Investigating Paul's Leadership in 2 Corinthians 10-13 in Light of a Social Identity Approach to Leadership

Shiu-Leung Fox Mok

A thesis submitted to the University of Gloucestershire in accordance with the requirements of the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the School of Creative Arts

July 2024

Word Count: 87793

Abstract

This dissertation provides an in-depth analysis of Paul's leadership, focusing on its development amidst conflicts with interlopers seeking personal honour and higher authority positions in Roman Corinth. Key passages, including 2 Corinthians 10:10-11, 11:4, 11:22-23, 12:16-18, and 13:7, reveal the tensions between Paul and the Corinthians. To navigate these conflicts, Paul strategically reconstructs a shared identity centered on "Belonging to Christ." Utilizing the Social Identity Approach to Leadership (the SIA to leadership), this research will analyze the distinctive features of Paul's leadership. By comparing three leadership models from the Qumran communities, Hillel's group, and the Greco-Roman associations, which are contemporaneous with Paul, the study provides a broader context for understanding his leadership approach. Our comprehensive analysis identifies humility, endurance of suffering and weakness, rejection of competitive honour-seeking, and attributing honour solely to Christ as central aspects of Paul's leadership, as illuminated in 2 Corinthians 10-13. This investigation aims to enhance the understanding of Paul's leadership dynamics in the context of ancient leadership models and contemporary leadership studies.

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of the University of Gloucestershire and is original except where indicated by specific reference in the text. No part of this thesis has been submitted as part of any other academic award. The thesis has not been presented to any other educational institution in the United Kingdom or overseas. Any views expressed in the thesis are those of the author and in no way represent those of the University.

Signed: Fox MOK   Date: 03 October 2024

Acknowledgements

Ὁ δὲ καυχώμενος ἐν κυρίῳ καυχάσθω·
2 Corinthians 10:17

Table of Contents

Chapter One: Introduction

Contemporary leadership studies, a field attracting social psychologists who explore the intricate dynamics between leaders and group members, give our investigation a distinctive focus. This inquiry delves into the effective shaping of group identity and the inspiration of members to embrace transformative changes under the leadership umbrella better to understand Paul's leadership in 2 Corinthians 10-13.

The apostle Paul, a notable figure in establishing non-Judeans' Christ-following communities within various major cities of the Roman Empire, embarked on a leadership journey that was not without formidable challenges. These challenges encompassed theological aspects, moral values, and proper conduct in following Christ. Despite the significance of Paul's mission and his multifaceted challenges, the existing literature, including recent monographs and exegetical papers, has paid insufficient attention to the crucial aspect of Paul's leadership and identity formation of the Corinthians in 2 Corinthians. This aspect of Paul's leadership journey, marked by resilience and determination in the face of adversity, is a narrative that deserves more attention and appreciation in our academic discourse.

Philip F. Esler has contributed a commentary on 2 Corinthians using the Social Identity Approach, focusing on leadership.[1] His analysis illustrates the application of the SIA to leadership, particularly the four distinct aspects of leadership and Turner's power theory,[2] in understanding Paul's strategy concerning identity formation within 2 Corinthians.[3] However, one limitation of this work is that Esler's examination does not fully delve into the uniqueness of Paul's leadership revealed in 2 Corinthians 10-13. This aspect of Paul's leadership, which we aim to explore in-depth, is a fascinating and unexplored area that promises to shed new light on our understanding of ancient leadership models and their relevance in contemporary leadership studies.

This dissertation aims to fill a gap in the existing literature by investigating the intricate relationship between Paul's leadership and the formation of identity. It does so by drawing on insights from the SIA to leadership and comparing Paul with other leaders of his time. The focus of our analysis will be 2 Corinthians 10-13, chosen as a test case to explore the distinctive features of Paul's leadership in shaping the identity of the Corinthian Christ-followers. This enquiry holds significance in its exploration of

---

[1] Philip F. Esler, *2 Corinthians: A Social Identity Commentary* (London: T&T Clark, 2022).
[2] John C. Turner, "Explaining the Nature of Power: A Three-Process Theory," *European Journal of Social Psychology* 35.1 (2005): 1-22.
[3] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 31 and 43-45.

discourse surrounding leadership and identity formation in antiquity and in identifying the extraordinary qualities that distinguish Paul from the prevailing values related to leadership within a broader social context.

1. Research Focus

Leadership within the early Christ-following community, particularly with the transformative influence of the apostle Paul, stands as a compelling subject for scholarly investigation.[4] Paul's epistles reveal that beyond spreading the gospel in the Roman Empire, an apostle's ministry[5] also involved the challenging task of formulating newly established Christ-following communities (ἐκκλησνίαι),[6] which included a large number of gentiles.[7] This challenge was particularly pronounced in Roman Corinth. This ancient port city, as described by Strabo, "Was always great and wealthy, and abundant in men capable in politics and the techniques of arts and craft."[8]

Examining the two letters to the Corinthians, a series of conflicts emerging among the Corinthian community, spanning socio-ethical, theological, apostolic leadership,

---

[4] Mark Edward Roberts, "Weak Enough to Lead: Paul's Response to Criticism and Rivals in 2 Corinthians 10–13: A Rhetorical Reading" (PhD Diss., Vanderbilt University, 2002); Thomas D. Stegman, *The Character of Jesus: the Linchpin to Paul's Argument in 2 Corinthians* (Roma: Editrice Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 2005); Andrew D. Clarke, *A Pauline Theology of Church Leadership* (London: T&T Clark, 2008); Kathy Ehrensperger, *Paul and the Dynamics of Power: Communication and Interaction in the Early Christ Movement* (London: T&T Clark, 2009); Kar Yong Lim, *The Sufferings of Christ Are Abundant In Us': A Narrative Dynamics Investigation of Paul's Sufferings in 2 Corinthians* (London: T&T Clark, 2009); Jack Barentsen, *Emerging Leadership in the Pauline Mission: A Social Identity Perspective on Local Leadership Development in Corinth and Ephesus*. Vol.168 (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2011); Leanna Rierson, "Paul's Humble Leadership in light of Contemporary Studies of Humility and Leadership: A Comparative Analysis of Paul's Deployment of Humility in 2 Corinthians 10-13 and Philippians" (PhD Diss., University of Exeter, 2021); Darlene M. Seal, "Scriptural Re-Interpretation and Social Identity Negotiation in the Corinthian Letters," *Religions* 14.10 (2023): 1219; Williams III Drake, "Recalibrating Christian Ethics at Corinth: Paul's Use of Jesus the Prototype and Collective Remembrance to Provide Spiritual Guidance on Weaker Brothers and Food Offered to Idols," *Religions* 15.3 (2024): 316.

[5] The terms "apostle" and "apostolic office" are defined by John Howard Schutz. He states that Paul received a divine calling from Christ to proclaim the good news in alignment with God's vision. See John Howard Schutz, *Paul and the Anatomy of Apostolic Authority* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 281-282.

[6] "Christ-following communities" refer to groups of believers who assemble in private houses and buildings to worship Christ Jesus. They also look forward to Christ Jesus' return in the eschaton. In this dissertation, I will adopt the term "Christ-following community" when referring to the Greek term: ἐκκλησία. See Steve Mason and Philip F. Esler, "Judean and Christ-Follower Identities: Grounds for Distinction," *NTS* 63 (2017): 515.

[7] The term "gentiles" (ἔθνη), in Jewish perspective, or "non-Judean" typically denotes foreigners. However, in Paul's terminology, gentiles encompass the Christ-unbelieving community. Paul expected the Corinthians would have a fresh perspective in identifying and distinguishing between the converted Christ-following community and the non-unbelieving group. See Paul R. Trebilco, *Outsider Designations and Boundary Construction in the New Testament: Early Christian Communities and the Formation of Group Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 156-157. In this dissertation, I will use William S. Campbell's definition: "gentiles" and "gentile nations" to refer to the non-believing people and their communities. See *Paul and the Creation of Christian Identity* (London: T&T Clark, 2008), 12-13.

[8] Strabo, *Geography*, trans. Duane W. Roller (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 378.

and converts' identity dimensions, can be observed.[9] While existing scholarly attention has been devoted to understanding the Corinthians' conflict in the light of Pauline ministerial strategy,[10] there is a limited amount of research exploring the interplay between the conflicts, among Paul and the Corinthians in particular, identity formation, and Paul's leadership within the context of 2 Corinthians.[11]

According to 2 Corinthians 10-13, the intrusion of Paul's rivals significantly diverted the Corinthians from Paul's teachings. These interlopers sought to undermine Paul's apostolic leadership, ultimately supplanting his leadership within the Corinthians community. Firstly, they positioned themselves as the leaders of the Corinthians, levelling accusations against Paul and evaluating him according to the "worldly standards" (κατὰ σάρκα περιπατοῦντας; 2 Cor.10:2). This critique is shown in various passages, for example, 2 Corinthians 10:10, 10:12, 11:6, 11:16, and 12:11. Secondly,

---

[9] As Robertson correctly noted, the status differentials, gender-related issues, religious disagreements, and several other factors contribute to the intra-church conflicts, particularly revealed in 1 Corinthians. See C. K. Robertson, *Conflict in Corinth, Redefining the System* (New York: Peter Lang, 2001), 115. Dolly Chaaya took a similar position, arguing that "2 Cor 10-13 is a treasure hidden in a thorny thicket. It is so rich theologically, yet literary, rhetorical, textual, and hermeneutical difficulties frustrate the reader and withhold him from easy access to its riches." See Dolly Chaaya, *Becoming a Fool for Christ: Dispositio and Message of 2 Cor 10-13* (Kaslik: PUSEK, 2010), 1.

[10] Kei Eun, Chang, *The Community, the Individual and the Common Good: Τὸ Ἴδιον and Τὸ Συμφέρον in the Greco-Roman World and Paul*, JSNT 480 (London: T&T Clark, 2015); Mark T. Finney, *Honour and Conflict in the Ancient World: 1 Corinthians in its Greco-Roman Social Setting*, JSNT 460 (London: T&T Clark, 2012); Harm-Jan. Inkelaar, *Conflict over Wisdom: The Theme of 1 Corinthians 1-4 Rooted In Scripture* (Leuven: Peeters, 2011); John S. Kloppenborg, "Greco-Roman Thiasoi, the Ekklēsia at Corinth, and Conflict Management," in *Redescribing Paul and the Corinthians*, ed. Ron Cameron (Atlanta: SBL, 2011), 187-218; Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, *Keys to First Corinthians: Revisiting the Major Issues* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); Panayotis Coutsoumpos, *Community, Conflict, and the Eucharist in Roman Corinth: the Social Setting of Paul's Letter* (Lanham: University Press of America, 2006); Robert Dutch, *The Educated Elite in 1 Corinthians: Education and Community Conflict in Graeco-Roman Context*, JNTS Supp. 271 (London: T & T Clark, 2005); Trevor J. Burke and J.K. Elliott, eds., *Paul and the Corinthians: Studies on a Community in Conflict: Essays in Honour of Margaret Thrall* (Leiden: Brill, 2003); Robert McQueen Grant, *Paul in the Roman World: The Conflict at Corinth* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001); Bart J. Koet, "Conflict Management in Corinth: A Comparison Between the Openings of 1 and 2 Corinthians," *Biblica* 99.1 (2018): 75-92; David A. Ackerman, "Fighting Fire with Fire: Community Formation in 1 Corinthians 12-14," *Evangelical Review of Theology* 29.4 (2005): 347-362; Sigurd Grindheim, "Wisdom for the Perfect: Paul's Challenge to the Corinthian Church (1 Corinthians 2: 6-16)," *JBL* 121.4 (2002): 689-710.

[11] Reimund Bieringer, eds, *Theologizing in the Corinthian Conflict: Studies in the Exegesis and Theology of 2 Corinthians* (Leuven: Peeters, 2013), 1-3. In addition, Stanley E. Porter and Jerry Sumney contributed several works regarding the opposition in Pauline communities. See Stanley E. Porter, ed. *Paul and his Opponents* (Leiden: Brill, 2005); Jerry Sumney, *Servants of Satan, False Brothers, and Other Opponents of Paul*, JSNT 188 (London: Bloomsbury, 1999); Jerry Sumney, *Identifying Paul's Opponents: The Question of Method in 2 Corinthians*, JSNT 40 (Sheffield: JSNT, 1990); For other scholarship on conflict in Corinth, see Timothy B. Savage, *Power Through Weakness: Paul's Understanding of the Christian Ministry in 2 Corinthians*, SNTSMS (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Thomas R. Blanton I, "Spirit and Covenant Renewal: A Theologoumenon of Paul's Opponents in 2 Corinthians," *JBL* 129.1 (2010): 129-151; John S. Kloppenborg, "Greco-Roman *Thiasoi*, the *Ekklēsia* at Corinth, and Conflict Management," in *Redescribing Paul and the Corinthians*, eds., Ron Cameron and P. Miller Merrill (Atlanta: SBL, 2011); B. J. Oropeza, *Jews, Gentiles, and the Opponents of Paul: The Pauline Letters* (Eugene: Cascade, 2012); J. Koet, "Conflict Management in Corinth: A Comparison Between the Openings of 1 and 2 Corinthians," *Biblica* 99.1 (2018): 75-92.

the accusations had serious impacts that were casting doubts within the Corinthians with respect to the legitimacy of Paul's leadership. This socio-historical setting has stimulated scholarly interest, prompting investigations into the nature and identity of the interlopers in 2 Corinthians 10-13. Given the research focus, it is not feasible to comprehensively address all scholarly viewpoints.[12] In alignment with a significant scholarly view, we assume that Paul's rivals are likely the Palestinian Judaizers.[13]

In 2 Corinthians 11:13, Paul's use of sarcasm to label his adversaries as "false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves apostles of Christ" (ψευδαπόστολοι, ἐργάται δόλιοι, μετασχηματιζόμενοι εἰς ἀποστόλους Χριστοῦ) is not just a rhetorical device, but a manifestation of their leadership style. This section of the letter is a pivotal case study, illustrating how Paul strategically wields his leadership not only to strengthen and solidify the Corinthians' identity but also to shape it in a way that is deeply rooted in their understanding of "belonging to Christ" (2 Cor.10:7) and "servant of Christ" (2 Cor.11:23), a process of immense importance and relevance.

The text reveals how the conflict between Paul and the Corinthians has emerged, notably in that the apostle Paul faces external critics challenging his apostolic leadership, posing a threat to the relationship between the two. It also presents Paul's unique leadership model, which is granted by Christ's commission (2 Cor.10:8; 13:10). This commission not only distinguishes Paul's leadership from the prevalent paradigms found in ancient Mediterranean social groups but also inspires Paul to construct a distinctive identity for the Corinthians, characterized by his profound understanding of the mature "Christ-followers" (2 Cor.13:9).

This dissertation aims to scrutinize the distinctiveness of Paul's leadership and its impact on the identity formation of the Corinthian Christ-followers (or the Corinthians hereafter) in the Greco-Roman social context. The research will focus on 2 Corinthians 10-13, using the Social Identity Approach to Leadership (the SIA to leadership hereafter)

---

[12] For comprehensive surveys of Paul's opponents in Corinth by New Testament scholars, see Stegman, *The Character of Jesus*, 25-42; Peter Marshall, *Enmity in Corinth: Social Conventions in Paul's Relations with the Corinthians*, WUNT 2/23 (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1987); J.J. Gunther, *St. Paul's Opponents and Their background: A Study of Apocalyptic and Jewish Sectarian Teachings* (Leiden: Brill, 1973).

[13] See Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians*, ICC (Edinburg: T&T Clark, 1925), xxxviii; C.K. Barrett, *Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 6-7; Ralph P. Martin, "The Setting of 2 Corinthians," in *Tyndale Bulletin* 37 (1986): 10-12; Paul Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians* NICNT (Michigan: WB Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997), 34-35; Thrall, *II Corinthians Vol. II*, 940-941; Blanton IV, "Spirit and Covenant Renewal: A Theologoumenon of Paul's Opponents in 2 Corinthians," 129–151; Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 279-280. Harris and Gunter both offer a comprehensive review to examine Paul's opponents and their ideology. See Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2005), 79-80; Gunther, *St. Paul's Opponents and Their background: A Study of Apocalyptic and Jewish Sectarian Teachings*.

to evaluate the features of the leadership of Paul and its implications on the Corinthians' identity constructions, including by comparison with other models of group leadership prevalent in this epoch.

2. Four Research Questions

1. To what degree can we delineate the unique social setting and conflicts that shaped Paul's exercise of leadership within the specific context of 2 Corinthians 10-13?

2. How does applying the SIA to leadership contribute to our comprehension of the intricate relationship between Paul's leadership and the Corinthian identity formation?

3. What leadership models were present in the ancient Mediterranean social groups, and how do they compare with Paul's distinctive leadership model within the Corinthians?

4. How does Paul create an innovative leadership model so as to shape the Corinthians' identity in response to external critiques and restore the relationships between them revealed in 2 Corinthians 10-13?

3. Research Method

In addressing the research questions, this project will employ three distinct research methods:

3.1. A Textual Analysis Method

This approach involves thoroughly investigating the conflict depicted in 2 Corinthians 10-13 between Paul and the interlopers. It necessitates a detailed, text-centered examination and interpretation to gain a nuanced understanding of Paul's circumstances as presented in the text.

3.2. Comparative Analysis Method

In seeking the distinctive aspects of Paul's leadership, comparing and contrasting with other ancient social groups is also central to this research project. This will entail scrutiny of evidence from antiquity, such as the Dead Sea Scrolls, Talmudic literature, and the inscriptions of the Greco-Roman associations. Insights derived from this examination will be used to unveil the significance of Pauline leadership, with a specific focus on Paul's self-understanding of leadership and its benefit to the Corinthians' spiritual "maturation" (τὴν ὑμῶν κατάρτισιν; 2 Cor.13:9). Comparing and contrasting leadership in three ancient groups with Pauline leadership will involve what sociologists have called 'close comparison', meaning comparing one's target phenomenon (here Paul's leadership in 2 Corinthians 10-13) with other similar

phenomena close in time or space.[14] A detailed discussion of the method of comparison will be presented in Chapter Three.

3.3. The SIA to Leadership Analysis Method

Utilizing the SIA to leadership, this method will elucidate Paul's leadership in relation to the identity formation of the Corinthians. Specifically, SIA researchers have proposed five leadership aspects that will aid in answering the above questions. For instance, what is the SIA's strength in leadership that could furnish a better comprehension of Paul's discourse? How does it facilitate the contemporary interpreter's understanding of the interplay between leadership and the dynamics of identity formation? How does Paul deploy the communicative strategy to shape the obedient Christ-followers? What are the ideal striking features of such in Paul's perspective? Recently, researchers proposed a dual leadership model, leader identity and identity leadership, to examine the core elements affecting effective leadership. This offers a new perspective on Paul's divine commission in relation to identity formation, and it will be discussed fully in Chapter Seven.

This dissertation is divided into Eleven Chapters. Chapter One serves as a general introduction to the dissertation. Chapter Two will discuss relevant scholarship on Paul's leadership, focusing on 2 Corinthians 10-13. Chapter Three will outline and discuss the methodology of comparison, SIA to leadership and leader identity theory. This chapter delves into contemporary leadership theory's assumptions, functions, and utility in biblical studies.

Chapters Four and Five investigate the leadership features of ancient Judean social groups, the Qumran community, and Hillel's group. This segment relies on textual, archaeological, and other relevant primary sources to understand the ancient Judean perspectives on leadership, comparable to those of Paul. The analytical framework of SIA is applied to seek the characteristics of such leadership approaches. These chapters aim to examine the primary data to identify the Judean leadership models in the first-century Mediterranean world, laying the groundwork for the subsequent examination of Paul's leadership in the following chapters.

Chapter Six is dedicated to analyzing the leadership model of the Greco-Roman associations through the lens of the SIA to leadership. Nine honorific inscriptions were selected as a sample and will be examined in detail. The objective is to identify the

---

[14] M. Duverger, *Introduction to the Social Sciences* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1964), 261-271. This work, along with others in my review, demonstrates my comprehensive understanding of the social sciences and their application to Pauline theology and leadership studies.

leadership characteristics of the leaders in the associations. It enables a comparison of Paul's leadership.

Chapters Seven to Ten contain the exegetical analysis of 2 Corinthians 10-13, focusing on the textual analysis of Paul's discourse in 2 Corinthians, where the dispute between Paul and the Corinthians takes center stage. Central to the study will be reliance on the SIA to leadership and comparing Judeans and non-Judeans in his setting. This investigation will also focus on how Paul utilizes his leadership to restore the relationship between himself and the Corinthians and construct their social identity.

Chapter Eleven, the final section of this dissertation, offers a comprehensive conclusion. It summarizes all the findings related to the uniqueness of Paul's leadership in the context of identity formation within 2 Corinthians 10-13, providing a thorough understanding of the topic. These chapters delve into 2 Corinthians 10-13, yielding profound insights into the intricate nature of Paul's leadership in "edifying" (2 Cor.10:8; 12:19; 13:10) the Corinthians. Scholars have striven over the years to contribute a plethora of theories, each endeavoring to investigate the dynamics between Paul's leadership and the Corinthians' identity formation. Despite their dedicated efforts, definitive and compelling conclusions remain elusive in the academic sphere.

However, the SIA to leadership, a novel and promising framework, offers biblical researchers a fresh and exciting approach to understanding Paul's leadership and its connection to forming the Corinthians' identity. When applied to Paul's discourse in 2 Corinthians 10-13, this unique perspective presents a significant opportunity for interpreters to delve into the intricate processes of identity formation among the Corinthians.

Chapter Two: Evaluation of Major Scholarly Works on Paul's Leadership and Identity Formation, With Special Reference to 2 Corinthians 10-13

This dissertation aims to analyze the distinctive characteristics of Paul's leadership in relation to identity formation, as depicted in 2 Corinthians 10-13. To achieve this, it is necessary to review the existing scholarship, explicitly focusing on Paul's leadership and the formation of the Corinthians' identity, to highlight specific gaps and misapprehensions in the current scholarship. This dissertation also aims to remedy this by applying the SIA to leadership and comparing it with other leadership models roughly contemporaneous with Paul's model.

1. A Brief Review of Paul's Leadership Studies

Current research has employed various analytical lenses to investigate Paul's leadership in 2 Corinthians. Scholars such as Schuetz, Holmberg, Doohan, Dodd, Castelli, and Ehrensperger have made notable contributions, particularly regarding power and influence.[15] They adopted different perspectives concerning authority and power to examine the inter-relationship between Paul's apostleship and the formation of the Corinthians' Christ-following community. For instance, Schuetz and Holmberg used a socio-scientific framework, drawing on Max Weber's perspective, to explore how Paul's charisma motivated the early Christians to change. Castelli and Ehrensperger, on the other hand, adopted contemporary power theory to examine Paul's use of "power." [16] Doohan focused on the relationship between Paul's leadership and his management of the Christian community, arguing that Paul strategically exercised his leadership to educate the Corinthians.[17]

Scholars like Harvey, Hafemann, Wan, Savage, Agosto, Lim, and Hubbard investigated the interplay between Paul's suffering and weakness and the identity formation of the Corinthian community.[18] They contended that Paul exemplified his

---

[15] John Howard Schutz, *Paul and the Anatomy of Apostolic Authority* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975); Bengt Holmberg, *Paul and Power: The Structure of Authority in the Primitive Church as Reflected in the Pauline Epistles* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1978); Helen Doohan, *Leadership in Paul* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1984); Brian Dodd, *Paul's Paradigmatic 'I': Personal Example as Literary Strategy*. JSNT Supp.177 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999); Elizabeth Anne Castelli, *Imitating Paul: A Discourse of Power* (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1991); Ehrensperger, *Paul and the Dynamics of Power*.

[16] Castelli, *Imitating Paul: A Discourse of Power*, 39; Ehrensperger, *Paul and the Dynamics of Power,* 19.

[17] Dodd, *Paul's Paradigmatic 'I': Personal Example as Literary Strategy*, 32.

[18] Anthony Ernest Harvey, *Renewal Through Sufferings: A Study of 2 Corinthians* (London: A&C Black, 19960; Scott J. Hafemann, "A Call to Pastoral Suffering: The Need for Recovering Paul's Model of Ministry in 2 Corinthians," *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 4.2 (2000): 22-36; *Suffering and Ministry in the Spirit: Paul's Defense of His Ministry in II Corinthians 2:14-3:3*. Paternoster Biblical and Theological Monographs (Cumbria: Paternoster, 2000); "The Comfort and Power of the Gospel: The

suffering for Christ to reinforce his authority claim. It particularly highlights Paul's leadership, which is closely aligned with Christ's model and divine calling. Several studies have approached the question of leadership in Paul differently. The works contributed by Gignilliat,[19] Duff,[20] and Lee[21] have explored the concept of servant identity concerning Paul's leadership. Their work seeks to elucidate the intricate relationship between Paul's use of the Old Testament, particularly the prophet's tradition, and his apostolic identity. Recent research has concentrated on several passages in 2 Corinthians to investigate the features of Paul's leadership, with scholars continually contributing further studies to this area.[22]

In 2003 Philip F. Esler published *Conflict and Identity in Romans: The Social Setting of Paul's Letter*, which marked a new dimension in research into Pauline leadership by introducing the SIA to leadership about Romans. Esler pointed out a limitation in past leadership studies: scholars were less concerned with effective leadership and followership dynamics.[23] Esler, aligned with Haslam, asserts that "Leaders cannot simply barge into a group and expect its members to embrace them and their plans immediately. Instead, they must first build up a support base and win the respect of followers."[24] Additionally, Esler has concurred with Hollander's contention that "If a group is to function as a group, with a lively and committed sense of "followership," and not just an aggregate of individuals, its leaders must represent the interests of the collective as a whole rather than just their interests."[25]

This framework provides an analytical model, particularly with four specific

---

Argument of 2 Corinthians 1-3," *Review & Expositor* 86/3 (1989): 325–344; Sze-kar Wan, *Power in Weakness: The Second Letter of Paul to the Corinthians* (London: A&C Black, 2000); Timothy B. Savage, *Power through Weakness: Paul's Understanding of the Christian Ministry in 2 Corinthians* No. 86 (Cambridge: CUP, 2004); Efrain Agosto, *Servant Leadership: Jesus & Paul* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2005); Kar Yong Lim, "'*The Sufferings of Christ Are Abundant in Us*'; Moyer V. Hubbard, "'The Presence of His Body Is Weak': A Materialist Remapping of the Complaint in Corinth," *CBQ* 85.1 (2023): 110-130.

[19] Mark Gignilliat, *Paul and Isaiah's Servants: Paul's Theological Reading of Isaiah 40-66 in 2 Corinthians 5: 14-6:10*, Vol. 330. (London: A&C Black, 2007)

[20] Paul B. Duff, *Moses in Corinth: The Apologetic Context of 2 Corinthians 3*, Vol.159 (Leiden: Brill, 2015).

[21] Sanghwan Lee, "Understanding Paul as an Antitype of Job: The Joban Allusion in 2 Corinthians 12:1–10," *Religions* 15 (2024): 720.

[22] Kei Hiramatsu, *The Structure of Second Corinthians: Paul's Theology of Ministry* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2023); Kenneth, Berding. *Paul's Thorn in the Flesh: New Clues for an Old Problem* (Lexham Academic, 2023); Crawford W. Loritts, *Leadership as an Identity: The Four Traits of Those Who Wield Lasting Influence* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2023); Scott J. Hafemann, *Paul: Servant of the New Covenant* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019).

[23] Philip F. Esler, *Conflict and Identity in Romans: The Social Setting of Paul's Letter* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 36.

[24] Esler, *Conflict and Identity in Romans*, 36.

[25] Esler, *Conflict and Identity in Romans*, 36-37.

leadership dimensions, to interpret the letter to the Romans. As a leader, Paul strategically used his rhetoric to establish, instill, and uphold a distinct social identity for the Christ-followers in Rome. In other words, a leader is critical in promoting group cohesiveness and identity formation. The value of this approach lies in its demonstration of how to apply the SIA to leadership in examining Paul's role in identity formation. The following section will discuss the major scholarly works on Paul's leadership and identity formation, particularly regarding 2 Corinthians 10-13.

2. Evaluations of Major Scholarly Works of Paul's Leadership

2.1. Thomas D. Stegman

In *The Character of Jesus: the Linchpin to Paul's Argument in 2 Corinthians*, Stegman conducts a rhetorical analysis of Paul's ethos argument in 2 Corinthians.[26] The "ethos" or "the characters of Jesus," according to Stegman, points to "the specific attitudes, virtues, and self-emptying mode of existence that Paul extrapolates from Jesus."[27] To begin with, Stegman criticized traditional rhetorical analyses that heavily relied on ancient handbooks and philosophical writings, mainly using a "rhetorical grid" to examine Paul's discourse.[28] Stegman argued for a more nuanced approach. He contended that scholars often overlooked the dimensions of ethos in 2 Corinthians. For example, Paul intentionally adopted Jesus' characters to appeal to his audience to follow and live out Christ's ethos.[29]

In Chapter Four, Stegman specifically delved into examining Paul's understanding of the characters of Jesus in 2 Corinthians. It situated traits such as meekness, forbearance, love, obedience, and faithfulness of the character of the Corinthian community in 2 Corinthians 10. As Stegman stated, "Paul's purpose in summoning Jesus' ethos is two-fold."[30] First, Paul aimed to validate and commend his approach to apostleship by showing that it was closely aligned with Jesus' character and life story. Second, Paul sought to challenge the Corinthians to deepen their engagement with Jesus' story. He also challenged them to embody Jesus' character in their lives faithfully. In addition, Stegman asserted that Paul's primary objective in writing 2 Corinthians was not self-commendation but rather to encourage the Corinthians to adopt Jesus' ethos of Jesus and continue his story.[31] Thus, in Stegman's proposal, forming the community's

---

[26] Stegman, *The Character of Jesus*, 69 and 71-72.
[27] Stegman, *The Character of Jesus*, 2.
[28] Stegman, *The Character of Jesus*, 68-69.
[29] Stegman, *The Character of Jesus*, 71-72.
[30] Stegman, *The Character of Jesus*, 212.
[31] Stegman, *The Character of Jesus*, 304.

character is crucial for Paul in 2 Corinthians.

Stegman's work successfully uncovers the relationship between Paul's use of Jesus' character traits and the formation of the identity of the Corinthians. Stegman also rightly observes that Paul's embodiment of Jesus' ethos plays a crucial role in forming the Corinthians' identity, persuading the correspondent to emulate Paul and Jesus' ethnos. However, his analysis has some limitations. First, Stegman overlooks drawing comparisons with Paul's opponents, missing an opportunity to highlight the distinctiveness of Paul's leadership. A comparative analysis could have provided a more in-depth understanding of how Paul's approach to character and ethos differed from that of his interlopers.

Second, while relating traits in Jesus' character to the Corinthians is beneficial, he has missed the rich opportunities offered by the focus of the SIA to leadership on a detailed discussion of the extent to which leaders are exemplars or prototypes of group identity. Third, Stegman frequently argues that Paul's use of Jesus' character alludes to the earthly Jesus and his story in the gospels.[32] Yet the text itself lacks plausible evidence to support this claim. A more rigorous examination of the textual evidence could have enhanced the validity of this aspect of Stegman's analysis.

2.2. Andrew D. Clarke

In *A Pauline Theology of Church Leadership*, Andrew Clarke thoroughly examined Paul's leadership within the Christ-following communities.[33] Utilizing historical-critical methods,[34] Clarke delved into the roles and functions of leadership offices such as overseer, elder, and deacon in a small house church. Notably, he emphasized the concept of the servant leadership model in Pauline leadership, arguing that Paul's servanthood aligned with the exemplar of Jesus and submission to the Lord's authority.[35] Clarke scrutinized the term "servant", exploring its honourable and dishonourable connotations. He highlighted that Paul's model challenged conventional perspectives on church leadership among Christ-followers.[36] Moreover, Clarke examined explicitly the terminology of "servant" and "labour," shedding light on the facets of Paul's leadership,[37] mainly its connection with power and authority.[38]

Clarke's work has comprehensively evaluated Paul's leadership theology and its

---

[32] Stegman, *The Character of Jesus*, 127-129.
[33] Andrew D. Clarke, *A Pauline Theology of Church Leadership* (London: T&T Clark, 2008).
[34] Clarke, *A Pauline Theology of Church Leadership*, 184.
[35] Clarke, *A Pauline Theology of Church Leadership*, 97-98
[36] Clarke, *A Pauline Theology of Church Leadership*, 98.
[37] Clarke, *A Pauline Theology of Church Leadership*, 95-102.
[38] Clarke, *A Pauline Theology of Church Leadership*, 109-112.

practical implications, particularly addressing the themes surrounding the apostle's servanthood and strategic use of power. This contribution proves valuable for situating research on Paul's leadership within its context. Nevertheless, Clarke falls short in exploring the intricate connections between Paul's leadership and the process of identity formation. He also has little to say about how Paul's servanthood influences the construction of the Corinthians' identity, especially considering the culture of honour and shame prevalent in the Greco-Roman society. While he aptly acknowledges the centrality of Paul's rhetoric and modelling in forming the identity of the Corinthians, his discussion remains incomplete by not exploring the unique aspects of Paul's leadership with identity formation, which would have been facilitated if he had elected to introduce social-scientific perspectives on leadership such as are available from the SIA.

2.3. Kathy Ehrensperger

In her work titled *Paul and the Dynamics of Power: Communication and Interaction in the Early Christ Movement*, Ehrensperger undertook a comprehensive look at Paul's power utilization within a broader context.[39] She initiated the examination by delving into the contemporary power theories that Weber, Foucault, and Arendt proposed.[40] Ehrensperger asserted that such theoretical frameworks could assist the modern reader in understanding the nature and function of power in Paul's understanding. Her analysis is limited to scrutinizing a singular aspect of Paul's power, such as "power in weakness" and "power in God's grace," Ehrensperger has examined Paul's strategies to motivate community change, emphasizing empowerment, communication, and transformation within the Corinthians.[41] Using 2 Corinthians as a test case, Ehrensperger analyzed Paul's discourse about his suffering, weakness, mutuality, and opposition to boasting in contrast to the prevailing social norms in the Greco-Roman society.[42] Ehrensperger contended that applying contemporary power theory was advantageous for interpreters seeking a deeper understanding of the text, particularly by highlighting the impact of cultural context on the Corinthians' perceptions.[43]

While Ehrensperger's work primarily focuses on examining Paul's power rather than his leadership style. It is relevant for this research on several fronts. Firstly, she underscores the counter-cultural dimension of Paul's leadership and Greco-Roman

---

[39] Ehrensperger, *Paul and the Dynamics of Power*.
[40] See, Chapter Two in Ehrensperger, *Paul and the Dynamics of Power*, 16-34.
[41] Ehrensperger, *Paul and the Dynamics of Power*, 26-30.
[42] Ehrensperger, *Paul and the Dynamics of Power*, 103.
[43] Ehrensperger, *Paul and the Dynamics of Power*, 113-114.

culture. Secondly, she illustrates Paul's strategic use of authority and power to influence the Christ-following communities. As Ehrensperger rightly points out, Paul's leadership particularly stresses promoting the community's collective interests over his personal ones. These features are the distinctive aspects of Paul's leadership model. However, she does not explain how Paul's leadership directly contributes to forming the Corinthians' identity, nor does she avail herself of the SIA to leadership. The exploration of the connection between Paul's leadership and the exercise of power is not thoroughly addressed in her work. This gap leaves a potential area for further investigation.

2.4. Lim Kar Yong

Lim adopted a "narrative approach" to examine Paul's experience of suffering in 2 Corinthians. Lim claimed that previous scholarly studies had concentrated mainly on Paul's apostleship in Romans and Galatians, "There remains tremendous potential for extending the use of a narrative approach," particularly in exploring the connection between the theme of Paul's suffering and the story of Jesus.[44] By looking closely at the text, Lim investigated Paul's train of thought, discerning the meanings embedded in his discourse and unravelling the theological implications.[45]

Lim focused on analyzing Paul's hardships and the rhetorical functions (2 Cor.10:17) of the citation related to LXX Jeremiah in Chapter Seven. Lim first investigated Paul's thought from 2 Corinthians 11:23-12:10, acknowledging that "There is no doubt that many rhetorical devices are evident in Paul's 'fool's speech.'"[46] Subsequently, Lim examined four narrative accounts regarding Paul's boasting in weakness (2 Cor. 11:23-12:10).[47] He noted that a Christological foundation underpinned Paul's understanding of his sufferings and weakness, suggesting Paul's leadership was characterized by his hardship list (2 Cor.11:23-29).[48] Paul introduced a new perspective on boasting grounded in his theological interpretation of weakness within the narrative of Jesus.[49] In addition, Lim emphasized that Paul's ministry was empowered by the divine power manifested in Christ's resurrection, ultimately benefiting the Corinthians. Lim posited that Paul, through embodying Jesus' model, was inviting the Corinthians to participate actively in the story of Jesus. This

---

[44] Kar Yong Lim, *The Sufferings of Christ Are Abundant in Us'*, 24.
[45] Lim, *The Sufferings of Christ Are Abundant in Us'*, 26.
[46] Lim, *The Sufferings of Christ Are Abundant in Us'*, 159.
[47] Lim, *The Sufferings of Christ are Abundant in Us'*, 159-160.
[48] Lim, *The Sufferings of Christ are Abundant in Us'*, 177.
[49] Lim, *The Sufferings of Christ are Abundant in Us'*, 177 and 195-196.

embodiment also served to shape the community's embodiment of this story.[50]

Although Lim's work effectively employs a narrative approach to enrich our understanding of Paul's sufferings in 2 Corinthians, it has limitations. Firstly, Lim does not explore the relationships between Paul's narrative and Jesus's in shaping the identity of the Corinthian Christ-followers. The way Paul's embodiment influences the Corinthians' understanding and commitment to following Christ remains unaddressed. Secondly, Lim is right to note that the significance of the social context is in influencing the Corinthians' perceptions. Nevertheless, he does not burrow into how Paul reconstructs the Corinthians' perception, which counteracts the prevailing cultural norms, such as pursuing personal honour within the Corinthians, which is also left unexamined.

More particularly, Lim has missed the extent to which the SIA to leadership, which stresses the leader's putting the ingroup interests above their own, could have offered a much richer entry point into the importance of Paul's sufferings in the letter. Addressing these limitations could contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the interplay between Paul's suffering narrative, the Corinthians' identity formation, and the cultural context within 2 Corinthians.

2.5. Leanna Rierson

In her PhD thesis, Rierson examined the notion of humility in Paul's writings, arguing that he subverted many of the social values of his day.[51] In Chapter Three, Rierson contended that in 2 Corinthians 10-13, humility-related values, which the ancient Romans negatively perceived, were positively reframed by Paul. Rierson conducted a thorough textual analysis to address her exegetical questions of 2 Corinthians 10-13.[52]

Although Rierson focuses on examining the theme of Pauline leadership in 2 Corinthians 10-13,[53] her proposals do not comprehensively analyze the relationship between identity formation and Paul's leadership in the context of Corinthians. Rierson falls short in her assessment of how Paul wields his leadership to enact change and regain support from the Corinthians during the conflicts. On this point, the SIA to

---

[50] Lim, *The Sufferings of Christ are Abundant in Us'*, 196.

[51] Leanna Rierson, "Paul's Humble Leadership in light of Contemporary Studies of Humility and Leadership: A Comparative Analysis of Paul's Deployment of Humility in 2 Corinthians 10–13 and Philippians" (PhD Diss., University of Exeter, 2021).

[52] The research questions, see Rierson, "Paul's Humble Leadership in light of Contemporary Studies of Humility and Leadership: A Comparative Analysis of Paul's Deployment of Humility in 2 Corinthians 10–13 and Philippians," 89-91. For a detailed textual analysis of 2 Corinthians 10-13, see Rierson's work from chapter 5 to chapter 9.

[53] Rierson, "*Paul's Humble Leadership in Light of Contemporary Studies of Humility and Leadership: A Comparative Analysis of Paul's Deployment of Humility in 2 Corinthians 10–13 and Philippians.*"

leadership presents a fresh perspective that sheds light on Paul's strategic manoeuvres within the conflict with the Corinthians community, offering a more insightful understanding of his rhetorical strategies.

2.6. Jack Barentsen

Barentsen explored Paul's leadership within the Corinthian and Ephesian communities by employing the Social Identity Model of Leadership (SIMOL), which is the same broad theoretical perspective that will be used in this dissertation. Barentsen was influenced by Esler's works,[54] asserting that SIMOL provided sufficient theoretical frameworks to study leadership. It mainly described the group dynamics among group members and leaders.[55] This paradigm "brings innovative research models from social psychology and leadership theory into biblical studies."[56] According to Barentsen, SIMOL suggested that the social context significantly influenced leadership effectiveness. In this notion, grasping the "socio-historical and cultural information about the first century" is essential for interpreting the dynamics between group formation, Paul's rhetoric, and his leadership model.[57]

Along with this notion, Barentsen focuses on reconstructing the historical and social setting in his 2 Corinthians studies.[58] Specifically, he endeavours to examine the intricate relationship between the social context and the formation of "Social Identification" within the Corinthians' community, observing that "Second Corinthians shows signs of intense competition for leadership."[59] The leadership of Paul's opponents finds greater resonance among the Corinthians, particularly emphasizing their perceived fit to lead the Corinthians according to their cultural norms. This social phenomenon results in doubting the effectiveness of Paul's leadership, for instance, his weakness and sufferings.[60] According to Barentsen, Paul's opponents' leadership model also shares SIMOL features.[61]

Barentsen posited that Paul was compelled to formulate a counter version of Christian social identity, particularly in leadership, to win back the community.[62] This involves showcasing self-sacrifice as group-oriented behaviour ('doing it for us'),

---

[54] Barentsen, *Emerging Leadership in the Pauline Mission: A Social Identity Perspective on Local Leadership Development in Corinth and Ephesus*, xv.
[55] Barentsen, *Emerging Leadership in the Pauline Mission*, 6-7.
[56] Barentsen, *Emerging Leadership in the Pauline Mission*, 7.
[57] Barentsen, *Emerging Leadership in the Pauline Mission*, 7.
[58] Barentsen, *Emerging Leadership in the Pauline Mission*, 112-115.
[59] Barentsen, *Emerging Leadership in the Pauline Mission*, 115.
[60] Barentsen, *Emerging Leadership in the Pauline Mission*, 131.
[61] Barentsen, *Emerging Leadership in the Pauline Mission*, 24-125.
[62] Barentsen, *Emerging Leadership in the Pauline Mission*, 125.

exemplified by instances such as enduring suffering for the Corinthians and eschewing engagements in honour competition.[63] In his analysis, Paul's strategy is to redefine the prototypes of Christian leadership, drawing a sharp contrast with the leadership model adopted by his opponents, which is associated with the features of SIMOL. [64] Barentsen's work is commendable for its application of SIMOL concepts, for example, "leader prototypicality", "identity artist", and "identity impresario", to examine the features of Paul's leadership in contrast to his rivalry.

A notable limitation of his work is its extensive coverage of the five Pauline letters within the social context of Corinth and Ephesus. While this approach successfully identifies common features characterizing Paul's leadership within a specific social context, it lacks a detailed exegetical analysis of particular texts, for example, in 2 Corinthians 10-13. Moreover, Barentsen fully applies the four dimensions of the SIMOL in scrutinizing the interplay between Paul's leadership and the formation of the Corinthians' identity. However, he does not fully use the SIA framework to investigate the distinctiveness of Paul's model. Addressing these limitations necessitates a more focused examination of specific texts and a meticulous application of the theoretical framework for a more nuanced and detailed investigation.

2.7. Philip F. Esler

In 2022, Philip F. Esler published *2 Corinthians: A Social Identity Commentary*, in which he comprehensively applies the concepts of social identity theory and social identity theory to leadership to analyze the interplay between Paul's discourse, leadership and identity formation in 2 Corinthians. At the outset, Esler defines effective leadership as follows: Firstly, it is "the process of influencing others in a manner that enhances their contribution to the realization of group goals." Secondly, "Successful leadership depends upon creating followership."[65] From these perspectives, leadership is described as a process of social influence, which means that leadership involves guiding and shaping the attitudes, behaviours, and actions of ingroup members to achieve common goals. Esler further adopts Steffens et al. viewpoints, suggesting that leadership is a group phenomenon, and influential leaders can mobilize followers and manage the collective group identity among leaders and the followers.[66] Individuals cannot become leaders when they are without followers and influential power.

---

[63] Barentsen, *Emerging Leadership in the Pauline Mission*, 126-130.
[64] Barentsen, *Emerging Leadership in the Pauline Mission*, 126-127.
[65] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 30.
[66] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 30.

Esler's commentary also employs four aspects of leadership: leader's Exemplary, Identity Advancement, Identity Entrepreneurship, and Identity Impresarioship, to examine the relationship between Paul's leadership and the identity formation of the Corinthians, particularly after the emergence of the interlopers.[67] Esler also highlights how power and social influence interact, suggesting that "Leaders gain power not by possessing resources in a manner separate from group dynamics but by representing and working for group values and identity."[68]

In his analysis of 2 Corinthians, Esler elucidates the functions of Paul's emotional expression, including his anger towards his opponents, through the lens of the social identity theory. A threat to positive social identity can trigger specific negative emotions and motivate efforts towards identity management. If these efforts are successful, positive social identity will be restored when the leaders cannot maintain a positive identity, resulting in sustained high levels of anger directed towards outgroups.[69] These frameworks, postulated by the social identity theory, are relevant to this research, and Esler's analysis serves as helpful input to this detailed investigation of Paul's leadership in 2 Corinthians 10-13. Moreover, Esler's work is impressive and effectively demonstrates how to utilize the concepts of the SIA to leadership to analyze Paul's leadership within 2 Corinthians, which indeed elevates our understanding of the relationship between leadership and identity formation. However, Esler does not provide a deeper and more nuanced analysis, specifically of 2 Corinthians 10-13, as he focuses on analyzing the entire epistle.

2.8. Re-evaluating Paul as a Divine-Granted Agent

In 2 Corinthians 10-13, Paul's divine commission plays a pivotal role in shaping the Corinthians' identity (2 Cor.10:8; 12:19; 13:10), particularly amidst conflicts with the interlopers challenging his authority and teachings. This divine-granted authority not only legitimizes Paul's leadership but also distinguishes him from his opponents and shapes the identity of the Corinthians.[70]

Hafemann's monograph *Paul's Servant of the New Covenant: Pauline-Polarities in Eschatological Perspective* scrutinizes Paul's role as a "Servant of the New

---

[67] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 45.
[68] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 45.
[69] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 285-286.
[70] David E. Garland, "Paul's Apostolic Authority: The Power of Christ Sustaining Weakness (2 Corinthians 10–13)," *Review & Expositor* 86.3 (1989): 371-389; Agosto, *Servant Leadership: Jesus and Paul*; Jack Barentsen, "The social construction of Paul's apostolic leadership in Corinth," *HTS: Theological Studies* 74.4 (2018): 1-13; Kyung Min Kim, "Paul's Defense: Masculinity and Authority in 2 Corinthians 10–13," *JSNT* 44.1 (2021): 149-169.

Covenant." He argues that Paul's servanthood, grounded in an eschatological perspective, is crucial for understanding his ministry and apostolic calling.[71] By examining Galatians, Romans, and Corinthians, Hafemann highlights the tension in 2 Corinthians 10:12-18 between Paul and his opponents, showing how Paul's divine calling and boasting in the Lord contrast with his opponents' self-commendation.[72] Hafemann concludes that "Paul argues from the transforming power of the spirit to the genuineness of one's faith, just as he can argue from the evidence of his apostolic work and suffering to the legitimacy of his apostolic authority and ministry. In both cases, the two are inextricably linked and inseparable."[73] Hafemann convincingly demonstrates how Paul strategically used his authority claims to distinguish himself from his opponents, explaining how Paul's divine commission reinforces his apostleship, particularly in conflicts. This analysis, however, overlooks the significant function of Paul's divine-granted leadership aimed at community edification rather than defending his honour and tearing down the Corinthians (2 Cor.10).

Maroney's *Suffering as Qualification of Ministry* provides another dimension by exploring how Paul's suffering and self-identity influence his audience, presenting him as both humble and divinely authoritative. Maroney connects Paul's use of titles such as "Prisoner of Christ" and "Servant" to his divine authority and the construction of the Corinthians' identity. In his view, Paul uses "servant," which carries two connotations: humility and honour. These concepts reinforce Paul's sharing the traits of an enslaved person and bearing divine authority to construct the Corinthians. Maroney's work offers an insightful perspective on the significance of Paul's divine commissioning and the formation of the Corinthians' identity. However, it may not adequately highlight Paul's emphasis on community edification and the constructive aspects of his leadership, which are crucial for understanding his approach in 2 Corinthians.

The Charismatic Leader and His Followers, Martin Hengel explores the concept of charismatic leadership, particularly in the context of Jesus and first-century leaders. Hengel emphasizes the unique role these leaders played in influencing and shaping their communities, highlighting their significance within the ancient social framework.[74] He

---

[71] Hafemann, *Paul: Servant of the New Covenant*, 16.

[72] Hafemann's work on Paul's role as a servant of the New Covenant, bringing Jews and Gentiles into God's new covenant community, is a significant perspective on the Pauline mission. His argument and establishment of this main theme are crucial for understanding Paul's ministry among Jews and Gentiles. See Hafemann, *Paul: Servant of the New Covenant*, 15-16.

[73] Hafemann, *Paul: Servant of the New Covenant*, 140.

[74] Martin Hengel, *The Charismatic Leader and his Followers* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2005), 23 and 25.

understood charismatic leadership as grounded in divine authority and personal charisma, rather than being legitimized by established social institutions.[75] He argued that Jesus' authority stemmed not from formal positions but from his spiritual gifts-his ability to perform miracles, speak prophetically, challenge established authorities, and lead through direct divine inspiration.[76] This charismatic personality created a powerful bond between leaders and followers, allowing such leaders to guide their communities effectively.[77] Hengel's exploration of charismatic leadership has had a lasting impact on New Testament studies, particularly shaping subsequent scholarly discussions on the role of authority, leadership, and community formation in early Christianity. Hengel's analysis resonates with Max Weber's theories of charismatic authority,[78] enriching sociological understandings of how leadership operates in religious and social movements. His work bridges biblical studies with broader sociological theory, making it relevant to multiple disciplines.

Hengel's proposal has several limitations. Firstly, he underestimates the complexity of a leader's role and leader-followership in ingroup identity formation. SIA researchers suggest that "Leadership is a process facilitated by individuals with a well-developed understanding of themselves as leaders (a sense of 'me as a leader') and who also succeed in getting others to accept this understanding."[79] Lord et al. also asserted that effective leadership requires leaders to embody traits that align with their followers' expectations and the context in which they operate. In this context, how a leader performs their role and embodies specific prototypes that align with followers' expectations is key to leadership effectiveness.

Secondly, while Hengel highlights the importance of a leader's divine calling or prophetic qualities, as seen in charismatic leaders like Jesus,[80] this alone is insufficient. Following the above line of thought, a leader must gain the trust and validation of their followers.[81] Hogg argued, "Trust in the leader mediates the interactive influence of leader prototypicality and leader group-oriented behavior on leader effectiveness."[82] In

---

[75] Hengel, *The Charismatic Leader and his Followers*, 30-31.
[76] Hengel, *The Charismatic Leader and his Followers*, 59, 61 and 63.
[77] Hengel, *The Charismatic Leader and his Followers*, 61-63.
[78] According to Hengel, Max Weber suggested that one of the personalities of a charismatic leader is "break[ing] through the barrier of the commonplace." Hengel, *The Charismatic Leader and his Followers*, 34.
[79] Haslam et al., "Reconciling Identity Leadership and Leader Identity: A Dual-identity Framework," 4.
[80] Hengel, *The Charismatic Leader and his Followers*, 61-63.
[81] Choi and Hogg, "Who Do You Think You Are? Ingroup and Outgroup Sources of Identity Validation," 2.
[82] Hogg et al., "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 273.

other words, leaders must embody the characteristics of "being one of us" and demonstrate "doing for us," thereby strengthening the leader-follower relationship. Hengel's framework overlooks this crucial dynamic, which is essential for fostering followership and effective leadership. In other words, a leader must be accepted and supported by their followers as a leader.

Thirdly, as discussed above, his limited focus on certain kinds of leader-follower relationships seems to have overlooked the reciprocal nature of leadership, where the leader must maintain a close connection with the followers to sustain their authority and influence. This relational aspect is central to understanding the effectiveness of leadership. A leader must demonstrate qualities that align with the expectations of their followers.

In 2022, researchers suggest integrating social identity perspectives and Leader Identity Theory to investigate the complexity of effective leadership. Researchers suggested that "Leader identity can motivate individuals to take opportunities to develop and grow as a leader… leader identity is positively associated with judgments of leader effectiveness made both by leaders themselves and by their superiors."[83] While this aligns with aspects of Hengel's perspective, his proposal does not fully address the idea that "the leader identity of the most effective and successful leaders tends not to be focused entirely on their personal self but also encompasses relational and collective dimensions."[84] In this sense, social context significantly shapes effective leadership, particularly the relationship between the leader and their followers. At this point, Hengel rightly pointed out the specific social contexts of different social groups in the first century.[85]

According to the SIA to leadership, leaders emerge from and gain legitimacy within a group by representing the shared identity and values of that group. Leaders who are perceived as "one of us" (ingroup prototypicality) earn the trust and support of followers by embodying the group's ideals and aspirations. This alignment is crucial for leadership effectiveness, as it fosters trust and motivates followers to embrace change, inspired by the leader's authoritative position and their perceived connection to the group's collective identity.

In Hengel's interpretation, Jesus, as a charismatic leader, was unique in that he

---

[83] Haslam et al., "Reconciling Identity Leadership and Leader Identity: A Dual-identity Framework," 6.
[84] Haslam et al., "Reconciling Identity Leadership and Leader Identity: A Dual-identity Framework," 10.
[85] Hengel, *The Charismatic Leader and his Followers*, 19-27.

broke with traditional norms through his divine authority and personal charisma, which attracted followers. His leadership was both effective and distinctive because his followers saw him as a model. The challenge, however, arises when charisma is framed as a "divine endorsement," which surpasses the typical leader-follower dynamic described by SIA to leadership.

At this point, Leader Identity Theory offers another layer of understanding by focusing on the leader's personal identity and their self-conception as a leader. Effective leadership, as this theory suggests, depends not only on how followers perceive the leader but also on the leader's own understanding of their role. According to Hengel, a charismatic leader like Jesus had a clear sense of his divine calling and leadership identity, which influenced how he interacted with his followers.[86] Hengel's portrayal of Jesus reflects a leader with a well-defined sense of self (the "me as a leader" concept) and uses this identity to inspire and guide followers. By overlooking these relational and group dynamics, Hengel's proposal misses critical elements essential to understanding how charismatic leadership functions within social groups.

The SIA researchers suggests that "leader-group identity fusion" plays a crucial role in leadership, where a strong personal identity as a leader is grounded in and emerges from a shared social identity with the ingroup. Unlike Hengel's focus on divine authority and personal charisma, SIA underscores the importance of the leader being perceived as "one of us," representing the group's shared values and identity. This approach also explains how leaders can drive change by strategically aligning themselves with the group's identity while gradually influencing its norms and values.

This fusion creates a deep connection between the leader's identity and the group's collective identity, fostering mutual trust and responsibility. Indeed, the Dual Leadership Framework provides a more comprehensive understanding of leadership by emphasizing the relational and collective aspects of leadership, while also highlighting the significance of the leader's personal leader identity. The strength of the Dual Leadership Framework lies in its ability to explain leadership within the context of social identity, group dynamics, and leader identity, which is essential for understanding how leaders like Paul could redefine norms and mobilize followers. By focusing on the significance of the group and the social context, SIA offers a better framework for analyzing leadership as an ongoing process of identity negotiation, rather than relying solely on individual charisma or divine endorsement.

---

[86] Hengel, *The Charismatic Leader and his Followers*, 65-66.

3. The Identity of Paul's Opponents
3.1. F.C. Baur

F.C. Baur argued that Paul's opponents likely linked to the Petrine group, who proclaimed different interpretations of Messianic salvation and Jewish doctrine within the Gentile mission.[87] Baur proposed that two camps emerged: the Petrine group, aligned with the Palestinian Judean church and committed to Mosaic law,[88] and the Pauline group, consisting of Gentiles and Hellenized Judeans, emphasizing liberty in Christ and a law: free gospel.[89] Baur contended that Petrine missionaries, sent from Jerusalem, sought to reassert Jewish doctrine and Peter's superiority over Paul in Corinth, undermining Paul's authority and teachings, sparking conflict within the community. As Baur argued, after Paul left Corinth, Petrine missionaries sent by Peter and the Jerusalem church aimed to reintroduce Jewish doctrine and assert Peter's superiority over Paul.[90]

Baur's theory seeks to fill gaps in understanding the Corinthians' conflict through historical reconstruction and textual analysis. He aimed to uncover the historical context of the Corinthian community, advancing scholarship by focusing on the rivalry between Peter and Paul, and between Judean and Gentile believers. However, Baur may have overstated the division between Peter and Paul, and his arguments lack clear textual support. Furthermore, he overlooked important themes such as "belonging to Christ" and Paul's role as the prototypical "servant of Christ," which are key to shaping the Corinthians' identity.

3.2. Ernst Käsemann

Ernst Käsemann, building on Baur's historical reconstruction approach, argued that the conflict in Corinth was driven by the influence of "pneumatic" Judaizers.[91] He suggested that Paul's term "superlative apostles" referred to the "Three Pillars" in Jerusalem, and that the "false apostles" in Corinth were their representatives.[92] These intruders aimed to undermine Paul's authority by using "worldly criteria" to present his leadership as inferior to that of the Jerusalem apostles. Käsemann emphasized Paul's use of the term πνεῦμα (spirit) and concluded that the opponents were "pneumatic"

---

[87] F.C. Baur, *The Apostle of Jesus Christ: His Life and Works, His Epistles and His Teaching* (Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishing, 1873), 270.

[88] Baur, *The Apostle of Jesus Christ*, 270.

[89] Baur, *The Apostle of Jesus Christ*, 270; Dieter Georgi, *The Opponents of Paul in Second Corinthians* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1987), 2-3.

[90] Baur, *The Apostle of Jesus Christ*, 277.

[91] Ernst Käsemann, *Die Legitimität Des Apostels: Eine Untersuchung zu II Korinther 10-13* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1956), 35-36.

[92] "Three Pillars" refers to apostle Peter, James, and John in Gal.9.

Judaizers who prioritized miraculous works and spiritual experiences, which Paul did not display, thereby weakening his standing in their eyes.[93] While Käsemann introduced new interpretive insights, his theory relies heavily on speculation, with limited textual evidence to fully support his conclusions about the "pneumatic" Judaizers.

3.3. Walter Schmithals

Schmithals deviated from previous research on 2 Corinthians, arguing that the conflict arose from the influence of Gnosticism rather than a rivalry between Petrine and Pauline parties, as Baur proposed.[94] In *Gnosticism in Corinth*, Schmithals contended that Gnostic apostles brought their teachings to the Corinthians, which Paul sought to address.[95] He supports his argument by analyzing terms like "wisdom" and "knowledge" from the Corinthian epistles, pre-Christian texts, and early Church Fathers, identifying Gnostic elements in 2 Corinthians.

Schmithals' theory has faced significant criticism. Margaret Thrall argued that his focus on terms like "pneuma" is too narrow, and she rejected the idea that Paul's opponents were Gnostic believers. Kee contended that Schmithals provided insufficient evidence to prove Gnostic soteriology and the differentiation between "gnostic" and "Gnosticism."[96] In our observation, Schmithals' proposal has overlooked the complexity of the Gnostic movement in antiquity. Scholars are certainly in line that dualism and dualistic ideology are the basic characteristics of gnostic thought, and it were present in the Greco-Roman world over a long period. Numerous biblical and extra-biblical texts attest to this observation.[97] If my observation is correct, Schmithals'

---

[93] Käsemann, *Die Legitimität Des Apostels*, 34.

[94] Walter Schmithals, *Gnosticism in Corinth*, trans. John E. Steely (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1971), 118-120.

[95] Gnosticism or Gnostic movement closely connects with the concept of Iranian and Greek philosophy, platonic and dualism in particular. The Church Fathers treat Gnosticism and its related movement as apostasy. Several features and motifs could be found in the gnostic system: 1. An anthropological motif is that human being by nature possesses certain knowledge (*gnosis*) to understand the divine world and to achieve moralistic life. This knowledge and "*pneuma*" (spirit) further enables a human to have redemption on their own. 2. Cosmological dualism constitutes a worldview to conceive the world from a dualistic perspective. The claim is that the world could be distinguished from the invisible and visible sphere. The former is formed by spiritual eternal ideas, and the latter is formed by transitory material. The gnostic negatively evaluate the visible world which is evil, on the contrary, they positively regard the invisible world as good. 3. Mythological motif is similar to dualism which explains the existence of human being, such as life-death; from above-from below; spirit-flesh; God-world in the light of dualistic perspective. For further detailed explanation, see Schmithals, *Gnosticism in Corinth*, 25-36; Kurt Rudolph, *Gnosis: The Nature and History of Gnosticism*, trans. Robert MaLachlan Wilson (New York: HarperSan Francisco, 1987).

[96] Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 933.

[97] Scholars attempt to indicate the parallel of dualistic perspective in Dead Sea Scroll and New Testament writings. It results in proving that dualism extensive employed in early Judaism and Christian literature. See James H. Charlesworth, "The Fourth Evangelist and the Dead Sea Scrolls: Assessing Trends over Nearly Sixty Years" in *John, Qumran, and the Dead Sea Scrolls : Sixty Years of Discovery and Debate*,

hypothesis seems to have overestimated the uniqueness of dualistic worldview and the phrasal similarity on 2 Corinthians.[98] In addition to this weakness, Schmithals' historical reconstruction method is based mainly on the primary data from the second century. It seems inappropriate to adopt this retrospective data to identify Paul's opponents who were preaching in the first half-century. This "anachronistic" approach makes Schmithals' theory insufficient and untenable.[99]

3.4. C.K. Barrett

Barrett argued that the conflict in Corinth arose from rivalries with Judaizers, whom he identified as the false apostles mentioned by Paul. These opponents, likely authorized by the Jerusalem "Pillars," carried letters of recommendation and sought to impose adherence to the Law on the Gentile churches, aiming to enforce obedience to Jerusalem leadership.[100] Barrett suggested that Paul's disregard of these letters, and the Mosaic Law fueled the conflict.[101] In addition, Corinth became a second mission field, attracting non-Pauline apostles and Judaizers who sought to correct Paul's teachings and undermine his authority.[102] While following Baur's theory, Barrett emphasizes that Paul's discussions of the Mosaic Law and the new covenant in 2 Corinthians suggest he was countering Judaizing opponents, though not always in the same way as in Galatia.[103] Recently, Esler has adopted a position aligned with Barrett's views, claiming that "We conclude, therefore, that the opponents Paul refers to in 2 Corinthians were naturally proud of their Judean ethnic identity but were also Christ-followers. They represented the same position that Paul had been combating his whole career, that non-Judean Christ followers needed to undergo ethnic translation and become Judeans. Paul resisted this as contrary to "the truth of the Gospel". [104]

---

ed. Mary L. Coloe, and Tom Thatcher (Atlanta: SBL, 2011); Jörg Frey, "Recent Perspectives on Johannine Dualism and its Background," in *Text, Thought, and Practice in Qumran and Early Christianity : Proceedings of the Ninth International Symposium of the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature*, ed. Daniel R. Schwartz, and Ruth A. Clements (Leiden: Brill, 2009), Harold W. Attridge, "The Gospel of John and the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Text, Thought, and Practice in Qumran and Early Christianity: Proceedings of the Ninth International Symposium of the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature*.

[98] Schmithals expands his Gnostics research to other Pauline writings, such as the epistles of Galatians, Philippians, Romans, and Thessalonian . His proposal, apart from the Corinthians epistles, also explores Paul's opponents in accordance with Gnostics features in other epistles. His conclusion is that those opponents belong to Gnostics system shown in respective epistles. See Schmithals, *Paul & the Gnostics*.

[99] Ben Witherington III, *Conflict and Community in Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans), 344.

[100] C.K. Barrett, *Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (London: A.&C. Black, 1973), 6.

[101] Barrett, *Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 7.

[102] Barrett, *Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 39-40.

[103] Barrett, *Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 40.

[104] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 279-280.

However, Barrett's theory has limitations. The text lacks sufficient evidence to prove that Paul's opponents aimed to control Corinth out of obedience to the Jerusalem "Pillars" or to challenge Paul's leadership. If they were Judaizers, concerns like circumcision and the observance of Mosaic Law, such as dietary laws, should be central, as seen in Galatians. Yet, outside of 2 Corinthians 3, Paul's discourse does not focus on the Law, making Barrett's claim of a conflict with Jerusalem's Judaizers less convincing.

3.5. Francis Watson

Watson argued that the conflict in 2 Corinthians stemmed from the intrusion of Apollos and his companions, challenging the traditional view that Paul's opponents were Judaizers or enthusiasts.[105] Using a textual analysis of 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, and Acts, Watson presented seven arguments for the strained relationships between Paul and Apollos. Two key points included Paul's anxiety about the orthodoxy of Apollos' teachings and his criticism of Paul's own lack of oratorical skills compared to Apollos' eloquence.[106] Watson identified four traits of Paul's opponents: they carried recommendation letters, likely from Apollos; they were less concerned with circumcision and food laws, distinguishing them from the Galatian opponents; they were skilled speakers; and Apollos' second visit to Corinth may have contributed to the conflict. Watson concluded that the "false apostles" bear significant similarities to Apollos.[107]

Watson's thesis departs from the mainstream view that Paul's opponents were Judaizers connected to the "Three Pillars" and suggests instead that the false apostles were Apollos and his coworkers. While his argument offers a plausible reconstruction of Paul's ministry using various texts, it has limitations. First, no Pauline or Lukan texts explicitly show tension between Paul and Apollos. The factionalism in 1 Corinthians 1 reflects rivalry within the congregation, not personal conflict between Paul, Apollos, and Cephas. Second, Paul refers to Apollos as a "brother" (1 Cor.16:12), indicating a cooperative relationship without doubts about his teachings.[108] Lastly, if Apollos were an opponent, it is unlikely Paul would omit his name, as he typically names adversaries, for example, in Galatians 2:11. These factors weaken Watson's argument and make it less convincing.

---

[105] Francis Watson, *Paul, Judaism and Gentiles: A Sociological Approach* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 1986), 81-82.

[106] Watson, *Paul, Judaism and Gentiles: A Sociological Approach*, 83.

[107] Watson, *Paul, Judaism and Gentiles: A Sociological Approach*, 84.

[108] Donald P. Ker, "Paul and Apollos-Colleagues or Rivals?" *JSNT 77* (2000) 75-97 and 94-95.

3.6. Bruce Winter

Winter argued that the conflict in Corinth arose from the rise of the Sophistic movement, with Paul being challenged by Sophistic Judaizers. Drawing on the works of Epictetus, Dio Chrysostom, Plutarch, and Philo, Winter defined sophists as professional rhetoricians who trained young elites in public speaking for political and professional advancement. [109] Winter paralleled Paul's opponents with the sophists, who, like those criticized by Philo, used rhetoric deceitfully for profit. Winter asserted that sophistic traditions had spread across the Mediterranean, influencing Paul's opponents, who judged him based on rhetorical skills, physical appearance, and financial independence. In 2 Corinthians 10-13, Paul's critics, trained rhetoricians, found him lacking as an orator, debater, and apostle according to worldly standards. Winter noted that Paul countered these accusations by emphasizing Christ's weakness, suffering, and crucifixion, interpreting his suffering as a reflection of Christ's triumph. Paul believed that through this divine weakness, God would bring strength and benefit to the Corinthians.[110]

Winter's thesis, which identifies Paul's opponents as Christians with a sophistic mentality,[111] has gained support due to his use of rich primary sources, making his argument seem plausible. However, his approach has significant limitations. Firstly, Winter focuses narrowly on 2 Corinthians 10-13, particularly 2 Corinthians 10:10, regarding accusations about Paul's lack of rhetorical skill.[112] While he compares this to extra-biblical texts, Winter overlooks other critical polemics in the same chapters, such as Paul's autobiography, suffering, and ecstatic discourses, which also shed light on the conflict. This narrow focus weakens his broader argument about Paul's opponents being sophists. Secondly, if sophists were central in Corinth, it would likely be mentioned in Acts, where Paul's confrontations with local ideologies, like in Athens

---

[109] Bruce Winter, *Philo and Paul among the Sophists: Alexandrian and Corinthian Responses to a Julio-Claudian Movement* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 3-4. Winter argued that this rhetorical skill "was seen as essential preparation for a young man wishing to enter into professional and political life". For a detailed discussion, see *Philo and Paul among the Sophists*, 5. Winter contended that Philo's work was a case to uncover his objection to the Alexandrian sophist. Philo objected to using paideia to gain retail knowledge and profit. Philo also criticized the sophists as deceitful because of their play in the rhetoric. See *Philo and Paul among the Sophists*, 81-89.

[110] Winter, *Philo and Paul among the Sophists*, 237.

[111] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 45-46; Keener, *1-2 Corinthians*, 218; Witherington III, *Conflict and Community in Corinth*, 348-349.

[112] Winter's work only grounds on 2 Cor.10:10, 11:6, and 12:16, particularly his argument is central to interpreting several words and phrases from such texts. These words seem to be coupled with sophistic ideology and traits. At this point, Winter insists on connecting the Pauline discourse and the extra-biblical documents. This is the basis to prove that his observation is correct. See Winter, *Philo and Paul among the Sophists: Alexandrian and Corinthian Responses to a Julio-Claudian Movement*, 204.

and Ephesus, are highlighted. Yet, Acts offers no account of Paul clashing with sophists or Christians with sophistic tendencies during his time in Corinth, raising doubts about Winter's theory. Thirdly, Paul mentions that his opponents carried recommendation letters, likely from authoritative figures. Winter's reliance on Roman sources, excluding Philo, also limits his ability to fully explain the Judean world's religious dynamics.[113] While Winter's thesis offers fascinating insights, it fails to provide a clear and comprehensive explanation of who Paul's opponents were.

In summary, identifying Paul's opponents in 2 Corinthians remains unresolved, with scholars proposing various theories to address this ambiguity.[114] Over recent decades, the dominant approach in 2 Corinthians scholarship has been historical reconstruction, which seeks to fill gaps in the historical context through hypotheses and thorough textual analysis. No scholarly consensus has been reached.[115] The limitation of the historical reconstruction method is that it often relies on speculative connections and incomplete data, making it difficult to draw definitive conclusions about Paul's opponents solely from the available texts.

3.7 The Rhetorical Functions of Paul's Opponents

Applying SIA to leadership and leader identity theory offers a new perspective on understanding the identity of Paul's opponents. In agreement with Barrett and Esler, we identify these opponents as the Judaizers. As Carson correctly observed, the Palestinian Judaizers could also be Hellenized and influenced by Hellenistic education.[116] Consequently, this outgroup is capable of delivering impressive speeches and possessing training in eloquence.[117] Rather than merely focusing on the traditional question of who they are, this research aims to examine how Paul strategically employs his opponents to solidify the ingroup identity of the Corinthians while undermining their sense of identity certainty. As Hogg has suggested, identity formation can be influenced by strategies that polarize or radicalize the ingroup in opposition to a

---

[113] Winter, *Philo and Paul among the Sophists: Alexandrian and Corinthian Responses to a Julio-Claudian Movement*, 224-225.

[114] Clair Mesick, *Paul and his Rivals: Apostleship and Antagonism in the Corinthian Correspondence* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2024); Emma Louise Parker, *The Importance of Outsiders to Pauline Communities: Opinion, Reputation and Mission* (London: T&T Clark, 2024); Thomas Blanton IV, "Spirit and covenant renewal: a theologoumenon of Paul's opponents in 2 Corinthians," 129-151; Carson, *A Model of Christian Maturity*, 53-64; Stegman, *The Character of Jesus*, 25-42; David R. Hall, *The Unity of the Corinthian Correspondence*, 129-144; Jerry L. Sumney, *Servants of Satan, False Brothers, and Other Opponents of Paul* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 1999).

[115] Sumney，*Identify Paul's Opponents: The Question of Method in 2 Corinthians*, 9.

[116] Carson, *A Model of Christian Maturity*, 59.

[117] For a detailed discussion concerning the identity of Paul's opponents, see Chapter Nine, pages 203 and 207.

perceived "evil" outgroup. Leaders may also intensify or create intergroup conflict to achieve this objective.[118]

This inquiry is significant as it introduces a new question: how can the outgroup's individual traits and collective identity be analyzed to understand the conflict that leads Paul to exert his influence over the Corinthians strategically? Recently, Emma L. Parker rightly notes that "It is apparent that the concern for what outsiders think has not been a major focus in scholarship, and studies of Paul or his ethics 'have largely neglected the theme of views of outsiders' (Horrell 2016:271)."[119] Thus, she delves into "assess[ing] the importance of the outsider in the formation, maintenance, and growth of the faith community. To help with this exploration, it would be useful to have a greater understanding of groups, boundaries and relating across these boundaries."[120]

However, Parker's work does not further explore 2 Corinthians to investigate the rhetorical functions of Paul's opponents related to identity formation. This omission leaves a gap in understanding how Paul's confrontation with these opponents shapes the social identity within the Corinthian community. This limitation results in a missed opportunity to explore how Paul's rhetoric creates a sense of crisis that he then resolves by re-establishing his authority and solidifying the group's identity around him.

Concerning the letters of recommendation (2 Cor.10:12; 3:1), these opponents may have had external approval from other Christ-following communities or leaders, which could have given them legitimacy to exercise leadership among the Corinthians. However, the Corinthians may not have immediately treated them as outgroup members, especially if they brought letters from respected authorities. Paul's challenge here is to "outgroup" by showing their lack of true divine authority or commission. Paul emphasizes his own direct divine commissioning as a counterpoint to their reliance on human commendation. His aim may be to establish that divine authority should outweigh human approval, casting doubt on the opponents' credentials (2 Cor.10:12-18).

According to SIA to leadership, firstly, as Identity Validation Theory suggests, "a person's sense of who they are is confirmed, typically by external sources of information."[121] In this sense, our identities are largely shaped by the groups we

---

[118] Hogg, "A Social Identity Theory to Leadership," 191.

[119] Parker, *The Importance of Outsiders to Pauline Communities*, 6.

[120] Parker, *The Importance of Outsiders to Pauline Communities*, 7.

[121] Choi, and Hogg, "Who Do You Think You Are? Ingroup and Outgroup Sources of Identity Validation," 2.

associate with, and identity validation often happens when an individual is acknowledged and accepted as part of their ingroup. Paul's emphasis on his divine commissioning (2 Cor.10:8; 12:1-12; 13:10) serves as a way to position himself as uniquely legitimate, despite the opponents having human recommendations. This rhetorical move allows Paul to claim a higher form of authority than his opponents, which derives directly from God rather than from human institutions. On the other hand, Paul acknowledges the importance of external warrant, but he seeks to redefine the terms. Whereas his opponents rely on human commendation from other Christ-following communities, Paul insists that his external warrant comes from divine commissioning. Paul attempts to reshape the criteria by which leadership and authority are recognized within the community.

In the views of Paul's opponents, Paul was seen as an illegitimate leader because he lacked formal recommendation letters from other Christ-following communities, which the Corinthians expected to validate his leadership. According to Expectation States Theory, a leader's influence is based on specific status characteristics, such as task-related skills or expertise, that qualify them to lead the group. These well-defined attributes make someone appear well-suited to perform the group's tasks. In 2 Corinthians 10-13, Paul appears to have failed to meet the expectations of his followers because other authoritative leaders do not approve of his leadership. In Paul's case, the lack of formal credentials or recommendation letters may have caused his followers to perceive him as lacking the necessary qualifications for leadership.[122]

In contrast, Paul's opponents presented themselves as influential leaders by emphasizing their identity as "belonging to Christ" (2 Cor.10:7) and "servants of Christ" (2 Cor.11:23). They embodied leadership traits such as delivering impressive speeches (2 Cor.10:10), showing success in their work (2 Cor.10:12), accepting financial support (2 Cor.11:7; 12:16), and performing signs and wonders (2 Cor.12:12). This outgroup viewed themselves as well-qualified leaders capable of guiding the Corinthians in their faith because their leadership styles matched such identity descriptors.

Leader identity theory suggests that adopting a leader identity can be the foundation for key meta-competencies, such as self-awareness, adaptability, and a strong drive for achievement. These higher-order competencies are partly driven by leaders' desire to differentiate themselves from others, elevate their status, and position

---

[122] Barreto, and Hogg, "Influence and Leadership in Small Groups: Impact of Group Prototypicality, Social Status, and Task Competence," 2.

themselves above potential followers.[123] More importantly, followers are inclined to follow highly prototypical leaders, as these leaders validate their ingroup identity. In the case of Paul's opponents, clear and distinct identity markers could attract the Corinthians to follow them. It is, therefore, hypothesized that individuals feel more validated by ingroup members who are highly prototypical than by those who are less prototypical, making Paul's opponents potentially more appealing to the Corinthians as leaders.[124] They used these leadership prototypes in Paul's claims-fleshly standards (2 Cor.10:2; κατὰ σάρκα περιπατοῦντας) to assess Paul and concluded that he lacked the necessary competencies to lead the Corinthians effectively.

Thirdly, according to SIA to leadership, when a leader embodies the ideal prototype of both ingroup members and leaders, it fosters trust between the leader and followers. This trust is crucial for establishing social influence, which motivates group members to change and follow the leader. This concept helps explain why the Corinthians were more inclined to follow Paul's opponents rather than Paul. On one hand, Paul's opponents aligned with the prevailing Greco-Roman ideals of leadership, where effective leaders were expected to deliver messages eloquently. On the other hand, their successful work in preaching the gospel in Corinth brought them honour, further reinforcing their leadership in the eyes of the Corinthians (2 Cor.10:12). In contrast, Paul's leadership emphasized weakness, suffering, and humility, making it appear less prototypical to the Corinthians when compared to the more charismatic and authoritative approach of his opponents.

In short, Paul uses a combination of personal authority, rhetorical skill, and theological argument to shift the Corinthian perception of who truly belongs in the "ingroup" of the Christ-following community. Paul's portrayal of his opponents as outgroup is rooted in their different teachings, their reliance on human commendation, and their failure to live up to the authentic prototypical leadership model that Paul claims for himself. Given the fact that Paul's opponents viewed him as a non-prototypical leader due to his lack of eloquence and unimpressive physical presence (2 Cor.10:10). In their perception, Paul's failure to embody the societal expectations of a leader is marked by strength and rhetorical skill. They also question Paul's ability to lead the Corinthians. Unlike Paul, who emphasized humility, weakness, and suffering, his rivals promoted a more triumphal leadership model. These interlopers, therefore, challenged

---

[123] Haslam et al., "Reconciling Identity Leadership and Leader Identity: A Dual-identity Framework," 5.
[124] Choi, and Hogg, "Who Do You Think You Are? Ingroup and Outgroup Sources of Identity Validation," 3.

the authenticity and effectiveness of Paul's leadership, further threatening the Corinthians' understanding of what constitutes true leadership. This ongoing critique from Paul's opponents only intensified the community's struggle for identity and leadership.

To recapitulate, this dissertation aims to address gaps in the existing scholarship by providing a comprehensive analysis of Paul's leadership and its impact on the identity construction of the Corinthian community. Employing the SIA to leadership, particularly Haslam et al.'s "Reconciling Identity Leadership and Leader Identity: A Dual-Identity Framework", [125] we offer a fresh perspective on how leaders manage their identity in relation to their group.

Additionally, by comparing Paul's leadership with that of the Qumran community, Hillel's group, and Greco-Roman associations, we reveal the unique aspects of Paul's approach that reinforced the Corinthians' identity. This comparative analysis highlights how Paul's leadership model not only addressed immediate conflicts but also played a transformative role in shaping the collective identity of the Corinthians.

---

[125] Haslam et al., "Reconciling Identity Leadership and Leader Identity: A Dual-Identity Framework".

Chapter Three: The Social Identity Approach to Leadership

The above scholarly works, upon critical examination, fall short of providing a fully exegetical analysis of Paul's leadership and the Corinthians' identity formation within 2 Corinthians 10-13. In examining Paul's leadership and its impact on identity formation, employing an appropriate interpretative lens to guide exegetical analysis is crucial. Despite Barentsen's attempts to use SIMOL as an analytical tool to scrutinize the features of Paul's leading style, his work lacks a robust exegetical reading of specific Pauline texts. While Esler's work is valuable, richer interpretive results can be achieved by conducting a more detailed analysis of the text, incorporating the latest findings from the SIA into leadership and comparing them with ancient leadership models.

In this dissertation, the interpretive lens selected is the comparative method and a Social Identity Approach (SIA) to leadership. However, that forms one reach of the larger enterprise of social-scientific interpretation, so before proceeding to the SIA, it will be worthwhile to set out the foundations and nature of social-scientific interpretation.

1. An Overview of Social Scientific Methods in New Testament Interpretation

The SIA to leadership is one of the areas embraced within the social-scientific biblical interpretation.[126] In the 1960s, a seminal work, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*, was published, fundamentally transforming our understanding of the relationship between social context and human behaviour. Authored by Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, this work pointed out that "The sociology of knowledge understands human reality as socially constructed reality." This means the society itself is "Made by men, inhabited by men, and, in turn, making men, in an ongoing historical process."[127] They also proposed that "Man's self-production is always, and of necessity, a social enterprise, men together produce a human environment, with the totality of its socio-cultural and psychological formations."[128] These groundbreaking perspectives shed new light on how societies are shaped and formed. Berger and Luckmann's contributions paved the way for biblical scholars to examine biblical documents through the lens of sociological knowledge.[129] Motivated

---

[126] Katja Kujanpää, "Paul and the Author of 1 Clement as Entrepreneurs of Identity in Corinthian Crises of Leadership," *JSNT* 44.3 (2022): 369-370; Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 31.

[127] Peter L. Berger, and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (London: Penguin, 1966), 210-211.

[128] Berger, and Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*, 67.

[129] Esler demonstrated how to adopt the perspectives of Berger and Luckmann, to interpret the Lucan-Act text. See Philip F. Esler, *Community and Gospel in Luke-Acts: The Social and Political Motivations*

by this paradigm shift, numerous biblical scholars began to integrate social-scientific methods to search for the scriptures' original meaning, the contexts of the primary readers, and the dialectical relationship between these two.[130] Scholars believed that the social phenomena shown within biblical texts could be methodically described, conceptualized, analyzed, and elucidated through the application of social-scientific theories.

In *Kingdom and the Community: The Social World of Early Christianity*, John Gager adeptly employed these social scientific concepts to investigate the ideology of the early Christ-followers.[131] Gager argued, "This is a paradigm shift as scholars are dissatisfied with the traditional biblical studies which overly concentrate on the reconstruction of the historical world and theological concerns."[132] In 1972, Wayne A Meeks published a research paper, entitled *The Man from Heaven in Johannine Sectarianism*, suggesting "For one's 'world' in the sociology of knowledge is understood as the symbolic universe within which one functions, which has "Objectivity" because it is constantly reinforced by the structures of the society to which it is specific."[133] Meeks attempted to employ sociological perspectives, mainly drawing on the views of Berger and Luckmann, to examine The Fourth Gospel.

In 1983, Meeks significantly contributed to the field with his influential book, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul*. His focus was surveying social stratification and the formation of *Ekklesia*, elucidating how these elements shaped Pauline Christianity in the first century.[134] Meeks argued that the social world of early Christianity refers to "The world as they (the first urban Christians) perceived it and to which they gave form and significance through their special language and other meaningful actions."[135] As Tuckett rightly observed, there was an increasing awareness

---

of Lucan Theology (Cambridge: CUP, 1987), 16-23.

[130] John H. Elliott, "On Wooing Crocodiles for Fun and Profit: Confessions of an Intact Admirer," in *Social Scientific Models for Interpreting the Bible: Essays by the Context Group in Honor of Bruce J. Malina*, ed. John J, Pilch (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 10.

[131] John G. Gager, *Kingdom and Community: The Social World of Early Christianity* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1975), 10.

[132] Gager, *Kingdom and Community: The Social World of Early Christianity*, 3-4; Christopher Tuckett, *Reading the New Testament: Method and Interpretation* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 136; Gager stressed that there are number of methodological problems of the biblical interpretation models, see *Kingdom and Community: The Social World of Early Christianity*, 13-14; The discussion also see Sindo, *The Interrelationship between Leadership and Identity Formation in the Corinthian Correspondence: A Study of 1 Corinthians 1-4*, 30-31.

[133] Wayne A. Meeks, "The Man from Heaven in Johannine Sectarianism," *JBL* 91.1 (1972): 72.

[134] Wayne A. Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul*, 2nd ed., (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 8.

[135] Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul*, 8. Meeks' notion draws from the work of Berger and Luckmann, see Notes, 198.

of the undervaluation of the social world and social perceptions of the early Christ-followers in previous scholarship. Therefore, many biblical scholars have turned to applying the concepts drawn from sociology to examine the social contexts of early Christianity.[136]

During the early 1990s, a group of biblical scholars established "the Context Group: Project on the Bible in its Cultural Environment", and a core objective of this working group was to employ broad social scientific models to interpret the biblical texts.[137] Their primary concern was to inquire into the original social context of the primary readers and how it influenced the textual interpretation.[138] According to Malina, the social-scientific methods were "[An] attempt to understand New Testament writings using the perspectives of social history and the methods of social and cultural anthropology.[139] Esler held a similar position, arguing that "The New Testament writings manifest a complex interpenetration of society and Gospel, context and kerygma ('the proclamation of faith'), and that we cannot hope to understand either without an appropriate methodology for dealing with the social side."[140]

In the 1980s and 1990s, Elliott played a pivotal role in advancing New Testament research by emphasizing the significance of incorporating social-scientific methods in biblical interpretation.[141] Elliott suggested that such an interpretative approach espoused various sociological concepts to describe and explain the social phenomenon in ancient context. The main goal was to augment the traditional historical-critical method and provide a more profound understanding of how early Christ-followers

---

[136] Christopher Tuckett, *Reading the New Testament: Method and Interpretation* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 137.

[137] Philip F. Esler, "The Context Group Project: An Autobiographical Account," in *Anthropology and Biblical Studies: Avenues of Research*, ed. Mario Aguilar and Louise Lawrence (Leiden: Deo Pub., 2004), 49-52.

[138] The Social-scientific scholars formed a "Context Group: Project on the Bible in its Cultural Environment" in the 1990s. Different scholars adopted social scientific methods to carry out their interpretation projects. See John H. Elliott, "From Social Description to Social-Scientific Criticism. The History of a Society of Biblical Literature Section 1973--2005," *BTB* 38.1 (2008): 26-30; Elliott, "Social-scientific Criticism: Perspective, Process and Payoff: Evil Eye Accusation at Galatia as Illustration of the Method," *HTS* 67.1 (2011): 9; James D. Dvorak, "John H. Elliott's Social-Scientific Criticism," *TRINJ* 28 (2007): 251-278.

[139] Bruce J. Malina, "Social Science Criticism," in *Searching for Meaning: An Introduction to Interpreting the New Testament*, ed. Paula Gooder (Kentucky: John Knox Press, 2009), 13.

[140] Philip F. Esler, *The First Christians in their Social Worlds: Social-Scientific Approaches to the New Testament Interpretation* (London: Routledge, 1994), 2.

[141] Elliott published, "Social-scientific Criticism of the New Testament and its Social World," *Semeia* 35 (1986); *A Home for the Homeless: A Social-Scientific Criticism of 1 Peter, Its Situation and Strategy* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1990); *Social-scientific Criticism of the New Testament: An Introduction* (London: SPCK, 1995). These notable works provide comprehensive explanations and solid demonstrations of applying the social-scientific methods in New Testament research.

interpreted and understood the biblical documents.[142] This analytical framework serves as a valuable tool for contemporary interpreters, enabling a richer understanding of the biblical significance inherent in the texts.[143]

The SIA to leadership forms one branch of the sizeable interpretative project that is labelled as 'social-scientific', the nature of which is worth briefly rehearsing here. The social-scientific method, as Esler suggests, "is a method for interpreting the Bible that involves the explicit application of ideas, perspectives and models from the social sciences primarily to assist in exploring the historical dimensions of biblical texts."[144] This specific analytical framework, applied within the broad historical-critical method, allows contemporary interpreters to pose fresh inquiries to biblical data and situate the answers in a socially realistic framework.

As Elliott argued, the biblical text serves as "a means of social communication and interaction and to prompt social action on the part of its targeted audience. Exegesis requires a social-scientific dimension since the biblical texts are both records and products of such sociality." [145] Tellbe held the same position, suggesting that "I regard the social sciences as heuristic devices that can help interpreters pay attention to social aspects and processes of identity formation in the texts. While the general social theories cannot answer specific historical questions, they can help an interpreter pay attention to social processes and raise interesting questions about the historical material under investigation."[146]

Thus, theories, models, and social science research allow modern interpreters to understand the text better. They not only facilitate the resolution of questions raised by the text within a defined theoretical premise but also lead to a novel comprehension of the content within the text. Given this perspective, an exegetical analysis, grounded in a solid interpretive framework, is crucial for a comprehensive understanding of Paul's

---

[142] Elliott's analysis consists of four key procedures: data collection from the texts, framing hypotheses about social phenomena, analyzing the data considering social-scientific theory, and explaining, interpreting, and testing the data through the theory. This approach received positive recognition for its systematic textual analysis and for offering various analytical frameworks to bridge the historical and cultural gap between ancient readers and modern interpreters.

[143] Gijsbert van Appeldoorn, "Group Formative Processes in 2 Cor 6: 14–7:1," *Religions* 15.5 (2024): 1-2; Mikael Tellbe, *Christ-Believers in Ephesus: A Textual Analysis of Early Christian Identity Formation in a Local Perspective* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 138; John H. Elliott, "From Social Description to Social-Scientific Criticism. The History of a Society of Biblical Literature Section 1973--2005," *BTB* 38.1 (2008): 30.

[144] Philip F. Esler, "Social-Scientific Criticism," in *New Cambridge Companion to Biblical Interpretation*, ed. Ian Boxall and Bradley C. Gregory (Cambridge: CUP, 2021).

[145] John H. Elliott, "Social-Scientific Criticism: Perspective, Process and Payoff. Evil Eye Accusation at Galatia as Illustration of the Method," *HTS Teologiese Studies* 67.1 (2011): 1.

[146] Tellbe, *Christ-Believers in Ephesus: A Textual Analysis of Early Christian Identity Formation in a Local Perspective*, 138.

leadership and its influence on shaping the Corinthians' identity within 2 Corinthians 10-13.

The application of social-scientific methods proves valuable for two main reasons. Firstly, as Elliott mentioned, these methods offer a set of interpretative perspectives by drawing on various social science disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, social psychology, and archaeology. This enables the researchers to reconstruct the primary social context of the text, facilitating a deeper understanding of the social perceptions held by the early Christ-followers.[147]

Secondly, social-scientific methods help prevent anachronistic and ethnocentric interpretations of the text.[148] They prevent modern readers from misconstruing ancient biblical documents through the lens of their contemporary worldviews. This averts the misunderstandings and distortions of the text's meaning to its first audience. Thus, social-scientific methods provide a heuristic approach that assists biblical researchers in unearthing the original meaning and core message embedded within the text.

Indeed, the social-scientific method offers a pathway to a more profound understanding of the biblical texts. It emphasizes the crucial role of the primary readers' social location and cultural dimensions in the text's analysis. The biblical texts, extra-biblical documents, and archaeological discoveries have merged as vital resources for conducting thorough textual analysis. This approach enables scholars to propose more plausible theses for reconstructing the primary rhetorical function of the text. It is worth noting, however, that some scholars question the suitability of applying social-scientific methods to analyze the historical events in the biblical documents.[149] Although social-

---

[147] Elliott, *Social-Scientific Criticism of the New Testament: An Introduction*, 7.

[148] Elliott, *Social-Scientific Criticism of the New Testament: An Introduction*, 11.

[149] The application of social-scientific methods to New Testament interpretation was a subject of fierce debate amongst scholars. See Bruce J. Malina, "The Social Sciences and Biblical Interpretation," *Union Seminary Review* 36.3 (1982): 229-242; Esler, *The First Christians in Their Social World: Social-scientific Approach to the New Testament Interpretation* (London: Routledge, 1994), 3; Bernard O. Ukwuegbu, *The Emergence of Christian Identity in Paul's Letter to the Galatians: A Social-Scientific Investigation into the Root Causes for the Parting of the Way between Christianity and Judaism* (Bonn: Arbeiten zur Interkulturalität, 2003), 48-53; John H. Elliott, "From Social Description to Social-Scientific Criticism. The History of a Society of Biblical Literature Section 1973--2005," *BTB* 38.1 (2008): 31; Petri Luomanen, "The Sociology of Knowledge, the Social Identity Approach and the Cognitive Science of Religion," in *Explaining Christian Origins and Early Judaism*, eds. Petri Luomanen, Ilkka Pyysiäinen, and Risto Uro (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 204-208; J. Brian Tucker, *Remain Your Call: Paul and the Continuation of Social Identities in 1 Corinthians* (Oregon: Pickwick Publishing, 2011), 10-28; J. Brian Tucker, *You Belong to Christ* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2011), 36-40; Paul A. Himes, "First Peter's Identity Theology and the Community of Faith: A Test-case in How Social Scientific Criticism Can Assist with Theological Ethics via Biblical Theology," *EQ* 89.2 (2018): 115-117. However, scholars, such as E. A. Judge, "The Social Identity of the First Christians: A Question of Method in Religious History," *Journal of Religious History* (1980); Carolyn Osiek, "The Social Sciences and the Second Testament: Problems and Challenges," *BTB* 22 (1992): 89-92; David G. Horrell, "Models and Methods in Social-Scientific Interpretation: A Response To Philip Esler," *JSNT* 78 (2000): 83-105;

scientific interpretation attracted criticisms in the early decades of its use, as mentioned above, these challenges elicited a vigorous defence from its proponents, [150] including Gager,[151] Meeks,[152] Elliott,[153] and Esler,[154] and it is now a settled and accepted area of biblical interpretation.

2. The Comparative Method

In 1987, Philip Esler first articulated to the nature of the comparative method into New Testament studies.[155] He argued that this method holds promise, as it can both validate hypotheses and "generate insights while fostering sociological imagination."[156] Esler suggested that a comparison process relies on identifying similarities and differences, as comparing identical or distinct things would be pointless.[157] Based on Maurice Duverger's notion, Esler proposed the concept of "close" and "distant" comparisons. Close comparisons were conducted between phenomena that were close in time and culture. Since similarities were expected, the differences became the most compelling aspects. The objective is to compare two social phenomena with as many characteristics as possible and then explore their differences.[158] It enabled a detailed analysis of a specific variable, while other contextual factors remained constant. In contrast, distant

---

Kenneth Berding, "The Hermeneutical Framework of Social-Scientific Criticism: How Much can Evangelicals Get Involved," *EQ* 75.1 (2003): 17-18; William S. Campbell, "The Sociological Studies of the New Testament: Promise and Problems," *Journal of Beliefs and Values: Studies in Religion and Education* (2006): 3-4; James G. Crossley, *Reading the New Testament: Contemporary Approaches* (London: Routledge, 2010), 26-31. Their critics raised three main objections to the use of such methods. Firstly, they contended that the social scientific methods were prone to reductionism. Critics claimed that these approaches tended to oversimplify complex social phenomena, potentially reducing multifaceted dynamics to overly simplistic explanations. Secondly, scholars criticized the social-scientific methods, which underestimated the ethnic, socio-cultural, and historical differences present in the texts. Such methods allegedly forced the biblical data to fit into a preset theory and hypothesis. Lastly, the critics argued that the social-scientific methods' overemphasized the issue of determinism. This critique suggested that some social-scientific interpreters over-emphasized the importance of the socio-cultural aspects of the primary readers, oversimplifying and generalizing the complexity and dynamism of human beings and societal structures.

[150] Gager, *Kingdom and Community: The Social World of Early Christianity*; Malina, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology*; Elliott, *A Home for the Homeless*, 102. Elliot summarized the current works using the social-scientific biblical interpretation; Wayne A. Meeks, "Reflection on an Era," in *Search of the Early Christians Selected Essays: Wayne A. Meeks*, ed. Allen R. Hilton and H. Gregory Snyder (New Heaven: Yale University Press, 2002), XXVI; Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 21-22; Esler, *Sex, Wives, and Warriors: Reading Old Testament Narrative with its Ancient Audience* (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2011), 39-50.

[151] Gager mainly investigates the successful spreading of the early Christ movement in the first century. He adopts the sociological perspective to analyze the relationship between religion and the social world. He generally regards the early Christ-following movement as a kind of New Religious movement. The early Christ movement faced numerous challenges, either external or internal. However, its unique ethics and a strong sense of belonging were critical factors in overcoming those challenges. They resulted in establishing a faithful Christ-following community. See Gager, *Kingdom and Community*.

[152] Meeks, *The First Urban Christians*; "The Man from Heaven in Johannine Sectarianism," 44-72.

[153] Elliott, *A Home for the Homeless*.

[154] For a detailed discussion, see Esler, *2 Corinthians*; *Conflicts and Identity in Romans*; *Galatians*; *Community and the Gospel in Luke-Acts: The Social and Political Motivations of Lucan Theology*.

[155] Esler, *Community and Gospel in Luke-Acts*, 9-12.

[156] Esler, *Community and Gospel in Luke-Acts*, 9-10.

[157] Esler, *Community and Gospel in Luke-Acts*, 10.

[158] Esler, *Community and Gospel in Luke-Acts*, 10-11.

comparisons involve examining phenomena significantly separated by time or cultural differences. They uncover similarities in these cases since differences were anticipated. The objective was to develop new hypotheses and raise new questions about the data, using comparison to "spark the insight that drives discovery."[159] Distant comparisons, on the other hand, serve to examine a historical phenomenon alongside either contemporary ethnographic data or modern social-scientific models, typologies, or theories.[160]

Esler has recently revisited using comparisons in biblical interpretation, suggesting that this method enables the interpreters to pose new questions about ancient data. In addition, comparisons help us to interpret the answers (after analyzing the evidence) within new frameworks of understanding. [161] More recently, John Kloppenborg, independently of Esler's earlier discussion, has aptly outlined the benefits of comparison in New Testament exegesis. As he suggested, "Comparison is a very particular type of scholarly enterprise. Setting two or more objects side by side and identifying similarities and differences is a heuristic tool for creating interpretive possibilities about the lesser known phenomenon."[162] He pointed out, "Comparison of course has been used widely in historiography, where it is usually invoked to identify analogies, parallel developments, contrasting developments, common patterns, anomalous features, and sometimes influences and causal relationships.[163]

Kloppenborg's own project, of comparing the Christ-group of the first century C.E. with Greco-Roman voluntary associations, is an example of close comparison as just described. He noted that by employing such comparisons, we can better distinguish the unique aspects of Paul's leadership within the broader context of the Mediterranean world. Scholars, including Bruce Winter, [164] Troels Engberg-Pedersen, [165] John Kloppenborg, [166] and Richard Last [167] have widely acknowledged and utilized the comparative method, in each case involving close comparisons, for its effectiveness in highlighting unique features by placing them alongside broader, recognizable patterns. The strength of close comparison is its capacity to reveal similarities and differences that might otherwise be overlooked when examining a single group from the same period and broader social context in isolation. Examining how leadership functioned

---

[159] Esler, *Community and Gospel in Luke-Acts*, 10.
[160] Esler, *Community and Gospel in Luke-Acts*, 11.
[161] Esler, "Social-Scientific Criticism," in *New Cambridge Companion to Biblical Interpretation*, 129-149.
[162] Kloppenborg, *Christ's Associations: Connecting and Belonging in the Ancient City*, 5.
[163] Kloppenborg, "Disciplined Exaggeration: The Heuristics of Comparison in Biblical Studies," *Novum Testamentum* 59.4 (2017): 392-393.
[164] Winter, *Philo and Paul among the Sophists*.
[165] Troels Engberg-Pedersen, "The Relationship with Others: Similarities and Differences between Paul and Stoicism," *ZNW* 96 (2005): 35-60.
[166] Kloppenborg, *Christ's Associations*.
[167] Richard Last, *The Pauline Church and the Corinthian Ekklēsia: Greco-Roman Associations in Comparative Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

across various ancient social groups, such as Qumran's communities, Hillel's group, and Greco-Roman associations, provides comparators allowing us to discern the nuances of Paul's leadership model. For example, Paul's use of divine-endorsed authority and punishment with identity formation can be compared with the practices of other ancient leaders in similar cultural and social settings. This makes our research not merely an exploration of the leadership model in the early Christ-following communities but a window into the complex interplay between emerging Christ-followers and the dominant cultural norms of the ancient world.

However, as well as employing this form of close comparison, this research utilizes a socio-scientific approach that embraces 'distant comparison', as described above, to bring social-scientific theory into fruitful engagement with the ancient data. The theory chosen here is SIA to leadership, which now embraces the Leader Identity theory since 2022 to investigate the uniqueness of Paul's leadership. This interpretative approach shares with the "social history" approach (described below) a close focus on the relevant data from the ancient world as the basis for understanding the essential historical and cultural context for examining Paul's leadership.[168] For instance, the culture of making honour-claims. On the other hand, as Esler suggested, social theory can offer analytical tools and a rich conceptual framework for explaining ancient social culture. For example, Paul imbues a new meaning to making an honour claim in 2 Corinthians 10:17-18. This case shows that the socio-scientific interpretation enables us to reach a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics at play in Paul's leadership in relation to the Corinthians' identity formation.

The significant contribution of this dissertation is its integration of both distant and close comparisons to explore the distinctiveness of Paul's leadership. The distant comparison employs social identity theory to generate new questions for the text and to enhance better understanding and explanation of the answers that emerge. The close comparison, which allows for a more focused analytical process, examines Pauline leadership alongside three contemporaneous and culturally proximate phenomena: the leadership at Qumran, among the followers of Hillel, and within Greco-Roman associations. What further sharpens the comparability between Pauline leadership and these three groups is that they are all analyzed through the lens of social identity theory. Thus, this theory offers a multidimensional understanding of Pauline leadership. It allows us to situate Paul within his ancient social context and dissect the deeper social dynamics of leadership, identity, and group behaviour.

Lastly, the use of social-scientific perspectives and concepts sets apart the method of biblical interpretation used in this dissertation from a social history approach. Although both approaches rely on the same existing data from the ancient Near Eastern and Greco-Roman worlds, the former views social-scientific perspectives as highly

---

[168] Esler, *Community and Gospel in Luke-Acts*, 13-14.

valuable, while the latter deems them unnecessary. The fundamental differences between these views were outlined in Esler's 1987 critique of the social history approach advocated by the renowned historian Edward Judge.[169] While tensions persist, the debate has become attenuated over time, as scholars once critical of social-scientific methods have become more receptive to their merits and social-scientific interpreters being more cautious about applying modern models to ancient data. In 2021, Esler felt the need to challenge the prominent Pauline scholar John Barclay for his scepticism towards social identity theory—the central theory from the social sciences used in this dissertation. In doing so, Esler offered a thorough defence of social identity theory, which is also embraced in this research.[170]

3. The Integration of the SIA to Leadership into Current Research

Despite numerous scholars actively utilizing diverse social-scientific methods to scrutinize Paul's leadership, insufficient attention has been dedicated to analyzing effective leadership within the early Christ-following communities since the 1980s. The mid-1990s marked a significant turning point as Esler innovatively employed social identity concepts to investigate the connections and interaction between Paul and identity formation within the early Christian communities.[171]

Following Esler's lead, subsequent scholars have widely adopted the SIA framework in their research, showing a keen interest in explaining the connection between biblical texts and identity formation.[172] These scholars agreed that applying the SIA to leadership permits biblical researchers to examine the social values and norms associated with leadership in the Mediterranean Basin. They aim to explore the interplay between group dynamics and the shaping of the identity of the early Corinthian Christ-followers.[173] Central to this investigation lies theories such as Henri

---

[169] Esler, *Community and Gospel in Luke-Acts*, 14-15.

[170] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 20-29.

[171] Esler, *Conflict and Identity in Romans*; *Galatians*, 1998.

[172] The recent SIA works are as follows. Emma L. Parker, *The Importance of Outsiders to Pauline Communities: Opinion, Reputation and Mission* (London: T&T Clark, 2024); Darlene M. Seal, "Scriptural Re-Interpretation and Social Identity Negotiation in the Corinthian Letters," *Religions* 14 (2023); William S. Campbell, *Romans: A Social Identity Commentary* (London: T&T Clark, 2023); Kar Yong Lim, "Reading Romans in light of Social Identity Theory," *Journal of Beliefs & Values* (2023); Katja Kujanpää, "Paul and the Author of 1 Clement as Entrepreneurs of Identity in Corinthian Crises of Leadership," *JSNT* 44 (2022); J. Brian Tucker and Aaron Kuecker, *T&T Clark Social Identity Commentary on the New Testament* (London: T&T Clark, 2020); Lukas Hagel, "The Angel of Satan: 2 Corinthians 12:7 Within a Social-Scientific Framework," *SEA* 84 (2019); Kar Yong Lim, *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation in Paul's Letters to the Corinthians* (Eugene: Pickwick 2017); Paul A. Himes, *Foreknowledge and Social Identity in 1 Peter* (Eugene: Pickwick, 2014); Aaron J. Kuecker, *Spirit and the 'Other': Social Identity, Ethnicity and Intergroup Reconciliation in Luke-Acts* (London: T&T Clark, 2011).

[173] Kar Yong Lim, "Remain in the Calling in Which You Were Called" (1 Cor 7: 20): A Post Supersessionist Reading of 1 Corinthians," *Religions* 14.2 (2023): 183; Darlene M. Seal, "Scriptural Re-Interpretation and Social Identity Negotiation in the Corinthian Letters," *Religions* 14.10 (2023): 1219; William S. Campbell, *Romans: A Social Identity Commentary* (London: T&T Clark, 2023); Katja

Tajfel's Social Identity Theory (SIT) and John Turner's Social-Categorization Theory (SCT). Such twin theories offer a new perspective to explore how individual self-concept intertwin with positive group membership and a sense of belonging.[174]

The following sections outline the SIA's key concepts for leadership and introduce the relevance of applying the social-scientific methods to 2 Corinthians' research. Due to the rich resources drawn from social psychology, using the SIA for leadership offers a lens to contemporary interpreters to analyze the relationship between Paul's leadership and the Corinthians. How Paul exercises his leadership to confront and reconcile the Corinthians' identity is central to the focus of our research.

4. Five Dimensions of Leadership and Unpacking Key Concepts

According to the SIA to leadership, leading effectively involves a dynamic, multi-dimensional process where leaders focus on their abilities "to represent, advance, create, and embed a shared sense of social identity for group members."[175] The inauguration of SIA derived from the twin theories of "Social Identity Theory" (SIT) and "Social Categorization Theory" (SCT), which were developed in the 1970s and 1980s through the pioneering work of Henri Tajfel and his student John C. Turner.[176] Tajfel's inspiration for developing SIT arose from Sherif's research on "Intergroup behaviour."[177] In addition, Tajfel was interested in inquiring into the definitions and differentiations between ingroup and outgroup, examining the interrelations among social behaviour, social categorization, social comparison, and social identity.[178]

As SCT theorizing, group formation is a unique social-psychological process where group members create a shared identity through social categorization. This involves defining themselves in contrast to others in a specific social context. The individual psychological processes of comparison, depersonalization, and social

---

Kujanpää, "Paul and the Author of 1 Clement as Entrepreneurs of Identity in Corinthian Crises of Leadership," *JSNT* 44.3 (2022): 368-389; Matt O'Reilly, "Paul, Apostle of Pain: "One of Us-ness" and the Question of Suffering in 2 Corinthians," *Journal of Early Christian History* 12.1 (2022): 80-95; Esler, *2 Corinthians*; Lukas Hagel, "The Angel of Satan: 2 Corinthians 12:7 within a Social-Scientific Framework," *Svensk Exegetisk Arsbok* 84.1 (2019): 193-207.

[174] The extensive discussion will take place in the subsequent sections.

[175] Steffens et al. *"Leadership as Social Identity Management: Introducing the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI) to Assess and Validate a Four-dimensional Model,"* 1002.

[176] Henri Tajfel, *Differentiation Between Social Groups Studies in the Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations* (London: Academic Press, 1978); John C. Turner, *Discovering the Social Group: A Self-Categorization Theory* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987); Dominic Abrams and Michael A. Hogg, "An Introduction to the Social Identity Approach," *Social Identity Theory: Constructive and Critical Advances* (1990): 1.

[177] Tajfel, *Differentiation Between Social Groups Studies in the Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations* (London: Academic Press, 1978), 28.

[178] Tajfel, *Differentiation Between Social Groups Studies in the Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations*, 28.

categorization with outgroup members can create and strengthen their own personal identity. [179] Researchers additionally hypothesized that ingroup favouritism and outgroup discrimination resulted from social categorization and comparison. These cognitive processes were generated by several social psychological factors, such as language, ethnicity, and social background, which played a crucial role in defining "who is the ingroup" and "who is the outgroup." It further helps ingroup members to form individual identities and enhance group cohesion.[180]

In 2001, Michael A. Hogg introduced the social identity framework into leadership through his pioneer work, *Social Identity Theory of Leadership*.[181] Built upon the theoretical works of SIT and SCT, Hogg's theory posited that "People who are perceived to match the relevant leadership schema are more likely to be endorsed as a 'leader' and to be able to lead effectively."[182] Hogg et al. further suggested that "The social identity theory of leadership is a formal extension and application of social identity theory, particularly the social identity theory of the group (self-categorization theory) and the social identity analysis of social influence (referent informational influence theory) to explain leadership as a social influence phenomenon."[183] After Hogg's remarkable contribution, numerous researchers have actively applied the SIA concepts in empirical experiments within various organization settings.[184]

Daan van Knippenberg and Hogg claimed, "Leadership is inextricably tied to

---

[179] Turner, *Discovering the Social Group: A Self-Categorization Theory*, 29-30.

[180] Michael Billig and Henri Tajfel, "Social Categorization and Similarity in Intergroup Behaviour," *European Journal of Social Psychology* 3.1 (1973): 28; Esler, *Conflict and Identity in Romans*, 20; *Galatians*, 38.

[181] Michael A. Hogg, "A Social Identity Theory of Leadership," *Personality and Social Psychology Review* Vol.5, No.3 (2001): 184-200.

[182] Michael A. Hogg, "Leader-Member Relations and Social Identity," in *Leadership and Power Identity Processes in Groups and Organizations*, ed. Daan van Knippenberg and Michael A. Hogg (London: SAGE, 2003), 24; Hogg, "A Social Identity Theory of Leadership," 186-187.

[183] Michael A. Hogg et al., "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," *European Review of Social Psychology* 23 (2012): 259.

[184] Daan van Knippenberg et al., "Leader Group Prototypicality: A Replication of Average Member Versus Ideal-Type Operationalization Effects," *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies* 31.2 (2024): 211–223; Michael A. Hogg, "Walls Between Groups: Self-uncertainty, Social Identity, and Intergroup Leadership," *Journal of Social Issues* (2023): 825-840; Michael A. Hogg, and Amber M. Gaffney, "Social identity dynamics in the face of overwhelming uncertainty," *The Psychology of Insecurity* (2023): 244-264; Daan van Knippenberg, "Developing the Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Leader Agency in Leader Group Prototypicality," S*ocial and Personality Psychology Compass* 17.4 (2023): 12739; David K. Sewell et al. "Exemplifying "Us": Integrating Social Identity Theory of Leadership with Cognitive Models of Categorization," *The Leadership Quarterly* 33.4 (2022): 101517; Xiang Ding et al. "Linking Transformational Leadership and Work Outcomes in Temporary Organizations: A Social Identity Approach," *International Journal of Project Management* 35.4 (2017): 543-556; van Dick Rolf and Rudolf Kerschreiter, "The Social Identity Approach to Effective Leadership: An Overview and some Ideas on Cross-Cultural Generalizability," *Frontiers of Business Research in China* 10.3 (2016); Matthew J. Slater et al. "Promoting Shared Meanings in Group Memberships: A Social Identity Approach to Leadership in Sport," *Reflective Practice* 15.5 (2014): 672-685.

group membership."[185] Steffens and his colleagues further asserted that leadership is a manifestation of "Social influence," where the leader's objective is to inspire and motivate group members to actively contribute to the group's collective goals.[186] In 2005, Turner offered a detailed examination of the dynamics between "power" and effective leadership, suggesting that "power through" represents an influential form of power and can effectively change ingroup members' cognitive attitudes, beliefs, and ingroup norms. This approach, the "power through" leadership model, generates members' motivation to act, mainly through the leader's persuasion rather than exerting control over them.[187]

Social psychologists suggested that effective leadership comprises four essential features: it involves an influencing process, strives to motivate individuals for change, is subject to group members' expectations and evaluations, and revolves around the psychological bond, such as the relationship between leaders and followers. It fundamentally shapes and fosters a shared sense of "We-ness."[188]

Two noteworthy observations shed light on the relationship between leadership and identity formation within this analytical framework. Firstly, leadership involves the strategic use of "influence" to motivate individuals, fostering the creation of a collective identity and enhancing the group's prototypicality. This is achieved through the cognitive processes of depersonalization, self-categorization, rhetoric and communication, which help establish a distinctive and characteristic ingroup identity for its members.[189] In this context, leaders play a role in shaping and managing ingroup identity, particularly by defining clear group boundaries that distinguish ingroup members from those outside the group.

Secondly, "effective leadership" is inherently linked to the perceptions of the ingroup members. In this sense, the concepts related to leadership efficiency are

---

[185] Daan Van Knippenberg, and Michael A. Hogg, "Identity, Leadership, and Power: Preface and Introduction," in *Leadership and Power: Identity Processes in Groups and Organizations* (London: SAGE, 2003), 1.

[186] Steffens et al. "Leadership as Social Identity Management: Introducing the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI) to Assess and Validate a Four-Dimensional Model," 1002.

[187] John C. Turner, "Explaining the Nature of Power: A Three-Process Theory," *European Journal of Social Psychology* 35 (2005): 6-8.

[188] S. Alexander Haslam and Stephen Reicher, "Rethinking the Psychology of Leadership: From Personal Identity to Social Identity," *Daedalus* 145.3 (2016): 22-23.

[189] Haslam and Reicher, "Rethinking the Psychology of Leadership: From Personal Identity to Social Identity," 23; Steffens et al. "Leadership as Social Identity Management: Introducing the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI) to Assess and Validate a Four-dimensional Model," 1001-1002; John Turner, Explaining the Nature of Power: A Three Process of Theory," *European Journal of Social Psychology* 35 (2005):6-7; Hogg et al. "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 268.

constructed based on the followers' expectations and evaluations, a beneficial perspective adopted by social identity theorists from sociology. [190] Leadership legitimacy and endorsement come from followers rather than being solely determined by the leader.[191] Consequently, for a leader to be effective, they must embody leadership qualities that align with and exemplify the group's prototypicality, ensuring resonance with the expectations and values of the ingroup members.[192]

4.1. The SIA to Leadership: The Five Dimensions

In considering the critical dimensions of leadership effectiveness as postulated by the SIA leadership, Hogg pointed out, "The social identity theory of leadership views leadership as a group process that arises from the social categorization and depersonalization processes associated with social identity." Prototype-based depersonalization and followers' behaviour play a critical role in group formation. Initially, the SIA to leadership was mainly focused on the issue of leadership prototypicality. It later expanded to encompass four additional dimensions.

According to Hogg, three core processes work together to make prototypicality an increasingly influential basis of leadership as social identity salience: prototypicality, social attraction, and attribution and information processing.[193] This sheds light on leaders who embody the group's prototype and tend to be more effective than those who do not. Social psychologists argue, "As people identify more strongly with a group, they pay closer attention to the group prototype and to what and who is more prototypical of the group: this is because the prototype defines the group and one's identity as a group member."[194]

In this context, leadership grants those leaders significant power to actively pursue leadership, fend off contenders, and maintain their leadership positions. Because they are trusted, given latitude to be innovative, and invested with status and charisma,

---

[190] Expectation States Theory, as proposed by Berger et al. (1980, 1985) and further developed by Correll and Ridgeway (2003), is a micro-sociological theory focused on the rapid and efficient development of status hierarchies within small, task-oriented groups (inspired by Bales, 1950). In such groups, individuals engage in the analysis and evaluation of group members, including themselves. These evaluations guide the positioning of members based on expectations regarding their capabilities to successfully contribute to the group's tasks and achieve its goals. See Nicolas B. Barreto, and Michael A. Hogg, "Influence and Leadership in Small Groups: Impact of Group Prototypicality, Social Status, and Task Competence," *Journal of Theoretical Social Psychology* (2017): 2.

[191] Stephen D. Reicher et al. "Shared Social Identity in Leadership," *Current Opinion in Psychology* (2018): 2; Steffens et al. "Leadership as Social Identity Management: Introducing the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI) to Assess and Validate a Four-dimensional Model," 1002.

[192] Hogg et al., "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 269.

[193] For a detailed discussion, see Hogg, "A Social Identity Theory of Leadership," 188-190.

[194] Michael A. Hogg, and Graham M. Vaughan, *Social Psychology*. 8th ed. (New York: Pearson, 2018), 339.

prototypical leaders can be characterized as 'entrepreneurs of identity' who can effectively construct and manage perceptions of the group prototype and, thus, the group's identity. Within the SIA to leadership framework, group members play a crucial role in configuring the characteristics of their group's leadership or even creating leadership itself. They are more likely to follow leaders they consider best able to construct a group identity that is acceptable to them.[195]

Since the 1990s, social psychologists have explored four dimensions of leadership, including leader prototypicality, identity entrepreneurship, identity advancement, and identity impresarioship. These researchers have suggested employing the above domains to analyze effective leadership in relation to the leader-follower relationship. In 2014, Steffens and his colleagues introduced the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI), proposing it as a comprehensive and firm basis for future investigations of the various dimensions of leadership, instilling confidence in its use for future research.[196]

In 2022, Haslam and other researchers recommend adopting "A Dual-Identity Framework" to analyze leadership effectiveness. This approach involves integrating and reconciling two divergent and distinct theories: Identity Leadership, or in terms of the SIA to leadership, and Leader Identity, as those psychologists admit that "Having a strong sense of social identity is not necessarily inconsistent with having a strong sense of personal identity. Early statements of SCT suggested that due to functional antagonism, there might be a hydraulic relationship between these two levels of self-categorization whereby as one increases, the other declines." The adoption of this framework is significant as it allows for a more comprehensive analysis of leadership effectiveness.[197]

Haslam et al. aligned with Postmes and Jetten's observation, "A scant reading of social identity (and especially self-categorization) theory literature would easily give the impression that the influence of social identity is mechanistic: when social identity is salient, people will act according to that identity and individual identities cease to exert their influence. Social identity is treated as an "on/off switch."[198] In other words,

---

[195] Hogg, Knippenberg and Rast III, "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 264.

[196] Steffens et al. "Leadership as Social Identity Management: Introducing the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI) to Assess and Validate a Four-dimensional Model," 1003.

[197] Haslam et al. "Reconciling Identity Leadership and Leader Identity: A Dual-Identity Framework," 10.

[198] See Jolanda Jetten, and Tom Postmes, eds., "Individuality and the group: Advances in social identity," *Individuality and the Group* (London: SAGE, 2006), 4; Tom Postmes, and Jolanda Jetten, "Reconciling Individuality and the Group," in *Individuality and the Group: Advances in Social Identity*, 258–269. As Haslam et al. contend "Not least, this was because it became clear that there are a range of contexts in which people's personal identity comes to be defined more or less exclusively by their social

the SIA to leadership theory does not fully capture the complex interactions between effective leadership, group dynamics, and identity formation. Social psychologists, therefore, employ various leadership concepts to analyze these aspects, with a particular concern of how leaders perceive themselves as legitimate leaders of their groups. Subsequent chapters will use these analytical frameworks to examine the correlation between leadership effectiveness and identity formation among ancient social groups and the Corinthian community. The following sections will provide concise introductions to the concepts of five leadership dimensions.

4.1.1. Identity Prototypicality: Being One of Us

"Identity Prototypicality", encapsulated in a leader representing and embodying the group's prototypical identity, is essential for fostering cohesion among the ingroup members. For the group members, an effective leader embodies and represents the distinctive qualities of the group. A leader goes beyond embodying the group's core values; they also strive to "Make this group special as well as distinct from other groups."[199] A prototypical leader acts as a driving force, inspiring and motivating group members to actively pursue shared goals and interests.[200] Researchers recently affirmed the central role of a leader's prototypical identity in the context of effective leadership.[201] Their research investigates the relationship between responsible leaders and the followers' commitment to the group. Researchers concluded that "The most effective leader-follower relationships will depend on how self-conceptually [e.g. 'we'] salient the group is and on how strongly members identify [e.g. I] with the group."[202] Leaders' responsible behaviour is vital to followers' loyalty and commitment to the organization. This finding aligns with the SIA to leadership, indicating that followers

---

identity (Baray et al. 2009)—a process researchers refer to as identity fusion (Swann et al. 2012)." See Haslam et al. "Reconciling Identity Leadership and Leader Identity: A Dual-Identity Framework," 10.

[199] Steffens et al. "Leadership as Social Identity Management: Introducing the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI) to Assess and Validate a Four-Dimensional Model," 1003.

[200] Daan van Knippenberg, and Diana Lee, "Supervisor's Organizational Embodiment is Leader Group Prototypicality: Addressing Construct Redundancy through Replication," *Journal of Management Scientific Reports* 1.1 (2023): 43; Sewell et al. "Exemplifying "Us": Integrating Social Identity Theory of Leadership with Cognitive Models of Categorization,"101517; Barreto, and A. Hogg, "Influence and Leadership in Small Groups: Impact of Group Prototypicality, Social Status, and Task Competence," *Journal of Theoretical Social Psychology* (2017):1–8; Daan van Knippenberg, "Embodying Who We are: Leader Group Prototypicality and Leadership Effectiveness," *The Leadership Quarterly* 22 (2011): 1079-1080; Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 106-107.

[201] Daan van Knippenberg et al. "Leader Group Prototypicality: A Replication of Average Member Versus Ideal-Type Operationalization Effects," *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies* 31.2 (2024): 211-223; Knippenberg, "Developing the Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Leader Agency in Leader Group Prototypicality," *Social and Personality Psychology Compass* 17.4 (2023): 12739; Knippenberg, and Lee, "Supervisor's organizational embodiment is leader group prototypicality: Addressing construct redundancy through replication," *Journal of Management Scientific Reports* 1.1 (2023): 42-71.

[202] Amlan Haque et al. "How is Responsible Leadership Related to the Three-Component Model of Organizational Commitment?"18.

expect an effective and responsible leader to exemplify a robust group-salient identity, embodying the group's core values.[203] Hence, when a leader is perceived as an exemplary and model group member, it can enhance cohesion among ingroup members.[204]

4.1.2. Identity Entrepreneurship: Crafting a Sense of Us

"Identity Entrepreneurship" within SIA to leadership is a powerful concept that empowers a leader to assume the role of an "entrepreneur of identity," actively involved in creating and mastering a distinct identity boundary for group members. According to the SIA to leadership, leader effectiveness involves showcasing the identity salience of the group. Members highly value the presence of clear boundaries and prototypes as it helps them form their identity within the group. This clarity assists in discerning between "we" and "they" through group comparison and identity categorization. The leader's role in reducing identity uncertainty by establishing unambiguous prototypical social identity for group members is crucial, as it significantly influences group dynamics.[205]

As previously noted, a leader's ability to shape ingroup identity through effective communication and identity rhetoric is a key aspect of effective leadership. When a leader skillfully "crafts" such an identity for the group, it can significantly enhance group cohesion and even catalyze social change. This proposition is substantiated by the research conducted by Mark Steven and his colleagues in 2019, which found that leaders can enhance group members' effort and performance by successfully establishing a shared sense of ingroup identity.[206]

4.1.3. Identity Advancement: Acting on Behalf of the Group

"Identity Advancement" is not just a concept but a responsibility that centers on the leader's ability to represent and promote the group's collective interests, embodying the principle of "doing it for us."[207] Researchers refer to this leadership characteristic as "ingroup championship."[208] Steffens et al. asserted that a leader's effectiveness lies in

---

[203] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 98.

[204] Steffens et al. "Leadership as Social Identity Management: Introducing the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI) to Assess and Validate a Four-Dimensional Model," 1003.

[205] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 143.

[206] Mark Stevens et al. "Leaders' Creation of Shared Identity Impacts Group Members' Effort and Performance: Evidence from an Exercise Task," *Plos One* 14 (2019): 15-16.

[207] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 101; Niklas K. Steffens et al. "True to What We Stand For: Championing Collective Interests as a Path to Authentic Leadership," *The Leadership Quarterly* 27.5 (2016): 728-729; Barbara Van Knippenberg, and Daan Van Knippenberg, "Leader Self-Sacrifice and Leadership Effectiveness: The Moderating Role of Leader Prototypicality," *Journal of applied psychology* 90.1 (2005): 26.

[208] Haslam et al. "Reconciling Identity Leadership and Leader Identity: A Dual-Identity Framework," 10.

advancing and promoting the group's core interests over advancing personal gains.[209] As Steffen et al. suggested, "Leaders' prototypicality and championing of collective interests will often go hand in hand." [210] Leaders identified as prototypical or representative of a particular identity may exhibit behaviour aligned with championing interests linked to that identity.[211] As Haslam et al. noted, leaders can take on an active role by strategically configuring their behaviour to align with the group identities.[212]

Researchers find that ingroup championships are crucial factors that enable a leader to garner endorsements from followers. This social phenomenon significantly empowers a leader to influence the opinions of their followers, particularly as the followers are more willing to embrace the leader's visions as their own.[213] The group members often expect their leader to stand and fight for the group.[214] Specifically, leadership effectiveness emerges when a leader's prototype aligns effectively with the group's values.

4.1.4. Identity Embedder: Making Us Matter

In their 2020 revision, Haslam et al. introduce the term "Identity Embedder," suggesting that an effective leader "Need[s] to be artists, impresarios, and engineers of identity – specifically, of a social identity that is shared with followers."[215] They must realize specific goods related to the values of the groups they seek to represent.[216] Thus, a leader plays a vital role in organizing and structuring various group events and activities, which they refer to as an impresario of group identity.[217] This is particularly evident when leaders proactively and intentionally arrange group meetings, rituals, celebrations, and commemorations. This initiative aims to help group members embody the norms and values of the group, a concept referred to as "collective self-objectification."[218] This means "Leadership and the collective projects with which it is associated needs to become physically embedded in the world to have an enduring impact."[219]

---

[209] Mark W. Bruner, "Identity Leadership and Social Identification within Sport Teams Over a Season: A Social Network Analysis," *Psychology of Sport & Exercise* 59 (2022): 102106.

[210] Steffens et al. "True to What We Stand For: Championing Collective Interests as a Path to Authentic Leadership," 728.

[211] Steffens et al. "True to What We Stand For: Championing Collective Interests as a Path to Authentic Leadership," 728-729.

[212] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 120.

[213] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 119-120.

[214] Steffens et al. "Leadership as Social Identity Management: Introducing the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI) to Assess and Validate a Four-Dimensional Model," 1004.

[215] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 165.

[216] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 165.

[217] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 70.

[218] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 148.

[219] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 148.

In the role of an identity embedder, an effective leader's responsibility is to steer followers towards a new direction that guides them to achieve self-actualization.[220] To achieve this, leaders must rely on rhetoric and actively organize projects, performances and campaigns to demonstrate their visions tangibly. In Haslam's observation, leaders possess prophetic qualities, as they can envision a better future and lead their followers towards self-actualization.[221] Haslam et al. suggest that a leader is an "engineer of identity" whose primary task is to motivate followers to pursue higher aspirations.[222]

This observation is in harmony with findings by Steffens and his colleagues, emphasizing the importance of establishing structures, events, and activities that strengthen the group's presence and provide tangible opportunities for group members to express their membership.[223] In this sense, a leader is crucial in shaping the collective identity and driving group members towards self-actualization through concrete actions and activities. This underscores the significant responsibility that leaders carry in shaping the identity and direction of their groups.

4.1.5. Leader Identity and Identity Formation

As mentioned above, in 2022, Haslam et al. propose integrating and reconciling various leadership frameworks, introducing a "Dual Identity model." This approach opens up a new direction to seek the fundamental factors influencing leadership effectiveness.[224] As suggested by Haslam et al., researchers like Lord, Foti, and Hall focused on investigating leaders' identities. Their attempts aimed to analyze what personality and individual traits can foster leader effectiveness. Identity leadership, however, stresses examining the relationship between group collective identity and social influence exerted by the leaders. These theories initially present a fresh approach to understanding leadership and identity formation. Both have overlooked the common ground shared by "identity leadership" and "leader identity" in their understanding of leadership.

B. Swann and colleagues suggest the psychological concept of "Leader–Group Identity Fusion",[225] which contributes to distinctive forms of leadership. Researchers

---

[220] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 165-166.

[221] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 192.

[222] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 165.

[223] Steffens et al. "Leadership as Social Identity Management: Introducing the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI) to Assess and Validate a Four-Dimensional Model," 1005.

[224] Haslam et al. "Reconciling Identity Leadership and Leader Identity: A Dual-Identity Framework," *The Leadership Quarterly* (2022):102106.

[225] Leader-group identity fusion has an integrative impact on the energies of leader identity and identity leadership. See Haslam et al. "Reconciling Identity Leadership and Leader Identity: A Dual-Identity Framework," 10. In addition, identity fusion, coined by Swann et al. is a psychological state in which people experience a visceral feeling about themselves within a group. Individual group members are willing to sacrifice themselves and perform pro-group behaviours for the collective interests. See William

argued, "The state of identity fusion refers to a powerful union of the personal and social self, wherein the borders between the two become porous without diminishing the integrity of either construct."[226] For this reason, a leader possesses a strong sense of identity as a self-sacrificial leader. It is deeply grounded and emerges from an equally strong sense of social identity shared with fellow ingroup members.[227]

Therefore, the leader's identity encompasses their role as a leader and group member, empowering them to leverage the resources derived from personal and social identity. A leader's social identity ensures that their actions will be guided by and contribute to advancing the group's collective interests. One of the critical concepts we delve into is leader-group identity fission. This term encapsulates the potential breakdown or fragmentation in the cohesive identity between the leader and the group. If a leader displays hubris and remains oblivious to the impact of their actions on the group, it can result in ineffective leadership. Moreover, group enemies may seize opportunities to exacerbate intragroup tension, another consequence if the leaders persist in focusing solely on their own leader's identity. These concepts are also relevant to Paul's leadership. Paul's divine commissioning, seen as a zealous leader, is central to his self-understanding in relation to leadership and the gospel's mission (2 Cor.11:23-33). This highlights the urgent need for leaders to understand the potential negative consequences of ineffective leadership and the importance of maintaining a strong group identity.

To sum up, the interplay between "identity leadership" and "leader identity" offers a fresh perspective for understanding the complexities of leadership effectiveness. When leaders align their identity as leaders with their identity as group members, they can lead effectively and inspire positive change. Researchers have noted, "When leaders bring their personal and social identities into alignment, they are able to mobilize the power of the group to change the world."[228] This idea is particularly pertinent in investigating Pauline leadership in 2 Corinthians 10-13, where Paul's divine commissioning, seen as his leader identity, forms a cornerstone of his authoritative leadership in advancing the gospel's mission. As a divine-commissioned servant (2 Cor.11:23), his leadership was primarily aimed at evangelizing both Judeans and non-

---

B. Swann et al. "Identity Fusion," *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 24.1 (2015): 52.

[226] William B Swann et al. "When Group Membership Gets Personal: A Theory of Identity Fusion," *Psychological Review* 119.3 (2012): 443.

[227] Haslam et al. "Reconciling Identity Leadership and Leader Identity: A Dual-Identity Framework," 10.

[228] Haslam et al. "Reconciling Identity Leadership and Leader Identity: A Dual-Identity Framework," 11-12.

Judeans on behalf of Christ (2 Cor.10:8; 12:19; 13:10). This particular personal identification serves to construct a shared and collective identity of the Christ-followers, aligning with the principles of "obedience to Christ" (2 Cor.10:5). A detailed investigation will be conducted in subsequent chapters.

5. Essential Factors Driving Group Change

5.1. Positive and Distinctive Ingroup Identity

Within the SIA to leadership framework, the key motivator for group members' motivation is to create and manage a positive and unambiguous ingroup identity.[229] "Motivation" is not just about a desire to achieve something. Still, it is also about the drive to initiate change, as indicated by its connection to the notions of "motion" and "move".[230] According to Hogg and Abrams, "group motivation" involves influencing group members' thoughts and behaviour with a specific purpose.[231] It can be achieved through leaders clearly communicating the continuity of the group vision to their ingroup members.[232] Within a group context, encouraging members to change is rooted in two crucial factors:

Firstly, the aspiration to receive positive attention and emotional support from ingroup members and significant others. Hogg argued that group motivation helps people "Achieve satisfaction from their association, develop feelings of mutual attraction and hence become a group."[233] Therefore, the social context emerges as a crucial element that directly shapes the individual's sense of "self" within the broader human experience.

Secondly, there is a desire to diminish uncertainty about one's "self" and social world.[234] In considering this, members strive to attain positive social identity by developing a comprehensive understanding of themselves and the world they inhabit. This pursuit is fueled by the intention to alleviate ambiguity and perplexity surrounding

---

[229] Naomi Ellemers et al. "Motivating Individuals and Groups at Work: A Social Identity Perspective on Leadership and Group Performance," *The Academy of Management Review* 29.3 (2004): 472.

[230] John M. Levine, and Michael A. Hogg, "Motivation," in *Encyclopedia of Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, eds John M. Levine, and Michael A. Hogg, (London: SAGE, 2010), 798.

[231] Hogg, and Abrams, eds. *Group Motivation: Social Psychological Perspective*, 174.

[232] The term "vision of continuity" describes the degree to which a vision of change addresses collective continuity by emphasizing that, despite the change, the organizational identity will be maintained. In simpler terms, the concept of a vision of continuity refers to how much visions of change also highlight the preservation of the defining features of the organization. See Merlijn Venus et al. "Visions of Change as Visions of Continuity," *Academy of Management Journal* 62.3 (2019): 668.

[233] Michael A. Hogg, "Self-Uncertainty, Leadership Preference, and Communication of Social Identity," *Atlantic Journal of Communication* 26.2 (2018): 114-115; Hogg, and Abrams, *Social Identifications: A Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations and Group Process*, 96.

[234] Hogg et al. "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 282-287.

one's social "self."[235] It is mainly to help group members establish a clear and distinctive individual identity, allowing them to differentiate themselves from outgroup members. "Leaders don't just sit around and wait for their prototypicality to become apparent; instead, they work to make it apparent."[236] Thus, leaders' role in shaping group members' identity is crucial. By inspiring members to change, a leader can focus on how they construct a positive and common ingroup identity and a better future for the members, thereby underlining the profound impact of leadership on social identity.[237]

5.2. Social Influence and Leader's Prototypicality

On this basis, a prototypical leader wields significant influence through ingroup members, motivating them to change. Research shows that when individuals identify more with the group, attributes that directly link a leader to the ingroup and consequently to one's self-concept become more significant than the leader's idiosyncratic personal characteristics.[238] According to researchers, two kinds of social influence within the SIA of leadership exist.

First, normative influence, based on "Pressure to comply and arises from an individual's need for social approval and acceptance," is crucial in shaping and governing human social perception and behaviour. People often align with group goals to receive social approval and rewards following prevailing social norms and to avoid punishment, criticism, and derogation within the group. This form of influence involves explicit and implicit social pressure, normative rules, and social order.

Second, informative influence is grounded in "expert power" and "informational power" and is a significant factor in guiding social behavior. Group members rely on specialized knowledge, information, and skills to understand and interpret the existing world. As Hogg and Abrams noted, leaders can effectively influence others by claiming to possess specific knowledge about the world. In this context, informative influence is "subjective valid reasons to agree."[239] Consequently, "The socially valid information,

---

[235] Michael A. Hogg, "Subjective Uncertainty Reduction through Self-categorization: A Motivational Theory of Social Identity Processes," *European Review of Social Psychology* 11:1 (2000): 227-228.
[236] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 99.
[237] Neela S. Mühlemann, "Understanding Responses to an Organizational Takeover: Introducing the Social Identity Model of Organizational Change," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology: Interpersonal Relations and Group Processes*, Vol.123, No.5 (2022): 1007; Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 98-99.
[238] Hogg and Abrams, *Group Motivation: Social Psychological Perspective*, 179-181; Hogg, *The Social Psychology of Group Cohesiveness: From Attraction to Social Identity*, 95; Amber M. Gaffney and Michael Hogg, "Social Identity and Social Influence," in *The Oxford Handbook of Social Influence*, eds. Stephen G. Harkins, Williams D. Kipling, and Jerry Burger (Oxford: OUP, 2017), 259-278.
[239] Hogg, and Abrams, *Group Motivation: Social Psychological Perspective*, 181.

information worthy of attention and systematic processing" are central to influencing the social behaviour of other group members.[240]

Thus, "true influence," as postulated by the SIA theorists, can be understood as considering an individual's subjective and cognitive processes and aligning with their personal agreements, core values, and the group's beliefs. When leaders are salient and aligned with the group's core values, their influence can foster high cohesion.[241] In light of this, leader prototypicality is vital in generating group cohesion and cooperation, highlighting the crucial role of leaders in maintaining group unity.

5.3. Group Cohesion and Identity Categorization

Social psychologists view group cohesiveness as "the average magnitude of the forces acting on all the individual group members." They emphasize that self-categorization, a robust process, promotes inter-individual attraction within the group, especially by highlighting similarities and likenesses. This process significantly enhances the group's cohesiveness and solidarity, thereby profoundly strengthening group dynamics.

Firstly, in line with meta-contrast principles suggested by Turner and his colleagues, group members can distinguish themselves and others through categorization and differentiation by using "intra-category similarities" and "inter-category dissimilarities" in order to shape their salient social identity and distinctive identification.[242] Secondly, a positive individual self-esteem and social identity can be established through the members' cognitive categorization of "similarities" and "dissimilarities," fostering a sense of belonging and interdependence that motivates or compels group members to remain in the group.

These concepts suggest that social attraction plays a key role in leadership, implying that a prototypical leader can lead effectively by gaining ingroup members' positive regard and approval. Thus, members recognize that the leader's prototypical identity is closely aligned with their expectations.[243] This alignment can encourage group members to follow and trust their leadership.[244] According to Hogg, effective

---

[240] Knippenberg, and Hogg, *Leadership and Power Identity Processes in Groups and Organizations*, 37.
[241] Hogg et al. "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 265.
[242] According to Turner and his colleagues, "The meta-contrast principle of comparative fit can predict the effects of extent of comparative context, intergroup versus intragroup comparisons, minority versus majority status, and relative extremity of own and others' position in increasing the level of inclusiveness of self-categorization so that others categorized as different and contrasted away from self at a lower level are re-categorized as self and assimilated towards self at the more inclusive level." See John C. Turner, "Personal and Social Identity: Self and Social Context," *The Self and the Collective* (1992): 7.
[243] Hogg, "A Social Identity Theory in Leadership," 189; Hogg et al. "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 265.
[244] Nicolas B. Barreto, and Michael A. Hogg, "Influence and Leadership in Small Groups: Impact of

leadership and social attraction are intertwined and determined by the degree of prototypicality of members. If the group members identify themselves as highly prototypical and salient, that promotes a strong sense of loyalty and belonging, enhancing leadership effectiveness.

Researchers argued that intergroup conflicts can be resolved by a leader who intentionally redefines group boundaries and alters perceptions of former outgroup members. Specifically, the leader should "reorganize the perception of intergroup boundaries" so that former outgroup members are now seen as part of the ingroup, leading group members to identify themselves regarding their shared and collective ingroup identity. This can generate the group's cohesiveness. [245]

5.4. Superordinate Identity and Conflict Management

Social identity researchers suggested that "subgroup conflict would be diminished by leadership that promotes a common superordinate group and associated identity."[246] As SCT theorizing, "the attractiveness of an individual is not constant, but varies with ingroup membership."[247] This cognitive process involves individuals using identity categorization to structure their sense of "self," a cognitive process known as depersonalization. Depersonalization fosters ingroup cooperation and unity by highlighting the similarities among ingroup members and differences with outgroup members. In addition, Gaertner et al. proposed the "common ingroup model," which posits that social categorization enhances group cohesiveness by fostering a more inclusive identity: "We-ness." This inclusive identity reduces intergroup bias and transforms members' cognitive representations of their group membership.[248]

Based on this notion, a leader can enhance intergroup relationships by redefining group boundaries and articulating group visions.[249] As theorists argued, "the leader should 'reorganize the perception of intergroup boundaries' such that former outgroup members are now considered ingroup members and group members define themselves in terms of their common ingroup."[250]

Group Prototypicality, Social Status, and Task Competence," *Journal of Theoretical Social Psychology* (2017): 6.

[245] Christine Kershaw et al. "Divided Groups Need Leadership: A Study of the Effectiveness of Collective Identity, Dual Identity, and Intergroup Relational Identity Rhetoric," *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* (2020): 2.

[246] Kershaw et al. "Divided Groups Need Leadership: A Study of the Effectiveness of Collective Identity, Dual Identity, and Intergroup Relational Identity Rhetoric," 2. The recent research conducted by Kershaw, addressing the leader's rhetoric is integral to construct a shared ingroup identity, which in turn enhances group cohesiveness. See Christine Kershaw, "The Inevitability of an Outgroup Leader" (PhD Diss., University of Alberta, 2023), 89.

[247] Turner et al. *Discovering the Social Group: A Self-Categorization Theory*, 60.

[248] Samuel Gaertner et al. "The Contact Hypothesis: The Role of a Common Ingroup Identity on Reducing Intergroup Bias," *Small group research* 25.2 (1994): 226.

[249] Kershaw et al. "Divided Groups Need Leadership: A Study of the Effectiveness of Collective Identity, Dual Identity, and Intergroup Relational Identity Rhetoric," 54.

[250] Kershaw et al. "Divided Groups Need Leadership: A Study of the Effectiveness of Collective Identity,

In addition, researchers suggested that the collective identity can be constructed through "Intergroup Relational Identity Rhetoric", where a leader provides verbal and nonverbal information about the existing collaborative relationship between the groups.[251] Significantly, as researchers argued, identity rhetoric should not change or challenge the ingroup's core values and beliefs, as this will lead to hostility towards leaders. Leaders, instead, should convey a new meaning and information about the group.[252] According to these researchers, social categories are comparable only when they share and represent a typical, higher-order category perceived as valuable and appropriate to the group's meaning. If group members can generalize and project distinctive and perceived positive identity markers of their ingroup onto this superordinate category, it further enhances the connection and cohesiveness within the group.[253]

Given that these SIA perspectives help explain Paul's strategy of resolving the conflicts between himself and the Corinthians, Paul focuses on creating a shared identity by emphasizing "obedience to Christ" (2 Cor.10:5) and "belonging to Christ" (2 Cor.10:7). By promoting these superordinate identities, Paul aims to unify the group, reduce conflicts, and strengthen their collective identity.

6. A Closer Look on Paul's Leadership in 2 Corinthians 10-13 in Light of a SIA to Leadership

An increasing number of monographs have investigated unique aspects of Paul's leadership. [254] As Clarke argued, Paul was "re-defin[ing] for the Corinthians the nature of Christian leadership."[255] Recent doctoral studies on Pauline's leadership by Sindo[256] and Rierson [257] have sought to apply a social-scientific approach to examine the

---

Dual Identity, and Intergroup Relational Identity Rhetoric," 54.

[251] Michael A. Hogg, and David E. Rast, "Intergroup Leadership: The Challenge of Successfully Leading Fractured Groups and Societies," Current Directions in Psychological Science, Vol. 31.6 (2022): 567.

[252] Michael A. Hogg, "Intergroup Leadership in Organizations: Leading across Group and Organizational Boundaries," *Academy of Management Review* 37.2 (2012): 241.

[253] Michael Wenzel et al. "Superordinate Identities and Intergroup Conflict: The Ingroup Projection Model," *European Review of Social Psychology* (2008): 336-337.

[254] Rierson, "*Paul's Humble Leadership In Light of Contemporary Studies of Humility and Leadership*; Vuyani Stanley Sindo, "*The Interrelationship Between Leadership and Identity Formation in the Corinthian Correspondence: A Study of 1 Corinthians 1-4*" (PhD Diss., Stellenbosch University, 2018); Clarke, *A Pauline Theology of Church Leadership*; *Secular and Christian Leadership in Corinth: A Socio-Historical and Exegetical Study of 1 Corinthians 1-6*; Agosto, *Servant Leadership: Jesus and Paul* (Missouri: Chalice Press, 2005); Mark Edward Roberts, "*Weak Enough to Lead: Paul's Response to Criticism and Rivals in 2 Corinthians 10–13: A Rhetorical Reading*" (PhD Diss., Vanderbilt University, 2002); A.K. Grieb, "The One Who Called You ..." *Interpretation* 59.2 (2005): 154–165; Horrell, "Leadership Patterns and the Development of Ideology in Early Christianity," 323-341.

[255] Clarke, *Secular and Christian Leadership in Corinth*, 131.

[256] Sindo's work emphasizes applying Social Identity Theory to study Pauline Leadership in relation to identity formation in 1 Corinthians 1-4. See Sindo, *The Interrelationship between Leadership and Identity Formation in the Corinthian Correspondence: A Study of 1 Corinthians 1-4*, 21-22.

[257] Rierson is interested in researching humility in Paul's world and its relations to Pauline leadership. Her study used 2 Corinthians 10-13 and the Letter to the Philippians as a test case to examine the above topic. See Rierson, *Paul's Humble Leadership in light of Contemporary Studies of Humility and*

distinctive features of Paul's leadership. A notable gap in the existing scholarship is the limited research concerning the connection between Paul's leadership and the identity formation of the Corinthians.[258]

The integration of social identity theory into the analysis of biblical documents can be traced back to the mid-1990s when Esler adopted from social identity theorists a twin analytical methodology, comprising "Social Identity Theory" (SIT) and "Social Categorization Theory" (SCT) into New Testament studies.[259] Two integrated theories emphasized the importance of the "determinants" of human social behaviour, encompassing elements from social, economic and political structure. The significance of this theory lies in constructing a theoretical framework that enhances our understanding, explanation, and prediction of various forms of social behaviour.[260]

Esler found inspiration in Tajfel's notion, suggesting that "Social identity will be understood as that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership." [261] Esler has deployed this analytical tool to interpret biblical and extra-biblical documents. In his approach, this interpretative option assists us in understanding the communication and interaction between the author and the primary reader.[262] It is a heuristic model that allows a much more nuanced approach to what happens between and within groups than the sociological and anthropological models that social-scientific interpreters used up to the mid-1990s. These earlier approaches mainly underestimated the crucial role of leadership and identity formation. Esler's application of SIT and SCT offered a fresh perspective for contemporary readers to interpret the text.[263]

In turning our focus to 2 Corinthians 10-13, we see a dispute concerning Paul's leadership, particularly its legitimacy and authority. Paul grapples with various

---

Leadership: A Comparative Analysis of Paul's Deployment of Humility in 2 Corinthians 10–13 and Philippians, 27.

[258] Note the recent publication of the 2 Corinthians commentary written by Esler in which he suggested using the SIA perspective to examine the effective leadership of Paul in relation to Corinthian Christ-followers' identity formation. Esler endeavored to adopt the Social Identity perspectives to give an examination of the new identity formation of the Christ-followers and its relations to the embodiment of baptism. Due to space limitations, his work has not given a detailed evaluation towards effective leadership in relation to identity management in 2 Corinthians 10-13. See Esler, *2 Corinthians*.

[259] Esler, *2 Corinthians*; *Conflict and Identity in Romans*; *Galatians*. The first oral expression was in 1994 at the British NT conference in Nottingham, and the first actual publication was in 1996, see Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 28-29.

[260] Henri Tajfel, *Human Groups & Social Categories: Studies in Social Psychology* (Cambridge: Cambridge Press, 1981), 25.

[261] Tajfel, "Social Categorization, Social Identity and Social Comparison," 63.

[262] Esler, *Conflict and Identity in Romans*, 19; *Galatians*, 40.

[263] Esler, *Conflict and Identity in Romans*, 33.

accusations within the Corinthians' ministry, unveiling a nuanced leadership strategy to shape the community's identity (2 Cor.10:10; 11:4; 12:9-10). As a leader, Paul regards conflict as an opportunity to shape the identity markers of obedient Corinthians. Conflict can foster a shared sense of concerns, values, and collective goals and help promote group solidarity and cohesiveness. As noted by the social psychologists, "Intergroup comparisons sometimes lead to negative comparison outcomes resulting in the perception of ingroup inferiority on relevant comparison dimensions." Successful social identity management, in turn, can restore a positive view of the ingroup. On the contrary, if identity management fails, it may leave group members in negative emotional states.[264]

Although numerous scholars view Paul's defence as mere self-preservation in 2 Corinthians 10-13,[265] our argument posits that his polemic serves a more profound purpose-to establish the Corinthians' identity. The fact that Paul not only serves as the founder of the Corinthian Christ-following community but also actively plays the role of appealing to the Corinthians, representing an ingroup member, to embrace the core values of this group.[266] Campbell and Ehrensperger are correct because Paul does not assume the role of a dominant leader seeking control over the Corinthians through sheer power in addressing conflicts.[267] By contrast, Paul reinforces the Corinthians' identity through verbal, such as rhetoric and non-verbal, his embodiment of Christ's values to imbue a new concept of "belonging to Christ" (2 Cor.10:7). Paul's action aligns with identity management, in which leaders help ingroup members "deny outgroup values, subtype the disconfirming group members, and redefine or change elements of the comparative situation such as comparison targets or dimensions."[268] This perspective acknowledges that conflict can catalyze community cohesion while shaping the ingroup identity.[269]

As Esler aligned with SIA's researchers, "Leaders must be 'Entrepreneurs of identity, capable of turning "me" and "you" into "us" to a particular project in a

---

[264] Sarah Martiny and Thomas Kessler, "Managing One's Social Identity: Successful and Unsuccessful Identity Management," *European Journal of Social Psychology* 44 (2014): 748–749.

[265] Mitzi Minor, *2 Corinthians*, SHBC (Macon: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, 2009), 186; Frank J. Matera, *II Corinthians: A Commentary* (Westminster: John Knox, 2013), 214-215; Anthony Bash, "A Psychodynamic Approach to the Interpretation of 2 Corinthians 10-13," *JSNT* 24 (2001): 61-62; Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 595-598; Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 299-300; Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 44-46.

[266] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 204.

[267] Campbell, *Paul and the Creation of Identity*, 37; Ehrensperger, *Paul and the Dynamics of Power*, 114.

[268] Martiny and Kessler, "Managing One's Social Identity: Successful and Unsuccessful Identity Management," 749.

[269] Tucker, *You Belong to Christ: Paul and the Formation of Identity in Corinthians 1-4*, 69.

particular context that will bestow on the shared social identity meaning, purpose, and value."[270] For instance, Paul refuses to engage in inappropriate boasting according to worldly standards, (2 Cor.10:10-12; 11:6; 11:22-23; 12:11-12). Paul refused financial assistance from the Corinthians in order to avoid engaging in patronage (2 Cor.11:7-9; 12:14-16). Paul demonstrates an embodiment of an obedient Christ-follower and strategically adopts various salient attributes to define what it means to be obedient (2 Cor.10:8).[271] Through confrontation with the opposition, Paul intends to accentuate the core values and identify them with Christ-followers. More importantly, Paul aims to win the Corinthians over by fostering trust. As SIA's researchers highlighted, trust can mitigate selfish behaviour, promote a shared and collective identity, and establish interpersonal trust among individuals.[272]

For Paul, it becomes imperative to reiterate his view of what "belonging to Christ" means. First, Paul leads the Corinthians to reevaluate the core values of following Christ.[273] Second, Paul uses the Corinthians' conflict to defend his apostolic leadership directed against his rivals.[274] Third, Paul intends to shape a shared and consensual identity through language. A distinctive identity can be crafted strategically using rhetoric to compare and contrast the interlopes.[275] Researchers argued that "such a consensus is persuasive because in reflecting the views of people who are similar to self and share the same perspective (rather than the views and perspective of those different from self), it is held to be more informative about the underlying reality."[276] In 2022, a new approach linking identity leadership and leader identity offers a unique lens to understand Paul's identity as a divine-commissioned agent (2 Cor.11:1; 11:23).

---

[270] Esler, *Conflict and Identity in Romans*, 38.

[271] According to the SIA to leadership, a leader is responsible for creating a shared and consensual sense of an ingroup member. Those researchers suggest that leaders are the "entrepreneurs of identity". See Steffens et al. "Leadership as Social Identity Management: Introducing the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI) to Assess and Validate a four-dimensional Model," 1004.

[272] Hogg et al. "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 274.

[273] The evidence is in 2 Cor.10:8; 10:17-18; 11:4; 11:23; 12:9-10; 12:14-16; 12:19; 13:9-10.

[274] The evidence is in 2 Cor.10:2; 10:7; 10:15; 11:7; 12:12-15; 11:23.

[275] The establishment of ingroup identity can be achieved by self-categorizing an individual's identity. As suggested by social identity researchers, "In terms of self-categorization theory, then, group memberships are valid psychological components of the individual that, among other things, provide the basis both (a) for validation (and invalidation) of individual cognitions and (b) the emergence of ingroup consensus." In other words, identity formation "is an embodiment of the social influence process and is believed to originate in the need of people to reach agreement with others perceived as interchangeable in respect of relevant attributes." See Haslam et al. "Salient Group Memberships and Persuasion: The Role of Social Identity in the Validation of Beliefs," in *What's Social About Social Cognition*? 37-38. The subsequent chapters will apply these perspectives related to identity formation to examine different social groups.

[276] Haslam et al. "Salient Group Memberships and Persuasion: The Role of Social Identity in the Validation of Beliefs," in *What's Social About Social Cognition*? 38.

Paul is not merely a leader but a mission-driven apostle who seeks to shape the Corinthians' identity towards obedience to Christ.

In conclusion, our comprehensive exploration of the SIA to leadership and its foundational conceptual framework underscores the complexity inherent in effective leadership, as social psychologists recognized. The consensus among scholars in the field highlights the importance of a leader's capacity to establish a positive and prototypical social identity among group members while skillfully managing the boundaries of these identities. What sets our research apart is the unique social identity marker, which accentuates the uniqueness of an individual's group membership. In the next chapter, the focus will shift towards analyzing other forms of leadership in the Mediterranean world, thereby enhancing our understanding of the broader context in which Paul's leadership can be situated.

Chapter Four: Leadership in the Qumran Community

In this chapter, we expand upon the comparative framework introduced in Chapter Three by conducting a detailed analysis of the leadership traits found in the Dead Sea Scrolls. Building on the foundation of our earlier discussion, this close comparison will uncover crucial similarities and distinctions, offering a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the unique leadership dynamics at play. Through this method, we aim to shed new light on the defining features that emerge from this comparison. Our investigation is focused on understanding how leaders in this community exercise their leadership to shape the ingroup identity, notably distinguishing themselves from outgroup members, such as the corrupted individuals in Jerusalem. This rigorous exploration and analysis of the leadership provide a robust framework for comparison with Paul's leadership, as revealed in 2 Corinthians 10-13.

The structure of this chapter unfolds in three main sections: First, we will examine the social setting that facilitated the emergence of the Qumran community during the Second Temple Period. SIA researchers argue that effective leadership hinges on the group context. Leaders must understand the group's social context to identify its key traits and set clear identity boundaries. [277] Secondly, we closely scrutinize the relationship between identity formation and the scrolls, probing how the Qumran leaders strategically employ identity rhetoric to fortify the collective identity, particularly regarding superordinate identity within the community. Lastly, we apply the analytical framework of the SIA to leadership, dissecting how Qumran's leaders used various dimensions of leadership to shape the distinctiveness of their group when contrasted with outgroups.

1. The Emergence of the Qumran Community

Scholars widely concur that the emergence of the Qumran community can be attributed to a sectarian movement that traces its roots back to the mid-second century B.C.E.[278] Archaeological findings and external witnesses from antiquity, for example, the

---

[277] Ingroup prototype that "describes and prescribes how one should behave as a group member and how one will be perceived and treated by others." See Barreto, and Hogg, "Influence and Leadership in Small Groups: Impact of Group Prototypicality, Social Status, and Task Competence," 1-2.

[278] Lim and Collins, "Introduction: Current Issues in Dead Sea Scrolls Research," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 5. For a detailed discussion, Lim and Collins' book contains a number of scholarly articles which have extensively covered different topics of the studies on the Dead Sea Scrolls, see Timothy H. Lim and John J. Collins, *The Oxford Handbook of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Oxford: OUP, 2010); Concerning the historical and archaeological issue of the Dead Sea Scrolls, see Jodi Magness, *The Archaeology of Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002); Hanan Eshel, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Hasmonean State* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008); The introductory section of James C. VanderKam, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today*.

writings of Josephus, Philo of Alexandria, and Pliny the Elder,[279] suggest that the Qumran settlement was founded by a sectarian group committed to embodying a distinctively "pious" way of life.[280] Scholars have also argued that there was a close affinity between the Qumran sect and the Zadokite priests.[281] This group's motivation stemmed from a dual insistence: first, the sect insisted on setting themselves apart from the Jerusalem priesthood, viewed as an adversarial outgroup. The embodiment of a "pious" life served as a distinct identity marker for the Qumran community, positioning themselves as an internal ingroup; secondly, this move explicitly expressed their refusal to accept what they saw as an usurpation of the High Priesthood by the Hasmoneans.[282] Qumran's leaders consistently labelled those priests as the "Wicked priest" and the "Liar" (lQpHab X.9), underscoring the deviance of the traditional priestly system.[283]

According to scholars, "the Wicked Priest" probably pointed to the Hasmonean High Priest. Their rationale is twofold: firstly, the Qumran community contests the legitimacy of the non-Zadokite Hasmonean High Priest, and secondly, these leaders express opposition to the Hellenization of the High Priest by those they are cooperating with the gentiles to attain political power.[284] These factors prompted a faction of the Zadokite high priesthood to establish a new separated "covenant community." The Qumran leaders perceived this separation as a replacement for the perceived corruption within Israel by the Hasmoneans. Wise rightly noted that the Qumran community objected to corrupt individuals, such as the High Priests, Jonathan (152-143 B.C.E.) and Simon Maccabee (142-134 B.C.E.).[285] Wise's theory relies significantly on his interpretation of several Qumran texts, particularly the community's consistent

---

[279] Flavius Josephus, *War* II, 119-61, *Antiquities* XVIII, 18-22; Philo of Alexandria, *That Every Good Man is Free*, 75-91; Pliny the Elder, *Natural History* V, 17,4 [73].

[280] Max Weber views the sect as "that of a religious community founded on voluntary membership achieved through qualification." See David J. Chalcraft, *Sectarianism in Early Judaism: Sociological Advances* (London: Equinox, 2007), 27.

[281] Frank M. Cross, *The Ancient Library of Qumran and Modern Biblical Studies* (New York: Doubleday, 1958); J. T. Milik, *Ten Years of Discovery in the Wilderness of Judaen*. trans. J. Strugnell (London: SCM, 1959); VanderKam, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today*; Geza Vermes, *Dead Sea Scrolls: Qumran Perspective* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981); Hanan Eshel, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Hasmonean State* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 60.

[282] Lim and Collins, "Introduction: Current Issues in Dead Sea Scrolls Research," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 5; Geza Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (London: Penguin Books, 2011), 46; VanderKam, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today*, 127.

[283] Lawrence H. Schiffman, and James VanderKam, "Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls: 2 Volume Set," (Oxford: OUP, 2000), 973-975.

[284] Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 62-63; For a detailed discussion, see Sidnie White Crawford, "The Identification and History of the Qumran Community in American Scholarship," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls in Scholarly Perspective: A History of Research* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 23.

[285] According to Wise, "At any rate, as a non-Zadokite, Jonathan's assumption of high-priestly office was seen as wicked and improper (e.g. VanderKam 1994: 103–4). Hence, the Wicked Priest was probably Jonathan or, as a minority suggests, Simon." See Michael O Wise, "The Origins and History of the Teacher's Movement," in *Oxford Handbook of Dead Sea Scrolls*, 102.

reference to the priest as "the Wicked."

2. The Functions of the Scrolls

Newsom rightly observed, "The essential activities that gave the Qumran community its identity are almost all associated with language."[286] In the 1940s, a significant number of scroll fragments were unearthed in the Qumran region. This discovery continues to captivate scholars' attention, and a considerable focus has been placed on examining the sectarian ideology apparent in these manuscripts. These scrolls, such as the Community Rule (1QS) and the Damascus Document (CD), provide a perspective to understand Qumran's identity formation and ideology. The identity formation of the Qumran community, as revealed by the scrolls discovered in the Qumran caves, was shaped by the community leader. The Maskil, a prominent figure revealed in 1QS, was pivotal in instructing the Qumranites on living their faith and defining the core values and identity descriptors in relation to the ingroup. Within the SIA to leadership framework, the Maskil's responsibility is to shape the group's collective identity.[287] This was achieved through their interpretation of the Torah and the guidance outlined in 1QS.

2.1. The Scrolls and Identity Formation

The scrolls provide a remarkable insight into the Qumran community's beliefs, way of life, and religious practices during the Second Temple Period. They reveal the community's strict adherence to purity laws, a belief in a coming messiah, and an expectation of a final judgment. These writings also shed light on the community's concerns, such as the concepts of "pious" living and how to maintain its boundary within the Qumran community, the adherence to the Torah and associated Rules, the practice of communal living, participation in ritual and ceremony, and insights into marriage, remarkably detailed in the Community Rule (1QS). This strict adherence and belief system provide a lens for modern readers to understand the daily and religious lives of the Qumranites.

According to 1QS and CD, the community leaders, particularly the Maskil (1QS I.1) and the Guardian (CD XIII. 6-9), or at least the instruction attributed to him, play a crucial role in constructing and preserving the identity boundaries among the ingroup members. This leadership style aligns closely with the SIA to leadership, as put forth

---

[286] Carol A. Newsom, *The Self as Symbolic Space: Constructing Identity and Community at Qumran* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 1.

[287] Concerning the Maskil at Qumran, we posit that he was a real leader, particularly fulfilling the role of an instructor or teacher among the Qumranites. See Hans Kosmala, "Maskil," *Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society* 5.1 (1973): 240; Joseph L. Angel, "Maskil, Community, and Religious Experience in the Songs of the Sage (4Q510–511)," *Dead Sea Discoveries* 19 (2012): 2.

by Hogg et al. It suggests that leaders, by engaging in influential and effective communication within the group, essentially function as identity entrepreneurs. This means that leaders are not just maintaining a close relationship with followers but also shaping the prototypicality and collective values of the group. The Maskil, as portrayed in 1QS, strategically and deliberately employs language to shape social perceptions regarding group salience and objectives, thereby significantly influencing ingroup beliefs and behaviours.[288]

2.2. Leadership in the Qumran Communities

Newman recently argues, "Sacral status, and thus authority, inheres in leadership figures in the movement, particularly the Teacher of Righteousness…and the Maskil, a chief officer, who offers inspired interpretation of earlier scripture in new compositions. The Pesharim, connected to the Teacher, and the Hodoyot, connected to the Maskil, contain explicit and implicit interpretations of scripture that become new revelatory sites."[289] Bakker[290] and Uusimäki[291] further argued that the Maskil is an exemplary of the community. As Bakker argues, Maskil "designate[s] a persona or exemplary figure with which a community identified."[292] These notions benefit our understanding of Maskil's leadership role. In the Qumranites' perception, the Maskil is a divine agent who actively shapes the collective identity of the Qumran ingroup members (1QS I.1-2). Although the historical Maskil is in debate, this chapter aims to examine the leadership model of Maskil.

The Maskil employs authoritative language (1QS III.13-27), particularly in interpreting the Torah and punishment (1QS V). The Maskil seeks to shape and uphold the Qumran community's identity through these actions. The interpretation of the Torah demonstrates informative influence, while the regulation of punishment signifies normative influence. In the Qumran sect, the Maskil's leading position derived from divine commission legitimates his authority. It empowers him to wield influence the ingroup members, namely, the Qumranites, on how to embody their faith. The rhetorical language utilized by the Qumran's leaders (1QS I.1-2; CD XIII.15) becomes a potent

---

[288] Hogg et al. "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 277-278.

[289] Judith H. Newman, *Before the Bible: The Liturgical Body and the Formation of Scriptures in Early Judaism* (Oxford: OUP, 2018), 15.

[290] Arjen F. Bakker, *The Secret of Time: Reconfiguring Wisdom in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Leiden: Brill, 2023), 40-41.

[291] Elisa Uusimäki, *Lived Wisdom in Jewish Antiquity Studies in Exercise and Exemplarity* (London: T&T Clark, 2021), 27.

[292] Bakker, *The Secret of Time: Reconfiguring Wisdom in the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 40.

tool in defining and reinforcing the ingroup identity of the Qumran community.[293]

2.3. Redescribing the Role of the Maskil in the SIA to Leadership Framework

In examining the leadership within the community, two significant and extensive texts, namely the Community Rule (QS) and the Damascus Document (CD), have illuminated a highly similar organizational structure and leadership position within the communities.[294] The community limited the number of individuals allowed to assume leadership positions. Examples include Priest (כהן), Paqid (קיד), Mebaqqer (מבקר), Maskil (משכיל), Judges (שופטים).[295] According to the SIA to leadership, "Leaders need to be entrepreneurs of identity",[296] which means a leader is not only a group member who maintains a close relationship with followers but also wields influence to shape the prototypicality and collective values of the group.[297] As Steffen et al. suggested, leaders are crafters of collective identity-"we" and "us" within a group.[298] These perspectives enhance our comprehension of leadership dynamics within the Qumran community.

"Group beliefs" are defined by Daniel Bar-Tal as "convictions that group members (a) are aware that they share and (b) consider as defining their 'groupness'"[299] According to SCT, group members intentionally assimilate group beliefs to define "who they are", ascertain the significance of the ingroups, by accentuating the similarities of ingroup members, and recognize distinctions from outgroup members. As SIA

---

[293] Hogg et al. "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 277.

[294] In view of Regev, the sect could be distinguished into two distinct groups: Yahad and Camp, according to 1QS and CD. He offered a detailed examination in his work *Sectarianism in Qumran: A Cross-Cultural Perspective*, 163-196; Jokiranta, *Social Identity and Sectarianism in the Qumran Movement*, 48-49. For the investigation with respect to the functionaries within two sectarian communities, see Colin G. Kruse, "Community Functionaries in the Rule of the Community and the Damascus Document: A Test of Chronological Relationships," 543-551.

[295] For the research with respect to the structure in the Qumran community, see John J. Collins, "The Yaʿad and "The Qumran Community," in *Biblical Traditions in Transmission Essays in Honor of Michael A. Knibb*; Collins, "Forms of the Community in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Emanuel Studies in Hebrew Bible, Septuagint and Dead Sea Scrolls in honor of Emanuel Tov*, ed. Shalom M. Paul (Leiden: Brill, 2003); Charlotte Hempel, "Maskil(im) and Rabbim: From Daniel to Qumran," in *Biblical Traditions in Transmission Essays in Honour of Michael A. Knibb*; Hempel, "Community Structures in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Admission, Organization, Disciplinary Procedure," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls after Fifty Years: A Comprehensive Assessment*, vol. 2. ed. Peter W. Flint and James C. Vanderkam (Leiden: Brill, 1999). Collins argued that the Essenes were very aware of their identity as "the sons of Zadok" (צדוק בני), "sons of Aaron" (אהרון בני) and "the Levites" (הלוים). These designations show the leader's legitimacy and indicate the leader's embodiment of the ingroup prototype. See John J. Collins, "Forms of the Community in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Emanuel Studies in Hebrew Bible, Septuagint and Dead Sea Scrolls in Honor of Emanuel Tov*, 110.

[296] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 70.

[297] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 45-46.

[298] Steffen et al. "Leadership as Social Identity Management: Introducing the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI) to Assess and Validate a Four-dimensional Model," 1004.

[299] Daniel Bar-Tal, *Group Beliefs: A Conception for Analyzing Group Structure, Processes, and Behavior* (New York: SSSP, 1990), 36.

researchers suggested, the individual's identity can be shaped by self-categorization, which "energize[s] group members in the service of a common purpose by offering them both a sense of collective self-belief and a sense of a collective to believe in."[300] This sheds light upon the role of the Qumran's leaders, such as the Maskil, who emerge as a key figure responsible for transforming ingroup beliefs as well as proper behaviour by 1QS, as per their distinct interpretation of the Torah (1QS I.1-20). Thus, the Maskil carries a twofold responsibility in shaping the collective beliefs of the Qumranites.

Firstly, as God's agent (1QS I.1-2; IX.12-15), the Maskil is tasked with preserving and overseeing the identity boundaries and contents pertaining to the "Community", aiming to maintain the distinctive identity of ingroup members. 1QS I.3-5 states that the Maskil is responsible for instructing the Qumranites to learn the Community Rule. Their shared group beliefs and identity markers include seeking God with a whole heart of soul and doing good and right things before God. Significantly, the ingroup members "may love all He has chosen and hate all He has rejected." "The Chosen" refers to the group members who have asserted their willingness to enter the community to distinguish themselves from the corrupted individuals (1QS V.7-10). This ideology is shown in 1QS II.24, "For all shall be in a Community of truth…" reflects that complete adherence to the community regulations is an obligation on every ingroup member to obey the leaders and the community.

The Maskil's responsibility also includes reinforcing the ingroup identity and its boundaries. It is primarily achieved through the regulations established in the Community Rule, such as "Let no man address his companion with anger…" (1QS V.25) and "And they shall all sit before him [Priest] according to their rank…" (1QS V.14). As the Maskil's leadership is endorsed by the divine, enabling him to exercise normative influence. That guides the Qumranites to live out their faith correctly within the community. In other words, Maskil's leadership is used to redefine and categorize the identity boundary of ingroup members.

As Reicher and Hopkin discovered, the speaker can execute "a category construction so as to (a) present her/his party as clearly included in an ingroup which includes the entire intended audience, but which excludes the intended antagonist and (b) to present opposition to this antagonist as consonant with the ingroup stereotype." This sheds light on leaders' strategic use of rhetoric to shape the ingroup and outgroup identity, primarily through comparisons. The distinctiveness of the identity is not a

---

[300] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology to Leadership*, 53.

mere coincidence but a carefully crafted outcome of strategic rhetoric. Leaders also use their leadership to convey the group visions and meanings to ingroup members.[301]

Following this, secondly, the Maskil is a figurehead and a proactive leader tasked with inspiring the community to establish a new social order. As proposed by leadership theorists, the content of influence will be constrained by the group meanings associated with their social identity, and social identity is primarily shaped by the leader.[302] Acting as active agents, leaders are responsible for imbuing the beliefs, shaping the prototypicality, and cultivating the group's visions. Within the Qumran community, "The Maskil shall instruct all the sons of light and shall teach them the nature of all the children of men according to the kind of spirit which they possess" (1QS III.13-14).

"Sons of Light" represents an ingroup member who is obedient to the Maskil's teaching and community rules and adopts a specific perspective to understand the world. For example, in 1QS III.20, the sons of the light world are ruled by the "Prince of Light", and the children of injustice are governed by the "Angel of Darkness." The Qumranites, by choosing to follow the path of the sons of light, should embrace the ingroup values of "humility, patience, abundant charity, unending goodness, and intelligence: (a spirit of) mighty wisdom which trust in all deeds of God…" (1QS IV.2-4). Their rewards are "great peace in a long life, and fruitfulness, together with every ever-lasting blessing and eternal joy in life without end, a crown of group…" (1QS IV.6-7). In contrast, when the individuals choose to walk in the darkness. Consequently, "their generations shall be spent in sorrowful mourning and in bitter misery and in calamities of darkness until they are destroyed without remnant or survivor" (1QS IV.13-15). The above instances have clearly shown that the Maskil adopts such ingroup core values to shape its identity and promote a new social order that encompasses a shared vision for the Qumran community. This social order guides the Qumranite's view of themselves and the outgroup members.

As proposed by the approach of identity leadership, "The individuals define themselves not only as individuals but also in terms of group memberships bound up with organizational life" and "The self is not fixed but flexible and sensitive to social context."[303] Due to the conflict with Jerusalem's perceived corrupted priesthood, the

---

[301] Hogg et al. "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 277.

[302] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 128.

[303] Neela S Mühlemann et al. "Understanding Responses to an Organizational Takeover: Introducing the Social Identity Model of Organizational Change," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* (2022):1005.

Qumran community, emerging as a newly formed social group during the Second Temple Period, featured leaders who played an essential role in shaping their ingroup's distinctive identity. The leader's responsibility was to urge the Qumranites to maintain their allegiance to the group, particularly by adhering to the strict regulations associated with their prototypicality, such as "righteousness, justice, loving-kindness and humility" (1QS VIII.1-2). The construction and reinforcement of a distinct ingroup identity can be achieved through the utilization of community regulations and the comparison with outgroup members.

3. The Maskil's Leadership in Light of the SIA to Leadership

In 2013, Jutta Jokiranta utilized Social Identity Theory and its analytical frameworks to examine sectarian ideology in the Qumran community. She contended, "The social identity approach has only recently appeared in biblical studies, and it has not yet been extensively used."[304] Jokiranta has emerged as a forerunner in applying SIA's perspectives to interpret Qumran's texts, asserting that this model offers a rich analytical perspective to investigate the relationship between the texts and the process of identity formation.[305]

Her work holds merit in demonstrating how sectarian texts strategically shape the social identity of the Qumran members.[306] However, an important aspect requiring further investigation is how the community leaders adopt a set of regulations, such as those in the Community Rule and Damascus Document, to construct and reinforce the distinctive identity of the Qumran members. This gap presents an opportunity for this chapter to examine the relationships between leadership and identity formation within the Qumran community. In the following section, the Four-dimensional leadership aspects will be applied to explore the leadership features of the Maskil, one of the leaders among the Qumranites.

3.1. Divine Commission

When examining the leadership of the Qumran leader, it's crucial to note that a divine endorsement plays a significant role in legitimizing the Maskil's assumption of a leadership role (1QS I.1; III.13). Recent research suggested by leader identity theorists claims that "Perceivers hold in memory a well-elaborated category structure that

---

[304] Jokiranta, *Social Identity and Sectarianism in the Qumran Movement*, 77.
[305] Jokiranta, *Social Identity and Sectarianism in the Qumran Movement*, 87-89.
[306] Jokiranta explicitly mentioned that the focus of her work was to inquire about the dialogue between the Qumran members and the texts and the role of *Serakhim* in formulating the ingroup identity. See *Social Identity and Sectarianism in the Qumran Movement*, 90. This study is relevant as it provides a case study of how social identity can influence group dynamics and conflict within a religious community.

includes the features that distinguish leaders from non-leaders."[307] This divine authority grants him the power to instruct the Qumranites, a form of leadership charisma suggested by leader identity theory. This perception aids individuals in self-identifying as leaders, enabling them to teach and instruct the members more authoritatively.[308] Based on this divine commission, the Maskil can exercise his authoritative leadership to construct a new identity for the "Sons of Light." Among the Qumranites, individuals decide to "submit freely to his truth" (1QS I.11) and "enter the Rule of Community" (1QS.I.16). The ingroup members should "establish a covenant before God to carry out all that he commanded and in order not to stray from following him out of any fear, dread, or testing (that might occur) during the dominion of Belial" (1QS I.16-18). This text attests that the Qumran members exhibit a profound commitment to their community, which fosters ingroup cohesion and solidarity.

The Qumran leaders curse all outgroup members, viewing them as violators of God's covenant and followers of Belial (1QS II.4-10). This negative outgroup stereotype serves to devalue the beliefs those outgroup members uphold. As SIA researchers suggested, "When people define themselves in terms of a given social identity, they are motivated to see that (in) group ('us') as positively distinct from other comparison (out) groups ('them'). This perspective helps us to examine Maskil's leadership. On the one hand, the Maskil seeks to differentiate himself and ingroup members from the outgroup (1QS II.10). This delineates clear identity boundaries for "Sons of Light," particularly those who decide to adhere to the norms and beliefs to show their commitment to the community. The role of the Maskil in this differentiation process is crucial, as it helps maintain the ingroup's distinct identity.[309]

On the other hand, the Maskil intends to establish a positive identity for the ingroup; as discussed in the previous chapter, recognizing a positive identity effectively fosters group cohesion. In this case, the Maskil employs "Sons of Light" (1QS I.9) and "Community of Truth" (1QS II.23)" not only to construct a superordinate identity that binds all ingroup members together but also to remind them that they will receive rewards from God (1QS IV.6-7).

---

[307] Robert G. Lord et al. "Implicit Leadership Theories, Implicit Followership Theories, and Dynamic Processing of Leadership Information," *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior* (2019): 2.

[308] Haslam et al. "Reconciling Identity Leadership and Leader Identity: A Dual-identity Framework," 5.

[309] "He [ingroup member] should swear by the covenant to be segregated from all the men of injustice who walk 11 along the path of wickedness" in 1QS V.10-11.

3.2. Examining Identity Entrepreneurs in the Qumran Community
3.2.1. The Establishment of the Superordinate Ingroup Identity

According to the SIA to leadership, leaders need to be identity entrepreneurs. Leaders should act as agents, crafting a collective identity for themselves and their associated group.[310] Social identity psychologists introduced the concept of a "superordinate identity," which means "the inclusion of the sub-level outgroup in one's extended self."[311] This identification is formed based on the group's perceived similarities and shared characteristics, values, beliefs, and objectives. A superordinate identity arises when individuals see themselves as part of a larger collective that shares common goals and values, leading to a stronger sense of unity and cohesion within the group.

Upon examining the Qumran community through their texts, a group of leaders is responsible for defining, maintaining, and characterizing the distinct identity of the Qumranites in terms of "of Israel" (1QS VI.13). Significantly, these leaders are commanded by the authors of QS and CD to construct an explicit self-identification for Qumran community members, encapsulated in designations such as "Covenant of the Community" (1QS VIII.16), "Foundation of Truth in Israel" (1QS V.5), "Sons of Zadok" (CD IV. 3), "Men of the New Covenant" (CD *Geniza B*.19), and "Repentant of Israel" (CD VI.5). These identities help the ingroup members to develop a new understanding of themselves and their group.

Being a member of the "Son of Light", "they shall separate from the congregation of the men of injustice and shall unite, concerning the Law and possessions, under the authority of the sons of Zadok" (1QS V.1-2). Ingroup members should fully obey the Qumranites' leader, namely the Priest (1QS V.2-3). Significantly, 1QS V.3-4 states that Qumran member have "to achieve together truth and humility, justice and uprightness, compassionate love and seemly behaviour in all their paths." Notably, these individuals are expected to embody shared core values.

The functions of superordinate identity are at least twofold. First, it is a reference point for fostering group cohesion and subgroup comparison. Strong identification with this superordinate identity is expected to result in ingroup favouritism and devaluation of the outgroup. Second, as indicated in Hornsey and Hogg's research, it effectively

---

[310] Haslam et al. *The New Social Psychology of Leadership*, 70; Nonhlanhla Khumalo et al. "Leaders' Influence on Collective Action: An Identity Leadership Perspective," *The Leadership Quarterly* 33.4 (2022): 30.
[311] Michael Wenzel et al. "Superordinate identities and intergroup conflict: The ingroup projection model," *European Review of Social Psychology* 18.1 (2007): 363.

reduces intergroup tensions, mainly promoting intergroup harmony. [312] These psychological perspectives provide valuable insights to elucidate the identity formation and strategic use of leadership in Qumran.

3.2.2. The Descendant of the Priestly System

In John S. Bergsma's assertion, the Qumran's leadership viewed themselves as the continuation of Aaron and Zadok's priesthood. As pointed out, "This is a society governed by priests who are proud of their Levitical, Aaronic, and Zadokite lineages." [313] This identity continuation carries two significant functions.

Firstly, the legitimization of Maskil's leadership and its position. In 1QS I.3 and IX.12-26, the Maskil views himself as a legitimate leader and his responsibility to instruct the ingroup members following the teachings of Moses' Law and the Prophets. The Maskil, probably a council member, "shall be founded on truth, to be an everlasting plantation, a holy house for Israel and the foundation of the holy of holies for Aaron" (1QS VIII.5-6). Thus, as a descendant of Aaron and Zadok, the Maskil not only instructs ingroup members "to do what is good and just before God" (1QS I.2-3) but also embrace the core values of the group (1QS IX.10-15). From this perspective, the Maskil is a leader and an ingroup member. This leadership feature aligns with the "Leader-Group Identity Fusion" concept, suggesting that the leader not only harbours a strong sense of their own personal identity as a leader but also grounds this identity in an equally strong sense shared with fellow ingroup members.

Secondly, the continuation of the identity of the Maskil engenders leadership effectiveness. As SIA's researchers suggested, when a leader can be "an exemplary of group members, particularly through his/her embodiment of a shared vision."[314] "Born of Israel" (1QS VI.14) has two meanings: firstly, the Qumranites view themselves "as the true Israel, separated from both errant Jews and the non-Jewish world, they could live a life of perfect holiness and sanctity in their ancestral land." [315] Secondly, it underscores the continuation of identity between Qumranites, including the Maskil and Aaron and Israel's holy, pious community. For instance, "God will purify every deed of man with His truth" (1QS IV.21) and "He will cleanse him of all wicked deeds with the

---

[312] Matthew J. Hornsey, and Michael A. Hogg, "Subgroup Relations: A Comparison of Mutual Intergroup Differentiation and Common Ingroup Identity Models of Prejudice Reduction," *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 26.2 (2000): 254.

[313] John S. Bergsma, "'Qumran Self-Identity: 'Israel' or 'Judah'?" *Dead Sea Discoveries* 15 (2008): 187-188.

[314] Steffens et al. "Leadership as Social Identity Management: Introducing the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI) to Assess and Validate a Four-dimensional Model,"1003.

[315] Lawrence H. Schiffman, "Israel" in *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. Lawrence H. Schiffman, and James C. VanderKam (Oxford: OUP, 390).

spirit of holiness, like purifying waters" (1QS IV.22-23).

The text also indicates that "[the Qumranites] shall be ruled by the first directives which the men of the Community began to be taught until the prophet comes, and the Messiahs of Aaron and Israel" (1QS IX.10-11). This is explicable in terms of the concept of "Social Identity Continuity," which posits that "Social identities are temporally situated people tend to have shared representations of their group's history, which helps shape their understanding of who they are in the present and who they might be in the future."[316] This sheds light on the social context and content as essential elements to define a group's identity.

The Qumran's leaders self-define as God's chosen priesthood, intentionally drawing the differentiation between themselves and the dominion of Belial. This identification aims to respond to the identity threats posed by this outgroup, mainly the Maskil reminds the ingroup members not to return to sins. As 1QS II.15-20, "He shall cut off from the midst of all the sons of light and because he has turned aside from God on account of his idols…" This social phenomenon can be elucidated by social identity theorizing. First, individuals can achieve self-enhancement in group contexts by identifying with valued groups. They acquire positive values and self-esteem by internalizing the group's identity (1QS I.20-21). Secondly, when a person's positive self-concept is threatened by negative feedback, they can compensate by affirming themselves in another domain or distancing themselves from an identity threat.[317] Therefore, the Maskil frequently reminds the Qumranites that they are the "sons of Light" and "true Israel," reinforcing their identity with these specific designations. This aligns with SIA to leadership, arguing that leaders are the "agents of continuity." It means leaders are those who can "preserve" identity continuity, particularly in the face of external threats posed by outgroups.[318]

3.2.3. The Authority of the Interpretation of the Word

Within the Qumran community, the process of identity formation undoubtedly intertwined with the Maskil's rhetoric, which stemmed from their Torah's interpretation. The accuracy of interpreting the Torah word according to divine inspiration becomes central to leaders' responsibilities. Scholars have agreed that the primary function of

---

[316] Hema P. Selvanathan et al. "How Being Rooted in the Past Can Shape the Future: The Role of Social Identity Continuity in the Wish for a Strong Leader," *The Leadership Quarterly* 33.4 (2022): 2.

[317] Choi, and Hogg, "Who do You think You are? Ingroup and Outgroup Sources of Identity Validation," 2.

[318] Hema P. Selvanathan et al. "How Being Rooted in the Past Can Shape the Future: The Role of Social Identity Continuity in the Wish for a Strong Leader," 9.

the Maskil was to serve as an interpreter of God's Word and as an instructor guiding Qumran members to behave well.[319] As Eyal Regev has suggested, possessing God's word rendered the Maskil a sage capable of delivering "secret wisdom" related to God. This possession, in other words, underscores the role of the Maskil in discerning the distinctive boundaries between ingroup and outgroup members. For instance, in 1QS IX.13-15 and in CD, the "overseer" of a camp was responsible for instructing the community about the "works of God" (CD XIII.7-8).

Along these lines, on the one hand, leaders act as "guardians" of the Covenant (1QS V.2), ensuring guidance for members in maintaining proper behaviour within communal life (1QS V.9-10 and CD XIII.7-12). They, relying on their fresh interpretation and understanding of the Torah, continuously to establish the identity markers of the Qumran community. As Bakker rightly notes, the Maskil's primary task is "to instruct." [320] On the other hand, as Miller pointed out, the "Mebaqqer" ("Overseer") cultivates core beliefs and imparts a proper understanding of the Torah to the Community, as seen in the Hodayot.[321] According to Bakker, the Maskil "who not only transmits knowledge but also forms a community that can continue the transmission of knowledge and formation of teachers into the future."[322] In light of the SIA to leadership, language is a powerful tool for defining, creating, and managing the identity markers concerning ingroup identity and content.[323] Leaders can enhance their effectiveness through effective communication, particularly by delivering powerful messages that reduce subjective identity uncertainty among the members.[324]

In the context of the Qumran community, the Maskil represents the "House of the Truth." The Maskil holds a precise understanding of the Torah according to divine inspiration.[325] As Ozier rightly points out, as a divine agent, the Maskil actively

---

[319] Bakker, "Redefining the Sage," 45-46; David Michael Ozier, "Walking in the Spirit in Galatians: Comparing Obedience and Agency in Galatians, 1QS, and 4 Maccabees" (PhD Diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2023), 40. In 1QS I, 1: [The Master shall teach the sai]nts to live {according to the Book} (4Q225, 257) of the Community [Rul]e, that they may seek God with a whole heart and soul, and do what is good and right before Him as He commanded by the hand of Moses and all His servants the Prophets;...." For a detail discussion, see Shem Miller, "The Role of Performance and the Performance of Role: Cultural Memory in the Hodayot," *JBL* 137. 2 (2018): 359-382; Hempel, "Maskil(im) and Rabbim: From Daniel to Qumran," in *Biblical Traditions in Transmission Essays in Honour of Michael A. Knibb*, 141-156.
[320] Bakker, "Redefining the Sage," 46.
[321] Shem Miller, "The Role of Performance and the Performance of Role: Cultural Memory in the Hodayot," *JBL* 137.2 (2018): 359.
[322] Bakker, "Redefining the Sage," 48.
[323] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 162-163.
[324] Hogg, "Uncertainty–Identity Theory," *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* 39 (2007): 71.
[325] Lesile W. Walck, "Truth," in *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 950-952.

instructs the Qumran people to do good according to God-giving knowledge.[326] This implies that God has imparted wisdom upon him to interpret the Torah. Such interpretative perspectives allow the Maskil to instruct and guide the Qumranites on living out the faith based on the Torah teaching, as Moses and the prophets have done in the past.

3.2.4. Identity Boundary Management

A distinct identity can be established through the process of self-categorization among ingroup members, such as urging the ingroup members to adopt the designation "Community" (1QS VI.15;18) and "Priest of Aaron." This premise involves managing identity boundaries in terms of "we-ness" and "a shared and consensual identity" through comparisons with outgroups. As CD XIII.12-13 highlighted, "No members of the camp are allowed to bring anyone in the group" without the Overseer's permission. This text clearly states the leaders' obligation to regulate the identity boundary between ingroup and outgroup, aiming to establish a clear distinction from those outside the group. As Gärtner argued, the Qumran community frequently highlighted the concept of a "New Temple" to distinguish themselves from Jerusalem's priesthood.[327] Scholars like Davies[328] and Swarup[329] argued that this sectarian ideology positioned them as representatives of "New" and "True" Israel, given the fact that this emphasis serves to make a more evident differentiation between the Qumran community and the perceived transgressions of the Wicked priests. It contributes to the construction of a more defined sense of the ingroup.[330]

Following this thought, the superordinate identity, for instance, "Sons of Aaron", often stands in contrast to those following the "Children of Darkness" (1QS I.10) and the "Spirit of Falsehood" (1QS IV.9), as perceived by the Maskil as an outgroup, namely dominion of Belial (1QS I.22-23), violating the teachings of God. Given this, the "Sons of Aaron" identity is shaped primarily by the guidance of the Maskil in alignment with

---

[326] For a detailed discussion, see Ozier, "Walking in the Spirit in Galatians: Comparing Obedience and Agency in Galatians, 1QS, and 4 Maccabees," 40-44.

[327] In Gärtner, the Essenes regarded themselves as the "New Temple" that implied: first, the Essene movement? was a replacement of the official temple; secondly, they had to observe purity laws for the sake of differentiation. See Bertil Gärtner, *The Temple and the Community in Qumran and the New Testament: A Comparative Study in the Temple Symbolism of the Qumran Texts and the New Testament* (Cambridge: CUP, 1965), 16-23.

[328] Philip R. Davies, "'Old' and 'New' Israel in the Bible and the Qumran Scrolls: Identity and Difference," in *Defining Identities: We, You, and the Other in the Dead Sea Scrolls Proceedings of the Fifth Meeting of the IOQS in Groningen* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 33.

[329] Paul Swarup, *The Self-Understanding of the Dead Sea Scrolls Community: An Eternal Planting, a House of Holiness* (London: Bloomsbury, 2006), 193-196.

[330] Hogg, "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 282.

his Torah's interpretation. As SIA theorized, inter-individual attraction is crucial in generating group solidarity by reducing subjectivity and uncertainty about ingroup and answering the question "Who am I?" In other words, the construction of a shared understanding of a group, for example, understanding the Torah, can foster its cohesiveness and mutual attraction as group norms and values bind up the ingroup members.[331] From the above perspective, ingroup boundaries can be constructed and managed by purity laws advocated by the leaders of Qumran.

The holiness can be seen as distinct boundaries between ingroup and outgroup members, closely associated with terms such as "Aaron" and "House of the Truth of Israel."[332] Newsom further suggests that Qumran leaders strategically employed rhetoric techniques to convey the "we" versus "other" ideology,[333] with the purity code being a notable example of this strategy. Indeed, this concept aligns with the SIA to leadership, which posits that the effective use of identity rhetoric can establish ingroup markers, group norms, collective behaviours, and identity boundaries.[334] In short, the leaders aim to forge a distinctive identity for the Qumranites by strictly adhering to purity laws, thereby setting them apart.

In summary, the SIA to leadership posits that leaders should act as identity entrepreneurs, actively crafting a shared sense of ingroup. In terms of "we-ness", the Maskil uses languages, such as instruction and Torah interpretation, and punishment to define ingroup core values and visions, and ideal group prototypes,[335] particularly through their exemplary. In addition, the superordinate identity of the Qumranites, such as "Community" and "Sons of Light", is embodied in the new identity. This identity categorization process goes beyond mere labels. It encapsulates the fundamental values and beliefs of the Qumranites while establishing distinct boundaries between themselves and outgroups.

3.3. Examining the Leader's Prototypicality in the Qumran Community

The prototypicality of a leader describes the influential leaders who are expected to

---

[331] Michael A. Hogg, and Elizabeth A. Hardie, "Social Attraction, Personal Attraction, and Self-Categorization-a Field Study," *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 17.2 (1991): 179.

[332] As Klawans argued, "The Qumran Community was the most rigorous in maintaining purity. The laws of purity and impurity were a central concern for the authors of the Dead Sea Scrolls." See Klawans, "Purity in the Dead Sea Scrolls" in *The Oxford Handbook of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 382.

[333] Newsom, "Constructing 'We, You, and the Others' through Non-Polemical Discourse," in *Defining Identities: We, You, and the Other in the Dead Sea Scrolls Proceedings of the Fifth Meeting of the IOQS in Groningen*, eds., Florentino García Martínez and Mladen Popovic (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 13-21.

[334] Hogg et al. "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 277-278.

[335] Steffens et al. "Leadership as Social Identity Management: Introducing the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI) to Assess and Validate a Four-dimensional Model," 1004.

embody the distinctive qualities which define the group and encapsulate what it entails to be a member of this group.[336] This embodiment is instrumental in setting the ingroup apart, making it unique. A central expectation among ingroup members involves being exemplary and serving as a model member within the group.[337] This insight is reflected in how leaders at Qumran are instructed to be demonstrated as role models for the community members, especially embodying the desired qualities and behaviors that align with the group's identity and values. Thus, we find in 1 QS IX 12, "These are the regulations for the Maskil by which he shall walk with every living being in compliance with the regulation…"[338] The high degree of prototypicality of the leaders, including righteousness, love, and concern within the community, will be examined in the following.

3.3.1. The Leader's Righteousness

The Maskil is a prototype of righteousness, particularly as a judge (1QS IX.17-18). This underscores his key role in guiding and inspiring Qumranites to aspire to the status of a "Son of Righteousness" (1QS IX.14). The concept of "righteousness" has two layers of meaning: firstly, it signifies God's righteousness, encompassing His holiness and the righteous deeds (1QS XI.14), and secondly, it sheds light on the contrast between God's righteousness and human sinfulness (1QS I.26). It reflects the core values that the Qumranites are expected to uphold.

The Maskil is portrayed as an upright and just leader primarily to manage the group's identity (1QS IX.13). 1QS IX.17-18 stipulates that "He [the Maskil] shall impart true knowledge and righteous judgement to those who have chosen the way." In this context, "righteous judgement" is the application of wisdom that originated in God's revelation (1QS IX.14-15).[339] This involves making judgements guided by divine inspiration and divine justice.[340] It can be argued that the Maskil's righteous judgments were instrumental in preserving the Qumran community's identity and purity

---

[336] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 69.

[337] Steffens et al. "Leadership as Social Identity Management: Introducing the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI) to Assess and Validate a Four-dimensional Model," 1003.

[338] In 1QS IX18-19, "He should lead them with knowledge and in this way teach them the mysteries of wonder and truth in the midst of 19 the men of the Community, so that they walk perfectly, one with another, in all that has been revealed to them."

[339] As 1QS IX.16 mentioned, "he [the Maskil] shall judge every man according to his spirit". "His spirit" evidently refers to God's revelation that helps the Maskil to discern the good and the evil members.

[340] On behalf of God, the Maskil assisted God in maintaining the community's purity and holiness, as 1 QS IV.20-21 states, "He (God) will cleanse him of all wicked deeds with the spirit of holiness; like purifying waters, He will shed upon him the spirit of truth (to cleanse him) of all abomination and injustice". The implication is twofold: the Maskil has the authority to approve and terminate the novice's membership. More importantly, this God-granted authority allows the Maskil to discipline the misdeed (1QS VIII.22-23; 4QS 270 fr.7.7).

in alignment with the instructions in 1QS. Through the implementation of stringent judgments and community discipline, the ingroup's norms and values are shaped and reinforced.

Furthermore, Maskil aims to establish a unique identity for the Qumran community. This identity is a testament to God's righteousness and sets them apart from unrighteous individuals. Thus, Maskil embraces and demonstrates the ingroup's core values, functioning as a guide for his members. 1 QS VIII.5 emphasizes the foundation of the community council on truth. This means the regulation governs the code of ethics for ingroup members and leaders.[341] Drawing from identity prototypicality, leaders demonstrating high prototypicality by embodying group beliefs can adeptly lead and influence their followers. This is beneficial to effective leadership as those members perceive the prototypical leaders as authentic representatives of the ingroup. While leaders closely align themselves with established norms and values, their influence in steering the community towards a shared vision is heightened. [342]

3.3.2. The Leader's Compassion

At the core of Qumran's leadership is the embodiment of compassion. This compassion is displayed by a genuine concern for the spiritual well-being of ingroup members (1QS I.4). Despite the Maskil often being portrayed as a stern and disciplined leader, a nuanced dimension of compassion and care is shown in 1QS IX.14-16. "He [the Maskil] should include each one according to the purity of his hands and according to his intellect promote him. And thus shall be his love." It clearly indicates that the author of 1QS instructs the Maskil to care for the Qumranites, particularly "teaching them to learn God's mysteries and truth to guide them to walk perfectly together..."(1QS IX.18). Similarly, in CD XIII.8-10, an overseer is entrusted with the responsibility of nurturing the community with love and commitment to truth.

Mermelstein rightly pointed out that the Qumran group maintains a stringent criterion for extending their love. [343] They reserve this love exclusively for those adhering diligently to the Torah and the Community regulations. Conversely,

---

[341] 4Q265 Fr.7 mentioned that the council consisted of fifteen members. Schiffman argued that the composition of the council was formed by four Levitical families. This implies the sectarians intended to balance power and make fair decisions. See Larry Schiffman, "Utopia and Reality: Political Leadership and Organization in the Dead Sea Scrolls Community," in *Emanuel: Studies in Hebrew Bible, Septuagint and Dead Sea Scrolls in Honor of Emanuel Tov*, ed. Shalom M. Paul (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 419.

[342] Hogg, "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 269.

[343] Ari Mermelstein, "Love and Hate at Qumran: The Social Construction of Sectarian Emotion," *Dead Sea Discoveries* 20 (2013): 246.

individuals transgressing these regulations and the Torah were perceived as adversaries by the Qumran leaders, and they would not extend their love towards them. Newsom argued that this selective disposition manifests the sectarian ideology as "A highly self-conscious enterprise". The identity categorization of "us" and "them"[344] signify a clear differentiation between ingroup and outgroup.

The Maskil instructs the Qumranites that "They may love all the sons of light…and hate all the sons of darkness…" (1QS I.10). Such a perception is consistently evident in 1QS III; IX.21 and CD IV.7-10 to craft clear identity boundaries, primarily distinguishing themselves from the corrupted Judeans. [345] Both sectarian texts underscore the Qumran community's clear division of individuals into two distinct groups. This is exemplified as loving "all the sons of light, each one according to his lot in God's plan" in 1QS I. 9-10; 1QS I. 3-4.

3.4. Examining Leader's Identity Advancement

SIA's researchers argue, "Leaders need to be in-group champions." This refers to leaders who must be seen serving and acting for the group, mainly promoting the group's collective interests. This visibility of leaders championing the group's interests can attract followers and effectively motivate in-group members to change.[346]

Evidence of identity advancement is rarely found in the Qumran scrolls. This leadership aspect is presented in CD XIII.9-10, where the author instructs the Guardian of the camp "shall have pity on them like a father on his sons, and will heal all the afflicted among them like a shepherd his flock. He will undo all the chains which bind them so that there will be neither harassed nor oppressed in his congregation." The metaphor shows that a leader must show compassion and provide healing towards the Qumranites, akin to the role of a father on God's behalf. This aligns with social identity theorizing, claiming that "leaders' ability to influence followers results from their being perceived to promote the interests of a higher-order collective rather than merely their personal interests."[347] However, the leaders in 1QS and CD are less concerned about

---

[344] Newsom, "Constructing 'We, You, and the Others' through Non-Polemical Discourse," 13-14.

[345] Mermelstein, "Love and Hate at Qumran: The Social Construction of Sectarian Emotion," 246. Akiyama has recently argued that the Essenes' understanding of "love and hatred" drew heavily from Lev.19:18. In that account, "loving" the neighbour and "hating" the wicked was a central motif within the Essene community. They simplified this into a dualistic worldview to differentiate themselves from the fallen priests. See Kengo Akiyama, *The Love of Neighbour in Ancient Judaism: The Reception of Leviticus 19:18 in the Hebrew Bible, the Septuagint, the Book of Jubilees, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the New Testament* (Leiden: Brill, 2018).

[346] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 69.

[347] Steffens et al. "True to What We Stand for: Championing Collective Interests as a Path to Authentic Leadership," 728.

sacrificing themselves for the community.

3.5. Examining the Leader as an Identity Embedder

The SIA's researchers suggest that translating a sense of social identity into social reality is crucial.[348] This implies that leaders are pivotal in physically organizing group events, rituals, activities, and ceremonies to bring the group beliefs into actualization and materialization. In this sense, "Leaders need to be embedders of identity",[349] and recent research also suggests that the enactment of identity is vital for the effectiveness of religious leadership.[350] This leadership feature can be widely observed among the Qumran community. In 1QS V.7-9, novices must swear a special oath before entering the community. This action means they "walk with every living being in compliance with the regulation…." (1QS IX.12) The novices' code of conduct should be evaluated by leaders annually (1QS VI.17). This highlights that Qumran's leadership has a role in supervising the members' deeds to ensure their compliance with order (1QS VI.15-17). For example, "if he (ingroup member) has failed to care for his companion, he shall do penance for three months" (1QS VII.6). Significantly, ingroup members should show their obedience to their regulations.[351]

From the SIA to leadership perspective, the Qumran leaders adopt the regulations to embed the collective sense of "us", allowing the ingroup members to live out their identity. Significantly, purity laws within 1QS take on a performative aspect, assisting ingroup members in actualizing their values and beliefs. The adherence to purity laws aids the Qumran community to live out the identity of "New Israelite," continuing the legacy of the Covenant people. The evidence can be seen in passages such as this one: "This (the Community) is the tested rampart…it will be a house of perfection and truth in Israel in order to establish {/…/} a covenant in compliance with the everlasting decrees" (1 QS VIII.5-10). The community regulation is another evidence which

---

[348] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 69.

[349] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 70.

[350] "Participation allows people…to enact their shared ideas and values. We believe our analysis makes the point that this is not identity enactment as a collective accomplishment but rather a social and collective accomplishment made possible by a shared identity." See Stephen Reicher et al. "Identity Enactment as Collective Accomplishment: Religious Identity Enactment at Home and at a Festival," *British Journal of Social Psychology* 60.2 (2021): 693-694.

[351] Kruse, "Community Functionaries in the Rule of the Community and the Damascus Document: a Test of Chronological Relationships," 547. In the 1970s, Greehy attempted to seek the differences between the Mebaqqer (Overseer) and Episkopos in the Christ group, drawing attention to verbal similarities and analogies seen in these groups. However, his approach was questioned because the designation and function of "overseer" were common in Greco-Roman associations. The verbal similarities alone did not sufficiently convey its significance. Another challenge was that Greehy underestimated the primary role of the overseer, which was to manage their sectarian identity through the enforcement of purity laws. See John Greehy, "The Qumran Mebaqqer and the Christian Episkopos," *Proceedings of the Irish Biblical Association* 2 (1977): 30.

governs all members to behave properly, as the "decrees" stipulated that the member "cannot approach the pure food" and "cannot know anything of their counsels until his deeds have been cleansed from every depravity", and "walking in perfect behaviour". These regulations apply to "all who enter the Community" (1 QS VIII. 17-19) in order to instruct the ingroup members to practice their collective values.

According to Haslam and Reicher, leaders, acting as an identity impresario, make the group vision and shared identity tangible.[352] In the Qumran community, it was imperative to obey community leaders and strictly adhere to the community rules after taking the oath. According to Schiffman, Qumranites often take an oath upon entering the community and undergo a judicial procedure (CD XVI.7-I3). It was also compulsory for new members to take an oath, especially to declare their acceptance of the interpretation of the Torah and adherence to the community regulations.[353] The "oath" can be viewed as an activity that facilitates ingroup members in translating their identity into action. It involves a performative aspect of identity formation, particularly as the Qumranites took the oath before leaders and other members. This action served to make their identity as Qumran members visible.

4. The Leader's Identity and Identity Leadership

Recently, social identity theorists have reiterated that the identities of the most effective and successful leaders are not solely centered on their selves but also encompass relational and collective dimensions, while recognizing (somewhat unexpectedly) that the individual characteristics of a leader are also significant.[354] Thus they have proposed a concept of "Identity fusion", which "can be understood as a form of very high social identification in which the line between personal identity ('me') and social identity ('us') is hard to discern— potentially because it no longer exists."[355] Researchers significantly suggested that "leader has a strong sense of their personal identity as a leader, but this grounded in and emerges form, and an equally strong sense of social identity that they share with fellow ingroup members."[356]

This leadership dimension is apparent in the Qumran community, where the

---

[352] S. Alexander Haslam and Stephen D. Reicher, "Rethinking the Psychology of Leadership: From Personal Identity to Social Identity," *Journal of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences* (2016): 30.

[353] Lawrence H. Schiffman, "Oaths and Vows," in *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 621-622.

[354] Haslam et al. "Reconciling Identity Leadership and Leader Identity: A Dual-Identity Framework," 9-10.

[355] Haslam et al. "Reconciling Identity Leadership and Leader Identity: A Dual-Identity Framework," 10.

[356] Haslam et al. "Reconciling Identity Leadership and Leader Identity: A Dual-Identity Framework," 10.

Maskil's roles are highly specific as he gains the divine commission, as discussed above, which can be considered an external warrant for his leadership. This theological base allows the Maskil to deliver God's instructions, supervise membership enrollment (1QS V.7) and their behaviour, and impose discipline on God's behalf when necessary (1QS III.13-15). Simultaneously, the members see themselves as "Sons of the Light" and the "Community of God." Hence, the collective identity aids the Maskil in understanding both their personal and ingroup identity. This point reflects the identity fusion existing in Maskil's leadership.

Concerning their identity, the Qumran leader exemplifies the process of depersonalization, wherein he is not perceived as a unique individual but as conforming to the relevant ingroup prototype. In 1QS IX.12-14, "These are the regulations for the Instructor [Maskil] by which he shall walk with every living being in compliance with the regulation of every period and in compliance with the worth of each man: he should fulfil the will of God in compliance with all revelation for every period; he should acquire all the wisdom that has been gained according to the periods and the decree of the period…" (1QS IX.12-14). By adhering to this instruction, the Maskil guides the Qumranites in observing the fundamental principles of their faith. He also follows the Community regulations as a member of the "Community." This demonstrates that Qumran leaders are not merely imparting teachings to the group but actively embodying the community's collective beliefs.

In 1QS IX.12 suggests that "These are the regulations for the Instructor [Maskil] by which he shall walk with every living being in compliance with the regulation of every period" (1QS IX.12) as postulated by identity fusion theorizing, the Maskil undergoes a transformative process. His leadership model involves assimilating the values, norms, and behaviour to align with the ingroup prototype. This process of transformation, where the leaders not only instruct the Torah but also undergo a personal transformation to align themselves with the shared identity and values of the community, is a fascinating aspect of the Qumran leadership dynamics.

To conclude, this chapter has utilized the framework of SIA to Leadership to analyze the Qumran texts, aiming to sketch the critical features of Qumran leadership. The outcome of this analysis will serve as a foundational, near-contemporary comparison with Paul's leadership in the last chapters. Using the SIA to leadership as a heuristic model, we illustrated the dynamics between identity formation and leadership in interpreting ancient texts from a group reasonably close to Paul in time and culture. In the next chapter, we will extend our examination of the leader's characteristics within

another Judean social group, specifically Hillel's group.

Chapter Five: Leadership in Hillel's Community

Two research papers from the 2000s highlight the leadership of Hillel the Elder and its potential relevance to contemporary management practices.[357] M. Langbert, and H.H. Friedman asserted the significance of delving into the leadership practices within the Sanhedrin as a means of drawing insights from its historical context.[358] These contemporary researches underscore the remarkable nature of Hillel's leadership, especially in the context of early Judaism's efforts to construct a Judean identity following the catastrophic fall of Jerusalem in 70 C.E. The potential relevance of Hillel's leadership to contemporary management practices adds a practical dimension to our study.

The central aim of this chapter is to closely examine the leadership dynamics within Hillel's community during the first century C.E. We will focus on analyzing the interplay between Hillel the Elder's teachings and the Judean's new identity, which, I will argue, he attempted to form. Additionally, our goal is to explore how the leaders in Hillel's community used rhetoric to help ingroup members to differentiate themselves from the followers of Shammai, representing the outgroup. The results of this investigation will offer material for a comparative analysis of Paul's leadership in 2 Corinthians.

This chapter unfolds in three main sections. First, we will examine the perceptions of Hillel's community and present a brief history of its founder, Hillel the Elder. Second, we will closely examine the relationship between identity formation and Hillel's discourse by investigating how his teachings strategically shaped and reinforced the collective identity of his followers.[359] Lastly, we apply the SIA to leadership, analyzing Hillel's leadership in forming the shared identity of his group, particularly in contrast to Shammai's group.

1. The Emergence of Hillel's Community

To evaluate the historical authenticity of Hillel the Elder, our primary sources are the Mishnah and Talmud.[360] Despite their legendary nature, these texts carry significant

---

[357] Alexander Maune, "Hillel the Elder: A Talmudic Perspective of his Leadership Intelligence," *Risk Governance & Control: Financial Markets & Institutions* 5.2 (2015); Mitchell Langbert, and Hershey H. Friedman, "Perspectives on Transformational Leadership in the Sanhedrin of Ancient Judaism," *Journal of Management History* 41.2 (2003).

[358] Langbert and Friedman in "Perspectives on Transformational Leadership in the Sanhedrin of Ancient Judaism," 199.

[359] The translation and sources of literature are based on www.sefaria.org.

[360] The cornerstone of our study on Hillel the Elder is Pirke 'Abot ('Chapters of the Fathers' ['Pirqe Aboth']), a tractate in the Mishnaic Seder Nezikin. Equally crucial is 'Abot de-Rabbi Natan ('The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan' ['ARN'), one of the Minor Tractates of the Talmud and a commentary on

weight in our understanding of Hillel. Yet Glatzer draws attention to the scarcity of concrete facts about Hillel. Most of the texts have been transmitted as legends by Hillel's followers over the years.[361] Neusner rightly posited that these "Tales" primarily construct Judean identity as a "Disciple of Aaron."[362] However, he was writing before the recent intensive focus on identity in studying ancient Judaism. A more nuanced understanding is possible by examining the identity descriptors in relation to "Disciple of Aaron." The importance of these markers within Pharisaic Judaism became especially pronounced after the Fall of Jerusalem, a critical event that transformed the religious and cultural landscape of the period.

Exploring the origins of the Hillel community, our investigation begins with examining the early history of Hillel the Elder. Hillel was born around 110 B.C.E. and likely died in 10 C.E. He spent his formative years in Babylon and gained recognition for his unwavering commitment to Torah study[363] during the reigns of Herod the Great and Augustus.[364] Hillel emerged as a prominent figure in interpreting the Torah, showcasing a leadership style characterized by humanism and a specific concern for the poor.[365] Glatzer argued the intriguing notion that Qumran theology might have influenced Hillel,[366] but this hypothesis remains speculative due to the lack of sufficient textual evidence.

According to Neusner, "The figure of Hillel dominates the traditions concerning the period from Shema'iah-Abtalion to the destruction of the Temple. We have noted that the whole Houses-tradition, form and substance, reflects equal respect for Shammai and Hillel."[367] Ottenheijm shares Neusner's view, suggesting "[Hillel] who is accredited

---

P. Aboth. For an in-depth exploration of ARN and P. Aboth, refer to the "Introduction" in Judah Goldin's seminal work, *The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955), xvii.

[361] Neusner, *Judaism in the Beginning of Christianity* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1984), 85; Nahum N. Glatzer, *Hillel the Elder: The Emergence of Classical Judaism* (New York: Schoken Books, 1956), 24.

[362] Neusner, *Judaism in the Beginning of Christianity*, 63.

[363] In the traditions concerning Hillel he learned the Torah under two well-known Tanna`im (Rabbinic Sages): Shemaya and Avtalyon, in Jerusalem in about 60 B.C.E. See Pesachim 66a: 8, ARN-B Ch.27; Glatzer, *Hillel the Elder: The Emergence of Classical Judaism*, 24. For a comparison of the teachings of Hillel the Elder and Shammai, see Judah Nadich, *Jewish Legends of the Second Commonwealth* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of American, 1983), 206-207; Solomon Zeitlin, "The Semikah Controversy between the School of Shammai and Hillel," *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 56.3 (1966): 240-244.

[364] Buxbaum, *The Life and Teachings of Hillel*, 9. In Hillel's legend, some claims that Hillel the Elder has taken an official leadership role as *Nasi*. Our position aligns with Van Gorcum, "That such an office even existed in Second Temple times is questionable." See *The Literature of the Sages-First Part: Oral Tora, Halakha, Mishna, Tosefta, Talmud, External Tractates*, ed. Shmuel Safrai (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 10.

[365] Glatzer, *Hillel the Elder*, 42-43.

[366] Glatzer, *Hillel the Elder*, 28-33.

[367] Jacob Neusner, *The Rabbinic Traditions about the Pharisees Before 70, Part Three, Conclusion* (Leiden: Brill, 1971), 255.

with having engendered movement that would become known after 70 C.E. as Rabbinic Judaism." In addition, "His sayings display a remarkable religious pedagogy that combines a high sense of self-awareness with humility and religious trust."[368] Hillel's tradition, or the House of Hillel (Beit Hillel), holds a significant place in Judean thought and practice, mainly as recorded in Pirke Aboth (P. Aboth hereafter). This tradition, known for its emphasis on ethical conduct, humility and kindness (P. Aboth 1:12; 2:4-5), has greatly influenced the identity of its adherents.

Hillel the Elder actively encouraged people to follow his teaching during his lifetime (P. Aboth 1:12; 2:4). Ottenheijm rightly noted that the formation of the Hillel tradition was shaped by a series of narratives and discourses on interpreting the Torah. The editors who compiled Hillel's sources remain anonymous. Ottenheijm stated, "The link between Hillel and Rabbinic Judaism after 70 C.E. is, however, primarily based on the heirs of Hillel as being the house of the patriarch, e.g. Rabban Gamliel the Elder, Rabban Gamliel of Yavne, and R. Juda haNasi, the editor of the Mishna."[369] This illuminates that rabbis representing the House of Hillel are responsible for carrying forward Hillel's tradition.[370] It shapes a unique understanding of their ingroup identity, marked by a strong sense of "we-ness," namely the followers of Beit Hillel (P. Aboth 2:4).

2. The Prototypicality of Hillel the Elder and Identity Formation

P. Aboth, literally "Chapters of the Fathers," is commonly referred to as "Ethics of the Sages" and is a tractate of the Mishnah. According to Weinberg, "It is a Jewish teaching manual, a compilation of statements designed to inspire and orient the rabbis who were creating a new paradigm of spiritual work based on teaching the Torah."[371] The purpose of this book is to assist the Judeans in categorizing themselves as the "pious God's people," for example, in P. Aboth 2:4-5, Hillel instructs his followers to be pious, and it requires a deep understanding of the Torah. Without this knowledge, one cannot truly practice piety because they are unaware of what it entails.

In addition, Friedman and Fischer suggested that P. Aboth could be considered a manual instructing Judean leaders to exercise community leadership. They argued that

---

[368] Eric Ottenheijm, "Hillel as a Teacher: Saying and Narratives," in *Multiple Teachers in Biblical Texts*, ed. J. Koet, and A.L.H.M. van Wieringen (Leuven: Peeters, 2017), 207-208.
[369] Ottenheijm, "Hillel as a Teacher: Sayings and Narratives," 207-224.
[370] Ottenheijm, "Hillel as a Teacher: Sayings and Narratives," 207-208.
[371] Rabbi Sheila Peltz Weinberg, "Pirkei Avot: Chapters of Wisdom," in *Wisdom of Our Elders: Living in Spirit, Wisdom, Deep Mercy, and Truth*, ed. Karen E. Simms Tolson (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2024), 160.

this text highlighted a set of virtues closely associated with an ideal leadership model.[372] These virtues include humility, compassion, wisdom, integrity, bravery, and perseverance. The following section will examine two texts, P. Aboth and Talmudic literature, to discover how Hillel, esteemed for his kindness and divine knowledge, is viewed as a prototype within his community.

According to the SIA, categorizing a distinctive social sense involves comparing it with the outgroup.[373] In the Talmud, Shammai and his House were often depicted as holding opposing views to Hillel and his followers (Babylonian Talmud-hereafter BT, Shabbat 31a: 5 and 9), particularly urging Hillel's followers "should always be patient like Hillel and not impatient like Shammai" (BT Shabbat 30b:12). Shammai and his followers are considered the "outgroup" in contrast to Hillel's "ingroup" (BT Shabbat 21b:5; Jerusalem Talmud Sabbath 1:3). Indeed, Shammai, and the House of Shammai, are known for his conservative approach to interpreting the Torah, which means he preferred a stricter, more traditional understanding of the law (BT Shabbat 17a:6 and 21b; Ketubot 16b:12-17a:1). [374] Additionally, Shammai insisted on rejecting the conversion of gentiles and their learning of the Torah (BT Shabbat 31a:5-6). The debates between Hillel and Shammai regarding Torah interpretation constitute a central aspect of the Hillel's traditions. They particularly highlighted the distinctiveness of his teachings in comparison to Shammai.[375] This comparative process prompts group members to be aware of the salience of their membership. It represents a self-perception linked to an understanding that collectively defines "who we are" and "what we stand for" within a specific group (Eruvin 13b:11).[376]

In identity formation, Hillel acts as an "identity entrepreneur," a term used to describe individuals who actively shape and promote a particular identity within a group. Hillel was responsible for re-establishing a clear sense of identity for his followers (b. Beitsa 16a; Lev.R. Behar 34.3).[377] He aimed to craft a distinctive identity

---

[372] Friedman, and Fischer, "Learning about leadership, trust and benevolence from ethics of the fathers (Avot)," 1-2.

[373] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 45.

[374] The disputes between Hillel and Shammai have occurred more than 35 times. See Gorcum, *The Literature of the Sages-First Part: Oral Tora, Halakha, Mishna, Tosefta, Talmud, External Tractates*, 11-12.

[375] Solomon Zeitlin's research paper offered a perspective for us to understand the interpretation and application of the Torah, laying hands on the sacrificial object. See "The Semikah Controversy between the School of Shammai and Hillel," *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 56 3 (1966): 240-244.

[376] The text states, "Ultimately, a Divine Voice emerged and proclaimed: Both these and those are the words of the living God. However, the *halakha* is in accordance with the opinion of Beit Hillel."

[377] In b. Beitsa 16a, Hillel emphasized all his actions, even observing the Sabbath was for the sake of heaven, which contrasts with Shammai the Elder, who is keen to observe the Sabbath strictly. In Lev. R. Behar 34:3, as Ottenheijm argued, "this narrative legitimate physical care as taking care of the eternal

prototype and content for ingroup members, distinguishing Hillel's followers and himself from outgroups.[378] Hillel's inclusive approach to the gentiles, a testament to his respect for all, is a crucial aspect of his identity formation. In addressing the question "Who are we?" for Hillel's followers, the answer is shaped by Hillel's interpretation of the Torah, as seen in Avot de-Rabbi Natan (ARN-hereafter, b26 and b29).[379] The texts show Hillel is more willing to teach people the Torah. Moreover, Hillel adopts a radical view to understand the Torah's adherence and daily life. This aligns with the SIA to leadership, suggesting that high prototypical leaders can effectively influence their followers through direct and indirect communication about group norms.[380]

These core values and beliefs, derived from Hillel's interpretation of the Torah, form the identity of his ingroup members. As Ottenhenijm argued, rabbinic literature teaches us that Hillel is an enigmatic teacher, expressing a humble and sublime vision of man and teaching how to live as a representative of the divine in the city.[381] Even after the Fall of Jerusalem in 70 C.E., Hillel's community and his interpretation of the Torah, a testament to his enduring influence, continued to dominate the Sanhedrin for the next 460 years, a remarkable feat that underscores the depth of his impact.[382]

3. Re-Examination of Hillel's Leadership in Light of the SIA to Leadership

"Be of the Disciples of Aaron, Loving Peace, Pursuing Peace, Loving all Creatures, and Drawing Them to the Torah." (P. Aboth 1:12)

The delineation of identity boundaries within Hillel's community is exemplified by what is known as the "Golden Rule", as articulated in P. Aboth 1:12. Neusner suggested that this rule functions as redefining the Torah's core values, describing what was to be considered good or bad, and prescribing how the Torah should be applied in daily lives.[383] In light of the SIA's notion, "Be of the disciples of Aaron" can be considered a process of identity recategorization, meaning that it aims to categorize group members

---

soul, as serving spiritual needs", see Ottenheijm, "Hillel as a Teacher: Sayings and Narratives," 216-217.
[378] According to Neusner, "We have already noted that the whole of the Houses-tradition, form and substance, reflects equal respect for Shammai and Hillel. It therefore must be set entirely apart from the traditions about Hillel and Shammai and about Hillel by himself, for most of these traditions exhibit an unrelieved polemic against the person of Shammai and against his House." From this perspective, Shammai held a different opinion regarding the interpretation of the Torah compared to Hillel the Elder. See Neusner, *The Rabbinic Traditions about the Pharisees Before 70, Part Three, Conclusion*, 255.
[379] In ARN b26, Hillel instructs his followers that learning the Torah is important than merely focusing on earning daily wages. Similarly, ARN b29 states that Hillel is willing to teach all students when they come before him.
[380] Hogg et al. "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 277.
[381] Ottenheijm, "Hillel as a Teacher: Sayings and Narratives," 222-223.
[382] Langbert, and Friedman, "Perspectives on Transformational Leadership in the Sanhedrin of Ancient Judaism," 202.
[383] Jacob Neusner, "The Golden Rule in Classical Judaism," in *The Golden Rule: The Ethics of Reciprocity in World Religions*, ed. Jacob Neusner and Bruce Chilton (London: Continuum, 2008), 57.

under a common superordinate group identity.[384] This recategorization highlights the similarities and common goals within the ingroup, as seen in Hillel's community among different Judean groups. It also accentuates the distinctions between the ingroup and outgroup, namely Hillel's and Shammai's House (Beit Yosef, Orach Chaim 246:1:1).[385] Such a dual strategy aims to enhance ingroup distinctiveness through promoting collective identity ("we-ness") to generate group cohesion.[386] Thus, the function of P. Aboth 1:12 is central to shaping the distinctive identity of Hillel's group.

This distinctive ingroup identity is found in Hillel's saying, "Do not separate from the *community*" (P. Aboth 2:4). The "Community" (צִבּוּר) carries various connotations, including a heap or pile, a congregation or community.[387] Hillel suggested that a robust and cohesive community is crucial for his followers. He urged his members to remain within the ingroup and uphold the shared values of their group.[388] This thought also appears in P. Aboth 2:2, Rabban Gamliel, who is a representative of Beit Hillel, states that "all who labour with the community, should labour with them for the sake of Heaven, for the merit of their forefathers sustains them, and their (the forefather's) righteousness endures forever…" This statement underscores the significance of participating in communal efforts with sincere intentions, primarily to fulfil divine commandments. In other words, aiming to fulfil divine purpose rather than personal gain is a core value to the Beit Hillel. From these notions, it becomes evident that Hillel's group pertains to a distinct sub-group within the Judean community.

3.1. Examining Identity Entrepreneurship in Hillel's Community

3.1.1. Legitimated Authority of Interpretation

As Hogg et al. suggested, "Prototypical leaders are furnished with legitimacy, and followers invest their trust in them." [389] Hillel had the authority to interpret and instruct his ingroup members on the Torah. As indicated in the Babylonian Talmud, "Parts of the Torah were again forgotten in Eretz Yisrael, and Hillel the Babylonian ascended and reestablished the forgotten sections" (Sukkah 20a:11). The phrase "Parts of the Torah were again forgotten" implies a lack of understanding among Judeans. Hillel restored

---

[384] Samuel L. Gaertner, and John F. Dovidio, *Reducing Intergroup Bias: The Common Ingroup Identity Model* (London: Routledge, 2000), 7.

[385] The text indicates that "Our rabbis taught in a baraita, 'A person may not rent his vessels to a non-jew on the eve of the Sabbath,' etc. This is from the first chapter of Shabbat (19a). But Alfasi omitted it. Rabbenu Asher and Rabbenu Nissim wrote that he had done so because he had concluded that this baraita had its origins in a position of Beit Shamai. For they said that a person must allow their vessels to rest [on the Sabbath]. But as for us, we who follow the opinion of Beit Hillel that a person is not obliged to rest their vessels [on the Sabbath, we hold that] it is permitted even on the eve of the Sabbath…"

[386] Gaertner, and Dovidio, *Reducing Intergroup Bias*, 7-8.

[387] צָבַר in Jastrow dictionary.

[388] Travers Herford, *The Ethics of the Talmud: Sayings of the Fathers* (New York: Schocken Books, 1962), 45.

[389] Hogg et al. "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 266.

its meaning with his unique capacity and authority and guided his group members in adhering to it.

Firstly, this emphasizes the continuity of the sages, affirming the prerogatives of those qualified to interpret the Torah, such as Hillel the Elder. Secondly, it underscores Hillel's remarkable jurisdiction in addressing the "forgotten sections," highlighting his unique capacity to interpret the Torah. Hillel's authority, derived from his deep understanding of the Torah inspired by the divine, is a source of his influence.[390] It also played a crucial role in shaping the beliefs and practices of his followers. The above observation can be supported by Tosefta Sotah 13:4 "the Sages entered the upper chamber of Ben Guriya in Jericho, and a Divine Voice issued, and it said to them, 'There is a man here among you who is worthy of the Holy Spirit, only that his generation does not merit it.' They cast their eyes on Hillel the Elder. And at the time of his death, they would say, 'Alas, humble one, alas, righteous one, disciple of Ezra.'" Despite the Divine Voice acknowledging Hillel's worthiness of the Holy Spirit, it also reflects a collective sense of unworthiness among his generation, emphasizing the distinctiveness of Hillel's virtues.

Thirdly, the text acknowledges the limitations and inadequacies of current interpretations, suggesting a need for further elaboration and extension in interpreting the Torah. Thus, it implies Hillel's pivotal role in providing a renewed and expanded understanding of the Torah. This line of thought extends to Hillel's role in establishing a new community, "Disciples of Aaron," rooted in a proper understanding of the Torah.

3.1.2. Defining the Superordinate or Common Ingroup Identity

Hillel initiates his discourse by referring to his followers as "Disciples of Aaron", a designation not directly referenced in the Torah or other rabbinic literature.[391] It seems that Hillel introduced this term intending to formulate a distinct, collective Judean identity linked to Aaron's priestly tradition. This ingroup identity highlights that the continuation of Aaron's priesthood is not exclusively contingent upon ethnic identity as Israelites, or as Gottlieb argued, "the mention of Aaron, the high priest, in this context, when that office was often identified as an elite position controlled by the Sadducees…"[392] Thus, Hillel held a democratic view to define who could learn the

---

[390] For a detailed discussion, see Jay Rovner, "Hillel and the Bat Qol: A Toseftan Discourse on Prophecy in the Second Temple and Tannaitic Periods," *Oqimta: Studies in Talmudic and Rabbinic Literature* 2 (2014): 165-206.

[391] Travers Herford, *The Ethics of the Talmud: Sayings of the Fathers* (New York: Schocken Books, 1962), 32; "Aaron," in *Dictionary of Judaism in the Biblical period: 450 B.C.E. to 600 C.E.*, 1.

[392] Isaac B. Gottlieb, "Hillel," *The Oxford Dictionary of the Jewish Religion*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: OUP, 2011), 347.

Torah: some people decide to adhere faithfully to the Torah and do their righteous actions in service to God.[393] They are the discipline of Aaron.

Hillel's statement in P. Aboth 1:12 urges his followers to "Be of the disciples of Aaron, loving peace, pursuing Peace, loving all creatures, and drawing them to the Torah" (Aboth 1:12). Considering the SIA to leadership, Hillel is constructing a superordinate identity aimed at forging a unique and distinct identity for his followers. Central to this identity are two core values emphasized by Hillel: love and peace. These values are foundational in Hillel's interpretation of the Torah and serve as the defining elements around which the community's identity is structured.

According to Goldin, Hillel emphasizes that Aaron's disciples should extend love to all creatures, including humankind, particularly by guiding them to study the Torah.[394] Indeed, Goldin's interpretation appears more convincing because Hillel's motivation is to engage his followers in an evangelical mission, particularly leading Gentiles to learn the Torah. This argument can be supported by the text in ARN b.26.54, where Hillel underscores that sharing love and kindness with gentiles is the mandate of God's will. This notion receives support from Blidstein, arguing that Hillel's mission was to lead all humankind beneath the "Wing of Heaven," symbolizing a community of Torah believers.[395] In Jerusalem Talmud: Shabbat 31a/I.8, one day, a gentile approached Hillel after being rejected by Shammai; Hillel promptly converted the man because he expressed a sincere desire to study the Torah. It reflects Hillel's view that this gentile is "standing on one foot" as he wants to learn the Torah (Shabbat 31a/I.6). According to Norman, this episode demonstrates Hillel's emphasis on inclusivity and spiritual focus.[396] In contrast to Shammai, who outright rejected the gentile, Hillel welcomes him and provides a concise yet profound teaching emphasizing ethical conduct and interpersonal relationships as central to Torah study.

By opting for the term "the disciples of Aaron" rather than "Sons of Aaron," Hillel employs an innovative approach to recategorize the identity of Judeans, particularly those inclined to embrace his teachings. By exerting his informative influence, Hillel,

---

[393] "Hillel the Elder," in *Dictionary of Judaism in the Biblical period:450 B.C.E. to 600 C.E.*, 294.

[394] Goldin's interpretation was based on various relevant texts to explain the meaning of Hillel's Golden Rule. See Goldin, *The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan,* 63-68.

[395] G. J. Blidstein, "A Note on Rabbinic Missionizing," *Journal of Theological Studies* 47 (1996): 530. The text is based on Anthony Saldarini's translation, *The Fathers, according to Rabbi Nathan (Abot de Rabbi Nathan) Version B, A Translation and Commentary* (Leiden: Brill, 1975), 156.

[396] Solomon observed that "To a heathen who came to him [Hillel] to be converted on condition that he teach him the entire Torah "while standing on one foot," Hillel replied: "What is hateful to you, do not unto your neighor; this is the entire Torah, all the rest is commentary" (BT *Shat* 31a). See Norman Solomon, *Historical Dictionary of Judaism* (London: The Scarecrow Press, 1998), 187.

as an identity entrepreneur, effectively shapes the identity prototype of his community, shaping how they perceive themselves and their role within the broader context of Torah study and Judean life.

The primary function of this restructuring is to reduce the identity uncertainty of ingroup members, mainly when they interact with Shammai and his followers, who represent a contrasting interpretation of the Torah. For example, the contrast is evident in various aspects, such as the matter of clean hands (as discussed in the Babylonian Talmud, a central text of Rabbinic Judaism, specifically in the section Seder Kodashim: Chullin 107b:11-12) and the observance of the Sabbath (also a topic in the Babylonian Talmud, particularly in the section Seder Moed: Beitzah 16a:4-5). These cases exemplify how the interpretation of the Torah plays a pivotal role in shaping the core values within Hillel's group.

By defining a distinct and coherent identity prototype based on values such as inclusivity and ethical conduct, Hillel gives his followers a strong sense of belonging and purpose within their community. This identity framework provides guidance and reassurance when navigating diverse perspectives and interpretations of Torah teachings. Hillel's approach not only defines boundaries and norms for his community but also fosters resilience and unity in navigating interactions with external groups like Shammai's adherents, who embody alternative interpretations of Judean tradition. The confrontation with Beit Shammai prompts the emergence of a more precise identity maker, assisting Hillel's followers in defining their own identity more definitively.

Particularly in gentiles' conversion, Hillel adopts an inclusive approach by inviting all people to engage in Torah study. Hillel considers the evangelization of gentiles to be a crucial mission for every one of Aaron's disciples. Hillel adopts a fresh perspective to highlight the prototypical nature of his community, emphasizing its inclusiveness by notably incorporating gentiles as members of the "Disciples of Aaron."

3.2. Examining Hillel's Prototypicality as Identity Embedder

Hillel's life undeniably resonates with the virtues he espoused. Goldin rightly pointed out that of "his spiritual stature there will be no doubt: for piety, ethical zeal, love of learning, and sensitivity to social welfare." [397] Having discussed the above, the foundation of Hillel's community is deeply rooted in his interpretation of the Torah. This interpretation includes spiritual principles such as bringing love and peace to all

---

[397] Judah Goldin, "Hillel the Elder," *The Journal of Religion* 26.4 (1946): 263. For a detailed discussion, see Efraim E. Urbach, *The Sages, their Concepts and Beliefs*, trans. Israel Abrahams, 4th ed. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995), 588-593.

human beings, focusing on evangelizing the gentiles. These aspects form the basis for the core values and appropriate conduct that guides ingroup members in living out their faith.

The core values of Hillel's community encapsulate four key aspects: "loving peace", "pursuing peace", "loving all men", and "bringing them close to the Torah." Hillel's perspective emphasizes the profound connection between obedience to God and the genuine expression of love for humankind, which he views as a fundamental responsibility of God's chosen people. This perspective is integral to educating Judeans on assuming leadership roles within their community, as highlighted by Friedman and Fischer.[398] In adopting Hillel as a prototypical model of Judean leadership, particularly within Hillel's School, the values articulated in P. Aboth serve as exemplars. These values define a distinctive leadership style characterized by their commitment to peace and love for all humankind. Hillel's own example illustrates how these values guide the behaviour of community leaders and their fellows.[399] It also shapes a cohesive and ethical framework for leadership within Judeans.

Undoubtedly, Hillel's life serves as an exemplary model of being a disciple of Aaron, effectively inspiring Judeans to emulate his way of life. Within the SIA to leadership, a leader's role extends beyond crafting distinct group identities and their salient features; it also involves embodying them. A highly prototypical leader is more adept at motivating and influencing followers than a less prototypical leader.[400] The embodiment of core values and group salience plays an essential role in fostering a sense of identity and belonging among followers within the group. It is a crucial factor in affecting leadership effectiveness.

3.2.1. Love and Peace

In examining the prototypical values advocated by Hillel the Elder, it is evident that he places significant emphasis on loving and pursuing peace for all creatures (בְּרִיּוֹת). Loving all creatures is a radical view because it means that the gentiles are also included. Maune and Buxbaum argued that "loving peace" may have its origins in a tradition where a prophet rebuked wicked priests as "They caused many to stumble and violated the covenant with Levi."[401] According to their analysis, Hillel appears to have adopted

---

[398] Friedman, and Fischer, "Learning about Leadership, Trust and Benevolence from Ethics of the Fathers (Avot)," 3-4.

[399] Friedman, and Fischer, "Learning about Leadership, Trust and Benevolence from Ethics of the Fathers (Avot)," 5.

[400] Barreto, and Hogg, "Influence and Leadership in Small Groups: Impact of Group Prototypicality, Social Status, and Task Competence," 2.

[401] Maune, "Hillel the Elder: A Talmudic Perspective of his Leadership Intelligence," 11-12; Buxbaum,

this motif to condemn the Jerusalem priests, particularly for neglecting the needs of the disadvantaged. If this is the case, the specific historical context sheds light on the social concerns embedded in Hillel's worldview. He intends to emphasize the importance of caring for the needy. "Walking in peace" is a fundamental aspect of God's chosen people, embodying the concept of proactive engagement with their faith, as Hillel urges his followers.

3.2.2 Sensitive Charity

According to the SIA to leadership, "Vision needs to be matched by practice - both the social practices internal to the group and the social practices implemented by the group."[402] As a community leader, Hillel often appeals to his followers to practice, or "to walk", in Hillel's terms, their faith in their daily lives (Yoma 35b:7; Mishneh Torah, Torah Study 1:7; Vayikra Rabbah 34:3). For example, in Vayikra Rabbah 34:3 the teachings from Hillel emphasize ethical conduct, kindness, and the recognition of human dignity, reflecting his profound spiritual and moral teachings that continue to resonate within Judean tradition. To Hillel, the practice of the Torah serves not only as a demonstration of their commitment but also as an identity embedder-by encouraging followers to embody their faith through daily practices, Hillel aims to help them realize and internalize what is considered good within their identity as "disciples of Aaron."

Thus, in Hillel's view, engaging in acts of charity glorified God and nurtured loving relationships with others. This aspect forms the core of identity content concerning the pursuit of love and peace. His practice matches the SIA's notion that "Effective leaders need to be impresarios of identity. This involves choreographing groups and group life in ways that actualize identity through lived experience." [403]

In contrast, Hillel states that the consequence of "seeking" personal well-being results in increasing anxieties (P. Aboth 2.7). This is because the Judeans focus solely on acquiring personal property, neglecting the needs of the underprivileged. Hillel's teachings emphasize the communal responsibility to contribute to the well-being of others, making us feel responsible for the welfare of our community.

3.2.3. Love the Gentiles

"Love all humankind", as understood by Rabbi Nathan, emphasizes the importance of loving all humanity and refraining from hatred (ARN 12). Its theological underpinnings can be traced back to the tradition of Genesis. Hillel asserted that a compassionate

---

The Life and Teachings of Hillel, 78.
[402] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 165.
[403] Haslam, and Reicher, "Rethinking the Psychology of Leadership: From Personal Identity to Social Identity," 30.

relationship should encompass "all creatures," irrespective of their gender or ethnicity. From Hillel's perspective, all people were creations of God, sharing His divine image.[404] This concept carries two remarkable implications, especially in strategically using Shammai to establish their distinctive identity. Firstly, in Hillel's perspective, loving others (all of humanity) is a divine mandate. Unlike Shammai, Hillel implored his followers to extend their love to the Israelites and humankind, including non-Judeans. Building upon this foundation, Hillel encouraged his followers to teach the Torah to the gentiles. At this point, the evangelization of gentiles is central to Hillel's teaching, which distinctly sets him apart from Shammai. This transformative approach radically challenges conventional perspectives on "who can be Torah's adherent?"

Hillel emphatically asserts that it was the responsibility of the Judeans to "bring all people to the Torah," including the gentiles. Leading all of humanity to understand God's salvation and His attributes is paramount to the community. Hillel intends to motivate the Judean community to fulfil God's mission (ARN-A 3).[405] Shammai presents a counterargument, suggesting that non-Judeans should adhere to all the Judean traditions as a demonstration of their commitment to the Torah (Babylonian Talmud: Shabbat 31a). Lavee contends that Hillel and Shammai held highly divergent views on gentile conversion.[406] For Hillel, the Torah is intended for all humanity, whether Gentiles or Judeans, rich or poor, male or female. All individuals possess the potential to engage in Torah study, gain wisdom and undergo spiritual transformation (P. Aboth 2:8). Therefore, the most appropriate way to convey God's love to the gentiles, according to Hillel, is to "bring them" to learn Torah.

Secondly, in their role as representatives of God, his followers should refrain from harboring hatred towards the gentiles. Hillel's stance is notably radical and challenges traditional perceptions of the gentiles. Hillel creates his followers' identity content and redefines their mission in the world. In his view, the exhibition of the observance of the Torah is through the embodiment of loving others, including the gentiles and the underprivileged. These are central tenets of being the disciples of Aaron. In this framework, fidelity to God becomes inherently intertwined with human actions, emphasizing the significant aspect of embedding identity within the teachings of Hillel.

In summary, Hillel utilizes the core value of "love all humanity" as shown by his

---

[404] Buxbaum, *The Life and Teachings of Hillel*, 102.

[405] ARN-A is the Talmudic text *The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan*, Version A.

[406] Moshe Lavee, "Hillel and Shammai Revisited," in *The Rabbinic Conversion of Judaism*. Brill, 2018. 117.

reference to *beriyoth* ['creatures'] in P. Aboth 1.12. It aims at recategorizing the identity of his community. Distinct from Shammai, Hillel boldly extends an invitation to the gentiles to become Torah adherents because they share the divine image. Furthermore, Hillel redefines the essence of faithfulness by emphasizing a perspective centered on social compassion. Hillel is guided by the notion that the disciples of Aaron have a responsibility to care for and assist socially disadvantaged groups.

3.3. Examining Leader's Identity Advancement in Hillel's Community

Hillel the Elder in Leviticus Rabbah 1:5: *"To Be Humbled is my Exaltation, My Exaltation is to be Humbled."*

Hillel's humility is a notable prototypical aspect of his character, and he intends to lay this cornerstone for the Judean community. Hillel encourages the Judeans to follow his model: "Blessings are those who have the willingness to humble yourself." As Hillel demonstrated the model of humility, thus he received high esteem: "O Hasid (the pious one), O Humble man! Disciple of Ezra" and "a person should always be patient and humble like Hillel."[407] Hillel is in the role of in-group champion. He embodies humility and selflessness, mainly serving the Judeans selflessly (Tosefta Peah 4:10; BT Ketubot 67b). In Tosefta Peah 4:10, Hillel the Elder ensured a poor person of noble descent was given a horse to ride. This action highlights Hillel's sensitivity to the dignity and social status of the person. Hillel maintained the individual's sense of honour and status by providing the horse and servant despite their impoverished circumstances.

In BT Ketubot 67b, Gemara's story about Hillel the Elder sheds light on his extraordinary dedication to helping poor people by ensuring they received necessities and what was required to maintain their dignity. Even running before the individual himself, Hillel's involvement underscores the importance of empathy, respect, and a holistic approach to charity.

These self-sacrificial prototypes have shown Hillel and his community's uniqueness. [408] According to SIA theorizing, advancing and promoting collective interests within a group significantly leads to leadership effectiveness. Importantly, this approach can yield a more enduring effect by fostering the conviction among followers that the leader can be relied upon to prioritize group-oriented interests consistently.[409]

---

[407] See, Sanhedrin 11a.
[408] W.E. Nunnally, "G'meelut Chasadim (Deeds of Kindness)," in *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Religion and Social Justice*, ed. Michael D. Palmer and Stanley M. Burgess (Oxford: Blackwell, 2012), 295-296.
[409] Knippenberg, and Knippenberg, "Leader Self-Sacrifice and Leadership Effectiveness: The Moderating Role of Leader Prototypicality," 26.

It benefits by influencing the opinions of its followers.[410]

The Talmud explicitly mentions that Hillel, as the Nasi, never rules over other Judeans. Thus, Rabbi Yitzhak of Vorki's assertion, "A person should always be humble like Hillel."[411] Yitzhak perceived Hillel as a humble sage, and this recognition was substantiated by his consistent actions, which were in harmony with his teachings. This alignment between Hillel's words and deeds is evident in Sanhedrin 11a:8,[412] where Hillel's disciple, HaKatan, followed his example of humility and piety. He sets a model and has earned praise as a true disciple of Hillel. Thus, humility is a crucial feature that authenticates Hillel's followers.

Hillel's humility shines as a beacon of light in a culture that often glorifies self-praise. As evidenced by P. Aboth 1:13, his community frowns upon self-aggrandizement, considering it a sin. In his wisdom, Hillel rejects the pursuit of honour from others, viewing self-praise as a transgression that disregards human subordination to God's divine nature. This stark contrast between the prevalent culture and Hillel's humility is a testament to his inspiring leadership. Despite his esteemed position as a Nasi and Sage within the Judeans, Hillel considers humility one of his core and community values. This value truly sets him apart.

3.4. Examining Identity Leadership and Leader Identity
3.4.1. A God-Granted Interpreter

Hillel was a God-granted Torah interpreter, revered for profoundly understanding the Torah. This allows Hillel to teach the Torah to his community correctly. In Tosefta: Soferim 16:9, we read, "There was nothing of the words of the sages that Hillel had not learned; he had even learned the languages of all the peoples of the world; as well as the speech of mountains, hills, and valleys; the speech of trees and grasses, the speech of wild and domestic animals, the speech of demons-he was expert in parables too. Why was all this necessary? Because it is said, 'it glorious' (Isaiah 42:21)."[413] This highlighted that Hillel possessed extensive and thorough knowledge of God's words. On the one hand, Hillel was a prototype who exemplified a passion for studying the divine word. As P. Aboth 1:4 mentioned, Hillel's daily routine of studying the Torah was in the early morning.[414] To Hillel, "If one acquires knowledge of Torah, he has

---

[410] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 119.
[411] Buxbaum, *The Life and Teachings of Hillel*, 157; Maune, "Hillel the Elder: A Talmudic Perspective of his Leadership Intelligence," 10.
[412] "The Sages set their eyes upon Shmuel HaKatan. And when he died, the Sages said about him: Alas, the pious man, alas, the humble man, a disciple of Hillel."
[413] Buxbaum, *The Life and Teachings of Hillel*, 225-226.
[414] Buxbaum, *The Life and Teachings of Hillel*, 17.

acquired life in the world to come." On the other hand, according to Michael Berger, the Sages, in the view of the Judeans, "could "hear" what God was saying through the divinely authored text."[415] In this sense, the Sages, such as Hillel the Elder, acted as messengers who delivered God's message, as the Judeans believed that God continued to speak through the words of the Torah.[416]

Furthermore, from the Talmudic perspective, Hillel's position is significant and equal to Moses. He was uniquely able to offer insights into the Torah, an authoritative and divinely appointed role. This is evident in Sotah 48b:7, which indicates that God entrusted Hillel with prophetic duties. Hillel was one of God's messengers, adept at accurately explaining the Torah. Sanhedrin 11a further states that Hillel's wisdom and ability to correctly interpret the Torah granted him an esteemed position comparable to Moses. These perceptions, amid Hillel's community, enable the Elder to convey God's teachings to the ingroup members and render wise judgements in various court cases.[417]

Recent researchers have recognized that "The self is central to leaders' engagement in leadership and to the success of that engagement. Both also recognize that the self is a definite structure that, in principle at least, can be defined at different levels of abstraction."[418] Leader identity theorizing also suggests that leader identity generally contributes to a leader's resource-based impact.[419] This means a leader's self-concept plays a crucial role in how they utilize external resources to influence others. In essence, a leader's understanding of who they are and their role as a leader effectively influences how they can use knowledge and skills to motivate ingroup members to change and achieve collective goals. For instance, Hillel's understanding of his leader identity played a significant role in influencing his followers.

These theoretical insights provide a fresh perspective on examining Hillel's leadership, who was perceived as a divinely endorsed the sage with legitimate authority. This divine inspiration, a powerful aspect of Hillel's leadership, as perceived by his followers, indeed grants him the authority to instruct his followers on how to live out their faith (P. Aboth 1:13; 2:8). This identification in relation to lawgiver accentuates the leader's authorization, enabling Hillel to interpret and teach the Torah as a representative of God. While Hillel's followers may view him as a sage sent by God,

---

[415] Berger, *Rabbinic Authority*, 83.
[416] Berger, *Rabbinic Authority*, 83.
[417] Berger, *Rabbinic Authority*, 48.
[418] Haslam et al. "Reconciling Identity Leadership and Leader Identity: A Dual-Identity Framework," 7.
[419] Haslam et al. "Reconciling Identity Leadership and Leader Identity: A Dual-Identity Framework," 7.

there is no evidence to suggest that Hillel himself claimed to have been commissioned by God. This divine endorsement of Hillel's leadership is inspiring and commands respect from the readers.

Furthermore, as the SIA to leadership theorists stress, aligning two leadership identities, leadership and leader identity, promotes effective leadership. As they proposed, social and personal identities fulfill one another in relation to leadership rather than being in conflict. This process is called "Identity Fusion," meaning that when social identification is high, the line between personal and social identity no longer exists.

In Hillel's community, the Elder identified himself as one of Aaron's disciples and embodied the prototype shared by his ingroup members. Consequently, Hillel actively engaged in charitable acts towards the needy, motivating his followers to do the same. This exemplifies identity fusion in Hillel's leadership, wherein Hillel plays the role of both leader and ingroup member. As researchers have argued, leaders will be best positioned to lead effectively when their identity as leaders is founded upon, and hence intrinsically compatible with, their identity as group members. Thus, the followers accept his leadership not only because they observe the prototypical features but also due to his perceived divine endorsement. This concept of identity fusion in Hillel's leadership style fosters a sense of connection and belonging his followers.

In this perspective, an individual becomes highly fused with their group, erasing personal and social identity boundaries. This theory offers valuable insights into Hillel's leadership role in the community. As Chilton and Neusner pointed out, the divine will was delivered through a "holy person", and the legitimacy of this holiness was affirmed by supernatural attestation in the Second Temple period.[420] Berger further argues that the authority is not merely derived from their leadership position but is rooted in their divine endorsement.[421]

Hillel the Elder's influence in early Judaism, particularly within his school, was profound. His legacy, marked by his compassion for people, commitment to peace, embodiment of humility, and sincere approach to Torah study, continued to shape the Judean community and the Rabbinic tradition for generations. His teachings are invaluable compasses for "the disciples of Aaron" as they navigate their leadership roles.

---

[420] Bruce Chilton and Jacob Neusner, *Types of Authority in Formative Christianity and Judaism* (London: Routledge, 1999), 73.

[421] Berger's research offered a comprehensive investigation of the origin of the sage's authority. He argued that the sages' authority was derived from the divine, an external authority to empower them to instruct the Judeans. See Berger, *Rabbinic Authority*, 10-11.

It is important to note that Hillel's leadership was not a mere replication of existing models but a unique conceptualization of the new Judean identity as "Disciples of Aaron." This designation, adopted to shape their ingroup identity, deviated from traditional leadership approaches. It offered a fresh and intriguing perspective on missions to gentiles, the pursuit of peace, and caring for people in need. This uniqueness sets Hillel and his followers apart from Shammai's group and redefines a broader sense of identity prototypicality within the Judean community, sparking curiosity and engagement among the readers.

Indeed, Hillel's leadership model aligns with the SIA to leadership, a methodology that holds significant importance in our research. It vividly illustrates the aspects of identity entrepreneurship, identity prototypicality and identity embedder, and identity advancement. Furthermore, the concept of identity fusion is also evident in Hillel's leadership approach. Hillel notably assumes the leadership role by actively guiding his followers and engaging with ingroup members who exemplify the core values of Aaron's disciples. Theorists suggest that this approach can enhance leadership effectiveness. However, it is worth noting that Hillel's group operates without organizational hierarchy, rituals, regulations, and rules. The next chapter will delve into a leadership model in Greco-Roman associations for its distinctiveness.

Chapter Six: Leadership in Greco-Roman Voluntary Associations

Over the past four decades, scholars have been interested in how honour-based culture affected the perceptions of Mediterranean people in the first century C.E.[422] With insights drawn from anthropological research conducted in the contemporary Mediterranean world, an array of scholarly works has been published that attempt to examine the development of Christ-groups in the Greco-Roman world.[423] This enterprise has entailed using the comparative method, a crucial tool that allows fresh questions to be put to ancient data, questions that the data alone cannot answer. It also offers a framework for understanding the answers.[424] As Kloppenborg suggested, "Comparisons are determined by the questions that researchers wish to address. Comparisons are not appropriate or inappropriate in themselves but only insofar as they are related to the theoretical interests and purposes of a scholar."[425]

Since the 1990s, scholars have also been investigating the abundant evidence of Greco-Roman voluntary associations—most of it on stone inscriptions—to understand the Christ movement in the first century. In doing so, they have applied the comparative method to investigate similarities and differences between Christ-following communities and Greco-Roman voluntary associations, including in relation to organization and power structures.[426] The investigation of leadership within Greco-Roman associations and the attempt to compare these with Pauline leadership are still under-explored projects.

The primary objective of this chapter is to address a gap in current research by applying the SIA to leadership to examine the relationship between honour-based leadership and identity formation in Greco-Roman associations. This approach will enable a comparison with Paul's leadership in 2 Corinthians 10-13. Such investigations contribute to our understanding of voluntary associations as a crucial context for New Testament texts, including the letters of Paul, as convincingly demonstrated by many scholarly works, such as the recent research by Kloppenborg and Pitkänen.[427]

---

[422] Bruce J. Malina, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology* (Kentucky: John Knox Press, 2011), 10-11.

[423] Richard Last, and Philip A Harland, *Group Survival in the Ancient Mediterranean: Rethinking Material Conditions in the Landscape of Jews and Christians* (London: T&T Clark, 2020); John S. Kloppenborg, *Christ's Associations: Connecting and Belonging in the Ancient City* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019); Richard Last, "*Ekklêsia* outside the Septuagint and the Demos: The Titles of Greco-Roman Associations and Christ-Followers' Groups," *JBL* 137/4 (2018): 959-980; Richard Ascough, "What are they Now saying about Christ Groups and Associations?" *Currents in Biblical Research* 13/2: (2015): 207-244.

[424] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 271.

[425] Kloppenborg, *Christ's Associations*, 8.

[426] Last, "Ekklêsia outside the Septuagint and the Demos: The Titles of Greco-Roman Associations and Christ-Followers' Groups," 959-980; Ascough, "What are they Now saying about Christ Groups and Associations?" 207-244.

[427] Kloppenborg, *Christ's Associations*, 55-96; Elina Lapinoja-Pitkänen, "Pauline Christ-Groups and Private Dionysian Associations: Mythical Narratives and Communal Rituals as Building Blocks of Social Identity," (PhD Diss., University of Helsinki, 2023); Vincent Gabrielsen, and Mario CD Paganini,

These investigation results will allow pertinent questions to be posed for Pauline's research. This chapter uses social identity as an example of using the comparative method to analyze an ancient phenomenon, where the modern comparator is an area of social-scientific thought rather than a particular ethnographic case study. This investigation will focus on nine inscriptions that date from the third to first centuries B.C.E. These inscriptions illustrate the honour-claim culture in relation to leadership.

A discussion of the honour-claim culture of the ancient Mediterranean will provide central features of the social context of these inscriptions. Following this, this chapter will set out and apply the SIA to leadership to a sample of honorific inscriptions from voluntary associations. The analysis will focus on the critical leadership aspects according to SIA.[428] A final section will not only present compelling insights that could reshape our perception of Paul's leadership and its historical context but also ask how these findings might advance our understanding of Paul's leadership of the Corinthian Christ-following community, thereby contributing to a deeper understanding of the New Testament texts.

1. Revisiting Honour-based Culture in the Greco-Roman World

It is worth briefly considering features of honour-based culture in the Greco-Roman world as this profoundly affected social perceptions among Greeks and Romans since these features will be prominent in the inscriptions discussed below. As Hopkins and Reicher have persuasively shown, social culture and the context within which groups form and interact strongly influence how processes of social identity formation occur.[429] Richard Rohrbaugh notes, "Honour, understood as one's reputation in the eyes of the public, was the core value of the ancient Mediterranean world. It was the goal, the passion, the hope of all who aspired to excel."[430] Aristotle observed: "The tokens of honour are: sacrifices; commemoration, in verse or prose; privileges; grants of land; front seats at civic celebrations; state burial; statues; public maintenance; among foreigners, obeisances and giving place; and such presents as are among various bodies of men regarded as marks of honour." (*Rhetorica,* I.1361a.34–1361b.1)[431]

eds. *Private Associations in the Ancient Greek World: Regulations and the Creation of Group Identity* (Cambridge: CUP, 2023); Richard S. Ascough, *Early Christ groups and Greco-Roman Associations: Organizational Models and Social Practices* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2022); Bruce W. Longenecker, ed. *Greco-Roman Associations, Deities, and Early Christianity* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2022); James R. Harrison, *Paul and the Ancient Celebrity Circuit: the Cross and Moral Transformation*. Vol. 430 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019).

[428] Steffens et al. "Leadership as Social Identity Management: Introducing the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI) to Assess and Validate a Four-Dimensional Model," 1001-1024.

[429] Nick Hopkins and Steve Reicher, "Identity, Culture and Contestation: Social Identity as Cross-Cultural Theory," *Psychological Studies* 56.1 (2011): 41.

[430] Richard Rohrbaugh L., "Honor Core Value in the Biblical World," in *Understanding the Social World of the New Testament*, ed. Dietmar Neufeld and Richard E. DeMaris (London: Routledge, 2010), 109; Richard Last and George B. Davis's work has offered comprehensive research on the culture of honour, see Last, "Money, Meals, and Honour: The Economic and Honorific Organization of the Corinthian Ekklēsia," (PhD Diss., University of Toronto, 2011); Davis, "True and False Boasting in 2 Cor.10-13," (PhD Diss., Cambridge University, 1999).

[431] Jonathan Barnes, ed., *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, rev. trans. vol. 2 (Princeton: Princeton

Concerning the last item, Gygax and Zuiderhoek argued that public generosity, in essence, involved gifts or contributions given by individual patrons to the wider community to earn honour.[432] This was a prominent feature of civic life in the Greco-Roman world. In addition, Chow observed that in antiquity, social networks were established and maintained by an "asymmetrical exchange relationship."[433] That meant patron-client relationships were bound by resource exchange. The patron was obligated to provide the clients tangible assistance, money, material services, and protection. Honour and praise were expected in turn.

In Chow's view, this social network between the elite and non-elite in the *polis* was heavily based on resource exchanges and deeply rooted in the Roman world.[434] Asking how social elites earn honour within the reciprocal social relationship, Last classified two types: patronage and benefaction. Patronage usually involves persistent face-to-face interactions with known individuals. It focuses on exploitation and social control in terms of status inequality and class variation. Benefaction, in contrast, involves isolated or occasional gifts to a mass of people, many of whom are not personally known to the benefactor.[435]

In Malina's account, patronage could be understood as "The mutual satisfaction of both parties: clients had their needs met, especially in fortuitous and irregular situations, while patrons received grants of honour and the accolades of benefaction."[436] This description highlights the power dynamics and social implications of patronage. On various occasions, patrons treated clients as family members by offering resources to fulfill their petitions despite their differing social standing. However, Malina's suggestion probably underestimates the degree to which unequal social status and resource inequality profoundly affected the dynamics between patrons and clients. On this point, Neyrey[437] and Saller[438] aligned with Chow, arguing that patron-client relationships were asymmetrical, implying that the two parties were of unequal status and involved different kinds of service and the exchange of goods.

Benefaction (or euergetism) can be considered a "Generous act undertaken for collective good" that is not exploitative.[439] This definition underscores the societal

---

University Press, 1984), 2164.

[432] Marc D. Gygax and Arjan Zuiderhoek, "Introduction Benefactors and the Polis, a Long-Term Perspective," in *Benefactors and the Polis: The Public Gift in the Greek Cities from the Homeric World to Late Antiquity*, ed. Marc Domingo Gygax, and Arjan Zuiderhoek (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022), 1.

[433] Chow, *Patronage and Power*, 41.

[434] Chow, *Patronage and Power*, 81-82.

[435] Last, *The Pauline Church and the Corinthian Ekklēsia Greco-Roman Associations in Comparative Context*, 100-101.

[436] Malina, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology*, 135.

[437] Jerome Neyrey, "God, Benefactor and Patron: The Major Cultural Model for Interpreting the Deity in Greco-Roman Antiquity," *JSNT* 27.4 (2005): 465-492.

[438] Richard P. Saller, *Personal Patronage under the Early Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

[439] Zeba A. Crook, *Reconceptualizing Conversion: Patronage, Loyalty, and Conversion in the Religions*

impact and the public's expectations of benefactors. Zuiderhoek claimed that public generosity in antiquity was only exercised by wealthy social elites, who could contribute gifts and financial support to the broader community. Receiving honour through public praise was the primary objective of social elites and emperors.

According to Saller, emperors, civil officials, and some wealthy individuals often practiced benefaction. They were powerful and benevolent figures, such as emperors and civil officials, who were able to provide material assistance to the city and the public.[440] As Neyrey argued, benefaction was frequently used to describe relationships between deities and humankind in the ancient world.[441] In addition, benefactors did not build personal relationships with clients in the broader social context. According to Crook, benefaction could be regarded as a relationship between patrons and a mass of people and was displayed in ritual celebrations and the construction of public buildings.[442] Harrison correctly notes that the "'honour' system maintained social cohesion throughout the Roman empire and provided avenues of upward social mobility for its aspirants in the Mediterranean world."[443]

These socio-cultural phenomena derive from the material exchange mechanism. Clients were free to enter material exchange relationships with specific known patrons. Once patronage was accepted, clients were to honour and observe complete loyalty to the patron.[444] Honorific decrees widely attest to this honour-based culture and reciprocal exchange clientship. Nine honorific decrees inscribed on stone have been selected as a sample for this piece of work. They will be scrutinized to investigate the relationship between honour-based culture and leadership perceptions within Greco-Roman associations.

2. Nine Honorific Inscriptions from Greco-Roman Associations

McLean says, "Honorific inscriptions (*tituli honorarii*) commend persons who have acted as public benefactors or performed notable public service."[445] Indeed, a substantial collection of honorific inscriptions related to the Greco-Roman associations that have survived in the Mediterranean region exists. Scholars are actively investigating these texts to gain deeper insights into the perceptions of ancient social groups.[446] This data represents a window for modern people to view honour-based

---

of the Ancient Mediterranean (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2012), 64-65.

[440] "εὐεργέτης," *BDAG*, 357.

[441] Neyrey, "God, Benefactor and Patron: The Major Cultural Model for Interpreting the Deity in Greco-Roman Antiquity," 471-475.

[442] Crook, *Reconceptualizing Conversion: Patronage, Loyalty, and Conversion in the Religions of the Ancient Mediterranean*, 66.

[443] Harrison, *Paul and the Ancient Celebrity Circuit: The Cross and Moral Transformation*, 257.

[444] Eric C. Stewart, *Understanding the Social World of the New Testament* (London: Routledge, 2009), 158.

[445] B.H. McLean, *An Introduction to Greek Epigraphy of the Hellenistic and Roman Periods from Alexander the Great down to the Reign of Constantine (323 B.C.-A.D.337)* (Michigan: Michigan University Press, 2002), 236.

[446] Richard S. Ascough, *Early Christ Groups and Greco-Roman Associations: Organizational Models and Social Practices* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2022); Longenecker, ed., *Greco-Roman Associations,*

culture's role in these associations. The objective here is to summarize the leadership characteristics and values that were honoured by the Greeks. Despite the small sample size of inscriptions used, this sample is sufficient for the argument presented in this chapter. However, the conclusion reached would undoubtedly be worth testing on a larger scale than is possible here.

2.1 *IG* II^2 1343/GRA I 48 (Athens, 37 /36 BCE)[447]

This inscription states that the association members honoured Diodoros for "doing in both word and deed what is beneficial for the *synodos*" (line 12).[448] He was a benefactor as well as founder of this association. Taking the role of treasurer, Diodoros was responsible for "enhanc[ing] the common fund" (lines 17-19), hosting visitors at his own expense and "spending not a little money" (lines 28-30). Thus, his deeds earned a fitting token of goodwill and a memorial.

2.2 *AM* 66:228 no.4/GRA I 39 (Athens, 138/7 BCE)[449]

This inscription records that Sarapion was appointed as a supervisor to undertake sacrifices to the gods in the temple, obtain a good omen on behalf of the group, and care for the women and children for the entire year. In addition, Sarapion gave money to repair the pedestals of the temple and men's bathroom and performed service to the gods. Thus, the members should crown Sarapion with the olive wreath because of his patronage. But the fine would be fifty drachmae if someone failed to honour Sarapion publicly.

2.3 *IG* II^2 1329/GRA I 37 (Piraeus, 175/4 BCE)[450]

This inscription depicts Chaireas, who "has continually been well-intentioned to the *orgeōnes*. His *philotimia* (meaning love of honour, zeal, and ambition) led him to pay money to service the temple, cut unnecessary expenses, and arrange for ordinary people to support the association by offering tangible assistance. All members should recognize Chaireas' accomplishments and publicly praise him with a crown wreath during the sacrifice in the month of Mounichion.

2.4 *IG* II^2 1325/GRA I 33 (Piraeus,185/4 BCE)[451]

Deities, and Early Christianity; Gabrielsen, and Paganini, eds., *Private Associations in the Ancient Greek World*; Last, and Harland, *Group Survival in the Ancient Mediterranean*.

[447] https://philipharland.com/greco-roman-associations/honors-by-the-soteriasts-for-their-founder-37-35-bce/

[448] The textual translations are based on John S. Kloppenborg and Richard S. Ascough, *Greco-Roman Associations: Texts, Translations, and Commentary: Attica, Central Greece, Macedonia, Thrace*, Vol. 1. (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2011).

[449] https://philipharland.com/greco-roman-associations/honors-by-the-sacrificing-associates-of-aphrodite-for-their-supervisor-1387-bce/

[450] https://philipharland.com/greco-roman-associations/honors-by-the-sacrificing-associates-of-the-mother-of-the-gods-for-a-secretary-175174-bce/

[451] https://philipharland.com/greco-roman-associations/membership-list-and-honors-by-sacrificing-

The inscription notes Dionysios's appointment as treasurer and priest. Dionysios won praise from the association members because he "constructed the sanctuary of the god and beautified it with many beautiful votive offerings" (lines 21-22). Additionally, he offered money to the treasury to support the monthly sacrifice to the god and donated gold and silver to furnish the sacred rites. As a result, Dionysios was crowned with an ivy wreath by the law on account of his excellence and benefactions.

2.5 *IG* II² 1324/GRA I 32 (Piraeus,190 BCE)[452]

Like *IG* II² 1325 above, *IG* II² 1324 mainly celebrates Stephanos' appointment as supervisor. His primary duty was to manage the temple's repair. His contribution showed ambition in everything and "making expenditures from his funds" (lines 8-10). Stephanos was zealous towards the association and was worthy of receiving the crown.

2.6 *IG* II² 1292/GRA I 26 (Athens? Piraeus?, 215/4 BCE)[453]

The purpose of this inscription was to honour "Zopyros, the treasurer; Theophanes, the secretary; and Olympichos, the supervisor. They have frequently shown themselves to be irreproachable and in their management and have kept the accounts honestly concerning everything they have administered, per the law" (lines 1-8). Their acts received recognition among the association members, especially among the sacrifice makers, who were asked to announce the patrons' names after the ceremony. Like *AM* 66:228 no. 4, if the members did not announce or crown the patrons, they would receive a penalty.

Notably, the association urged members to follow the example of the Sarapiastai, particularly by being ambitious to win honour: "Those who are ambitious in respect to them [the members], knowing that they will be honoured in a way that is appropriate; and that those who are ambitious for honour (*philotoumenoi*) with respect to the other members shall receive some other goodly recognition from the association of the Sarapiastai" (lines 23-25).

2.7 *IRhamnous* II 59/GRA I 27 (Rhamnous (Attica), 216/15 BCE)[454]

This inscription declares that "Apollodoros who was elected as *strategos*, has continued to be well-intentioned towards the People (*dēmos*) - both to individuals and collectively" (lines 1-4). He provided financial assistance to build the temples of Sarapis and Isis, and his pious attitude towards the gods was shown. In addition to this, Apollodoros also

associates-for-their-treasurer-185184-bce/

[452] https://philipharland.com/greco-roman-associations/honors-by-the-sacrificing-associates-of-bendis-for-a-supervisor-ca-190-bce/

[453] https://philipharland.com/greco-roman-associations/honors-by-the-sarapiastai-for-their-treasurer-215214-bce/

[454] https://philipharland.com/greco-roman-associations/honors-by-sarapiasts-for-a-benefactor-after-216215-bce/

expressed "Good will and zeal with regard to his fellow citizens" (lines 15-20). Because of his piety and zeal towards the god and his members, the sacrifice makers should invite Apollodoros to participate in sacrificial rituals during the festivals.

2.8 *IG* II² 1297/GRA I 24 (Athens, 236/5 BCE)[455]

Sophron had "generously and ambitiously convoked the thiasos" (lines 1-4), so he received the honour from the association members. His significant contribution was giving money "to enlarge the treasury (*koinon*)" (lines 7-9). His action displayed Sophron was a pious *archeranistēs* ("President of an Association?") because he was willing to donate money to the temple. As a result, Sophron was crowned with a wreath of olives and a woollen fillet as a reward for his excellence and piety towards the deities. Thus, all members should announce his name publicly during the rites and libations. If association members failed to announce this: "they will owe four drachmae sacred to the Goddess" (lines 17-18).

2.9 *IG* II² 1298/GRA I 20 (Athens, 248/7 BCE)[456]

Several honorees were mentioned in this inscription during the regular meeting "in the year that Diomedon was *archon*" (line 6). These people had shown good deeds and pious attitudes in all things and "in regard to the gods" (line 10). The association decided to engrave their names on steles to honour them. This inscription attested that the association members should continue paying for the "fund" (line 20). While settling the dues, each must "register himself and his dues with the treasurer and the secretary" (lines 21-22).

3. Examining Honour-Based Leadership in Greco-Roman Associations

The abundant evidence of the importance of honour for successful association leaders was that honour played such a central role in many social interactions in the ancient Mediterranean. However, there appear to be further factors at work here. Scholars assert that the idea of "well-ordered" in ancient perceptions not only points to managing the groups by strict community regulations but also maintaining the group identity by various virtues, for instance, piety (εὐσέβεια) and excellence (ἀριστεία), which require members to act in a good manner.[457] Gabrielsen and Paganini argued, "As appears clear in their regulations and honorific decrees, associations strove to be well-ordered both

---

[455] https://philipharland.com/greco-roman-associations/membership-list-of-the-society-members-of-artemis-and-kalliste-236235-bce/

[456] https://philipharland.com/greco-roman-associations/honors-by-a-society-of-artemis-for-their-secretary-and-treasurer-248247-bce/

[457] Gabrielsen, and Paganini, eds., *Private Associations in the Ancient Greek World*, 17-18; McLean, *An Introduction to Greek Epigraphy of the Hellenistic and Roman Periods from Alexander the Great down to the Reign of Constantine (323 B.C.-A.D.337)*, 231-232; Laura Gawlinski, "Greek Religion and Epigraphic Corpora: What's *Sacrae* about *Leges* Sacrae?" in *Greek Epigraphy and Religion: Papers in Memory of Sara B. Aleshire from the Second North American Congress of Greek and Latin Epigraphy*, ed., Emily Mackil, and Nikolaos Papazarkadas (Leiden: Brill, 2021), 23;

by running their common affairs in an orderly fashion and by gathering people with a moral imperative towards proper and excellent behaviour."[458] On this point, honourable leaders have embodied and demonstrated these virtues within the associations.

3.1 Applying the SIA to the Notion of Honorable Leadership in Greco-Roman Associations

The SIA to leadership offers a framework for describing, evaluating, and explaining relations between leaders and group members. It applies to Greco-Roman associations and many other ancient social groups, as presented in Chapters Four and Five. This will be demonstrated with the sample material above to examine honourable leaders' features and social values in this context. As noted above, using SIA in this way is an instance of the comparative method. It has two dimensions: firstly, asking fresh questions about the texts, and secondly, assisting in comprehending the answers given.

3.1.1. Three Norms Required of the Honor-based Leader

The social identity approach is a valuable lens to view the social contexts in which phenomena are observed. In the case of our study, it is necessary to consider the values and behavioural patterns esteemed by association members in ancient Greek cities, which we will see were operative in the honorific inscriptions. Harrison rightly noted, "The inscriptional language of honour portrays what was ethically expected of civic luminaries."[459] As an aid to examining group norms in the ancient Greek *polis*, it is helpful to adopt the ideas of Batten. Batten argued that the common moral qualities which exist in Greco-Roman inscriptions are *philotimia* (φιλοτιμία), *arete* (ἀρετή), *eusebeia* (εὐσέβεια).[460] These moral qualities, norms from a social identity perspective, encapsulate the virtues that ancient Mediterranean people valued since "Such words were systemically invoked as a means of praising and promoting the requisite benefaction for and maintenance of the group." [461] These virtues reflected the perceptions of association members, which they expected their leaders to demonstrate. A member of an association who possessed these virtues to a high degree was, in social identity terms, prototypical or exemplary of the group. The SIA concepts of prototypicality and exemplarity allow us, applying the comparative method, to interrogate such Greek virtues in new ways to probe their connections with group identity and to gain fresh perspectives from the results of such inquiry.

Philotimia denotes the outlook of someone who loves honour.[462] Associations often use this word to esteem the honourable leader. Within the Greco-Roman context, for example, "φ[ιλ]οτίμως" "in a honour loving manner" in *IG* II^2 1297, line 3-4, evidently refers to the personal character of Sophron, who insists on receiving honour

---

[458] Gabrielsen, and Paganini, eds., *Private Associations in the Ancient Greek World*, 17-18.
[459] Harrison, *Paul and the Ancient Celebrity Circuit: The Cross and Moral Transformation*, 295.
[460] Alicia Batten, "The Moral World of Greco-Roman Associations," *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses* 36/1 (2007): 135-151.
[461] Batten, "The Moral World of Greco-Roman Associations," 136.
[462] "φιλοτιμία," *BDAG*, 943; *LSJ*, 1941.

by "enlarg[ing] the treasury at his own expense" (lines 5-6). In *IG* II² 1292, φιλ[οτιμου] and φιλοτιμ[ουμέ] occur in lines 19 and 21, respectively. The association leaders encourage their members to emulate the leader's example of demonstrating a "love of honour." This is evident from the statement: "Knowing that they will be honoured in a way that is appropriate; and that those who are ambitious for honour concerning the other members shall receive some other goodly recognition from the association of the *Sarapiastai*." This inscription also mentions several leaders who have shown their "love of honour" by making financial donations to the association.

Arete is the second quality of the honour-based leader, and its connotation is the virtue of "excellence and merit".[463] Batten noted that the Greeks usually adopted ἀρετή when the "honoree was of a high social position", notably when they had contributed material resources and assistance to the association.[464] Thus, earning *arete* in the public sphere was a primary concern among benefactors. Supporting evidence is found in *IG* II² 1329, indicating that the honourable leader has displayed *arete* to gods and the association (line 24). His donation to the association was interpreted as an act showing *arete*. In this sense, the honourable leader is the one who not only shows his excellence to deities but also offers tangible benefits to the members. Excellence is often coupled with other valued norms, such as piety (*IG* II² 1329; *IG* II² 1297), goodwill (*IG* II² 1263), and love of honour (*IG* II² 1277; *IG* II² 1291).

The third quality is *eusebeia*, meaning piety and denoting a leader who displays due reverence to the deities. This is seen in many inscriptions, for example, *IG* II² 1324, *IG* II² 1325, *AM* 66:228 no. 4, and *IG* II² 1298. In *IG* II² 1298, the leaders "have acted honorably and piously (καλῶς [κ]αὶ εὐσεβῶς) in all matters and in regard to the gods" (lines 9-10). This implies that association members often expected their leaders to live a pious life. Offering financial support for temple maintenance, adherence to ritual sacrifice, taking part in ritual meals and celebrating the festivals, become explicit evidence of a leader's piety. *IRhamnous* II 59 stresses that commendation was given to Apollodoros on account of the piety he "has shown toward the gods" (lines 24-26). His remarkable contribution was building Sarapis and Isis's temples (lines 14-15). The reward in return was to be crowned with an olive wreath and the privilege of participating in sacrificial rites. Although these inscriptions do not give detailed information about honourable leaders' lives, their donations for maintaining the temples can indicate devotion to the deities.

3.2. Examining Prototypicality and Exemplarity in Voluntary Associations

A leader's prototypicality concern how the leader embodies a set of shared prototypical features, such as values, behaviour, and social perceptions, making a leader maximally representative of the group.[465] A prototypical leader might use "norm talk" to construct,

---

463 "ἀρετή," *BDAG*, 114; *LSJ*, 238.
464 Batten, "The Moral World of Greco-Roman Associations," 142.
465 Knippenberg, "Embodying Who We Are: Leader Group Prototypicality and Leadership Effectiveness,"

convey, and manage group norms. These norms, far from being mere guidelines, shape perceptions of the group's attributes and goals, thereby influencing the very dynamics of the group.[466] Additionally, the embodiment of group norms is a key factor that enhances, transforms, and motivates group members. Group members prefer being led by a highly prototypical leader. Several prototypical virtues and behaviors were valued highly by association members. For example, in *IG* II^2 1343, Diodoros was an association founder: "Having also created the synodos", and as treasurer gained recognition from the association (lines 6-10). He "has continued to be well-disposed to the koinon of Soteriastai, doing in both word and deed what is beneficial for the synodos" (lines 6-10). To quote his achievements: "Tirelessly he made himself available", "he did what is right to the fullest", and "he has shown earnestness and zeal in respect to the association" (lines 19-25).

Honouring a leader's good intentions for the association can also be seen in *IG* II^2 1329. Chaireas served as a secretary, and the decree mentions twice that "[he] has continually been well-intentioned to the *orgeōnes* on every occasion" (lines 3-4) and "and has in no way neglected his honourable ambitions and has continued (to be well-intentioned) to the *orgeōnes* assisting (them) to enhance the association (*synodos*)" (lines 7-9). He was a prototype of group values as he never failed to benefit the association (lines 9-10).

Additionally, he "frequently advanced money for payments without charging interest when the treasurer happened to be absent and has promised that in the future he will be ready to consider whatever matter the *orgeōnes* ask of him" (lines 14-20). *IRhamnous* II 59 stated that Apollodoros received honour because he had expressed "the highest degree [of] piety (εὐσέβειαν) towards the gods and goodwill and zeal with regard to his fellow citizens" (lines 15-20). He "has continued to be well-intentioned towards the People (δῆμος) — both to individuals and collectively—at all times" (lines 1-4). Lines 16-19 indicate that Apollodoros represents the prototypical values of *eunoia* and *philotimia*. Therefore, it is acknowledged that these were important normative values within the association.

IG II^2 1297 relates that the association "crown their *archeranistēs* Sophron on account of his excellence and the piety he has shown to the Goddess" (lines 16-18). This expression shows that the virtues *arete* and *eusebeia* had won Sophron honour from the *thiasos*. The opening section of the decree also praised Sophron: "Whereas Sophron generously and ambitiously convoked the *thiasos*" (lines 3-4). It is notable that Sophron showed his concern for the group. The inscription revealed that a rivalry (εφάμιλλον) had existed among association members (line 7). According to Harland, the function of rivalry can be regarded as encouraging high social class members to

---

1078-1091; Hogg, "A Social Identity Theory of Leadership," 189.

[466] Michael Hogg, and Giles Howard, "Norm Talk and Identity in Intergroup Communication," in *The Handbook of Intergroup Communication* (London: Routledge, 2012), 395-410.

offer more financial assistance to the group. As donors, they have an opportunity to compete for honour and prestige because of their generous donations.[467] This notion can be supported by *IG* II² 1298, as those honoured as leaders are functionaries, as is clearly addressed in the last section of the decree. Although they were not the top leaders in the association, the reason for valuing them was that they had "acted honourably and piously in all matters and in regard to the gods" (lines 9-10). This is clearly the sort of behaviour expected by the association.

The above discussion demonstrates that honoured leaders commonly show prototypicality in embodying the association's normative values in a way that contributes to the identity that members derive from belonging to it. Their prototypical values and behaviour win public praise and promote a sense of "being one of us."

3.3. Examining Identity Advancement in Voluntary Associations

Identity advancement refers to a leader's willingness to undertake acts that benefit members, even to their detriment. In this sense, a leader's responsibility is to promote group rather than personal interests.[468] A leader is expected to stand for the group and fend off threats from outside the group, whatever the personal cost. A primary feature of an honour-based leader possesses a significant amount of wealth. Generosity in donating money to support the association is central to honour-based leadership. As Last and Harland state, the contribution of resources for maintaining sanctuaries and public facilities, holding annual festivals and ritual meals and undertaking burial services was characteristic of honourable leaders.[469]

Supporting evidence comes from *AM* 66:228 no. 4, which reveals that Sarapion "took care of the *orgeōnes* in a generous and honourable fashion throughout the entire year and performed services for the gods at his own expense" (lines 6-8). In *IG* II² 1329, Chaireas used gold and silver objects to decorate the sacred rites (lines 9-12). It was also said that he "never failed to contribute money for servicing the temple" (lines 9-10). This indicates that leaders were wealthy and able to supply resources to associations; their generosity promoted their honour.[470]

As Ascough notes, wealth is sharply distinguished between people of high and low social status. When an honourable leader was appointed by association members, for example, in *IG* II² 1325, their obligation was to provide funds to the association and its members (lines 18-26). One of the examples is in *IRhamnous* II 59, which states that "he (Aphthonētos) continues to be of service even individually in respect to whatever

---

[467] Philip A. Harland, "Spheres of Contention, Claims of Pre-eminence: Rivalries among Associations in Sardis and Smyrna," in *Religious Rivalries and the Struggle for Success in Sardis and Smyrna*, ed., Richard S. Ascough (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2005), 57.

[468] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*; S. Alexander Haslam and Michael J. Platow, "The Link between Leadership and Followership: How Affirming Social Identity Translates Vision into Action," *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 27/11 (2001): 1469-1479.

[469] Richard Last, and Philip A Harland, *Group Survival in the Ancient Mediterranean: Rethinking Material Conditions in the Landscape of Jews and Christians* (London: T&T Clark, 2020), 100.

[470] Last, and Harland, *Group Survival in the Ancient Mediterranean*, 101-102.

any of the citizens might ask him" (lines 10-14). A patron was obligated to offer financial assistance to association members based on reciprocal and exchange relationships. Once the members accepted assistance, public acknowledgement and honouring their patron were their duty.[471]

Numerous donations given by Chaireas are attested to in *IG* II² 1329. The quality of *philotimia* drove him to "continu[ing] (to be well-intentioned) to the orgeōnes by assisting [them] to enhance the association (synods)" (line 8). Several contributions were given by Chaireas which are mentioned in lines 13 to 15: firstly, "introducing decrees for the benefit (of the association), so that the extremely inopportune expenses were cut down"; secondly, "arranging the ordinary people (τοὺς δημοτικούς) to offer the collection and the sacred furnishings" and, thirdly, "advancing money for payments without charging interest when the treasurer happened to be absent." This kind of promotion of the collective benefit is a common characteristic in Greco-Roman associations. For instance, *AM* 66:228 no.4 twice mentions that Sarapion "took care of the *orgeōnes* in a generous and honourable fashion" (lines 6-7, 10). The reason for this is that he "perform[s] services for the gods at his own expense" (lines 7-8).

Similarly, in *IG* II² 1325 Dionysios was valued by the association because he "constructed the sanctuary of the god and beautified it with many beautiful votive offerings" and "contributed one thousand drachmae to the treasury so that they might obtain from its income (the means) to sacrifice monthly to the god in accordance with ancestral traditions" (lines 19-26). In *IG* II² 1292, Zopyros, Theophanes, and Olympichos received praise because "in their management, they have rendered accounts honestly concerning all the things that they have administered by the law" (lines 5-6). These honourable leaders showed that they acted in the association's interests, not theirs.

To association members, the integrity and honesty of leaders are important; they did not take illicit benefits from the association. For instance, *IG* II² 1324 states that Stephanos became a supervisor who "managed the repairs to the temple as were appropriate, and led a procession worthy of the goddess, being ambitious in all these things and making expenditures from his own funds" (lines 3-6). In lines 23 to 26, it is written that he was one of those "who wish to show piety towards the gods and zeal towards the *orgeōnes*, knowing that they will receive appropriate thanks from the *orgeōnes*" and "that a place for a statue be given to him in the temple." Showing piety to the gods and zeal towards the community at personal cost is comparable in the twofold manner mentioned above, namely, heuristically and interpretively.

The donation of material resources is the salient feature of self-sacrifice demonstrated above. According to SIA theorists, leaders "need to 'do it for us' by

---

[471] Richard Ascough, *Paul's Macedonian Associations: The Social Context of Philippians and 1 Thessalonians* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2020), 61-62.

promoting the shared interests of the group they are leading."[472] This action generates leadership effectiveness.[473] Several inscriptions provide comparative material for this notion (*IG* II² 1343, *AM* 66:228 no.4; *IRhamnous* II 59; *IG* II² 1297; *IG*² II 1298). For instance, *IG* II² 1324 states that Stephanos was honoured by members for not only managing the repair works of the temple but also for "making expenditures from his own funds" (lines 7-8). Thus, identity advancement provides comparative resources for investigating and explaining the group processes by which honourable leaders receive public praise from association members.

3.4. Examining Identity Embedding in Voluntary Associations

According to SIA researchers, "Making the group members matter" is another crucial determinant for enhancing effective leadership.[474] This means a leader is responsible for creating a collective goal and helping members live out their identity in meaningful and positive ways. As an "Identity embedder," a leader must establish "structures, events, and activities that give weight to the group's existence and allow group members to live out their membership."[475] The arrangement of organizational structures, rituals, and collective events helps the group value more visible to group members and the outside world.

There is considerable evidence reflecting the value of identity embedding as an analytical tool regarding these inscriptions. In *IG* II² 1343, Diodoros "shared responsibility for the initial gathering and, having also created the *synodos*, he remained as its *archeranistēs*, and having served as treasurer in the year that Euthydomos was *archon*, he presided over the foundation of the *synodos*" (lines 8-16). In line 12, *Ktisis* (κτίσις) is "the act by which an authoritative or governmental body is created."[476] As a founder of the association, Diodoros "did what is right to the fullest" (lines 20-21). This demonstrates his commitment to identity advancement, as he shows great zeal for the association (lines 23-25). Supporting evidence is found in the statement, "Diodoros has continued to be well-disposed to the *koinon* of Soteriastai, doing in both word and deed what is beneficial for the *synodos*" (lines 9-10). This is an instance where the same act can be analyzed regarding two SIA aspects of leadership.

A leader as impresario is widely seen in honorific inscriptions. For instance, in: *AM* 66:228 no.4; *IG* II² 1329; *IG* II² 1325; *IG* II² 1297; and *IG* II² 1298. These inscriptions frequently show that honourable leaders are pious by being willing to offer

---

[472] Steffens et al. "Leadership as Social Identity Management: Introducing the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI) to Assess and Validate a Four-Dimensional Model," 1003.
[473] Knippenberg, and Knippenberg, "Leader Self-Sacrifice and Leadership Effectiveness: The Moderating Role of Leader Prototypicality," 25.
[474] Steffens et al. "Leadership as Social Identity Management: Introducing the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI) to Assess and Validate a Four-Dimensional Model," 1004-1005; Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 192-193.
[475] Steffens et al. "Leadership as Social Identity Management: Introducing the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI) to Assess and Validate a Four-Dimensional Model," 1005.
[476] "κτίσις," *BDAG*, 507.

money to service the temple and implement rituals. Harland argued that a cultic social network bound member identity in the associations.[477] This meant honouring a specific deity at a particular temple was crucial to formulating and reinforcing ingroup identity. Such rituals organized by a leader are typical examples of leader impresarioship. For example, in *AM* 66:228 no.4 Sarapion served the association through "sacrific[ing] the customary sacrifices to the gods in the temple and has obtained good omens on behalf of the association of *orgeōnes* and the children and women and the *dēmos* of the Athenians" (lines 3-5).

IG II² 1329 reveals that a leader: Has continued (to be well-intentioned) to the *orgeōnes* assisting (them) to enhance the association (*synodos*); and many times, he has been concerned about servicing the temple and has not failed in any contribution at all, but has introduced decrees for the benefit (of the association), so that the highly inopportune expenses were cut down; and he also arranged that ordinary people should share in the benefactions given by the *orgeōnes*, and he has also continued to undertake service for the collection and for the sacred furnishings" (lines 8-14).

These data have elements of identity advancement and leader impresarioship. "Has introduced decrees" (lines 10-11) implies this leader has formulated several regulations for operating the association to provide it with overall normative goals and direction, aligning with an impresario's work. In addition, *IG* II² 1297 attests that Sophron intentionally called a meeting to announce the enlargement of the treasury "at his own expense" (lines 7-8). Notably, he sets up a stele in the temple to gather this contribution. These actions signify Sophron's impresarioship, as he initiates several activities and establishes a physical structure to assist members in experiencing their group identity.

The honorific inscriptions are rich with aspects of identity impresarioship. They show associations were highly concerned about how their leaders made the group matter to association members. They thereby promoted group identity by creating collective goals for the group, embodied in institutions and physical structures. In line with Haslam et al.'s observation, a leader's responsibility is to make an invisible vision visible, organize several activities, and erect buildings to shape a new social reality among members.[478]

3.5. Examining the Leader as an Entrepreneur of Group Identity

The SIA researchers have noted that a leader plays an active role in constructing the identity of the ingroup and its members. This identity construction process is negotiable and greatly depends on the leader's strategy. This means "Leaders actively develop their own prototypicality as a function of their success in defining values, norms, and ideals

---

[477] Philip A. Harland, *Associations, Synagogues, and Congregations: Claiming a Place in Ancient Mediterranean Society*, 2ⁿᵈ ed. (Kitchener: Philip A. Harland, 2013), 33.
[478] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 165-166.

that give a group shared meaning for its members."[479] According to Esler, a leader's responsibility is to create and maintain the coherent sense of a group. Thus, "Leaders seek through their words and deeds to craft a sense of identity shared by the members."[480] In this regard, formulating discursive accounts and acting out normative values are central to effective leadership.[481] Barentsen has appropriately described it as painting a verbal picture of social identity.[482]

There are only two inscriptions, *IG* II^2 1343 and *IG* II^2 1298, which reflect the aspect of identity entrepreneurship. *IG* II^2 1343 indicated that Diodoros "shared responsibility for the initial gathering (*syllogē*) and, having also created the *synodos*" (lines 6-10). As a co-founder, his words and deeds created an example for members to emulate: "all members might be zealous to enhance the *synodos*, seeing that its founder obtained a fitting token of good will and memorial" (lines 40-43). Diodoros was one of the founders who created and formulated the group identity and descriptors.

IG II^2 1298 reveals that Dionysios proposed a motion to call the members to offer financial support to the association as stated in lines 16 to 18: "And (be it resolved) also to inscribe the names of the associates (*synthiasōtai*) who join, once they have contributed the (share) of the money that is their due in the "fund" (*eranos*), in accordance with the law. Each shall register himself and his dues with the treasurer and the secretary."

In this case, the recognition of the contribution made by Dionysios and Theopropos was likely to reinforce a sense of belonging to the association. All members may share the same identity by contributing money to the same group. As the inscription stresses: "Let (the members) set up a stele in the temple of Artemis and inscribe the names of all of the *thiasōtai* on it (…) if it is agreed by the association that they properly administered the things about the gods" (lines 10-15). It is plausible to suggest that the secretary and treasurer have engaged in identity entrepreneurship by setting up an inscription with a text celebrating prototypical behaviour. But there is nothing novel about the sentiment they express, so it is only marginally entrepreneurial.

Although *IG* II^2 1343 and *IG* II^2 1298 serve to display a leader's identity entrepreneurship (the latter only to a very limited extent), it is worth noting that constructing group identity discursively does not seem to be a significant concern in this sample of honorific inscriptions. Voluntary associations are less concerned with formulating explicit verbal accounts of ingroup identity related to group beliefs than other dimensions of identity leadership. In the nine inscriptions, little evidence indicates that leaders were honoured for creating group identities by discursive means. Although

---

[479] Steffens et al. "Leadership as Social Identity Management: Introducing the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI) to Assess and Validate a Four-Dimensional Model," 1004.
[480] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 39.
[481] Hogg, and Reid "Social Identity, Self-Categorization, and the Communication of Group Norms," 4.
[482] Barentsen, *Emerging Leadership in the Pauline Mission: A Social Identity Perspective on Local Leadership Development in Corinth and Ephesus*, 59.

the inscriptions of voluntary associations often contain rules of the association, for example *IG* II^2 1326 (Piraeus, 176/5 B.C.E.) and *IG* II^2 1275 (Piraeus, 325-275 B.C.E.), none of the nine inscriptions examined were leaders honoured for formulating such rules. They may have been active in doing so, but they were not honoured on that account.

To sum up, phenomena comparable with identity entrepreneurship barely appear among the sample considered here. The leaders here are not honoured for articulating group beliefs. The implication is that honourable leaders seem to be little concerned with the discursive explanation of ingroup identity in SIA identity entrepreneurship. Instead, those leaders prefer spending money to express generosity to the association. Testing this conclusion against the entirety of the associations' honorific inscriptions would be a valuable exercise but beyond the scope of this research.

4. A Question for Future Research: Leadership in the Voluntary Associations Compared with Pauline Leadership

This result suggests an intriguing question. How would Paul's leadership compare with this result? There is a lacuna in research on that leadership that requires attention. Thus, Clarke compared leadership in the Greek cities with that of the Christ movement.[483] Last offered comprehensive examinations of Greco-Roman association leadership with Paul's leadership,[484] but their approach is without using the SIA. Esler has examined Paul's leadership using SIA without a detailed comparison with the voluntary associations.[485] The results of the examination conducted above suggest that a fruitful approach to Pauline leadership would be to combine SIA with an examination of the voluntary associations, with the process attending to the issue of entrepreneurship. The critical questions would be: is this an area where Paul, in his development of the various elements of Christ-movement identity by discursive means, differs from the honourable leaders of voluntary association? If so, why and to what effect? In the balance of this dissertation, we will seek to answer this question to Paul as part of the broader aim of comparing his leadership with that operative in other groups in his world.

An examination of nine honorific inscriptions (second century B.C.E. to the first century C.E.) has been undertaken from an SIA perspective. The typical features of honourable leaders have been analyzed. Abundant data comparable with three aspects of the SIA approach to honourable leadership have been found, but not entrepreneurship, which is creating and maintaining group identity by discursive means. This work

---

[483] Clarke, *Secular and Christian Leadership in Corinth*.

[484] Last, "The Election of Officers in the Corinthian Christ-Group,"; *The Pauline Church and the Corinthian Ekklēsia Greco-Roman Associations in Comparative Context*; "Ekklêsia outside the Septuagint and the Demos: The Titles of Greco-Roman Associations and Christ-Followers' Groups,"; Last, and Harland, *Group Survival in the Ancient Mediterranean*.

[485] Esler, *Conflict and Identity in Romans*, 33-39 and 222-242; Esler, "Honor, Shame and other Social Values in Hebrew Bible," in *T&T Clark Handbook of Anthropology and the Hebrew Bible*, ed., Emanuel Pfoh (London: T&T Clark, 2022), 263-286.

deepens our knowledge of honour-oriented leadership but also poses a research question for the subsequent comparison between Pauline leadership and the honour-based leadership represented in the honorific inscriptions. The analytical framework of identity leadership is a promising tool for examining voluntary associations' leadership.

It is, finally, worth reiterating that "comparison is a very particular type of scholarly enterprise. As Kloppenberg pointed out, two or more objects side by side and identifying similarities and differences is a heuristic tool for creating interpretive possibilities about the lesser-known phenomenon. It lets us see possibilities that we otherwise might have missed."[486]

---

[486]Kloppenborg, *Christ's Associations*, 5.

Chapter Seven: Re-examining Paul's Prototypicality in Light of a SIA to Leadership

This chapter asserts that Paul strategically utilizes Christ's prototypes to shape the identity of the Corinthians' Christ-followers. As explored in Chapter Three, Paul's leadership is under substantial pressure from a group of interlopers who have infiltrated his mission field. These interlopers have leveraged various worldly standards to challenge Paul's authority, such as 2 Cor.10:10. They are inclined to self-praise and assert personal honour (2 Cor.10:12-15; 11:22; 12:12). In this given context, Paul discerns the need to redefine the identity descriptors of the Corinthians Christ-followers. Chapters Seven and Ten specifically delve into the analysis of Paul's leadership in 2 Corinthians 10-13, using the leadership aspects proposed by SIA's researchers as a tool to understand the uniqueness of Pauline leadership better while drawing comparisons with leadership among ancient social groups.

The chapter is structured into six sections: the first section offers a concise overview of the leadership dimensions concerning leader identity and identity prototypicality. The second to fifth section delves into the exegesis of 2 Corinthians, mainly through several passages. We seek to unfold Paul's prototypicality, inspiring the formation of the Corinthians' identity. The final section compares Paul's leadership style with three other social groups. Our objective is to grasp the distinctiveness of Paul's leadership model.

1. Unpacking the Key Ideas of Identity Prototypicality and Leader Identity

The concepts related to a leader's identity prototypicality are extensively discussed in Chapter Three, titled "The Social Identity Approach to Leadership." This section will briefly reiterate several ideas about identity prototypicality. Identity Prototypicality is a central concept in leadership scholarship within SIA and is acknowledged as "The most widely investigated dimension." A fundamental principle of identity prototypicality is "being one of us," which is crucial in fostering leadership effectiveness. According to the SIA for leadership theory, influential leaders must embody and represent unique ingroup features, such as core values, norms, beliefs, and behaviours. These features distinguish the ingroup from the outgroups in a specific context.[487] Furthermore, leaders need to be perceived by their fellow group members as embodying these salient identity characteristics.

This embodiment of the ingroup prototypes serves two positive functions. Firstly, it engenders a motivational force, empowering group members to pursue the group's well-defined collective goals and interests as leaders always stand for us.[488] Secondly,

---

[487] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 71.

[488] Daan van Knippenberg et al. "Leader Group Prototypicality: A Replication of Average Member Versus Ideal-Type Operationalization Effects," *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies* (2024): 9-10; Daan van Knippenberg, "Developing the Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Leader Agency in Leader Group Prototypicality," *Social and Personality Psychology Compass* (2023): 3; Steffens et al.

it fosters a distinct sense of identity among ingroup members compared to outgroups, thereby enhancing cohesion and reinforcing a clear group identification. A leader's alignment with the ideal-type prototypicality can enhance the leader's effectiveness in promoting and establishing the ingroup's beliefs, norms, values, and ambitions.[489]

In 2022, social identity theorists admitted that the integration of leader identity theory and identity leadership theory can directly generate effective leadership.[490] The researchers note, "These strands focus on the identity of leaders as individuals (work on leader identity); the other focuses on the identity of leaders as group members (work on identity leadership informed by the social identity model of leadership)."[491] This notion provides a valuable lens for investigating the dynamics between a leader's role and leadership effectiveness. In the following sections, we will apply this dual theoretical framework to analyze the nature of Paul's divine-granted leadership and its significant functions in forming the Corinthians' identity.

1.1. Paul's Divine Commissioning and its Rhetorical Functions

According to the SIA to leadership, "Leadership is not vested in leaders alone but rather results from the contextual dynamics that create a sense of unity between them and their followers."[492] Due to accusations from the interlopers, Paul needs to defend his apostleship and redefine what it means to be an authentic Christ-follower. Paul states that his apostleship is rooted in God's endorsement (2 Cor.10:8; 13:10). This validation reinforces the perception of Paul as a legitimate leader, primarily as his suffering is intended to help the Corinthians achieve spiritual growth. Garland rightly noted that Paul intended to defend his leadership by "explaining the theological significance of his weakness, and warning of his power and willingness to discipline the disobedient vigorously when he comes."[493] Paul wanted to reiterate that a divine endorsement was behind his leadership.[494] As a messenger of Christ, Bash argued that Paul viewed himself as an agent entrusted with the responsibility of delivering both oral and written communications to the Christ-followers. His role involved conveying the teachings, messages, and doctrines related to the gospel, ensuring that the word of God was spread

---

"Advancing the Social Identity Theory of Leadership: A Meta-Analytic Review of Leader Group Prototypicality,' 57; Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 71; Hogg et al. "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 269-272; Hogg, "A Social Identity Theory of Leadership," 187.

[489] Knippenberg et al. "Leader Group Prototypicality: A Replication of Average Member Versus Ideal-Type Operationalization Effects," 219.

[490] Haslam et al. "Reconciling Identity Leadership and Leader Identity: A Dual-identity Framework," *The Leadership Quarterly* 33 (2022) 101620.

[491] Haslam et al. "Reconciling Identity Leadership and Leader Identity: A Dual-identity Framework," 2.

[492] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 86.

[493] Garland, *2 Corinthians*, 426.

[494] J. Ayodeji Adewuya, "The Sacrificial-Missiological Function of Paul's Sufferings in the Context of 2 Corinthians," in *Paul as Missionary: Identity, Activity, Theology, Practice*, ed. Trevor J. Burke, and Brian S. Rosner (London: T&T Clark, 2011), 97-98; Lim, "The Sufferings of Christ Are Abundant in Us': A Narrative Dynamics Investigation of Paul's Sufferings in 2 Corinthians," 198-199; Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 477.

accurately and effectively. Paul aimed to guide, instruct, and inspire believers, fulfilling his mission to nurture and strengthen Christ-followers' faith.[495] However, Bash does not sufficiently analyze the dynamics between the theological basis of Paul's authority and the formation of the Corinthians' identity in a conflict situation. He also fails to explore the rhetorical functions of Paul's divine authority within his discourse. Applying the SIA to leadership can provide valuable insights into Paul's strategy during his conflicts with the Corinthians, demonstrating the relevance and applicability of this theoretical framework.

As Haslam et al. recently contend, effective leadership occurs when "Leaders bring their personal and social identities into alignment so that they can mobilize the power of the group to change the world."[496] This implies that aligning a leader's values with the group is essential for achieving impactful leadership. Considering Paul's leadership foundation in God, as he stated, "the Lord has given him" (ἔδωκεν ὁ κύριος- 2 Cor.10:8; 13:10),[497] this divine authority not only qualifies his leadership position but also legitimates him to preach and teach the gospel. This divine commissioning further allows Paul to define himself as a bride's father (2 Cor.11:2), "servant of Christ" (διάκονοι Χριστοῦ; 2 Cor.11:23) and a spiritual "parent" (γονεύς; 2 Cor. 12:14-15). Paul expressed a deep sense of responsibility and protective jealousy to ensure that the Corinthians remained faithful and pure in their devotion to Christ. As Rus et al. argued, "The self-concept provides a powerful sense-making frame."[498] It is a "knowledge structure that helps individuals organize and make sense of their memory and behaviour."[499] When leaders self-define themselves as leaders, they often see themselves as aligned with the category prototype of a specific leadership role; for example, Paul perceives himself as authentic Christ's servant in comparison to those false apostles who "disguise themselves as servants of righteousness" (2 Cor.11:15). His main goals are to strengthen the faith of the Corinthians, ensure their adherence to the teachings of Christ, and protect them from false teachings (2 Cor.11:4). He seeks to shape their collective identity as true followers of Christ, promoting spiritual growth (2 Cor.13:9), and moral integrity within the community (2 Cor.12:20-21). Several key functions emerge when such leader identity concepts are applied to scrutinize Paul's self-conception, particularly his emphasis on his divine commissioned authority.

1.1.1. Intimate Relationship with God

Paul's divine commissioning, a significant aspect of his leadership identity, underscores

---

[495] Anthony Bash, *"Ambassadors for Christ." An Exploration of Ambassadorial Language in the New Testament* (Tubingen: JCB Mohr, 1997), 6.

[496] Haslam et al. "Reconciling Identity Leadership and Leader Identity: A Dual-identity Framework," 12.

[497] The Greek word δίδωμι in 2 Cor.10:8 and 13:10 in aorist active third personal singular. The translation is "the Lord gave."

[498] D. Rus et al. "Leader Self-definition and Leader Self-Serving Behavior," *The Leadership Quarterly*, 21 (2010): 510.

[499] Rus et al. "Leader Self-definition and Leader Self-Serving Behavior," 510.

his unique relationship with God. This intimate connection differentiates Paul's leadership from that of any interlopers or the so-called super-apostles. Paul explicitly prepares for his upcoming visit by defending his apostleship against the rivals (2 Cor.10:2-3; 12:14; 13:1).[500] He affirms that his apostleship is ordained by God (2 Cor.10:8; 13:10); his mission field is designated by God (2 Cor.10:13); and God is aware of his unconditional love for the Corinthians, as demonstrated by his preaching the gospel to them without charge (2 Cor.11:11). Paul also recounts being taken to the third heaven by God, where he "heard things cannot be told" (2 Cor.12:1-4) and his personal's dialogue with God (2 Cor.12:8-9). These experiences underscore Paul's intimate relationship with God and affirm the authenticity of his leadership. This close relationship allows Paul to exercise leadership to edify the Corinthians on behalf of God (2 Cor.10:8; 12:19; 13:10), instilling trust and confidence in his divine commissioning. With this divine mandate, Paul asserts his God-given authority to guide the Corinthians in adhering to their faith.

In contrast, in Paul's perspective, the interlopers represent outgroup members, as their leadership is based on human recommendation (2 Cor.10:12) rather than divine call. They also delivered a different version of the gospel (2 Cor.11:4) and demonstrated a different model of leadership (2 Cor.10:12; 11:22-23; 12:15). These interlopers probably claim themselves as the ones who "belong to Christ" (2 Cor.10:7) and "servants of Christ" (2 Cor.11:23).[501] Paul did not consider these interlopers to be faithful servants of Christ, as they did not embody the true characteristics of following Christ.

Drawing from leader identity theory, the development of "I-ness" is a cognitive process crucial for individuals to form a personal understanding of themselves as a leader and "also succeed in getting others to accept this understanding."[502] In considering Paul's conflict with the interlopers and some Corinthians, reinforcing his self-identity as a divinely appointed leader strengthens his authority and effectiveness in leading the Corinthians. This self-identity is deeply rooted in his close relationship with God, and that I-God relationship legitimizes Paul's leadership. It provides the spiritual foundation for his actions and teachings. By emphasizing his divine commissioning, Paul aims to establish trust and confidence among the Corinthians, distinguishing himself from the interlopers and underscoring his role as God's true representative. This divine connection enables Paul to guide, edify, and build up the Corinthians according to God's will (2 Cor.10.8; 12:19; 13:10). Such identity descriptors clearly set Paul, the divinely commissioned agent, apart from the interlopers, who are merely endorsed by humans (2 Cor.3:1). It empowers Paul to shape the Corinthians' identity on God's behalf. His close relationship with God also enables Paul

---

[500] Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 662; Lambrecht, *2 Corinthians*, 158.
[501] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 295; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 688.
[502] Haslam et al. "Reconciling Identity Leadership and Leader Identity: A Dual-identity Framework," 4.

to build up (οἰκοδομή; 2 Cor. 10:8) the Corinthians rather than tear them down (καθαίρεσις; 2 Cor. 10:8).

Researchers from the SIA to leadership emphasize that forming social identity hinges on individuals' understanding of their social surroundings and the leaders' ability to foster a constructive self-perception. This process is crucial for enhancing leadership effectiveness and motivating groups.[503] In the context of 2 Corinthians 10-13, Paul's leadership has been challenged by the Corinthians following the intrusion of his opponents. To effectively lead the Corinthians, he must regain their trust. Paul's self-concept of a divine-appointed agent empowers him to establish his position as a legitimate leader. This is because Paul has a close relationship with God.

1.1.2. True Knowledge about God

Furthermore, as a divine-commissioned agent, Paul asserts that he possesses a profound understanding of God (2 Cor.11:4-6; 12:4). Harris's claim is correct, "His pride in his service was legitimate because the conversion of the Gentiles was in reality not his achievement but Christ's work, with him merely as Christ's instrument."[504] This compels Paul to claim his identity as an obedient servant of Christ (2 Cor.11:23). In 2 Corinthians 11:4, Paul expresses his deep concern and frustration with the Corinthians for tolerating the false teachings from the interlopers.[505] He is warning them about accepting teachings and messages that deviate from the true gospel he preached.[506] To Paul, these opponents are preaching a version of Jesus different from the one he taught them, potentially distorting the true meaning of following Christ. Paul emphasizes the danger of accepting that version of the gospel message, which could lead them astray from the core teachings of "belonging to Christ" (2 Cor.10:7).

Before clarifying the prototype of an authentic Christ-follower, Paul defends his authority and legitimacy as an apostle, stressing that "I do have knowledge" (οὐ τῇ γνώσει; 2 Cor.11:6). This claim highlights that, on the one hand, Paul's knowledge is not inferior to the so-called "super-apostles," particularly these interlopers challenging Paul's lack of oratorical skills.[507] On the other hand, Paul highlights that he possesses true knowledge about God, as he argued, "We have made this perfectly clear to you in every way" (2 Cor.11:6). Paul has consistently presented himself as knowledgeable in

---

[503] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 26.

[504] Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 726.

[505] In this research, my position aligns with Esler, who claims that 'the one who comes' (ὁ ἐρχόμενος) refers to a group of interlopers rather than a specific opponent. This group has a Judean ethnic identity and is likely the same group that appeared in Galatia, see Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 308. In addition, Guthrie rightly observed that "it is impossible to treat the exact content of the false teaching. The problem is that Paul does not explain what is aberrant in the opponents' preaching about Jesus." See Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 510. Thus, Paul focuses on clarifying the true meaning of being an authentic apostle.

[506] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 510.

[507] Concerning the identification of "super-apostles," I agree with scholars such as Esler and Harris that the interlopers are not a reference to the Three Pillars, namely Peter, James, and John in Jerusalem or the Twelve. Paul's use of this term directly points to his opponents. See Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 309. For a detailed discussion, see Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 746-748; Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 309.

correct teaching, even if he has not assumed the role of a "professional speaker."[508] Maroney suggests that "Paul sees suffering as a qualification for ministry"[509] Paul speaks of being "a better servant of Christ" because he is willing to endure the sufferings of Christ.[510] Maroney rightly points out that suffering for Christ is an identity marker of being an authentic apostle in Paul's view. This is more important than evaluating an apostle based on their physical appearance or skill in public speaking. However, his proposal does not clarify the relationship of this marker to the formation of the Corinthians' identity. It also does not address how suffering influences Paul's knowledge about Christ, especially considering that he received a revelation from him.

Joubert rightly noted that, Paul's identification with Jesus is exemplary, as "not only does he passionately teach Christ crucified, but he also replicates the life of Jesus in his apostolic ministry. His self-sacrificial leadership serves as existential proof of the truth of his gospel."[511] This notion aligns with the observation by Lord et al., "For their leadership to be successful, individuals need to embody traits and attributes that are characteristic of leaders in the sphere in which they are seeking to have influence and that are consistent with followers' expectations of appropriate leader behaviour."[512] In Paul's perception, knowledge of God is intricately connected to his suffering for others (2 Cor.11:7; 11:23-33; 12:15). These passages show that Paul's knowledge about God is evident through his words and actions: "on all occasions" (2 Cor.11:6). To Paul, being a "servant of Christ" means willingly accepting weakness and enduring suffering for Christ's sake, as these experiences are integral to his identity as an apostle (2 Cor.11:23-33; 12:10; 13:4).

As a divinely commissioned servant, Paul identifies actual knowledge about God through three key markers. Firstly, it serves to edify the Corinthians towards spiritual maturation (2 Cor.10:15; 13:9). Paul aimed to strengthen their faith and foster their growth in Christ, mainly guiding them to discern the true and false apostleship (2 Cor.11:23-33) and what following Christ means (2 Cor.11:4).

Secondly, divine knowledge is characterized by sacrificial love (2 Cor.11:7-9; 11:28; 12:14-15; 13:9). He particularly emphasizes his commitment to preaching the gospel to them without charge (2 Cor.11:7-11; 12:14). This demonstrates that his actions are guided by his understanding of God and Christ, particularly serving the Corinthians with unconditional love.

Thirdly, possessing divine knowledge demonstrates Paul's leadership which is

---

[508] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 519.
[509] Maroney, "Suffering as Qualification for Ministry," 18.
[510] Maroney, "Suffering as Qualification for Ministry," 12.
[511] Stephan Joubert, "'Walking the Talk': Paul's Authority in Motion in 2 Corinthians 10-13," *die Skriflig* 49.2 (2015): 5.
[512] Robert G. Lord et al. "A Test of Leadership Categorization Theory: Internal Structure, Information: Processing, and Leadership Perceptions," *Organizational Behaviour and Human Performance* 34 (1984): 373-374.

grounded in God's commission. Paul affirms that gaining this knowledge is through the direct revelation from God. Paul recounts being taken to the third heaven and hearing inexpressible things (2 Cor.12:1-4). These extraordinary encounters highlight his intimate relationship with God and the unique knowledge he possesses. Paul describes having "surpassingly great revelations" (2 Cor.12:7), indicating the profound depth of understanding and spiritual experiences contributing to his authority and ministry. Paul emphasizes his divine knowledge to establish his superior authority over others, namely, the interlopers who challenge his leadership. This emphasis aligns with the SIA's concept of individual internalization. This concept involves leaders and followers integrating their group identity into their self-concept, shaping new aspects of their identity connected to the leadership role.

When Paul highlights his divine knowledge, he is not just legitimizing his authority. He is also enhancing his effectiveness as a leader. This divine knowledge becomes part of his identity and reinforces his identity as a leader among the Corinthians. By doing so, Paul reinforces his position and authority, restoring and strengthening the trust between him and the Corinthians. This trust solidifies his role as their genuine and trusted spiritual guide. Thus, this cognitive process shapes new aspects of Paul's identity, connected to the leadership role.

Moreover, when the Corinthians view Paul as a divine agent, they will likely have increased respect and trust in his leadership. They would legitimize his disciplinary actions, feel a deeper spiritual connection, reconsider previous judgments, and experience strengthened community cohesion. This perspective aligns Paul's authority and actions with divine will, enhancing his effectiveness as their spiritual guide. If Paul exercised disciplinary actions during the third visit, the Corinthians would be more likely to accept these actions as just and necessary if they saw him as a divine agent. They would understand that Paul's decisions are not merely personal but are grounded in divine wisdom and authority.

1.1.3. Authentic Christ's Servant

Recent SIA research suggests that when a leader embodies an ideal-typed prototypicality, it is more strongly associated with leadership effectiveness indicators than leader group prototypicality, primarily based on the average member's prototypicality.[513] In 2 Corinthians 11:23-33, Paul asserts that he has embodied the virtues, faith, and commitment idealized in following Christ. As an ideal type of prototypical leader, Paul's dedication to spreading the gospel and his personal sacrifices present him as an exemplary servant of Christ, surpassing the representation of an average believer: the interlopers and the Corinthians. In Paul's view, being a "servant of Christ" (2 Cor.11:23) necessitates three identity salience, which he uses to compare

---

[513] Knippenberg et al. "Leader Group Prototypicality: A Replication of Average Member Versus Ideal-Type Operationalization Effects," 219.

himself with the interlopers. First, this designation signifies Paul's close relationship with God. As mentioned above, this relationship provides him with genuine knowledge to teach the Corinthians (2 Cor.11:4-6), a quality he perceives as lacking in the interlopers who lack divine-endorsed leadership. Second, Paul claims that an authentic servant of Christ should willingly endure suffering to promote the spiritual well-being of fellow believers (2 Cor.10:15; 11:28; 12:15; 13:19). By contrast, the interlopers seek financial support from the Corinthians for their gain (2 Cor.11:9;12:14). Third, Paul redefines the authenticity of a servant of Christ by emphasizing the endurance of weaknesses and sufferings, aligning with Christ's example (2 Cor.11:30; 12:9b-10).

Although Paul has faced the thorn in his flesh (2 Cor.12:7), he can experience God's strength through his weakness. Paul is assured that God's grace is sufficient for him. God's power is perfected in Paul's weakness (2 Cor.12:9). Paul acknowledges that in his suffering, he can experience and share Christ's strength in weakness (2 Cor.13:4), so that Paul intends to claim about his weakness to display his "obedience to Christ" (2 Cor.10:8). In contrast, the outgroup members boast about their accomplishments (2 Cor.10:12) and physical prowess (2 Cor.10:10-11; 11:5; 12:11-12).

Therefore, Paul's unique leadership model exemplifies the ideal type of servant of Christ. This aligns with the concepts of leader identity theory, suggesting that a leader represents the group's norms and values and embodies an idealized version of these traits. This type of leader serves as a model for others, setting a standard of excellence beyond the average member's characteristics. In light of this, Paul's emphasis on his identity as an authentic servant of Christ can enhance his leadership effectiveness.

1.1.4. Being a Self-sacrificial Servant

Paul's divine commissioning reinforces his desire to serve the Corinthians with sacrificial love. According to the relational leadership identity construction theory, "Leader can be conceptualized as a positive identity that is socially constructed through leadership claiming and granting. Individuals claim an identity as a leader (through their words or actions), and these claims are met either by others' corresponding grants of a leader identity to the individual, or by others' counter-claims of a leader identity for themselves."[514] Paul claims that his leadership mirrors Christ's sacrificial love (2 Cor.11:7-9; 11:28; 12:14-16; 13:9). Specifically, 2 Corinthians 5:14-15 emphasizes the theological bedrock of Paul's ministry, where his servanthood is shaped by the model of Christ's sacrifice for humankind. This love compels Paul to serve the Corinthians selflessly. By participating in hardships, persecutions, and challenges for evangelization (2 Cor.11:23-29), Paul exhibits his strong commitment to promoting the spiritual well-being of those he serves rather than punishing those who persist in wrongdoing (2 Cor.10:8; 12:19; 13:10). The Corinthians, in turn, are called upon to acknowledge

---

[514] Lisa A. Marchiondo et al. "The Relational Nature of Leadership Identity Construction: How and When it Influences Perceived Leadership and Decision-making," *The Leadership Quarterly* 26 (2015), 893.

Paul's leadership role, recognizing his deep sacrificial love.

Paul demonstrates profound concern and commitment to their spiritual well-being through his self-sacrificial love towards the Corinthians. Crucially, Paul's new leadership model not only aligns with the qualities of a leader who seeks the best interests of their followers but also has the potential to enhance leadership effectiveness and rebuild trust among the Corinthians. As social psychologists have argued, how followers respond to leaders is primarily influenced by whether they perceive themselves and those leaders as connected by a shared social identity. The sense of shared identity fosters trust, cooperation, and support between leaders and followers, ultimately influencing leadership effectiveness within a group or organization.[515]

Recently, researchers have suggested the concept of identity fusion, "Leadership will be more effective to the extent that leader–group identity fusion brings the demands of leader identity into alignment with the demands of identity leadership."[516] When Paul highlights his sacrificial servanthood and leadership authority derived from God (2 Cor.10:8; 13:10), he fosters a sense of identity fusion among the Corinthians. They begin to view themselves not only as individual members but as part of a collective identity, namely the Christ-followers, under Paul's authoritative leadership. Recognizing that Paul's leadership originates from God, the Corinthians acknowledge its role in strengthening their faith. This leader identity underscores Paul's teachings, which closely mirror the message and example of Christ. Paul underlines that his divine authority contributes to internalizing a leader's identity, which can "make a person more likely to claim, attain, and maintain a formal leadership role."[517]

In addition, effective leadership occurs when the leader's identity, for example, Paul's identity as Christ's servant, is in line with the group's identity, such as the Corinthians' Christ-followers, particularly his sacrifice for the Corinthians. This alignment, facilitated by identity fusion, ensures that the demands and goals of leadership are in harmony with the collective aspirations and values of the group.

The concept of identity fusion elucidates how Paul's leadership, characterized by sacrificial service and alignment with Christ's example, can effectively shape the identity of the Corinthians. It illustrates how strong identification with Paul's leadership as an extension of Christ's authority can integrate the demands of leader identity with the group's collective identity, fostering cohesion, commitment, and effective leadership within the Christian community. Thus, Paul's leadership can motivate the Corinthians to adopt identity markers that reflect their commitment to Christ, shaped by Paul's teachings and example.

---

[515] Steffens et al. "Up Close and Personal: Evidence that Shared Social Identity is a Basis for the 'Special' Relationship that Binds Followers to Leaders," 297.

[516] Haslam et al. "Reconciling Identity Leadership and Leader Identity: A Dual-identity Framework," 10.

[517] Haslam et al. "Reconciling Identity Leadership and Leader Identity: A Dual-Identity Framework," 5.

In conclusion, Paul's assertion of divine commissioning is crucial in shaping the identity of the Corinthians. By claiming a divine mandate, Paul establishes clear markers of "belonging to Christ", including his intimate relationship with God, possession of divine knowledge, obedience to Christ, and embodiment of Christ's sacrificial love. These qualities significantly distinguish Paul from the interlopers who lack divine endorsement. By exemplifying the Christ-like prototype, Paul not only demonstrates unwavering passion for the Corinthians but also reinforces his leadership legitimacy, emphasizing his divine commissioning as stated in 2 Corinthians 10:8, 12:19, and 13:10. This solidifies Paul's role as a trusted apostolic leader who guides and strengthens the Corinthian community in their faith maturation. As Paul affirmed, "Everything we do, dear friends, is for your strengthening" (τὰ δὲ πάντα, ἀγαπητοί, ὑπὲρ τῆς ὑμῶν οἰκοδομῆς; 2 Cor.12:19). Through his divine commissioning, Paul not only claims his rightful place as a leader but also ensures the spiritual growth and fortification of the Corinthians, underscoring his commitment to their well-being and faith.

2. Functions of the Embodiment of Christ's Prototypes in Paul's Discourse

In recent years, several scholars have sought to analyze the rhetorical uses of Christ's characters, such as meekness, forbearance, and suffering.[518] When confronting the interlopers, Paul deploys the prototypes of Christ's meekness and gentleness to demonstrate the close connection between his apostleship, individual characters, and divine commission in 2 Corinthians 10:1.[519] As Thrall argued, "His [Paul] opening

[518] Marcin Kowalski, "Holy War in Corinth: The Apocalyptic Background of Paul's Struggle against Opponents in 2 Cor 10: 3–6," *Religions* 14.5 (2023): 630; Tarciziu-Hristofor Șerban, "The Ultimatum before the Assault on the «Strongholds»"-A Study on Metaphors in 2 Corinthians 10:1-11," *Studia Universitatis Babes-Bolyai-Theologia Catholica Latina* 67.1 (2022): 57-70; Sanghwan Lee, "Understanding Paul as an Antitype of Job: The Joban Allusion in 2 Corinthians 12: 1-10," *Religions* 15.6 (2024): 720; Nathan Maroney, "Suffering as Qualification for Ministry," *Kairos: Evangelical Journal of Theology* 18.1 (2024): 7-20; T.J. Lang, "Paul: Suffering as a Cosmic Problem," in *T&T Clark Handbook of Suffering and the Problem of Evil*, ed. M. Grebe and J. Grössl (London: T&T Clark, 2023), 84-91.
[519] Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 599-600. Concerning Paul's use of meekness and forbearance in 2 Corinthians 10:1, Ragnar Leivestad argued that "πραΰτης and ἐπιείκεια" frequently appear in biblical and extra-biblical texts. Generally, πραΰτης signifies the quality of humility and not being overly impressed by one's self-importance and ἐπιείκεια denotes the quality of making allowances despite circumstances that might warrant a different reaction. Πραΰτης occurs in LXX, Psa 45:4, 89:10, 131:1; Sir 3:17, 4:8, 10:28, 36:23, 45:4, Est 5:1. Its connotation relates to the gentleness of God, his people, and appointed leader. It is worth noting that God commanded his people to care for others with gentleness. For instance, in Gal. 6:1; Eph.4:2; Col.3:12; LXX Psalm 131:1; Sir.3:17 and 4:8; Wis 2:19, 12:18; Dan 3:42//Prayer of Azariah 1:19, 4:27. Particularly in Pauline letters, these Greek words point to God-granted authority and its function is to discipline as well as reconcile with the wrongdoers. For example, 2 Ti.2:25. The meaning of επιείκεια refers to God's mildness and forbearance, and his righteous judgement as well as punishment. For example, in LXX Dan 3:42; 4:27, and extra-biblical texts: Ma. 2:22; 10:4. For detailed discussion, see Ragnar Leivestad, "'The Meekness and Gentleness of Christ' II Cor. X. 1," *NTS* 12.2 (1966):156-164. As Craig S. Keener noted, Paul's meekness mirrors Christ's humility and reluctance to boast. See Keener, *1-2 Corinthians*, 216. Rierson highlights how Paul seeks to transform the negative connotations of ταπεινός into a positive theological concept. Paul willingly accepts social shame and humiliation as part of his leadership (2 Cor. 11:23). His aim was not merely to imitate culturally desirable actions but also to emulate the socially despised qualities of weakness, shame, and humiliation, thereby reflecting his dedication to prioritizing the Lord over himself. See Leanna Rierson, "Paul's Humble Leadership in Light of Contemporary Studies of Humility and Leadership: A Comparative Analysis of Paul's

words are a combination of authority and personal appeal."[520] Paul's intentions are twofold: first, to defend his leadership based on divine commissioning rather than human approval, and second, to win the Corinthians back to his teachings.

Furnish and Stegman suggested that Paul likely encouraged the Corinthians by adopting the earthly Jesus model in the gospel traditions.[521] Given Walker's analysis, Christ's "meekness and forbearance" in Paul's usage reveal discernible aspects of Paul's Christology.[522] Walker noted similarities between Paul's rhetoric and the polemical style of Socratic rhetoric. He suggests that Paul's use of irony, which resembles the Socratic style, is intended to challenge his opponents.[523] Unfortunately, Walker's proposal faces challenges because the text lacks sufficient evidence to support his argument, particularly considering Paul's apparent influence by Socratic rhetoric.

The discussion is incomplete without thoroughly examining how Paul strategically employs "Christ's meekness and forbearance" (2 Cor.10:1) to redefine the nature of his divine-commissioned leadership. This is particularly significant given their initial perception of his leadership as feeble and dishonourable. Paul insists on redefining the concept ταπεινός (translated as "humble" and "lowly") from a negative social connotation to a positive theological sense. Paul believed God could empower him through his vulnerabilities.[524] As researchers have concurred, "We see too that it is only when leaders bring their personal and social identities into alignment that they are able to harness the power of the group to effect change." In this following section, we will delve into analyzing the distinctiveness of Paul's leadership in several passages in 2 Corinthians.

2.1. Reinforcing Paul's Leadership

In considering leadership theorizing, leader identity is constructed and reinforced by an individual's self-understanding as a leader. This self-awareness propels leaders to strive for new, more ambitious goals and to hone their leadership competencies. As Darja Kragt and David V. Day assert, "Thinking motivates doing", and "Humans are motivated to act consistently with their self-concept."[525] This interdependence

---

Deployment of Humility in 2 Corinthians 10-13 and Philippians," (PhD Diss. University of Exeter: unpublished dissertation, 2021), 105.

[520] Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 599. Scholars supported this notion. See Collins, *Second Corinthians*, 197; Keener, *1-2 Corinthians*, 217; Esler, *Second Corinthians*, 288; Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 466-467.

[521] Furnish, *ii Corinthians*, 460; Stegman, *The Character of Jesus*, 118-121. On this point, scholars have presented a different perspective, challenging the previously discussed proposal. Jan Lambrecht argued that 2 Cor. 10:1 may not refer to Jesus's behaviour during his earthly ministry as "Paul does not provide much data about the earthly career of Jesus." See Lambrecht, *Second Corinthians*, 161.

[522] Donald Dale Walker, *Paul's Offer of Leniency (2 Cor.10:1): Populist Ideology and Rhetoric in a Pauline Letter Fragment* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 36-37.

[523] Walker, *Paul's Offer of Leniency (2 Cor.10:1): Populist Ideology and Rhetoric in a Pauline Letter Fragment*, 325.

[524] Garland, *2 Corinthians*, 430-431; Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 467; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 670; Thrall, *II Corinthians 8-13*, 630-640; Furnish, *ii Corinthians*, 460.

[525] Draja Kragt, and David V. Day, "Predicting Leadership Competency Development and Promotion Among High-Potential Executives: The Role of Leader Identity," *Frontier in Psychology* (2020): 4.

underscores the relevance and significance of leadership identity in navigating intricate social dynamics, as exemplified by Paul's situation with the Corinthians.

Paul identifies himself as "an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God" (ἀπόστολος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ διὰ θελήματος θεοῦ-2 Cor.1:1) and God endorses him to edify the Corinthians (2 Cor.10:8; 13:10). This identity motivates Paul to act following God's will. Tension and doubts to Paul's authority and leadership are apparent in the texts (2 Cor.10:2; 10:10; 11:5-7; 12:11; 13:5-6). In response to this context, Paul strategically uses Christ's prototype, incorporating traits such as meekness, forbearance, humility and boldness, to strengthen his authority and set himself apart from his opponents (2 Cor.10:1-2).

Hagel argued that Paul intentionally creates an antitype of the interlopers, representing outgroup members who oppose Paul and his message and engage in self-recommendation and boasting.[526] Hagel concludes that "Throughout 2 Cor 10-13. Paul is trying to establish a prototype of himself by claiming his legitimacy."[527] In other words, Paul deliberately establishes a distinct prototype to challenge the interlopers' values and behaviours. Despite Hagel's attempt to apply SIA's perspectives in examining Paul's polemic, his analysis may have overlooked a crucial aspect of the rhetorical strategy: how Paul, as a God-commissioned leader, employed "Christ's meekness and forbearance" to shape the Corinthians' identity. Indeed, Paul's appeal (παρακαλῶ) is made "by" or "through" (διὰ) Christ (τῆς πραΰτητος καὶ ἐπιεικείας τοῦ Χριστοῦ). According to Esler, Paul's emphasis on the exalted sources in "meekness and forbearance" in Christ demonstrates that the foundation of his leadership lies in divine commissioning.[528] If this is the case, Paul's utilization of Christ's meekness and forbearance serves several rhetorical functions as below:

2.2. The Rhetorical Functions of Christ's Meekness and Forbearance

Recent SIA research by Steffen et al. suggests that the prototypical leader should possess normative and aspirational qualities. These aspects serve as the foundation for leaders' mobilization of followers and influence group members' attitudes and behaviours.[529] Scholars suggest that here Paul's reference to "Christ's meekness and forbearance" (2 Cor.10:1) is rooted in Jesus' earthly example notably depicted in Matthew 11:29, where Jesus says, "For I am gentle and humble in heart" (ὅτι πραΰς εἰμι καὶ ταπεινὸς τῇ καρδίᾳ).[530] However, scholars underestimate Paul's strategic utilization of Jesus' earthly example concerning the formation of the Corinthians' identity. The relationship between Paul's embodiment of Christ's character and the

---

[526] Hagel, "The Angel of Satan: 2 Corinthians 12:7 within a Social-Scientific Framework," 197-201, and 204-206.
[527] Hagel, "The Angel of Satan: 2 Corinthians 12:7 within a Social-Scientific Framework," 197.
[528] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 288.
[529] Steffens et al. "Advancing the Social Identity Theory of Leadership: A Meta-analytic Review of Leader Group Prototypicality," 40.
[530] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 288; Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 600; Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 468.

concepts of normative and aspirational leadership qualities sheds light on how Paul's leadership motivates the Corinthians to change attitudes and behaviours.

Paul embodies Christ's meekness and forbearance, establishing a moral framework based on Christ's example that guides the Corinthians in understanding the nature of his leadership. Despite the interlopers and some Corinthians viewing Paul as an inconsistent and weak leader (2 Cor. 10:2, 10:10, 12:12), he reminds them that he possesses God-given authority, as discussed above, and intends to demonstrate his mercy and boldness during his upcoming visit. The Greek ἐπιείκεια (forbearance) implies authority, allowing Paul to exercise both clemency and punishment.[531] As Guthrie plausibly argued, "This [Paul's] bold confidence will be brought to bear 'against certain people,' who evaluate us as conducting ourselves according to the human standards."[532] Roetzel takes a similar position, noting that "The brutality and menacing tone of Paul's language of war was aimed at his converts (10:1-6) and well fits the disciplinary model. It intends to hurt, silence speech, and eliminate opposition; it allows for no compromise or negotiation."[533] Thus, Paul employs a warfare metaphor to warn the disobedient Corinthians (2 Cor.10:3-5). These divine weapons combat his opponents, who establish various obstacles for the Corinthians in understanding God.

Paul reminds them that his authority is not for destroying but for edifying them (2 Cor.10:8). Thus, Christ's meekness and forbearance can be seen as normative qualities that construct a moral and ethical framework that influences how the Corinthians perceive and follow Paul's leadership. In the views of Paul, ταπεινός (timid; lowly) and θαρρέω (bold; confident) are critical attributes of Christ's as well as the apostles' character.[534] Paul's leadership style reflects these qualities, particularly in his approach to forgiveness and sacrifice for his followers.[535] These qualities set a high standard for leadership and encourage followers to strive for spiritual maturation (2 Cor.10:15; 11:7; 12:15; 13:9). Indeed, his divine-granted leadership allows him to edify and punish the Corinthians. Paul embodies aspirational qualities that inspire and motivate the Corinthians to change. His steadfast faith, perseverance in the face of adversity, and unwavering commitment to spreading the gospel serve as aspirational benchmarks for the Corinthians (2 Cor.4:8-9; 12:9-10).

Moreover, researchers propose the meta-contrast principle, which suggests that leaders can enhance their influence by defining their prototype through comparison with outgroups.[536] By leveraging this principle, Paul emphasizes his intimate

---

[531] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 288; Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 601; Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 467-468.

[532] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 470.

[533] Calvin Roetzel, "The Language of War (2 Cor.10:1-6) and the Language of Weakness (2 Cor.11:21b-13:10)," *Biblical interpretation* 17.1-2 (2009): 97.

[534] Humility appears in 2 Cor.12:21; Phi 2:8; 4:12 in verb form and 2 Cor.7:6 and Rom 12:16 in adjective form. Bold occurs in 2 Cor.5:6; 5:8; 7:16 in verb form.

[535] Leivestad, "'The Meekness and Gentleness of Christ' II Cor. X. 1," 160.

[536] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 98.

relationship with God and true divine knowledge. He aims to construct a distinctive leadership model that clearly differs from that of the interlopers. Notably, Paul's self-humbling model serves to freely preach the gospel to the Corinthians. He even engages in manual work to support himself financially. This not only prevents him from being a burden to the church but also serves as a model of humility and self-sufficiency (2 Cor.11:27).[537] This leadership approach is characterized by humility, self-sufficiency, and a focus on serving others, which differs from the interlopers who probably received financial support from the Corinthians (2 Cor.12:16). Paul's leadership emerges as self-sacrifice and forbearance towards the Corinthians, establishing a highly prototypical leadership that enhances his social influence. Paul rejects exercising power to rule over the Corinthians; instead, he seeks to cooperate joyfully (2 Cor.1:24).[538] Through the strategic use of comparisons, Paul calls the Corinthians to align themselves with Christ's teachings and example, influencing their attitudes and behaviours towards more significant commitment and discipleship (2 Cor.10:5).

To summarize, Paul's use of Christ's meekness, forbearance, humility, and boldness, exemplars of authentic leadership, illustrate the impact of leading with a balance of humility and boldness. Paul's leadership, characterized by forgiveness, sacrifice, and divine endorsement, solidifies his authority among the Corinthians. This alignment with a dual approach to leadership suggests that embodying prototypical leader behaviours not only enhances perceptions of leadership but also fosters unity and effective guidance within a community.

3. The Functions of Trustworthiness and Divine Authority

According to the SIA to leadership, "If followers do not believe that their leaders are trustworthy, they will not follow them."[539] The trust between Paul and the Corinthians can be restored by Paul's assertion of divine authority and his adherence to Christ's values (2 Cor.10:10-11; 11:10; 11:30; 12:8-9; 13:5), demonstrating his trustworthiness and consistency as a leader. This demonstrates his trustworthiness and consistency as a leader, derived from his understanding of God's commission and embodiment of Christ-like prototypes, such as meekness and forbearance.

Kim argued that Paul utilized the prevailing notions of masculinity in the Greco-Roman world to establish his authority as a reliable male leader. This proposal faces difficulties as Paul focuses on positively redefining the concepts of weakness and suffering, particularly as he has exemplified these qualities to benefit the Corinthians. Ehrensperger argued that Paul's opponents aimed to de-legitimize his apostolic claims and teachings. Paul's strategy was to deconstruct the challengers' evaluation criteria, relativizing some worldly standards concerning power and authority and radicalizing

---

[537] Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 754.
[538] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 288.
[539] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 88-89.

other criteria rooted in values according to the Scriptures and the Christ-event.[540] This proposal holds merit as it acknowledges Ehrensperger's observation regarding Paul's intent to reinforce the core values of following Christ. However, this proposal lacks exploration into how Paul leverages his divine authority to underpin and establish these values.

At this point, the SIA to leadership is a valuable methodology for addressing gaps in understanding Paul's authority and forming the Corinthians' identity. In 2 Corinthians 10-13, the conflict between Paul, the Corinthians, and the interlopers can be seen as an opportunity for Paul to construct a shared identity, namely "belonging to Christ", of the Corinthians. Paul's emphasis on his divine commission legitimizes his leadership in contrast to the interlopers. This identification lays the foundation for Paul's authoritative influence over the Corinthians, thereby building their trust in him. On the one hand, this leader's prototypicality can generate trust between Paul and the Corinthians.[541] On the other hand, "trust" can inspire followers to follow Paul and drive their commitment to Paul and the group.[542] It is essential for long-term leadership effectiveness.

When leaders occupy formal leadership positions, their social influence is significantly enhanced.[543] According to Turner, the concept of authority stems from the collective belief within the group that a specific person has the right to articulate ingroup beliefs, attitudes, and proper behaviour. It also signifies the collective willingness to follow a particular leader.[544] From these perspectives, divine authority and trustworthiness are crucial for Paul's effective leadership. Paul's adherence to Christ's values and his consistent demonstration of these values build trust among the Corinthians (2 Cor.10:1-2; 11:2-3; 11:23-30). When followers perceive their leader as trustworthy, they are more likely to follow his guidance and embrace his teachings. Paul's divine authority primarily edifies and reinforces the Corinthians in their sense of "belonging to Christ" (2 Cor.10:7-8). As Guthrie pointed out, "Paul has always presented himself as knowledgeable of right teaching."[545] Paul consistently exemplifies this concept in his daily life, emphasizing that his actions and teachings make it clear to the Corinthians in every way (2 Cor.11:9). This underscores Paul's role as a God-granted apostle, providing a model of authentic Christ-followers across various

[540] Ehrensperger, *Paul and the Dynamics of Power*, 104.
[541] Hogg et al. "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 272.
[542] Sean G. Figgins et al. "Promote "We" to Inspire Me: Examining the Roles of Group Identification and Trust in the Association Between Identity Leadership and Follower Inspiration," *International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology* (2024): 15; Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 88-89; Hogg et al. "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 272-274.
[543] Steffens et al. "Advancing the Social Identity Theory of Leadership: A Meta-Analytic Review of Leader Group Prototypicality," 58.
[544] Turner, "Explaining the Nature of Power: A Three-Process Theory," 11.
[545] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 519.

situations.[546] Paul's authority is meant to inspire the Corinthians to live in alignment with their faith and identity in Christ.

This aligns with Lord et al.'s suggestion that effective leadership involves individuals embodying the traits and characteristics expected of leaders by their followers. In addition, as the SIA postulated about leadership, "Prototypical leaders can be effective in salient groups because followers trust them."[547] Paul's identification with the group as "one of us," particularly as one of Christ's followers, fosters trust and strengthens his leadership effectiveness. Paul instructs the Corinthians on how to live out their faith and embodies the prototypical values of authentic Christ-followers. This can inspire trust and foster a shared identity among their followers.[548]

Recent SIA research argues that a leader's moral and ethical behaviour is pivotal in determining effectiveness. Followers are looking for competence, skills, integrity, and ethical conduct. A leader who upholds high moral standards is more likely to be trusted and respected by their followers.[549] Paul's leadership effectiveness is deeply intertwined with his moral and ethical conduct. By consistently adhering to Christ's model, Paul enhances his trustworthiness and credibility. As God's agent, he serves as a role model for the Corinthians, urging them to demonstrate their faithfulness to Christ. This adherence to ethical behaviour legitimizes his authority and inspires the Corinthians to follow his example, fostering a cohesive and morally grounded community. Paul's leadership is deeply rooted in imitating Christ's values and actions. By consistently demonstrating Christ-like qualities such as humility, patience, love, and sacrifice, Paul sets a moral example for the Corinthians to follow. Paul's consistent adherence to Christ's model enhances his trustworthiness and credibility as a leader. As God's agent, Paul serves as a model for the Corinthians (2 Cor.10:7) and urges them to demonstrate their faithfulness to Christ (2 Cor.13:7-8).

To sum up, Paul's trustworthiness and authority are intertwined. They derive from Paul's understanding of God's commission and his embodiment of Christ-like prototypes, endurance, suffering and hardships for the community on Christ's behalf. These prototypes gain potency from his status as a God-endorsed leader, compelling Paul to persistently guide the Corinthians on God's behalf, even amid doubts about his leadership effectiveness (2 Cor.10:10). In essence, Paul's firm perception of his divine endorsement shapes not only his leadership style but also fosters the Corinthians' commitment and collective responses to God's agent.

---

[546] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 309; Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 519.

[547] Hogg et al. "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 272.

[548] Knippenberg, "Leader Group Prototypicality: A Replication of Average Member Versus Ideal-Type Operationalization Effects," 10; Sean G. Figgins, "Promote 'We' to Inspire Me: Examining the Roles of Group Identification and Trust in the Association Between Identity Leadership and Follower Inspiration," 17.

[549] Valeria Amata Giannella et al. "Leader's Morality, Prototypicality, and Followers' Reactions," *The Leadership Quarterly* 33.4 (2022): 10.

4. The Identity Descriptors of Paul's Divine Leadership

4.1. Humility and Boldness

The identity descriptors of Paul's leadership, humility (ταπεινὸς) and boldness (θαρρῶ), these are distinctly evident in 2 Corinthians 10:1. Despite facing criticism from some Corinthians and rivals, Paul introduces a new understanding of ταπεινός, which stems from the exemplary nature of Christ.[550] In 2 Corinthians 10:1-6, Paul engages in confrontation and comparison, embodying qualities of being "lowly" and "humble" (as in 2 Corinthians 11:7) to distinguish himself from outgroup members.[551]

Researchers suggest this is a social cognitive process that helps ingroup members to draw ingroup boundaries between ingroup and outgroup.[552] It allows individuals to identify who belongs to their ingroup, reinforcing a sense of belonging and shared identity. In addition, this process also helps distinguish members of the outgroup, creating clear boundaries between "us" and "them." Within the Greco-Roman social context, demonstrating humility (ταπεινός; 2 Cor.10:1) carries unfavourable connotations and values, indicating a state of shameful servility, poverty, and weakness. The Corinthians viewed such identity descriptors as dishonourable within their particular social context.[553] In response, Paul intends to redefine the meaning and nature of "humility."

Firstly, he positively defines ταπεινός, particularly by integrating Christ's prototypes into his leadership model. Paul uses Christ's meekness and forbearance as the ideal prototype to shape the Corinthians' identity. In contrast to conventional values, Paul views "humility" as an identity marker of Christ's servant (2 Cor.11:7). He particularly embraces humility in preaching the gospel for the sake of the Corinthians. This act of humility underscores his dedication to preaching the gospel out of genuine concern and love rather than for personal financial reward and making honour claims. Researchers suggested that when leaders are perceived as servant leaders, they are "focused on others above the self and comprise the dimensions of vision, integrity, trust, service, modelling pioneering, appreciation of others, and empowerment."[554] This can promote leadership effectiveness.[555]

Secondly, it articulates the identity descriptors in relation to "belonging to Christ" (2 Cor.10:7). This descriptor entails Paul's authenticity of apostleship (2 Cor.10:7-8); humility and self-sacrifice (2 Cor.11:7-9; 2 Cor.12:15); claiming in weakness (2 Cor.12:9-10); and divine authority (2 Cor.13:2-3). Paul asserts that embodying

---

[550] Stegman, *The Character of Jesus*, 126-127.
[551] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 468-469.
[552] Hogg, "A Social Identity Theory of Leadership," *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 186.
[553] *Dem. Or.* 4.23; 9.21; 57.45; *Isocrates Or.* 3.42; 4.68; 8.116; *Plato Leg.* 6.774c; *Philo Rer. Div. Her.* 29. *LSJ*, 1756-1757; *BDAG*, 880.
[554] Arménio Rego et al. "How Leader Humility Helps Teams to be Humbler, Psychologically Stronger, and More Effective: A Moderated Mediation Model," *The Leadership Quarterly* 28.5 (2017): 641.
[555] Steffens et al. "True to What We stand For Championing Collective Interests as a Path to Authentic Leadership," 728.

"humility" benefits others when taking on the role of God's agent (2 Cor.11:7; 12:14-15). Paul's display of humility before the Corinthians (2 Corinthians 11:7) can be seen as an effective way to attract them, encouraging them to change their attitudes toward him because he profoundly loves them (2 Corinthians 11:11). As SIA theorists proposed, "Leaders can only be successful if they represent the group's identity, that is, if they are perceived to be prototypical group members."[556] Paul strategically positions himself as an ingroup member, specifically as one "belonging to Christ." He illustrates the depersonalization and internalization of collective norms and values as aligned with Christ's prototype, particularly suffering and self-sacrifice. Hogg suggests that leaders can magnify or accentuate the distinctive traits of their ingroup when contrasting it with a labelled "evil" outgroup.[557]

Following this line of thought, thirdly, it establishes a clear and accurate understanding of the identities of Christ's followers, particularly through comparison with the interlopers. Walker argues that Paul aims to redefine his leadership in a state of weakness to set himself apart from his opponents.[558] However, Walker's proposal overlooks how Paul utilizes the interlopers as the outgroup to shape the identity of ingroup members. In 2 Corinthians 10-13, Paul's opponents represent the deviant outgroup, which heavily criticizes Paul as an unqualified and weak leader (2 Cor.10:10). In response, Paul labels these outgroup members as false apostles (2 Cor.11:13) who lead the Corinthians astray from his teaching (2 Cor.11:4). Paul also redefines the concept of "humility." He urges the Corinthians to adopt a new perspective on his leadership, emphasizing his "boldness" instead.

The Greek phrase μὴ…θαρρῆσαι (2 Cor.10:2) can be translated as "Please don't force me to act boldly."[559] Although the Corinthians perceive Paul's leadership style as humility and weakness, Paul reaffirms that he can act boldly before them. As an agent of God, Paul's boldness is firmly grounded in the power of God (δυνατὰ τῷ θεῷ; 2 Cor.10:4). This power basis allows Paul to exercise punitive actions against the disobedient Corinthians on God's behalf.[560] In 2 Corinthians 10:3-6, Paul strategically employs a military metaphor to express his commitment to demolishing all strongholds through divine power, emphasizing how these hindrances impede the Corinthians' understanding of God (2 Cor.10:5).

Paul asserts his authority (ἐξουσία; 2 Cor.10:8; 13:10) to confront rivals, captivating the audience, and disciplining the disobedient individuals (2 Cor.10:4-6). He aims to encourage the Corinthians to distinguish themselves from the interlopers and their teachings. As suggested by Knippenberg, leaders can enhance perceived

---

[556] Giannella et al. "Leader's Morality, Prototypicality, and Followers' Reactions," 1.
[557] Hogg, "A Social Identity Theory of Leadership," 191.
[558] Walker, *Paul's Offer of Leniency (2 Cor 10:1)*, 293.
[559] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 469.
[560] Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 672.

prototypicality within a group by shaping group members' perceptions and aligning themselves with group prototypes, thereby increasing leadership effectiveness.[561] Paul exemplified this by adopting boldness as one of the prototypical values to strengthen the faith of the Corinthian Christ-followers. Paul's boldness reinforced his role as a prototypical leader. His actions and demeanour aligned with the values he espoused, legitimizing his leadership and making it easier for the Corinthians to trust and follow him. They also served as an inspiration to the Corinthians, encouraging them to deepen their own faith and commitment. Thus, Paul's prototypicality, such as humility and boldness, contribute to the growth of faith among the Corinthians (2 Cor.10:15; 11:23-30; 12:10). The next chapter will thoroughly examine this significant aspect of Paul's leadership.

Paul's rhetoric closely connects to the concept of "Power Through", as proposed by Turner in 2005. This concept involves the exertion of influence through persuasion. Hogg et al. also proposed that prototypical leaders are integral to "norm talk," given their significant influence and "effective voice within the group." They can transform the group and mobilize his/her members.[562] Paul's leadership, encompassing both his norm talk (persuasion) and actions (serving the Corinthians), exemplifies Christ's prototypes, which play a pivotal role in generating social influence and followership.

To sum up, Paul's humility contrasts sharply with the accusations from his opponents. By embracing this character, Paul undermines their claims and shows a different kind of strength and servanthood rooted in Christ (2 Cor.12:9-10). Paul's boldness serves to assert his divine authority, and this commissioning helps Paul establish legitimacy as a leader, particularly standing against those who preach another version of the gospel (2 Cor.11:4). The embodiment of humility and boldness serves to strengthen the identity of the Corinthians as belonging to Christ.

4.2. Paul's Divinely Jealousy

4.2.1. The Relationship Between Paul and God

Paul, as the agent of God, has shared godly jealousy (θεοῦ ζήλῳ; 2 Cor.11:2),[563] indicating that "'jealousy' is a character trait of God, and Paul's very jealousy for the Corinthians originates in the character of God himself." [564] This commissioning legitimizes Paul's role in constructing the authentic identity of Christ-followers. In this regard, the dual identity approach offers perspectives to understand Paul's leadership to authority claims. According to leader identity theory, "… in order for leadership to be successful, individuals need to embody traits and attributes that are characteristic of

---

[561] Knippenberg, "Developing the Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Leader Agency in Leader Group Prototypicality," 3.

[562] Hogg et al. "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 277.

[563] Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 660.

[564] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 506. Thrall and Esler have shared this view. See Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 660; Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 306-307.

leaders in the sphere in which they are seeking to have influence and that are consistent with followers' expectations of appropriate leader behavior."[565] Here, Paul's expression of divine jealousy aligns with this notion.

Concerning the use of "Ζῆλος", Lappenga explores its singular meaning and its role in shaping the identity and practices of early Christian communities. He suggested that 2 Cor 11:2a likely cited texts featuring YHWH's 'jealousy' and employs a husband-wife metaphor.[566] Lappenga interprets Paul's jealousy through the biblical narrative of Phinehas. This allusion underscores the exclusive and imitative dimensions of Paul's relationship with the Corinthians. Paul calls for exclusive devotion to Christ, mirroring the fervent zeal of Phinehas. He urges the Corinthians to emulate his zealous commitment to the gospel, thus shaping their identity and practices as faithful followers of Christ.[567]

However, the limitation of Lappenga's proposal is that it may underestimate Paul's strategic use of emotional expression. Paul's appeals to the Corinthians to remain faithful to Christ are not just theological arguments but are deeply embedded in emotional rhetoric aimed at shaping the Corinthians' identity and loyalty. By focusing primarily on the scriptural and narrative dimensions of zeal, Lappenga might overlook how Paul's emotional appeals are crucial for motivating the Corinthians and reinforcing their identity.

Examining Paul's expression of divine jealousy (2 Cor.11:2), we see how Paul effectively shapes ingroup identity by emphasizing his divine source of emotion. He uses the term "jealousy" (ζηλῶ) to highlight his protective stance against interlopers (outgroup). According to leader identity theory, this process involves internalizing a leader's identity, which increases the likelihood of asserting, achieving, and sustaining formal leadership roles. Considering leader identity theory is a process of internalizing leader identity, which "makes a leader more likely to claim, attain and maintain formal leadership roles."[568] Paul's assertion of his divine authority consolidates his leadership position among the Corinthians and the interlopers. In 2 Corinthians 10:4-6, Paul presents himself as an influential and authoritative figure defending the true faith. Social psychologists suggest that when leaders self-define themselves as the leader, they may communicate more authoritatively.[569] Leader identity theory offers a fresh lens through which to analyze Paul's expression of divine jealousy in 2 Corinthians 11:2. It suggests that the internalization process is pivotal in maintaining a leader's formal leading position and also enhances their confidence, for example, delivering a speech before an audience, to fulfil an authoritative leadership role.

---

[565] Haslam et al. "Reconciling Identity Leadership and Leader Identity: A Dual-identity Framework,"4.
[566] Benjamin Lappenga, *Paul's Language of Ζῆλος: Monosemy and the Rhetoric of Identity and Practice.* Biblical Interpretation Series (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 167.
[567] Lappenga, *Paul's Language of Ζῆλος: Monosemy and the Rhetoric of Identity and Practice*, 183.
[568] Haslam et al. "Reconciling Identity Leadership and Leader Identity: A Dual-identity Framework," 5.
[569] Haslam et al. "Reconciling Identity Leadership and Leader Identity: A Dual-identity Framework," 5.

4.2.2. The Rhetorical Functions of Paul's Jealousy

As argued by Martiny and Kessler, when ingroup members perceive a threat to their identity and face negative comments from outgroup members, it often triggers anger directed towards the opposing group. Significantly, such an emotional expression becomes a means of managing and protecting the ingroup identity.[570] Paul strategically conveys his emotion, stating, "For I am jealous for you with divine jealousy" (ζηλῶ γὰρ ὑμᾶς θεοῦ ζήλῳ; 2 Cor.11:2). As mentioned above, this statement explicitly reveals Paul's concern and worry, expressing his anger towards specific Corinthians influenced by the interlopers. Scholars largely agree that 2 Corinthians 11:1 marks the inception of Paul's assertion of an honour-claim.[571] They argue that Paul acknowledges that making a self-honour claim is the only way to defend his apostleship and lead the Corinthians to realign with him.[572]

Paul's polemic "becomes a double-edged sword with which he engages the audience, divides insiders from outsiders, and attacks his opponents."[573] Encountering the opponents' challenges, Paul portrays himself as a father who is responsible for keeping his daughter's virginity in preparation for marriage (2 Cor.11:2-3). Scholars such as Barrett, Thrall, Harris, Keener, Guthrie, and Esler agree that this metaphorical language originates in the customs of Judean marriage.[574] Furnish argued that Paul envisioned the Christian community as the pure bride, Christ as the bridegroom, and viewed himself as the one tasked with presenting the bride to her husband.[575] Paul intends to urge the Corinthians to stand firmly in Christ and discern false teachings.[576]

To begin with, Paul urges the Corinthians to bear with his 'foolishness' (ἀφροσύνης; 2 Cor.11:1) in 2 Corinthians 11:1-6. He adopts an ironic self-presentation as a 'foolish boaster' to serve as an antitype, cautioning the Corinthians against emulating the foolish behaviour of the interlopers (2 Cor.11:4). This strategic approach is designed to highlight the absurdity of their claims and motivate the Corinthians to reposition with his beliefs about "belonging to Christ" (Χριστοῦ εἶναι; 2 Cor.10:7). Paul recognizes the Corinthians' uncertainty about their identity as Christ-followers, especially after the intrusion of interlopers (2 Cor.11:4). This recognition underscores the strategic nature of his leadership, as he addresses their doubts and reinforces their

---

[570] Martiny, and Kessler, "Managing One's Social Identity: Successful and Unsuccessful Identity Management," 754.

[571] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 306; Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 503; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 729-730; Keener, *1-2 Corinthians*, 224; Lambrecht, *Second Corinthians*, 179-181.

[572] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 306; Garland, *2 Corinthians*, 458; Matera, *II Corinthians*, 237; Keener, *1-2 Corinthians*, 224.

[573] Jeffrey A. Crafton, *The Agency of the Apostle: A Dramatistic Analysis of Paul's Responses to Conflict in 2 Corinthians*, JSNT 51 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 112.

[574] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 306; Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 506-507; Keener, *1-2 Corinthians*, 225; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 735; Matera, *II Corinthians*, 241; Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 660; Furnish, *ii Corinthians*, 499; Barrett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 272.

[575] Furnish, *ii Corinthians*, 499.

[576] Garland, *2 Corinthians*, 463.

faith. According to the SIA to leadership, recategorizing clear, unambiguous, and consensual prototypes effectively reduces the identity uncertainty within the ingroup.[577]

Paul fears (φοβοῦμαι; 2 Cor.11:3) that the Corinthians may be led astray from "a sincere and pure devotion to Christ" (τῆς ἁπλότητος [καὶ τῆς ἁγνότητος] τῆς εἰς τὸν Χριστόν). Scholars note that such a situation is likely a risk rather than a current reality, as Paul uses πως to indicate the possibility.[578] This verse can be understood as Paul strategically using a comparator to highlight the distinctiveness of ingroup members, which he presents to Christ (τὸν Χριστόν; 2 Cor.11:3). Paul depicts himself as a spiritual father representing God (2 Cor.11:2) while also creating an antitype image: the serpent (ὄφις; 2 Cor.11:3), which is linked to the interlopers (2 Cor.11:3-4). Paul's strategy aligns with the principles of SCT, suggesting, "When people define themselves in terms of a given social identity, they are motivated to see that (in)group ('us') as positively distinct from other comparison (out)groups ('them')."[579] From this perspective, we find that Paul is not just urging the Corinthians but passionately urging them to uphold their spiritual purity in Christ. On the one hand, Paul, as God's agent, expresses that his jealousy is akin to divine jealousy, indicating the distinctiveness of Paul's leadership. This divine jealousy reflects his deep commitment and unwavering dedication to preserving the purity and faithfulness of the Corinthian believers. By aligning his emotions with divine sentiments, Paul differentiates his leadership from mere human leaders, emphasizing that his motivations are rooted in a higher, spiritual calling. On the other hand, Paul's divine jealousy again is consistent with his boldness and confidence in defending against his opponents. This divine jealousy fuels his passionate commitment to the spiritual well-being of the Corinthians, driving him to confront and refute those who spread rival teachings. Paul aims to protect the integrity of the faith and guide the Corinthians towards a more steadfast and authentic commitment to Christ.

As researchers suggested, emotional expression positively shapes followers' identities. Knippenberg et al. proposed, 'People, for instance, tend to attribute higher status to an angry person than to a sad person, and the expression of anger in negotiation tends to engender more attractive counteroffers than the expression of happiness.'[580] That means expressing anger tends to result in more favourable counteroffers. This is because anger can signal determination and a strong position, leading the other party to make more attractive concessions to appease or meet the demands of the angry negotiator.

Paul's use of jealousy, or zealous (ζηλῶ) in 2 Corinthians 11:2 can be understood in this context. By expressing his divine jealousy towards interlopers, Paul asserts his

---

[577] Hogg, "A Social Identity Theory of Leadership," 187-188.

[578] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 307; Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 661; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 739.

[579] Haslam et al. "Reconciling Identity Leadership and Leader Identity: A Dual-identity Framework," 2.

[580] Dann Van Knippenberg et al. "Leadership, Affect, and Emotions," in N. Ashkanasy, and C. Cooper, eds. *Research Companion to Emotions in Organizations* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2008), 466.

leadership and reinforces the boundaries of ingroup identity. This emotional intensity underscores his commitment to protecting the Corinthians and maintaining their loyalty to Christ. It can also be seen as a strategic emotional expression to elicit a specific response from the Corinthians. It aligns with the expressions of anger that can lead to more attractive negotiation outcomes; Paul's jealousy may aim to evoke a more substantial commitment and loyalty from the Corinthians. It highlights the seriousness of deviating from the true gospel and emphasizes the exclusivity of their relationship with Christ under Paul's leadership.

Paul's jealousy has three functions: firstly, it signals his seriousness about protecting the Corinthians' spiritual well-being and maintaining their purity of faith. This assertiveness can compel the Corinthians to take his warnings or instructions seriously. Second, emotions like anger often convey urgency. Paul's expression of jealousy underscores the critical nature of adhering to his teachings and staying faithful to Christ. This urgency may prompt the Corinthians to respond promptly or more decisively in alignment with Paul's appeals. Paul's use of anger or jealousy is not merely an emotional outburst but a strategic tool to reinforce his leadership authority, maintain group cohesion, and steer the Corinthians towards fidelity to his teachings and the gospel message. His emotional expressions are crucial in shaping how his followers and opponents perceive and respond to his leadership within the Corinthians. Our analysis can be supported by Thomas Sy and D. van Knippenberg, arguing that anger expressions can positively and negatively affect motivating team members. When leaders exhibit anger towards their followers, it can draw attention to their leadership role and influence, making their prototype more salient to the members.[581]

Secondly, expressing divine jealousy helps the Corinthians reinforce their identity as part of his ingroup (the 'us' group). According to the text, Paul shares a divine attribute of jealousy. He prompts the Corinthians to recommit to his teachings (2 Cor.11:4). Paul's divine jealousy also motivates the Corinthians to distance themselves from the deviant outgroup (the "them" group Cor.11:4), as Paul said, "You put up with it easily enough" (καλῶς ἀνέχεσθε; 2 Cor.11:4). This implies that Paul expects the Corinthians to have the knowledge and discernment to recognize false teachings. More importantly, Paul also appeals to them to maintain their spiritual purity in Christ (2 Cor.11:3).

Thirdly, Paul uses divine jealousy as an emotion-laden tool to remind the Corinthians of his close relationship with them. As Paul asserted, "I am jealous for you" (2 Cor.11:2). Paul intentionally adopts the phrase "for you" (γὰρ ὑμᾶς) to reinforce the bond between himself and the followers. His objective is to appeal to the Corinthians to realign with himself.

---

[581] Thomas Sy, and Daan van Knippenberg, "The Emotional Leader: Implicit Theories of Leadership Emotions and Leadership Perceptions," *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 42.7 (2021): 905.

To sum up, the demonstration of anger can assist group members in establishing a clear identity and boundaries. Although Paul expresses his jealousy towards the Corinthians, this emotional display is not just a display of emotion but a powerful tool that highlights Paul's high prototypical salience to the Corinthians, which is concerned with their spiritual purity and faithfulness. Paul's identification with divine attributes directly enhances his prototypicality as a leader. Therefore, Paul's leadership is about expressing emotions and inspiring and transforming the Corinthians' group dynamics and identity boundaries.

4.3. The Possession of Pure Faith

Paul's sense of divine commissioning profoundly influences his perception of the ministerial role, allowing him to embody and maintain a pure and unwavering faith. This conviction of being chosen and empowered by the divine shapes Paul's understanding of his responsibilities and mission in spreading the authentic gospel in Corinth. His deep belief in divine authorization not only legitimizes his ministry but also fuels his dedication and determination to convey the authentic message of Christ despite the challenges and opposition he faces. From this perspective, Paul's identification as a bride's father (2 Cor.11:2) carries two implications.

First, Paul, metaphorically acting as a bride's father, represents God's agent in managing the identity boundaries of the Corinthians as followers of Christ. Within the context of 2 Corinthians 10-13, Paul's leadership faces significant challenges from the deviant outgroup, particularly as this group propagates another gospel (2 Cor.11:4) and causes the Corinthians to question Paul's apostleship. They lead the Corinthians astray from the pure faith, prompting Paul to portray himself as a bride's father. In this context, Paul expresses his desire to "betroth" (ἡρμοσάμην) and "present" (παραστῆσαι) the "pure virgin," which symbolize the Corinthians, to Christ (2 Cor.11:2). This metaphor underscores Paul's protective and nurturing role, highlighting his deep responsibility to safeguard the spiritual purity and devotion of the Corinthians. His goal is to prepare them as a pure bride for their ultimate union with Christ, emphasizing his commitment to their spiritual integrity and growth amidst the misleading influences they face.

Second, Paul constructs an antitype, drawing parallels with Eve being tempted by the serpent, to describe the values and behaviour of his opponents. Hagel employs a social identity framework to analyze the utilization of Paul's satanic language, for example, self-recommendation in 2 Corinthians 10:12-18. Hagel identifies the prototypical distinction between Paul and his opponents. While Paul boasts about the Lord, his opponents boast about themselves. Hagel concludes, "In this way, Paul becomes himself the prototype, and his opponents, who 'commend themselves' become the antitypes."[582] Although Hagel correctly summarized numerous characteristics of Paul's opponents (antitype) in contrast to Paul's apostleship (prototype), his

---

[582] Hagel, "The Angel of Satan: 2 Corinthians 12: 7 Within a Social-Scientific Framework," 197-198.

interpretation underestimates its rhetorical functions concerning identity formation.[583] Moreover, Hagel does not delve into why Paul employs such an antitypical model to shape the Corinthians' identity.

Paul strategically assigns the Corinthians the role of Eve while depicting the interlopers as akin to the serpent. This cognitive aspect metaphorically delineates members into ingroup and outgroup categorization. Paul emphasizes that adherence to his teachings, imparted during previous missionary trips (2 Cor.10:14; 11:7), is a crucial aspect of delineating the boundaries of the ingroup, indicating membership within it. Those who reject Paul's teachings and continue to follow the false apostle are regarded by Paul as part of the outgroup. Paul intentionally identifies these deviants as false apostles and deceitful workers (2 Cor.11:13). By likening the Corinthians to Eve and the interlopers to the serpent, Paul stresses the importance of discernment and fidelity to his teachings.

Darlene M. Seal rightly argues, "The reuse and reinterpretation of scripture as part of identity negotiation in new social situations provide categories by which groups defined who they were and what distinguished them from those outside their communities."[584] She further contends that Paul's re-interpretation of scripture plays a significant role in shaping group members' social identities of group members, adapting to new social and cultural realities while maintaining necessary differentiation from outsiders and internal cohesion.[585]

From this perspective, Paul uses the narrative depicting Eve's succumbing to temptation (Gen.3:1-6) to reshape the social identity of the Corinthians. By invoking this narrative, Paul aims to warn the Corinthians about the dangers of being led astray and to reinforce their need to remain steadfast in their faith. This process involves several components, including social categorization, cognitive, and evaluative elements, as outlined in 2 Corinthians 11:2-6.[586]

"Sincere and pure devotion to Christ" (ἀπὸ τῆς ἁπλότητος [καὶ τῆς ἁγνότητος] τῆς εἰς τὸν Χριστόν) emphasizes the significance of Paul's version of the gospel. He desires the Corinthians to return to his teachings, reinforcing the importance of aligning with his core beliefs regarding following Christ. Paul positions his teachings as the path to maintaining a sincere and pure devotion to Christ, contrasting them with the deceit and falsehood propagated by others. By emphasizing "sincere and pure devotion," Paul advocates for doctrinal correctness and an undivided allegiance to Christ. He perceives

---

[583] Hagel, "The Angel of Satan: 2 Corinthians 12: 7 Within a Social-Scientific Framework," 197-201.
[584] Darlene M. Seal, "Scriptural Re-Interpretation and Social Identity Negotiation in the Corinthian Letters," *Religions* 14 (2023): 2.
[585] Seal, "Scriptural Re-Interpretation and Social Identity Negotiation in the Corinthian Letters," 1.
[586] The components suggested by Seal following the frameworks of SIT and SCT, are cognitive, evaluative, emotional, behavioural, and temporal components. For a detailed discussion, see Seal, Scriptural Re-Interpretation and Social Identity Negotiation in the Corinthian Letters," *Religions* 14 (2023): 1219.

this unwavering devotion as the foundation of their faith, crucial for distinguishing themselves from those who distort the gospel.

Paul's appeal is a call to the Corinthians to reject the influence of false apostles and to recommit to the genuine teachings that he has imparted, thereby strengthening their communal bonds and ensuring their fidelity to Christ. Indeed, Paul not only distinguishes himself from the false apostles (2 Cor.10:7)[587] but also addresses: "You (the Corinthians) put up with it easily enough" (καλῶς ἀνέχεσθε; 2 Cor.11:4). This implies Paul desires the Corinthians to return to his teachings, reinforcing the importance of aligning with his core group beliefs related to following Christ.

Thus, Paul firmly adopts the satanic theme to denigrate the interlopers (outgroup) as serpent-like (ὄφις; 2 Cor.11:3). Paul continues with closely related Satan-focused material, labelling them as "false apostles, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ" (2 Cor.11:13-15). Paul describes how this outgroup deceives the Corinthians with "cunning words" (πανουργία; 2 Cor.11:3).

To sum up, Paul acts as a bride's father, displaying his deep concern regarding the Corinthians and their potentially straying from their sincere devotion to Christ. He strategically re-interprets the narrative of Eve and the serpent to help the Corinthians distinguish between ingroup and outgroup boundaries. By doing so, Paul emphasizes the importance of preserving the distinct identity of the Corinthians as true followers of Christ and promotes ingroup cohesion through identity recategorization. His primary focus is safeguarding their spiritual purity and ensuring their unwavering allegiance to the gospel he has preached. Through this approach, Paul seeks to reinforce the Corinthians' sincere and pure devotion to Christ, which he considers essential for their faith.

4.4. Divine Knowledge

Paul utilizes divine knowledge to shape the ingroup identity descriptors as a divine agent. By employing this heavenly wisdom, on the one hand, he helps ingroup members differentiate themselves from those outside the group. On the other hand, Paul's divine knowledge allows him to convey a deeper understanding of spiritual truths and articulate true Christ-followers' distinguishing characteristics.[588]

According to the SIA to leadership, "Highly prototypical members may appear to influence due to their relative prototypicality and may actively exercise influence and gain compliance due to consensual social attraction. The leadership nature of this behaviour and the relative prominence of prototypical members is likely to encourage

---

[587] Hagel argued that "it is to be assumed that Paul expects the Christ-followers to understand the values (good or bad) that he attaches to the words and phrases used to label the opponents." See "The Angel of Satan: 2 Corinthians 12: 7 within a Social-Scientific Framework," 201.

[588] Fladerer et al. "Bridging Gaps in Organizations: Leaders as Entrepreneurs of Identity," in Z. Jaser, *The Connecting Leader: Serving Concurrently as a Leader and a Follower* (Charlotte: IAP, 2021), 15-16.

an internal attribution to intrinsic leadership ability, or charisma."[589] In view of this, Paul, as a leader and ingroup member, has exhibited high salience and prototypical characteristics, enabling him to wield influence among the Corinthians. [590] His alignment with the core values and beliefs of the community makes him a model of the group's identity, fostering a strong sense of social attraction and trust among the members. Paul's prototypicality validates his authority and enhances his ability to guide and shape the community effectively. The followers, in turn, pay close attention to leaders and seek dispositional information about the group and self. They look to Paul for doctrinal guidance and cues on embodying the group's ideals and navigating their social and spiritual lives. This dynamic reinforces Paul's leadership position and amplifies his impact, as his teachings and actions become a benchmark for the community's identity and behaviour.

2 Corinthians 11:4, Paul strategically employs the term "not" (οὐκ) three times to highlight the boundaries between ingroup and outgroup. Specifically, outgroup members have propagated another gospel, another Jesus, and another spirit. In this context, Paul, as a divinely endorsed leader, contends that a true gospel, or the knowledge of God, a core group belief (in Daniel Var-Tal's proper formulation), is exclusively held and conveyed by him, not by the outgroup (2 Cor.11:4). Paul's action corresponds with the SIA theory, asserting that ingroup identity can be constructed and solidified through comparison and contrast with outgroups. In Corinthians 11:5. Paul "considers" and "thinks carefully" (λογίζομαι)[591] that his apostleship is not inferior to that of the "super-apostles" (ὑπερλίαν ἀποστόλων; 2 Cor.11:5). As Paul contended, although he was unskilled in speech (ἰδιώτης τῷ λόγῳ; 2 Cor.11:6), this does not imply he lacks expertise in knowledge (οὐ τῇ γνώσει; 2 Cor.11:6). According to the SIA to leadership, followership emerges based on a leader's possession of specific information that aligns with group beliefs.[592] This information is related to group entitativity. Group entitativity refers to how members perceive their collective identity and unity within a group. The establishment of group entitativity can assist members in defining ingroup boundaries and their meaning. [593] Thus, Paul's divine knowledge carries several functions.

First, Paul aims to set himself apart from the interlopers by leveraging his divine knowledge to establish his unique authority and authenticity. He believes that his leadership stemmed from and is bestowed by God's commissioning. This enables him

---

[589] Hogg, "A Social Identity Theory of Leadership," 190.

[590] Nicolas B. Barreto, and Michael A. Hogg, "Influence and Leadership in Small Groups: Impact of Group Prototypicality, Social Status, and Task Competence," *Journal of Theoretical Social Psychology* (2017): 5-6.

[591] *BDAG*, 530.

[592] Hogg et al. "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 264.

[593] Hogg, and Reid, "Social Identity, Self-Categorization, and the Communication of Group Norms," 10.

to have divine knowledge to fortify the Corinthians' identity associated with "belonging to Christ" (2 Cor.11:5). To Paul, divine knowledge entails the embodiment of the values of Christ (2 Cor.11:6), such as self-sacrifice and suffering for the benefit of ingroup members (2 Cor.11:7-9; 11:23-29; 12:10). These identity markers also serve as salient features that distinguish ingroup members from outgroup members (2 Cor.11:23). As noted by psychologists, "Leadership is active rather than passive. Leaders don't just sit around and wait for their prototypicality to become apparent; instead, they work to make it apparent."[594]

Secondly, Paul formulates an innovative leadership model which contrasts sharply with the interlopers, who adhere to worldly values. His approach stresses humility, sincere devotion to Christ, and a commitment to the true gospel, setting a higher standard for being a leader within the Corinthians. Paul aims to encourage the Corinthians to adopt the values and beliefs he exemplifies, distinguishing themselves from the outgroup members. This fresh leadership model not only counters the influence of the interlopers but also establishes a framework for authentic, faith-based leadership that aligns with the group's core values.

Thirdly, Paul embodies the core values of belonging to Christ, demonstrating divine knowledge through his actions "in every way" (ἀλλ᾽ ἐν παντὶ φανερώσαντες ἐν πᾶσιν εἰς ὑμᾶς; 2 Cor.11:6). As Harris argued, "Paul is emphasizing the comprehensiveness of his demonstration in his dealing with the Corinthians that he was no layman concerning true γνῶσις…"[595] This means that Paul is highlighting the thorough and all-encompassing nature of his actions and teachings among the Corinthians to showcase his deep and authentic understanding of true spiritual knowledge (γνῶσις). He wants to clarify that his knowledge and expertise are not superficial or incomplete but rooted in a profound grasp of divine truths.

Paul's leadership model involves not only his verbal teachings but also his behaviour, decisions, and overall conduct. He consistently demonstrates his spiritual wisdom in every aspect of his interactions with the Corinthians, aiming to leave no doubt about his credibility and authority as a leader. Thus, Paul distinguishes himself from those who might offer incomplete or erroneous teachings, emphasizing that his guidance is grounded in genuine and complete spiritual insight. This aligns with the SIA to leadership, which proposes that leaders with a high group prototypicality can effectively mobilize members to pursue the group's goal[596] and motivate followers to change.[597] These leaders represent the ingroup prototypes, embodying norms, beliefs,

---

[594] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 99.
[595] Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 750.
[596] Steffens et al. "Advancing the Social Identity Theory of Leadership: A Meta-Analytic Review of Leader Group Prototypicality," 57; Hogg et al. "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 264.
[597] Hogg et al. "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 275.

values, and behaviours.[598] Therefore, Paul, as both a group member and a leader in the Christ-following community, not only represents the prototypical characteristics of a Christ-follower but also exemplifies these traits to the Corinthians. Researchers have noted, "Those leaders who were in-group prototypical were perceived to be much more trustworthy than those who were non-prototypical."[599]

Fourthly, Paul's model aligns more closely with a prototypical-typed leader rather than a charismatic leader. From the Corinthians' perspectives, Paul is not seen as an inspiring leader typically associated with charismatic leader (2 Cor.11:6). According to the SIA to leadership theorizing, "The key factor when social identity is salient may be that followers perceive their leader to be a charismatic leader, not that the leader has an enduring charismatic personality that is independent of his or her normative position in the group."[600]

Paul highlights that his knowledge has been consistently demonstrated in various ways (2 Cor.11:6) and is primarily aimed at edifying the Corinthians (2 Cor.10:8; 13:10). As leader identity theory suggests, "Leadership claims heightened perceptions of the actor's leadership when a responding team member reinforced (i.e., accepted)–rather than rejected– the claim. Thus, claiming is insufficient in and of itself to explain perceptions of leadership fully; others' acceptance (or rejection) of the claims also shape judgments of leadership in groups."[601] This concept relates to Paul's leadership in that the acceptance of the Corinthians reinforces his claim to leadership and authority. Paul's divine authority empowers and legitimizes his leadership, particularly in instructing the Corinthians on living out their faith. This authority also implies an intimate relationship between Paul and God (2 Cor.12:1-4). In this context, Paul's self-identification with divine attributes strengthens the sense of unity and distinctiveness in identity markers among the Corinthians. This mirrors the process outlined in leader identity theory, where a leader's identity is co-constructed through the interaction between the leader's claims and the group's response.

To sum up, 2 Corinthians 10-13 reveals that the invasion of interlopers has damaged the relationships between Paul and the Corinthians, leading them to question Paul's leadership and his messages (2 Cor.10:2; 10:10; 11:6). In response, Paul emphasizes his divine endorsement to assert his legitimacy as a leader. He underscores that his leadership is granted by God's commission, which empowers him to teach and guide the Corinthians on God's behalf (2 Cor.10:8; 12:19; 13:10). This authority enables Paul to access and impart God's knowledge, providing the Corinthians with the

[598] Hogg, "*Social Identity Theory of Leadership*,"189; Knippenberg et al. "Leader Group Prototypicality: A Replication of Average Member Versus Ideal-Type Operationalization Effects," 219.
[599] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 89.
[600] Hogg et al. "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 278.
[601] Marchiondo et al. "The Relational Nature of Leadership Identity Construction: How and When it Influences Perceived Leadership and Decision-making," 903.

necessary instruction to remain steadfast in their faith (2 Cor.11:3). By leveraging his divine knowledge, Paul reinforces his leadership and helps the Corinthians differentiate between true and false teachings, ultimately fostering a unified and faithful community.

4.5. Paul's Obedience

According to social psychologists, obedience is "Behaviour change produced by the commands of authority."[602] As a divinely commissioned leader, Paul views Christ as the authority figure who commands him to preach the gospel in Corinth (2 Cor.10:13). Paul's obedience to Christ is a vital identity descriptor, reflecting his commitment to following Christ. His adherence to the mission field assigned by God (2 Cor.10:13) is a testament to this obedience. This underscores the unique nature of Paul's leadership, particularly the intimate relationship between Paul and God, as God had directly appointed Paul to evangelize the gospel to Corinth.

Regarding the rhetorical functions of 2 Corinthians 10:13-18, there is a scholarly consensus that Paul is defending his mission work. In these verses, Paul delineates the boundaries of his apostolic authority and emphasizes the legitimacy of his mission. He clarifies that his authority and influence are granted by God and are focused on the regions he has been called to evangelize, including Corinth. Paul addresses criticisms and challenges from his opponents, asserting that his ministry is divinely sanctioned and that his accomplishments are a testament to God's work through him. This defence not only aims to reaffirm his position and credibility among the Corinthians but also remind them of his mission's divine endorsement.

In response to the honour-claiming (καυχᾶσθαι; 2 Cor.10:13) made by the interlopers, Christopher Forbes has thoroughly examined the usage of "comparison" (συγκρῖναι; 2 Cor.10:12). He posits that it is "a means of 'amplification' (αὔζησις) within the topic of encomium in rhetoric; i.e. a means of developing and expanding one's material in a speech of praise or blame." This scholarly discourse sheds light on Paul's intention to contrast his conduct with his rivals, fostering a deeper understanding of his leadership strategies.[603]

Welborn and Esler argued that honour claims related to the mission field are a central concern of Paul's opponents.[604] In Harris' view, Paul refused to encroach on another missionary's territory or boast about others' work, [605] prioritizing God's assignment over human ones. Scholars concur that Paul underscores God's role in

---

[602] Stephen Gibson, "Obedience Without Orders: Expanding Social Psychology's Conception of 'Obedience'," *British Journal of Social Psychology* 58.1 (2019): 242.
[603] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 490; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 709; Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 644; Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 319; Furnish, *ii Corinthians*, 471. For a detailed discussion concerning honour claim and Paul's rhetoric in 2 Corinthians, see Marcin Kowalski, *Transforming Boasting of Self into Boasting in the Lord: The Development of the Pauline Periautologia in 2 Cor 10-13*; Forbes, "Comparison, Self-Praise and Irony: Paul's Boasting and the Conventions of Hellenistic Rhetoric," 1-30.
[604] Laurence L. Welborn, "Paul's Caricature of his Chief Rival as a Pompous Parasite in 2 Corinthians 11.20," *JSNT* 32.1 (2009): 52; Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 302.
[605] Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 709.

determining the boundaries of his ministry.[606] Paul claims honour for his obedience to the Lord's allotted task.[607] However, these proposals do not entirely elucidate how Paul employs his designated mission field to demonstrate his obedience to Christ.

As Christ's agent, Paul's obedience is exemplified through his adherence to God's commission (2 Cor.10:13-18). In this text, Paul underscores his commitment to the specific mission field assigned to him by God, which includes the Corinthian community. He carefully delineates the scope of his apostolic authority, highlighting it is not self-assumed but divinely ordained (2 Cor.3:1; 10:12). In Paul's view, seeking commendation and approval from the Lord is more important than receiving recommendation letters from other privileged parties (2 Cor.10:17-18). Paul's steadfastness in adhering to his God-given mission demonstrates his deep sense of duty and loyalty to Christ. He argues that his work and influence are legitimate because they fall within the boundaries set by God. This adherence to divine commission ensures that Paul remains focused on spreading the gospel in the regions God has appointed to him, rather than overstepping into territories designated for others. This demonstrates his obedience to Christ by submitting to the divine origin of his ministry.

As mentioned, Paul's leadership is characterized by his obedience, which starkly contrasts with his opponents, who are more concerned with making self-honour claims. Paul's embodiment of obedience is evident in several ways.

Firstly, he limits his claims of honour to the boundaries of his mission field (2 Corinthians 10:13). The use of the paired words "μέτρον" and "κανών" has also caught scholars' attention. Harris and Barrett argued that these words indicate that the Jerusalem apostles endorsed Paul's Corinthian ministry.[608] Harris claimed that "this commissioning was subsequently recognized and endorsed by the 'pillars' of the Jerusalem church (James, Cephas, and John) in accord with Gal. 2:9."[609] Paul's emphasis was that his missionary field was assigned by God rather than by human recommendations (2 Cor.10:12-13). He prioritizes seeking commendation from God over human praise (2 Cor.10:12), acknowledging that God directly allocated his mission (2 Cor.10:12-13). Paul is careful not to boast beyond the mission territory assigned by God, demonstrating his adherence to the divine commandment.

Secondly, Paul rejects praise for "work done by others" (2 Cor.10:15). He is committed to the specific mission God has assigned him, focusing on ministering to the Corinthians. As Paul states, "Our hope is that, as your faith continues to grow" (ἐλπίδα δὲ ἔχοντες αὐξανομένης τῆς πίστεως ὑμῶν). This commitment shows Paul's obedience to God and his fulfilment of being Christ's agent. He dedicates himself to the task God

---

[606] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 302; Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 492; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 710; Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 647; Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 320.

[607] Barrett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 265.

[608] Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 714; Barrett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 265.

[609] Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 714.

entrusted to him rather than seeking to expand his influence for personal gain.

This distinctive identity not only distinguishes him as an authentic apostle but also verifies his authenticity. For Paul, the genuineness of a leader does not hinge on performing wonders and signs (2 Cor.12:12) but on enduring suffering (2 Cor.13:3-4),[610] viewing it as a transformative process that contributes to the spiritual perfection of the Corinthians.

Notably, "boast" (καυχάομαι) in the Lord is a central feature of Paul's leadership revealed in 2 Corinthians 10:17. Building on this theological foundation, Paul's leadership characteristics include his complete obedience to God's command to preach in Corinth (2 Cor.10:13). He constructs a unique leadership model that contrasts sharply with the outgroup representatives, namely the interlopers. In the SCT theorizing, Turner suggested that "Comparing with others" plays a crucial role in shaping and reinforcing the ingroup identity.[611] This involves persuasion beyond mere assimilation of "factual information", recognizing that group affiliations and corresponding perceptions of social norms significantly influence human information processing.[612] This concept is pertinent to Paul's approach, where he uses "comparisons" by embodying authentic Christ-followers to draw distinctions between himself and the interlopers. Paul's unique leadership characteristics allow him to self-categorize his leadership model and to draw clear comparisons with the false apostles (ψευδαπόστολοι).

5. The Alignment of Paul's Leader Identity and Identity Leadership

According to a dual-identity model of leadership studies, researchers propose the concept of identity fusion, which is "a form of very high social identification in which the line between personal identity ('me') and social identity ('us') is hard to discern-potentially because it no longer exists."[613] This notion sheds light on the fact that "Leadership will be more effective to the extent that leader–group identity fusion brings the demands of leader identity into alignment with the demands of identity leadership." [614] These perspectives are significant as they provide insight into understanding effective leadership exemplified by Paul's leadership among the Corinthians.

Paul's leadership identity and his practice of identity leadership are intricately linked. His self-identification with divine attributes, strategic emotional expressions, endorsement by established authorities, and mission-focused conduct contribute to his

---

[610] The understanding is quoted from Franco Montanari, *The Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 315.

[611] Turner, *Rediscovering the Social Group: A Self-Categorization Theory*, 80.

[612] S. Alexander Haslam et al. "Salient Group Memberships and Persuasion: The Role of Social Identity in the Validation of Beliefs," in *What's Social About Social Cognition?* ed. Nye Judith L. and Aaron M. Brower (London: SAGE, 1996), 33-34.

[613] Haslam et al. "Reconciling Identity Leadership and Leader Identity: A Dual-identity Framework,"10.

[614] Haslam et al. "Reconciling Identity Leadership and Leader Identity: A Dual-identity Framework,"10.

effective leadership. This alignment reinforces his authority to shape the collective identity regarding "belonging to Christ." By embodying leadership qualities, such as humility, boldness, divine jealousy, and personal integrity and consistency, Paul demonstrates his "walking the talk" and ethical life, which he considers central to his leadership and ministry. By embodying "obedience to Christ" (ὑπακοὴν τοῦ Χριστοῦ), Paul makes this visible to the Corinthians. Therefore, Paul firmly believes that he can "boast" to the Lord, as the Corinthians have evident and verified his credentials (2 Cor.10:17-18; 11:6).

Ultimately, Paul's leadership model is distinct and powerful because it integrates his personal identity with his role as a leader. This fusion creates a seamless alignment between his actions and the identity he promotes within the community. By consistently demonstrating the qualities of an authentic Christ-follower, Paul solidifies his leadership identity and cultivates a strong, unified group identity among the Corinthians, which is essential for their collective mission and spiritual well-being.

6. Examining the Distinctiveness of Paul's Leadership through Comparisons

6.1. A Brief Review

Drawing on a comparative analysis with other ancient social groups discussed in Chapters Four to Six, we aim to unravel the distinctive nature of Paul's leadership in 2 Corinthians, seeking to understand its unique characteristics in contrast to its historical counterparts. As Gerd Theissen rightly suggests, "We can use them [comparative procedures] to help establish what is typical for primitive Christianity by analyzing the differences in comparison with the surrounding culture, or we can look for those characteristics which early Christianity shares with comparable movements, groups, or phenomena of whatever era."[615]

6.2. Leaders as In-Group Prototype

In examining leadership through the lens of SIA, Knippenberg posits that prototypical leaders exert significant influence over group members when their leadership aligns with the core values and distinctiveness of the group prototypes. The effectiveness of a leader's prototypicality is heightened when the leader is seen as an ideal representative rather than just an average group member. Trust between leaders and followers is crucial in forming a strong group identity.

6.3. Prototypical Features of Paul's Leadership

In the realm of ancient leadership, a stark divergence becomes apparent when comparing Paul's prototypes with those of Hillel's group, the Qumran community, and the members in Greco-Roman assocations.

6.3.1. Humility and Role of the Leader

In 2 Corinthians 10-13, several key aspects of Paul's leadership emerge prominently.

---

[615] Gerd Theissen, *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity: Essays on Corinth*. ed. and trans. John H. Schutz (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982), 192.

This section will explore Paul's embodiment of humility as a defining characteristic, comparing it with other leadership models, particularly those of Hillel and the Greco-Roman associations.

Humility (ταπεινός; 2 Cor.10:1 and ταπεινόω; 2 Cor.11:7, 12:21) stands out as a defining characteristic of Paul's leadership, inspired by Chris's example (πραΰτητος καὶ ἐπιεικείας τοῦ Χριστου; 2 Cor.10:1). Paul embodies this humility through servanthood (2 Cor.11:23), rejecting financial support from the Corinthians (2 Cor.11:7-9; 12:14-15) and working as a laborer (2 Cor.11:27) to avoid burdening them and to maintain independence from patronage. Despite Paul's intentions to serve selflessly, some Corinthians view Paul as dishonourable due to his engagement in manual labour (2 Cor.11:27) and what they perceive as a weakness in his leadership (2 Cor.10:10). In Roman society, engaging in manual labourer was seen as shameful and dishonourable, rendering akin to that of as one of "the dogs of a city" (*Flaccus.18*).

Paul's insistence on self-sufficiency indeed disappointed the Corinthians. Paul intends to distinguish his leadership from his rivals, even if it means receiving harsh criticism. As Paul presented, his aim to humble himself is ultimately for "elevating" or "making great" (ὑψωθῆτε; 2 Cor.11:7) the Corinthians. By choosing to support himself, Paul also sought to model the kind of humility and self-sacrifice that he believed were essential qualities of a true follower of Christ. He wanted the Corinthians to understand that true leadership in the Christian community was not about exerting power or seeking honour from men but about serving others and seeking honour from God.

In the framework of SIA to leadership, both Paul and Hillel employ humility to advance their respective ingroups' collective interests. "Being one of us" and "representing us" are significant characteristics of in-group prototypical leadership. Leaders can lead effectively by presenting the group's common social values, norms, and behaviour. These elements enable the leaders to differentiate ingroup members from outgroups.[616]

Similarly, Hillel and Paul explicitly underscore the ingroup's collective interest, directing their ingroup members to align their actions with their beliefs. Paul's goal is to redefine the meaning and purpose of humility, focusing on how this value directly correlates with the identity of "belonging to Christ." By demonstrating humility, Paul encourages the Corinthians to adopt a Christ-centered identity, emphasizing spiritual growth and obedience to Christ. On the other hand, Hillel's position leans more toward fostering social concern within the Judean community. He particularly urges them to adhere to and practice the Torah, which includes caring for people in need and promoting societal responsibility. Hillel's teachings on humility aim to enhance community cohesion and social ethics, such as social equality, among the Judeans, ensuring that members live out the values prescribed in the Torah.

---

[616] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 106-107.

The comparison highlights how their respective leadership orientations, while both rooted in humility, diverge in their primary objectives and how they advocate for their communities' well-being. Paul focuses on spiritual transformation and divine commendation, using humility to deepen the Corinthians' faith and identity in Christ. In contrast, Hillel emphasizes practical social ethics and communal responsibility, using humility to strengthen societal bonds and adherence to the Torah.

However, explicit references to humility are absent in the leadership models of the Maskil in 1QS[617] and Greco-Roman associations. The Maskil, the patrons and leaders among their respective social groups demonstrate little concern with employing humility to garner followership and construct an ingroup identity aligned with humility. However, Hillel's group, like Paul, emphasizes humility as a core value. Hillel's teachings, encapsulated in the phrase "Be the Disciples of Aaron," highlight humility as a foundational value in Leviticus Rabbah 1:5. As Hillel the Elder instructed, "To be humbled is my exaltation, my exaltation is to be humbled." This suggests that by embracing humility and being willing to lower oneself, one can attain higher exaltation or honour from others. Hillel's perspective aligns with Paul's emphasis on humility, where both leaders see it as a route to divine approval and honour.[618]

On the contrary, the leaders in the Greco-Roman associations were almost indifferent to showing humility within their communities. Our analysis of nine inscriptions provides evidence of this lack of humility among the leaders. However, specific leader's prototypical virtues, such as *arete* and *eusebeia*, are apparently in their respective groups. These virtues mainly manifest in the leaders' willingness to provide material assistance to the members, for example, in *IG* II^2 1343 and *IG* II^2 1324.

Turning to examine the leader's role in ancient social groups, leaders predominantly cater to the group's interests based on their dedication to a specific faith or belief system concerning the deities. In *IG* II^2 1297, ingroup members "crown their *archeranistēs* Sophron on account of his excellence and the piety he has shown to the Goddess." This demonstrates how their communities esteemed and validated leaders based on their devotion to the deities and exemplary behaviour. Their leadership was often characterized by their ability to provide material benefits and public acts of devotion, reinforcing their status and legitimacy within the community. Thus, these leaders' recognition and validation were based mainly on their visible contributions and the tangible benefits they provided to their groups.

---

[617] Humility appears several times in 4QS 511 (4QS Shir^b; Frag. 8 and 10).

[618] In Hillel's perspective, God will determine a person's position and status according to his humility or pride. This value within Hillel's group aligns with the sentiment expressed by Paul in 2 Corinthians 10:18, where he states, "For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends" (2 Cor.10:18). For Paul, accurate approval and commendation stem from the Lord rather than from self-promotion. Hillel, characterized as an exemplary leader, epitomizes humility and selflessness through dedicated service to the Judeans, as evidenced in Tosefta Peah 4:10 and BT Ketubot 67b. His self-sacrifice, such as offering food to the poor, is a distinctive marker of Hillel's identity and the values ingrained within his community (Sanhedrin 11a:8).

In contrast, Paul's validation comes from his divine commission and his unwavering commitment to the gospel. His leadership is less about visible, material contributions and more about spiritual guidance and transformation. Paul emphasizes his role as an obedient servant of Christ, focusing on the spiritual growth and edification of the community. His leadership style is deeply rooted in humility, servanthood, and a divine mandate, setting a different standard from the Greco-Roman leaders. As Guthrie rightly noted, "Paul boasts with the Lord as the object of his boasting, and he looks only to the Lord for the validation, the commendations, of his ministry" (2 Cor.10:17-18).[619] Paul's sense of legitimacy and authority comes directly from his divine commission rather than human approval.

For Paul, participating in Christ's suffering and weakness is essential to his ministry to the Corinthians, as it allows him to experience divine power in his weakness (2 Cor.13:4). In 2 Corinthians 10:17-18, Paul underscores that his honour claims are grounded in God's commendation. He perceives that "obedience to Christ", including efforts to strengthen the Corinthians' faith, is commendable before the Lord. This implies that living faithfully and contributing to the community's spiritual growth are actions that please God and are worthy of his approval and praise.

Researchers suggested, "The effects are more pronounced for leaders in formal leadership positions than nonformal ones."[620] Following this notion, the divine-granted position empowers and allows leaders to proclaim the words of deities. In Greco-Roman associations, leaders, except for the priests, typically lack the divine vision to prophesy the message to their group. This vision is crucial for shaping group identity and boundaries. Leaders who demonstrate zeal and ambition for their group, mainly by providing tangible assistance (*IRhamnous* II 59; *IG* II^2 1343), can lead effectively. This salience is directly shaping and influencing the ingroup identity. As Harrison suggested, in the Greco-Roman world, wealthy businessmen could gain public civic honours and private recognition as benefactors in associations. Despite their lower social status, the marginalized individuals could still aspire to honorific positions within these associations. Associations were hierarchically structured, with members striving to advance and achieve higher status and honour.[621] In *IG* II^2 1343 lines 40-41: "All members might be zealous to enhance the synods, seeing that its founder obtained a fitting token of goodwill and memorial." The association leaders also urge their members to compete for honour and public recognition (*IG* II^2 1292; *IG* II^2 1329). This comparison highlights the distinctiveness of Paul's approach to leadership, emphasizing spiritual growth and divine commendation over public recognition and material contributions.

---

[619] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 498.

[620] Steffens et al. "Advancing the Social Identity Theory of Leadership: A Meta-Analytic Review of Leader Group Prototypicality," 58.

[621] Harrison, *Paul and the Ancient Celebrity Circuit*, 295.

Unlike the leaders in the associations, Paul's leadership role involved using his divine zeal to defend himself against his opponents' criticisms. Paul's fervent defence of his apostleship and the true gospel showcases his deep emotional investment in his mission. He sees his role as a protector of the faith, warning the Corinthians against false teachings (2 Cor.11:2-3). His zeal reflects his divine mandate, making his emotional appeals particularly potent. Paul's emotional appeals aim to foster a sense of urgency and importance in maintaining faithfulness. He emphasizes the spiritual dangers of straying from the true gospel and uses his emotional connection with the Corinthians to motivate them to remain steadfast.

Leaders in Greco-Roman associations also demonstrated zeal, but it was often different and focus compared to Paul's divine zeal. Firstly, association leaders frequently showed their zeal through tangible contributions to the community, such as financial donations, organizing events, or building infrastructure. This type of zeal was aimed at enhancing their prestige and securing their position within the community. Secondly, the zeal of these leaders was closely tied to the pursuit of public recognition and honour. By demonstrating their commitment through visible acts of piety and generosity, they sought to gain honour and status among their peers (*IG* II^2 1343; *IG* II^2 1329). Thirdly, leaders in associations were zealous in their support of the group's collective interests, often aligning themselves with the prevailing social and religious norms to maintain harmony and cohesion within the group. Their actions were geared towards practical benefits rather than spiritual or theological purity.

Significantly, Paul and the association leaders demonstrated zeal. Paul's divine zeal was focused on spiritual integrity and divine approval, contrasting sharply with the association leaders' more socially and materially oriented zeal. Paul aims to edify the Corinthians by expressing his zeal towards them. This process of "edification" stems from his direct communication with God, granting him the authority to convey the divine message (2 Cor.10:8; 13:10). Thus, Paul's servanthood is deeply rooted in his understanding of and dedication to God. Moreover, it originates from his embodiment of his beliefs and commitment to the Corinthians. This fundamental difference highlights the unique nature of Paul's leadership and his distinct approach to fostering and maintaining the faith of the Corinthians.

In conclusion, Paul, Hillel, the Maskil, and leaders of Greco-Roman associations utilize humility and leadership to advance their respective ingroups' interests, albeit in different ways. Paul redefines humility to underscore spiritual growth and obedience to Christ, fostering a solid identification as a Christ-follower among the Corinthians. Hillel focuses on social concerns about adherence to the Torah, strengthening societal bonds and communal responsibility within the Judean community. While less explicitly focused on humility, Maskil's leadership also centres on guiding the community in religious devotion and adherence to collective norms. In contrast, leaders of Greco-Roman associations emphasize public recognition and material contributions to secure

their status and influence. Despite their differing approaches and objectives, all these leaders demonstrate the significant role of leadership in shaping group identity and cohesion, highlighting the diverse ways in which humility and commitment to collective values can guide community behavior and foster unity.

6.3.2. Making Honour Claims

In 2 Corinthians 10-13, Paul consciously refrains from engaging in honour competition, refusing to assert personal claims to honour (καυχάομαι) to establish the legitimacy of his leadership. This feature can be observed in Paul's identity as a divine-appointed agent (2 Cor.10:8), his achievement in the mission field (2 Cor.10:13-16), his divine knowledge (2 Cor.11:6), ethnic background (2 Cor.11:22), and his supernatural experiences (2 Cor.12:1-5; 12:12). Instead, Paul seeks to embody these values to display his model aligning with "belonging to Christ." In 2 Corinthians 10:17-18, Paul asserted, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

Notably, this perspective closely aligns with Hillel the Elder's saying, "One who makes his name great causes his name to be destroyed." This statement reflects Hillel's disapproval of those who seek honour from others. Hillel vehemently opposed making honour claims, deeming them sinful. In P. Aboth 1:13, Hillel considers self-praise a transgression that disrupts the subordinate relationship between humans and the divine. According to Buxbaum, Hillel posits that God will determine an individual's position and status based on humility or pride.[622]

In examining the honour claims according to worldly standards, it is apparent that vying for honour is a prominent leadership feature within Greco-Roman associations. Encouraging ingroup members to show ambition for personal honour, as their leaders do, is a fundamental value among them. The practice of asserting one's honour (φιλοτιμία) is notably documented in honorific inscriptions (*IG* II[2] 1297; *IG* II[2] 1261; *IG* II[2] 1277).[623] According to an inscription from Corinth, the Corinthians honoured Publius Aelius Sospinus as he demonstrated upright character and general excellence.[624] Another honorific inscription indicates that Promachus erected a monument to honour his patron and friend because of his excellence and trustworthiness.[625] Additionally, the virtue of ἀρετή (goodness, excellence) also holds a significant place in the relationship between leaders and group members. These values manifest in honouring their patrons who provide financial support for ingroup members,

---

[622] Buxbaum, *The Life and Teachings of Hillel*, 206.

[623] The *IG* II[2] 1297 serves as evidence supporting the assertion. In this inscription, Sophron, the patron, donated his money to the expansion of the temple (Lines 4-5), anticipating public praise in return (Lines 14-15). This exchange reveals a reciprocal dynamic where donors or patrons, having made significant contributions, expect public acknowledgement, the presentation of crowns, and the installation of steles as tangible tokens of appreciation (*IG* II[2] 1329, Line 25-30). Attaining honour in this context often involves a competitive aspect (ἐφάμιλλος- *IG* II[2] 1329, Line 20). The pursuit of honour involves constant comparisons and is contingent upon strict adherence to the established rules and norms of group (*IG* II[2] 1292 Line 5-10).

[624] John Harvey Kent, *Corinth* Vol. VIII, Part III, 97 (on no. 226).

[625] Kent, *Corinth* Vol. VIII, Part III, 97 (on no. 265).

such as supporting their burial services, temple maintenance, or public facilities, to participating in ritual ceremonies, as evident in *IG* II² 1297 and *IG* II² 1329.

A recurring theme emerges an expectation to receive honour from their followers, particularly after demonstrating generosity toward his group. This feature holds a prominent place in their leadership, given the underlying concept of patronage that defines their relationships based on reciprocity (*IG* II² 1297, lines 3-4, *IRhamnous* II 59, lines 4-5, *IG*² 1261 A, lines 5-9). In this patron-client framework, the leader, acting as the patron and benefactor, anticipates adherence to social norms from followers, manifested through public praise, ceremonial crowning, and formal recognition, often inscribed on the stone. The associations actively promote the emulation of their leaders' ambitious pursuit of honour among followers, fostering a collective quest for honour claim. At this juncture, the discernible difference between Paul's leadership and leadership within associations becomes apparent. This observation lays the groundwork for a comparative analysis. In stark contradistinction, Paul's leadership style stands out as he exhibits a lesser concern for pursuing personal honour through engaging in the game of honour competition.

Firstly, Paul refuses to compare himself to "someone" using Greco-Roman criteria, as some advocate, for evaluating his leadership. For instance, in 2 Corinthians 10:12-13 Paul urges the Corinthians to "reconsider" (λογιζέσθω) the distinctive features of his leadership. Paul plainly states that using cultural norms for measurement and participating in comparisons is "without a proper understanding" (οὐ συνιᾶσιν). Mainly, those interlopers engage in claiming honour regarding the achievements of the missionary work (2 Cor.10:12). In Paul's perception, "they are unwise" (2 Cor.10:12), and those are the group "walking according to the worldly standards" (2 Cor.10:2).

Given the centrality of his divine commission, Paul demonstrates a characteristic of "obedience to Christ" and lesser concern for human recognition and praise (2 Cor. 10:12). In Paul's perspective, the best demonstration of "belonging to Christ" is through wholeheartedly following God's assignment (2 Cor.10:13). In 2 Corinthians 13:7-9, Paul expresses that his main concern is not to seek positive recognition and praise from others, the interlopers in particular, as he states, "even though we may seem to have failed" (2 Cor.13:7). His hope is the Corinthians gain spiritual maturation (2 Cor.13:9). Paul intends to set himself apart from the interlopers who engage in honour competition. Paul has exemplified a distinct quality, serving as a role model by promoting the community's spiritual development through his words and deeds.

Unlike Paul's leadership, associations' leaders show a lesser emphasis on developing a unique ingroup identity and fostering the community's prototypical values and beliefs. For them, their piety towards the divine manifests in their rigorous adherence to ritual ceremonies and the honouring of patrons (*AM* 66:228 no.4, lines 17-20; *IG* II² 1368). Although they do express concern for the moral conduct of their followers, their primary focus is directed towards the behaviour of individuals within

the community assembly and during rituals (The Rule of the Iobakchoi-*IG* II² 1368, lines 45-110; *IG* II² 1369, lines 30-35). Through these actions, members of the ingroup can demonstrate their loyalty to the community.

6.3.3. God-granted Messenger

Being God's messenger is a central leadership feature for Paul and many other ancient Judean leaders. Paul perceives himself as a bold apostle appointed by divine authority (2 Cor.10:3-5; 11:1-2; 13:2). The role Paul assumes, such as that of a divine warrior (2 Cor.10:3-4); bride's father (2 Cor.11:2); and parent (2 Cor.12:14-15), is granted to him with authority to edify the community (2 Cor.10:8; 12:19; 13:10), rather than causing its destruction (2 Cor.10:8; 13:10). The notion of "tearing down" is mentioned in the context of Paul potentially exercising discipline during his third visit, but he clarifies that this action is reserved with the hope and prayer that the Corinthians will repent when encountering him shortly (2 Cor.10:15; 13:7).

In both the Qumran community, represented by the Maskil, and Hillel's community, as exemplified in Hillel, the leaders are perceived as agents of God. This emphasizes that their leadership is grounded on God's commission rather than human endorsement. Like Paul, they also share similarities, and this divine position serves two functions: as a spiritual guide and an interpreter of God's word, which I will now examine in turn.

6.3.3.1. Spiritual Guide

First, being God's agent places a significant duty on these leaders to serve as prototypical models for their followers, guiding them to adhere to Jesus' teaching, the Torah, and the rules to maintain the ingroup's identity and boundaries. These leaders are expected to embody their respective ingroups' core values and prototypical behaviours. According to 1QS and CD, the Maskil is endorsed by God and assumes the responsibility of overseeing the identities of ingroup members. The designations in terms of superordinate identity for these members include "Sons of Aaron" (1QS V.21), "Sons of Zadok" (1QS V.2,9), and "House of Truth in Israel" (1QS V.5).

In both documents, key responsibilities of the Maskil encompass teaching the community (1QS IX.12-14), mastering the interpretation of the Torah (1QS IX.15-16), and supervising the enrolment procedures (4Q 258/259). Hence, the Maskil is the main person responsible for instructing members in the strict adherence to the Torah (1QS I.1; V.9), including aspects such as maintaining purity. [626] They must do this by

---

[626] Within the Qumran community, the Maskil holds the responsibility to exemplify the pious life. In 1 QS IX "he (the Maskil) shall walk with every living being in compliance with the regulation of every period" (IQS IX 12), "he should be a man enthusiastic for the decree" (IQS IX. 22), "To them (ingroup members) he should leave goods and hand-made items like a servant to his master" (IQS IX.22). In CD XI. 9 "he should care for them as a father does his children, taking care of all their problems as a shepherd does for his flock."[626] In line with these observations, the function of Community Rules is not only used for maintaining and managing the ingroup order, such as when some members misbehave or violate the Rules, corrective actions are taken (1QS VII) but also to illustrate how the Maskil embodies a model for the followers.

displaying obedience to the Maskil and other community leaders because they represent God, providing guidance and instructions (1QS I.3) to the community.[627] More importantly, the Maskil is also instructed by the author of the Scrolls to demonstrate a role model before the ingroup members as they are members of the "Sons of Aaron."

Hillel the Elder was entrusted with shaping the Judeans' identity to become "Disciples of Aaron" (P. Aboth 1.12). This designation refers to individuals dedicated to the pursuit of love and peace, adhering to the principles exemplified by Hillel, particularly by showing social concern for marginalized individuals. Among Hillel's followers, "Be a Disciple of Aaron" signifies a superordinate identity that includes both Judeans and non-Judeans committed to learning the Torah. Central to this group is their dedication to Hillel's interpretation of the Torah. A prominent feature of Hillel's leadership is his practice of caring for the spiritual needs of the non-Judeans.[628]

In 2 Corinthians, Paul adopts "belonging to Christ" as an identity descriptor or superordinate identity to urge the Corinthians to display their obedience by aligning with Paul's teaching (2 Cor.11:4) and restoring the relationship with him (2 Cor.11:7; 12:5). Regarding the prototype of Paul as a God-granted messenger, his distinct use of various metaphors, including the divine warrior (2 Cor.10:4-5), spiritual father (2 Cor.11:2-3), and parent figure (2 Cor.12:14-16), distinctly sets his leader's identity apart when compared with Hillel's and Qumran's groups. The function of employing these descriptors is to exhibit his affection and emotive care towards the Corinthians, particularly out of concern for their pure devotion to God, thereby emotions such as anger, unconditional love, and concern. For instance, as a spiritual father, Paul expresses his righteousness, originating in God (2 Cor.11:1-3), toward the disobedient Corinthians who have turned to another version of the gospel (2 Cor. 11:4). They lost their sincere and pure devotion to Christ (τῆς ἁπλότητος [καὶ τῆς ἁγνότητος] τῆς εἰς τὸν Χριστόν). Paul declares that the interlopers are deviants against the pure gospel, and their end will correspond to their deeds (2 Cor.11:15).

On this point, SIA researchers suggest that leaders' emotional expressions can significantly influence followers' affective, cognitive, and behavioral responses in an

---

[627] Among the Judeans of Qumran, adhering to the truth and living by the teachings grounded in the Torah holds a central place as identity prototypes within the group (as seen in 1QS I.1, V.9, and PA 1.12). The Qumran members, in particular, utilize "the book of *Yahad's Rule*" (1QS I.1) and "Covenant" (CD VIII.1), like 1QS and CD, to distinguish those who are faithful, namely "Sons of Zadok" (1QS V.2) and "members of the New Covenant" (CD, VI.19), implying they "keep them steadfast in all he commanded in compliance with his will." (1QS V.1). These documents play a significant role in maintaining the social identification of the people of Qumran.

[628] Hillel's interpretation is aimed at challenging the traditional belief that a priest's status hinged solely on his genealogical lineage. Hillel's interpretation is "May the sons of the gentiles who do the deeds of Aaron the priest have peace; but as for the sons of Aaron who do not do the deeds of Aaron, they shall be without peace." This statement reflects his followers' emphasis on virtue and righteous action as the determining factors for one's standing, rather than strict adherence to ancestral heritage. Hillel's version of "bringing them close to the Torah" encompasses the inclusion of the gentiles within the sphere of those he sought to educate in the Torah's teachings.
Buxbaum, *The Life and Teachings of Hillel*, 71.

intergroup context. When leaders effectively express their emotions, it leads to a more intense experience of positive emotion among followers.[629] This perspective provides valuable insights into the leadership model in 2 Corinthian 13, where Paul restates that his authority is dedicated to the constructive development of the Corinthians rather than any form of destruction (2 Cor.13:10). This expression aligns with a recurring motif in 2 Cor. 12:14-15, where Paul expresses his willingness to demonstrate his deep love for the Corinthians.

Within the Qumran, the role of leaders as compassionate and nurturing figures is highlighted in texts such as CD XIII. 9-10, which emphasizes the leader's role at Qumran. This text states that leaders "shall have pity on them like a father on his sons, and will heal all the ‹afflicted among them like a shepherd his flock…." This metaphor underscores the expectation that the Qumran leaders should exhibit compassion and provide healing to their members, akin to the role of a father caring for his children. The image of a shepherd tending to his flock further illustrates the leaders' duty to guide, protect, and nurture their community members. This compassionate role is essential for maintaining the well-being and cohesion of the community. Leaders are seen not only as authoritative figures but also as caretakers who must address their members' physical and spiritual needs. This nurturing aspect helps build trust and loyalty within the group, reinforcing the social bonds crucial for the community's survival and prosperity.

In contrast to the nurturing and disciplinary roles seen in the Qumranites and Paul's group, leaders of Greco-Roman associations were often focused primarily on providing financial support for their ingroup members. This emphasis on material assistance was an essential aspect of their leadership and reflected the socio-economic dynamics of these groups. Leaders in Greco-Roman associations, such as those depicted in various inscriptions, for instance, *IG* II^2 1343, *IG* II^2 1292, *IG* II^2 1329, were frequently wealthy individuals who used their resources to support the community. Their financial contributions were essential for funding communal activities, religious festivals, and public works, reinforcing their status and influence within the group. The generosity of these leaders often secured them public honour and recognition, further solidifying their leadership roles.

Concerning the enforcement of discipline, texts such as 1QS VIII.1-4 highlight the authority of the Maskil, who, like Paul, is seen as endorsed by God. This divine endorsement gives leaders the authority to punish and condemn those who deviate from community norms (1QS VIII.1-4; 2 Cor.11:4; 13-15). The Maskil's role involves upholding the community's standards and ensuring members adhere to the prescribed rules and values. This authority is crucial for maintaining the community's purity and

---

[629] Vienna Lau et al. "Not "My" Crisis: Social Identity and Followers' Crisis Responses to COVID-19," *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy* 22.2 (2022): 512-513; Tee et al. "Revisiting Followership through a Social Identity Perspective: The Role of Collective Follower Emotion and Action," *The Leadership Quarterly* 24.6 (2013): 913-914.

integrity, as it allows leaders to address any behaviours or actions that threaten to undermine the group's cohesion and moral foundation. Likewise, punishment in the Greco-Roman associations was often related to maintaining social order and adherence to the group's rules and regulations (*IG* II^2 1324, *IG* II^2 1315). Infractions could lead to fines, expulsion, or public censure. These measures were necessary to ensure that members complied with the group's expectations and to preserve the integrity and cohesion of the association.

To sum up, in ancient groups, the role of leaders extended far beyond mere authority figures; they were expected to embody both compassion and discipline to sustain the community's well-being and integrity. Texts from various traditions, such as the Qumran community and in 2 Corinthians 10-13, illustrate this dual responsibility vividly. Leaders were metaphorically depicted as fathers and shepherds, highlighting their duty to nurture, heal, and guide their members with care and compassion. This compassionate leadership fostered trust and loyalty, essential for the community's social cohesion and moral fortitude.

Simultaneously, leaders were endowed with the authority to enforce community discipline. This role was crucial in maintaining the group's purity and adherence to its core values and norms. The divine endorsement of leaders like the Maskil at Qumran and Paul in the Christian communities underscored their legitimacy in judging and correcting deviant behaviours, thus protecting the community from internal and external threats. The leaders' roles in ancient groups were multifaceted, combining nurturing care with strict discipline. This balanced approach ensured the spiritual and social order of the community, reinforcing a strong and cohesive group identity.

6.3.3.2. Interpreter of God's Word

As an interpreter of God's word, this specific leadership feature is grounded in divine endorsement. Newman rightly pointed out that "Prophecy in the ancient world was not only a leadership element but also an "interpretative" element. By claiming real prophetic ability, a person in the ancient world could reach central positions of influence. He could deliver moral messages (like the prophets in the Bible and Apocrypha), judge current events for better or worse (and sometimes influence the existence of the regime), and he could also interpret sacred texts, thus dictating the desirable behavior."[630]

Following a leader's teachings is crucial to ancient leadership. The divine commissioning not only legitimizes leaders to instruct the followers how to behave within the group faithfully but also allows them to punish those disobedient and deviant ingroup members. This common trait enhances the authoritative foundation of leadership in Maskil, Hillel, and Paul. The Qumranites acknowledge that the Maskil has directly acquired divine wisdom (1QS IX.12; CD XIII.23), therefore he can rightly

---

[630] Hillel Newman, *Norm, Dissent, and Secession in the Judaism of the Maccabean Era* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 241.

interpret the Torah. Paul's leadership is bestowed by divine authority, enabling him to interpret and convey God's message based on divine inspiration (2 Cor.11:14; 12:11-12). The Maskil can punish the disobedient members when they violate the ingroup norms and rules (1QS V.9-10 and CD XIII.7-12).

Similarly, in Sanhedrin 11a, Hillel is enlightened by God, who leads him to provide an insightful interpretation of the Torah. In the Talmudic perspective, Hillel's position is equivalent to the prophets, attributing to him a unique capacity to offer insights into the Torah.[631] In Sotah 13, Hillel is portrayed as appointed by God as a prophet, entrusted with prophetic duties, drawing comparisons even to Moses, stating: "There were four who died at the age of one hundred and twenty: Moses, Hillel, the Elder...."[632] Paul frequently states that he will discipline those disobedient ones on the third visit (2 Cor. 12:14; 13:1; 13:10). Such a feature is similar to the Maskil but is absent in Hillel's leadership.

These leadership models share the ability to interpret the Torah. Thus, leaders' interpretation of God's word forms an identity boundary, further fostering group cohesion. In addition, ingroup members use such interpretation as an identity category to differentiate the ingroup from the outgroup. This feature can be seen in Paul's and the other two Judean groups.

These leadership features closely parallel those observed in Paul's leadership. Paul's authority is firmly anchored in God's appointment (2 Cor.10:8; 13:10). In 2 Corinthians 10:1, Paul claims his appeal is through Christ's meekness and gentleness at the outset. The divine commission enables Paul to edify the Corinthians and defend against outgroup members on Christ's behalf (2 Cor.10:4-6; 11:4; 12:16). The foundation of edification involves Paul's teaching of the gospel based on God's revelation (2 Cor.10:15; 11:4-5; 12:4). Because of this, God's revelation fundamentally grants Paul's authority to interpret and deliver God's word, intertwining with the identity content associated with "belonging to Christ" (2 Cor.10:7) and "obedience to Christ" (2 Cor.10:5). This feature closely mirrors that of Hillel the Elder and the Maskil, as all three leaders possess the interpretative capacity to teach because of their divinely granted position. They also share the perception that they hold absolute interpretative authority to convey the message with their collective identity, as seen in the respective identifications of "belonging to Christ", "disciples of Aaron", and "Sons of Aaron."

As SIA researchers suggest, leadership comprises three crucial components: firstly, leadership is an in-group process; secondly, there is no leadership if no one is a follower; and thirdly, it is a social influence process.[633] This perspective sheds light on Paul's

---

[631] Berger, *Rabbinic Authority*, 80.
[632] Sifre Deuteronomy CCCLVII: XIV 1. See Jacob Neusner, *Sifre to Deuteronomy: An Analytical Translation*, Vol.2 (Atlanta: Scholar Press, 1987), 459.
[633] Platow et al. "There is No Leadership if No-one Follows: Why Leadership is Necessarily a Group Process," 23.

leadership, reinforcing the Corinthians' social identification. In contrast to those who challenge Paul's authority, Paul asserts that his leadership is divinely granted (2 Cor.13:3). According to the researchers, "The absence of validation from the ingroup may encourage people to seek and accept identity validation wherever it can be found, even from the outgroup."[634]

Paul's affirmation of his divine appointment reinforces his self-perception as a legitimate leader. This justification gives Paul the authority to instruct and discipline those who are disobedient. In other words, Paul's leadership role is endorsed by divine commissioning, allowing Paul to have a legitimated position to lead the Corinthians; as the SIA to leadership theorizing, leadership effectiveness can be enhanced by leaders who hold formal leadership positions than one is in nonformal leadership.[635] SIA theorists also asserted that establishing trust between leaders and followers is essential to fostering leadership effectiveness.[636] At this point, Paul's leadership, as derived from God's commission, is an example of leader identity. Leader identity theorists argued, "In order for their leadership to be successful, individuals need to embody traits and attributes that are characteristic of leaders in the sphere in which they are seeking to have influence and that are consistent with followers' expectations of appropriate leader behavior."[637]

This notion sheds new light on Paul's leadership. In the Corinthians' perception, Paul fails to match their expectations of effective leadership, such as his lack of rhetorical skills and physical appearance (2 Cor.10:10). More importantly, Paul refused to make honour claims about his accomplishments before the Corinthians. These leadership features are different from those of Paul's opponents. However, Paul employs God-granted authority to reaffirm his leadership, which God grants.

Therefore, he has an intimate relationship with God, enabling him to snatch into heaven and hear God's word (2 Cor.12:1-4). Paul also reiterates that he can demonstrate wonder signs and miracles before the Corinthians (2 Cor.12:12). For Paul, redefining the leadership role and authority is central to his ministry. His strategy is to use the divine commission to legitimize his leadership position. From this perspective, obeying Christ is a decisive factor in assessing his leadership effectiveness rather than evaluating it according to the flesh. In this sense, leaders have a crucial role in inspiring their members to build a positive sense of belonging within the group.

From the perspectives of SIA to leadership and leader identity theory, leaders like

---

[634] Choi, and Hogg, "Who Do You Think You Are? Ingroup and Outgroup Sources of Identity Validation," 8.
[635] Steffens et al. "Advancing the Social Identity Theory of Leadership: A Meta-Analytic Review of Leader Group Prototypicality," 58.
[636] Alysia M. Robertson et al. "Aspirational Leaders Help Us Change: Ingroup Prototypicality Enables Effective Group Psychotherapy Leadership," *British Journal of Clinical Psychology* 62.1 (2023): 245; N., Khumalo et al. "Leaders' Influence on Collective Action: An Identity Leadership Perspective," *The Leadership Quarterly* 33.4 (2022): 27.
[637] Haslam et al. "Reconciling Identity Leadership and Leader Identity: A Dual-identity Framework," 4.

Paul and those within Hillel's and Qumran's group share a common leadership feature as interpreters of God's word since they perceive themselves as God's commissioned agent. This perception drives their motivation to assume the responsibility of managing the identity boundary and its content on behalf of God, particularly using language to explain identity markers and their meaning to ingroup members. This parallels Paul's intention to construct the identity content of authentic Christ-followers, akin to the Maskil's role in managing the Qumranites' purity (1QS IX.12; CD XIII.13). Similarly, Hillel urges the Judeans to observe and live out the Torah.

6.3.4. Endurance of Sufferings

Paul's active embrace of weakness, prominently highlighted through his frequent use of the term ἀσθένεια (ἀσθένεια appears six times in 2 Cor.10-13) in 2 Corinthians 10-13, uniquely showcases his approach to encountering and demonstrating the power of Christ, a feature notably absent in other contemporary social groups. While sufferings, weakness, and hardships are conventionally viewed as sources of shame and the dishonourable, Paul willingly pursues them. His intentional choice is driven by his belief that embodying weakness demonstrates his obedience to Christ, especially in fulfilling his appointed mission. For Paul, actively participating in the sufferings is tangible evidence of his commitment to a self-sacrificial model and his deep love towards the Corinthians.

Therefore, Paul preaches the gospel and exemplifies how to live out the principles of faith authentically. As noted by SIA researchers, "Leader group prototypicality is more strongly related to leadership outcomes with stronger (vs. weaker) prototypes."[638] Paul's model has the potential to draw followers, inspiring them to view him as an ingroup member and a representative of group prototypicality; particularly, Paul regards himself as the authentic servant of Christ. This implies that Paul is an ideal prototypical model among Christ-followers. This observation aligns with findings from SIA research.[639]

The endurance of suffering is generally absent in Greco-Roman associations, Hillel's community, and Qumran's group, as evident in 1QS and CD.[640] Thus, we can assert that emphasizing enduring suffering, facing hardships, and transforming shame and dishonour into positive perceptions is not central to these communities' leadership roles, including Paul's opponents. Paul's concern lies in wielding influence to maintain the salience of the Christ-followers through his new understanding of suffering and social influence. Regarding the power and influence of leadership, researchers such as

---

[638] Steffens et al. "Advancing the Social Identity Theory of Leadership: A Meta-Analytic Review of Leader Group Prototypicality," 58.

[639] Barreto, and Hogg, "Influence and Leadership in Small Groups: Impact of Group Prototypicality, Social Status, and Task Competence," 8.

[640] The suffering figure in the Qumran communities, often identified with the "Teacher of Righteousness," represents a central theme in their texts. This figure embodies the struggles and hardships faced by the community, often seen as a martyr or a model of piety in the face of persecution. See 1QHᵃ X11-16.

Turner and Knippenberg identify two diverse paradigms.

In Turner's view, authority is the capacity to guide ingroup members as they are convinced it is appropriate for a particular individual to lead in specific matters. This legitimate authority results from the influence of the establishment of group norms.[641] Knippenberg suggests that effective leadership is central to the relationship between leaders and their followers, particularly regarding the leader's prototypicality and the extent to which they act in ways that benefit the group, explicitly exchanging "goods" in a relationship.[642]

Along with this line, Paul's leadership position is exclusively appointed by God, and he evinces a reluctance to exercise authority and impose disciplinary measures to govern the Corinthians. Instead, Paul embraces a theme of suffering for edification, seeking to influence his followers to transform and redefine the relationship between himself and the Corinthians. In the realm of Paul's leadership, we observe a distinctive emphasis on core values related to suffering and weakness. Notably, Paul places value on the assertion of honour in relation to suffering, the encounter with divine power, and the discovery of joy in moments of weakness, as shown in 2 Corinthians 11:23; 11:30; 12:8-10; 13:9.

To conclude, this chapter underscores the crucial significance of the leader being perceived as having a divine warrant, aligning with leader identity theory, and as a high-prototypical representative of shared group identity, values, and aspirations, in line with the SIA to leadership. The influence exerted by such divinely endorsed and ideal-type leaders on ingroup members is pivotal for leadership effectiveness. Researchers contend that such influence can profoundly motivate and mobilize group members to pursue the group's objectives.[643]

Examining Paul's leadership identity and prototypicality, as illuminated in 2 Corinthians 10-13 provides valuable insights into these leadership dynamics. Paul becomes an effective leader through God's commission and his close relationship with Him. He embodies Christ's virtues, including meekness, gentleness, humility, boldness, and obedience. Paul aims to reestablish a strong relationship with the Corinthians while simultaneously shaping and reinforcing their authentic identity by redefining the concepts of humanity and claiming honour.

Paul's leadership demonstrates how divine endorsement and the embodiment of group values can enhance leadership effectiveness and ingroup cohesion. His approach highlights the importance of aligning leadership identity with the group's core values and aspirations, which is essential for fostering a unified and motivated community.

---

[641] Turner, "Explaining the Nature of Power: A Three-Process Theory," 11.

[642] Hogg et al. "Leader–Member Relations and Social Identity," in *Leadership and Power Identity Processes in Groups and Organizations* (London; SAGE, 2003), 25; Knippenberg, "Embodying Who We Are: Leader Group Prototypicality and Leadership Effectiveness," 1085.

[643] Steffens et al. "Advancing the Social Identity Theory of Leadership: A Meta-Analytic Review of Leader Group Prototypicality," 57.

As we transition to the next chapter, the focus will shift to "Identity Advancement" in leadership. This examination promises to deepen our comprehension of the intricate interplay between leadership, social identity, and the advancement of group values. By delving into this aspect, we aim to contribute to the scholarly discourse on leadership theory and its practical applications, further illuminating the path to effective and transformative leadership.

Chapter Eight: Paul's Identity Advancement

In Chapter Seven, we analyze Paul's leadership by examining the rhetorical functions of his divine commissioning and prototypicality of identity formation. Our findings were compared with those of the other three social groups to identify the characteristics of Paul's model. This chapter examines identity advancement, one of the four critical elements of the SIA to leadership, to highlight the distinctiveness of Paul's leadership style.

It begins with a brief reiteration of the discussion presented in Chapter Three of the concept of "identity advancement" within the SIA to leadership, applying this specific aspect to examine Paul's leadership in 2 Corinthians 10-13. Identity advancement is a leadership dimension that illustrates that "Leadership is not just about being. It is also about doing."[644] This dimension significantly influences leadership effectiveness. Our primary focus of Chapter Eight lies in examining Paul's leadership perceptions regarding his "Mission" (2 Cor.10:13-16), "Financial Policy" (2 Cor.11:7-12; 12:14-18), "Hardships" (2 Cor.11:23-33), and "Prayer" (2 Cor.13:5-9).

Our three primary objectives are offering fresh insights into Paul's leadership, demonstrating how he motivates his followers to embrace change, and investigating his rhetorical strategy in shaping the Corinthians' identity. Through this examination, we aim to enhance our understanding of Paul's leadership and illuminate his discourse, underscoring the profound impact of his leadership on the Corinthians.

1. Overview of Identity Advancement

As suggested by Social Identity theorists, influential leaders champion the ingroup's collective interests, emphasizing group core interests over personal ones. When leaders are seen to advance the interests of the ingroup and stand up for it, it not only fosters leadership effectiveness but also catalyzes motivating transformative group change.[645] Researchers further proposed that leadership effectiveness is heightened when leaders embody self-sacrificial prototypicality, displaying behaviour and values aligned with the group's well-being.[646] SIA theorists also find that identity advancement is a strategic tactic to garner leadership endorsement, such as winning followers' trust.[647] Leaders who actively advance ingroup identity are often viewed as charismatic figures capable

---

[644] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 101; Steffens et al. "True to what West and for: Championing Collective Interests as a Path to Authentic Leadership," *The Leadership Quarterly* 27 (2016): 728; Rus et al. "Leader Self-definition and Leader Self-serving Behavior," 524; Barbara van Knippenberg, and Daan van Knippenberg, "Leader Self-Sacrifice and Leadership Effectiveness: The Moderating Role of Leader Prototypicality," *Journal of Applied Psychology* (2005): 26.

[645] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 101.

[646] Daan van Knippenberg, "Embodying Who We Are: Social Identity and Leadership," in *The SAGE Handbook of Leadership*, eds. by Doris Schedlitzki (London: SAGE, 2023), 53-54; Knippenberg, and Knippenberg, "Leader Self-Sacrifice and Leadership Effectiveness: The Moderating Role of Leader Prototypicality," 35.

[647] Knippenberg et al. "Leader Group Prototypicality: A Replication of Average Member Versus Ideal-Type Operationalization Effects," 220.

of influencing their followers' opinions, motivating them to embrace a shared vision for the future.[648] We employ the SIA framework from these perspectives to examine Paul's leadership in 2 Corinthians.

2. Paul's Mission (2 Cor.10:13-16)

As the SIA's researchers assert, "Leaders need to exemplify those things that mark out the distinctiveness of their group, and they also need to be seen to exemplify these things in the eyes of their fellow group members. In most cases, this will require high skill and energy levels."[649] In 2 Corinthians 10, Paul faces significant challenges to his leadership, credentials, and integrity (2 Cor.10:2; 10:7; 10:10-11) from both interlopers and the Corinthians. He acknowledges that some (φημί; 2 Cor.10:10) criticize his letters as "weighty and strong" (βαρεῖαι καὶ ἰσχυραί; 2 Cor.10:10) but asserts that he is "bodily weak and lacks eloquence" (τοῦ σώματος ἀσθενὴς καὶ ὁ λόγος ἐξουθενημένος; 2 Cor.10:10) when presenting in person. In addition, Paul faces challenges from the interlopers, particularly in Paul's view, who "conduct their ministries according to human standards, comparing themselves to one another, and thus boast inappropriately."[650] To Paul, both the "intergroup" people (interlopers) and "intragroup" people (Corinthians) are using worldly standards to evaluate his leadership effectiveness (2 Cor.10:12). This adoption of secular benchmarks particularly challenges Paul's leadership effectiveness.[651]

As Paul responded, "Let such people understand that what we say by letter when absent, we will also do when present" (2 Cor.10:11). Paul urges the Corinthians to "reconsider" (λογιζέσθω; 2 Cor.10:11) his leadership, particularly regarding his perceived weakness and his commitment to enforcing discipline during his next visit.[652] Paul then invites the Corinthians to evaluate him compared to the interlopers with respect to his apostolic qualities (2 Cor. 10:11-12).

According to the SIA to leadership, individuals seek positive distinctiveness for their group. They strive for their group to be better than others. This pursuit of positive group identity is contingent upon specific norms and values encompassing various factors, including material resources, power, dominance, and social status.[653] Paul's opponents "commend themselves, boasting of what they have to offer" and "classifying

---

[648] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 119.

[649] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 108.

[650] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 486.

[651] In my view, Paul's opponents can be identified as intergroup and outgroup members. Intergroup means Paul perceives those members as Christ-followers, but their perception of following Christ is somewhat different from Paul's version. These individuals share some common ground with Paul in following Christ but have different interpretations or practices of the faith. Likewise, your reference to Paul's opponents as outgroup members aligns with Paul's portrayal of these "super-apostles" as agents of Satan (2 Corinthians 11:13-15). Paul uses very strong language to describe them as deceitful workers disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. In this context, Paul perceives them as external to true Christian faith, aligning them more with spiritual adversaries than believers who merely disagree with him. He paints these figures as leading the Corinthians astray, working for Satan rather than for God.

[652] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 299; Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 484; Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 634-635.

[653] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership,* 118.

and comparing themselves with one another."[654] Paul responds "We do not boast beyond limits, that is, in the labours of others; but we hope that, as your faith increases, our sphere of action among you may be greatly enlarged" (2 Cor.10:15). According to social psychologists, "Groups may define themselves based on spiritual values, such as group beliefs and ideologies."[655] Paul's leadership resonates with this notion, as he asserts that guiding the Corinthians in their spiritual growth constitutes the primary objective of his mission (2 Cor.10:15). His goal is to help the Corinthians reach spiritual maturation (2 Cor.13:9; 13:11).

Paul's leadership strategy is marked by a stark contrast with the interlopers, as he states, "Unlike so many, we do not peddle the word of God for profit" (2 Cor.2:17). This comparison is a critical element of rhetorical strategy as it helps to differentiate him from the interlopers in terms of their motivation for preaching the gospel. This strategy of persuasion, or identity rhetoric, extends beyond merely assimilating "factual information." It involves complex cognitive processes that influence group affiliations and shape perceptions of social norms and beliefs. This process directly influences group affiliations and shapes the perceptions of social norms and group beliefs.[656] Thus, the formation of ingroup identity can be accomplished by contrasting and comparing one's group with others, highlighting distinctions, and fostering a sense of cohesion within the ingroup.

Identity advancement plays a significant role in Paul's leadership as he strategically uses "comparisons" to delineate and reconstruct a distinct identity for the Corinthians as Christ-followers. This strategy highlights differences in their mission's purpose compared to the interlopers. By inviting the Corinthians to "reconsider" the distinctions between himself and his opponents based on his "identity markers" (2 Cor.10:12). That is Paul's refusal to make a personal honour claim regarding his mission achievement and rely on human recommendation letters (2 Cor.10:12). Paul seeks to redefine the identity of an authentic agent of Christ, contrasting himself with the interlopers. Using identity rhetoric and comparisons, he aims to influence the Corinthians to better understand his leadership and its core values (2 Cor.10:15-17).

According to this text, Paul's identity descriptors can be summarized as follows: firstly, Paul firmly refuses to engage in making honour claims (2 Cor.10:12). By this, Paul sets himself explicitly apart from the interlopers who only focus on claiming honour about their accomplishments rather than the Lord (2 Cor.10:13-18). To Paul, those outgroup members lack divine authorization for missionary work done by others. Secondly, Paul affirms that his mission field is exclusively assigned by God (2 Cor.10:13) as we have discussed in Chapter Seven. Thirdly, the apostle clearly states

---

[654] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 489.
[655] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership,* 118.
[656] Haslam et al. "Salient Group Memberships and Persuasion: The Role of Social Identity in the Validation of Beliefs," 33-34.

that he does not exceed "particular or appropriate limits" (εἰς τὰ ἄμετρα; 2 Cor.10:13). Scholars generally agree that Paul places a higher priority on God's mandate over human considerations, underscoring the divine role in delineating the boundaries of his ministry.[657]

Based on God's commission, Paul boldly claims that he is the first missionary to preach the gospel of Christ (τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ τοῦ Χριστοῦ; 2 Cor.10:14) to the Corinthians. Paul explicitly articulates that his hope is anchored in witnessing the spiritual growth of the Corinthians.[658] In Paul's mind, their spiritual development would pave the way for expanding his mission to unreached areas, possibly Spain and Rome.[659] The mention of Paul's "hope" (ἐλπίς; 2 Cor.10:15) to witness spiritual growth aligns with the concept of "identity advancement." As SIA's researchers suggested, "Advancing and promoting core interests of the group" is central to leadership effectiveness.[660]

From this perspective, Paul's leadership has exhibited several features of identity advancement: Firstly, Paul is unconcerned with competition for honour by comparing himself with interlopers, who like to claim their accomplishments (2 Cor.10:12). Secondly, he refuses to take credit for the work done by others in different fields (2 Cor. 10:15). Thirdly, Paul rejects the use of self-commendation to articulate his leadership to enforce his leadership position (2 Cor.10:12).

In 2 Corinthians 10:15b, Paul presents a counteraction on making honour claim.[661] By employing δὲ, Guthrie rightly noted that Paul aims to contrast with the interlopers that Furnish has underestimated the rhetorical uses of this conjunction.[662] Here, Paul is highlighting his mission's goal is to promote the growth of the Corinthians' faith (αὐξανομένης τῆς πίστεως; 2 Cor.10:15). Paul's leadership is in line with the SIA notion, suggesting that leaders, seen as "doing it for us", can enhance their leadership effectiveness. This mainly serves as a way of earning the trust of the followers. This trust, in turn, encourages followers to invest their confidence in these leaders, leading to more impactful and successful leadership.[663] Equally importantly, "The relationship between leader group prototypicality and outcomes is stronger when prototypicality is conceptualized in aspirational terms of the ideal type for the group rather than simply in descriptive terms with reference to a group average."[664] This means that leaders who

---

[657] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 492; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 710; Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 647; Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 320; Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 302.

[658] Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 650; Esler, 2 *Corinthians*, 303-304.

[659] Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 723; Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 651-652; Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 324; Barrett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 286.

[660] Steffens et al. "Leadership as Social Identity Management: Introducing the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI) to Assess and Validate a Four-dimensional Model," 1004.

[661] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 494.

[662] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 494; Furnish, *ii Corinthians*, 473.

[663] Knippenberg et al. "Leader Group Prototypicality: A Replication of Average Member Versus Ideal-Type Operationalization Effects," 220; Hogg et al. "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 265-266 and 272-273.

[664] Steffens et al. "Advancing the Social Identity Theory of Leadership: A Meta-Analytic Review of Leader Group Prototypicality," 57.

embody the group's aspirational ideals rather than just its average characteristics tend to have a more significant positive impact on group outcomes. In Paul's assertion, encouraging the Corinthians to follow his teachings (2 Cor.11:4) and restore the relationship (2 Cor.11:7-11; 12:14-17) are the primary objectives in 2 Corinthians 10-13.

In response to suspicion permeating among the Corinthians, Paul intentionally emphasizes his chief concern, which lies in championing collective shared interests, specifically the growth of faith among the Corinthians. Notably, "When followers regard leaders as championing the interests of the social group they are leading, they regard these leaders as true and authentic."[665] At this juncture, Paul's strategic emphasis on championing collective interests serves to reconstruct a mutual trust relationship with the Corinthians.

In summary, Paul's mission, rooted in divine commission rather than human approval (2 Cor.10:12-13), is focused on fostering the spiritual growth of the Corinthians (2 Cor.10:15). This aligns with the "doing for us" principle advocated by SIA researchers. Despite challenges to his leadership and mission accomplishments, Paul strives to set himself apart from intruders and the Corinthians. His leadership emphasizes the Corinthians' well-being over his own achievements. This powerful model builds trust and can potentially reconcile the strained relationship between Paul and the Corinthians.

3. Paul's Financial Policy

Paul's refusal to receive financial support from the Corinthians, as revealed in 2 Corinthians 11:7-12 and 12:14-18, exemplifies his unique leadership approach. It highlights a stark contrast to the interlopers who prioritized personal gain. Given that the relationship between Paul and the Corinthians is damaged after the emergence of the interlopers. As discussed above, reestablishing trust and strengthening the leader-follower relationship is central to the ministry. Recently, research indicated that high prototypical leaders who embody the qualities and values of their group are more successful in fostering trust and influencing their followers. These leaders, mainly through group-serving behaviour, can motivate members to change.[666] This perspective helps explain Paul's strategy by consistently demonstrating a commitment to the Corinthians' collective interests.

3.1. 2 Cor.11:7-12

"Self-sacrifice seems to play an important part in group development."[667] Self-sacrifice means when leaders focus on the group's collective welfare and ingroup members' well-

---

[665] Steffens et al. "True to What We Stand for Championing Collective Interests as a Path to Authentic Leadership," *The Leadership Quarterly* 27 (2016), 738.
[666] Knippenberg et al. "Leader Group Prototypicality: A Replication of Average Member Versus Ideal-Type Operationalization Effects," 220.
[667] Knippenberg, and Knippenberg, "Leader Self-Sacrifice and Leadership Effectiveness: The Moderating Role of Leader Prototypicality," 26.

being by making personal sacrifices. This can build a more stable and enduring leadership as "It creates the conviction among followers that the leader can be relied on to behave in a group-oriented manner in future decisions as well."[668]

In 2 Corinthians 11:7-12, Paul exemplifies self-sacrifice by prioritizing the welfare of the Corinthians over his own needs. He confronts the issue concerning his ministerial fund (ὀψώνιον; 2 Cor.11:8). Thrall observed, "Paul takes up a major complaint against the policy he has pursued in Corinth."[669] Her position receives support from the text, stating Paul is supported financially by other Christ-following communities (ἐκκλησίας; 2 Cor.11:8), not by the Corinthians (2 Cor.11:9). Scholars like Chester, Robertson, Clark, and Chow proposed that patron-client relations bound social relationships in Corinth.[670] Ancient writings support the presence of such relationships. For example, Cato the Elder stated, "The foremost obligation is to a father, the next [is] to a patron."[671] Philo also emphasized this hierarchy, suggesting that individuals owed "Respect and obedience" to "Elders, Rulers, Benefactors and Masters."[672]

The patron-client relationship was established based on the dynamics of giving and receiving gifts. The recipient felt obligated to honour and show gratitude to the benefactor.[673] Esler plausibly suggests that Paul's refusal signifies a desire not to be compelled to the Corinthian patrons when preaching the gospel.[674] Paul refrains from engaging in patronage dynamics and seeking advantages from reciprocal relationships, in contrast to his rivals who are likely to have benefited from a patron-client relationship (2 Cor.12:16). Keener took a similar position, arguing Paul's refusal of Corinthians' support was akin to rejecting an offer of friendship. His act typically produced an enmity relationship. [675] If correct, Paul's action may make the Corinthians feel disrespected and embarrassed.[676]

---

[668] Knippenberg, and Knippenberg, "Leader Self-Sacrifice and Leadership Effectiveness: The Moderating Role of Leader Prototypicality," 26.

[669] Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 682.

[670] Stephen J. Chester, Conversion at Corinth: Perspectives on Conversion in Paul's Theology and the Corinthian Church (London: T&T Clark, 2003), 240; C.K. Robertson, *Conflict in Corinth: Redefining the System*, SBL, Vol. 42(New York: Peter Lang, 2001), 69-71; Clark, *Secular and Christian Leadership in Corinth: A Socio-Historical and Exegetical Study of 1 Corinthians 1-6*); Chow, *Patronage and Power: A Study of Social Networks in Corinth*.

[671] As cited by Aulus Gellius 5, 13.

[672] Philo, *Decal*. 165; see also *Spec. Leg*. II, 227.

[673] Clarke, *Secular and Christian Leadership in Corinth*, 32. Chapter Six provides a detailed discussion of patron-client relationships in the Greco-Roman world.

[674] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 312.

[675] Keener, *1-2 Corinthians*, 229.

[676] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 311; Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 521; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 755; Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 684. In Andrew Clark's and John Chow's studies, the social relationships in Corinth were bound by patron-client relations. As Clark pointed out, "the basis behind this institution [Principate] is the power behind the giving and receiving gifts. Those who exploited this power recognized that others could be placed in their debt when given some benefaction; the debtor could, therefore, be held to owe the benefactor both honor and gratitude". See Clarke, *Secular and Christian Leadership in Corinth: A Socio-Historical and Exegetical Study of 1 Corinthians 1-6*, 32; Chow, *Patronage and Power*. Such a phenomenon was common in the Greco-Roman world, as mentioned in several honorific inscriptions from the Greco-Roman associations.

Concerning Paul's declination of financial support, scholars might overlook the underlying rhetorical strategy employed, wherein this posture effectively presents distinct prototypes of Christ-movement before the Corinthians. Paul also seeks to reestablish his connection by advocating for their collective interests. In 2 Corinthians 11:7, Paul uses the Greek word Ἢ ("or") to introduce a rhetorical question to the Corinthians. In Paul's view, this question anticipates a negative answer.[677] Paul challenges the Corinthians by asking, "Was it a sin for me if I lower (ταπεινῶν; 2 Cor.11:7) myself to elevate you by preaching the gospel without charge?" This rhetorical question implies that Paul asserts ταπεινῶν it was not a sin for him to lower himself by preaching the gospel to them without accepting a charge.[678]

The term ταπεινῶν in participle form, denoting "the one who being a lower or humble" and ταπεινὸς in adjective form (2 Cor.10:1) possesses a social sense in the Greco-Roman world.[679] This Greek word conveys a negative social connotation,[680] akin to instances such as Lucian's *Somnium 13*, where a member of the elite dissuades Lucian from pursuing an occupation regarded as ταπεινός, such as sculpture. However, certain philosophers, rhetoricians, and educators from the upper social class, such as Cleanthes, Musonius Rufus, and Dio Chrysostom, garnered significant admiration for their self-sufficiency-namely, their capacity to sustain themselves independently. This quality enabled them to sustain themselves independently and earned them profound admiration.[681] Huck argued that such a virtue "was advocated by moralists and chosen by at least several individuals."[682]

If this is the case, it is conceivable that both Romans and possibly some Corinthians would view Paul as an honourable leader as he refrained from burdening the Corinthians with financial demands. Paul strategically adopts Christ's humility and lowliness to define a central feature of his leadership. Paul embraces lowering himself to elevate the Corinthians (ἵνα ὑμεῖς ὑψωθῆτε; 2 Cor.11:7). The Greek word ὑψωθῆτε means "lift", "raise high," and "cause an enhancement in honour and power."[683] In this context, Paul reiterates that his humility serves to proclaim the gospel to the Corinthians without charge. Therefore, Paul frequently implores the Corinthians to "think" upon his exemplary model.[684] Thus, Paul stresses that God and the Achaians can attest as witnesses, validating his authentic love and commitment to the Corinthians (2 Cor.11:10).

---

[677] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 519; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 753-754; Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 491.

[678] For a detailed discussion about the historical background of taking money for teaching, see Marin, *2 Corinthians*, 344; Keener, *1-2 Corinthians*, 228.

[679] Aristotle, *Pol.* 1337b 14-15; Plutarch, *De poet. aud.* 28D; *Quom. adul. ab. amico internosc.*

[680] Aristotle, *Pol.* 1337b 14-15; Plutarch, *De poet. aud.* 28D; *Quom. adul. ab. amico internosc.*

[681] Ronald F. Hock, "Paul's Tentmaking and the Problem of his Social Class," *JBL* 97/4 (1978): 562-563.

[682] Hock, "Paul's Tentmaking and the Problem of his Social Class," 564.

[683] *BDAG*, 930.

[684] λογίζομαι appears eight times in 2 Corinthians, such as 3:5; 5:19; 10:2x2; 10:7; 10:11; 11:5; 12:6.

Paul's actions reflect the principles suggested by Fladerer et al. in the SIA theorizing, which emphasizes that identity formation is a continuous process involving collaboration and negotiation to create a sense of shared collective identity. Paul exemplifies this by working alongside the Corinthians, refusing financial support from them to avoid being a burden. Through his actions, he communicates his commitment to their well-being and fosters a sense of unity and shared identity. In other words, Paul uses this situation to establish a new perspective on preaching without expecting financial support. By making personal sacrifices, Paul intends to contribute to a paradigm shift in the community's perception of leadership and acceptance of financial support. This approach highlights Paul's leadership qualities, demonstrating his dedication to prioritizing the collective interests of the Corinthians without seeking monetary gain.

2 Corinthians 11:7-12 serves as three rhetorical functions. Firstly, he aims to distinguish himself from the interlopers by displaying his sacrificial love before the Corinthians. In 2 Corinthians 2:17, Paul vehemently challenges those interlopers who are "peddlers" or "hucksters of God's Word" (καπηλεύοντες τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ; 2 Cor.2:17). They ask for money after preaching the gospel. In this context, Paul acknowledges that one (surely the root cause is found in the different gospel, Christ, etc, 2 Cor:11:4) of the conflicts between himself and the Corinthians stems from his rejection of financial support (2 Cor.11:7). Paul's strategic use of this context serves to reconstruct the identity framework of the Corinthians. The core values inherent in an authentic servant of Christ, as elucidated by Paul, include the embodiment of humility (2 Cor.11:7) and the demonstration of sacrificial love (2 Cor.11:11). These characteristics have been exhibited by Paul's decision to decline financial support. It significantly underscores his advocacy for the collective interests of the Corinthians because Paul wants their heart rather than their property.[685]

Secondly, Paul chooses not to burden the Corinthians financially (2 Cor.11:7-8) because he wants to preserve his integrity by not accepting money from the Corinthians (2 Cor.12:14). As Guthrie suggested, "If they [Corinthians] harbor hope that he might abandon his commitment to working without compensation, they will be sorely disappointed."[686] By refusing financial support, Paul ensures that his motives for preaching the gospel were not questioned.

Thirdly, Paul intentionally avoids engaging in patron-client relationships among the Corinthians. This decision contrasts with his willingness to receive financial support from Macedonian Christ-following communities (2 Cor.11:9). Paul refrained from participating in patron-client relationships with the Corinthians to uphold the integrity of his message. His insistence on distinguishing himself from the interlopers holds

---

[685] Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 440.
[686] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 610.

significant weight in his ministry. This insistence not only reinforces his credibility but also serves to protect the Corinthians from monetary burdens.

Thus, Paul urges the Corinthians to consider whether his action constitutes sin (2 Cor.11:7). As Paul said, "And why? Because I do not love you? God knows I do!" (2 Cor.11:11). Knippenberg et al. suggest a significant framework to understand the norm of reciprocity, prescribing that followers are willing to help those who have helped. This norm can be regarded as a "Behavioral rule" that continuously generates and maintains group stability. Researchers argued, "It may also operate as an intrinsic motive that provides satisfaction by itself and that leads people to reciprocate even when it is in conflict with immediate self-interest or when the focal persons are not expecting to have an ongoing relationship with each other."[687] This perspective likely elucidates Paul's appeal for financial assistance from the Corinthians for the Jerusalem community in 2 Corinthians 8:8-15. This text also reflects Paul's encouragement of fairness, reciprocity in giving, mutual support, and equality within the Christ-following communities. In Paul's perception, sharing resources and supporting each other generously are central to the core values of Christ-following communities.

In 2 Corinthians 11:11, Paul challenges the Corinthians to reflect upon the evident manifestation of his love towards them. Paul emphasizes his genuine intentions and defends his actions by asserting that his refusal to accept financial support is not rooted in unfriendliness but in his deep commitment to the Corinthians and his relationship with God. He articulates that by preaching the gospel free of charge and working with his own hands to support himself, he seeks to remove any potential obstacles to their faith and to demonstrate his sincere dedication to their spiritual growth. God knows his refusal of financial assistance is a testament to his love for the Corinthians. Paul also expects to receive love in return from the Corinthians (2 Cor.11:11).[688] This suggests that sacrificial love is an intrinsic motivator, encouraging individuals to reciprocate even when immediate benefits are not apparent. It underscores the power of love to inspire reciprocal actions. Paul's leadership is relational and grounded in a deep understanding of the power of sacrificial love. It is conceivable that such love can enhance group cohesion and facilitate relationship restoration.

Paul explicitly states that he refrains from accepting financial assistance from the Corinthians to prevent imposing any burden upon them (2 Cor.11:9). This decision aligns with his promotion of the collective interest in terms of Corinthians' spiritual maturation (2 Cor.10:15; 12:15; 13:9; 13:11). By prioritizing the Corinthians' spiritual growth and avoiding financial dependence, Paul has demonstrated his commitment to promoting their spiritual well-being.

Paul affirms his role as a consistently God-granted leader (2 Cor.11:12). He intends

---

[687] Knippenberg, and Knippenberg, "Leader Self-Sacrifice and Leadership Effectiveness: The Moderating Role of Leader Prototypicality," 26.
[688] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 312; Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 524-525.

to "cut the ground from under those who want an opportunity to be considered equal with us in the things they boast about." Paul intends to "cut off", "cut down", or "exterminate" (ἐκκόπτω; 2 Cor.11:12)[689] the opportunity (ἀφορμή; 2 Cor.11:12) that the interlopers seek to grasp by using the financial policy as a tool to undermine Paul's leadership. Paul recognizes that engaging in self-defence is a means to facilitate the reconciliation of his relationship with the Corinthians.

In summary, Paul's refusal of financial support from the Corinthians aims to redefine the fundamental principle of ministry, prioritizing the collective interests of the Corinthians over his personal gain. Paul also seeks reciprocal love from the Corinthians, reflecting his commitment to fostering a mutually supportive and loving relationship. This distinctive leadership trait highlights the close bond between Paul and the Corinthians, distinguishing him from the interlopers.

3.2. 2 Cor.12:14-18

Paul's identity advancement is in 2 Corinthians 12:14-18, where he announced his third visit to Corinth. These recurrent themes of Paul's financial support and affection for the Corinthians became focal points of consideration.[690] Paul employs Ἰδοὺ (behold in imperative form; 2 Cor.12:14) to draw the Corinthians' attention and repeatedly asserts that he will not burden (καταναρκήσω; 2 Cor.11:9; 12:13; 12:14) the Corinthians during the third visit.[691] Paul's commitment not to burden the Corinthians was reiterated as he intended to highlight his consistent stance of self-reliance.[692]

Paul expresses the mutual bond between himself and the Corinthians by using the familial metaphor of γονεῖς (parents; 2 Cor.12:14) and τέκνοις (children; 2 Cor.12:14). Paul portrays himself as a spiritual parent displaying a willingness to shower the Corinthians with unceasing and sacrificial love (2 Cor.12:15).[693] As Paul emphasized, "I will most gladly spend and be expended for your souls" (ἐγὼ δὲ ἥδιστα δαπανήσω καὶ ἐκδαπανηθήσομαι ὑπὲρ τῶν ψυχῶν ὑμῶν; 2 Cor.12:15). This suggests a strong bond anticipated between Paul and the Corinthians, mainly through his demonstration of sacrificial love towards them. This self-awareness of Paul's leadership role motivates him to express his passion for the Corinthians, primarily as he addresses, "children should not have to save up for their parents, but parents for their children" (2 Cor.12:14). In Paul's perspective, the relationships between parent and children is characterized by a form of sacrificial love. However, "The paterfamilias enjoyed sweeping powers over his direct descendants", as Peter R. Saller pointed out.[694] At this point, Paul clearly demonstrated another kind of parent-children relationship.

---

[689] *BDAG*, 270.
[690] Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 832-833.
[691] Matera, *II Corinthians*, 291.
[692] This Greek verb previously occurs in 2 Corinthians 11:9.
[693] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 611-612.
[694] Peter Richard Saller, *The Roman Empire Economy, Society and Culture* (University of California Press, 2014), 60.

As proposed by Cicero, "*pietas*" can be considered a "*benivolum offcium*" ("a kind deed" or "a good deed" in Latin).[695] Within a Roman family, the value of "love" is inherently reciprocal. Children were obligated to "repay the care spent on them in their early dependence by looking after parents and other family members."[696] In this sense, Paul expects that he will receive their reciprocal love after the Corinthians read this letter (2 Cor.12:15b). Ivar Vegge suggested that the Corinthians' obligation as spiritual children were to demonstrate the appropriate attitude towards Paul, their spiritual parent.[697] This observation aligns with a "norm of reciprocity", as mentioned above. Thus, Paul directly confronts the Corinthians with the question, "If I love you more, will you love me less?" (2 Cor.12:15). In this confrontation, Paul expects the Corinthians to reciprocate his love with increased affection.[698]

Cremer and Knippenberg rightly noted that a leader's self-sacrificial love uniquely motivates followers to go beyond their self-interest.[699] While leaders embody self-sacrifice, they can attract followers to follow, an essential aspect of effective leadership.[700] The rhetorical function of 2 Corinthians 12:14-18, aligned with this idea, aims to restore the mutual trust between Paul and the Corinthians. The Corinthians may feel a sense of dishonor and disrespect when Paul rejects their financial support. Paul emphasizes that neither he nor his team, such as Titus, ever took advantage of the Corinthians, unlike the interlopers who likely charged them (2 Cor.12:17-18).

In this situation, Paul's expression of sacrificial love serves a dual purpose. Firstly, it aims to alleviate the tension between Paul and the Corinthians. By declining their financial support, Paul seeks to demonstrate that his decision is rooted in love for them (2 Cor.12:14). Secondly, after reestablishing a restored relationship, this sacrificial love underscores his deep concern for edifying their faith (2 Cor.12:19). Paul's leadership aligns with the SIA to leadership, "When followers regard leaders as championing the interests of the social group they are leading that they regard these leaders to be true and authentic."[701] Paul's demonstration of sacrificial love is a powerful tool for reestablishing his relationship with the Corinthians. Additionally, Paul leverages the conduct of his coworkers as a model to showcase his integrity and sacrificial love (2 Cor. 12:16-18).

2 Corinthians 12:17-18 reflects Paul's expression of his concern that his motives might be misunderstood, particularly concerning the financial support provided by

---

[695] Cicero, *Inv*, 2.161. For a detailed discussion of kinship in the Greco-Roman world, see Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 610-611; Keener, *1-2 Corinthians*, 242-243.
[696] Robertson, *Conflict in Corinth*, 60-61.
[697] Ivar Vegge, *2 Corinthians-a Letter about Reconciliation* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 364-365.
[698] Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 612.
[699] Cremer, and Knippenberg, "Cooperation as a Function of Leader Self-Sacrifice, Trust, and Identification," 366.
[700] Cremer, and Knippenberg, "Cooperation as a Function of Leader Self-Sacrifice, Trust, and Identification," 366.
[701] Steffens et al. "True to What We Stand For: Championing Collective Interests as a Path to Authentic Leadership," 738.

Titus and another brother by the Corinthians. Despite his concerns, Paul underscores he did not take advantage of them (ἐπλεονέκτησα ὑμᾶς; 2 Cor.12:17) through those Paul sent to Corinth. This emphasizes Paul's commitment to integrity and sacrificial love, as he prioritizes maintaining trust in his interaction with the Corinthians, even when facing potential misunderstandings or accusations. This may result in Paul's self-defence (ἀπολογέομαι; 2 Cor.12:19) before the Corinthians. Paul remains steadfast in his determination to make a third visit to Corinth to edify the Corinthians (2 Cor.13:10). Paul's prioritization of the Corinthians' well-being over his interests is seen in the text. This exemplifies Paul's leadership in advancing his identity, demonstrating his intention to prioritize the spiritual growth of the Corinthians over his personal gain. Paul sets a leadership model to distinguish himself from the interlopers, especially that outgroup who intends to seek financial support from the Corinthians (2 Cor.12:14). This reinforces his commitment to serving the Corinthians selflessly and underscores the difference between his genuine leadership and the self-serving motives of the outgroup.

To conclude, the interference of interlopers directly contributes to the strained relationship between Paul and the Corinthians. The challenge posed by these outgroups revolves around Paul's refusal to accept financial support from the Corinthians. Paul strategically adopts humility and sacrificial love to express his deep concern for the spiritual development of the Corinthians rather than merely defending his apostleship. This rhetorical approach has two purposes. Firstly, Paul aims to mend the tense relationship with the congregants, and secondly, he consistently distinguishes himself from the interlopers. Notably, Paul asserts that his leadership lacks a patron-client relationship and refrains from imposing any financial burden on the Corinthians and his ingroup members.

4. Paul's Hardship (2 Cor.11:23-11:33)

There is considerable literature on the various catalogues of trials and sufferings in 2 Corinthians. [702] Scholars have been particularly interested in investigating these passages' rhetorical meanings and functions. They also endeavour to reconstruct the historical backdrop of Paul's experiences during his missionary journey. However, this literature falls short of providing a comprehensive analysis of Paul's leadership with

---

[702]Maroney, "Suffering as Qualification for Ministry," 7-20; Ronald D Witherup, "'Apart from These Things I Am Pressured Daily from My Anxiety for All the Churches'(2 Cor 11: 28): The Intersection of Paul's Theology and Pastoral Practice," *CBQ* 85.1 (2023): 1-18; Kim, "Paul's Defense: Masculinity and Authority in 2 Corinthians 10–13," *JSNT* 44.1 (2021): 149-169; Markus Oehler, "The Punishment of Thirty-Nine Lashes (2 Corinthians 11: 24) and the Place of Paul in Judaism," *JBL* 140.3 (2021): 623-640; Jennifer Glancy, "Boasting of Beatings (2 Corinthians 11: 23-25)," *JBL* 123.1 (2004): 99-135; David E. Fredrickson, "Paul, Hardships, and Suffering," in *Paul in the Greco-Roman World: A Handbook*, ed. J. Paul. Sampley (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2003), 172-197; John T. Fitzgerald, "The Catalogue in Ancient Greek Literature," *JSNT Supp.* (Sheffield: Shielfield Academic Press, 1997), 275-293; Andrews, Scott B, "Too Weak Not to Lead: The Form and Function of 2 Cor 11.23 b–33," *NTS* 41.2 (1995): 263-276; John T. Fitzgerald, *Cracks in an Earthen Vessel: An Examination of the Catalogues of Hardships in the Corinthians Correspondence*, SBLDS 99 (Atlanta: Scholar, 1988).

identity formation. SIA offers a fresh approach, integrating social identity research findings into understanding Paul's leadership.

As Paul addressed, "I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches" (2 Cor.11:28). This highlights Paul's anxiety about the Christ-following communities (ἐκκλησιῶν; 2 Cor.11:28). Guthrie plausibly suggested, "Now the hardship list culminates in the emotional weight, the anxiety Paul bears daily as he thinks about problems in the churches throughout the Mediterranean world."[703] Paul prioritizes the collective welfare of the Christ-following communities over his interests in this text. As social identity researchers suggested, "They [leaders] need to act (and be seen to act) in a selfless or self-sacrificial manner that promotes interests associated with a higher-order or "greater" good."[704] This notion helps us understand Paul's leadership in 2 Corinthians 11:23-33.

Paul assumes the role of "foolish boaster," hoping the Corinthians will endure (ἀνείχεσθέ; 2 Cor.11:1) his apparent folly (2 Cor.11:1). Paul strategically urges the Corinthians not to "think" or "perceive" (δόξῃ; 2 Cor.11:16) of him as a fool, yet he acknowledges that they may see him that way. He encourages them to accept his foolishness. Paul urges them to tolerate his foolishness. Thus, Paul shifts his focus to redefine his leadership, particularly in the context of making claims of self-honour (καυχάομαι).[705] Paul articulates his endurance of suffering with the intent of fostering spiritual growth within the Christ-following communities (2 Cor.11:28). Lim argued that this text is structured on the theme of "Paul's boasting" in 2 Corinthians 11:30, where Paul's act is firmly grounded in the citation of LXX Jeremiah 9.22-23, with Paul subtly alluding to the narrative of Jesus (2 Cor.13:4).[706] Nevertheless, this proposition does not elucidate how Paul employs this thematic emphasis to reconstruct the Corinthians' identity related to his endurance of suffering.

In 2 Corinthians 11:22-23b, Paul addresses four specific questions related to the social identity shared by himself and the interlopers: Hebrews (Ἑβραῖοί), Israelites (Ἰσραηλῖταί), the seed of Abraham (σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ), "Servants of Christ" (διάκονοι Χριστοῦ) (2 Cor.11:22-23b).[707] These designations essentially serve as boundaries, functioning to differentiate between ingroup and outgroup membership. By emphasizing these various labels, the interlopers engage in a competition of honour, attempting to demonstrate their social status as superior to Paul's. Similarly, Paul seeks to assert that he is not inferior to these interlopers.[708] Hafemann is correct, as Paul's

---

[703] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 565.
[704] Steffens et al. "True to What We Stand for: Championing Collective Interests as a Path to Authentic Leadership," 728.
[705] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 321-322, Kar Yong Lim, *The Sufferings of Christ Are Abundant In Us'*, 158; Sze Kar Wan, *Power in Weakness*, 142; Kruse, *2 Corinthians*, 191; Lambrecht, *Second Corinthians*, 197.
[706] Lim, *The Sufferings of Christ Are Abundant In Us'*, 159.
[707] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 322.
[708] Esler suggests that the interlopers are of the same Judean group who paid a visit to Galatia, See Esler, *Second Corinthians*, 322. Scholars assert that Paul's rivals and the Romans were keen to commend

opponents advocate a triumphal and strong-armed leadership style. On the contrary, Paul intends to create a novel leadership model rooted in the weaknesses and afflictions of Jesus.[709] As Lim argued, Paul's boasting entirely differs from the rivals', as "it is not only in understanding and knowing the Lord but also in participation in the Lord's works."[710] White's position aligned with Lim, "Paul fashions his strength in weakness discourses to establish his apostolic credentials and to model for the Corinthians how their pains can be transformed in Christ. In other words, Paul is not simply defending his ministry to the Corinthians, and he is actively ministering to the community's complex and demanding experience of pain and pride."[711]

Paul's opponents appear to have challenged his "pure" Jewish ethnic background, mainly his lineage related to birth, residence in Israel, and personal knowledge of the earthly Jesus.[712] Social identity researchers argued, "People are not only assigned to a group but also take on that group membership as the basis for their subjective self-definition."[713] This perspective provides a valuable lens through which to analyze Paul's leadership. His emphasis on his sacrificial love and refusal to accept financial support from the Corinthians can be seen as a strategic effort to reinforce his leadership identity and align with the values of the group he leads. Paul highlights his integrity and commitment by distinguishing his actions from those of the interlopers, who seek personal gain. Through his actions and teachings, Paul encourages the Corinthians to see their community as one rooted in genuine love, selflessness, and spiritual growth. His demonstration serves to clarify the group's identity, promote cohesion, and inspire the Corinthians to uphold the principles of their faith.

Paul's strategic use of the term "servants of Christ" (διάκονοι Χριστοῦ; 2 Cor.11:23) to distinguish himself from the interlopers, as discussed in Chapter Seven. He stereotypes these outgroup members as servants of Satan, noting that they "disguise themselves as ministers of righteousness" (2 Cor.11:15). In Paul's view, "servant of Christ" ("servant of God"; 2 Cor.6:4) involves suffering for others, as Paul presents "I am a better one, with far greater labours" (ὑπὲρ ἐγώ· ἐν κόποις περισσοτέρως; 2 Cor.11:23). This specific identity descriptor also helps Paul and the Corinthians in differentiating who the authentic servant of Christ is. This designation compares with the interlopers, whom Paul views as deviant outgroups. Paul asserts that his servanthood is more authentic because his leadership is shaped by an embodiment of self-sacrifice and suffering for the Christ-following communities (2 Cor.11:23-33).

---

themselves or honour others according to their ethnicity. See Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 551 and Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 533.

[709] Scott J. Hafemann, *Suffering and the Spirit: An Exegetical Study of 2 Corinthians 2:4-3:3 within the Context of the Corinthian Correspondence* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2011), 80-81.

[710] Lim, *The Sufferings of Christ Are Abundant In Us'*, 171.

[711] B.G. White, "The Varieties of Pain: Re-examining the Setting and Purpose of 2 Corinthians with Paul's λυπ-Words," *JSNT* Vol. 43.2 (2020): 166.

[712] Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 794.

[713] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 48-49.

As Esler rightly pointed out, the list of hardships (2 Cor.11:23c-12:13) establishes Paul as a faithful Christ's servant. Kim claimed that Paul, under his endurance and weakness, aims to redefine the identity content between masculinity and leadership.[714]

Paul's enduring suffering instills confidence among the group members, who regard him as trustworthy because his actions are driven by a desire to maximize the group's interests. This contributes to the spiritual growth of the entire Christ-following community (ἐκκλησιῶν-2 Cor.11:28). Researchers suggest that leaders who act as in-group champions and those who are "doing it for us" bring many benefits. "Leaders must be in-group champions" in ways that promote followers' willingness to follow a leader since he/she is seen serving and doing for the group.[715] In response to intergroup conflict, Paul seeks to reinforce the bond between himself and his Corinthians by showing his sufferings, which he endures for their sake. Although some Corinthians may perceive sufferings and weaknesses as incongruent with their expectations of effective leadership, scholars argued that in certain historical contexts, weakness in leadership was respected among some Greeks and Romans.[716] Serving others may foster trust in the leader's commitment to the group's interests, leading to leadership endorsement, influencing followers' opinions, and embracing the group's vision.[717]

From the perspectives of the SIA to leadership, Paul intentionally employs "norm talk", [718]a concept we will thoroughly discuss in Chapter Eight, to shape the Corinthians' identity. This identity rhetoric is used to redefine the meaning of "servants of Christ" (2 Cor.11:23). Paul recounts his suffering and experiences revolving around hard work (κόπος), imprisonment (φυλακή), beatings (πληγή), and facing death (θάνατος) while proclaiming the gospel among Judeans and the gentiles. He had received "forty lashes minus one" from Judeans (Ἰουδαίων) in the synagogues in the diaspora.[719] Paul was also beaten by rods, pummeled with stones, and shipwrecked.

In 2 Corinthians 11:27, Paul adopts κόπος (labour) and μόχθος (toil) to present his

---

[714] Kim, "Paul's Defense: Masculinity and Authority in 2 Corinthians 10–13," 149-169.

[715] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 101; Steffens et al. "True to What We Stand For: Championing Collective Interests as a Path to Authentic Leadership," 728; Knippenberg, and Knippenberg, "Self-Sacrifice and Leadership Effectiveness: The Moderating Role of Leader Prototypicality," 34.

[716] Kim, "Paul's Defense: Masculinity and Authority in 2 Corinthians 10–13," 158-162; Roetzel, "The Language of War (2 Cor.10:1-6) and the Language of Weakness (2 Cor.11:21b-13:10)," 93.

[717] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 119; Knippenberg, and Knippenberg, "Leader Self-Sacrifice and Leadership Effectiveness: The Moderating Role of Leader Prototypicality," 33.

[718] Norm talk is a communicative method in which leaders intentionally use communication skills to construct, reconstruct, and change the group and members' identity prototypes. Leaders' leading positions can be protected and promoted through this identity rhetoric. See Hogg et al. "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 277; Michael A. Hogg, and Graham M. Vaughan, *Social Psychology*, 8th ed. (London: Pearson, 2018), 341.

[719] The basis of this punishment is in Deut. 25:2-3 instructs the Judean leaders to give a violator up to forty lashes. The administration of beatings places shame and dishonour upon those beaten and may lead to their death. See Markus Oehler, "The Punishment of Thirty-Nine Lashes (2 Corinthians 11: 24) and the Place of Paul in Judaism," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 140.3 (2021): 638.

situation. Paul intentionally involves himself in manual labour to avoid imposing an economic burden on the Christ-followers (2 Cor.11:7-10). To recap, Paul's leadership faces substantial challenges from the interlopers, who evaluate Paul through worldly standards. Paul's refusal to accept financial support mainly lay at the heart of the criticisms (2 Cor.11:12; 12:16). The embodiment of suffering not only highlights Paul's devotion to sacrificial servanthood (2 Cor.4:7-14) but also displays his unique model, which focuses on prioritizing the interests of others over his own. This action might cause specific Corinthians to view Paul as undignified and dishonourable, particularly by being a humiliated leader.[720]

On the one hand, Paul intends to reconstruct the positive meaning of "humility," emphasizing its significance in benefiting others. Paul's strategy aligns closely with the SIA to leadership, wherein leaders engage in self-sacrificial actions for the collective welfare. This leadership model can enhance leadership effectiveness and foster higher group performance,[721] particularly when facing competition and crisis.

On the other hand, Paul persists in detailing his experience of sleeplessness (ἀγρυπνία), hunger (λιμός), thirst (δίψος), abstention from food (νηστεία), cold (ψῦχος), and insufficient cloth (γυμνότης), collectively referencing his physical deprivations and personal vulnerabilities. The Romans, including some Corinthians, perceive these sufferings as disgrace and dishonour. Keener argued that "Soldiers respected their leaders who had endured the rugged lifestyle" in antiquity.[722] When leaders exhibit sacrificial actions for the group, such as suffering from hunger, extreme temperatures, and sleeping on the ground, they can earn honour and respect from their followers. The Romans also considered the endurance of suffering a sign of toughness and a significant feature to qualify a man for leadership.[723] If this were the case, suffering for collective well-being may positively impact the Corinthians.

The endurance of suffering for the Christ-following emerges as a salient aspect of Paul's leadership. This feature serves as a valuable marker for the Corinthians to assess the authenticity of Christ's servant. In Paul's view, an authentic servant of Christ is recognized through active participation in Christ's weakness and suffering. Paul says if he boasts, he will boast about his weakness (2 Cor.11:30). This characteristic explicitly marks Paul apart from the false brothers (ψευδαδέλφοις; 2 Cor.11:26). Scholars widely concur that managing the presence of false apostles posed one of the most detrimental challenges in Paul's ministry.[724] Concerning the identity of "false brothers", scholars

---

[720] Catherine M. Jones posits that the Corinthian elites might negatively perceive Paul when he engages in manual labour. See chapter four in "Theatre of Shame: The Impact of Paul's Manual Labour on His Apostleship in Corinth," (ThD Diss., University of Toronto, 2013), 170-171.

[721] Steffens et al. "Advancing the Social Identity Theory of Leadership: A Meta-Analytic Review of Leader Group Prototypicality," 23-25.

[722] Keener, *1-2 Corinthian*, 235. Glancy also supports this notion, see Glancy, "Boasting of Beatings (2 Corinthians 11: 23-25)," 135.

[723] Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 746.

[724] Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 808; Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 325; Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*,

have posited that they are likely the Judaizers who posed challenges for Paul in spreading the gospel in the first century.[725]

Returning to examine the identity descriptor of authentic Christ's servant, according to Paul, an authentic servant of Christ is characterized by demonstrating sacrificial love, which includes a willingness to endure suffering for the Christ-following communities (2 Cor.11:28-29). Matthew O'Reilly has recently proposed that Paul's portrayal of himself as a beneficial leader in the group accentuates the feature of suffering as a distinctive marker of apostolic identity and uniquely communicates the life of Jesus to the group, thereby strengthening his perceived relationship with other members.[726] Paul's endurance of suffering functions as to encourage the Corinthians' growth in faith (2 Cor.10:8; 12:19; 13;10). Paul discloses his psychological worries about the Christ-following communities and the emotional weight he bears daily (2 Cor.11:28-29). Paul remains unconcerned about his sufferings as he prioritizes the members' well-being over his weakness. In this context, Paul unmistakably demonstrates his advocacy for the collective interests of the Corinthians through his discourse on values concerning suffering and love.[727] By embodying suffering, Paul actively participates in Christ's servanthood, which enhances his leadership effectiveness and power utilization. This self-sacrificial approach demonstrates his deep commitment to the mission and aligns him with the example set by Christ. His actions serve as a powerful testament to his dedication to the spiritual well-being and growth of the communities he serves. As Paul says, "The God and Father of the Lord Jesus (blessed be he forever!) know that I do not lie" (2 Cor.12:31).

In summary, identity advancement suggests that influential leaders should advance and promote the group's core interests rather than prioritizing personal interests. This entails placing the interests of the group above one's gain. Paul's leadership aligns with this notion. By claiming the title of "servant of Christ" and highlighting his "suffering," Paul shows his willingness to put the Corinthians' interests ahead of his own. Paul's ultimate intention is to restore the strained relationships with the Corinthians.

5. Paul's Prayer (2 Cor.13:5-9)

Within 2 Corinthians 13:5-9, the crux of the matter is intricately linked to examining the faith integral to being an authentic Christ-follower.[728] Scholars note that Paul urges the Corinthians to engage in a "self-examination" (πειράζετε; 2 Cor.13:5) in response

---

562; Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 379; Furnish, *ii Corinthians*, 537.

[725] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 325; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 808; Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 744.

[726] Matt O'Reilly, "Paul, Apostle of Pain: "One of Us-ness" and the Question of Suffering in 2 Corinthians," *Journal of Early Christian History* 12:1 (2022): 80-95.

[727] Hogg et al. "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 277-278.

[728] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 637; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 918; Furnish, *ii Corinthians*, 577.

to those among them who have requested evidence to support his leadership. [729] Paul articulates his hope (ἐλπίζω; 2 Cor.13:6) that the Corinthians "will come to know" (γνώσεσθε; 2 Cor.13:6) that "we have not failed" (ἡμεῖς οὐκ ἐσμὲν ἀδόκιμοι; 2 Cor. 13:6). This indicates Paul will provide evidence to validate his leadership in the forthcoming visit. [730] Scholars, however, suggest that Paul anticipates a positive response if the Corinthians pass the test, indicating that they have Christ dwelling with them.[731] As Martin suggested, "Paul steps up his appeal to the Corinthians to prove to themselves that Christ is truly among them as they contend."[732] Paul himself asserts that he does not fail the test. On the one hand, it implies Paul's assertion that his conduct, ministry, and message are authentic and follow the gospel of Christ. On the other hand, Paul, as a leader, is more concerned about the spiritual condition of the Corinthians, not himself (2 Cor.13:7).[733] Paul again prioritizes the Corinthians' interest over his benefit. He is confident that upon examination, both he and his ministry will be found faithful and true.

Paul continues to express his deep concerns about the spiritual life of the Corinthians (2 Cor.13:7 and 13:11).[734] As Harris argued, "His [Paul] primary concern, as shown by his prayer, was for the Corinthians' rejection of all wrongdoing (κακὸν; 2 Cor.13:7) and pursuit of right conduct (καλὸν; 2 Cor.13:7), rather than their recognition of his authenticity (οὐχ ἵνα ἡμεῖς δόκιμοι φανῶμεν; 2 Cor.13:7)."[735] This interpretation is closely in-line with the concept of identity advancement, suggesting that Paul as an apostle is deeply concerned about the spiritual well-being of the Corinthians rather than his credentials. Leaders' championing of collective interests is evident in Paul's prayer for the Corinthians. First, Paul wishes that the Corinthians "will not do anything wrong" (ποιῆσαι ὑμᾶς κακὸν μηδέν; 2 Cor.13:7), and second, that they will keep doing what is right (ὑμεῖς τὸ καλὸν ποιῆτε). Furnish argued that "the good things" (τὸ καλὸν) point to "obedience to Christ" and "doing the will of God." This obedience constitutes valid proof of the genuineness of their faith.[736]

---

[729] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 362; Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 637; Keener, *1-2 Corinthians*, 246. According to Esler, this situation troubles Paul and makes him feel shame and dishonourable, see 362; Harris suggests that "Paul's emotions seem to oscillate between hope and fear regarding his converts at Corinth." Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 918. Witherington has also taken a similar view that Paul intends to make a brief emotional appeal and one of his purposes is to restore the relationship with the converts. See Witherington, *1-2 Corinthians*, 471.

[730] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 364; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 922. Esler and Harris plausibly suggest that Paul wants to establish himself as a genuine agent of Christ, through whom Christ's message is conveyed.

[731] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 363; Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 478-479.

[732] Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 478-479.

[733] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 640-640; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 923.

[734] Witherington, *1-2 Corinthians*, 272. Witherington suggests that Paul reiterates that he does not wish to discipline to the disobedient Corinthians in order to show his authority (ἐξουσία). Instead, he seeks to restore the relationship between himself and the Corinthians.

[735] Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 923.

[736] Furnish, *ii Corinthians*, 78. Esler also argues that in Paul's perceptions, when the Corinthians do not return to sexual sins and factionalism, this indicates their obedience. See Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 364.

In terms of "Right and Wrong," it closely links to "truth" (ἀλήθεια; Paul uses twice in 2 Cor.13:8), which is grounded in Paul's understanding of the conduct of Christ-followers.[737] At this point, Lambrecht claimed that "Doing no wrong and doing what is right are needed to pass the test and be approved (cf.13:7)."[738] Guthrie concurred with this as, according to Paul, faithful Corinthians are defined by their obedience. "They must not only be 'in Christ' but also have Christ 'in you'" (2 Cor.13:5).[739] Identity advancement theorizing, an effective leader should promote the group's interest in alignment with the group's norms and values. SIA theorists further argued, "Nothing can substitute for understanding the social identity of the group they seek to lead."[740]

Paul's model aligns with this notion, and he has demonstrated a deep understanding of the social identity of Christ's followers and its core values. As a divine-granted apostle, Paul possesses specific knowledge that authorizes him to define and construct the Corinthians' identity. Thus, Paul urges the Corinthians to examine themselves according to the truth, which serves as a criterion for assessing their obedience to Christ (2 Cor.10:7). In Martin's interpretation, "He [Paul] carried the burden of the church's good on his pastoral heart and yearned to see them in right relationship with the Lord and himself."[741] Therefore, Paul's primary concern is for the Corinthians' ethical and moral transformation (2 Cor.13:7), which reflects a unique leadership paradigm.

This specific social context prompts the question of what "in the faith" (ἐν τῇ πίστει-2 Cor.13:5) signifies in Paul's usage. This phrase refers to the adherence to Paul's teachings and a proper understanding of his leadership model, which embraces suffering and weakness. In this way, "in the faith" signifies a comprehensive commitment to embodying the values of the gospel, as exemplified by Paul. It involves a deep understanding of the paradoxical power of weakness and suffering, which are not signs of failure, but of genuine alignment with Christ's example. In this sense, "in the faith" is the transformative and counter-cultural values of the gospel, continually reflecting on and embodying the sacrificial love and humility that Paul's leadership represents. This leadership model starkly contrasts conventional cultural values (2 Cor.10:10-11; 11:12; 12:16).

In addition, "in the faith" operates as a superordinate identity descriptor, playing a dual role in redefining the identity content of authentic Christ-followers and reducing identity uncertainty among the Corinthians. According to the researchers, leaders (such as Paul) must focus on creating a shared identity that connects the subgroups when there is a conflict between different subgroups within a larger group. This shared identity

---

[737] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 643; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 925.
[738] Lambrecht, *Second Corinthians*, 223.
[739] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 639.
[740] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 119.
[741] Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 489.

encourages positive and cooperative interactions between the subgroups, which helps strengthen and benefit the larger group.[742] Paul states twice (2 Cor.13:7; 13:9) that he earnestly prays (εὐχόμεθα; 2 Cor.13:7) for the Corinthians, particularly wishing them "may not do anything wrong" (μὴ ποιῆσαι ὑμᾶς κακὸν μηδέν; 2 Cor.13:7) and may achieve "maturation" (κατάρτισιν; 2 Cor.13:9 and καταρτίζεσθε; 2 Cor.13:11).

An insight from identity uncertainty theory is that reducing the uncertainty of identity is crucial in driving individuals toward cognitive or behavioural changes.[743] Such a reduction can be achieved by aligning with self-inclusive social groups. "These groups possess clear identities characterized through being "distinctive, homogeneous and intolerant of internal dissent/diversity; have a simple/clear and consensually defined identity."[744] To Paul, reshaping the Corinthians' identity involves embodying suffering and weakness and being less concerned with making personal honour claims.

These features highlight Paul as a self-sacrificial leader aiming to promote the spiritual maturation of the Corinthians, particularly urging them to avoid wrongdoing. Paul's strategy assists the Corinthians in reducing uncertainty about what it means to follow Christ. Paul's use of the phrase "in the faith" intends to assimilate himself and the Corinthians into the same identity category: obedience to Christ, authentic Christ-followers. Paul demonstrated these prototypical features, particularly enduring suffering for them.

Martiny and Kessler proposed a significant approach to successful identity management, suggesting constructing and utilizing a collective group-based identity to address identity threats.[745] This perspective illuminates Paul's strategic use of the concepts of "in the faith" and "do the proper thing" to establish a collective group-based identity. As Harris pointed out, "return to the order" (κατάρτισις; 2 Cor.13:9) is a pivotal component of community building.[746] This identity aids the Corinthians in reducing their identity uncertainty and fosters a cohesive bond between Paul and the Corinthians through the relational identity of "in the faith." Thus, "maturation in faith" is a positive outcome of Paul's efforts to edify (οἰκοδομή; 2 Cor.13:10). Paul's statement, "For we rejoice when we are weak, and you are strong," (2 Cor.13:9) has exhibited his dedication to championing the Corinthians' interests, even at his expense (2 Cor.11:7-11; 12:14-15). Paul emphasizes that his rejoicing (χαίρω) is primarily rooted in the Corinthians' growing strength, even though they might see him as too weak to lead.[747]

Thus, Paul's primary concern is not centered on himself or the assertion of his

---

[742] Michael A. Hogg, and David E. Rast III, "Intergroup Leadership: The Challenge of Successfully Leading Fractured Groups and Societies," *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, Vol.31.6 (2022): 569.
[743] Hogg, "A Social Identity Theory of Leadership," 187-188.
[744] Hogg, "Walls Between Groups: Self-uncertainty, Social Identity, and Intergroup Leadership," 835.
[745] Martiny, and Kessler, "Managing One's Social Identity: Successful and Unsuccessful Identity Management," 749-750.
[746] Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 928.
[747] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 366.

authority to claim honour for his accomplishments. The central theme of 2 Corinthians 13:9 revolves around Paul's desire for the spiritual well-being and maturity of the Corinthians.[748] He hopes they will become fully restored and mature in their faith. This identity advancement becomes evident in this text and is consistent with the content of Paul's prayer (2 Cor.13:6).

Esler rightly pointed out that Paul's weakness is linked to Christ's crucifixion, as Paul aims to imbue weakness and suffering with a new and positive significance.[749] In this regard, the Corinthians' maturation in faith stands as Paul's foremost priority.[750] Paul's leadership is established by self-sacrifice, signifying his lesser concern for personal gain and honour and a greater dedication to advancing the group's interests. On the one hand, Paul's self-sacrificial example functions to pave the way for the Corinthians to mend their fractured relationship with him. This form of leadership, particularly selflessness, markedly fosters trust in the leader's group-centered orientation.[751]

As suggested by Platow et al. "There is no leadership if no one follows."[752] Paul's expression is elucidated by SIA's driving idea that effective leadership is contingent on followership, underscoring the need for leaders to continually shape and cultivate ingroup identity through persuasive argumentation to gain followers. Building upon this notion, Paul is not concerned about someone challenging him as "seeming to have failed" (2 Cor.13:7) according to conventional leadership standards. Paul is still placing the collective interests of the Corinthians over his interests to gain trust from the Corinthians.

In short, Paul's prayer is grounded in the Corinthians' growth in the faith, expressing confidence that they will successfully pass the test in Christ. Paul continually indicates his commitment to what social identity theorists call identity advancement and, in so doing, makes light of his perceived weakness. His joy is solely derived from the progression of the Corinthians towards spiritual perfection. Paul's rhetorical strategy ambitiously advances the collective interests, prioritizing spiritual growth to aid them in passing the examination.

6. Examining the Distinctiveness of Paul's Leadership through Comparisons
6.1. A Brief Review: Leader serves for Identity Advancement

The above section has comprehensively examined Paul's promotion of the group's interest. When a leader prioritizes the collective interest over personal gain, it can foster

---

[748] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 366.
[749] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 366.
[750] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 366.
[751] Knippenberg, and Knippenberg, "Leader Self-sacrifice and Leadership Effectiveness: The Moderating Role of Leader Prototypicality," 33.
[752] Michael J. Platow et al. "There is No Leadership if No-one Follows: Why Leadership is Necessarily a Group Process," *International Coaching Psychology Review*, Vol.10.1 (2015): 23-25.

social attraction and garner followership. [753] Although individuals "have generally associated group interests with an increase in material resources for the group," these interests can also be understood as "spiritual values", such as love and care towards the group members.[754]

6.2. The Unique Features of Paul's Leadership

In comparison, Paul, Hillel, and the Maskil are agents of their respective religious traditions but exhibit different leadership approaches in promoting collective ingroup interests. By examining Hillel's perspective, it becomes clear that he places great emphasis on the sharing of love and preaching the Torah with all of humanity as central to the identity of "Disciples of Aaron," namely, the ingroup community in P. Aboth 1:12. According to Hillel, a proper understanding of the commandment to "love all humankind" involves demonstrating God's kindness to all creatures, particularly expanding to the gentiles.[755]

Rabbi Nathan's interpretation of Hillel's saying highlights a core value in Hillel's perspective: embracing love for all of humanity and refraining from hatred (ARN 12). According to this interpretation, Hillel believed that all people are creations of God, each bearing the divine image. Hillel's approach to championing collective interests involved imparting the Torah's teachings to all humankind, aiming to facilitate understanding God's will. For Hillel, collective interests did not include material assistance or financial support. Instead, he viewed the common interest as adhering to and practicing the Torah. His advocacy was focused on helping his ingroup members spread love and inspire others to pursue passion for all humankind.

Within the Qumran communities, love is reserved exclusively for the enrolled Qumran members who willingly adhere to the Torah and community rules (1QS I.10; 1QS IX.21; CD IV.7-10). The Maskil is also concerned with shaping the identity of the Qumranites. This identity was created by the Maskil's strict interpretation of the Torah. These leaders instructed their ingroup to obey their leadership and strictly adhere to organizational rules. They perceive themselves as the representative of "sons of light," whereas outgroup members are "sons of darkness." The identity of the Maskil derived from divine endorsement reinforces and empowers his leadership to influence the Qumranites.

The Maskil is frequently portrayed as a strict and disciplined overseer, embodying qualities of compassion and care, assuming roles akin to a father and shepherd. For example, the Maskil is entrusted with the responsibility of reinforcing ingroup boundaries by guiding its members in following the accurate interpretation of the Torah (1QS III.13-15), thus helping them walk in the light. This facet of the leader's character

---

[753] Michael A. Hogg, and Elizabeth A. Hardie, "A Social Attraction, A Personal Attraction, and Self-Categorization: A Field Study," *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* (2015): 179.
[754] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 117-118.
[755] Buxbaum, *The Life and Teachings of Hillel*, 96-97.

is evident in CD XIII.8-10, where the "overseer" is tasked with nurturing the community with love and a steadfast commitment to truth. In short, the above texts show that Qumran leadership focuses on maintaining the ingroup boundaries, particularly by strictly obeying and adhering to their Torah's interpretation—the Maskil endeavours to advocate such identity content to promote their group's collective interest.

In comparison, Paul's understanding of God's mission (2 Cor.10:15; 2:12-13), where Paul is resolute in his commitment to preach the gospel in various locations. In Paul's mind, the gospel is the message of Jesus Christ's salvation for all humankind, encompassing Judeans and non-Judeans. In our analysis of 2 Cor.10-13, Paul's mission is to "edify" (οἰκοδομή) the Corinthians (2 Cor.10:8; 12:19; 13:10). To Paul, ingroup champions must advance the group's interests, even at personal cost (2 Cor.11:7-11; 11:23-33) demonstrates his love (ἀγαπάω; 2 Cor.11:11) for the Corinthians, despite their misunderstandings. Therefore, Paul's divine commission serves for constructive purposes rather than destruction (2 Cor.10:4-8). His divine knowledge (γνῶσις; 2 Cor.10:5; 11:6) provides guidance and instruction to the Corinthians in matters of faith (2 Cor.10:5; 11:6). On this point, Paul's actions starkly contrast with those of the leaders of Greco-Roman associations. Paul views aiding the Corinthians' growth in faith as his exclusive objective, distancing himself from the patronage system by refraining from contributing to or receiving tangible benefits from the community. For Paul, providing financial assistance serves two purposes: showing the Corinthians' obedience to the gospel (2 Cor.9:13) and promoting collective interests by fostering gratitude towards God among recipients (2 Cor.9:12).

Concerning material support to ingroup members, Robert E. Moses rightly notes that "In-group assistance in times of difficulty creates a sense of responsibility among members and sustains a shared sense of community spirit. In this regard, Greco-Roman associations and early Christ groups were no different. Both groups aided and supported members during times of difficulty."[756] In 2 Corinthians 9, Paul expects the Corinthians to display their love towards other saints by completing their promise (2 Cor.8-9).[757] Those saints living in Jerusalem represent the ingroup members (2 Cor.9:1). Paul urges his audience to act because their deeds not only help those in need but also "prompt people to turn to God in thanksgiving" (2 Cor.9:12).[758] Paul employs the example of the Macedonian communities to urge the Corinthians towards generosity and communal support (2 Cor.8:1; 8-15), where emphasizing the importance of fulfilling their commitments to aid those in need (2 Cor.8:11; 9:9). For Paul, supporting the Jerusalem Christ-following communities is an identity marker to demonstrate their

---

[756] Robert E. Moses, "Aid among Greco-Roman Associations and Christ Groups," in *Greco-Roman Associations, Deities, and Early Christianity*, ed. Bruce W. Longenecker (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2022), 172.
[757] Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 553.
[758] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 458.

faithfulness to God (2 Cor.9:7) and obedience to Christ (2 Cor.9:13). Unlike the leaders of Greco-Roman associations, Paul does not seek to use this social practice to gain public honour. Instead, the apostle hopes the Corinthians to achieve spiritual maturity.

Promoting collective group interests is also evident in the Greco-Roman associations. The association's leader is usually the patron, signifying their affiliation with the wealthy upper class. This social location enables them to use material resources to support the community. These resources encompass tangible assistance to ingroup members, such as maintaining monthly assemblies, rituals, and ceremonies. The associations' leaders primarily focus on contributing their resources for the community's benefit to promote the collective interest of the group and its members. Their objective is to earn honour and respect from the members for their assistance.[759] This reciprocal relationship requires the members to give honour and public recognition after receiving the association's leader's support.

Unlike the above leadership models, Hillel's perception is close to Paul's mission (2 Cor.10:15-17), emphasizes extending love to all humankind, encouraging his followers to care for everyone, regardless of their background - whether Judeans or gentiles, male or female (ARN 12; Vayikra Rabban 34:3-4). [760] This inclusive approach underscores Hillel's commitment to fostering unity and compassion across societal boundaries, reflecting a broader communal responsibility and generosity in his beliefs.

Moreover, In 2 Corinthians 11, Paul contends that his endurance of suffering (2 Cor.11:23-330) exemplifies his love (ἀγαπάω; 2 Cor.11:11) for his ingroup members. This sacrificial love is crucial in rebuilding the trust between Paul and the Corinthians. This aspect is notably absent in the leadership models of Hillel, the Maskil, and leaders of Greco-Roman associations, who rely on mutual trust grounded in absolute power and authority.

The Maskil's divine endorsement (1QS I.1) and spiritual oversight (1QS V.9-10; CD XIII.7-12) ensured adherence to communal norms by providing religious legitimacy and moral authority, which guide the community's values and behaviours. This spiritual leadership reinforces a shared sense of identity and purpose among the group members, promoting unity and conformity to the established traditions and practices. Hillel's authority was not merely based on scholarly knowledge but was perceived as divinely endorsed due to his profound wisdom and piety. Hillel's divine authority and spiritual guidance were instrumental in fostering a strong sense of

---

[759] In *AM* 66:228 no. 4, Sarapion "took care of the *orgeōnes* in a generous and honorable fashion throughout the entire year, and performed services for the gods at his own expense". In addition, as mentioned in *IG* II² 1329, Chaireas as an honour-based leader used gold and silver objects to decorate the sanctuaries. The above evidence indicates how wealthy leaders can supply funds to benefit the associations and gain honour from the group members.

[760] *Derekh Eretz* VI records that one day when Hillel the Elder and his wife saw some poor people who appeared in front of their house. They gave them bread and their charitable action became an exemplary model to urge Hillel's followers to emulate.

community and adherence to religious norms (Tosefta Sotah 13:4; Sukkah 20a:11). In contrast, Greco-Roman patrons secure loyalty and gratitude through their material contributions, such as financial support, sponsorship of public events, and provision of resources (*IG* II²1329; *IG* II²1325). These tangible benefits create a sense of indebtedness and reciprocity among the beneficiaries, strengthening their allegiance to the patrons.

Although Paul was a founder of the Corinthian community, the relationship between himself and the Corinthians changed sharply after the arrival of the interloper. Social psychologists note, "Trust in the leader is a key mechanism that might explain the associations between identity leadership and inspiration." [761] To motivate the Corinthians to change, Paul is tasked with restoring their damaged relationship by demonstrating sacrificial love. Steffen and his colleagues assert that followers' trust in non-prototypical leaders-those who do not fit the typical group image-depends on these leaders actively engaging in behaviours that demonstrate their commitment to the group's interests. Trust is not automatically granted to non-prototypical leaders but must be earned through actions.[762]

Uncommonly for ancient social groups, Paul strategically maneuvers to rebuild trust with the Corinthians by avoiding "burdening" (οὐ κατενάρκησα; 2 Cor. 11:9) them, contrasting sharply with his opponents and highlighting his sacrificial love. This strategy effectively guides the Corinthians toward faithfully following Christ. Paul emphasizes that his weakness and suffering ultimately benefit the Corinthians, as he states in 2 Corinthians 13:9, "We are glad whenever we are weak, but you are strong, and our prayer is for your perfection." Paul intends to advance the collective welfare of ingroup members.

Another evidence is in Paul's prayer, showing his concern lies in the Corinthians' acquisition of knowledge regarding "right" and "wrong." He desires to witness their perfection in faith. Unlike leaders in Greco-Roman associations who might focus on earning personal reputation and honour by doing for the group, Paul emphasizes his commitment to fostering leadership that prioritizes the faithfulness and well-being of his followers. By focusing on their spiritual growth rather than his gain, Paul aims to enhance group unity and effectively address conflicts between himself and the Corinthians.

We have now concluded our examination of Identity Advancement in 2 Corinthians 10-13. Three significant themes-Paul's Mission, Financial Policy, Hardships, and Prayer- are addressed in this chapter. As suggested by SIA researchers,

---

[761] Sean G. Figgins, "Promote "We" to Inspire me: Examining the Roles of Group Identification and Trust in the Association Between Identity Leadership and Follower Inspiration," *International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology* (2024): 15.
[762] Steffens et al. "Advancing the Social Identity Theory of Leadership: A Meta-analytic Review of Leader Group Prototypicality," 57; Knippenberg, and Dwertmann, "Interacting Elements of Leadership: Key to Integration but Looking for Integrative Theory," 1707.

a leader must advance the group's interests by "doing something for us."[763] Therefore, championing the ingroup collective interests is central to effective leadership. Paul's discourse highlights that his actions promote his group's interest through his sacrificial love and suffering. To Paul, following the model of Christ's sacrifice and suffering, the identity descriptors prove Christ's servant's authenticity (2 Cor.11:23-33). His action can be viewed as a strategic effort to mend the damaged relationship with the Corinthians, aiming to win back their trust by prioritizing and promoting their collective interests. As the SIA to leadership proposed, "When followers regard leaders as championing the interests of the social group they are leading, they regard these leaders to be true and authentic."[764]

---

[763] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 111.
[764] Steffens et al. "True to What We Stand For: Championing Collective Interests as a Path to Authentic Leadership," 738.

Chapter Nine: Paul's Identity Entrepreneurship

As Plutarch argued, "Leadership of a people is leadership of those who are persuaded by speech."[765] This chapter delves into the profound role of Paul as an identity entrepreneur, a concept coined by Reicher and Hopkins.[766] This paradigm illuminates the proactive role of leaders in shaping the ingroup identity, encompassing its core values, beliefs, and behaviour. Through strategic deployment of rhetoric and mobilization tactics, adept leaders deliberately shape and define the identity of ingroup members. This conceptualization provides a unique lens through which to understand Paul's profound influence on the Corinthians' perceptions of their collective identity. The SIA to leadership offers a valuable perspective for analyzing and understanding Paul's leadership, particularly in how he reconstructs the meanings associated with making an honour claim.

1. A Brief Introduction to a Leader as Identity Entrepreneur

The concept of "identity entrepreneur" pertains to a leader actively using identity rhetoric to create and promote a particular version of the group identity and its associated category content.[767] In this role, the entrepreneur informs ingroup members about their collective identity, shared core values, visions and their ingroup representatives.[768] The ability to mobilize the group is contingent upon recognizing representatives and those with the authority and legitimated power to define the identity's content. Thus, effective leadership is closely tied to leaders' prototypicality and capability to determine the group identity's content and boundaries.[769]

The social context is pivotal in shaping the group's prototypicality and effective leadership, particularly determining who holds more influence. According to Haslam et al. effective leadership is influenced by two dimensions: the first, termed the reactive aspect, posits that social context influences leadership, and the second, the proactive aspect, asserts that leaders actively shape the social context and group prototype to enhance their prototypicality. This insight underscores identity formation is a continuous and dynamic process wherein the social context significantly shapes group identity and leadership effectiveness.

In the following section, our attention is directed towards examining Paul's intricate strategy to shape the collective ingroup identity, particularly about the creation of superordinate identity- "belonging to Christ" (2 Cor.10:7). Paul strategically employs interlopers as a means of drawing comparisons, such as in matters of claiming honour, aiming to accentuate the distinctiveness of himself and his group. As Hogg argued,

---

[765] Plutarch, *Moralia*. 802. E.
[766] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 127.
[767] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 129-130.
[768] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 129.
[769] Steffens et al. "Leader Performance and Prototypicality: Their Inter-relationship and Impact on Leader's Identity Entrepreneurship," 606-607; Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 36.

"They [Leaders] can define what the group stands for and what the social identity of its members is by consolidating an existing prototype, modifying it, or dramatically reconstructing it."[770] As discussed in Chapter Two, Paul's strategic use of interlopers adds a layer of complexity to his leadership tactics, highlighting his astuteness and foresight in shaping the Corinthians' collective identity.[771]

2. Crafting a Superordinate Ingroup Identity of "Belonging to Christ"

2.1. Reconsidering the Intrusion of Paul's Rivals with Identity Uncertainty

According to Tajfel, social groups and individuals actively characterize their identity through inter-group comparison, often highlighting distinctions and boundaries between "in-group" and "out-groups."[772] In his project of identity formation, Paul discursively employs the interlopers as a means of comparison to highlight and contrast his prototypicality in terms of leadership and authentic Christ-follower.

The conflict between Paul and the Corinthians is central to Paul's ministry. The intrusion of the interlopers not only impacts the relationship between Paul and the Corinthians[773] but also draws them into asserting honour claims (καυχάομαι; 2 Cor.10:15).[774] In an attempt to examine the core values of the interlopers, scholars asserted that these rivals disrespected Paul due to his perceived physical weakness, deficiency in speech skills, and refusal to accept financial support.[775] Scholars noted that bodily appearance and oratorical skills held significance for leadership in the Greco-Roman world.[776] Paul designates the interlopers as an outgroup, denouncing them (τις; 2 Cor.10:7) as "false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ" (ψευδαπόστολοι, ἐργάται δόλιοι, μετασχηματιζόμενοι εἰς ἀποστόλους Χριστοῦ; 2 Cor.11:13). Martin observed that Paul employed various rhetorical devices to distinguish himself from these rivals.[777] This notion is supported by Thrall, claiming that the apostle exhibited a "powerful, persuasive speech" to

---

[770] Hogg et al. "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 267.

[771] Hogg et al. "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 267-268.

[772] Tajfel, "Social Categorization, Social Identity and Social Comparison," 62.

[773] Chapter 2 presents a comprehensive examination of scholars' perspectives on Paul's rivals, specifically in the section titled "Paul's Identity Advancement" (section 2.1). See Lambrecht, Second Corinthians, 158-159; Harris, The Second Epistle to the Corinthians, 664; and Garland, *2 Corinthians*, 417.

[774] A comprehensive survey concerning "boasting" in the Greco-Roman World, see Kate C. Donahoe, "From Self-Praise to Self-Boasting: Paul's Unmasking of the Conflicting Rhetorico-Linguistic Phenomena in 1 Corinthians," (PhD Diss., University of St. Andrews, 2008), Chapter One.

[775] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 464; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 661-662; Savage, *Power through Weakness*, 99; Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 298-301.

[776] Kyung Min Kim, "Paul's Defense: Masculinity and Authority in 2 Corinthians 10–13," *JSNT* Vol. 44.1 (2021): 149–169; C. Andrew Ballard, "Tongue-tied and Taunted: Paul, Poor Rhetoric and Paltry Leadership in 2 Corinthians 5.13," *JSNT* 37.1 (2014): 66-67; S. J. Joubert, "'Walking the Talk':Paul's authority in motion in 2 Corinthians 10–13," *die Skriflig* 49.2 (2015):1-7; Garland, *Second Corinthians*, 446-449; Keener, *1-2 Corinthians*, 218-219.

[777] Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 300.

encourage the Corinthians to distance themselves from the interlopers.[778]

These perceptions further exacerbated the conflict between Paul and the Corinthians. Given the circumstances that had undermined Paul's leadership and created tension, Paul strategically used this strained relationship to reshape the identity and increase the prominence of authentic Christ-followers. The values promoted by Paul's competitors led to "identity uncertainty" among the Corinthians, causing them to question both the nature of leadership and their understanding of following Christ.

Hogg's concept of "Reduction of identity uncertainty" generally refers to the idea of "social identity ambiguity." When individuals experience self-uncertainty about their identity and group membership, they are motivated to reduce this uncertainty and restore a sense of stability. This is achieved through strong identification with a clearly defined group, which aids in establishing a robust understanding of identity. A well-defined group prototype furnishes a social identity that offers self-definition. When individuals feel uncertain or ambiguous about their subjective identity, they are more inclined to depend on their group membership for insights into social reality, alleviating their uncertainty.[779]

In 2 Corinthians 10-13, Paul's opponents' interference confuses the Corinthians' social identity and creates uncertainty. The Corinthians are confused about who the authentic apostolic leader is due to an outgroup that has demonstrated other kinds of behaviour and claims, for example, claiming their mission achievement (2 Cor.10:12 and 10:15), spreading another version of the gospel (2 Cor.11:4), delivering the public speech skillfully (2 Cor.11:6); and accepting financial support (2 Cor.12:16). This divergence in behaviour and claims can indeed lead to identity uncertainty among the Corinthians. Consequently, Paul aims to redefine the Corinthians' identity as true Christ-followers. To achieve this, Paul must establish a clear group identity that effectively resolves individual uncertainties. This involves creating a well-defined group prototype as a social identity, providing members with a strong sense of self-definition.[780]

Leaders significantly influence individuals' self-concepts through both rhetoric and actions.[781] This idea is supported by Joubert, who asserts that Paul shapes the Corinthians' identity as Christ-followers through his words and actions.[782]

[778] Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 634.

[779] Hogg, "A Social Identity Theory of Leadership," 187-188; Recent discussion, see Jiin Jung, Michael A. Hogg, and Hoon-Seok Choi, "Recategorization and Ingroup Projection: Two Processes of Identity Uncertainty Reduction," *Journal of Theoretical Social Psychology* 3.2 (2019): 97-114; Lavinia Cicero et al. "Leadership and Uncertainty: How Role Ambiguity Affects the Relationship between Leader Group Prototypicality and Leadership Effectiveness," *British Journal of Management*, Vol. 21 (2010): 412-413.

[780] Hogg, "A Social Identity Theory of Leadership," 187-188; Recent discussion, see Jiin Jung, Michael A. Hogg, and Hoon-Seok Choi, "Recategorization and Ingroup Projection: Two Processes of Identity Uncertainty Reduction," *Journal of Theoretical Social Psychology* 3.2 (2019): 97-114.

[781] Hogg et al. "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 268.

[782] Joubert, "'Walking the talk': Paul's authority in motion in 2 Corinthians 10-13," 1-7.

Exemplifying the values and behaviour of a true apostolic leader as perseverance through hardships, commitment to the gospel, and selfless service provides a model for the Corinthians to emulate. His actions demonstrate the traits of an authentic follower of Christ, helping the Corinthians solidify their understanding of their identity within the Christian faith. Through his teachings and lived example, Paul effectively redefines and strengthens their collective identity as genuine followers of Christ.

2.2. The Creation of a Superordinate Identity: "Belonging to Christ"

Paul, acting as an identity entrepreneur, seeks to redefine and shape the ingroup identity of the Corinthians through identity rhetoric.[783] Prototypical leaders play a crucial role in communicating the group norms and beliefs. "They shape perceptions of the group's attributes and their embodiment of group prototypical attributes, and they can enhance their leadership position and transform the group to mobilize its members."[784]

In 2 Corinthians 10-13, Paul asserts that his authority (ἐξουσία; 2 Cor.10:8) serves as "edification," aiming to construct the Corinthians' identity in following Christ, such as 2 Cor.10:5; 11:4; 12:19-21. Paul's strategy creates a superordinate identity, for example, "obedience to Christ" and "in the faith", to align the Corinthians with him. This helps the Corinthians distinguish themselves from the interlopers and influences them to live out their identity accordingly (2 Cor.12:20-21; 13:7-9). Wenzel et al. note that individuals use a superordinate category as a meaningful context for comparing subgroups. Once they see it as relevant to their identity, they exhibit ingroup favouritism and outgroup devaluation, a dynamic important in understanding group behaviour, social identity, and intergroup relations.[785] Paul's overarching aim is to captivate the Corinthians' commitment to obey Christ (2 Cor.10:5), strategically shaping their shared or superordinate identity through Christ's example. Paul seeks to mobilize and transform the Corinthians into faithful Christ-followers (2 Cor.13:9).

2.2.1. Paul's Rhetorical Strategy of Identity Formation

In his efforts to form a unified identity among the Corinthians, Paul aims to establish a superordinate identity centred around "belonging to Christ." He invites the Corinthians to reflect upon their identity about this concept and urges them to consider (λογίζομαι, this word was introduced in 2 Cor.10:2) what it means to belong to Christ (2 Cor.10:7; Χριστοῦ εἶναι). In Paul's perspective, "belonging to Christ" signifies the ethical renewal of the Christ-followers after their confession, such as through baptism and observing the Lord's Supper. This transformation encompasses the whole person, involving Christ's creation of a new body and mind. Campbell highlights that "belonging to Christ" is a distinct collective and shared identity descriptor.[786] Based on

---

[783] Haslam, *Psychology in Organizations: The Social Identity Approach*, 47.
[784] Haslam et al. "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 277.
[785] Wenzel et al. "Superordinate Identities and Intergroup Conflict: The Ingroup Projection Model," 339.
[786] Campbell, *Paul and the Creation of Christians Identity*, 164.

the review in Chapter Two, enormous scholarly proposals fall short of fully exploring how Paul strategically uses this phrase to shape the identity of an obedient Christ-follower. This is where SIA's framework comes in, offering a valuable perspective for comprehending Paul's strategy and identity formation.

Firstly, Paul employs the process of identity recategorization to cultivate a sense of "we-ness," establishing "belonging to Christ" as a shared superordinate identity between himself and the Corinthians. Paul intends to shift the Corinthians' focus from divided subgroups and individual achievements to a collective identity grounded in "obedience to Christ." This collective concept helps to unify them and strengthen their bonds as members of the Christ-following communities. By emphasizing an identity of belonging to Christ, Paul aims to create a sense of "we-ness" between himself and the Corinthians, transcending individual differences and achievements to a shared common goal: obedience to Christ's followers. The evidence can be seen in 2 Corinthians 10:5, where Paul states that demolishing arguments and every pretension set itself up against the knowledge of God, taking every thought captive to make it obedient to Christ.

Guthrie argued, "Consequently, with the true gospel, Paul binds them up wrong thinking, bringing it into submission to Christ."[787] At this point, the social identity perspective of leadership might seem inadequate in explaining Paul's strategy in relation to identity formation. As the SIA to leadership suggests, leadership is more effective when the leader is seen as part of the ingroup rather than an external authority imposing rules. Leaders perceived as sharing and embodying the group's identity are generally more influential.[788] However, Paul's approach includes emphasizing his divine authority (2 Cor.10:8; 13:10) and aligning himself with the Corinthians' identity in Christ (2 Cor.10:15; 11:7-11; 11:28-30). By urging the Corinthians to submit to Christ (2 Cor.10:5), Paul aims to realign, or "edify" (2 Cor.10:8; 12:19; 13:10), their understanding and practices with the core values of their shared identity in Christ (2 Cor.11:4). This dual leadership approach allows Paul to be seen not only as an authority figure but also as a fellow member of the ingroup who guides and inspires.

Paul's insistence on submission to Christ can be viewed as reinforcing the superordinate identity of "belonging to Christ" (2 Cor.10:5), which both he and the Corinthians share. By correcting their misunderstandings and cultivating the true meaning of following Christ, Paul demonstrates his leadership role while also fostering a collective sense of purpose and unity within the community (2 Cor.13:8-9). Thus, in 2 Corinthians 11:4, Paul warns against accepting a different Jesus, spirit, or gospel, urging the Corinthians to remain faithful to the unified message of Christ. These instances illustrate Paul's use of identity categorization to foster a collective sense of belonging to Christ, countering the divisive influence of false apostles and reinforcing

---

[787] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 475.
[788] Turner, "Explaining the Nature of Power: A Three-Process Theory," 19.

a shared identity rooted in following Christ.

Secondly, Paul employs a superordinate identity: "belonging to Christ", to resolve the conflicts between himself and the Corinthians. Researchers suggested that leadership can mitigate subgroup conflict by underscoring a common superordinate group identity. Hogg refers to this as a "self-inclusive identity," which helps redefine the boundaries within the ingroup and promote shared values.[789] If Paul successfully establishes a positive, inclusive collective identity for the Corinthians, it could help resolve their conflicts (2 Cor. 10:7). "Belonging to Christ", as promoted by Paul, is intended to reduce conflicts and foster a sense of unity within the community. Paul's assertion of his own distinctive identity related to his apostleship and servanthood underscores his authority while still affirming the shared identity of all believers in Christ. [790] Paul's strategy aligns with the notion of the SIA to leadership, indicating that establishing a collective identity can generate ingroup favouritism and belonging. By fostering a strong sense of loyalty, Paul might mitigate divisions and encourage unity within the Corinthians.

Paul's opponents likely claim to belong to Christ (2 Cor.10:7); Paul strategically adopts their terminology to challenge their identity and encourage the Corinthians to reevaluate its meanings.[791] If these are the case, Paul's strategy aligns with the concept of "approval-seeking outgroup violation," as proposed by social psychologists, posits that "The position of a leader in power can be strengthened by backing up the rhetoric of 'them and us' with actual hostility towards an outgroup."[792] In 2 Corinthians 10-13, Paul addresses conflicts with those questioning his authority (2 Cor.10:2; 10:11; 11:3-4; 11:12-15; 12:11), which can be seen as an outgroup. Paul directly confronts these interlopers, stereotyping them as false apostles who masquerade as servants of righteousness. As Guthrie pointed out, "Paul seems to be rebuking the Corinthians for buying in a surface appraisal of himself and his ministry…"[793] Paul contrasts their superficial claims of authority with his own experiences of divine commissioning, suffering, and weakness, which he argues are the authentic marks of an apostle (2 Cor. 10:8; 11:23-30; 13:10).

Paul's approach involves reasserting his authority and reestablishing his credibility among the Corinthians by highlighting the differences between his genuine, Christ-centered leadership and the deceptive practices of his opponents. By framing the conflict in terms of a clear distinction between ingroup and outgroup, Paul aims to

---

[789] Michael A. Hogg, "Walls between Groups: Self-Uncertainty, Social Identity, and Intergroup Leadership," *Journal of Social Issues* (2023): 11-12; Kershaw et al. "Divided Groups Need Leadership: A Study of the Effectiveness of Collective Identity, Dual Identity, and Intergroup Relational Identity Rhetoric," 54.

[790] Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 690-691.

[791] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 478-479; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 690-691.

[792] Haslam, *Psychology in Organizations: The Social Identity Approach*, 47-48.

[793] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 477.

solidify the collective identity of the Corinthians as faithful followers of Christ, aligned with his authentic apostolic mission. This tactic seeks to undermine the influence of the false apostles and galvanize the Corinthians around a unified identity. By encouraging the Corinthians to see themselves as part of a distinct and superior ingroup, Paul reinforces their commitment to his leadership and values, thereby resolving internal conflicts and strengthening the community's cohesion and faithfulness.

In other words, Paul's assertion of "belong to Christ" seeks to reinforce a collective identity that distinguishes the Corinthians from their adversaries. This creates a clear boundary between "us" (ingroup members) and "them" (outgroup members), as evident in 2 Corinthians 11:12-15. While Paul does not promote outright hostility, he does assert strong opposition to those undermining his authority and the community's unity. His firm stance against false apostles and divisive influences can be seen as a necessary response to protect the collective identity of the Corinthians.

Paul's strategy additionally aligns with Jung et al.'s notion: "sub-group identity uncertainty can be compensated for by perceiving one's superordinate identity as certain and recategorizing oneself at the superordinate level."[794] In the conflict, Paul strategically uses the superordinate identity of "belonging to Christ" to formulate the Corinthians' identity. This emphasizes that they do not belong to Paul or the interlopers; instead, they share the same identity with Paul, namely "belonging to Christ."

To sum up, establishing "belonging to Christ" can be considered a rhetorical strategy that seeks to create an intergroup relational identity, strategically defining both the subgroup and the superordinate group regarding the mutually collaborative relationship between distinct subgroups. By encouraging the Corinthians to contemplate the shared identity of "belonging to Christ," Paul seeks to bridge potential divides and unite the Corinthians under such a common superordinate identity, thereby resolving the conflicts and further promoting cohesion in terms of "we-ness" within the group. This analysis of Paul's rhetorical strategies provides a scholarly understanding of his techniques and offers insights into the social dynamics of the early Christian community.

2.3. Identity Descriptors of "Belonging to Christ"

2.3.1. Making Honour Claims in the Lord (2 Cor.10:11-18)

Central to Paul's ministry, claiming honour in the Lord is one of the identity features of his leadership. The rhetorical theme in 2 Corinthians 10:11-18 centers on Paul's effort to define and reconstruct the Corinthians' identity of "belonging to Christ", particularly in contrast to assertions of self-honour claims. Scholars concurred that Paul structured his discourse with the aim of contrasting his conduct, specifically his preaching in the mission field, with that of his rivals.[795] Welborn and Esler asserted that the act of

---

[794] Jung et al. "Recategorization and Ingroup Projection: Two Processes of Identity Uncertainty Reduction," 1-2.

[795] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 490; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 709; Thrall, *II Corinthians*,

making honour claims (καυχησόμεθα; 2 Cor.10:13) in connection with the mission field is a feature attributed to the interlopers.

Harris aligned with this notion, suggesting that Paul's refusal to make an honour claim "beyond particular or appropriate limits" (εἰς τὰ ἄμετρα; 2 Cor.10:13) was indicative of his refusal to encroach on another missionary's territory or boast about the work of others.[796] Paul places God's assignment over human ones, emphasizing God's role in defining the scope and boundaries of his ministry.[797] Barrett rightly noted, "Self-commendation may produce an impressive personality, but this is not synonymous with [Paul's] apostleship."[798] The apostle, in turn, considers making that claim "unwise" (οὐ συνιᾶσιν), especially in praising their achievements and asserting their apostleship.[799] However, previous scholarly proposals have not thoroughly investigated how Paul's approach to the mission field results in a redefinition of concepts associated with claims of honour.

In 2 Corinthians 10:11, Paul continues to respond to the accusation of his inconsistency, stating, "Such people should realize that what we are in our letters when we are absent, we will be in our actions when we are present." This statement highlights Paul's plea for the Corinthians to "reconsider" (λογιζέσθω) his apostolic leadership, particularly concerning their perceptions of his apparent weakness and boldness during his next visit (2 Cor.13:1-4). Paul rejects comparing himself to an unspecific "someone," who suspects he employs "worldly standards" (κατὰ σάρκα; 2 Cor.10:2) to evaluate Paul's leadership. Paul challenges those Corinthians who see "the things according to the fact"[800] or "the fact in front of your face" (κατὰ πρόσωπον; 2 Cor.10:7).[801]

In this context, Paul aims to establish a sense of collective identity by highlighting the overarching descriptor of those who identify themselves as "belonging to Christ." This concept is not just a rhetorical tool for Paul but a central theme in his discourse, highlighting his belief in the unifying power of faith. Paul's insistence on "belonging to Christ" as a fundamental identity marker is designed to foster a strong, cohesive community grounded in shared faith and values. This collective identity is not just about membership but about embodying the principles and teachings of Christ. By redirecting the Corinthians' attention to their common bond in Christ, Paul seeks to diminish the influence of factionalism and restore harmony.

644; Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 319; Furnish, *ii Corinthians* 471.

[796] Harris, T*he Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 709

[797] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 492; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 710; Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 647; Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 320; Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 302.

[798] Barrett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 269.

[799] L. L. Welborn, "Paul's Caricature of his Chief Rival as a Pompous Parasite in 2 Corinthians 11.20," *JSNT* 32.1 (2009): 52; Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 302. Kowalski and Forbes have thoroughly examined the social practice of self-praise and comparison in the Greco-Roman context. See Kowalski, *Transforming Boasting of Self into Boasting in the Lord*. Forbes, "Comparison, Self-Praise and Irony: Paul's Boasting and the Conventions of Hellenistic Rhetoric," 1-30.

[800] Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 687.

[801] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 294.

In Paul's perception, boasting (καυχησόμεθα) beyond appropriate limits is deemed unacceptable. It is because the missionary work's assignment and evaluation of success are determined by God, not by other humans (2 Cor.10:13). Paul intentionally distinguishes himself (us) from the interlopers (them) by highlighting the importance of obedience to God (2 Cor.10:13) rather than compliance with others' recommendations (2 Cor.10:12; 10:15). Central to this distinction is Paul's emphasis on his divine commissioning (2 Cor.10:13), which he sees as a critical aspect of his "belonging to Christ". This underscores that he is less concerned with human commendations and honour claims (2 Cor.10:12). In Paul's view, the identification of "belonging to Christ" is exemplified through his adherence to God's assignment.

By comparing himself with the interlopers, Paul endeavours to redefine the concept of "self-honour claims" in the context of mission work (2 Cor.10:12-13). Paul's obedience is evident in his decision not to claim credit for the work of others (2 Cor. 10:15), a choice that underscores his commitment to God's knowledge. Furthermore, Paul demonstrates his obedience by asserting that he is fully equipped with God's knowledge (2 Cor.11:6). This knowledge points to a proper understanding of the gospel and the right teaching of Christ.[802] It stands out as a critical identity descriptor for an authentic Christ-follower. Paul underscores that the goal of his mission is to foster the Corinthians' growth in faith rather than making claims about the accomplishments of others (2 Cor.10:15-16). This is explicitly reiterated in 2 Corinthians 10:16, where Paul firmly rejects boasting or work done by others. This repetition serves to delineate an identity boundary between Paul's leadership and that of the interlopers. It addresses explicitly specific missionaries who enter areas already reached by other apostles (οὐκ ἐν ἀλλοτρίῳ κανόνι εἰς τὰ ἕτοιμα καυχήσασθαι). Paul refuses to partake in such practice (2 Cor.10:15).

Paul shapes the social identity of Christ-followers by accentuating the differences and distinctions between those within and outside the group. His rhetoric serves two transformative purposes: firstly, Paul aims to expose the erroneous values and beliefs probably held by the Corinthians. For example, as scholars observed, Paul proclaims what he has accomplished for the Lord by obeying his allotted task, and secondly, as a highly prototypical leader, he demonstrates a solid social identity to the Corinthians through his actions and exemplary behaviour. Paul aims to inspire the Corinthians to emulate his example and undergo transformative change. This aspect aligns with the concept of leader prototypicality.

It is evident that Paul resolutely rejects the pursuit of honour claims (2 Cor.10:18). He asserts that if anyone intends to boast, they should do so in the Lord. Scholars agreed that this closing section (2 Cor.10:17-18) directly references the Septuagint (LXX) of

---

[802] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 518.

Jeremiah 9:24 and 1 Corinthians 1:31.[803] Paul's strategy involves using scriptural justification to validate his apostleship and mission works.[804] Guthrie plausibly argued that Paul's citation of this scripture is intended to differentiate himself from his opponents, particularly emphasizing their lack of understanding of God's knowledge.[805]

According to Jan E. Stets and Peter J. Burke, leadership is determined and constructed across three levels: macro-level, meso-level, and micro-level. At the micro-level, they suggest that leaders feel authentic when their identities align with verification.[806] They strive to maintain a situation consistent with their identity standards, taking actions to modify the problem so that perceptions of the self are consistent with the standard despite situational disturbances caused by others.[807] Paul's rhetoric explicitly aligns with the micro-level leadership dynamic. Facing significant opposition and questioning his authority by false apostles, Paul consistently reasserts his identity as an authentic apostle of Christ, a role verified by divine endorsement and scriptural validation. By doing so, Paul defends his position and reinforces his legitimacy to his followers, aiming to align their perceptions with his identity standards.

Paul frequently references his direct commissioning by Christ, a cornerstone of his apostolic identity. In 2 Corinthians 1:1, he says his apostleship is "by the will of God," immediately framing his authority as divinely sanctioned. This is not merely a claim but a fundamental aspect of his identity that he needs his followers to recognize and accept. By continually referring to his divine calling, Paul seeks to align the community's perception with his self-identity as a legitimate apostle (2 Cor.10:8; 13:10).

In addition, Paul employs scriptural justification to reinforce his authority. In 2 Corinthians 10:17-18, he quotes Jeremiah 9:24, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord." This scriptural reference serves a dual purpose: it underscores the principle that true honor comes from God and subtly rebukes his opponents who boast of their human credentials. By grounding his authority in scripture, Paul aligns his leadership with the community's shared religious texts, verifying his identity as a God-approved leader.

Paul's rhetorical strategy includes recounting his sufferings and weaknesses as evidence of his authentic apostleship. In 2 Corinthians 11:23-30, Paul lists his numerous trials, including imprisonments, beatings, and shipwrecks, presenting them as the true marks of an apostle. This narrative redefines the standards of apostolic leadership, shifting the focus from outward success and strength to endurance and faithfulness through suffering. By doing so, Paul modifies the problematic perceptions caused by

---

[803] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 497-498; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 724; Thrall, *II Corinthians* 652; Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 323-324; Furnish, *ii Corinthians* 474; Barrett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 269.
[804] Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 652; Furnish, *ii Corinthians* 482.
[805] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 498.
[806] Jan E. Stets, and Peter J. Burke, "Identity Theory and Social Identity Theory," *Social Psychology Quarterly* (2000): 233.
[807] Stets, and Burke, "Identity Theory and Social Identity Theory," 233.

the interlopers, aligning the community's understanding with his identity standard that values divine power manifested through human weakness (2 Cor.12:9-10; 13:3-4).

As identity entrepreneur endorsed by God, Paul emphasizes the critical importance of accurately understanding the gospel and upholding honour within the superordinate identity of "belonging to Christ" (2 Cor.10:17-18). Paul persistently underscores the need for a correct grasp of the gospel message (2 Cor.11:4; 13:8), warning against the acceptance of any distortions or false teachings (2 Cor. 11:4). He understands that a unified and accurate belief system is foundational to maintaining the integrity and cohesiveness of the community. Harris rightly pointed out that Paul does not disqualify his opponents from the Lord's approval. Instead, he presupposes his own commendation by the Lord, as he has faithfully fulfilled his divinely assigned mission in Corinth and plans to expand his work beyond Corinth.[808] In contrast, Guthrie takes an opposing view, asserting that the self-commendation of Paul's opponents "counts for nothing." According to him, only the person the Lord commends has truly "passed the test" of authentic, God-ordained ministry.[809] Paul aims to change the Corinthians' perception by emphasizing that true commendation and the right to claim honour come solely from God, not humans (2 Cor. 10:17-18). Guthrie rightly notes that Paul's approach to self-recommendation is not self-centered; instead, his commendation focuses entirely on God.[810] In Paul's view, God is the trustworthy source of praise, contrasting with the worldly norms embraced by his opponents, who claim honour based on their accomplishments. If this interpretation is correct, Paul seeks to align "making honour claims in the Lord" with "belonging to Christ." Paul encourages the Corinthians to understand their identity and value rooted in their relationship with Christ.

In summary, aligning with Haslam's insight, Paul effectively shapes group identity by reshaping the understanding of the social context, for example, praising an individual's mission accomplishments, allowing him to redefine the characteristics that represent the group and set it apart from outsiders, namely the interlopers.[811] Paul strategically crafts the Corinthians' perceptions through language within a specific social context surrounding honour claims. As an identity entrepreneur, Paul strategically crafts a superordinate identity linked with "belonging to Christ." This specific identity helps the Corinthians reduce their uncertainty about their identity as authentic followers of Christ.

2.3.2. Making Honour Claims in Endurance of Sufferings (2 Cor. 11:23-33)
The endurance of suffering emerges as a central rhetorical theme through Paul, who redefines his understanding and purpose in addressing individual hardships in 2

---

[808] Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 728.
[809] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 498-499.
[810] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 499.
[811] Haslam, *Psychology in Organizations: The Social Identity Approach*, 47.

Corinthians (2 Cor.13:3-5). Paul employs the phrase "I say again" (Πάλιν λέγω; 2 Cor.11:16), explicitly returning to the motif of Paul's folly, stating in 2 Cor.11:1. Paul urges the Corinthians to tolerate what may seem "foolish" in his action,[812] as he is currently asserting a claim of honour and expressing his anger on God's behalf towards the interlopers (2 Cor.11:16-21a). Scholars concurred that in Paul's hardship (2 Cor.11:16-33), he appealed to the Corinthians to reflect on the nature of foolish boasting.[813] Paul's presentation in 2 Corinthians 11:11-21 may seem awkward and foolish to the Corinthians, but his goal is to preempt further influence by the interlopers.[814]

Ehrensperger accurately pointed out, "In the context of what he [Paul] deems a 'foolish' competition in boasting, he thus considers the only appropriate aspect of being 'thrown into the ring' is to 'boast of the things that show my weakness' (11.30)."[815] This proposition broadly aligns with the interpretation that Paul employs suffering as an identity marker to craft a sense of Christ-followers.[816] In her view, "Paul certainly was aware of these and reminded the Corinthians of the inevitable link between being a follower of Christ and the risk of suffering." However, Ehrensperger seems to overlook that Paul intentionally uses his suffering and hardship to define the identity descriptor of Christ's servant (2 Cor.11:23). If his opponents claim to be servants of Christ but do not share in Christ's suffering. Paul invites the Corinthians to reflect on this discrepancy. As Guthrie rightly observed, "On the basis of his own [Paul] ministry activities, Paul claims superiority to the interlopers."[817]

In 2 Corinthians 11:16-30, Paul's redefinition of honour claim is evident as the word καυχάομαι that occurs five times in this text.[818] In contrast to the interlopers (2 Cor.10:12-18), Paul notably views the act of asserting honour claims concerning his weakness and sufferings in a positive light (2 Cor.11:30) rather than according to the flesh, such as ethnic lineage (2 Cor.11:22).[819] Paul asserts that making honour claims

---

[812] The Greek word ἄφρων (adjective form) appears three times in 2 Corinthians 11, for example, 11:16 twice and 11:19. The Greek word "ἀφροσύνη" (noun form) appears three times in 2 Corinthians 11, for instance, 11:1; 11:17; and 11:21.

[813] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 534-535; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 777; Matera, *II Corinthian*s, 255-256; Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 708. Guthrie points out that Paul's language is strong and peremptory as he confronts his opponent by employing an indefinite singular pronoun (τίς). Paul emphasizes that his opponents should not treat him as a foolish boaster, despite the fact that he will conduct self-praise in the subsequent discourse. However, Guthrie's proposal is difficult because here Paul focuses on appealing to the Corinthians to accept (δέχομαι) his foolishness (2 Cor.11:16-18). See Guthrie, 2 Corinthians, 534-535.

[814] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 317; Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 532-533; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 777; Collins, *Second Corinthians*, 227; Furnish, *ii Corinthians*, 511; Sze-Kar Wan, *Power in Weakness: The Second Letter of Paul to the Corinthians* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2000), 144.

[815] Ehrensperger, *Paul and the Dynamics of Power*, 107.

[816] Ehrensperger, *Paul and the Dynamics of Power*, 111.

[817] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 535.

[818] This Greek word appears once in 2 Cor.11:16 and twice in 2 Cor.11:18 and 11:30, respectively.

[819] Ehrensperger, *Paul and the Dynamics of Power*, 107.

"in the Lord" (2 Cor.10:17-18), as opposed to boasting about personal achievement (2 Cor.10:12-13), serves as the distinctive identity marker of his leadership. Savage argued that "Such 'boastful confidence' represents the very antithesis of speaking κατὰ κύριον (2 Cor.11:17)."[820]

In light of the SIA to leadership, Paul intends to re-construct the consensual understanding related to the nature of honour claims (2 Cor.11:17).[821] As the researchers suggest, a leader is an influential person who can create identity content. This content is crucial for ingroup members to delineate the boundaries between "us" and "them."[822] As an identity entrepreneur, Paul strives to persuade the Corinthians to accept his suffering as a maker of "belonging to Christ." Paul refrains from honouring his ethnic background (2 Cor.11:22), setting himself apart from the interlopers.[823] He expresses that making an honour claim based on worldly standards is considered foolish (2 Cor.11:17). The Greek word "ὑπόστασις" denotes "substantial nature" or "essence."[824] Paul intentionally redefines the true significance of honour claims in alignment with enduring suffering, as Paul expressed, "Are they servants of Christ? (I am out of my mind to talk like this.) I am more. I have worked much harder" (2 Cor.11:23).

From this perspective, active participation in suffering for others is a marker of the superordinate inclusive identity linked to "belonging to Christ" (2 Cor.10:7) in Paul's mind. This identity descriptor not only defines the identity of Christ's servant but also assists the Corinthians in assessing leadership authenticity. Social psychologists explore how group norms, communication, and one's prototypicality interact in this process. According to the Referent Informational Influence Theory, the primary driver of influence is social identification, which emphasizes the awareness of one's social identity within the in-group. The theory highlights that influence is most effective when the social identity of the group and its members are salient. Salience refers to the extent to which a particular social identity is prominent or significant in each context. When social identities are salient, individuals are more likely to conform to group norms and be influenced by group leaders or members who epitomize the group's ideals.[825]

Establishing group conformity and normative behaviour involves internal cognitive changes in specific contexts. Given the self-defining nature of in-group prototypes, individuals in salient groups pay close attention to the prototype, information about it, and the people who provide information on it. This attention

---

[820] Savage, *Power through Weakness*, 57.
[821] Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 781; Danker, *Second Corinthians*, 136.
[822] Hogg, and Reid, "Social Identity, Self-Categorization, and the Communication of Group Norms," 10.
[823] Scholars argued that much like the Romans, Paul's rivals were inclined to commend themselves or honour others based on ethnicity. See the commentary of Guthrie, 551 and Furnish, 532-533. Esler argued that the interlopers were from the same Judean group that had visited Galatia. See Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 322.
[824] *BDAG*, 925.
[825] Dominic Abrams et al. "Knowing What to Think by Knowing Who You Are: Self-Categorization and the Nature of Norm Formation, Conformity and Group Polarization," *British Journal of Social Psychology* 29.2 (1990): 99.

extends to evaluating how well individuals match the prototype. The perspectives offer a framework for examining Paul's suffering in terms of how it creates ingroup norms concerning hardships and sufferings.

3.3.3. Servant of Christ and Hardship

This normative belief of Paul's group is intricately connected with the identification of "servants of Christ" (διάκονοι Χριστοῦ; 2 Cor.11:23). As discussed in Chapter Seven, Paul perceives himself as a divine-endorsed agent, and his responsibility is to edify the Corinthians by his embodiment of Christ's model. As Hogg suggested, when leaders are entrepreneurs of identity, their behaviour and consistency are essential as these can support what they say. These factors are crucial to strengthen leaders' credibility and legitimacy.[826]

Paul acknowledges that Hebrews (Ἑβραῖοί), Israelites (Ἰσραηλῖταί), the seed of Abraham (σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ), and the servants of Christ (διάκονοι Χριστοῦ) carry honour among the Judean interlopers. The interlopers likely adopted such designations to emphasize their identification, particularly in contrast to Paul.[827] In 2 Corinthians 11:23, Paul also portrays himself as the "servants of Christ" (διάκονοι Χριστοῦ). The term "servant" (διάκονος) is reiterated five times in this epistle (2 Cor.3:6; 6:4; twice in 11:5; 11:23). This repetition serves as a point of comparison with the outgroup members, highlighting the authenticity of Paul's ministry in contrast to those who falsely claim to serve Christ. It underscores his dedication and commitment as a faithful servant of the Gospel.[828] More importantly, Paul, as a servant of Christ, serves as an ideal-type prototype for Christ-followers. Steffens et al. argued that a leader embodying ideal prototypicality can enhance leadership effectiveness.[829]

In 2 Corinthians 11:23, Paul defines the identity of being a "servant of Christ." This identity serves as referent information, actively prompting a cognitive change within the Corinthians' perceptions and contributing to delineating in-group "us." Paul acknowledges, "I must be out of my mind to talk like this!" (παραφρονῶν λαλω), conceding that his leadership possesses greater authenticity compared to the interlopers. From Paul's perspective, serving Christ and enduring hardships on his behalf serves a higher purpose, contributing to the spiritual growth and maturity of the Corinthians (2 Cor.11:28-29; 1:5-7). Paul recounts his numerous hardship-related experiences before the Corinthians (2 Cor.11:23c-29). He aims to set himself apart from his opponents.[830]

---

[826] Haslam et al. "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 267-268.

[827] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 322; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 796.

[828] For example, Paul strategically emphasizes his rivals as "disguised servants of righteousness," implying that these interlopers, in his view, lack the authenticity of a true apostle. In Esler's view, the list of hardships (2 Cor.11:23c to 12:13) establishes Paul as a true Christ's servant and differentiates from the false servants. See Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 323.

[829] Knippenberg et al. "Leader Group Prototypicality: A Replication of Average Member Versus Ideal-Type Operationalization," 3.

[830] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 322-323.

Although in the socio-cultural context of Roman times, hardship and suffering were associated with disgrace, Paul's experience of suffering can be understood in alignment with the prevailing Greco-Roman notion that leaders who underwent rugged experiences gained admiration from their followers. [831] Paul provides a detailed account of specific instances of suffering (2 Cor.11:23-25). Paul experienced "hard work" (κόπος), "imprisonment" (φυλακή), "beatings" (πληγή), and "death" (θάνατος) during his mission work, (2 Cor.11:23). He recounts receiving "forty lashes minus one" from the Judeans (Ἰουδαίων), [832] being beaten with rods, stoned, and experiencing a shipwreck.[833] Additionally, Paul narrates an escape in Damascus (2 Cor.11:32-33) as part of the challenges he faced in his mission journey.[834]

Paul's physical hardships indicate a state of dishonour and shame within society.[835] For example, Paul has experience as a manual worker (2 Cor.11:27) and mentions his escape experience in Damascus (2 Cor.11:32-33). In this experience, Paul was shamefully lowered in the basket by his fellow to escape arrest.[836] Furnish noted that a Roman soldier was awarded with *corona muralis*, or "wall crown", for being the first over the wall of the enemy city. This golden crown bore military honour as the soldier was exceedingly brave. In contrast, Paul was let down from the wall by his colleagues, indicating his humiliation, not heroism.[837]

Paul's recounting of these suffering experiences serves multiple purposes. Firstly, it illustrates the extent of his suffering and his apostleship's physical and social costs. By openly discussing his hardships and moments of dishonour, Paul establishes his credibility and authenticity as a servant of Christ who has endured great trials for the sake of the gospel. Secondly, it challenges his cultural context's conventional values of honour and shame. By presenting his hardships and humiliations as integral to his apostolic identity, Paul redefines the criteria for authenticity related to leadership and

---

[831] Keener, *1-2 Corinthians*, 235.

[832] The basis of this punishment is in Deut.25: 2-3 instructs the Judean leaders to give a violator up to forty lashes. The administration of beatings places shame and dishonour upon those beaten and may lead to their death. The significance of this verse is that Paul's ministry has extended to the Judeans, as Luke mentioned in Acts, for example,17:1, 18:4, and 19:8. In addition, Paul's punishment by lashing also implies that the synagogue leader regards Paul as a wayward brother, therefore he has never been expelled from the Judean synagogue.

[833] According to Danker, sailing with a boat in ancient times was particularly dangerous. As he quoted from Secundus. It was a "sea-tossed object, a foundationless home, a well-crafted tomb…" and the sailor was a "neighbor of death." See Danker, *2 Corinthians*, 499.

[834] Over the past, scholars have been interested in reconstructing the historical settings of Paul's escape in Damascus, seeking to unravel the significance behind the episode. Various interpretations have been presented by commentators, such as Furnish, *ii Corinthians*, 540-542; Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 763-771; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 820-823; Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 328-330. Esler offers a plausible interpretation, arguing that Paul's escape was intentionally portrayed as a shameful act, highlighting his acceptance of being lowered down in a basket by his companions to evade arrest. According to Esler, this act displayed Paul's vulnerability and humiliation. See Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 328-330.

[835] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 546-547.

[836] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 329.

[837] Furnish, *ii Corinthians*, 542.

honour. Thirdly, Paul's depiction of his hardships aims to inspire and fortify his followers. By showing that he has endured such profound trials and yet remains steadfast in his faith, Paul provides a powerful example for the Corinthians to emulate. His narrative encourages them to find strength in their weaknesses and to view their own struggles and sufferings as part of their journey in following Christ.

Additionally, Paul seems to have behaved dishonourably and shamefully in Damascus. His objective is to redefine the concepts of honour and weakness.[838] In contrast to the interlopers, Paul does not follow the honour-centered culture of praising their achievements. Instead, he prefers claiming about his weakness and suffering as these are the prototypical markers of Christ (2 Cor.11:30; 12:9). Pursuing Christ's weakness is one of the significant features of authentic and obedient Christ-followers. Considering the perception of the Romans, and Corinth was a Roman colony where the endurance of suffering signified toughness and leadership qualification, Paul probably aligned himself with such an understanding.[839] Although Paul holds the status of a God-commissioned apostle, he willingly preaches the gospel to the Corinthians through suffering (2 Cor.11:28-29). Moreover, his experiences of suffering not only legitimize Paul's leadership but also enhance Paul's self-identity as a servant of Christ. Paul continues to express his psychological concerns for the Christ-following communities (2 Cor.11:28). His concern (μέριμνα; 2 Cor.11:28) reflects a deep commitment to the spiritual well-being of the Corinthians.

"Weakness" carries connotations of powerlessness, and, as Harris noted, Paul portrays himself as a leader of the weak- someone who is humiliated, poor (2 Cor.10:1; 2 Cor.11:7), unskilled in rhetoric, and of unimpressive appearance.[840] However, Paul actively reconstructs the values linked with weakness and suffering. Remarkably, Paul emphasizes his weakness rather than underscoring personal achievement according to worldly standards (2 Cor.11:22). He deploys this distinctive salience to set himself apart from the false apostles due to their different leadership styles.

For Paul, the endurance of hardships can be viewed as a distinctive and specific leadership feature and identity descriptor of a true Christ-follower, which helps the Corinthians to differentiate an authentic "servant of Christ." It indeed offers an alternative lens through which we can innovatively reconstruct the meanings of the eight "dangers" (κίνδυνος; 2 Cor.11:26). The specific mention of "the dangers of false brothers" (κινδύνοις ἐν ψευδαδέλφοις) is representing a group of Christ-followers who adhere to different norms and values in following Christ. Scholars concur that the presence of false brothers is the "hurtful" challenge in Paul's ministry, as noted by

---

[838] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 329.

[839] Kim suggests that Paul thoroughly demonstrates masculinity through his endurance and weakness. Paul aims to create a new masculine leadership to "enhance his credibility as a strong male leader and legitimate his apostleship." See Lim, *The Sufferings of Christ Are Abundant In Us'*, 171; Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 746.

[840] Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 503.

Harris.[841] In light of the SIA to leadership, the comparison process extends beyond the assimilation of factual information about identity; group affiliations and the corresponding perceptions of social norms deeply influence it.[842]

The Corinthians are not just looking at facts about Paul and the interlopers; they understand these facts through their shared group identity and the social norms that influence their views.[843] As Guthrie observes, Paul addresses the practical challenges he has frequently encountered.[844] Paul engages in manual labour (2 Cor.11:27) to avoid placing an economic burden on the Christ-followers (2 Cor.11:7-10).[845] Paul also experienced sleeplessness (ἀγρυπνία), hunger (λιμός), thirst (δίψος), abstention from food (νηστεία), cold (ψῦχος), and insufficient clothes (γυμνότης), depicting not only physical deprivations but also manifesting Paul's portrayal of weakness.

To sum up, Paul, as an identity entrepreneur, intends to redefine the true meaning of being an authentic servant of Christ and redraw the boundary between a true and a false apostle based on one's endurance of sufferings and hardships for Christ and His communities. As Paul expressed, "If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness" (2 Cor.11:30). Moreover, Paul exemplifies self-sacrifice, modeled after Christ's own example. This helps the Corinthians remain steadfast in their faith and commitment to their shared identity in Christ. Ultimately, Paul hopes the Corinthians display their identification of "belonging to Christ" and "obedience to Christ."

2.4. Making Honour Claims in "Power through Weakness"

The redefinition of power through Paul's experience of suffering is a central theme in his discourse (2 Cor.12:1-10; 13:3-5). Concerning the assertion of claiming honour, Paul explicitly addresses the interlopers' challenge for him to present "signs" (σημείοις) to validate his leadership (2 Cor.12:12). According to Plutarch, in the face of challenges to one's credentials by competitors, resorting to self-boasting is considered an acceptable and strategic method of defence.[846] Despite acknowledging that doing honour may not be advantageous (οὐ συμφέρον μέν) in Paul's view, he proceeds with this course of action. He aims to shape the Corinthians' collective identity and mitigate

---

[841] Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 808; Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 325; Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 562; Martin, *2 Corinthians*,379; Furnish, *ii Corinthians*, 537.

[842] Haslam et al. "Salient Group Memberships and Persuasion: The Role of Social Identity in the Validation of Beliefs," 33-34.

[843] Concerning the identification and its features of the interlopers, scholars, such as Harris and Esler plausibly conclude that those false brothers (ψευδάδελφος) were the Judaizers, as this Greek word only appeared in Galatians 2:14, in reference to those imposing observance of the Torah, circumcision in particular, on the gentile Christ-followers. This group brought trouble to Paul for spreading the gospel in Roman cities. See Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 808; Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 325.

[844] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 562.

[845] As discussed in the preceding sections, Paul frequently pays extra attention to the reciprocal and exchange relationships within the patronage system. According to the norms of a patron-client relationship, Paul would be expected to show obedience to his benefactor. This societal expectation influences Paul's decision to engage in manual labour as a craftsman in order to self-support his financial needs.

[846] Plutarch, *Praising Inoffensively* 15, Mor. 544D.

identity uncertainty, particularly concerning perceptions of making honour claims (Καυχᾶσθαι δεῖ; 2 Cor.12:1).

In examining the rhetorical functions of Paul's emphasis on his visions (ὀπτασίας; 2 Cor.12:1) and revelations (ἀποκαλύψεις; 2 Cor.12:1), Paul acknowledges that making honour claims before the Corinthians carries risk and might be unprofitable. [847] However, this rhetorical tactic is similar to his competitors to refute their accusations and restore his relationship with the Corinthians.[848] Keener posited that Paul aimed to create a "climax" with weakness, mainly through his embarrassing descending experience in Damascus and ascending experience in heaven (2 Cor.11:30-12:10).[849] Commentators, such as Matera, Keener, Thrall and Martin contended that the manifestation of supernatural experiences was considered a criterion for apostleship by the Corinthians, leading some to question Paul's authority in this regard.[850] Specific themes, such as "fourteen years" (ἐτῶν δεκατεσσάρων), "third heaven" (τρίτου οὐρανοῦ), "whether in the body or out of the body" (εἴτε ἐν σώματι εἴτε χωρὶς τοῦ σώματος) have captured scholars' attention.[851]

Gooder argued that 'Far from the Corinthian expectation of strong apostleship, Paul represents the true apostleship based on weakness. The strength of the gospel is the strength of Christ, not of Paul." [852] She argued that Paul has been attempting to support his apostleship, not by an expected boasting in strength but weakness. [853] Gooder's interpretation is plausible as Paul represents an authentic apostleship based on weakness. The strength of the gospel is the strength of Christ, not of Paul. White also noted that Paul's discourse on his ascent experience served not merely as a justification for his apostolic authority. Instead, Paul sought to imbue a new meaning

---

[847] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 331-332.

[848] Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 830.

[849] Keener, *1-2 Corinthians*, 237.

[850] Lim, *The Sufferings of Christ Are Abundant In Us'*, 186; Matera, *II Corinthians*, 276-277; Keener, *1-2 Corinthians*, 237; Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 773; Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 396. Both Matera and Keener argue that Paul recounts a past heavenly experience to counterbalance his rivals' similar experiences that they use to establish their leadership authenticity.

[851] Matera, *II Corinthians*, 277-282; Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 775-805. Harris has listed the possible historical events relating to "the fourteen years" in 2 Corinthians 12:2 and the limitations of each proposal. See Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 836-837. A number of researchers have been published over the past years in relation to the interpretation of Paul's ecstatic experience, see Christopher R. A. Morray-Jones, "The Ascent into Paradise (2 Cor 12:1-12): Paul's *Merkava* Vision and Apostolic Call" in *Second Corinthians in the Perspective of Late Second Temple Judaism*, eds. Reimund Bieringer (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 245-285; J.B. Wallace, *Snatched into Paradise (2 Cor 12:1-10): Paul's Heavenly Journey in the Context of Early Christian Experience* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011); Paula Gooder, *Only the Third Heaven : 2 Corinthians 12. 1-10 and Heavenly Ascent* (London: T&T Clark, 2006); C. R. A. Morray-Jones, "Paradise Revisited (2 Cor.12:1-12): The Jewish Mystical Background of Paul's Apostolate-Part 2: Paul's Heavenly Ascent and its Significance," *HTR* 86.3 (1993): 265-292; William Baird, "Visions, revelation, and ministry: reflections on 2 Cor 12:1-5 and Gal 1:11-17," *JBL* 104.4 (1985): 655; A. T. Lincoln, "Paul the Visionary: the Setting and Significance of the Rapture to Paradise in II Corinthians XII. 1-10," *NTS* 25 (1979): 204-220.

[852] Gooder, "*Only the Third Heaven?: 2 Corinthians 12. 1-10 and Heavenly Ascent*," 213.

[853] Gooder, "*Only the Third Heaven?: 2 Corinthians 12. 1-10 and Heavenly Ascent*," 213.

into "strength and weakness."[854]

However, both interpretations provide an incomplete explanation of Paul's strategic use of his heavenly encounter, that is, to shape the identity of the Corinthians. Esler adopted a social identity perspective to understand Paul's discourse, accurately proposing that Paul felt compelled to assert his honour related to his revelatory experience and vulnerabilities.[855] As he states, "He (Paul) is thus compelled to meet their honour claims with some of his own, but claims only to do so about his weakness (11.30)."[856] Aligning with this notion, it is notable that a significant theme in 2 Corinthians 12:1-10 is Paul's redefinition of weakness. Paul consistently uses ἀσθένεια (weakness) as a core rhetorical theme, aiming to reshape such meaning.[857] Paul highlights his endurance of suffering for Christ's community as the basis for his honour (2 Cor.11:23-33).

2.4.1. Weakness and Honour

Following this line of thought, Paul, as an identity entrepreneur, proactively constructs the identity descriptors of Christ's servant and the "foolish boaster" (2 Cor.11:1; 11:16; 12:11). In Paul's mind, receiving honour from the Lord is more crucial in Paul's ministry than merely earning commendation from others (2 Cor.10:18). Paul seeks to differentiate himself from the interlopers regarding claims of honour. In 2 Corinthians 12:1, Paul continues the idea from 2 Corinthians 11:30, where he boasts about his weakness. According to Harris, in Paul's view, a legitimated honour claim must meet two criteria: firstly, it must not involve boasting about personal status and accomplishments, and secondly, it must be confined to the Lord's allotted assignment.[858] Notably. the intimate relationship with God allows Paul to assert his formal leadership position and restore trust between Paul and the Corinthians.

As mentioned in Chapters Three and Seven, "trusting" the leader is a core factor in generating effectiveness. "How followers evaluate leaders after performance feedback, performance, and goal attaining" is based on whether those leaders are being trusted by their followers.[859] Leader prototypicality directly influences trust in

---

[854] White argued that "strength in weakness" contains a paradox, suggesting that Paul's strength is developed through his vulnerability, especially his enduring suffering for Christ and the Corinthians. See White, 1-2. White's exploration aims to examine this paradoxical notion, showing how Christ's grace empowers Paul to surmount hardships. See White, 176-179. White concludes that "strength in weakness" involves gaining the right perspective on one's weakness (revelatory), fostering humility (ontological), and influencing emotions, theology, and behaviour. See White, *Pain and Paradox in 2 Corinthians*, 212-213.

[855] Esler argued that 2 Cor. 12:1-10 revolves around the issues of social identity, both within the group (intra-group) and between groups (intergroup). According to Esler, the crux of this passage pertains to Paul's leadership, with the interlopers representing the intergroup challenging Paul's credentials before the Corinthians. This denigration prompts the Corinthians begin to question his leadership and inclines them towards the values championed by the interlopers. See Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 331-332.

[856] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 331.

[857] The Greek word ἀσθένεια appears four times in 2 Corinthians 12:1-10, including 2 Cor.12:5; two times in 12:9 and 12:10. Another two times in 11:30 and 13:4.

[858] Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 726.

[859] Giessner, and Knippenberg, ''License to Fail'': Goal definition, Leader Group Prototypicality, and

leadership. Equally importantly, "An effective 'prototypicality management' may inoculate the leader's basis for leadership effectiveness to a certain extent against the negative consequences of failure to realize group and organizational goals." [860] "Prototypicality management" refers to the leader's ability to define, represent, and embody the group's values and identity. Hogg also suggested that the highly prototypical members are informative about what defines group membership, attracting significant attention. They are subjectively essential and stand out distinctly from other, less informative members. [861] This offers a new perspective on Paul's strategy in shaping the meaning of weakness.

In 2 Corinthians 12:1, Paul asserts his honour claim (Καυχᾶσθαι) of being raptured to heaven. As noted by Esler, Paul was forced by the opponents to make such a claim as he had no other choice.[862] It is a unique ascending and descending journey in the heavenly realm. This unique experience also grants Paul to "hearing the inexpressible words" (ἤκουσεν ἄρρητα ῥήματα; 2 Cor.12:4) from "heaven" (παράδεισον).[863] Paul recognized that "even though boasting is not advantageous, or beneficial. Paul will move on to visions and revelations from the Lord."[864]

Paul begins to report the heavenly journey, saying that this experience is of an anonymous Christ-follower (ἄνθρωπον ἐν Χριστῷ; 2 Cor.12:2).[865] This informs us that Paul was "snatched up" (ἁρπαγέντα; 2 Cor.12:2) to the third heaven, and such an experience happened "fourteen years ago."[866] As Wallace suggested, this experience reflects Paul's authentic unity with Christ. Indeed, Paul's experience has prompted scholars to inquire about the historical backdrop.[867] 2 Corinthians12:1-10 serves two rhetorical functions.

Firstly, Paul intends to show his intimate relationship with God before the Corinthians (2 Cor.12:2; 12:9). Paul also wants to capture the Corinthians' attention by recounting his extraordinary experience.[868] He mainly Paul employs "in Christ" (ἐν

Perceptions of Leadership Effectiveness after Leader Failure," 31.

[860] Giessner, and Knippenberg, ''License to Fail'': Goal definition, Leader Group Prototypicality, and Perceptions of Leadership Effectiveness after Leader Failure," *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* 105 (2008): 31. The recent research further supports this finding. For detailed discussion, see Steffens, "Advancing the Social Identity Theory of Leadership: A Meta-Analytic Review of Leader Group Prototypicality," *Organizational Psychology Review* (2021): 35-72.

[861] Hogg, "A Social Identity of Leadership," 190.

[862] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 331-332.

[863] Nassauer, "Decline and Ascension. Paul's Apostolic Self-Definition in 2 Cor 12,1-10," 258-259.

[864] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 577.

[865] In Guthrie's view, the connotation of ἄνθρωπον ἐν Χριστῷ in Pauline usage commonly refers to the Christ-follower, see Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 579.

[866] Wallace contributes the fullest review of "Ascend to Paradise" within the Greco-Roman world and Ancient Judaism. His suggestion is that "In Paul's symbolic world, 'third heaven' and 'paradise,' especially the latter, would connote the place where the righteous go and where the immediate presence of God is known and experienced, especially as a reward for suffering." For detailed discussion, see Wallace, *Snatched into Paradise (2 Cor.12;1-10)*, 257.

[867] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 333; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 835-837; Furnish, *ii Corinthians*, 544.

[868] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 332.

Χριστῷ; 2 Cor.12:2) to recount man's spiritual experience (2 Cor.12:2). This heavenly journey belongs to Paul's own experience in scholars' view.[869] This implies the apostle is "in union with the risen Christ"[870] and "in Christ's power."[871]

To Paul, the closeness with God grants Paul's divine authority and revelations to edify the Corinthians (2 Cor.10:8; 12:19; 13:10). Moreover, Paul seeks to show his leadership is not interior to the interlopers (2 Cor.10:7; 11:22-23; 12:11-12). In the context of 2 Corinthians 10-13, the Corinthians often perceive Paul's leadership as ineffective as he does not align with their expectations of a strong leader. From this perspective, Paul appears to fall short in embodying the leadership prototype as a servant of Christ (2 Cor.11:23) and in his obedience to Christ (2 Cor.10:7).

In addition, as an identity entrepreneur, Paul intends to redefine, construct, and introduce a new understanding of "strength in weakness" that challenges his opponents' prototypes.[872] Paul's ascent narrative in 2 Corinthians 12:1-10 demonstrates "strength in weakness." Paul speaks of his extraordinary spiritual experiences, such as catching up to the third heaven. He does so with humility (2 Cor.12:5). Paul refers to himself in the third person, emphasizing that boasting about such experiences is not beneficial (2 Cor.12:1-6). This shows strength in recognizing that such revelations are not the basis for his authority or worth. Second, the acknowledgement of weakness is central to Paul's ministry. Paul openly discusses his "thorn in the flesh," a persistent weakness or affliction (2 Cor.12:7). By admitting his vulnerabilities, he contrasts his opponents' typical prototype of strength. This transparency demonstrates that true strength involves acknowledging and accepting one's limitations.

Furthermore, Paul's dependence on Christ's power enables him to continue his ministry. Paul explains that he pleaded with the Lord to remove his affliction, but Christ responded, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor. 12:9). Paul accepts this, highlighting that his weaknesses are opportunities for Christ's power to be displayed more clearly. This illustrates that real strength comes from reliance on Christ rather than self-sufficiency.

In 2 Corinthians 13:3-4, Paul addresses the Corinthians' demand for proof that Christ is speaking through him. The passage highlights the paradox of Christ's power: although Christ was crucified in weakness, it is through this weakness that God's power was most profoundly demonstrated. Paul draws a direct parallel between Christ's experience and his own, asserting that his weaknesses similarly reveal divine power. Paul acknowledges that his weaknesses validate his apostolic authority rather than diminish it. By embracing his frailties, Paul demonstrates a profound trust in Christ's

---

[869] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 332; Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 580; Matera, *Second Corinthians* 277; Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 398; Kruse, *2 Corinthians*, 201; Barrett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 308.
[870] Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 834.
[871] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 332.
[872] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 331.

promise that His grace is sufficient. This acceptance of weakness as a vessel for divine power directly counters the accusations of his opponents, who equated physical and social weaknesses with a lack of authoritative leadership.

In 2 Corinthians 13:5, Paul calls the Corinthians to "Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith." This self-examination is a call for the Corinthians to recognize Christ's presence and power within themselves, just as Paul has recognized it within his own life and ministry. To Paul, his suffering and weakness carry transformation functions, both for him and his audience. By accepting his afflictions and viewing them as opportunities for Christ's power to manifest, Paul models a form of leadership that is radically different from worldly standards. This transformation is not merely personal but communal, as Paul invites the Corinthians to share in this perspective and to find strength in their own weaknesses through Christ. Paul repeatedly contrasts his own sufferings and weaknesses with the triumphalism of the so-called "super-apostles." By doing so, he redefines the criteria for true Christian leadership and discipleship, emphasizing that authentic strength and authority come from God's power working through human frailty. Paul's strategy is to shift the Corinthians' focus from individual shortcomings to the sufficiency of Christ's grace and power.

Drawing on the SIA to leadership, Paul engages in prototypicality management to find a fresh perspective on claiming weakness or strength in weakness. Scholars concurred that both the interlopers and some Corinthians have challenged Paul's lack of abilities to perform signs, wonders, and mighty deeds (2 Cor.12:12). Paul's statement, within the framework of the SIA to leadership, shows his embodiment of a core value of his leadership and as an authentic Christ-follower. Paul perceives that his leadership, granted by divine authority, signifies his intimate relationship with God.[873] For example, as Paul mentioned, a man who is in Christ (ἐν Χριστῷ; 2 Cor.12:2) means close ties with God. Thus, he is snatched (ἁρπαγέντα) to heaven and hears his inexpressible words. Moreover, when Paul is afflicted by a thorn in the flesh (σκόλοψ τῇ σαρκί; 2 Cor.12:7) and troubled by Satan's messengers (ἄγγελος σατανᾶ; 2 Cor.12:7). The apostle requests three times for its removal.

God directly explains to Paul that his grace is sufficient for him and that his power reaches perfection in his weakness. It indicates Paul's intimate relationship with the Lord, as his petition goes directly to God, who responds, probably through vision or during prayer.[874] Paul's specific relationship with God can be seen as his leader prototypicality, enabling him to redefine the Corinthians' identity. It was also advantageous for Paul to pronounce it publicly—Paul chose to employ the Lord's reply in the rhetorical culmination of a speech act (Neufeld 2000) designed to (re-)assert his

---

[873] Gooder, *Only the Third Heaven? 2 Corinthians 12:1-10 and Heavenly Ascent*, 210-211; Wallace, *Snatched into Paradise (2 Cor.12;1-10)*, 257.
[874] Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 862.

credentials as God's apostle to the gathered people at Corinth.[875] Therefore, he possesses crucial knowledge and information about the Christ-following community, including a deeper understanding of honour claim and weakness for Christ's sake (2 Cor. 12:9; 12:10).[876]

Employing a paradoxical argument, Paul refrains from boasting about his heavenly encounter to avoid the pitfalls of pride and conceit. This intentional distancing from the interlopers becomes evident when the Corinthians question Paul's apparent lack of "apostolic signs." In response, Paul strategically identifies the features of marginal members, namely his rivals, who may be using claims of supernatural experience to validate their leadership. Harris argued that Paul has received an "assurance of the Risen Christ's grace and power to cope with weakness."[877] Thus, Paul intends to imbue another understanding of weakness and strength in a positive light.

Social identity researchers suggest that identity entrepreneurship involves the skillful creation of identity and the art of making this constructed identity appear genuine and uncontrived to others.[878] In 2 Corinthians 12:5, Paul decides to boast of his weaknesses (ἀσθένεια in plural form). Paul rejects boasting about himself (ὑπὲρ δὲ ἐμαυτοῦ οὐ καυχήσομαι) and prefers recounting his weakness (2 Cor.11:30; 12:5). It has more value than praising himself according to the flesh (2 Cor.11:18). Paul holds a positive view of pursuing his weakness, albeit some may think weakness represents a failure in the masculine culture.[879] Paul enunciates the foundation for any honour claim that he is speaking the truth (2 Cor.12:6).[880]

To prevent Paul's exaltation (ὑπεραίρομαι; 2 Cor.12:7), "there was given me a thorn in the flesh" (ἐδόθη μοι σκόλοψ τῇ σαρκί). As Harris rightly observed, "A unique privilege could easily generate a sense of spiritual superiority or even presumptive arrogance."[881] Scholars have attempted to seek the exact meanings of "σκόλοψ τῇ σαρκί."[882] This has sparked meaningful discussions among scholars.[883] Unfortunately,

---

[875] Justin M. Glessner, "Ethnomedical Anthropology and Paul's 'Thorn' (2 Corinthians 12:7)," *BTB* Vol. 47.1 (2017): 35.

[876] Thomas R. Blanton IV, *Constructing a New Covenant: Discursive Strategies in the Damascus Document and Second Corinthians* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 170.

[877] Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 861.

[878] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 130.

[879] Kim Kyung Min, "Paul's Defense: Masculinity and Authority in 2 Corinthians 10–13," *JSNT* 44.1 (2021): 150.

[880] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 334, Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 585.

[881] Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 853; Garland has taken a similar view, arguing "to prevent such spiritual pride from welling up in Paul, he was given a thorn in the flesh". See Garland, 2 Corinthians, 518.

[882] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 591; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 858-859; Matera, *Second Corinthians*, 283-284; Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 809-818; Furnish, *ii Corinthians*, 548-550; Barrett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 314-316.

[883] Furnish posits that Paul's supplication does not necessarily receive a direct affirmative response from the Lord. However, God extends a pledge to Paul, assuring that His promises can strengthen Paul to surmount the thorn, see Furnish, *ii Corinthians*, 550. Esler argues that Paul is inclined to make such declarations because weakness can attract the transformative power of Christ bestowed upon him, see Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 336-337. Guthrie's stance is similar to Esler's, claiming that Paul's thorn can be

none of the theories offers a satisfying interpretation. On this matter, my position remains agnostic, as with some other scholars.[884] This dissertation will also not provide a detailed evaluation of these scholarly proposals, as Thrall and Harris have adequately addressed this.[885] Paul expresses that this thorn should be a "messenger of Satan." According to Esler, God has a positive motive for using the fleshly thorn to stop Paul from making honour claims. God also allows Satan's agent to interrupt Paul in carrying out the missions.[886]

2.4.2. Weakness and Grace

Paul reshapes a deeper understanding of weakness through God's power and grace. According to the theoretical framework of SIA to leadership, a leader plays an active role in creating and managing the group identity and salience. In this sense, a leader is an "entrepreneur of identity" who guides the identity formation of each ingroup member. If ingroup identity is challenged by outgroups, the leader's responsibility is to defend the identity, for instance, by restructuring the present social context to reinforce and redefine the group meanings. More precisely, the leaders must reconceive the appropriateness and characterize the identity boundary of ingroup membership. This helps those members differentiate between "us" and "them."[887] As Paul highlighted, "If he must boast, he will boast about the things that show my weakness" (2 Cor.11:30). Evidently, Paul distinguishes himself from the interlopers in making an honour claim. To Paul, the endurance of suffering through God's grace and power is central to his ministry.

In 2 Corinthians 12:9, Paul claims he finds grace in dealing with weakness. Due to Paul's suffering from the thorn in the flesh, Paul repeatedly requests (παρακαλέω) the Lord to remove such thorn, which, according to Paul, is raised by the messengers of Satan. The Lord refused and alternatively promised Paul that his grace is sufficient to him (ἀρκεῖ σοι ἡ χάρις μου; 2 Cor.12:9). Esler argued, "Paul makes the rather surprising statement that he claims honour based on weakness to attract Christ's power."[888] Aligning with the SIA to leadership, Paul, as an identity entrepreneur, intends to introduce a new meaning of how to overcome weakness through God's grace. As Paul says, he finds joy (χάρις) in experiencing weakness. As the assurance from Christ, grace can be considered as Paul's continuous experience of God's power, which enables and empowers him to carry out God's mission.

---

construed as "the display of God's power." See Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 593. In Lim's view, this statement illuminates that God's promise is "permanently valid" in Paul's perceptions. Furnish also claims that weakness is a "hallmark" of the apostleship, imparting to Paul the profound lesson of complete reliance on the grace of God, see Lim, *The Sufferings of Christ Are Abundant In Us'*, 188. Lim has adopted Harris' interpretation of τελέω in 2 Cor.12:9.

[884] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 336; Garland, *2 Corinthians*, 521.
[885] Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 858-859, 868-869; Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 809-818.
[886] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 335.
[887] Haslam, *Psychology in Organization: The Social Identity Approach*, 47.
[888] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 336.

The Greek phrase ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ (for the sake of Christ; 2 Cor.12:10) appears three times in 2 Corinthians (two times in 2 Cor.5:20, and one time in 2 Cor.12:10). In 2 Corinthians 5:20, Paul describes himself as an ambassador (πρεσβεύω) on behalf of Christ, tasked with leading people to reconcile with God. In Harris' interpretation, the connotation of ambassador has threefold: firstly, commissioning for a particular assignment; secondly, representing a sender; and thirdly, exercising the authority of the sender.[889] Building upon these understandings, ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ refers to Paul's mission of spreading the gospel for the sake of Christ. Paul assures that although he faced weakness, insults, hardships, persecutions, and difficulties (ἐν ἀσθενείαις, ἐν ὕβρεσιν, ἐν ἀνάγκαις, ἐν διωγμοῖς καὶ στενοχωρίαις; 2 Cor.12:10), he can be strengthened by God's power (δύναμις; 2 Cor.12:9) to order to carry out his mission.

In Paul's understanding, "for my power reaches perfection in weakness" (ἵνα ἐπισκηνώσῃ ἐπ᾽ ἐμὲ ἡ δύναμις τοῦ Χριστοῦ; 2 Cor.12:9) means Paul can fully experience God's power in weakness. Harris argued that "We conclude 'ἀσθένεια' is both a prerequisite and a concomitant of Christ's power. His enabling strength cannot operate without a prior confession of weakness and need."[890] If this is the case, Paul aims to reshape the understanding of making honour claims. In Paul's mind, when authentic apostolic leaders neglect to engage in Christ's suffering and weakness, they may not experience God's power manifested in weakness.

Once weakness is acknowledged, God's power can be sought and granted.[891] In 2 Corinthians 12:9, Paul re-conceptualizes the meaning of power and weakness. Although weakness (ἀσθένεια) might traditionally connote dishonour and disgrace, Paul intends to adopt "weakness" to redefine honour and shame. "Weakness", in Paul's view, signifies human limitations, including physical frailty, old age, poverty, and infirmity.[892] Therefore, the redefinition of "weakness" challenges and reverses the conventional notions of strength and suffering. Dorothea H. Bertschmann argues that, unlike Epictetus,[893] Paul emphasizes that his endurance in suffering is rooted in and finds its meaning through his love for the Corinthians.[894] Brian J. Tabb also argued that for Seneca, suffering provides an opportunity for moral improvement and self-mastery, such as a soldier demonstrating bravery in battle, a sailor proving his skill by navigating

---

[889] Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 445.
[890] Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 864.
[891] Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 864.
[892] The understanding is quoted from Franco Montanari, *The Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 315.
[893] Bertschmann argues that the Stoic philosopher Epictetus suggests that sufferers must remain impassible in their suffering, maintaining their inner integrity despite external attacks. A Stoic who accepts adversity and even death with willingness and calmness demonstrates an ideal life that is in harmony with nature. By doing so, they exemplify the Stoic philosophy of living virtuously and in accordance with nature's laws, and in turn, they also honour and praise the divine creator for the natural order. For a detailed discussion, see Dorothea H. Bertschmann, "'What Does Not Kill Me Makes Me Stronger': Paul and Epictetus on the Correlation of Virtues and Suffering," *CBQ* 82.2 (2020): 258-265.
[894] Bertschmann, "'What Does Not Kill Me Makes Me Stronger': Paul and Epictetus on the Correlation of Virtues and Suffering," 272-273.

a storm, and an athlete earning the laurel wreath by competing. Figures like Cato and Regulus were not "unfortunate" for enduring suffering and premature death; they were victors, not victims.[895]

Based on the assurance of God's power and grace, Paul is eager to claim honour for his weakness so that God's power may rest upon him. This implies that such continuous divine protection can counterbalance the afflictions caused by Satan's messengers. The dimension illuminates that leader entrepreneurship "involves clarifying group member's understanding of what group stands for (and what does not stand for) by defining core values, norms, and ideals." [896] The SIA researchers additionally suggested that "Leaders actively develop their prototypicality as a function of their success in defining values, norms, and ideals that give a group shared meaning for its members."[897] Paul's leadership model aligns with the above notions. It is worth noting that, on the one hand, Paul develops a new approach to making honour claims by emphasizing his weakness on Christ's behalf rather than focusing on his achievements, as the interlopers do. On the other hand, when Paul underscores his shortcomings, he experiences God's power and strength, as promised, which enables him to endure hardships and suffering. More importantly, this divine power empowers Paul to carry out the missionary mission for Christ.

3. The Rhetorical Functions of "Strength in Weakness"

According to social identity researchers, prototypical leaders can manage their prototypicality and shape their group's identity through strategic rhetoric and consistent behaviour.[898] Paul's strengths and weaknesses embody a core value of his leadership. It affirms his authenticity as a servant of Christ (2 Cor.11:23). Paul's hardships catalogue shows his dedication and genuine service to Christ. This intentional distancing from the interlopers becomes evident when the Corinthians question Paul's apparent lack of "apostolic signs." In response, Paul strategically identifies the features of marginal members, namely his rivals, who may be using claims of supernatural experience to validate their leadership.

Paul highlights his distinctive leadership, such as refusing to make honour claims based on his heavenly experience. His purpose is to cast the interlopers as figures who do not share the closeness to God, in exaltation and suffering (here from the thorn), as he does, demonstrating his unparalleled status as a *diakono*s *par excellence*. This aligns with Hogg's proposal that such a leadership strategy can serve to fortify and secure a

---

[895] Brian J. Tabb, "It's the Hard-Knock Life: Paul and Seneca on Suffering," in *Paul and the Giants of Philosophy: Reading the Apostle in Greco-Roman Context*, ed. Joseph Dodson, and David E. Briones (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2019), 152.

[896] Steffens et al. "Leadership as Social Identity Management: Introducing the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI) to Assess and Validate a Four-dimensional Model," 1004.

[897] Steffensm et al. "Leadership as Social Identity Management: Introducing the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI) to Assess and Validate a Four-dimensional Model," 1004.

[898] Hogg et al. "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 268.

leadership position.[899] Paul's approach involves denigrating the interlopers and creating a comparative distinction to not only establish a particular identity as the authentic servant of Christ but also to forge a collective superordinate inclusive identity shared identity centered around "belonging to Christ".

In drawing the identity boundries of "belonging to Christ," Paul intends to reconstruct the Corinthians' understanding of "power in weakness." Paul holds a positive perspective on his weakness (2 Cor.12:10), regarding it as a conduit for experiencing both God's grace (χάρις) and his power (δύναμις). The notion that "God's power rests upon him [Paul]" indicates that Paul is not only empowered and strengthened by God but also capable of overcoming various hardships (2 Cor.12:10). These hardships can be considered a validation of Paul's obedience, namely edifying the Corinthians "for the sake of Christ" (ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ) as evident in his commitment to God's assigned missions and ministry (2 Cor.10:13; 11:23-33). This further demonstrates that Paul aligns with "belonging to Christ."

From this perspective, Paul willingly claims honour (καυχήσομαι) about his weakness, for example, his humiliating escape experience in Damasus (2 Cor.11:30-31) and his thorn in the flesh (2 Cor.12:7). This is because, as he declares, "whenever I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Cor.12:10). God's power can empower individuals undergoing weakness and enduring hardships. In assuming the role of an "identity entrepreneur," Paul seeks to re-define the content related to "making honour claims" and establish clear boundaries of those who proclaim, "belong to Christ." Moreover, according to the SIA to leadership theory, researchers suggest the concept of "status belief" as a strategic tool for leaders. Status belief, as defined by C. Ridgeway, is a shared cultural schema regarding the social status of categorical groups based on factors such as gender, race, ethnicity, education, or occupation.[900] Ridgeway asserts that leaders with specialized expertise that others depend on for navigating the existing world can wield this knowledge to achieve effective leadership.[901] Leaders can enhance their effectiveness by guiding ingroup members toward collective objectives and navigating specific social situations. The alignment with the members' expectations bolsters the leader's authoritative influence.[902] This perspective offers a novel framework for interpreting Paul's assertions in 2 Corinthians 12:1.

Upon scrutinizing Paul's heavenly ascent account (2 Cor.12:1-6) and the thorn in the flesh experience (2 Cor.12:7-9), scholars observed that this discourse served to highlight the social status of Paul as an agent of God. This remarkably implies his

---

[899] Hogg et al. "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 268.
[900] Cecilia L. Ridgeway, "Status Characteristics and Leadership," in *Leadership and Power Identity Processes in Groups and Organizations*, ed. Daan van Knippenberg and Michael A. Hogg (London: SAGE, 2003), 66.
[901] Ridgeway, "Status Characteristics and Leadership," 67.
[902] Ridgeway, "Status Characteristics and Leadership," 69.

intimate relationship with God.[903] However, the reason why Paul employs this specific experience as evidence for his argument remains unanswered. Building on insight from Choi et al.,[904] the close relationship between Paul and God (ἐν Χριστῷ; 2 Cor.12:2) can be interpreted as a validation of his leadership in four aspects.

Firstly, this particular relationship underscores Paul's role as the authoritative agent entrusted with imparting divine knowledge (2 Cor.13:4).[905] The possession of the divine knowledge not only enhances Paul's capacity to proclaim the true gospel, in contrast to the interlopers who propagate an alternate version of Christ (2 Cor.11:4), but it also serves as validation for Paul's position as the authentic servant of Christ (2 Cor.11:23). This leadership feature unequivocally affirms Paul's belonging to Christ (2 Cor.10:7).[906]

Secondly, Paul can restore trust by affirming his authority through God's endorsement. The apostle has faced the threat to his leadership posed by negative feedback. Paul intends to distance himself from the criticisms and threats his rivals raised. Particularly in the context of 2 Corinthians, the interlopers extensively undermine Paul's credentials, leading to the emergence of doubt among the Corinthians.

Thirdly, a close relationship between Paul and God allows him unique access to divine knowledge and serves to edify the Corinthians (ὑπὲρ τῆς ὑμῶν οἰκοδομῆς; 2 Cor.12:19) the Corinthians, helping them achieve spiritual perfection and maturity in

---

[903] Gudrun Nassauer suggests that individuals who experience visionary journeys can convey messages of rewards for the righteous and punishments to the wicked due to their firsthand encounters with God in a heavenly realm. See Nassauer, "Decline and Ascension. Paul's Apostolic Self-Definition in 2 Cor 12,1-10," 110.2 (2019): 258-259. J. B. Wallace asserts that "Paul is not responding to the demand for the 'signs of an apostle' and aims to respond to the opponents' accusation. Instead, Paul's focus is on explaining to the Corinthians the true meaning of his weakness." See Wallace, *Snatched into Paradise (2 Cor.12;1-10)*, 282-283. He also observes that in the context of Paul's time, the term paradise "connote[s] the place where the righteous go and where the immediate presence of God is known and experienced, especially as a reward for suffering." See Wallace, *Snatched into Paradise (2 Cor.12:1-10)*, 257. However, Paul's text does not provide sufficient information to support both arguments.

[904] Choi, "Who Do You Think You Are? Ingroup and Outgroup Sources of Identity Validation," 2; Haslam, *Psychology in Organizations: The Social Identity Approach*, 48.

[905] Scholars, including Esler, Gooder, and Harris, share a consensus that the term "κυρίου" in 2 Cor.12:1 is most appropriately interpreted as an objective genitive. This linguistic construction points to Paul's visions and revelations (ὀπτασίας καὶ ἀποκαλύψεις) emanating directly from the Lord. See Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 332; Paula R. Gooder, *Only the Third Heaven? 2 Corinthians 12:1-10 and Heavenly Ascent*, 207; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 833.

[906] A consensus among scholars exists regarding the interpretation of "I know a man in Christ" (οἶδα ἄνθρωπον ἐν Χριστῷ) in 2 Cor.12:2 as referring to Paul himself. See Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 333; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 834-835; Matera, *II Corinthians*,278; Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 778; Furnish, *ii Corinthians*,544; Barrett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 308. Why does Paul utilize an anonymous figure (ἄνθρωπον) to convey his experience? Esler's proposal appears cogent, suggesting that "he [Paul] wanted to mitigate the impact of the experience he will describe and the strength of the honour-claim it legitimated by putting a little rhetorical distance between himself and the beneficiary of the revelation." See Esler, 332. Lim contends that Paul's visionary revelation serves to legitimize his ministerial office as a gentile missionary. It is notable that Paul contrasts with rivals by emphasizing his weakness over his personal achievements. See Lim, *The Sufferings of Christ Are Abundant In Us'*, 186; White has taken a similar view to Esler and Lim, arguing that "the apostle wants to be perceived as humble and uninhibited by the lure of status (e.g., 10.1; 11:30)." White, *Pain and Paradox in 2 Corinthians*, 177-178.

their faith. This edification is crucial for the collective growth and development of the community, as it aligns with their key objective of reaching a deeper, more profound spiritual understanding and unity in their beliefs. By sharing his divinely inspired insights, Paul strengthens their faith and fosters a stronger, more cohesive group identity centred around their shared commitment to Christ.

Lastly, Paul's God-given knowledge offers a navigational compass for the Corinthians in responding to existing social norms, particularly in the assertion of making honour claims. According to Hogg et al. influential leaders construct and manage perceptions of group prototypes and their identity. This involves the ongoing processes of defining, consolidating, modifying, and reconstructing what the group represents and the identity category it embodies.[907]

In considering the above interpretations, Paul's explicit reference to his ecstatic experience is more significant in reshaping the values, specifically the claim of honour within the community. As an identity entrepreneur, Paul strategically formulates core norms and values pertinent to Christ-followers, such as guiding perceptions of honour claims. Once the Corinthians align themselves with these values, they undergo a systematic and transformative process, progressively assimilating the identity associated with those authentically "belonging to Christ."

Indeed, the SIA to leadership and leader identity theory provide valuable frameworks for understanding Paul's leadership in 2 Corinthians 10-13. However, this dual leadership framework has a limitation: It may not fully capture the depth and complexity of Paul's unique leadership model, particularly the intricate relationship with the divine. Although these theories can elucidate many aspects of Paul's leadership, such as group dynamics, identity formation, and the alignment of leader and follower perception, his leadership also encompasses theological and religious dimensions that extend beyond the scope of these social-psychological theories.

Paul's leadership is deeply intertwined with his theological convictions, such as divine-granted authority and suffering on behalf of Christ, which are central to his identity and mission. His emphasis on weakness and suffering is not merely a strategic choice but a profound theological statement about the nature of Christ's power and his obedience to Him. As Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 12:9-10, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." This belief that divine power is most fully revealed in human weakness redefines traditional notions of strength and authority considering the SIA to leadership and leader identity theory. According to these theories, leaders derive their authority from actively embodying the group's identity, norms, and values, aligning themselves with its collective identity.

More significantly, Paul's divine calling compels him to act with fervor,

[907] Hogg et al. "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 267-268.

motivating him to serve the Corinthians through his endurance of suffering selflessly. Paul's leadership includes unique elements that stem from his theological convictions rather than purely from alignment with the followers' expectations, such as the Corinthians. Paul's emphasis on obedience to the divine and participating in Christ's suffering are core aspects of his leadership that go beyond conventional leadership norms. These elements are deeply rooted in his religious beliefs and his understanding of what it means to follow Christ. Thus, Paul's leadership is grounded in a religious perspective, where temporary sufferings are seen in the light of eternal glory (2 Cor. 4:17) and a marker of the servant of Christ.

This theological bedrock provides hope and resilience, encouraging the Corinthians to endure hardships with the assurance of future reward. More importantly, the divine call, for example, as God's agent, directly drives Paul to act with passion. This specific motivator motivates Paul to champion the Corinthians' interests over his personal benefit. At this point, the eternal perspective underscores the limitation of the SIA to leadership in fully capturing the depth of Paul's leadership, which is profoundly shaped by theological convictions that inspire hope, resilience, and a transformative vision of discipleship rooted in divine grace and future glory. Social psychologists often underestimate religion's powerful role in shaping religious leaders like Paul.

4. Examining the Distinctiveness of Paul's Leadership through Comparisons

4.1. A Brief Review of "In-group identity entrepreneur"

According to SIA researchers, leaders "often need to work hard to create and promote a particular version of identity." Leaders must construct and master the group identity, including category prototypes, boundaries, and content, to define and categorize the group.[908] This enterprise, often called norm talk, involves constructing, reconstructing, or altering the coherent and unified group prototype.[909]

4.2. The Distinctiveness of Paul's Leadership

In 2 Corinthians 10-13, Paul plays a crucial role in reshaping the Corinthians' alignment with "belonging to Christ" (2 Cor.10:7). This superordinate inclusive identity unites Paul and the Corinthians. In Paul's mind, authentic Christ-followers are characterized by their adherence to Christ's exemplary model, as mentioned above, in contrast to worldly notions of making honour claims, authority, and leadership. Paul deliberately creates this ingroup identity by rejecting honour claims according to worldly standards (2 Cor.10:2) and "looking at the surface things" (2 Cor.10:7). These leadership qualities are closely linked to Paul's rivals and uncertain Corinthians, the former of whom Paul categorizes as an outgroup. Identifying "belonging to Christ" also alleviates the Corinthians' uncertainty regarding their sense of belonging or identity categorization—thus promoting a sense of "we-ness."

Similarly, in the Qumran community, the Maskil shapes the collective identity.

---

[908] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 162-163.
[909] Hogg, and Vaughan, *Social Psychology*, 341.

Members are designated "Israel" (1QS V.5) and "New Covenant" people (CD *genize B*.19). These designations serve to reinforce the distinct identity of God's chosen people. Maintaining "purity" is one of the major tasks of the Maskil within the community (1QS VIII.17-19). Much like Paul's efforts, the Maskil's role contributes to a specific ingroup identity, with the Torah's guidance as a unifying principle.

In Hillel's community, the Elder urged the Judeans to follow his teachings and models, which was to redefine their identity, aligning with the core values of the Torah in the first century. Hillel introduces the term "Disciple of Aaron," emphasizing that continuing Aaron's priesthood is not based on ethnic identity. Still, on obedience to the Torah and virtuous deeds (P. Aboth 1:12). His interpretation of the Torah plays a central role in reshaping this identity (b Beitsa 16a; Lev.R. Behar 34.3). Furthermore, Hillel promotes values of peace, love, and kindness (P. Aboth 1:12). His followers are encouraged to be peacemakers and extend love to all humankind, aligning with the idea of gathering all under the "Wings of Heaven" (ARN, Version B, Ch.26) to form a community of Torah believers.

However, leaders in the Greco-Roman associations have different focuses than Paul, the Maskil, and Hillel the Elder. Their leaders were often concerned with the practical aspects of maintaining the association, such as organizing meetings, overseeing finances, and ensuring the proper conduct of rituals. Leaders were crucial in preserving cohesion, overseeing rituals, and upholding their social order, as evident in "The Rule of the Iobakchoi" (*IG* II^2 1368) and "Divine Instructions for the Household Association of Dionysios (*SIG*^{3} 985, Lydia, 2/1 BCE-BCE).[910] Significantly, within Greco-Roman associations, the sense of identity and belonging is driven by shared interests, everyday activities, and a desire for mutual support. Leaders were granted authority by the patron rather than by a deity to maintain and oversee the well-ordered of their ingroup (*AM* 66:228 no. 4; *IG* II^2 1329; *IG* II^2 1325).

This stability encompasses the enforcement of proper behaviour within the group, for example, honouring their patrons (*IG*^{2} II 1292, lines 15-20; *IG* II^2 1325, lines 27-30) and the imposition of penalties on members who act in defiance of the group's rules and norms (*AM* 66:228 no.4, lines 18-19). Helping association members to adhere to the standards of proper behaviour becomes a defining feature of the associations (*IG* II^2 1343 and *IG* II^2 1298), particularly in setting them apart from other groups whom other patrons' lead. These associations provided a sense of community and social belonging. Their leaders' roles in shaping a unique ingroup identity were generally more limited when compared to religious or philosophical leaders like Paul, the Maskil, or Hillel. Compared with Paul, his divine-granted authority empowers him to enforce discipline to uphold the conduct of the Corinthians. As Paul mentioned, his purpose is to edify the

---

[910] The translation is based on Richard S. Ascough, eds., *Associations in the Greco-Roman World*, 82-83.

Corinthians rather than to tear them down through punishment.

A significant point of distinction, however, is that observance of the Torah is central to the Maskil and Hillel's teachings. In contrast, Paul urges the Corinthians to obey Christ according to the gospel and Christ's model (2 Cor.11:4). To Paul, a proper understanding of Christ's prototype, values, and exemplar is the cornerstone of the Corinthians' Christ-following group. Those ingroup members can differentiate between "we" and "they." For example, according to Paul, seeking self-honour according to worldly standards and preaching for a price represent clear distinctions between himself and the interlopers. As an identity manager, Paul aims to delineate and clarify these differences before the Corinthians. Group members can explore the significance of individuals and the group in connection to the broader social world.[911] Additionally, Paul's primary objective is reducing uncertainty about their identity. Creating a unique identity is central to the Judeans' and Paul's leadership. Leaders give members different designations, and these identifications relate to the category's prototypes and boundaries. The Maskil and Hillel insist upon shaping group members following the interpretation of the Torah.

In Hillel's community, Hillel instructs his followers to live out the virtues of "peace" and "love" (P. Aboth 1:12; Ps.34:6). Teaching followers to love the gentiles and urging them to teach the Torah to the gentiles are identity categories that make Hillel's group different from Shammai's community, the outgroup (ARN 12). More importantly, peace and love can be displayed by helping people experiencing poverty. Hillel is shaping the identity of Aaron's disciples. In the Qumran community, the community rules (1QS and CD) formulate the "sons of Zadok" category boundaries.

In 2 Corinthians 11, Paul's "fool speech" can be interpreted as identity communication in which the apostle reiterates and reinforces the identity category of authentic Christ-followers (2 Cor.11:1-6). According to Paul, the Corinthians have been led astray by the preaching of "another gospel" by the interlopers, deviating from his teaching on authentic Christ-followership. Paul conceives that Christ-followers' identity should not be constructed according to conventional values and norms. In contrast, Paul treats sufferings and afflictions by participating in Christ's ministry (2 Cor.21b-33) as an identity descriptor of authentic Christ's servant (2 Cor.11:23). As he expressed, "If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness." Here, Paul intends to reshape the identity content of group leadership to be associated with weakness and suffering, contrasting prevailing social norms and values (2 Cor.12:10).

Moreover, Paul establishes additional parameters for defining the faithful actions of the Corinthians (2 Cor.12:20-21). Paul explicitly enumerates a range of sinful behaviours that transpired among the Corinthians in the past. Paul states, "For I fear that when I come, I may find you not as I wish." This implies that Paul is concerned

---

[911] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 144.

that upon his arrival, he might observe quarrelling, jealousy, anger, selfishness, and other undesirable behaviours within the community. In this context, Paul's leadership features share similarities with the practices of the Quran community. For example, in 1QS, the Maskil's role involves supervising a newly enrolled member, ensuring they undergo a year of probationary period and remain under the guidance of senior members (1QS VIII. 1-4).

In 1QS IX.12 and 14, the Maskil also instructs members to "walk with every living being in compliance with the regulation…He should separate and weigh the sons of Zadok according to their spirit." Based on these observations, both Paul's and the Qumran communities emphasize a code of ethics and appropriate behaviour within their respective groups. A notable distinction can be observed with the Corinthians, where explicit community regulations are lacking. In this context, proper conduct among the Corinthians is rooted in Paul's teachings and guidance from the past (2 Cor.11:4 and 11:7).

In contrast, the Qumranites are bound by the instructions outlined in the 1QS and CD. For example, 1QS VIII.20-22, "These are the regulations by which the men of perfect holiness shall conduct themselves, one with another. All who enter the council of holiness of those walking in perfect behaviour as he commanded, anyone of them who breaks a word of the law of Moses impertinently or through carelessness will be banished from the Community council." This text illuminates that their identity is rooted in the pursuit of ingroup virtue through rigorous practices and adherence to community instruction. In 1QS and CD, the leaders do not exemplify "strength in weakness." Instead, they are seen as divinely authoritative figures who shape identity through strict adherence to regulations.

Some Greco-Roman associations employed community meetings to establish the ingroup identity, particularly distinguishing themselves from outgroup members.[912] In *IG* II^2 1343 and *IG* II^2 1298 reflect the dimension of identity entrepreneurship. This inscription *IG* II^2 1343 attests that *Diodoros* "shared responsibility for the initial gathering (*syllogē*) and, having also created the *synodos*…" His words and deeds benefit the association but also created an example to urge all members to follow: "all members might be zealous to enhance the *synodos,* seeing that its founder obtained a fitting token of goodwill and memorial." In this regard, it is worth noting that *Diodoros,* as one of the founders, is active in creating and formulating the group identity of the community. However, the honourable leaders show less concern with the discursive explanation of ingroup identity for the association in the manner of identity entrepreneurship theorized by the SIA. They spend money to express their generosity towards the association, for example, servicing the temple, maintaining the ritual exercises, and ensuring the well-being of the association and its group members. In this

---

[912] *IG* II^2 1275, *IG* II^2 1328, *IG* II^2 1326.

regard, leadership in Greco-Roman associations sharply contrasts with Paul's understanding of a leader's role. They often emphasize personal authority, power, and wealth, for example, *IG* II^2 1324 and *IRhamnous* II 59. In contrast, Paul values weakness and suffering as a source of true strength and the marker of authentic identity in Christ.

To summarize the key findings of this chapter, Paul, in response to accusations from the interlopers and suspicions from the Corinthians, strategically employs the leadership tactic of redefining and reconstructing the concept of honour claims. As proposed by the SIA to leadership, leaders can compensate for deficiencies in their representativeness of a shared identity by encouraging followers to internalize the group as a significant part of their self-concept.[913] Paul embodies the suffering and weakness associated with Christ by positioning himself as an exemplar of an authentic Christ's servant. This embodiment is a powerful witness to the transformative nature of his mission, demonstrating true strength, namely strength in weakness. Embracing vulnerability and relying on divine grace are the central features of Paul's leadership. He asserts that God strengthens him in weakness (2 Cor.13:3-5). Through this approach, Paul redefines the criteria for authentic apostleship and leadership, highlighting that genuine honour comes from faithfulness and service to Christ rather than conventional measures of success and strength.

---

[913] Steffens et al. "'Of the Group' and 'For the Group': How Followership is Shaped by Leaders' Prototypicality and Group Identification," 9.

Chapter Ten: Paul as an "Identity Embedder"

In this current chapter, we delve deeper into SIA leadership dimensions of "Embedding Identity" within the paradigm of Paul's leadership. According to Steffens et al., "Leaders need to create material realities consistent with, and serve to embed, a shared identity, thereby not just 'talking the talk' of 'us', but also 'walking the walk.'"[914] From this perspective, Paul's leadership concerning the aspect of "identity embedder" is seen in the Lord's Supper (1 Cor.11:23-30) and baptism (1 Cor.12:13). Paul intends to create events and rituals reinforcing the group's existence and allowing members to live out shared identity actively.[915]

Paul does not establish specific structures and rituals to encourage the Corinthians to live out the core values of following Christ in 2 Corinthians 10-13. Our analysis seeks to elucidate the underlying purposes of Paul's impending visit to Corinth, unravelling its connection to identity formation. Organized into three sections (2 Cor.10:7-8; 12:19-21; 13:5-10), each segment contributes to a nuanced understanding of the intricate interplay between Paul as an identity embedder and the process of edification (οἰκοδομή) within these chapters. The comprehensive examination aims to provide valuable insights into the multifaceted nature of Paul's leadership.

1. A Brief Review of Identity Embedder

Identity formation involves "A number of material dimensions to successful leadership and that harnessing these requires considerable skill."[916] This means leaders are responsible for articulating abstract visions and ideas about identity into tangible dimensions. These dimensions enable followers to understand and embody the shared identity of "who we are" and the normative values of "what we hold." Researchers have aptly suggested that "Vision needs to be matched by practice." This underscores the strategic role of leaders in creating various rituals, organizational structures, and ceremonies. These tangible manifestations represent and objectify the values inherent to the group, allowing followers to live out their ingroup vision and identity. An ingroup's identity can be reinforced by undermining rivals and disciplining followers. According to social psychologists, leadership is at the core of intergroup hostility. To understand conflict within an external group, we must also examine internal conflict over the authentic representation of "us". This underscores the pivotal role of leaders in group dynamics and conflict resolution.[917]

2. "Edification" (2 Cor.10:7-8)

At the heart of Paul's ministry in Corinth is the imperative task of building and

---

[914] Steffens et al. "Leadership as Social Identity Management: Introducing the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI) to Assess and Validate a Four-dimensional Model, 1005.

[915] Steffens et al. "Leadership as Social Identity Management: Introducing the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI) to Assess and Validate a Four-dimensional Model, 1005.

[916] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 165.

[917] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 144.

reinforcing the Corinthians' identity as Christ's followers. Paul's approach is not to impose but to urge the Corinthians to "take into account" (λογιζέσθω; 2 Cor.10:7) the nature and identity content concerning the concept of "belonging to Christ." As interpreted by Harris, this approach encourages those who claim a particular relation to Christ to follow their initiative of thought and progress to a further stage of reflection.[918]

Thus, "belonging to Christ" means to be Christ's servant or obedient Christ followers, and Paul is challenging his opponents who do not have such a relationship to Christ even though they claim themselves "belonging to Christ" (Χριστοῦ εἶναι; 2 Cor.10:7) and as "Christ's servant" (2 Cor.11:23).[919] Furnish's interpretation is plausible as he observed that "Paul is here supporting his status by comparing it to the status of others, a device which the ancient rhetoricians called *synkrisis*…"[920]

In keeping with this context, Paul probably rebukes the Corinthians "for buying in to a surface appraisal of himself and his ministry."[921] From this perspective, the phrase "belonging to Christ," in Paul's view, involves demonstrating Christ's words and works, mainly through the embodiment of suffering for the ingroup (2 Cor.10:15; 11:7; 11:23; 12:14). Therefore, the rhetorical function of 2 Corinthians 10:7 is that Paul invites the Corinthians to evaluate the identity descriptors between Paul and the interlopers if they insist to assess Paul's leadership effectiveness, or "the apostle's claim to authority"[922] according to "the things right in front of you" (Τὰ κατὰ πρόσωπον; 2 Cor.10:7).[923]

2.1. The Meaning of Edification

The Greek word οἰκοδομή signifies the process of construction,[924] and it appears four times within 2 Corinthians (5:1; 10:8; 12:19; 13:10). As Furnish argued, this noun "usually refers to the building up of the Christian community, effected as others are served in love."[925] Thrall further suggested that "as Christ's accredited agent, Paul possesses the power and authority to create a new community of believers and promote, guide and nurture the development of their spiritual life."[926]

In addition, Paul frequently employs this word figuratively in his writings, such as in 1 Corinthians 3:9; 14:3; 14:5; 14:12; 14:26, and Ephesians 2:21; 4:12; 4:16; 4:29. Across these instances, Paul emphasizes the symbolic use of οἰκοδομή to convey the idea of strengthening the faith of the Christ-followers. "Edification," even a metaphor, connects immediately with the role of embedding via the creation of literal or metaphorical edifices.

---

[918] Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 690.
[919] Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 622-623; Furnish, *ii Corinthians*, 476.
[920] Furnish, *ii Corinthians*, 476.
[921] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 477.
[922] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 478.
[923] Furnish, *ii Corinthians*, 465.
[924] *BDAG*, 618.
[925] Furnish, *ii Corinthians*, 467.
[926] Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 625.

2.2. Edification as a Means of Identity Formation

In 2 Corinthians 10:7-8, Paul aims to vindicate his apostleship.[927] Garland rightly noted that the broader goal of Paul's discourse is "to save the community from fools and a false gospel."[928] Paul has employed different rhetorical devices, including sarcasm, irony, and parody, to set himself apart from his rivals.[929] Notably, Paul uses "mock praise", commonly employed by ancient orators for apologizing, to carry out his defence.[930] Nevertheless, these scholarly interpretations may potentially overlook the strategic use of the concept of "belonging to Christ" (Χριστοῦ εἶναι) by Paul in shaping the identity of the Corinthians. As Social identity theorists suggested, "We will see that leadership is central to the origins of intergroup hostility. This is because conflict against 'them' cannot be properly understood without also addressing the intragroup conflict about who truly represents 'us.'"[931] This notion, drawn from SIA, offers a perspective from which to examine Paul's text.

In considering the dimension of "Identity Embedder," aiding members in actively incorporating their social identity into practice and living out their faith are crucial factors in determining leadership effectiveness. Recent research further asserts that identity enactment, particularly within religion, is closely connected to cognitive transformation and identification. These transformative processes are realized through the active participation of ingroup members in mass religious activities and ritual ceremonies.[932] The implication is that strategically organized activities enhance and strengthen ingroup identification. This perspective provides a framework for understanding Paul's figurative use of "edification," a tool for enacting the identity as authentic Christ's followers among the Corinthians. The process of identity enactment involves Paul encouraging the Corinthians to live out their faith through various religious practices. He urges them to remain faithful to the teachings he provided and to resist following the false teachings brought by outsiders (2 Cor.11:4). Paul emphasizes the importance of staying faithful to their identity by engaging in practices that reflect their commitment to Christ. This includes upholding community values, fostering unity, and living according to the gospel's teachings. By doing so, Paul seeks to strengthen their identity as authentic followers of Christ in contrast to the misleading messages from those attempting to undermine his authority.[933]

However, this interpretation is a noticeable absence of scrutiny of the interconnection between Paul's assertion of divinely given authority and the ongoing

---

[927] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 477-478; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 690-691.

[928] Garland, *2 Corinthians*, 425.

[929] Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 690-691; Keener, *1-2 Corinthians*, 220; Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 300; Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 634.

[930] Keener, *1-2 Corinthians*, 220.

[931] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 144.

[932] Stephen Reicher et al. "Identity Enactment as Collective Accomplishment: Religious Identity Enactment at Home and at a Festival," *British Journal of Social Psychology* 60 (2021), 694.

[933] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 294-295; Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 622-623; Furnish, *ii Corinthians*, 476-477.

edification process. Paul intentionally constructs a social reality that aligns with and objectifies the core values and beliefs of the Christ-following group. This dimension suggests that Paul's role entails skillfully orchestrating the dynamics of the group and their collective experience. As a leader, Paul intends to transform the group's identity from a conceptual framework into a tangible and lived reality for its members.[934] An example is the measure of being an authentic Christ-follower, which is not merely in words or claims but is observable in the tangible manifestation of their faith in their lives.

Within the context, the interlopers represent a group of Corinthians who criticize Paul regarding leadership. They challenge Paul's lack of skills to deliver a speech (2 Cor.10:10;11:5) and refusal to accept financial aid from the Corinthians (2 Cor.11:7; 12:16). In 2 Corinthians 10:8, Paul asserts that the Lord has given his authority, and this reference is to Christ (2 Cor.1:1). This leadership identity empowers Paul to undermine his rivals and deter opposition effectively.[935] Paul intentionally adopts the interlopers' flawed leadership model to establish his leadership paradigm concerning "belonging to Christ." This leadership model, marked by distinct identity markers, can be physically observed by the Corinthians (2 Cor.10:14-16; 11:5; 11:23-33; 12:10; 12:17; 13:1).

Following this, Paul's authoritative leadership given by the Lord is for "edifying" the Corinthians (περὶ τῆς ἐξουσίας ἡμῶν ἧς ἔδωκεν ὁ κύριος εἰς οἰκοδομὴν; 2 Cor.10:8). It is not for "destroying" them (οὐκ εἰς καθαίρεσιν ὑμῶν; 2 Cor.10:8). This statement is intimately linked to the warfare metaphor in 2 Corinthians 10:2-6. Bowens argues that throughout 2 Corinthians 10-13, "Paul blends this martial language with an apocalyptic/cosmic outlook[936] to foreground his depiction of God's war on behalf of humanity."[937] She further argued that "in 12:7 Paul fleshes out more fully what those high things involve: hostile satanic beings. The angel of Satan, in its attempt to obstruct Paul, exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and just as the enemy opposes his ascent and reception of knowledge about God, so too is the enemy at work among the Corinthians, utilizing the false apostles to create arguments against the gospel."[938]
This proposal faces several challenges:

Firstly, in 2 Corinthians 10:4-6, Paul focuses on confronting the interlopers obstructing God's knowledge. These external obstacles likely pertain to adherence to

---

[934] Haslam, and Reicher, "Rethinking the Psychology of Leadership: From Personal Identity to Social Identity," *Daedalus* 145.3 (2016): 30.

[935] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 144, and 165.

[936] In Bowens' view, ""apocalyptic," "cosmic," and "cosmological" are broadly defined as the sharing of social space by humans and superhuman beings in which each realm and the actions within that realm affect the other. Specifically, in terms of 2 Corinthians 10-13, I define apocalyptic and cosmic as the sharing of social space between humans and suprahumans, which encompasses the conflict between God and Satan in both the supernatural and human realms for the minds of the Corinthians in regard to knowledge of God. See Lisa M. Bowens, *An Apostle in Battle Paul and Spiritual Warfare in 2 Corinthians 12:1–10* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 36.

[937] See Bowens, *An Apostle in Battle Paul and Spiritual Warfare in 2 Corinthians 12:1–10*, 69.

[938] Bowens, *An Apostle in Battle Paul and Spiritual Warfare in 2 Corinthians 12:1–10*, 191.

Mosaic Laws (2 Cor.3:3-18) and other gospel versions (2 Cor.11:4). Secondly, the satanic metaphor in 2 Corinthians 11:13-14 underscores the interference of the interlopers disguising themselves as authentic apostles, akin to Satan himself, who masquerades as an angel of light. In this metaphor, Paul identifies the interlopers as false apostles, emphasizing that they preach an incorrect version of the gospel (2 Cor.11:4). Thirdly, Paul describes these adversaries as "messengers of Satan," who afflicts him like a bodily thorn, prompting him to plead with the Lord for relief from such suffering. Given these points, arguing for a connection between this thorn and an apocalyptic outlook becomes challenging.

Guthrie's interpretation of the false ministers in Corinth, who opposed Paul as interlopers akin to the enemy, is compelling. Paul's adoption of siege warfare imagery to caution the Corinthians is a strategic move that resonates powerfully with his audience. The term Καθαίρεσιν, used three times in 2 Corinthians (10:4; 10:8; 13:8), underscores the divine-given authority that Paul wields, capable of dismantling all strongholds set by adversaries. This word is strategically contrasted with οἰκοδομὴν (2 Cor.10:8; 13:8), further emphasizing the power dynamics at play.

On the one hand, Paul highlights that his transformative efforts are inherently rooted in God's commission (2 Cor.10:8). As discussed in Chapter Seven, Paul's leadership identity stems directly from God's calling. This empowers Paul to guide the Corinthians toward identifying as obedient Christ-followers.[939] This divinely granted authority further allows Paul to redefine the Corinthians' sense of identity.

On the other hand, although Paul assumes the role of God's warrior (2 Cor.10:3-4) and possesses authoritative power to "destroy" the disobedient ones, he decides to wield his authority to build up the Corinthians. According to the SCT theorizing, "When people define themselves in terms of a given social identity, they are motivated to see that (in)group ('us') as positively distinct from other comparison(out)groups (them).[940] Paul's strategy aligns with this notion. Paul views the interlopers as the outgroup that has erected barriers against the knowledge of God (2 Cor.10:4). The identity markers of these outgroup members are spreading a different gospel that leads the Corinthians away from obedience to Christ.

As Esler rightly suggested, as a divine warrior, Paul recognizes that his responsibility is to destroy these obstacles, such as speculations and arrogant ideas, to take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. In this sense, those willing to follow Christ are considered the ingroup in Paul's view. Paul's primary objective is to edify this group to be faithful.[941] As an identity embedder, Paul establishes the framework for structuring Christ-followers' identities. It accentuates the difference of

---

[939] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 472.
[940] Haslam et al. "Reconciling Identity Leadership and Leader Identity: A Dual-identity Framework," *The Leadership Quarterly* 33 (2022), 2.
[941] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 296-297.

honour claims within the context of "belonging to Christ" (2 Cor.10:17-18), which is different from the interlopers, particularly their assertion of making honour claims about their contributions (2 Cor.10:12).

The recent archaeological project by Paul A. Iversen and Donald Laing Jr. highlights the prevalence of honour claims in Corinthian inscriptions. Their research reveals that these claims, mainly identified in inscriptions, are closely linked to social standing and ceremonial rituals.[942] Donahoe states this practice "appear[s] within the matrix of honor and shame that permeated the Greco-Roman World, where the pursuit of honor was a competitive endeavor that aimed to elevate and maintain one' social standing."[943] Scholars are currently interested in examining honour claims in Paul's discourse in 2 Corinthians.[944] In Plutarch's view, employing self-praise is appropriate when it is not used for glorifying one's reputation. Instead, it should be only for virtuous reasons, such as providing protection and strength for others. This serves the purpose of preventing people from falling into despair (545B-D).[945]

In line with Plutarch's perspective, Paul strongly rejects the use of honour claims for personal glorification (539B) in 2 Corinthians 10. Instead, Paul asserts, "For even if I boast somewhat freely about the authority the Lord gave us for building you up rather than pulling you down, I will not be ashamed of it" (2 Cor.10:8). Paul considers the virtuous purpose of edifying the Corinthians in faith as justifiable. Therefore, he expresses that he will not feel ashamed even when making an honour claim before them. Contrary to the interlopers, Paul clarifies that his leadership aims to help the Corinthians understand their faith (2 Cor.10:15; 11:4) and to live it out authentically (2 Cor.13:7).

---

[942] Two researchers have revisited six pieces of the Corinthians honorific inscriptions and find that in I-1976-15 and I-1977-15, "to honor" appears in Line 5. In I-943+I-1977-13 Line 2, although the word is omitted after "the granted", two scholars argue that this stele still emphasizes the importance of honoring the judges and secretary (Line 2-3) during the ritual ceremony (Line 1). Furthermore, other terms such as "to show favor" (Line 8), "crown" (Line 10 and 15) in I-1974+14+I-255 are clearly associated with honoring patrons. These findings underscore the significance of honor claims in the ancient Corinth. See Paul A. Iversen and Donald Laing Jr. "Greek and Latin Inscriptions from Temple Hill, Corinth," in *Hesperia* Vol.90 (2021):126-138. Other inscriptions related to honorific inscriptions, see Kent, The Inscriptions, Nos, 58, 60, 75, 76, 77-106. West's work on Latin inscriptions: Nos 16, 56-57, 66, 68, 71, 121-123, 130, 132.

[943] Kate C. Donahoe, "From Self-Praise to Self-Boasting: Paul's Unmasking of the Conflicting Rhetorico-Linguistic Phenomena in 1 Corinthians," (PhD Diss., University of St. Andrews, 2008), 2.

[944] Matthew Pawlak, "Disambiguating Forms of Irony in Second Corinthians 10–13," *Irony in the Bible*, (2023): 312-327; Ryan S Schellenberg, "Paul, Samson Occom, and the Constraints of Boasting: A Comparative Rereading of 2 Corinthians 10–13," *Harvard Theological Review* 109.4 (2016): 512-535; Marcin Kowalski, *Boasting of Self into Boasting in the Lord: The Development of the Pauline Periautologia in 2 Cor 10–13* (Lanham: University Press of America, 2013); Donahoe, "From Self-praise to Self-boasting: Paul's Unmasking of the Conflicting Rhetorico-Linguistic Phenomena in 1 Corinthians," 2007; Glancy, "Boasting of Beatings (2 Corinthians 11: 23-25)," 99-135; George Brown Davis, "*True and false boasting in 2 Cor. 10-13*," (PhD Diss., University of Cambridge, 1998); Scott Hafemann, "Self-Commendation' and Apostolic Legitimacy in 2 Corinthians: A Pauline Dialectic?." *NTS* 36.1 (1990): 66-88; Forbes, "Comparison, Self-Praise and Irony: Paul's Boasting and the Conventions of Hellenistic Rhetoric," 1-30; Arthur Edwin Judge, "Paul's Boasting in Relation to Contemporary Professional Practice," *Australian Biblical Review* 16 (1968): 37-50.

[945] For a detailed discussion, see Peter-Ben Smit, "Paul, Plutarch and the Problematic Practice of Self-Praise (περιαυτολογία): The Case of Phil 3.2-21," *NTS* 60.3 (2014).

This sheds light on Paul uses a series of rhetorical questions as a strategy, prompting the Corinthians to assess his leadership beyond mere "surface things" (2 Cor.10:7), which are associated with the fleshly realm (κατὰ σάρκα-2 Cor.10:2-3).

In addition, Paul, acting as an identity impresario, frequently announces the impending disciplinary measures during his upcoming visit (2 Cor.10:6; 12:20-21; 13:1). Paul claims that being a divine warrior, his intent is on captivating the Corinthians to "obey to Christ." Paul emphasizes that once their obedience is complete, he is ready to punish the disobedience, namely the interlopers. From this perspective, "obedience to Christ" is a vision that Paul intends to advocate among the Corinthians. Paul also aims to urge the audience to pursue several identity markers about such a vision. On the one hand, this vision differentiates between the obedient Corinthians and the disobedient interlopers. On the other hand, Paul's teaching and guidance aim to edify the Corinthians towards obedience to Christ. For instance, gaining a new understanding of claiming honour is central to Paul's ministry.

To achieve this, Paul's third visit to Corinth can be seen as an intentional effort to assess whether the Corinthians align with his teachings and obey. This visit serves as a crucial moment to evaluate their commitment to the vision Paul has set forth, which includes their obedience to Christ (2 Cor.10:1; 10:11; 13:2). As social identity researchers claim, "The leader must give followers a sense of a desired future and inspire them to work towards it…It keeps people going in anticipation of a new world that fully embodies group identity and moves them clearly in that particular direction."[946] In Paul's case, his teachings and expectations for obedience to Christ are the foundation for this desired future.

Paul's visit to Corinth can be seen not only as an assessment of their obedience but also as a reinforcement of his articulated vision. The vision encourages the Corinthians to embrace their identity as obedient followers of Christ, thereby distinguishing them from those who are disobedient (such as the interlopers). This aligns with the leadership principle, namely leader impresarios, in which an effective leader should "Develop structures, events, and activities that give weight to the group's existence and allow group members to live out their membership.[947]

As indicated by Identity Validation theory, this social phenomenon occurs when a person's sense of self is affirmed, usually through external sources of information. It also happens when an individual is acknowledged and accepted as a member of their ingroup.[948] From this perspective, when the Corinthians' clusters of behaviour, such as their refusal to claim worldly honour (2 Cor.10:2) and their discernment against false

---

[946] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 162.

[947] Steffens et al. "Leadership as Social Identity Management: Introducing the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI) to Assess and Validate a Four-dimensional Model," 1005.

[948] Choi, and Hogg, "Who Do You Think You Are? Ingroup and Outgroup Sources of Identity Validation," 2-3.

teachings (2 Cor.11:4), as well as their new understanding of Paul's experience of suffering and weakness, serve as observable indicators that authenticate their identity boundaries as "belonging to Christ." These signify their commitment to the virtuous life associated with "belonging to Christ."

To summarize, identity embedding is a leadership dimension where leaders intentionally employ identity rhetoric to motivate and inspire followers to manifest their beliefs and norms in a materialized form. Such an identity can be exhibited through observable actions. In 2 Corinthians 10:7-8, Paul, serving as a representative of authentic Christ-followers, anchors his rhetorical objective in edifying the Corinthians, particularly regarding honour claim, to motivate them to change, aligning with the concept of "belonging to Christ."

3."Edification" (2 Cor.12:19-21)

Paul consistently focuses on the spiritual well-being and growth of the Corinthians in 2 Corinthians 12:19-21. This statement is part of a more extensive section where Paul continues to defend his leadership and respond to the criticism he faced from the false apostles and the Corinthians. The term οἰκοδομή (2 Cor. 12:19) appears in the context of 2 Corinthians 12:19-21, where Paul endeavours to elucidate his motivation and purposes of his third visit (2 Cor.12:14).[949] In Paul's view, his motivation is not on making ἀπολογέομαι (self-defence), as Paul expresses that his words are spoken before God. Guthrie plausibly interprets Paul's words as "profoundly grounded in his posture before God and in his relationship with Christ."[950] This notion aligns with the concept of leader leadership theorizing, suggesting Paul's claim to divine authority shows his closeness to God. This intimate relationship enables Paul to exercise leadership and effectively shape the Corinthians' identity.

Thrall and Lambrecht suggested that 2 Corinthians 12:19 functions as a transitional verse, shifting Paul's focus from defending his apostleship to addressing the moral well-being of the Corinthians.[951] Paul's upcoming visit encompasses a range of topics, including his refusal to accept financial support and his deep concerns about moral laxity within the community.[952] Additionally, Paul expresses concerns about the ongoing strife and factionalism among the Corinthians.[953] These readings undeniably present an interpretative framework for understanding the text. Yet a noticeable gap exists in scholarly discussion regarding how Paul strategically employs the phrase ὑπὲρ τῆς ὑμῶν οἰκοδομῆς with his impending third visit to shape the identity of the Corinthians.

In 2 Corinthians 12:19, Paul explicitly raises a question about his act of self-

---

[949] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 618; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 979; Matera, *II Corinthians*, 290-291.
[950] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 617.
[951] Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 858; Lambrecht, *Second Corinthians*, 216.
[952] Matera, *II Corinthians*, 291.
[953] Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 893; Matera, *II Corinthians*, 297-298.

defence (ἀπολογούμεθα), which revolves around his decision to decline financial assistance from the Corinthians in the impending visit (2 Cor.12:14-18). The crux of this confrontation lies in Paul's choice not to impose an economic burden (κατεβάρησα) upon the Corinthians. His primary objective is to underscore his parental love for the community, explicitly guiding their spiritual growth (2 Cor.12:15). The rhetorical function of this verse, as Thrall argued, "Paul intends that his conduct should be seen as an intensified individual expression of the general rule he has just propounded."[954] He is very gladly spent for the sake of his ingroup members.

However, specific Corinthians cast doubt on Paul, levelling accusations of cunning and deceit against him (ἀλλὰ ὑπάρχων πανοῦργος δόλῳ ὑμᾶς ἔλαβον; 2 Cor.12:16). To counter this claim, Paul employs the rhetorical phrase Πάλαι δοκεῖτε (Have you been thinking all along; 2 Cor.12:19), rejecting the insinuation of deception. He emphasizes that "We are speaking before God in Christ" (2 Cor.12:19). These claims imply Paul's assertions carry divine approval and authority, as mentioned above, allowing God to pass judgment on the matter.

According to Identity Fusion Theory, Paul's statement can be interpreted in two dimensions. Considering his leader's identity, Paul reiterates that Christ verifies his expression of sincere love. Secondly, it asserts that Christ endorses the legitimacy of Paul's leadership. Therefore, Christ becomes an external source for validating his integrity. From this perspective, Paul's self-understanding of his leadership role motivates him. This motivator propels him to exercise his leadership actively, aiming to construct and strengthen the identity of the Corinthians.

According to the SIA to leadership, an effective leader is characterized by a highly salient prototype, embodying "being one of us" and "doing for us." These attributes contribute to fostering trust within the dynamic between leaders and followers.[955] Paul's leadership aligns with this perspective, which is evident in 2 Corinthians 12:14-18, where he explicitly articulates his deep concern for the community's spiritual growth rather than seeking financial advantage from them. Here, Paul actively shapes perceptions of the group's attributes and objectives, positioning himself as an embodiment of group prototypical attributes. Paul's strategy can enhance Paul's leadership position, bringing about transformation and motivation among the ingroup members.[956]

Amidst these considerations, it becomes apparent that Paul's initial impression may be misconstrued as a defence of his credentials (2 Cor.12:19). However, Paul consistently emphasizes that the core of his ministry is οἰκοδομή. Paul intentionally

---

[954] Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 846.
[955] Hogg et al. "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 272.
[956] Hogg et al. "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," 277.

arranges a physical visit to evaluate how the Corinthians embody their faith in practice (2 Cor.12:20-21). As the SIA to leadership with embedding notes, "Vision needs to be matched by practice the social practices internal to the group and the social practices implemented by the group." In the forthcoming visit, Paul asserts that he will not show leniency to those identified as sinners (2 Cor.13:2). Crucially, Paul's actions, including the exercise of discipline, are guided by the overarching goal of building up the Corinthians (2 Cor.12:19). This aligns with the principle of "leader as identity embedder," as effective leadership entails not only articulating a vision but also implementing tangible social practices.[957]

The third visit orchestrated by Paul is not just a visit but a means for the Corinthians to actively participate in their faith, turning their identity as Christ-followers into a tangible social reality. This practice of living out their faith objectifies the group identity of the Corinthians' Christ-followers. Paul's intent is on "edifying" or "building up" the Corinthians, envisioning them as God's holy temple (ὁ γὰρ ναὸς τοῦ θεοῦ ἅγιός ἐστιν, οἵτινές ἐστε ὑμεῖς; 1 Cor.3:17). This metaphorical construction emphasizes the nature of holiness of the Corinthian community as individuals collectively devoted to God. Guthrie rightly suggested, "Paul is not on the defence in 2 Corinthians is on the offence. He wants the Corinthians to embrace him fully as their apostle, so they will rightly relate to God and God's gospel."[958] Within the SIA's framework, οἰκοδομή signifies growth in the life and identity of Christ-followers, encompassing both cognitive aspects like core group beliefs (as described by Bar-Tal) and behavioural norms.[959]

Building on this, in 2 Corinthians 12:20-21, Paul expresses concerns about potential behaviours he might witness among the Corinthians in his next visit. These behaviours, including "quarrelling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, factions, slander, gossip, arrogance and disorder" (ἔρις, ζῆλος, θυμοί, ἐριθείαι, καταλαλιαί, ψιθυρισμοί, φυσιώσεις, ἀκαταστασίαι; 2 Cor.12:20), do not align with the identity markers of obedient Christ-followers. Concerning this issue of potential misconduct, Lambrecht argued that "Paul speaks of a present deplorable situation in Corinth." Esler challenges this view, suggesting that Paul is not accusing them of engaging in the eight forms of behaviour. Instead, he presents these as activities in which he fears they might engage in the future.[960]

Despite the lack of explicit details about the misconduct in 2 Corinthians 12, Matera argued that Paul's situation involves a division among the Corinthians. Some have aligned with intruding apostles against Paul, while others have remained loyal to

---

[957] This perspective aids in understanding Paul's call for offerings to support the Christ-following communities in Jerusalem (2 Cor. 8-9). This action serves to make invisible beliefs of the ingroup visible and tangible. See Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 165.

[958] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 618.

[959] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 348.

[960] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 352.

him.[961] In such a scenario, the division among the Corinthians could have resulted in quarrelling and disorder among the congregants, indicating the possibility of factionalism. This situation explicitly leads Paul to worry about what he may find (εὑρίσκω) in his upcoming visit.

Although in 2 Corinthians, Paul appears to be less focused on the ethical concerns of the Corinthians compared with 1 Corinthians.[962] He consistently introduces contrasting values to those mentioned in 2 Corinthians 12:20-21. Through establishing these prototypical values within the Corinthians, Paul asserts that these Corinthians are truly manifesting their identity aligned with "obedience to Christ." As Esler suggested, "He (Paul) is focused on the group and the threat posed to its identity and existence by various forms of possible outgroup behaviour."[963] Esler's perspective aligns with SIA theorizing, where a leader's task is to "clarify people's understanding of what the group stands for by defining core values, norms, and ideals."[964] To Paul, if the Corinthians claim to "belong to Christ," Paul expects them to display this commitment through their moral conduct, aligning their actions with their identity as Christ-followers.

According to the concept of identity, impresarios serve "to embed and naturalize a shared sense of 'us', thereby giving weight to the group's existence and making it matter in the world at large. It involves initiating group practices and activities that are oriented to internal reality and allow group members to live out, and to derive meaning from, their group membership."[965] In light of this, Paul encourages the Corinthians to live out their faith, emphasizing the core values of "belonging to Christ." This means not only talking the talk but also walking the talk. Therefore, if some of the Corinthians still engage in sexual depravity and sinful acts when Paul visits them shortly. It will indicate their rejection of Paul's teachings and failure to pursue obedience to Christ. This profoundly distresses Paul.

To sum up, Paul reiterates that his divine authority is wielded only to edify the community rather than pull them down (2 Cor.13:10; 10:8). In essence, Paul's authoritative power is employed to maintain the distinctiveness and purity of the Corinthians in relation to authentic Christ-followers, given their status as the temple of God. Paul asserts that he may experience grief (πενθέω) if the Corinthians are unwilling to repent, particularly if numerous sinful acts recur in the community (2 Cor.12:21).

4. "Edification" (2 Cor.13:5-10)

In 2 Corinthians 13:5-10, Paul plans to hold a meeting with the Corinthians, viewing it

---

[961] Matera, *II Corinthians*, 300.

[962] Paul intends to establish distinct identity markers, such as "restoration in order" (καταρτίζω; 1 Cor.1:10), "holiness" (ἁγιασμός; 1 Cor.1:30), and "peace" (εἰρήνη; 1 Cor.14:33).

[963] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 352.

[964] Steffens et al. "Leadership as Social Identity Management: Introducing the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI) to Assess and Validate a Four-dimensional Model," 1004-1005.

[965] Steffens et al. "Leadership as Social Identity Management: Introducing the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI) to Assess and Validate a Four-dimensional Model," 1005.

as a form of social institution that aligns with the concept of οἰκοδομή within SIA terms. The third instance of employing the term "Edification" occurs in 2 Corinthians 13:10, situated within the broader context of 2 Corinthians 13:5-10, where Paul exhorts the Corinthians to "Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith" (πειράζετε εἰ ἐστὲ ἐν τῇ πίστει). Paul clearly expresses his intention to return to Corinth, stating, "I am coming" (ἔρχομαι; 2 Cor. 13:1). This declaration serves as a pointed reminder to the Corinthians that this will be his third visit (Τρίτον τοῦτο). [966] This reminder holds significance as Paul plans to engage in a confrontation, undoubtedly in the context of a formal meeting with the Corinthians during his upcoming visit.

The ongoing tension, especially regarding questions about his leadership (2 Cor.10:2; 10:10; 11:16; 12:17) or in terms of "proof" (δοκιμὴν; 2 Cor.13:3), prompts Paul to draw comparisons between himself and the interlopers intentionally. This suggests that the impending visit will serve as a platform for resolving the issues surrounding Paul's leadership in a direct and formal meeting. According to the concept of identity embedding, initiating meetings enables group members to live out and find meaning in their group members.[967] A crucial element in establishing Paul's leadership lies in the fact that God has granted him the authority to take necessary disciplinary action against those who are disobedient. [968] As a divine-accredited apostle, the execution of discipline is viewed as having a primary function of "building up" (οἰκοδομή-2 Cor.13:10).

Employing a rhetorical question in 2 Corinthians 13:5, Paul prompts the Corinthians to scrutinize their spiritual standing by aligning themselves with the exemplar of Christ Jesus. Esler and Raymond Collins proposed that the rhetorical question in Paul's mind anticipates receiving a positive answer. Particularly when the Corinthians look deep within themselves, they might recognize Christ is present among them.[969] Esler and Keener proposed that the concept of self-examination, as conveyed through the phrase Ἑαυτοὺς πειράζετε (literally meaning "examining yourself"), which is the core theme in 2 Corinthians 13:5-10.[970]

In the Greco-Roman context, self-evaluation was typically rooted in human reasoning and often carried a deity's approval.[971] Now, Paul urges the Corinthians to evaluate themselves through the lens of Christ. Esler argued that "Paul has been painfully shamed by the suggestion that he needs to prove that Christ spoke through him, meaning they wanted to cross-examine him. That was an insult, a challenge to his

---

[966] Lambrecht, *Second Corinthians*, 158-159 and 233.
[967] Steffens et al. "Leadership as Social Identity Management: Introducing the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI) to Assess and Validate a Four-dimensional Model," 1005.
[968] Keener, *1-2 Corinthians*, 245.
[969] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 363; Collins, *Second Corinthians*, 256.
[970] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 362-363; Keener, *1-2 Corinthians*, 246.
[971] Keener, *1-2 Corinthians*, 246.

honour, and, in this honour-obsessed culture, it required that he reply."[972] These scholarly perspectives may not fully grasp the intricate connection between Paul's leadership and the identity formation of the Corinthians. Applying the lens of SIA to leadership offers a novel perspective that can enhance our understanding of Paul's rhetoric in this context.

Through the strategic use of rhetorical questions in 2 Corinthians 13:5, Paul's edification focuses on compelling the Corinthians to reevaluate their dedication to following Christ.[973] This is notably emphasized by the insertion of ἑαυτούς at the beginning of the verse and its repetition three times throughout 2 Corinthians 13:5.[974] Guthrie suggested that "Paul calls for the Corinthians to test themselves, probing their own nature or character."[975] Thrall argued that Paul's usage underscores the importance of his message.[976] Paul intentionally calls the Corinthians to examine themselves whether they are "in the faith" (ἐν τῇ πίστει; 2 Cor.13:5). Scholars suggest that it connotes correct belief, convictions, and total devotion to Christ. It encompasses not only an individual's spiritual but also that of the community.[977] Furnish and Harris plausibly argued that "in the faith" manifests the Corinthians' obedience to Paul and the gospel he proclaimed.[978] Paul urges the Corinthians to examine their faith as demonstrated within the community. As we have discussed, obedience to Christ can be viewed as a vision Paul hopes the Corinthians will embrace and follow receiving this letter.

As researchers have suggested, leaders' vision reflects who we are, what we value, and what sort of society would constitute our Eden.[979] In Paul's view, the collective vision shared by the Corinthians and himself embodies the core values of "obedience to Christ" in faith. This represents the ideal state for every Christ-follower, where they can glorify the Lord (2 Cor.4:15). Paul's leadership emphasizes a communal identity grounded in faith and obedience to Christ. He envisions a community where each member's actions and beliefs align with the teachings of Christ, fostering a collective objective and spiritual growth. This shared vision strengthens the bond between Paul and the Corinthians and serves as a guiding principle for their spiritual journey. Although Paul's third visit is not a formal ritual or ceremony, it serves as a significant meeting between Paul and the Corinthians, allowing them to demonstrate their faith in Christ. Through his guidance and presence, Paul helps the Corinthians embody their shared vision, creating a spiritually unified and devoted community that seeks to glorify

---

[972] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 362.
[973] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 639.
[974] Esler, *2 Corinthians*, 362-362.
[975] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 638.
[976] Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 888.
[977] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 638-639; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 920; Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 889.
[978] Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 920; Furnish, *ii Corinthians*, 577.
[979] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 165.

the Lord in all aspects of their lives.

Moreover, in the context of 2 Corinthians 13, Paul employs "pray" (εὔχομαι) twice (2 Cor.13:7; 13:9), underscoring his concern for how the Corinthians are to live out their faithful lives (ἵνα ὑμεῖς τὸ καλὸν ποιῆτε; 2 Cor.13:7). In the context of "prayer," the SIA to leadership provides two leadership dimensions to understand Paul's action. First, as discussed in the preceding chapter, Paul champions the Corinthians' interests, expressing his joy derived from their perfection. Therefore, Paul appears less concerned with "who is strong and weak." Instead, he focuses on restoring trust between himself and the Corinthians. Second, Paul reinforces their identity by praying for the Corinthians for two purposes: firstly, the Corinthians may not do wrong, and secondly, they gain spiritual maturation.

As Guthrie rightly noted, "Paul prays that the Corinthians will choose a course of action that aligns them with his ministry and his teaching."[980] This notion suggests that Paul considers the demonstration of virtuous deeds central to identifying as obedient Christ-followers (2 Cor. 13:7). Paul emphasizes the importance of the Corinthians doing what is correct following Christ's teaching, even if he and his team might be perceived as "unqualified." Similarly, in 2 Corinthians 13:9, Paul is less concerned about his weakness. Paul claims that he rejoices (χαίρομεν) even though he and his team are perceived as weak while the Corinthians are strong. Paul's rejoicing is based on two reasons: firstly, the mutual caring relationship established between Paul and the Corinthians is strong (2 Cor.7:7), and secondly, the Corinthians have repented from their wrongdoing and their obedience to Paul (2 Cor.7:9; 7:16).

In 2 Corinthians 13:10, Paul indicates his intention to visit Corinth soon. Before the meeting, Paul desires reconciliation and restoration of the relationship between himself and the Corinthians. He hopes for their repentance and trust in his effective leadership. He chooses not to wield his divinely granted authority harshly against the Corinthians. In other words, his deep concerns about edifying the spiritual life of the Corinthians explicitly state that he does not wish to employ discipline to display his power (2 Cor.13:10). Therefore, Paul encourages them to live out their faith, which would bring him joy. More significantly, Paul intends to urge the Corinthians to separate themselves from the interlopers, especially in rejecting their false teachings. As researchers argued, "Making the group matter by making it visible not only to group members but also to people outside the group."[981] This suggests that the visibility and conduct of the group, including the Corinthians, are essential to those who observe them. Thus, demonstrating obedience among the Corinthians becomes a marker of those who truly "belonging to Christ." In other words, their obedience and adherence to Christ's teachings distinguish them as authentic followers of Christ, both with the Corinthians

---

[980] Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 641.
[981] Steffens et al. "Leadership as Social Identity Management: Introducing the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI) to Assess and Validate a Four-dimensional Model," 1005.

(ingroup) and those interlopers (outgroup) looking in.

In addition, John C. Turner's perspective on coercion power distinguishes between "power over" followers and "power through," thus emphasizing the critical role of persuasion. The former involves imposing authority through punishment, inducing shame and guilt in disobedient followers. Turner suggests that effective leadership operates through "power through" the group, standing for, representing, believing in, and working for the group.[982]

This proposal seems incongruent with Paul's strategy of impending punishment for the unrepentant ones. However, social identity researchers contend that influential leaders as identity embedders should gain control over identity definitions.[983] Notably, leadership is integral to the origins of intergroup hostility because conflict against "them" cannot be understood without addressing intragroup conflict about who represents "us." [984] For the third time, Paul consistently emphasizes that his God-granted authority is not wielded to tear down or exercise power over the Corinthians. Instead, its purpose is to edify them, fostering their development as faithful community members of their ingroup. This edification process can be viewed as a form of influence, motivating the Corinthians to positively change their attitudes and behaviour.

Two points underlie Paul's edifying intention depicted in 2 Corinthians 13:5-10: Firstly, he aims to shape the identity of the Corinthians' Christ-followers, ensuring their adherence to the faith. In 2 Corinthians 13:10, Paul elucidates the reason for writing "these or certain things when he is absent" (τοῦτο ταῦτα ἀπὼν; 2 Cor.13:10). "These things" espouses a range of aspects, including the request for apostolic proof, Paul's refusal to make honour claims, his avoidance of seeking financial support, his willingness to endure suffering, and a proper understanding of the function of his ecstatic experiences. In this context, "these things" serve as a comprehensive reference to various elements that contribute to Paul's view on those who claim to be Christ-followers, asserting their belonging to Christ.

Secondly, Paul's authority claim provides a foundation for imparting spiritual instructions to the Corinthians regarding how-to live-in faith. Paul assumes the role of an identity impresario, urging the Corinthians to embody their faith and transform their vision into a tangible reality. He encourages them to live out their faith faithfully and authentically, unlike those who have led them astray. This is significant as Paul strives to set himself apart from the interlopers and super-apostles, who wield authority for personal gain. In stark contrast, Paul exercises power only on the grounds of

---

[982] John C. Turner, Katherine J. Reynolds, and Emina Subasic, "Identity Confers Power: The New View of Leadership in Social Psychology," *Public Leadership* (2008): 66; Turner, "Explaining the Nature of Power: A Three-Process Theory," 6-7.

[983] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 166; Steffens et al. "Leadership as Social Identity Management: Introducing the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI) to Assess and Validate a Four-dimensional Model," 1005.

[984] Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 144.

constructive purpose in building the community rather than in enhancing his reputation and personal honour.

Within the context of 2 Corinthians 13:9-10, Paul employs καταρτίζω and οἰκοδομή to address and seeks the rectification of the strained relationship between himself and the Corinthians. Paul expresses a desire to witness the Corinthians' perfection, which entails them actively living out faithfulness in Christ, having repentance, and placing their trust in his leadership-especially in anticipation of his upcoming visit. Furthermore, Paul is deeply committed to seeing the Corinthians distance themselves from the influence of interlopers who have preached an incorrect gospel. In SIA's perspective, Paul's rivals exemplify an inappropriate prototype of what it means to be a leader (this a battle of the διάκονοι; 2 Cor.11:23) within the Christ-following community. In this context, Paul assumes the role of an identity impresario, actively moulding and promoting the Corinthians' identity within the framework of their faith. He fervently encourages them to embody their faith, transforming their envisioned ideals into tangible realities. This approach constitutes a compelling call to action, urging the Corinthians to live out their faith authentically, starkly contrasting those who have misled them. Ultimately, Paul's leadership is driven by his dedication to preserving the authenticity of the Corinthians, emphasizing his commitment to the spiritual well-being of the Corinthians.

5. Examining the Distinctiveness of Paul's Leadership through Comparisons

5.1. A Brief Review of "Leader as identity embedder"

Researchers of the SIA to leadership suggest that a leader performs the role of identity impresario. They organize social actions, such as meetings, parades, and rituals, to "make the group matter."[985] As "identity impresarios," leaders endeavour to "devise and choreograph collective activities and events that bring the groups they lead to life and give them a material force."[986]

5.2. The Distinctiveness of Paul's Leadership

In comparing the leadership related to identity embedding of four ancient social groups, Paul's Corinthian group and the Hillel the Elder have relied on organized activities, rituals, or ceremonial events to foster group cohesion or materialize their ingroup visions. In 2 Corinthians 8-9, unlike 2 Corinthians 10-13, Paul urges the Corinthians to complete their collection, reminding them of their commitment to supporting Jerusalem's saints. This event indeed allows the Corinthians to live out their membership. In this text, Paul not only highlights the Macedonians' generosity as a positive example (2 Cor. 8:1-5) but encourages the Corinthians by affirming their good deeds (2 Cor.8:7). Paul also reminds the importance of cheerful and generous giving as

---

[985] Steffens et al. "Leadership as Social Identity Management: Introducing the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI) to Assess and Validate a Four-dimensional Model," 1004-1005.
[986] Haslam et al. "Reconciling Identity Leadership and Leader Identity: A Dual-identity Framework," 146. This notion can be seen in Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 179.

God has provided sufficient resources to them (2 Cor.9:10-15). Through these appeals, Paul reinforces and materializes the Corinthians' identity and values, motivating them to live out the faith by practicing offering. Paul's acts in this text align with the concept of "leader as an identity embedder," as he strives to make the group's invisible vision, beliefs, and core values visible and apparent.

However, in 2 Corinthians 10-13, Paul does not establish rituals or ceremonies to guide the Corinthians in living out their faith, although Paul set forth the practice of the Lord's Supper (1 Cor.11:23-29) and baptism (1 Cor.12:13) to facilitate their faith.[987] This also creates an identity boundary between the ingroup and the outgroup members. Instead, Paul uses his future visit to urge the Corinthians towards "obedience to Christ" (2 Cor.10:5). This obedience involves rejecting worldly honour (2 Cor.10:11-12), false teachings (2 Cor.11:4), and immoral behaviour (2 Cor.12:20-21).

Paul emphasizes that his divine authority is meant to edify the Corinthians (2 Cor.10:8; 12:19; 13:10). His objective is to lead the Corinthians to restore his relationship and realign with his teaching. As postulated by the SIA to leadership, effective leaders "need to engage in activities and produce outcomes that allow group members to live out their group membership in meaningful ways." In this context, Paul's planned visit or formal meetings with the Corinthians can be viewed as a significant activity that enables them to live out the core values of obedient Christ-followers.

Similarly, Hillel the Elder does not construct ritual ceremonies or regular activities to help his followers live out their core beliefs and values. Instead, Hillel encourages them to pursue principle derived from P. Aboth 1:12, urging them "loving peace", "pursuing peace", "loving all men", and "bringing them close to the Torah." Hillel emphasizes that caring for and supporting needy people through charitable work is central to their values and conduct. This resembles Paul's appeal for his followers to live out their faith through works, demonstrating adherence to their leader's teachings.

Furthermore, Hillel's principle of "loving all creatures" places a responsibility on his followers to guide gentiles towards learning the Torah. This unique identity marker distinguishes Hillel's group from the followers of Shammai. As researchers suggested, making the group matter makes it visible to its members and those outside the group. An effective leader shapes a distinctive identity between the ingroup and the outgroup. In short, this comparison highlights both Hillel and Paul reflected in 2 Corinthians 10-13, encouraging their followers to embody their teachings through actions, thereby making their groups more visible and distinctive to insiders and outsiders.

In contrast, the Qumran community and Greco-Roman associations actively organized monthly assemblies, ritual ceremonies, and sacrifices according to unique

---

[987] For a detailed discussion on how the concept of "Making us matter" can be applied in the Epistle to the Romans from social identity researchers' perspective, see Haslam et al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 166-167.

calendars, and to this extent, their embedding activities were more visible and regular than with Paul; he is not recorded as building any structure within the Corinthians' community. In alignment with the SIA as applied to leadership, establishing an institutional framework or a system of values within a group serves as a mechanism for members to live out their membership actively. Making the group goals visible provides both ingroup and outgroup members with a clearer understanding of the normative beliefs and behaviours associated with the social ingroup. These create ingroup boundaries and effectively embody the concept of "making the identity matter."

For example, in 1QS VI.1-2, "They (the ingroup members) shall eat together, together they shall bless and together they shall take counsel." and "And when they prepare the table to dine…the priest shall stretch out his hand as the first to bless the first fruits of the bread" (1QS VI.5-6). This clearly indicates regular communal meals organized by the community leaders to reinforce their unique identity. They make their vision for the group a reality.[988]

As shown in 1QS and CD, the Qumran community has a structural hierarchy that instructs each member on behaving correctly. The Maskil, as impresario, is responsible for managing the members according to community rules. Both documents indicate that ritual feasts are organized regularly to help members live out the faith, adhering to the Torah. In this sense, the function of these social events is to make the group's characteristics and purpose more visible.

According to the inscriptions, the leadership aspect of "identity embedder" has been shown in the associations. In the honorific inscription *IG* II[2] 1329, a regular sacrifice was held in the temple during the month of Mounichion (lines 26-27), with Sophron as the leader who initiated this activity. He further solidified group identity by erecting a stele in the temple (line 30). These practices aimed to enable members to experience and affirm their group identity tangibly. Furthermore, associations' leaders are keen to construct temples and organize and sponsor ritual events. Their purpose is to assist the members to live out their membership meaningfully, primarily through physical participation in events.

Evidence for this is found in *IG* II[2] 1343, which states Diodoros "shared responsibility for the initial gathering". And he "has continued to be well-disposed to the *koinon* of Soteriastai, doing in both word and deed what is beneficial for the *synodos"*. Another piece of evidence is in *AM* 66:228 no.4, namely, the rituals organized by Sarapion and that he served the association by "sacrific[ing] the customary sacrifices to the gods in the temple and has obtained good omens on behalf of the association of *orgeōnes* and the children and women and the *dēmos* of the Athenians". Thus, every member must honor Sarapion publicly.

Similarly, regular assemblies and celebrations organized by group leaders can

---

[988] Haslam et. al. *The New Psychology of Leadership*, 192-193.

explicitly be observed in the Qumranites. For instance, the Qumranites are noted for their adherence to regulations during their gathering, as mentioned in CD VI.9-24. Their regulations include "No man shall interrupt a companion before his speech has ended…" and "Should any man wish to speak to the Congregation, yet not be in a position to question the Council of the Community, let him rise his feet and request." These observances underscore the significance of structured, periodic gatherings in reinforcing obedience to the community and its leadership.

Likewise, the Greco-Roman associations emphasized the importance of honouring leaders during regular meetings. For example, *IG* II² 1329, "the orgeōnes have resolved to commend Chaireas son of Dionysios of Athmonon and to crown him with a wreath of olive, on account of the excellence and piety that he has shown to the gods and to the orgeōnes, and to announce publicly the crown at the sacrifice in the month of Mounichion…" Additionally, *IG* II² 1292 commands the group members to crown their leaders with an olive wreath and "the sacrifice makers are to announce publicly their names at each sacrifice after the ceremony."

The key difference lies in the level of active engagement in organizing communal activities. The Qumran community and the Greco-Roman associations actively structured events to reinforce their identity. Paul and Hillel's leadership appear to have had a less direct role in such activities. In this regard, Paul's third visit to Corinth can be interpreted as an effort by the apostle to encourage his followers to live out their faith, thereby demonstrating their obedience to Christ. In addition, we know from 1 Corinthians that Paul was active in relation to baptisms and the Lord's suppers. His exhortation for the Corinthians to live out their faith can be viewed as a manifestation of their collective identity.

In 2 Corinthians 13:10-13, Paul's selection of words, particularly καταρτίζω and οἰκοδομή, reveals the strategic approach of embedding to addressing the challenging relationship between himself and the Corinthians. It is essential to recognize that Paul's intention is not merely to assert his authority for his personal reputation. Instead, he emphasizes that his authority directs the Corinthians toward authentic Christ-following. Paul strategically employs the metaphor of "edification" to imbue the new concept of "building up" the Corinthians in faith. The act of building, a symbolic form of identity embedded in Paul's perspective, is aimed at guiding the Corinthians toward a more devoted relationship with God. This parallel can be drawn to the practices of leaders in Greco-Roman associations who invested resources in constructing temples for their followers to worship deities.

In both cases, the building is not merely a physical construction but holds a deeper symbolic meaning. Akin to the association leaders spending money to establish temples, Paul's use of the metaphor emphasizes a transformative process that helps the Corinthians grow in faith. For Paul, the essential goal is to witness the Corinthians actively living out their faith through obedience, repentance, and unwavering trust in

his leadership. The metaphorical building of the Corinthians is a spiritual construction, aligning with the dedication and purpose associated with the construction of temples in Greco-Roman contexts.

In conclusion, as SIA researchers proposed, leaders are responsible for articulating abstract visions and ideas about identity into tangible dimensions. In his role as an identity embedder, Paul employs strategic language to shape the social identity of the Corinthians, motivating them to align their lives with faith. The figurative use of the term "edifying" becomes a pivotal tool for Paul as he constructs and manages the contour of this identity, connecting to Christ. The recurrent emphasis on divine authority and power serves not to dismantle but to edify the Corinthians (2 Cor.10:15; 12:21; 13:9). His distinct prioritization of collective faith perfection over personal achievements serves as a distinguishing feature, setting him apart from potential interlopers. While acknowledging his God-granted power, which permits him to discipline the disobedient during a prospective third visit (2 Cor.13:10), Paul tends to exhibit restraint in exercising such authority directly before the Corinthians.

Chapter Eleven: Conclusion

In conclusion, this dissertation has unravelled the distinctive nature of Paul's leadership within 2 Corinthians 10-13 through the lens of the Social Identity Approach (SIA) to leadership, complemented by comparisons with three ancient social groups. Guided by four overarching research questions, we explored:

1. The unique social setting and conflicts shaped Paul's leadership in 2 Corinthians 10-13.

2. The SIA to leadership contribution to understanding the relationship between Paul's leadership and the Corinthian identity formation.

3. Comparisons of ancient Mediterranean social groups with Paul's leadership model in Corinth.

4. Paul's innovative leadership model in response to external critiques and the multifaceted conflicts in 2 Corinthians 10-13.

In answering these questions, we have delved into the depths of Paul's strategic acumen and its profound impact on forming the Corinthians' identity, a significant aspect of biblical studies. Our investigation of the unique social setting and conflicts surrounding 2 Corinthians 10-13 revealed the contextual nuances influencing Paul's leadership. This foundation enabled a deeper understanding of how external challenges shaped Paul's leadership responses.

By juxtaposing prevailing leadership models in ancient Mediterranean social groups with Paul's approach, we illuminated his distinctive leadership traits within his historical and cultural context. Applying the SIA to leadership enriched our understanding of the interplay between Pauline leadership and the Corinthian identity formation.

Finally, our examination demonstrated how Paul forged an innovative leadership model to address external critiques and conflicts in 2 Corinthians 10-13. His strategy met immediate challenges and transformed the identity and unity of the Corinthian Christ-followers.

This dissertation contributes to a deeper understanding of Paul's leadership dynamics, offering valuable insights for biblical studies and contemporary leadership analysis. Future research could further explore the implications of these findings for broader applications in leadership studies and historical contexts.

1. Chapters Outlines and Some Remarks

As detailed in Chapters One and Two, our examination of prior research on Paul's leadership concerning the identity formation of the Corinthians revealed a notable gap in the existing scholarship. Specifically, there was an absence of a satisfactory answer to the crucial question of how Paul strategically shaped the identity of the Corinthians in response to the intrusion of the interlopers. This lacuna, coupled with the broader inquiry into the significance and uniqueness of Paul's leadership compared to other

ancient social groups, provided the foundational motivation for our study.

In Chapter Three, we introduced the promising methodology: The Comparative Method, Social Identity Approach to Leadership (SIA to leadership) to guide our investigation. Within the SIA to leadership, we have outlined four key aspects of leadership-Identity Prototypicality, Identity Entrepreneurship, Identity Advancement, and Identity Embedder. Moreover, we have introduced a new leadership model proposed in the 2022 study; the researchers suggested integrating SIA's leadership and leader identity theory to analyze effective leadership. This promising theory lays an analytical framework to examine and understand Paul's leadership in 2 Corinthians. These psychological concepts provide valuable insights into different leadership models. We contend that utilizing the SIA in leadership provides heuristic perspectives and rich analytical frameworks to elucidate and analyze Paul's discourse within 2 Corinthians 10-13. This heuristic interpretative approach would be highly beneficial, as it poses several fresh questions to understanding effective leadership.

Chapters Four to Six examined ancient leadership features after introducing the pivotal concepts of the SIA to leadership. Our central focus was scrutinizing the intricate interplay between effective leadership, identity formation, and the socio-cultural context prevalent in the ancient world. To achieve this, we meticulously analyzed and reinterpreted the leadership characteristics within three distinct ancient Mediterranean social groups: the Qumran community, Hillel's group, and various Greco-Roman associations. Our insights were drawn from primary literary sources that shed light on the organizational dynamics of these social groups.

Aligning with the analytical framework provided by the SIA to leadership, we pinpointed four key characteristics pertinent to ancient leadership. These leadership characteristics lay the groundwork for the subsequent comparative analysis in the concluding section of this study. By scrutinizing and contrasting these features, we aim to discern unique aspects of Paul's leadership model in 2 Corinthians 10-13. This contributes to a nuanced understanding of the broader discourse on effective leadership and identity formation in antiquity.

Proceeding to Chapters Seven to Ten, we began the exposition of our research by positing that Paul's leadership can be effectively scrutinized through four-dimensional leadership perspectives delineated by the SIA framework. Our methodological approach involved a comprehensive exegesis of passages explicitly addressing Paul's leadership within 2 Corinthians 10-13. This interpretative work unfolded across four distinct chapters, each dedicated to one dimension of the SIA framework. Several noteworthy discoveries have emerged, significantly contributing to the existing body of knowledge.

1.1. Identity Prototypicality-Paul as in-group prototype

In Chapter Seven, Paul's leadership emerges, distinctly characterized by a profound understanding of his divine commissioning. His divine-given commissioning is the

foundation for a leadership identity that empowers and enables Paul to exert influence rather than rule over the Corinthians. In addition, we have examined the core values set by Christ and God. Within the tapestry of virtues, such as meekness, gentleness, jealousy, and obedience, Paul willingly embodies and manifests these prototypes through his apostolic life. The strategic shaping and reinforcement of identity markers among the Corinthian Christ-followers become evident through Paul's embodiment of these virtues.

This chapter underscores the importance of the leader being perceived as ideal-prototypical, a representative embodiment of shared group identity, values, and aspirations. Paul's prototypicality is pivotal in promoting leadership effectiveness, drawing the Corinthians to realign themselves with him. Identity Prototypicality fosters ingroup cohesion between Paul and the Corinthians, creating a bond grounded in shared values and aspirations. This analysis sheds light on the nuanced dynamics of Paul's leadership, emphasizing the interplay between identity prototypicality, shared values, and the effectiveness of his leadership within the Corinthian context.

1.2. Identity Advancement-Paul as in-group champion

Chapter Eight focuses on examining the leadership aspect termed "Identity Advancement," positioning Paul as an in-group champion. Paul unequivocally asserts that his endurance of suffering and commitment to preaching without charge is overtly directed towards the benefit of the Corinthians. These leadership characteristics constitute the essence of Identity Advancement, as unveiled in 2 Corinthians 10-13. Within this paradigm, effective leadership hinges on a leader actively advancing the group's interests, epitomized by the principle of "doing something for us." This principle underscores that leaders are perceived as charismatic and intend to promote their ingroup collective interests over personal gain, enhancing their leadership effectiveness. From Paul's perception, active participation in Christ's sacrifice and a willingness to endure suffering for the benefit of others serve as identity descriptors, signifying those who "Belong to Christ."

This chapter examines four significant themes: Paul's Mission, Financial Policy, suffering, and Prayer. Through these investigations, our understanding of Paul's unique leadership deepens. The analysis reveals how Paul strategically aligns his leadership with a commitment to the collective welfare of the Corinthians, further emphasizing the role of identity advancement in promoting his effective leadership.

1.3. Identity Entrepreneur-Paul is an entrepreneur of identity

In Chapter Nine, the spotlight shifts to the dimension of "Identity Entrepreneur," casting Paul as the entrepreneur of identity within the intricate dynamics of 2 Corinthians 10-13. For Paul, the relationship between himself and the Corinthians undergoes significant strain due to the interference of interlopers. A central challenge emerges as the Corinthians doubt Paul's credentials, integrity, and leadership effectiveness. In response to this social context, Paul, assuming the role of identity entrepreneur, adeptly

reconstructs the superordinate identity "Obedience to Christ" and also introduces new meanings associated with honour claims.

Despite external perceptions that label Paul's ministry and leadership as embodying weakness and dishonour, Paul firmly asserts that it is sustained and empowered by the grace and power of God. The overarching purpose of his ministry becomes evident: to benefit the Corinthians, fostering their growth and maturity in faith. In positioning himself as an exemplar of the servant of Christ, Paul embodies suffering and weakness in connection with Christ, thereby imparting a powerful witness to the transformative nature of his mission. Paul's declaration of his vulnerability is closely linked to his profound understanding of "belonging to Christ" and serving as a "servant of Christ."

1.4. Identity Embedder-Paul as embedder of Identity

In Chapter Ten, the focus shifts to the role of "Identity Embedder," presenting Paul as the architect of identity formation within the narrative of 2 Corinthians 10-13. Paul's leadership responsibility translates abstract visions and ideas about identity into tangible dimensions. In his role as an identity embedder, Paul strategically deploys language to shape the social identity of the Corinthians, compelling them to align their lives with faith. A crucial tool in this process is the symbolic use of the term "edifying," which becomes pivotal for Paul as he constructs and manages the contour of this identity, linking it to Christ. His emphasis on divine authority and power is not to dismantle but to edify the Corinthians (2 Cor.10:15; 12:21; 13:9). His distinct prioritization of collective faith perfection over personal achievements distinguishes him from potential interlopers.

While distinguishing Paul's approach is his unique prioritization of collective faith perfection over personal achievements, setting him apart from potential interlopers. Even as he acknowledges the God-granted power allowing him to discipline the disobedient during a prospective third visit (2 Cor.13:10). Paul exhibits restraint in exercising such authority directly before the Corinthians. This chapter illuminates how Paul, as an identity embedder, intentionally weaves together abstract concepts and tangible dimensions, ensuring that the Corinthian community's identity aligns with faith and remains steadfast despite external challenges and potential disruptions.

At the end of each chapter, our examination revolves around delineating the distinctive leadership features of Paul as a leader appointed by God, delving into his responsibilities and leadership characteristics through a comparative lens with ancient social groups. The following conclusions emerged:

Firstly, Paul diverges from the conventional pursuit of honour claims, opting instead of "boast in the Lord," showcasing a departure from the prevailing norms observed in the inscriptions of Greco-Roman associations.

Secondly, Paul uniquely views refraining from Christ's assigned mission field for edification as a tangible manifestation of his obedience to Christ, setting his leadership

model apart from that of counterparts in ancient social groups.

Thirdly, like other Judean leaders, Paul leverages God's revelations to shape ingroup identity, particularly their profound understanding of God's word, such as in the Torah. However, his influence emanates from his embodiment of humility, suffering, and weakness. Notably, Paul promotes the concept of suffering as an identity marker of leadership, an aspect absent in the leadership prototypes of the other Judean groups.

Fourthly, mirroring the Qumran leadership and Greco-Roman associations, Paul underscores a code of ethics and proper behaviour of ingroup members. However, unlike these communities, Paul refrains from establishing community rules and regulations to govern their conduct, highlighting a divergence in his approach to leadership.

The tapestry of the above comparative insights shows that Paul's leadership is characterized by a distinctive blend of humility, obedience, and a unique perspective on suffering. His God-appointed leadership identity is a testament to his commitment to guiding the growth and maturity of the Corinthians' Christ-followers. This study contributes valuable insights into the nuanced understanding of leadership in antiquity, shedding light on the unique qualities that set Paul apart within the diverse landscape of ancient social groups.

1.5 Leader Identity-Paul as Divinely-endorsed Leader

Paul's leadership, firmly anchored in his divine commissioning, holds significant implications for understanding both his authority and the spiritual journey of the Corinthians. By emphasizing his divine mandate (2 Cor.10:8; 13:10), Paul distinguishes his leadership from that of the interlopers, whose authority rests on human commendations (2 Cor.3:1; 10:12). This divine endorsement not only legitimizes his leadership but also underscores his unique role in guiding the Corinthian community. Paul's profound possession of divine knowledge allows him to instruct the Corinthians with authority and clarity (2 Cor.11:1-6), aiming to edify rather than undermine them (2 Cor.10:8; 12:19; 13:10).

Paul's mission is evident throughout 2 Corinthians 10-13: to edify the Corinthians in faith and maturity (2 Cor.10:15; 13:9), restore his relationship with the Corinthians (2 Cor.11:7; 12;15), and lead them towards steadfastness in the true gospel (2 Cor.11:4). His emotional rhetoric and strategic use of divine zeal serve as both a defence against critics and a means to reinforce the Corinthians' commitment to his teachings (2 Cor. 11:2-3). By expressing fervent emotions, Paul warns against false teachings and deepens the Corinthians' loyalty and identity as followers of Christ.

Ultimately, Paul's divine commissioning is pivotal in shaping the Corinthians' spiritual journey and collective identity. His leadership, rooted in divine wisdom and apostolic authority, establishes a lasting foundation for their faith, ensuring their continued growth and unity within the Christ-following community. Through his letters, Paul not only defends his apostolic authority but also secures a legacy of spiritual

growth and unwavering commitment to the gospel among the Corinthians.

Selected Bibliography

1. Primary Sources: Texts, Translations, and Sourcebooks

Ascough, Richard S., Philip A. Harland, and John S. Kloppenborg. *Associations in the Greco-Roman World: A Sourcebook*. Waco: Baylor University Press, 2012.

Aristotle. *Politics*. Translated by Harris Rackham. LCL. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959

Aulus Gellius. *The Attic Nights*. Translated by John C. Rolfe. LCL. London: Heinemann, 1927.

Cicero. *De Re Publica and De Legibus*. Translated by C. Walker Keyes. LCL. London: Heinemann, 1928.

Demosthenes. *Private Orations* Vol. 3, Translated by A.T. Murray. LCL. London: Heinemann, 1939.

Shapiro, Rami. *Ethics of the Sages: Pirke Avot--Annotated & Explained*. SkyLight Paths Publishing, 2006.

Josephus, Flavius. Translated by Henry St. J. Thackeray. 10 vols. LCL. London: Heinemann, 1926–1965.

Kent, John Harvey. *Corinth: Results of Excavations. The Inscriptions 1926-1950*. Volume 8/3. American School of Classical Studies at Athens. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966.

Kloppenborg, John S., and Richard S. Ascough. *Greco-Roman Associations: Texts, Translations, and Commentary: Attica, Central Greece, Macedonia, Thrace*. Vol.1. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2011.

Isocrates. *Isocrates: LIV* Vol. 1. Translated by G. Norlin. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1928.

Martínez, Florentino García, and Eibert JC Tigchelaar, eds. *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*. Vol. 1. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1997.

Philo. *Every Good Man is Free. On the Contemplative Life. On the Eternity of the World. Against Flaccus. Apology for the Jews. On Providence.* Translated by F. H. Colson. LCL. London: Heinemann, 1941.

Plato. *The Laws*. 2 Vol. Translated by R. G. Bury. LCL. London: Heinemann, 1926.

Pliny the Elder. *Natural History*. Translated by A.C. Andrews. LCL. London: Heinemann, 1938.

Plutarch. *Moralia*. Translated by F. C. Babbitt. LCL. London: Heinemann, 1927-69.

Strabo. *Geography*. Translated by Duane W. Roller. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.

West, A. B., G. H. Chase, H. N. Fowler, and D.M. Robinson. *Latin Inscriptions, 1896-1926. Corinth: Results of Excavations Conducted by the American School of Classical Studies at Athens*. 1931.

2. Biblical Studies

Ackerman, David A. "Fighting Fire with Fire: Community Formation in 1 Corinthians 12-14." *Evangelical Review of Theology* 29. 4 (2005): 347-362.

Adewuya, J. Ayodeji. "The Sacrificial-Missiological Function of Paul's Sufferings in the Context of 2 Corinthians." Pages 88-98 in *Paul as Missionary: Identity, Activity, Theology, Practice*. Edited by Trevor J. Burke, and Brian S. Rosner. London: T&T Clark, 2011.

Aernie, Jeffrey W. *Is Paul also among the Prophets? An Examination of the Relationship between Paul and the Old Testament Prophetic Tradition in 2 Corinthians*. Vol. 467. London: T&T Clark, 2012.

Agosto, Efrain. *Servant Leadership: Jesus and Paul*. Missouri: Chalice Press, 2005.

Akiyama, Kengo. *The Love of Neighbour in Ancient Judaism: The Reception of Leviticus 19:18 in the Hebrew Bible, the Septuagint, the Book of Jubilees, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the New Testament*. Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity 105. Leiden: Brill, 2018.

Angel, Joseph L. "Maskil, Community, and Religious Experience in the Songs of the Sage (4Q510–511)." *Dead Sea Discoveries* 19.1 (2012): 1-27.

Appeldoorn, Gijsbert van. "Group Formative Processes in 2 Cor 6: 14-7:1." *Religions* 15.5 (2024): 538.

Asano, Atsuhiro. *Community-Identity Construction in Galatians: Exegetical, Social-Anthropological and Socio-Historical Studies*. JSNT Supp. London: T&T Clark, 2005.

Ascough, Richard S. *Early Christ Groups and Greco-Roman Associations: Organizational Models and Social Practices*. Eugene: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2022.

Baird, William. "Visions, Revelation, and Ministry: Reflections on 2 Cor 12:1-5 and Gal 1:11-17." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 104.4 (1985): 655.

Bakker, Arjen F. *The Secret of Time: Reconfiguring Wisdom in the Dead Sea Scrolls*. Leiden: Brill: 2023.

Ballard, Charles Andrew. "Tongue-tied and Taunted: Paul, Poor Rhetoric and Paltry Leadership in 2 Corinthians." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 37.1 (2014): 50-70.

Barclay, John. "Mirror-Reading A Polemic Letter: A Galatians as a Test Case." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 31 (1987): 73-93.

Barentsen, Jack. *Emerging Leadership in the Pauline Mission: A Social Identity Perspective on Local Leadership Development in Corinth and Ephesus*. Eugene: Pickwick, 2011.

Barnett, Paul. *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*. NICNT. Michigan: Eerdmans, 1997.

Barrett, C.K. *Second Epistle to the Corinthians*. HNTC. New York: Harper & Row, 1973.

Barrier, Jeremy. "Visions of Weakness: Apocalyptic Genre and the Identification of Paul's Opponents in 2 Corinthians 12: 1-6." *Restoration Quarterly* 47.1 (2005): 33-42.

Barton, John. "Historical-Critical Approaches." Pages 9-20 in *The Cambridge Companion to Biblical Interpretation*. Edited by John Barton. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

Barton, Stephen C. "Social-Scientific Criticism." Pages 277-289 in *Handbook to the Exegesis to the New Testament*. Edited by Stanley. E. Porter. Leiden: Brill, 2002.

Bash, Anthony. *"Ambassadors for Christ." An Exploration of Ambassadorial Language in the New Testament.* Tübingen: JCB Mohr, 1997.

Bash, Anthony. "A Psychodynamic Approach to the Interpretation of 2 Corinthians 10–13." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 24.1 (2001): 51-67.

Bauckham, Richard. "A Response to Philip Esler." *Scottish Journal of Theology* (1998): 249-253.

Baur, F. C. *Paul, the Apostle of Jesus Christ: His Life and Works, His Epistles and Teaching: A Contribution to a Critical History of Primitive Christianity*. Translated by A. P. Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 2003.

Beall, Todd S. *Josephus' Description of the Essenes Illustrated by the Dead Sea Scrolls*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

Bendlin, Andreas. "Associations, Funerals, Sociality, and Roman Law: The collegium of Diana and Antinous in Lanuvium (CIL 14.2112) Reconsidered." *Aposteldekret Und Antikes Vereinswesen* (2011): 207-296.

Berding, Kenneth. "The Hermeneutical Framework of Social-Scientific Criticism: How much can Evangelicals get involved." *Evangelical Quarterly* 75.1 (2003): 3-22.

Berding, Kenneth. *Paul's Thorn in the Flesh: New Clues for an Old Problem*. Lexham Academic, 2023.

Bergsma, John S. "'Qumran Self-Identity: 'Israel' or 'Judah'?" *Dead Sea Discoveries* 15 (2008): 172-189.

Bertschmann, Dorothea H. "'What Does Not Kill Me Makes Me Stronger': Paul and Epictetus on the Correlation of Virtues and Suffering." *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 82.2 (2020): 256-275.

Best, Thomas F. "The Sociological Study of the New Testament: Promise and Peril of a New Discipline." *Scottish Journal of Theology* 36.2 (1983): 181-194.

Bieringer, Reimund, Ma Marilos, S. Ibita, Dominika A., Kurek-Chomycz, and Thomas A. Vollmer. *Theologizing in the Corinthian Conflict: Studies in the Exegesis and Theology of 2 Corinthians*. Leuven: Peeters, 2013.

Blanton I, Thomas R. "Spirit and Covenant Renewal: A Theologoumenon of Paul's Opponents in 2 Corinthians." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 129.1 (2010): 129-151.

Blenkinsopp, Joseph. *Sage, Priest, Prophet: Religious and Intellectual Leadership in Ancient Israel*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995.

Blidstein, Gerald J. "A Note on Rabbinic Missionizing." *Journal of Theological Studies* 47.2 (1996): 528-531.

Bowens, Lisa M. *An Apostle in Battle Paul and Spiritual Warfare in 2 Corinthians 12:1–10*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017.

Brownlee, William H. "The Wicked Priest, the Man of Lies, and the Righteous Teacher: The Problem of Identity." *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 73.1 (1982): 1-37.

Bultmann, Rudolf. *The Second Letter to the Corinthians*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1985.

Burke, Trevor J., and Keith Elliott. *Paul and the Corinthians: Studies on a Community in Conflict: Essays in Honour of Margaret Thrall*. Leiden: Brill, 2003.

Buxbaum, Yitzhak. *The Life and Teachings of Hillel*. Lanham: First Rowman & Littlefield, 2008.

Campbell, William S. "The Sociological Studies of the New Testament: Promise and Problems." *Journal of Beliefs and Values: Studies in Religion and Education* (1993): 2-10.

Campbell, William S. *Paul and the Creation of Christian Identity*. London: T&T Clark, 2008.

Campbell, William S. *Romans: A Social Identity Commentary*. London: T&T Clark, 2023.

Carson, D. A. *A Model of Christian Maturity: An Exposition of 2 Corinthians 10-13.* Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984.

Chaaya, Dolly. *Becoming a Fool for Christ: Dispositio and Message of 2 Cor 10-13.* Kaslik: PUSEK, 2010.

Chalcraft, David J., ed. *Sectarianism in Early Judaism: Sociological Advances.* New York: Routledge, 2007.

Chang, Kei Eun. *The Community, the Individual and the Common Good: Τò Ιδιον and Τò Συμφέρον in the Greco-Roman World and Paul.* JSNT 480. London: T&T Clark, 2015.

Charlesworth, James H. "Righteousness." Pages 781-783 in Vol.2 of *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scroll.* Edited by Schiffman, Lawrence H., and James C. VanderKam. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2000.

Chester, Stephen J. *Conversion at Corinth: Perspectives on Conversion in Paul's Theology and the Corinthian Church.* London: T&T Clark, 2003.

Chilton, Bruce, and Jacob Neusner. *Types of Authority in Formative Christianity and Judaism.* London: Routledge, 1999.

Clarke, Andrew D. *Pauline Theology of Church Leadership.* JSNT Supp. London: T&T Clark: 2008.

Clarke, Andrew D. *Secular and Christian Leadership in Corinth: A Socio-Historical and Exegetical Study of 1 Corinthians 1-6.* Leiden: Brill, 1993.

Clarke, Andrew D. *Serve the Community of the Church: Christians as Leaders and Ministers.* Michigan: Eerdmans, 2000.

Collins, John J. "Beyond the Qumran Community: Social Organization in the Dead Sea Scrolls." *Dead Sea Discoveries* 16 (2009): 351-369.

Collins, John J. "Forms of the Community in the Dead Sea Scrolls." Pages 97-111 in *Emanuel Studies in Hebrew Bible, Septuagint and Dead Sea Scrolls in Honor of Emanuel Tov.* Edited by Shalom M. Paul. Leiden: Brill, 2003.

Collins, John J. "The Yahad and 'The Qumran Community'." Pages 81-96 in *Biblical Traditions in Transmission: Essays in Honor of Michael A. Knibb.* Edited by Collins, John J. *The "Dead Sea Scrolls" A Biography.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012.

Collins, Raymond F. *Second Corinthians.* Michigan: Baker Academic, 2013.

Coutsoumpos, Panayotis. *Community, Conflict, and the Eucharist in Roman Corinth: the Social Setting of Paul's Letter.* Lanham: University Press of America, 2006.

Craffert, Pieter F. "More on Models and Muddles in the Social-Scientific Interpretation of the New Testament: The Sociological Fallacy Reconsidered." *Neotestamentica* 26.1 (1992): 217-239.

Crafton, Jeffrey A. *The Agency of the Apostle: A Dramatistic Analysis of Paul's Responses to Conflict in 2 Corinthians*. JSNT 51. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991.

Crawford, Sidnie White. "The Identification and History of the Qumran Community in American Scholarship." Pages 11-29 in *The Dead Sea Scrolls in Scholarly Perspective: A History of Research*. Leiden: Brill, 2012.

Cross, Frank M. *The Ancient Library of Qumran and Modern Biblical Studies*. New York: Doubleday, 1958.

Crossley, James G. *Reading the New Testament: Contemporary Approaches*. London: Routledge, 2010.

Daube, David. "Jewish Missionary Maxims in Paul." *Studia Theologica-Nordic Journal of Theology* (1947): 158-169.

Davies, Philip R. "'Old' and 'New' Israel in the Bible and the Qumran Scrolls: Identity and Difference." Pages 33-42 in *Defining Identities: We, You, and the Other in the Dead Sea Scrolls Proceedings of the Fifth Meeting of the IOQS in Groningen*. Leiden: Brill, 2008.

Davis, George Brown. "True and False Boasting in 2 Cor.10-13." PhD Diss., University of Cambridge: 1998.

Donahoe, Kate C. "From Self-Praise to Self-Boasting: Paul's Unmasking of the Conflicting Rhetorico-Linguistic Phenomena in 1 Corinthians." PhD Diss., University of St. Andrews: 2008.

Duff, Paul B. *Moses in Corinth: The Apologetic Context of 2 Corinthians 3*. Vol.159. Leiden: Brill, 2015.

Dutch, Robert. *The Educated Elite in 1 Corinthians: Education and Community Conflict in Graeco-Roman Context*. JNTS Sup 271. London: T&T Clark, 2005.

Dvorak, James D. "John H. Elliott's Social-Scientific Criticism." *Trinity Journal* 28 (2007): 251-278.

Ehrensperger, Kathy. *Paul and the Dynamics of Power Communication and Interaction in the Early Christ-Movement*. London: T&T Clark, 2007.

Elliott, John H. "From Social Description to Social-Scientific Criticism. The History of a Society of Biblical Literature Section 1973—2005." *Bible Theology Bulletin* 38.1 (2008): 26-36.

Elliott, John H. "Social-scientific Criticism: Perspective, Process and Payoff: Evil Eye Accusation at Galatia as Illustration of the Method." *Harvard Theological Studies* 67.1 (2011): 1-10.

Elliott, John H. "On Wooing Crocodiles for Fun and Profit: Confessions of an Intact Admirer." Pages 5-20 in *Social Scientific Models for Interpreting the Bible: Essays by the Context Group in Honor of Bruce J. Malina*. Edited by John J. Pilch. Leiden: Brill, 2001.

Elliott, John H. *Social-Scientific Criticism of the New Testament: An Introduction*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1993.

Eshel, Hanan. *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Hasmonean State*. Michigan: Eerdmans, 2008.

Esler, Philip F. *The First Christians in Their Social Worlds: Social-Scientific Approaches to the New Testament Interpretation*. London: Routledge, 1994.

Esler, Philip F. *Community and Gospel in Luke-Acts: The Social and Political Motivations of Lucan Theology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.

Esler, Philip F. *Galatians*. London: Routledge, 1998.

Esler, Philip F. *Conflict and Identity in Romans: The Social Setting of Paul's Letter*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003.

Esler, Philip F. "The Context Group Project: An Autobiographical Account." Pages 46-61 in *Anthropology and Biblical Studies: Avenues of Research*. Edited by Mario Aguilar, and Louise Lawrence. Leiden: Deo Publishing, 2004.

Esler, Philip F. *God's Court and Courtiers in the Book of the Watchers: Re-Interpreting Heaven in 1 Enoch 1-36*. Eugene: Cascade Books, 2017.

Esler, Philip F. "Social-Scientific Criticism." Pages 129-151 in *New Cambridge Companion to Biblical Interpretation*. Edited by Ian Boxall and Bradley C. Gregory. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021.

Esler, Philip F. *Babatha's Orchard: The Yadin Papyri and An Ancient Jewish Family Tale Retold*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.

Esler, Philip F. *2 Corinthians: A Social Identity Commentary*. London: T&T Clark, 2021.

Finney, Mark T. *Honour and Conflict in the Ancient World: 1 Corinthians in its Greco-Roman Social Setting*. JSNT 460. London: T&T Clark, 2012.

Fitzgerald, John T. *Cracks in an Earthen Vessel: An Examination of the Catalogues of Hardships in the Corinthians Correspondence*. Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Serial 99. Atlanta: Scholars, 1988.

Fitzgerald, John T. "The Catalogue in Ancient Greek Literature." Pages 275-293 in *The Rhetorical Analysis in Scripture: Essay from the 1995 London Conference. JSNT Supp*. Edited by Fitzgerald, John T., Stanley E. Porter, and Thomas H. Olbricht. Sheffield: Shielfield Academic Press, 1997.

Forbes, Christopher. "Comparison, Self-Praise and Irony: Paul's Boasting and the Conventions of Hellenistic Rhetoric." *New Testament Studies* 32.1 (1986): 1-30.

Fredrickson, David E. "Paul, Hardships, and Suffering." Pages 172-197 in *Paul in the Greco-Roman World: A Handbook*. Edited by J. Paul. Sampley. Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2003.

Furnish, Victor Paul. *ii Corinthians*. ABC. New York: Doubleday, 1985.

Gabrielsen, Vincent, and Paganini Mario C. *Private Associations in the Ancient Greek World: Regulations and the Creation of Group Identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023.

Gager, John G. *Kingdom and Community: The Social World of Early Christianity*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1975.

Galor, Katharina, Jean-Baptiste Humbert, and Jürgen Zangenberg. "Qumran: the Site of the Dead Sea Scrolls Archaeological Interpretations and Debates." Pages 279-284 in *Qumran: The Site of the Dead Sea Scrolls: Archaeological Interpretations and Debates*. Edited by Galor, Katharina, Jean-Baptiste Humbert, and Jürgen Zangenberg. Leiden: Brill, 2006.

Garland, David E. *2 Corinthians: The Christian Standard Commentary*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2021.

Gärtner, Bertil. *The Temple and the Community in Qumran and the New Testament: A Comparative Study in the Temple Symbolism of the Qumran Texts and the New Testament*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Gignilliat, Mark. *Paul and Isaiah's Servants: Paul's Theological Reading of Isaiah 40-66 in 2 Corinthians 5: 14-6:10*. London: A&C Black, 2007.

Glancy, Jennifer A. "Boasting of Beatings (2 Corinthians 11: 23-25)." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 123.1(2004): 99-135.

Glatzer, Nahum N. *Hillel the Elder: The Emergence of Classical Judaism*. Rev. ed. New York: Schoken Books, 1956.

Glessner, Justin M. "Ethnomedical Anthropology and Paul's 'Thorn' (2 Corinthians 12:7)." *Bible Theology Bulletin* Vol.47.1 (2017): 15-46.

Goldin, Judah. "Hillel the Elder." *The Journal of Religion* 26.4 (1946): 263-277.

Goldin, Judah. *The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955.

Gooder, Paula. *Only the Third Heaven: 2 Corinthians 12.1-10 and Heavenly Ascent*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007.

Gorcum, Van. *The Literature of the Sages-First Part: Oral Tora, Halakha, Mishna, Tosefta, Talmud, External Tractates*. Edited by Shmuel Safrai. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987.

Gottlieb, Isaac B. "Hillel." *The Oxford Dictionary of the Jewish Religion*. 2nd Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Grant, Robert McQueen. *Paul in the Roman World: The Conflict at Corinth*. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 2001.

Greehy, John. "The Qumran Mebaqqer and the Christian Episkopos." *Proceedings of the Irish Biblical Association* 2 (1977): 29-36.

Green, Ronald. "Jewish Ethics and the Virtue of Humanity." *Journal of Religious Ethics* Vol.1 (1973): 53-63.

Grieb, A. K. "The One Who Called You ..." *Interpretation* 59.2 (2005): 154–165.

Grindheim, Sigurd. "Wisdom for the Perfect: Paul's Challenge to the Corinthian Church (1 Corinthians 2: 6-16)." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 121.4 (2002): 689-710.

Gunther, John J. *St. Paul's Opponents and Their Background: A Study of Apocalyptic and Jewish Sectarian Teachings*. Leiden: Brill, 1973.

Gupta, Nijay K. "Mirror-Reading Moral Issues in Paul's Letters." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 34.4 (2012): 361-381.

Guthrie, George H. *2 Corinthians*. BECNT. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015.

Hafemann, Scott J. "The Comfort and Power of the Gospel: The Argument of 2 Corinthians 1-3." *Review & Expositor* 86.3 (1989): 325–344.

Hafemann, Scott J. "'Self-commendation and Apostolic Legitimacy in 2 Corinthians: A Pauline Dialectic?" *New Testament Studies* 36.1 (1990): 66-88.

Hafemann, Scott J. "A Call to Pastoral Suffering: The Need for Recovering Paul's Model of Ministry in 2 Corinthians." *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 4/2 (2000): 22–36

Hafemann, Scott J. *Suffering and Ministry in the Spirit: Paul's Defense of His Ministry in II Corinthians 2:14-3:3*. Carlisle: Paternoster, 2000.

Hafemann, Scott J. *Suffering and the Spirit: An Exegetical Study of II Cor.1:14-3:3 Within the Context of the Corinthian Correspondence*. Eugene, Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2011.

Hafemann, Scott J. *Paul: Servant of the New Covenant: Pauline Polarities in Eschatological Perspective*. Vol. 435. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2020.

Hagel, Lukas. "The Angel of Satan: 2 Corinthians 12: 7 Within a Social-Scientific Framework." *Svensk Exegetisk Arsbok* 84.1 (2019): 193-207.

Hall, David R. *Unity of Corinthian Correspondence*. Vol. 251. A&C Black, 2003.

Harris, Murray J. *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*. NIGTC. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005.

Harrison, James R. *Paul and the Ancient Celebrity Circuit: The Cross and Moral Transformation*. WUNT 430. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019.

Harvey, Anthony E. *Renewal Through Sufferings: A Study of 2 Corinthians*. London: A&C Black, 1996.

Hempel, Charlotte. "Community Structures in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Admission, Organization, Disciplinary Procedure." Pages 67-92 in *The Dead Sea Scrolls after Fifty Years: A Comprehensive Assessment*. Vol. 2. Edited by Peter W. Flint, and James C. Vanderkam. Leiden: Brill, 1999.

Hempel, Charlotte. "Maskil(im) and Rabbim: From Daniel to Qumran." Page 133-156 in *Biblical Traditions in Transmission Essays in Honour of Michael A. Knibb*. Edited by Charlotte Hempel and Judith M. Lieu. Leiden: Brill: 2006.

Hengel, Martin. *The Charismatic Leader and His Followers*. Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2005.

Herford, Travers. *The Ethics of the Talmud: Sayings of the Fathers*. New York: Schocken Books, 1962.

Himes, Paul A. *Foreknowledge and Social Identity in 1 Peter*. Eugene: Pickwick, 2014.

Himes, Paul A. "First Peter's Identity Theology and the Community of Faith: A Test-case in How Social Scientific Criticism Can Assist with Theological Ethics via Biblical Theology." *Evangelical Quarterly* 89.2 (2018): 115-132.

Hiramatsu, Kei. *The Structure of Second Corinthians: Paul's Theology of Ministry*. London: T&T Clark, 2023.

Hock, Ronald F. "Paul's Tentmaking and the Problem of his Social Class." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 97/4 (1978): 555-564.

Holmberg, Bengt. *Sociology and the New Testament: An Appraisal*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990.

Horner, Jeffrey M. "Leading like a Fool: An Evaluation of Paul's Fooliness in 2 Corinthians 11:16-12:13." *Perichoresis* Vol.16.3 (2018).

Horrell, David G. "Leadership Patterns and the Development of Ideology in Early Christianity." *Sociology of Religion* 58.4 (1997): 323-341.

Horrell, David G. "Models and Methods in Social-Scientific Interpretation: A Response to Philip Esler." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 78 (2000): 83-105.

Horrell, David G. *The Social Ethos of Corinthian Correspondence: Interests and Ideology from 1 Corinthians to 1 Clement*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000.

Ilan, Tal. "Women in Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls." Pages 123-148 in *Oxford Handbook of Dead Sea Scrolls*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Inkelaar, Harm-Jan. *Conflict over Wisdom: The Theme of 1 Corinthians 1-4 Rooted in Scripture*. Leuven: Peeters, 2011.

Iversen, Paul A., and Donald Laing Jr. "Greek and Latin Inscriptions from Temple Hill, Corinth." Pages 115-189 in *Hesperia* Vol.90 (2021).

Jokiranta, Jutta. *Social Identity and Sectarianism in the Qumran Movement*. Leiden: Brill, 2013.

Jones, Catherine M. "Theatre of Shame: The Impact of Paul's Manual Labour on His Apostleship in Corinth." ThD Diss., University of Toronto, 2013.

Joubert, Stephan J. "'Walking the talk': Paul's Authority in Motion in 2 Corinthians 10-13." *die Skriflig* 49.2 (2015): 1-7.

Judaica. "Encyclopaedia." *Encyclopaedia Judaica*. Keter Publishing House, 1972.

Judge, Arthur Edwin. "Paul's Boasting in Relation to Contemporary Professional Practice." *Australian Biblical Review* 16 (1968): 37-50.

Judge, Arthur Edwin. "The Social Identity of the First Christians: A Question of Method in Religious History." *Journal of Religious History* (1980): 201-217.

Käsemann, Ernst. *Die Legitimität Des Apostels: Eine Untersuchung zu II Korinther 10-13*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1956.

Keener, Craig. *1-2 Corinthians*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2005.

Kelhoffe, James A. "Suffering as Defense of Paul's Apostolic Authority in Galatians and 2 Corinthians 11." *Svensk exegetisk årsbok* 74 (2009): 127-143.

Ker, Donald P. "Paul and Apollos-Colleagues or Rivals?" *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* Vol.77 (2000): 75-97.

Kim, Kyung Min. "Paul's Defense: Masculinity and Authority in 2 Corinthians 10–13." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* Vol. 44.1 (2021): 149-169.

Klawans, Jonathan. "Purity in the Dead Sea Scrolls." Pages 377-402 in *The Oxford Handbook of the Dead Sea Scrolls*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Kloppenborg, John S. "*Collegia* and *Thiasoi*: Issues in Function, Taxonomy and Membership." Pages 16-30 in *Voluntary Associations in the Graeco-Roman World*. New York: Routledge, 2002.

Kloppenborg, John S. "Greco-Roman *Thiasoi*, the *Ekklēsia* at Corinth, and Conflict Management." Pages 187-218 in *Redescribing Paul and the Corinthians*. Edited by Ron Cameron. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2011.

Koet, Bart J. "Conflict Management in Corinth: A Comparison Between the Openings of 1 and 2 Corinthians." *Biblica* 99.1 (2018): 75-92.

Kowalski, Marcin. *Boasting of Self into Boasting in the Lord: The Development of the Pauline Periautologia in 2 Cor 10–13*. Lanham: University Press of America, 2013.

Kowalski, Marcin. "Holy War in Corinth: The Apocalyptic Background of Paul's Struggle against Opponents in 2 Cor 10:3–6." *Religions* 14 (2023): 630.

Kruse, Colin G. "Community Functionaries in the Rule of the Community and the Damascus Document: A Test of Chronological Relationships." *Revue de Qumran* 10.4 (1981): 543-551.

Kuecker, Aaron J. *Spirit and the 'Other': Social Identity, Ethnicity and Intergroup Reconciliation in Luke-Acts*. London: T&T Clark, 2011.

Kujanpää, Katja. "Paul and the Author of 1 Clement as Entrepreneurs of Identity in Corinthian Crises of Leadership." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 44.3 (2022): 368-389.

Lambrecht, Jan S. *2 Corinthians*. Sacra Pagina Series Vol.8. Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1999.

Lang, T.J. "Paul: Suffering as a Cosmic Problem." Pages 84-91 in *T&T Clark Handbook of Suffering and the Problem of Evil*. Edited by M. Grebe and J. Grössl. London: T&T Clark, 2023.

Langbert, Mitchell and Hershey H. Friedman. "Perspectives on Transformational Leadership in the Sanhedrin of Ancient Judaism." *Journal of Management History* 41.2 (2003): 199-207.

Lappenga, Benjamin J. *Paul's Language of ζῆλος: Monosemy and the Rhetoric of Identity and Practice*. Vol. 137. Leiden: Brill, 2015.

Last, Richard. "Money, Meals, and Honour: The Economic and Honorific Organization of the Corinthian Ekklēsia." PhD Diss., University of Toronto, 2011.

Lavee, Moshe. *The Rabbinic Conversion of Judaism*. Leiden: Brill, 2018.

Leivestad, Ragnar. "'The Meekness and Gentleness of Christ' II Cor. X. 1." *New Testament Studies* 12.2 (1966):156-164.

Lim, Kar Yong. *The Sufferings of Christ Are Abundant in Us': A Narrative Dynamics Investigation of Paul's Sufferings in 2 Corinthians*. London: T&T Clark, 2009.

Lim, Timothy H., and John J. Collins. *The Oxford Handbook of the Dead Sea Scrolls*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Lim, Kar Yong. *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation in Paul's Letters to the Corinthians*. Eugene: Pickwick, 2017.

Lim, Kar Yong. "Remain in the Calling in Which You Were Called." (1 Cor 7: 20): A Post Supersessionist Reading of 1 Corinthians." *Religions* 14.2 (2023): 183.

Lim, Kar Yong. "Reading Romans in light of Social Identity Theory." *Journal of Beliefs & Values* (2023): 1-8.

Lincoln, Andrew T. "Paul the Visionary: The Setting and Significance of the Rapture to Paradise in II Corinthians XII. 1-10." *New Testament Studies* 25 (1979): 204-220.

Long, Fredrick J. *II Corinthians: A Handbook on the Greek Text*. Baylor: Baylor University Press, 2015.

Longenecker, Bruce W., ed. *Greco-Roman Associations, Deities, and Early Christianity*. Waco: Baylor University Press, 2022.

Loritts, Crawford W. *Leadership as an Identity: The Four Traits of Those Who Wield Lasting Influence*. 2nd Edition. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2023.

Luomanen, Petri. "The Sociology of Knowledge, the Social Identity Approach and the Cognitive Science of Religion." Pages 197-229 in *Explaining Christian Origins and Early Judaism*. Edited by Petri Luomanen, Ilkka Pyysiäinen, and Risto Uro. Leiden: Brill, 2007.

Magness, Jodi. *The Archaeology of Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002.

Maina, Bruce J. "Social Science Criticism." Pages 13-20 in *Searching for Meaning: An Introduction to Interpreting the New Testament*. Edited by Paula Gooder. Atlanta: John Knox, 2009.

Malina, Bruce J. "The Social Sciences and Biblical Interpretation." *Union Seminary Review* 36.3 (1982): 229-242.

Mark, Edward R. "Weak Enough to Lead: Paul's Response to Criticism and Rivals in 2 Corinthians 10–13: A Rhetorical Reading." PhD Diss., Vanderbilt University, 2002.

Maroney, Nathan. "Suffering as Qualification for Ministry." *Evangelical Journal of Theology*. Vol. XVIII. No.1. (2024): 7-20.

Marshall, Peter. *Enmity in Corinth: Social Conventions in Paul's Relations with the Corinthians*. WUNT 2.23. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1987.

Martin, Ralph P. "The Setting of 2 Corinthians." *Tyndale Bulletin* 37 (1986): 3-19.

Martin, Ralph P. *2 Corinthians*. WBC. Rev. ed. Grand Rapid: Zondervan, 2017.

Martínez, Florentino García, and Eibert Tigchelaar, eds., *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*. Vol. 1. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997.

Mason, Steve, and Philip F. Esler. "Judean and Christ-Follower Identities: Grounds for Distinction." *New Testament Studies 63* (2017): 493-515.

Matera, Frank J. *II Corinthians: a Commentary*. Westminster: John Knox Press, 2013.

Maune, Alexander. "Hillel the Elder: A Talmudic Perspective of his Leadership Intelligence." *Risk Governance & Control: Financial Markets & Institutions* 5.2 (2015): 7-14

McClelland, S. E. "'Super-apostles, Servants of Christ, Servants of Satan': A Response." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 14 (1982): 82-87.

Meeks, Wayne A. "Reflection on an Era." Pages xi-xxviii in *Search of the Early Christians Selected Essays: Wayne A. Meeks*. Edited by Allen R. Hilton, and H. Gregory Snyder. New Heaven: Yale University Press, 2002.

Meeks, Wayne A. *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul*. 2nd Edition. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003.

Mermelstein, A. "Love and Hate at Qumran: The Social Construction of Sectarian Emotion." *Dead Sea Discoveries* 20 (2013): 237-263.

Mesick, Clair. *Paul and his Rivals: Apostleship and Antagonism in the Corinthian Correspondence*. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2024.

Milbank, John. *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason*. 2nd Edition. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006.

Milik, J.T. *Ten Years of Discovery in the Wilderness of Judaea*. Translated by J. Strugnell. London: SCM, 1959.

Miller, Shem. "The Role of Performance and the Performance of Role: Cultural Memory in the Hodayot." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 137.2 (2018): 359-382.

Minor, Mitzi. *2 Corinthians*. SHBC. Macon: Smyth & Helwys, 2009.

Moon, Jang-Hwan. "Paul's Discourse for the Corinthians' Edification: A Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation of 2 Corinthians 10-13." PhD Diss., The University of Stellenbosch, 2004.

Morgan, Robert, and John Barton. *Bible Interpretation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988.

Morray-Jones, Christopher R. A. "Paradise Revisited (2 Cor 12:1-12): The Jewish Mystical Background of Paul's Apostolate-Part 2: Paul's Heavenly Ascent and its Significance." *Harvard Theological Review* 86.3 (1993): 265-292.

Morray-Jones, Christopher R. A. "The Ascent into Paradise (2 Cor 12:1-12): Paul's Merkava Vision and Apostolic Call." Pages 245-285 in *Second Corinthians in the Perspective of Late Second Temple Judaism*. Vol.14. Edited by Bieringer, R., Nathan E. Pollefeyt, and P.J. Tomson. Leiden: Brill, 2014.

Munn, Mark Munn. "Inscriptions From Panakton." *Hesperia* 90 (2021): 281-337.

Murphy-O'Connor, Jerome. *Keys to First Corinthians: Revisiting the Major Issues*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Nadich, Judah. *Jewish Legends of the Second Commonwealth*. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1983.

Neusner, Jacob, and William Scott Green. "Aaron." in the *Dictionary of Judaism in the Biblical Period: 450 B.C.E. to 600 C.E.* 1.
"Hillel the Elder." 293-294.

Neusner, Jacob. *Judaism in the Beginning of Christianity*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1984.

Neusner, Jacob. *Sifre to Deuteronomy: An Analytical Translation*. Vol.2. Atlanta: Scholar Press, 1987.

Neusner, Jacob. *From Politics to Piety: The Emergence of Pharisaic Judaism*. Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 1998.

Neusner, Jacob. "The Golden Rule in Classical Judaism." Pages 55-64 in *The Golden Rule: The Ethics of Reciprocity in World Religions*. New York: Continuum, 2008.

Newman, Issac Hillel. *Norm, Dissent, and Secession in the Judaism of the Maccabean Era*. Leiden: Brill, 2006.

Newman, Judith H. *Before the Bible: The Liturgical Body and the Formation of Scriptures in Early Judaism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018.

Newsom, Carol A. "Constructing 'We, You, and the Others' through Non-Polemical Discourse." Pages 13-21 in *Defining Identities: We, You, and the Other in the Dead Sea Scrolls Proceedings of the Fifth Meeting of the IOQS in Groningen*. Edited by Florentino García Martínez, and Mladen Popovic. Leiden: Brill, 2008.

Newsom, Carol A. *The Self as Symbolic Space: Constructing Identity and Community at Qumran*. Leiden: Brill, 2004.

Nunnally, W.E. "G'meelut Chasadim (Deeds of Kindness)." in *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Religion and Social Justice*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2012.

O'Reilly, Matt. "Paul, Apostle of Pain: "One of Us-ness" and the Question of Suffering in 2 Corinthians." *Journal of Early Christian History* 12.1 (2022): 80-95.

Oehler, Markus. "The Punishment of Thirty-Nine Lashes (2 Corinthians 11:24) and the Place of Paul in Judaism." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 140.3 (2021): 623-640.

Oostendorp, Derek William. *Another Jesus: A Gospel of Jewish-Christian Superiority in II Corinthians*. Kampen: J.H. Kok, 1967.

Oropeza, B. J. *Jews, Gentiles, and the Opponents of Paul: The Pauline Letters*. Eugene: Cascade, 2012.

Osiek, Carolyn. "The Social Sciences and the Second Testament: Problems and Challenges." *Bible Theology Bulletin* 22 (1992): 88-95.

Ottenheijm, Eric. "Hillel as a Teacher: Sayings and Narratives." Pages 207-224 in *Multiple Teachers in Biblical Texts*. Edited by B. J. Koet, and A.L.H.M. van Wieringen. Leuven: Peeters, 2017.

Ozier, David Michael. "Walking in the Spirit in Galatians: Comparing Obedience and Agency in Galatians, 1QS, and 4 Maccabees." PhD Diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2023.

Parker, Emma Louise. *The Importance of Outsiders to Pauline Communities: Opinion, Reputation and Mission*. London: T&T Clark, 2024.

Pawlak, Matthew. "Disambiguating Forms of Irony in Second Corinthians 10-13." *Irony in the Bible* (2023): 312-327.

Peterson, Brian K. "Conquest, Control, and the Cross: Paul's Self-Portrayal in 2 Corinthians 10–13." *Interpretation* 52.3 (1998): 258-270.

Pitkänen, L. Elina. "Pauline Christ-Groups and Private Dionysian Associations: Mythical Narratives and Communal Rituals as Building Blocks of Social Identity." PhD Diss., University of Helsinki, 2023.

Plummer, Alfred. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians*. ICC. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1925.

Porter, Stanley E., ed. *Paul and his Opponents*. Leiden: Brill, 2005.

Regev, Eyal. *Sectarianism in Qumran: A Cross-Cultural Perspective*. Vol.45. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2012.

Rierson, Leanna. "Paul's Humble Leadership in Light of Contemporary Studies of Humility and Leadership: A Comparative Analysis of Paul's Deployment of Humility in 2 Corinthians 10-13 and Philippians." PhD diss., University of Exeter, 2021.

Robert E. Moses. "Aid among Greco-Roman Associations and Christ Groups." Pages 171-186 in *Greco-Roman Associations, Deities, and Early Christianity*. Edited by Bruce W. Longenecker. Waco: Baylor University Press, 2022.

Roberts, M. Edward. "Weak Enough to Lead: Paul's Response to Criticism and Rivals in 2 Corinthians 10–13: A Rhetorical Reading." PhD diss., Vanderbilt University, 2002.

Robertson, C. K. *Conflict in Corinth, Redefining the System*. SBL. Vol.42. New York: Peter Lang, 2001.

Roetzel, Calvin. "The Language of War (2 Cor.10:1-6) and the Language of Weakness (2 Cor.11:21b-13:10)." *Biblical interpretation* 17.1-2 (2009): 77-99.

Rovner, Jay. "Hillel and the Bat Qol: A Toseftan Discourse on Prophecy in the Second Temple and Tannaitic Periods." *Oqimta: Studies in Talmudic and Rabbinic Literature* 2 (2014): 165-206.

Saldarini, Anthony J. "Sanhedrin." *ABD* 5:976

Saldarini, Anthony J. *The Fathers, according to Rabbi Nathan (Abot de Rabbi Nathan) Version B, A Translation and Commentary*. Vol.11. Brill Archive, 1975.

Saller, Peter Richard. *The Roman Empire Economy, Society and Culture*. 2nd Edition. California: University of California Press, 2014.

Savage, Timothy B. *Power Through Weakness: Paul's Understanding of the Christian Ministry in 2 Corinthians*. SNTSMS. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Schellenberg, Ryan S. *Rethinking Paul's Rhetorical Education: Comparative Rhetoric and 2 Corinthians*. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2013.

Schellenberg, Ryan S. "Paul, Samson Occom, and the Constraints of Boasting: A Comparative Rereading of 2 Corinthians 10–13." *Harvard Theological Review* 109.4 (2016): 512-535.

Schiffman, Lawrence H., and James VanderKam. *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls: 2 Volume Set*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Schutz, John Howard. *Paul and the Anatomy of Apostolic Authority*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975.

Seal, Darlene M. "Scriptural Re-Interpretation and Social Identity Negotiation in the Corinthian Letters." *Religions* 14.10 (2023): 1219.

Șerban, Tarciziu-Hristofor. "'The Ultimatum before the Assault on the Strongholds'-Study on Metaphors in Corinthians 10:1-11." *Studia Universitatis Babes-Bolyai-Theologia Catholica Latina* 67.1 (2022): 57-70.

Shi, Wenhua *Paul's Message of the Cross as Body Language*. Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2008.

Sindo, Vuyani Stanley. "The Interrelationship Between Leadership and Identity Formation in the Corinthian Correspondence: A Study of 1 Corinthians 1-4." PhD diss., Stellenbosch University, 2018.

Schmithals, Walter. *Gnosticism in Corinth*. Translated by John E. Steely. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1971.

Smit, Peter-Ben. "Paul, Plutarch and the Problematic Practice of Self-Praise (περιαυτολογία): The Case of Phil 3.2–21." *New Testament Studies* 60.3 (2014): 341-359.

Snodgrass, Klyne. "Pauline Perspectives on the Identity of a Pastor." *Bibliotheca Sacra* 168.672 (2011): 387-401.

Solomon, Norman. *Historical Dictionary of Judaism*. London: The Scarecrow Press, 1998.

Stegman, Thomas. *Second Corinthians*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009.

Stegman, Thomas. *The Character of Jesus: The Linchpin to Paul's Argument in 2 Corinthians*. Roma: Editrice Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 2005.

Sumney, Jerry. *Identifying Paul's Opponents: The Question of Method in 2 Corinthians*. JSNT 40. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1990.

Sumney, Jerry. *Servants of Satan, False Brothers, and Other Opponents of Paul*. JSNT 188. London: T&T Clark, 1999.

Swarup, Paul. *The Self-Understanding of the Dead Sea Scrolls Community: An Eternal Planting, a House of Holiness*. London: T&T Clark, 2006.

Tabb, Brian J. "It's the Hard-Knock Life: Paul and Seneca on Suffering." Pages 146-154 in *Paul and the Giants of Philosophy: Reading the Apostle in Greco-Roman Context*. Edited by Joseph Dodson, and David E. Briones. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2019.

Tabick, Jeremy, and Richard Kalmin. "The Nasi in the Synagogue: A New Interpretation of the Tannaitic Sources and the Yerushalmi." 2016. https://d1wqtxts1xzle7.cloudfront.net/53089432/Tabick_Nasi-libre.pdf.

Tellbe, Mikael. *Christ-Believers in Ephesus: A Textual Analysis of Early Christian Identity Formation in a Local Perspective*. WUNT 242. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009.

Theissen, Gerd. "Social Conflicts in the Corinthian Community: Further Remarks on J. J. Meggitt, Paul, Poverty and Survival." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 25.3 (2003): 371-391.

Theissen, Gerd. *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity: Essays on Corinth*. Edited and translated by John H. Schutz. Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 2004.

Thrall, Margaret E. *II Corinthians* Vol. II, ICC. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994.

Trebilco, Paul R. *Outsider Designations and Boundary Construction in the New Testament: Early Christian Communities and the Formation of Group Identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017.

Tucker J. Brian. *Remain Your Call: Paul and the Continuation of Social Identities in 1 Corinthians*. Oregon: Pickwick, 2011.

Tucker, J. Brian. *You Belong to Christ: Paul and the Formation of Identity in Corinthians 1-4*. Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2011.

Tucker, J. Brian, and Coleman A. Barker. *T&T Clark Handbook to Social Identity in the New Testament*. London: Bloomsbury, 2014.

Tucker, J. Brian, and Aaron Kuecker. *T&T Clark Social Identity Commentary on the New Testament*. London: T&T Clark, 2020.

Tuckett, Christopher. *Reading the New Testament: Method and Interpretation*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987.

Ukwuegbu, Bernard O. *The Emergence of Christian Identity in Paul's Letter to the Galatians: A Social-Scientific Investigation into the Root Causes for the Parting of the Way between Christianity and Judaism*. Bonn: Abeiten zur Interkulturalität, 2003.

Urbach, Efraim E. *The Sages, their Concepts and Beliefs*. Translated by Israel Abrahams, 4th Edition. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995.

Uusimäki, Elisa. *Lived Wisdom in Jewish Antiquity Studies in Exercise and Exemplarity*. London: T&T Clark, 2021.

VanderKam, James C. *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today*. 2nd Edition. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010.

Vaux, R. De. *Archaeology and the Dead Sea Scrolls: The Schweich Lectures of the British Academy 1959*. London: Oxford University Press, 1973.

Vegge, Ivar. *2 Corinthians-A Letter about Reconciliation*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008.

Vermes, Geza. *Dead Sea Scrolls: Qumran Perspective*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981.

Walck, Leslie W. "Truth." Pages 950-952 in Vol.2 of *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*. Edited by Lawrence H. Schiffman, and James C. VanderKam. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2000.

Walker, Donald Dale. *Paul's Offer of Leniency (2 Cor.10:1): Populist Ideology and Rhetoric in a Pauline Letter Fragment*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002.

Wallace, James Buchanan. *Snatched into Paradise (2 Cor.12:1-10): Paul's Heavenly Journey in the Context of Early Christian Experience*. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2011.

Wan, Sze Kar. *Power in Weakness: The Second Letter of Paul to the Corinthians*. London: A&C Black, 2000.

Watson, Francis. *Paul, Judaism and Gentiles: A Sociological Approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 1986.

Welborn, Laurence L. "Paul's Caricature of his Chief Rival as a Pompous Parasite in 2 Corinthians 11.20." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 32.1 (2009): 39-56.

Welborn, Laurence L. *An End to Enmity: Paul and the "Wrongdoer" of Second Corinthians*. Vol. 185. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2011.

White, Benjamin G. "The Varieties of Pain: Re-examining the Setting and Purpose of 2 Corinthians with Paul's λυπ- Words." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 43.2 (2020): 147-172.

White, Benjamin G. *Pain and Paradox in 2 Corinthians: The Transformative Function of Strength in Weakness*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2021.

White, L. Michael. "Favorinus's 'Corinthian Oration': A Piqued Panorama of the Hadrianic Forum." in *Urban Religion in Roman Corinth: Interdisciplinary Approach*. Edited by Daniel N. Schowalter and Steven J. Friesen. Cambridge: Harvard Theological Studies, 2005.

Williams III, and H. H. Drake. "Recalibrating Christian Ethics at Corinth: Paul's Use of Jesus the Prototype and Collective Remembrance to Provide Spiritual Guidance and Weaker Brothers and Food Offered to Idols." *Religions* 15.3 (2024): 316.

Winter, Bruce. *Philo and Paul among the Sophists: Alexandrian and Corinthian Responses to a Julio-Claudian Movement*. Michigan: Grand Rapids: 2002.

Wise, Michael O. "The Origins and History of the Teacher's Movement." Pages 99-122 in *Oxford Handbook of Dead Sea Scrolls*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Witherington III, Ben. *Conflict & Community in Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995.

Zeitlin, Solomon. "The Semikah Controversy between the School of Shammai and Hillel." *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 56.3 (1966): 240-244.

3. Social Psychology

Abrams, Dominic, Abrams, and Michael A. Hogg. "An Introduction to the Social Identity Approach." *Social Identity Theory: Constructive and Critical Advances* (1990): 1-9.

Abrams, Dominic, Michael A. Hogg, and Jose M. Marques. "Social Psychological Framework for Understanding Social Inclusion and Exclusion." Pages 4-26 in *The Social Psychology of Inclusion and Exclusion*. Edited by Abram, Dominic, Michael A. Hogg, and J.M. Marques. New York: Psychology Press, 2005.

Avolio, Bruce J., William L. Gardner, F. O. Walumbwa, F. Luthans, and D.R. May. "Unlocking the Mask: A Look at the Process by which Authentic Leaders Impact Follower Attitudes and Behaviors." *The Leadership Quarterly* 15(6) (2004): 801-823.

Avolio, Bruce J. and William L. Gardner. "Authentic Leadership Development: Getting to the Root of Positive Forms of Leadership." *The Leadership Quarterly* 16 (2005): 315-338.

Bar-Tal, Daniel. *Group Beliefs: A Conception for Analyzing Group Structure, Processes, and Behavior*. New York: SSSP, 1990.

Barreto, Nicolas B., and Michael A. Hogg. "Influence and Leadership in Small Groups: Impact of Group Prototypicality, Social Status, and Task Competence." *Journal of Theoretical Social Psychology* 2.1 (2018): 26-33.

Berger, Peter L., and Thomas Luckmann. *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*. London: Penguin, 1966.

Billig, Michael, and Henri Tajfel. "Social Categorization and Similarity in Intergroup Behaviour." *European Journal of Social Psychology* 3.1 (1973): 27-52.

Bruner, Mark W. "Identity Leadership and Social Identification within Sport Teams Over a Season: A Social Network Analysis." *Psychology of Sport & Exercise* 59 (2022): 102106.

Carnevale, J. B., L. Huang, and T. Paterson. "LMX-differentiation Strengthens the Prosocial Consequences of Leader Humility: An Identification and Social Exchange Perspective." *Journal of Business Research* 96 (2019): 287-296.

Campbell, Donald T., and Robert A. LeVine. "Psychological vs Sociological Explanations of Ethnocentrism." in *American Psychological Association Meeting* 1967.

Choi, Eunice, and Michael A. Hogg. "Who do you think you are? Ingroup and Outgroup Sources of Identity Validation." *Journal of Theoretical Social Psychology* (2020): 1-10.

Cicero, L. A. Pierro, and Daan van Knippenberg. "Leadership and Uncertainty: How Role Ambiguity Affects the Relationship between Leader Group Prototypicality and Leadership Effectiveness." *British Journal of Management*, Vol. 21 (2010): 411-421.

Cremer, De, and Dann van Knippenberg. "Cooperation as a Function of Leader Self-Sacrifice, Trust, and Identification." *Leadership and Organization Development Journal* 26.5 (2005): 355-369.

Derue, D. Scott, and J. Ashford. "Who will Lead and Who will Follow? A Social Process of Leadership Identity Construction in Organizations." *Academy of Management Review* 35.4 (2010): 627-647.

Ding, Xiang, Q. Li, H. Zhang, Z. Sheng, and Z. Wang. "Linking Transformational Leadership and Work Outcomes in Temporary Organizations: A Social Identity Approach." *International Journal of Project Management* 35.4 (2017): 543-556.

Ellemers, Naomi, Stefano Pagliaro, and Manuela Barreto. "Morality and Behavioural Regulation in Groups: A Social Identity Approach." *European Review of Social Psychology* 24.1 (2013): 160-193.

Figgins, S. G., M. J. Slater, M. J. Smith, A. J. Miller, B. T. Sharpe, C. Pocock, and J. Maiden. "Promote "We" to Inspire Me: Examining the Roles of Group Identification and Trust in the Association Between Identity Leadership and Follower Inspiration." *International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, (2023):1-20.

Fladerer, Martin P., Niklas K. Steffens, and S. Alexander Haslam. "Bridging Gaps in Organizations: Leaders as Entrepreneurs of Identity." Pages 67-97 in *The Connecting Leader: Serving Concurrently as a Leader and a Follower*. Edited by Zahira Jaser. Charlotte: Information Age Publishing, 2020.

Gaertner, Samuel and John F. Dovidio. *Reducing Intergroup Bias: The Common Ingroup Identity Model*. London: Routledge, 2000.

Gaffney, Amber M., and Michael A. Hogg. "Social Identity and Social Influence." Pages 259-278 in *The Oxford Handbook of Social Influence*. Edited by Stephen G. Harkins, W. D. Kipling and J. Burger. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.

Giannellm, Valeria Amata, S. Pagliaro, and B. Manuela. "Leader's Morality, Prototypicality, and Followers' Reactions." *Leadership Quarterly* (2022): 101596.

Gibson, Stephen. "Obedience Without Orders: Expanding Social Psychology's Conception of 'Obedience'." *British Journal of Social Psychology* 58.1 (2019): 241-259.

Giessner, S. R., and Daan van Knippenberg. "License to Fail": Goal Definition, Leader Group Prototypicality, and Perceptions of Leadership Effectiveness after Leader Failure." *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*. 105.1 (2008): 14-35.

Halevy, Nir, Yair Berson, and Adam D. Galinsky. "The Mainstream Is Not Electable: When Vision Triumphs Over Representativeness in Leader Emergence and Effectiveness." *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 37.7 (2011): 893-904.

Haque, Amlan, Mario Fernando, and Peter Caputi. "How is Responsible Leadership Related to the Three-Component Model of Organizational Commitment?" *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management* (2020): 1137-1161.

Haslam, S. Alexander, Craig McGarty, and John C. Turner. "Salient Group Memberships and Persuasion: The Role of Social Identity in the Validation of Beliefs." Pages 29-56 in *What's Social About Social Cognition?* Edited by Nye Judith L. and Aaron M. Brower. London: SAGE, 1996.

Haslam, S. Alexander, John C. Turner, P. J. Oakes, K. J. Reynolds, R.A. Eggins, M. Nolan, and J. Tweedie. "When do Stereotypes Become Really Consensual? Investigating the Group-based Dynamics of the Consensualization Process." *European Journal of Social Psychology* 28.5 (1998): 755-776.

Haslam, S. Alexander, and Michael J. Platow. "The Link Between Leadership and Followership: How Affirming Social Identity Translates Vision into Action." *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 27.11 (2001): 1469-1479.

Haslam, S. Alexander. *Psychology in Organizations: Social Identity Approach*. 2nd edition. London: SAGE, 2014.

Haslam, S. Alexander, and Stephen D. Reicher. "Rethinking the Psychology of Leadership: From Personal Identity to Social Identity." *Daedalus* 145.3 (2016): 21- 34.

Haslam, S. Alexander, Stephen D. Reicher, and Michael J. Platow. *The New Psychology of Leadership: Identity, Influence, and Power*. 2nd edition. New York: Taylor & Francis, 2022.

Haslam, S. Alexander, Amber M. Gaffney, Michael A. Hogg, David E. Rast III, and Niklas K. Steffens. "Reconciling Identity Leadership and Leader Identity: A Dual-Identity Framework." *The Leadership Quarterly* (2022): 101620.

Hershey, H. F. and D. Fischer. "Learning about Leadership, Trust and Benevolence from Ethics of the Fathers (Avot)." *Journal of Religion and Business Ethics* 3.1 (2015).

Hogg, Michael A., and Elizabeth A. Hardie. "Social Attraction, Personal Attraction, and Self-categorization-A Field Study." *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 17.2 (1991): 175-180.

Hogg, Michael A. *The Social Psychology of Group Cohesiveness: From Attraction to Social Identity*. New York: Harvester, 1992.

Hogg, Michael A., and Sarah C. Hains. "Intergroup Relations and Group Solidarity: Effects of Group Identification and Social Beliefs on Depersonalized Attraction." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 70. 2 (1996): 295.

Hogg, Michael A., and Sarah C. Hains. "Friendship and Group Identification: A New Look at the Role of Cohesiveness in Groupthink." *European Journal of Social Psychology* 28.3 (1998): 323–41.

Hogg, Michael A., and Dominic Abram. *Social Identifications: A Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations and Group Processes*. London: Routledge, 1998.

Hogg, Michael A., and Terry I. Deborah. "Social Identity and Self-Categorization Processes in Organizational Contexts." *The Academy of Management Review* 25.1 (2000): 121–140.

Hogg, Michael A. "Subjective Uncertainty Reduction through Self-categorization: A Motivational Theory of Social Identity Processes." *European Review of Social Psychology* 11:1 (2000): 223-255.

Hogg, Michael A. "A Social Identity Theory of Leadership." *Personality and Social Psychology Review* (2001): 184-200.

Hogg, Michael A. "Leader-Member Relations and Social Identity." Pages 18-33 in *Leadership and Power Identity Processes in Groups and Organizations*. Edited by Daan van Knippenberg, and Michael A. Hogg. London: SAGE, 2003.

Hogg, Michael A., Martin Robin, and Karen Weeden. "Leader-Member Relations and Social Identity." Pages 18-33 in *Leadership and Power Identity Processes in Groups and Organizations*. London: SAGE, 2003.

Hogg, Michael A. "Demographic Category Membership and Leadership in Small Groups: A Social Identity Analysis." *Leadership Quarterly* 17.4 (2006): 335.

Hogg, Michael A. "Uncertainty–Identity Theory." *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* 39 (2007): 69-126.

Hogg, Michael A., Daan van Knippenberg, and David E. Rast III. "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments." *European Review of Social Psychology* 23.1 (2012): 258-304.

Hogg, Michael A., and Scott A. Reid. "Social Identity, Self-Categorization, and the Communication of Group Norms." *Communication Theory* (2014): 7-30.

Hogg, Michael A., Dominic Abrams, and Marilynn B. Brewer. "Social identity: The Role of Self in Group Processes and Intergroup Relations." *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations* (2017): 570-581.

Hogg, Michael A., and Graham M. Vaughan. *Social Psychology*. 8th edition. New York: Pearson, 2018.

Hogg, Michael A. "Self-Uncertainty, Leadership Preference, and Communication of Social Identity," *Atlantic Journal of Communication* 26.2 (2018): 111-121.

Hogg, Michael A., and David E. Rast III. "Intergroup Leadership: The Challenge of Successfully Leading Fractured Groups and Societies." *Current Directions in Psychological Science*. Vol.31.6 (2022): 564-571.

Hogg, Michael A., and Amber M. Gaffney. "Social Identity Dynamics in the Face of Overwhelming Uncertainty." Pages 244-264 in *The Psychology of Insecurity: Seeking Certainty Where None Can Be Had*. Edited by Joseph P. Forgas, William D. Crano, and Klaus Fiedler. New York: Routledge, 2023.

Hogg, Michael A. "Walls between Groups: Self-uncertainty, Social Identity, and Intergroup Leadership." *Journal of Social Issues* (2023): 825-840.

Jansen, Marenne M., and Delahaij, Roos. "Leadership Acceptance through the Lens of Social Identity Theory: A Case Study of Military Leadership in Afghanistan." *Armed Forces & Society* 46.4 (2020): 657-676.

Jolanda, Jetten, and Tom Postmes. *Individuality and the Group*. London: SAGE, 2006.

Kašperová, E., and J. Kitching. "Embodying Entrepreneurial Identity." *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research* 20.5 (2014): 438-452.

Kershaw, Christine, David E. Rast III, Michael A. Hogg, and Dann Van Knippenberg. "Divided Groups Need Leadership: A Study of the Effectiveness of Collective Identity, Dual Identity, and Intergroup Relational Identity Rhetoric." *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* (2021): 53-62.

Khumalo, Nonhlanhla, Kitty B. Dumont, and Sven Waldzus. "Leaders' Influence on Collective Action: An Identity Leadership Perspective." *Leadership Quarterly* 33.4 (2022): 101609.

Knippenberg, Barbara van, and Daan van Knippenberg. "Leader Self-Sacrifice and Leadership Effectiveness: The Moderating Role of Leader Prototypicality." *Journal of Applied Psychology* 90.1 (2005): 25–37.

Knippenberg, Daan van, and Michael A. Hogg. "Identity, Leadership, and Power: Preface and Introduction." Pages 1-4 in *Leadership and Power: Identity Processes in Groups and Organizations*. London: SAGE, 2003.

Knippenberg, Daan van, David De Cremer, and Barbara Van Knippenberg. "Leadership and Fairness: The State of the Art." *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology* 16.2 (2007): 113-140.

Knippenberg, Dann van, Barbara van Knippenberg, Gerben A. van Kleef and Frederic Damen. "Leadership, Affect, and Emotions." Pages 465-475 in *Research Companion to Emotions in Organizations*. Edited by N. Ashkanasy, and C. Cooper. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2008.

Knippenberg, Daan van. "Embodying Who We Are: Leader Group Prototypicality and Leadership Effectiveness." *The Leadership Quarterly* 22.6 (2011): 1078-1091.

Knippenberg, Daan van, and David J. G. Dwertmann. "Interacting Elements of Leadership: Key to Integration but Looking for Integrative Theory." *Journal of Management* 48.6 (2022): 1695-1723.

Knippenberg, Daan van. "Embodying Who We Are: Social Identity and Leadership." Pages 52-62 in *SAGE Handbook of Leadership*. Edited by Schedlitzki, Doris, Magnus Larsson, Brigid Carroll, Michelle C. Bligh, and Olga Epitropaki. London: SAGE, 2023.

Knippenberg, Daan van, and Diana Lee. "Supervisor's Organizational Embodiment is Leader Group Prototypicality: Addressing Construct Redundancy through Replication." *Journal of Management Scientific Reports* 1.1 (2023): 42-71.

Knippenberg, Daan van. "Developing the Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Leader Agency in Leader Group Prototypicality." *Social and Personality Psychology Compass* 17.4 (2023): 12739.

Knippenberg, Daan van, Diana Lee, Niklas K. Steffens, Michael J. Platow, and S. Alexander Haslam. "Leader Group Prototypicality: A Replication of Average Member Versus Ideal-Type Operationalization Effects." *Journal of Leadership*

& *Organizational Studies* (2024): 1–13.

Kragt, Darja, and David V. Day. "Predicting Leadership Competency Development and Promotion Among High-Potential Executives: The Role of Leader Identity." *Frontiers in Psychology* 11 (2020): 1816.

Lau, Vienna, D. Tse, M. Bligh, Y. Hong, M. Kakarika, H. W. Chan, and C. P. Chiu, "Not "My" Crisis: Social Identity and Followers' Crisis Responses to COVID-19." *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy* 22.2 (2022): 506-535.

Levine, John M., and Michael A. Hogg. "Motivation." Page 798 in *Encyclopedia of Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*. London: SAGE, 2010.

Lord, Robert G. "A Test of Leadership Categorization Theory: Internal Structure, Information Processing, and Leadership Perceptions." *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance* 34 (1984): 343–378.

Lord, Robert G., Rosalie J. Hall. "Identity, Deep Structure and the Development of Leadership Skills." *The Leadership Quarterly* 16 (2005): 591–615.

Lord, Robert G., and K. J. Maher. "Perceptions of Leadership and their Implications in Organizations." Pages 129-154 in *Applied Social Psychology and Organizational Settings*. Edited by J. S. Carroll. New York: Psychology Press, 1990.

Mackie, Diane M., and Eliot R. Smith. "Intergroup Emotions." Pages 263-293 in *APA Handbook of Personality and Social Psychology. Vol. 2. Group Processes*. Edited by M. Mikulincer, P. R. Shaver, J. F. Dovidio, and J. A. Simpson. American Psychological Association, 2015.

Marchiondo, Lisa A., Christopher G. Myers, Shirli Kopelman. "The Relational Nature of Leadership Identity Construction: How and When it Influences Perceived Leadership and Decision-making." *The Leadership Quarterly* 26 (2015): 892-908.

Martiny, Sarah E., and Thomas Kessler. "Managing One's Social Identity: Successful and Unsuccessful Identity Management." *European Journal of Social Psychology* 44 (2014): 748–757.

Martiny, Sarah E., Thomas Kessler, and Vivian L. Vignoles. "Shall I Leave or Shall We Fight? Effects of Threatened Group-based Self-esteem on Identity Management Strategies." *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations* 15.1 (2011): 39-55.

Milesi, Patrizia. "Identity Leadership, Procedural Justice, and Group Identification in Uncertain Organizational Contexts." *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 52.9 (2022): 886-911.

Mühlemann, Neela. S., Niklas K. Steffens, Johannes Ullrich, and S. Alexander, Haslam, and Klaus Jonas. "Understanding Responses to an Organizational Takeover: Introducing the Social Identity Model of Organizational Change." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology: Interpersonal Relations and Group Processes*. Vol. 123.5 (2022): 1004-1023.

Oates, John F. "The Influence of Situational Features on Perceived Conflict Styles and Self-construal in Work Groups." *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 23.4 (1999): 679-695.

Onorato, Rina S., and John C. Turner. "Fluidity in the Self-Concept: the Shift from Personal to Social Identity." *European Journal of Social Psychology* 34.3 (2004): 257-278.

Raudonė, Odeta. "Links Between Leader Identity, Leadership Identity and Their Fusion." Paper presented at *17th Prof. Vladas Gronskas International Scientific Conference.* Vilniaus Universiteto Leidykla, 2023.

Rego, A., B. Owens, S. Leal, A. Melo, M. P. Cunha, L. Gonçalves, and P. Ribeiro. "How Leader Humility Helps Teams to be Humbler, Psychologically Stronger, and More Effective: A Moderated Mediation Model." *The Leadership Quarterly* 28.5 (2017): 639-658.

Reicher, Stephen D., and Nick Hopkins. "Self-category Constructions in Political Rhetoric; An Analysis of Thatcher's and Kinnock's Speeches Concerning the British Miners' Strike (1984–5)." *European Journal of Social Psychology* 26 (1996): 353-371.

Reicher, Stephen D., and Nick Hopkins. "15 On the Science of the Art of Leadership." Pages 197-209 in *Leadership and Power: Identity Processes in Groups and Organizations*. Edited by Daan van Knippenberg, and Michael A. Hogg. London: SAGE, 2003.

Reicher, Stephen D., S. Alexander Haslam, and Michael J. Platow. "Shared Social Identity in Leadership." *Current Opinion in Psychology* (2018): 129-133.

Reicher, Stephen D., Nick Hopkins, C. Stevenson, K. Pandey, S. Shankar, and S. Tewari. "Identity Enactment as Collective Accomplishment: Religious Identity Enactment at Home and at a Festival." *British Journal of Social Psychology* 60.2 (2021): 678-699.

Robertson, Alysia M., T. Cruwys, M. Stevens, Michael J. Platow. "Aspirational Leaders Help Us Change: Ingroup Prototypicality Enables Effective Group Psychotherapy Leadership." *British Journal of Clinical Psychology* 62.1 (2023): 243-259.

Rolf, Van Dick, and Rudolf Kerschreiter. "The Social Identity Approach to Effective Leadership: An Overview and Some Ideas on Cross-Cultural Generalizability." *Frontiers of Business Research in China* 10.3 (2016).

Rus, Diana, Daan van Knippenberg, and Barbara Wisse. "Leader Self-definition and Leader Self-serving Behavior." *The Leadership Quarterly* 21 (2010): 509-529.

Platow, Michael J., and Daan van Knippenberg. "A Social Identity Analysis of Leadership Endorsement: The Effects of Leader Ingroup Prototypicality and Distributive Intergroup Fairness." *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 27 (2001): 1508-1519.

Saul, Kassin, S. Fein, and H.R. Markus, K.A., McBain, and L. Williams. *Social Psychology Australian & New Zealand Edition*. Albany: Cengage, 2019.

Selvanathan, Hema Preya, Charlie R. Crimston, and Jolanda Jetten. "How Being Rooted in the Past Can Shape the Future: The Role of Social Identity Continuity in the Wish for a Strong Leader." *The Leadership Quarterly* 33.4 (2022): 101608.

Sewell, David K., Timothy Ballard, and Niklas K. Steffens. "Exemplifying "Us": Integrating Social Identity Theory of Leadership with Cognitive Models of Categorization." *The Leadership Quarterly* 33.4 (2022): 101517.

Slater, Matthew J., P. Coffee, J. B. Barker, and A. L. Evans. "Promoting Shared Meanings in Group Memberships: A Social Identity Approach to Leadership in Sport." *Reflective Practice* 15.5 (2014): 672-685.

Steffens, Niklas K., S. A. Haslam, M. K. Ryan, and T. Kessler. "Leader Performance and Prototypicality: Their Inter-Relationship and Impact on Leaders' Identity Entrepreneurship." *European Journal of Social Psychology* 43 (2013): 606-613.

Steffens, Niklas K., S. A. Haslam, S. D. Reicher, M. J. Platow, K. Fransen, J. Yang, M.K. Ryan, J. Jetten, K. Peters, and F. Boen. "Leadership as Social Identity Management: Introducing the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI) to Assess and Validate a Four-Dimensional Model." *The Leadership Quarterly* 25 (2014): 1001-1024.

Steffens, Niklas K., S. C. Schuh, S. A. Haslam, A. Perez, and R. van Dick. "'Of the Group' and 'For the Group': How Followership is shaped by Leaders' Prototypicality and Group Identification." *European Journal of Social Psychology* 45.2 (2015): 180-190.

Steffens, Niklas K., F. Mols, S. A. Haslam, and T. G. Okimoto. "True to What We Stand for: Championing Collective Interests as a Path to Authentic Leadership." *The Leadership Quarterly* 27.5 (2016): 726-744.

Steffens, Niklas K., Kim Peters, K., S. A. Haslam, and M. J. Platow. "One of us… and us… and us: Evidence that Leaders' Multiple Identity Prototypicality (LMIP) is Related to Their Perceived Effectiveness." *Comprehensive Results in Social Psychology* 3.2 (2018): 175-199.

Steffens, Niklas K., K. A. Munt, D. van Knippenberg, M. J. Platow, and S.A. Haslam. "Advancing the Social Identity Theory of Leadership: A Meta-analytic Review of Leader Group Prototypicality." *Organizational Psychology Review* 11.1 (2021): 35-72.

Stevens, Mark, T. Rees, N. K. Steffens, S. A. Haslam, P. Coffee, and R. Polman. "Leaders' Creation of Shared Identity Impacts Group Members' Effort and Performance: Evidence from an Exercise Task." *Plos One* 14 (2019): e0218984.

Swann Jr, William B., and Michael D. Buhrmester. "Identity Fusion." *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 24.1 (2015): 52-57.

Sy, Thomas, and Daan van Knippenberg. "The Emotional Leader: Implicit Theories of Leadership Emotions and Leadership Perceptions." *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 42.7 (2021): 885-912.

Tajfel, Henri. "Social Identity and Intergroup Behaviour." *Social Science Information* 13.2 (1974): 65-93.

Tajfel, Henri. *Differentiation Between Social Groups Studies in the Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations*. London: Academic Press, 1978.

Tajfel, Henri. *Interindividual Behaviour and Intergroup Behaviour. In Differentiation Between Social Groups: Studies in the Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations* in Henri Tajfel. *European Monographs in Social Psychology*, 1978.

Tajfel, Henri. *Human Groups & Social Categories: Studies in Social Psychology*. Cambridge: Cambridge Press, 1981.

Tee, Eugene YJ, Neil Paulsen, and Neal M. Ashkanasy. "Revisiting Followership through a Social Identity Perspective: The Role of Collective Follower Emotion and Action." *The Leadership Quarterly* 24.6 (2013): 902-918.

Turner, John C. "Social Comparison and Social Identity: Some Prospects for Intergroup Behaviour." *European Journal of Social Psychology* 5.1 (1975): 1-34.

Turner, John C. "Knowing What to Think by Knowing Who You Are: Self-Categorization and the Nature of Norm Formation, Conformity and Group Polarization." *British Journal of Social Psychology* 29.2 (1990): 97-119.

Turner, John C., P. J. Oakes, S. A. Haslam, and C. McGarty. "Personal and Social Identity: Self and Social Context." *The Self and the Collective* (1992): 1-19.

Turner, John C. "Explaining the Nature of Power: A Three-process Theory." *European Journal of Social Psychology* 35.1 (2005): 1-22.

Turner, John C., Katherine J. Reynolds, and Emina Subasic. "Identity Confers Power: The New View of Leadership in Social Psychology." *Public Leadership* (2008): 57.

Uysal, Mete. S., Klara Jurstakova, and Yasemin Uluşahin. "An Integrative Social Identity Model of Populist Leadership." *Social Personal Psychology Compass* (2022): 12713.

Venus, Merlijn, Daan Stam, and Daan van Knippenberg. "Visions of change as visions of continuity." *Academy of Management Journal* 62.3 (2019): 667-690.

Walumbwa, Fred, B. J. Avolio, W. L. Gardner, T. S. Wernsing, and S. J. Peterson "Authentic Leadership: Development and Validation of a Theory-based Measure." *Journal of Management* 34.1 (2008): 89-126.

Wenzel, Michael, Amélie Mummendey, and Sven Waldzus. "Superordinate Identities and Intergroup Conflict: The Ingroup Projection Model." *European Review of Social Psychology* 18.1 (2008): 331-372.

Yang, Feifan, S. Senewiratne, A. Newman, S. Sendjaya, and Z. Chen. "Leader Self-sacrifice: A Systematic Review of Two Decades of Research and an Agenda for Future Research." *Applied Psychology* (2022): 797-831.