

LEADING IN THE TIME THAT REMAINS

The Passion and Complexity of Paul's Leadership in 1 Corinthians

Brent Duckor and Jean-François Racine

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Le bon pasteur : une métaphore parlante pour un *leadership* d'aujourd'hui ?

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[See table of contents](#)

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Article abstract

Paul of Tarsus sought to lead Gentiles toward Israel with a passion, style, and commitment that invite us to study his leadership model with a concrete congregation, the Corinthians. After discussing what is known about Paul and the Corinthian congregation, the article explains further his project for this group and how its adoption of Paul's message puts them in a delicate and difficult position. The article then presents three case studies (1 Cor 1:10-12; 5:1-4; 12) that examine how Paul exercises leadership relevant for today's leadership studies. Using a standard modern work, *The Leadership Challenge*, the article shows how Paul's exercise of leadership in 1 Corinthians converges with some best practices of leadership described by Kouzes and Posner, but also collides with these prescriptions. The article concludes that Paul appears as an audacious and refreshingly authentic leader dedicated to his commission to bring this group in proximity to Israel. From this study emerges the portrayal of a complex, principled leader who must lead at multiple levels within and across a community.

LEADING IN THE TIME THAT REMAINS The Passion and Complexity of Paul's Leadership in 1 Corinthians

BRENT DUCKOR AND JEAN-FRANÇOIS RACINE

Jesus, Peter, and Paul. These are the three major figures of leadership that emerge from the early Christian scriptures. Each has a unique position in the development of the 1st century CE church. But only one leader, Paul, sought to lead Gentiles toward Israel with a passion, style, and commitment that invites us to study his model of leadership with a concrete congregation, the Corinthians.¹ The leadership style, tone, and the substance of Paul's teachings are available in first-hand accounts. Through his extant letters, we have a window into Paul's role as a leader in the early churches across the eastern Mediterranean.

Paul is a towering figure in the story of leadership for today's Christians. He experienced both success and failure with his flock. But Paul models the way forward as he perseveres towards his mission to establish the churches. Paul models the way through hardship and contention, despite numerous setbacks with his congregants. Paul enables others to act in the Corinthian community while he leads and "corrects" from a distance.

The Paul who proclaims his apostleship to the Gentiles is the subject of nearly half of the Acts of the Apostles. Paul's letters come to constitute a significant portion of the Christian scriptures. Theologians from Augustine to today have drawn heavily on Paul's letters and he has inspired modern church leaders, especially in the Reformed tradition, to consider the implications of his leadership challenge.

Thus, it is not surprising that Paul's leadership style and mission has received much attention in recent years.² We have chosen 1 Corinthians as an

1. From the editor: A word of warning. Paul never uses the metaphor of the shepherd in his writings. However, it is not difficult to see that his conception of apostleship consisted in gathering a flock and empowering local shepherds with a sound map to where spiritual pastures were, and therefore that the metaphor of shepherding applies also to this situation. Let the reader keep this in mind to understand why a leader who never conceived of his leadership in shepherding terms, remains nonetheless a prime example of a shepherding way of understanding leadership.

2. See for instance Richard S. ASCOUGH and Charles A. COTTON, *Passionate Visionary: Leadership Lessons from the Apostle Paul*, Peabody MA, Hendrickson, 2006; Andrew J. CLARKE,

ideal location to study Paul's leadership style, his message, and the complexity of leading in the time that remains from his perspective. Among Paul's letters, 1 Corinthians is the most dialogic one: it shows Paul addressing and discussing a wide variety of issues that the members of the Corinthian church have submitted to him.

In exploring the argument for Paul's unique leadership style, his message and vision, we have taken a resolutely synchronic approach. By studying Paul's leadership in the Corinthian case, and contrasting his positionality to popular works on the subject today such as *The Leadership Challenge* by James Kouzes and Barry Posner,³ we identify places where Paul conforms to and resists accepted notions of good leadership. Rather than deny Paul a Christ-centered point of view on leadership, we explore how his words and actions cannot be fully explained by modern scholarship, and instead invite us to challenge our own assumptions about what makes a good leader.

Our goal is not to cast aspersions on today's mix of psychology, sociology, and organizational theory that guides secular discussions of leadership. Rather, we hope to show that Paul is relevant to thinking through what it means to lead well – but not necessarily in the ways a modern reader might expect. The register of Paul's leadership is rooted in a position toward time, and an immutable belief in Christ's messiahship. This particular register and historical space delimits our attempts to reduce Paul's leadership in Corinth to modern, universalist categories in the leadership discourse field. Even if we discover along the way that Paul is not a leader "for us" today, we can nonetheless go on the journey with him. His project is too important to dismiss as anachronistic.

Because of the limited scope of this article, we focus on three case studies that depict Paul as a leader in an administrative and strategic role. As indicates 1 Corinthians, once the entrepreneurial phase of founding a Christian community is over, Paul has to deal with the various issues that arise in the daily life of the group. In each case, we use a modern text, *The Leadership*

Secular and Christian Leadership in Corinth: A Socio-Historical and Exegetical Study of 1 Corinthians 1-6, in *Secular and Christian Leadership* (Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums, 18), Leiden, Brill, 1993; *A Pauline Theology of Church Leadership* (Library of New Testament Studies, 362), London, T & T Clark, 2008; Verlyn D. VERBRUGGE, *Paul's Style of Church Leadership Illustrated by His Instructions to the Corinthians on the Collection: To Command or not to Command*, San Francisco CA, Mellen Research University Press, 1992.

While all these works provide rich insights about Paul's leadership style, they either focus on a small sample of Paul's letters (Verbrugge) or the whole collection of Paul's letters (Ascough and Cotton; Clarke 2008). The closest thing to our project is Clarke's 1993 monograph that investigates 1 Corinthians using what is known of first-century CE structures of leadership in the Greco-Roman world.

3. *The Leadership Challenge: How to Make Extraordinary Things Happen in Organizations*⁶, Hoboken NJ, Wiley & Sons, 2017.

Challenge, to ask how Paul leads (or felt led) in these specific situations. What emerges from this comparative study is, that even though Paul is generally up to *The Leadership Challenge*, his leadership style and substantive message collides with the corporate model assumed by many of today's authors. Unlike the audience of corporate and educational leadership in the 21st century, Paul sees leaders as called by God. Because of Paul's conviction that God has called him to lead in the time that remains, and because Paul aims at preserving the integrity of the body of Christ in Corinth while he prepares others for Israel, we cannot approach his work with slogans and formulae. His is a complex leadership challenge, wrought with struggle and trials and tribulations that do not fit into today's well-packaged, commodified "how to lead" literature. Paul's writings, his letters, therefore, merit our deepest care and humility as we investigate what leading meant for him in the founding years of the Christ movement.

Who is Paul and How do we Know about Him?

Assuming that not everyone is familiar with recent scholarship on Paul, this section provides basic information about him, his mission, and importance in Christian scriptures.

The problem of obtaining reliable information about Paul is complex, in part, because we have two sources of different quality: his letters and the Acts of the Apostles. At first glance, the large number of pages, particularly the biographical information garnered from Acts, gives the impression that one has everything one needs to know about Paul. A closer look mitigates that impression. At issue is the fact that Acts, written roughly forty years after the letters, is not as reliable as Paul's own extant letters, from which little biographical data exists. Of the thirteen letters assigned to Paul's corpus: six were composed later and have little to no connection with him. The seven remaining letters provide scant biographical information, except for a few details related to his dealings with these early Christ-following communities.

The scarcity of biographical data about Paul from his own letters has led many scholars to go to the Acts of the Apostles for proof of who he was and what he did. Acts seems to provide ample biographical details. Whatever acts were ascribed to Paul by the author of Luke-Acts, these are based on second-hand accounts at best. As John Knox has shown, we should be very cautious about the information found in the Acts of the Apostles.⁴ Too many parts of Acts make historically little sense: the account of Paul's travels, the nature of his geographical missions, his Roman citizenship. The author of Luke-Acts

4. *Chapters in a Life of Paul*, New York NY, Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1950.

constructed his portrait of Paul from hearsay and filled in the blanks to suit a purpose.

Letters closely connected with Paul (Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians, and Philemon) provide solid grounds for obtaining a few, plausible facts. Based on the consensus of late 20th-century and early 21st-century scholarship, we can state the following: Paul was fluent in Greek, knew some aspects of Greek rhetoric, cited the Greek translation of the Bible used in the Jewish diaspora. Hence, Paul was a diaspora Jew. We also learn from these letters that Paul identified himself as a Pharisee (Phil 3:5), which could also mean that he had adopted the religious perspective of the Pharisees, persecuted the Church at some point (1 Cor 15:9), had at least one mystical experience (2 Cor 12:1-10), and espoused at times an apocalyptic mindset (1 Thess 4:16-5:3). To see Paul as a diaspora Jew who shared a pharisaic outlook regarding the building of Israel and as an apostle who came to preach the way to Israel for Gentiles is consistent with a review of the evidence presented in his letters.

From Paul's own writings, most interestingly we learn that Paul was not running a one-man leadership show. In fact, these letters invariably use the first-person plural and mention associates such as Silvanus, Sosthenes, Timothy, Titus, Prisca, and Aquila. These associates traveled with him or visited the churches on his behalf to inform Paul of their situations and minister to them. It is Paul's reliance upon and commitment to collaborative relationships with men and women in his work that strike the modern reader as advanced for its time. Paul's leadership style and his message place tremendous emphasis on the community as a body that connected to God in its many parts. Paul sees the need for leaders – apostles, prophets and teachers foremost (1 Cor 12:28)—while acknowledging the community's gifts and their proper place.

To this portrait drawn from Paul's seven letters, we can add information from the Acts of the Apostles unrelated to its program. For instance, Acts identifies Paul's hometown as Tarsus in Asia Minor (Acts 21:39) and tells that he is a tent-maker (Acts 18:3). Paul's business dealings as a tent-maker would have put him in contact with many groups within the Roman empire, including Jews, Greeks, and Romans. His business placed him at the intersections of Greco-Roman life. Still, Paul maintained his position in a relatively well-defined social stratum that excluded the destitute and the elites. From all the available evidence, we see that Paul led from the middle rungs of society because he was a product of them.

Who Are the Corinthians?

The city and the milieu

Social and economic conditions in Corinth

When Paul visited Corinth (ca 50 CE), he found himself in a cosmopolitan “boomtown” advantaged by its two harbors, located on each side of the isthmus of Corinth. Goods that transited through Corinth were moved from one port to the other before shipping across the Mediterranean. Corinth also profited from the development of trade in the region made possible by the newly built Roman road system and a better policing of the roads and seaways. Trade also brought migrants to Corinth.

We accept the scholarly consensus concerning the social location of the early Greek-speaking churches.⁵ Meeks suggests that early urban Christ-following churches in Corinth likely attracted people who did not neatly fit in the established social categories of agrarian societies. He has coined the phrase “social inconsistency” to describe the social location of these early Christians who likely recruited among the overlapping categories of displaced people, former slaves, traders, and craftspeople.⁶ While Meeks labels the members of these early churches as “proto-bourgeois,” we lean toward the conclusions of scholars’ work that better sifts the available evidence about social stratification.⁷ Friesen, for example, has outlined a seven-tiered scale of Greco-Roman social-economic levels. He contends that the members of the early Greek-speaking churches fell in the middle and lower-middle tiers. Although some members of the Corinthian congregations could have been traders, artisans, shop owners, who had some employees and enjoyed a “moderate surplus,” most members had a stable income that placed them just above the subsistence level. Paul was among this collection of traders, merchants, and artisans in Corinth and he likely intersected them through his own business dealings in the region.

Voluntary associations and house churches

Voluntary associations are the best model for understanding the organization of the early Greek-speaking churches. Voluntary associations existed in every Hellenistic city and gathered people from the same profession, ethnicity, even neighborhood. The worship of a common god (e.g., Poseidon) prompted the creation of these local associations. Voluntary associations held common

5. Wayne A. MEEKS, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul*, New Haven CT, Yale University Press, 1983.

6. Wayne A. MEEKS, *The First Urban*, p. 73.

7. Steven J. FRIESEN, “Poverty in Pauline Studies: Beyond the So-Called New Consensus,” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*, 26 (2004), pp. 323-361.

meals once or a few times a year and some performed rituals when receiving new members.

The abundance of documents makes it possible to have a good idea about the organization and activities of voluntary associations, including those found in Corinth.⁸ Voluntary associations in Corinth were common to all social classes, sometimes blending members of different social groupings. Importantly, they were open to men and women. These associations helped displaced people to meet others from the same ethnic group or trade and build new networks of relationships in their dynamic social and economic environment.

Because of the diversity of social classes in Corinth, conflicts were common among the members of these associations. Legal and organizational documents from the period indicate that those who failed to attend meetings or stole seats from other members at community meals had to pay a fine or face potential litigation. 1 Corinthians is consistent with what we know about voluntary associations in this period. Paul indicates the presence of factions in the churches of Corinth throughout the whole letter. These may have been the result of conflicts that emerge when mixing different peoples from different social classes in a single association.

Kloppenborg maintains that thinking of a single, unified Church when discussing the situation in Corinth is unhelpful: it is more likely the “churches” during Paul’s time were a group of loosely affiliated households. The account in Paul’s letters to the Corinthians points to the possibility of many houses where different groups gathered and factions were based on allegiances and commitments to particular leaders. This is consistent with the hypothesis of the establishment of multiple voluntary associations across Corinth.⁹ If the Corinthian church is a gathering of several household churches, as Kloppenborg suggests,¹⁰ we can better understand why conflicts arose and Paul’s continuing efforts to bring unity.

When reading about the challenges in 1 Corinthians, the understanding of social class, voluntary associations, and mixing of peoples help to frame what makes Paul’s leadership unique. By contextualizing Paul’s struggles in this period, we are in a better position to evaluate Paul’s work to form and lead these groups.

8. For a compilation of publications on voluntary associations up to 2015, see Richard S. ASCOUGH, “What Are They Now Saying About Christ Groups and Associations?” *Currents in Biblical Research*, 13 (2015), p. 236-244.

9. Paul and his associates likely established one or several of these house churches (e.g., Chloe’s household 1 Cor 1:11; Stephanas’s household 1:16) while other apostles, e.g., Peter, Apollos may have established others.

10. John S. KLOPPENBORG, “Greco-Roman *Thiasoi*, The *Ekklesia* at Corinth, and Conflict Management,” in Ron CAMERON and Merrill P. MILLER (eds.), *Redescribing Paul and the Corinthians* (Early Christianity and Its Literature, 5), Atlanta GA, Society of Biblical Literature, 2011, p. 209.

Paul's Call to Lead and the Project for the Corinthians

The apostle

Paul consistently claims only one title through his letters: Apostle. The formula that contains this word tends to appear among the first ten words of each letter.¹¹ Literally, "apostle" refers to the one who is dispatched. The apostle does not dispatch oneself; an agent dispatches the apostle. For Paul this agent is God who has called him into this position. The title "apostle" captures an essential trait of Paul's leadership as he envisions it: Paul does not propel himself toward a leadership position by his own personal aspiration or formal training, rather he claims to be called into the work by a higher power.¹² Paul perceives that God grants him his capacity to be a leader, and that Christ is guiding his leadership among the Corinthians in their formation.

Even though Paul describes himself as working harder than the other apostles (1 Cor 15:10), he immediately adds that it was rather God's grace that was working in him. Paul's own account of his calling as a leader is different than today's leaders in the corporate or ecclesiastical world; they are often appointed by their superiors, and sometimes, after much maneuvering towards the desired leadership position. Furthermore, Paul's apostleship to the Gentiles by his own proclamation is part of God's leadership plan – not his own! In Paul's eyes, he is called to non-Jews to bring them to worship the God of Israel.

Proximity to Israel

Paul was a diaspora Jew who self-identified as a Pharisee (Phil 3:5). The Pharisees promoted the belief in the resurrection of the dead and granted authority to the writings of the prophets besides the Torah. Paul also shows a strong interest in preaching Christ to the Gentiles, an interest that was consistent with Pharisaic ideas.

In Matt 23:15, Jesus teases the Pharisees for crossing the lands and oceans to make a single proselyte. The language is likely hyperbolic but tells something about the Pharisees' interest in non-Jews. Based on their readings of the book of the prophet Isaiah, the Pharisees considered that eventually, the non-Jews would converge to Jerusalem to worship the God of Israel (Is 56:5-7; 60:3). This would be a sign that God's rule is about to unfold. Hence, the Pharisees were interested in making converts among Gentiles.

11. Giorgio AGAMBEN, *The Time That Remains: A Commentary on the Letter to the Romans*, trans. Patricia DAILEY (Meridian, Crossing Aesthetics), Stanford CA, Stanford University Press, 2005.

12. To describe his call (Gal 1:15), Paul uses the words of Isaiah (Is 49:1) and Jeremiah (Jer 1:5), two other leaders who perceived themselves as commissioned by God.

Paul is often called the apostle to the Gentiles which is fully consistent with his perspective on Christ's role which includes the gathering of nations. Indeed, Paul as apostle for Christ traveled hundreds of kilometers to visit Gentiles and make sure that they joined the Christ movement. Why is Paul so interested in Gentiles in the eastern Mediterranean in general and Corinth in particular? If we take seriously that Paul has adopted beliefs promoted by Pharisees his interest in non-Jews makes sense: Paul sees himself as a leader dispatched on behalf of Christ at work to realize the plan set in the book of Isaiah. Even though many Gentiles were attracted to Judaism during Paul's time,¹³ the circumcision and dietary restrictions stood in the way of Gentiles interested in becoming Jews.¹⁴ Paul's leadership model in the Gentile world set forth a new way – toward God in Christ – for pagans.

As Donaldson explains, Paul's encounter with Christ through a revelation resulted in a reorganization of his system of beliefs concerning the possibility for Gentiles to become associated with Israel.¹⁵ Paul was interested in Gentiles before this mystical experience which makes him see another way for Gentiles to associate with Israel: by becoming part of the body of Christ, those who join the Christ movement can become part of Israel.

Paul sees himself as having been dispatched to preach Christ to the non-Jews. Paul's mission is to gather those in Christ and to do so in the time that remains. We know that Paul single mindedly focused his "ministerial" leadership on those Gentiles ready to associate with Israel – on new terms and conditions.¹⁶ In Paul's view, by becoming part of the body of Christ,¹⁷ those who join the Christ movement with him can now become part of Israel.

13. On this see, Pamela EISENBAUM, *Paul Was not a Christian: The Original Message of a Misunderstood Apostle*, New York NY, HarperOne, 2009, pp. 110-113.

14. Mark D. Nanos comments about a passage from Josephus, *Ant.* 20.17-48 on this very issue. "The Question of Conceptualization: Qualifying Paul's Position on Circumcision in Dialogue with Josephus's Advisors to King Izates," in Mark D. NANOS and Magnus ZETTERHOLM (eds.), *Paul Within Judaism: Restoring the First-Century Context to the Apostle*, Minneapolis MN, Fortress, 2015, pp. 105-152.

15. Terence L. DONALDSON, *Paul and the Gentiles: Remapping the Apostle's Convictional World*, Minneapolis MN, Fortress, 1997, p. 236.

16. To explain this "theological" possibility, Paul makes a demonstration based on grammar that has nothing to do with his mystical experience. In Gal 3:16, he argues that God's promise to Abraham (Gen 12:1-7) was made to his descendant (singular) rather than his descendants (plural). By his faithful attitude to God, which is also Abraham's attitude, Jesus Christ proves to be the genuine descendant of Abraham. All those who are in Christ, therefore, qualify as Abraham's descendants and are part of Israel. Male Gentiles, according to Paul's view, ought not to undergo circumcision nor change their diet to be part of Israel. A closer look nevertheless shows that Paul maintains the ethical imperatives of the Torah in some areas such as sexuality (1 Thess 4:1-8. See also, 1 Cor 9-11).

17. The phrase "body of Christ" occurs a few times in Paul's authentic letters (Rom 7:4; 1 Cor 10:16) but the ubiquitous phrase "in Christ" in Paul's letters likely conveys the same conviction as Albert Schweitzer has argued. See *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle*, William MONTGOMERY (trans.), London, A. & C. Black, 1931, pp. 122-124.

Delicate posture

The distinction between Greek and Jew could not be dissolved by self-nomination in the Greco-Roman society. Even if Paul considers the Corinthian members of his church as not being pagans anymore (1 Cor 12:2), Jews in the region would not have considered these followers of Paul as fellow Jews. Part of Paul's mission as a leader was to break down and transcend these distinctions to show how being in Christ makes them void (cf. Gal 3:28).

What is important for our leadership study is to recognize that the Christ followers of Paul's congregations inhabited an in-between, or liminal space. Neither Jews nor Gentiles, Paul's followers were without well-defined social markers or ethnic anchors. Instead, they occupied a sort of no-man's land.¹⁸ The imperatives of turning toward the God of Israel meant that they had to find a way to excuse themselves from traditional public cultic ceremonies common among pagans in Corinth. More difficult was to excuse oneself from the cultic practice of worship of house divinities. Ancestral ties were essential to the structure and function of family as were well-defined lineages in the Greco-Roman world. Paul is, therefore, asking much from his followers. To separate oneself from these divinities, a Christ follower in Corinth would have to alienate oneself from the immediate and extended family.¹⁹

The social "in-between" posture in which Christ's followers found themselves during Paul's time was uncomfortable and an impossible stance to hold on to for the long term in Greco-Roman society. Looking into the transitional situation Paul and his congregants faced, one could expect a resolution in two ways. On the one hand, Paul could ask his followers to hold out until Christ's return, asking them to work "in between" traditional lines of pagan religious authority and social convention. On the other hand, Paul could work to create a critical mass of adepts with its own evolving social network, autonomous from traditional identifications, where a new community nourishes "Christ-followers" that are neither Jews nor Gentiles.

Paul led toward the former option while his work in retrospect generated the added benefits of the latter one. Paul, unlike many of his subsequent readers, expected Christ to return soon, perhaps in his own lifetime. Letters such as 1 Thessalonians and 1 Corinthians indicate that he assumed that Christ's

18. As also suggested by Caroline JOHNSON HODGE, "The Question of Identity: Gentiles as Gentiles – but Also Not – in Pauline Communities," in Mark D. NANOS and Magnus ZETTERHOLM (eds.), *Paul Within Judaism: Restoring the First-Century Context to the Apostle*, Minneapolis MN, Fortress, 2015), pp. 153-174 and Paula FREDRIKSEN, *Paul: The Pagans' Apostle*, New Haven CT, Yale University Press, 2017, pp. 112 and 117.

19. On this, see Kathy EHRENSPERGER, "Between Polis, Oikos, and Ekklesia: The Challenge of Negotiating the Spirit World (1 Cor 12:1-11)," in James R. HARRISON and L.L. WELBORN (eds.), *The First Urban Churches 2: Roman Corinth* (Writings from the Greco-Roman World Supplement Series, 8), Atlanta GA, SBL Press, 2016, pp. 112-120.

followers would find themselves in this delicate, transitional posture only for a short term.

With the benefit of the historical record, the creation of new Christ-following communities prevailed and the notion of a “Christian” became a new religious category in late Antiquity. This recognition helps us to approach Paul’s leadership challenge with fresh ideas about his role in the formation of early churches—beyond the reach of official Church history—but bounded by his own horizons and firmly rooted in his unique struggle.

The time that remains

One would look in vain in Paul’s letters for a comprehensive discourse about the end time, the ἔσχατον. One only finds two short descriptions of the events that surround Christ’s return (1 Thess 4:16-17; 1 Cor 15:52) but they are subsumed under the issue of the resurrection of the dead. It is rather the present moment – ὁ νῦν καιρὸς – in which Paul is interested (Rom 3:26; 8:18; 11:5; 2 Cor 6:2; 8:14). This present moment is different from the ἔσχατον. It is the time that remains before the ἔσχατον, a time in which duration is unspecified. As Giorgio Agamben contends, the matter of duration when one speaks of the καιρὸς is irrelevant.²⁰ It is a moment that provides the opportunity for changing one’s way and living differently. 1 Cor 7:29 has the phrase ὁ καιρὸς συνεσταλμένος which means that the moment or the time has contracted or is wrapping up.²¹ This is the time during which and for which Paul leads the church of Corinth. There is no specific deadline to meet. It is simply a time-space in between the resurrection of Christ and his full presence in the spiritual Body that is forming before Paul’s eyes. To be in Christ, for Paul, is to be led by him. The change in one’s lifestyle, in modern parlance, is total. Paul will remind his followers in Corinth of these spiritual facts in ways that appear urgent and uncompromising. But he does not wave a signpost to announce the end time.

20. Giorgio AGAMBEN, *Time That Remains*, p. 62. See also Joseph A. FITZMYER, *First Corinthians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (The Anchor Yale Bible, 32), New Haven CT, Yale University Press, 2008, p. 317.

21. See Frederick W. DANKER (ed.), *A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature Based on Walter Bauer’s Griechisch-deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der frühchristlichen Literatur, sixth edition*, ed. Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, with Viktor Reichmann and on previous English editions by W. F. Arndt, F. W. Gingrich, and F. W. Danker³, Chicago IL, University of Chicago Press, 2000, ad. loc.

How does Paul Lead the Corinthians? Looking for Parallels and Models of Practice

Paul established himself as a leader with several supporters in Corinth. When he moved on, his challenge was how to maintain proximity to the Corinthians, while working with other Gentile communities in the region. While Paul is away, assumingly in Ephesus, he receives a visit from Chloe's people, who report about the situation in the Corinthian churches.²²

Several issues addressed in 1 Corinthians originate from the report made by Chloe's people.²³ Chloe is likely one of Paul's trusted and close allies who was there with him during the founding days. Other issues addressed in 1 Corinthians are a response to a letter from Corinth not unlikely delivered by Stephanas, a householder mentioned in 1:16 and 16:13,17.²⁴ We can surmise that Stephanas, like Chloe, is held in high esteem by Paul and is a patron/host to a congregation in Corinth. Like Chloe, Stephanas serves as a go-between to communicate between Paul and the other households. Paul relies on these local leaders to work with the houses/congregations that are struggling.

The relationships with Chloe and Stephanas are significant for the student of Paul's leadership. While Paul recognizes himself as a founder (an apostle in fact!), he also realizes key members of the houses/church of Corinth turn to him for continuing guidance and support. It becomes clear in 1 Corinthians: Paul needs to lead the local leaders at a distance. Even though Chloe and Stephanas have routines for the social gatherings, can organize logistics, and have assembled resources to sustain the followers, these local co-leaders rely on Paul for spiritual teaching and ethical guidance. Other apostles, such as Peter and Apollos, by Paul's own admission visited Corinth. They may have established some other house churches, but it is Paul who sees himself as called to serve as a leader among leaders. Consequently, it is Paul who needs to negotiate his leadership position on multiple fronts – with other trans-local

22. Chloe is a female name and she has employees. Not only does this mean that she has certain means, but that she is likely a householder. Her employees travel. The main reason for traveling at that time in that part of the world was commerce. There are therefore good reasons to think that Chloe is involved in commerce. Chloe would be a female householder in a patriarchal society involved in commerce, a non-traditional occupation in this society. Paul takes the information that originates from her people seriously. This implies that Paul considers Chloe and her people as a reliable source of information.

23. These are the problem of factions in the Corinthian church (1 Cor 1:10-4:20); the case of incest (5:1-5); taking each other to court and other ethical breaches (6:1-8); and problems during fellowship meals (11:17-34).

24. These issues are a question about marriage and celibacy (7); eating meat from animals sacrificed to pagan gods (8-10); the spiritual gifts (12); the order in church meetings (14); the resurrection of the dead (15); the collection for the church of Jerusalem (16:1-2), and Apollos's next visit (16:12). We follow John C. Hurd's work, *The Origin of First Corinthians*², Macon GA, Mercer University Press, 1983, about attributing the origin of these issues to either the report of Chloe's people or the Corinthians' letter.

leaders such as Apollos and Peter, as well as with the local co-leaders of various houses, which include Chloe and Stephanas.

A contemporary model of leadership

Whether we know it or not, it is hard to read Paul's letters without judging them by today's standards. We know that Paul was a leader, that he served others, and that he struggled to bring congregants forward – with his vision of Christ. But did Paul do a good job as a leader? Was he an effective communicator and manager of various crises? Put bluntly, could Paul have handled the Corinthians differently? These are important questions, some of which can be addressed by looking closer at today's leadership best practices.

To better situate and assess the characteristics of Paul's leadership for the modern reader we have turned to a popular book, the sixth edition of *The Leadership Challenge: How to Make Extraordinary Things Happen in Organizations*. Written by James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, both professors at the business school of Santa Clara University,²⁵ this book offers a framework for thinking through what matters most in administrative and strategic leadership. It is also consistent with many ways of seeing “good,” “effective” and “promising” leaders in action.

The Leadership Challenge lists and explains at length five core principles of leadership. It gives examples of situations that illustrate each core principle, which are termed “practices.” According to Kouzes and Posner, the core principles and practices for good leaders are:

- Model the way (Practice One)
- Inspire a shared vision (Practice Two)
- Challenge the process (Practice Three)
- Enable others to act (Practice Four)
- Encourage the heart (Practice Five)

Using this framework, and applying it to several case studies drawn from 1 Corinthians, we will see whether Paul is up to the modern leadership challenge set forth by Kouzes and Posner. But first a few preliminary observations are necessary.

The Leadership Challenge is aimed at those who have leadership positions at all levels of an organization – from lower management positions to CEOs to

25. We are not experts in organizational leadership or corporate psychology. Rather than exhaustively treat the literature, we called upon colleagues in leadership studies in educational and business schools and located a mainstream textbook widely used by multiple programs. After these informal inquiries, we chose *The Leadership Challenge* as our reference work. Not only is it used in management courses of business schools but also in corporate and educational settings. The copy we used indicates that 2.5 million copies of the book sold, that it has been translated in twenty-two languages, that it won several awards, and continues to be listed among *The 100 Best Business Books of All Times* [317].

those aspiring to greater things in the world. Whether one is leading in secular or religious contexts, *The Leadership Challenge* contends that leadership is for everyone. That is, anyone can learn how to be a leader.

Reading the book, one finds a number of leadership role models. Through case study and vignette, *The Leadership Challenge* casts its gaze on all sorts of businesses, from different continents, across many cultures and peoples. The representation of the diversity of leadership situations around the world gives the reader the impression that anyone that follows Kouzes and Posner's principles and practices will become a successful leader in any country, in any culture, in any time.

Consistent with today's modern secular psychology and social science, the subjects of *The Leadership Challenge* are individuals unfettered by religious affiliation. There is no mention of apostolic calling in this text. The reader of *The Leadership Challenge* is an individual (not necessarily one who is dispatched) who wants to become a leader. He, she, or they are free to take up the challenge.

For these reasons alone, one might ask: Why study *The Leadership Challenge* or any modern leadership discourse for that matter, to make sense of Paul's struggles to lead the Corinthians? Paul was dispatched, his mission was driven by Christ, and he did, for better or worse, press the congregations to move forward on matters of tremendous importance, in the time that remained in the years that followed Jesus' crucifixion (circa 33 CE). These differences in subject and character and context suggest that the modern reader has little to gain in comparing proverbial apples to oranges.

Yet, for those who see a benefit in interdisciplinary study and comparative discourse analyses, it is clear that there are important similarities and differences worth unpacking in studies of Paul's leadership. There are many "Pauls" depending on which lens one brings to the study of his letters. This article sees Paul as a leader. But what kind of leader he is depends on the lens/frame used to make sense of his work in establishing the early churches.

The next section examines how far one can apply modern leadership best practices exemplified in Kouzes and Posner to Paul's leadership by asking: How far can Paul be understood by their core principles of leadership? In doing so, we raise deeper questions such as how much do contemporary leaders in this literature resemble Paul's work with his Gentile congregations? When there are important differences in Paul's leadership practices, how might we look beyond his style and tone and demeanor towards the substance of his mission or the demands of his apostolic calling? And finally, as we dig deeper into Paul's leadership which is inseparable from his understanding of Christ, must we demand a different stance than modern organizational theorists and psychologists towards human agency, personal motivation and self-efficacy in community building?

Case studies: Problems and Possibilities for Paul's Leadership from a Modern Vantagepoint

Promising case studies abound when studying Paul's leadership style. In 1 Corinthians, for example, one could focus on matters such as members taking each other to court (1 Cor 6:1-11), eating meat from animals sacrificed to pagan gods (1 Cor 8 and 10), how to approach common meals (1 Cor 11:17-34), and the question of the resurrection of the dead (1 Cor 15). We present three cases that show diverse aspects of Paul's leadership challenge in Corinth, some which invite comparison with modern perspectives on good leadership and others which resist it. These cases include the study of "dealing with factions," "setting boundaries" and "recentering on core values among the host of gifts." Each case invites investigation into the situation, and Paul's response to the leadership challenge in Corinth.

First Case: Dealing with factions (1 Cor 1:10-12)

The situation

By Paul's own admission in the opening chapters of 1 Corinthians, he is confronted with reports of faction. Presumably since his first contact, in which he established his authority as a founder of the first congregations, Paul realizes that things have deteriorated. There are at least four major camps; each presumably led by Corinthians who have a different vision than Paul. While Paul acknowledges his own camp, he is concerned with how to project unity and tie together these strands (Gk, σχίσματα 1:10) into one body. As Paul is fond of saying, after acknowledging differing views, gifts, and orientations, we are all one in Christ.

We see Paul's leadership operating on two fronts. On the one hand, Paul must now acknowledge that several house churches have preferences for different outside leaders. In addition to Paul, Apollos and Peter, have shared their gospels with various peoples in Corinth. All but one faction (those who say "I belong to Christ") claim an esteemed individual as its leader. Any of these individual leaders may have ties, for example, through rites of baptism to the people. Paul generously notes that his companion, Apollos, has watered the seeds that Paul claims to have planted. We do not know the extent of rivalry if any among these preachers. We do know that in 1 Corinthians Paul positions all trans-local leaders on equal footing when he repeats, regarding all efforts including his and Apollos's, that God gave the increase.

Paul the leader

Through this textual lens, aided by modern models of leadership study, we can see how Paul “models the way” of the good leader guided by practices (Practice One in Kouzes and Posner’s frame). First, as is required by today’s leadership discourse, Paul “faces the situation.” The Paul of 1 Corinthians does not shirk from the reported conflicts. Rather, he faces the situation with sober and honest appraisal. There is a crisis situation about who shall lead and what shall be done in the absence of a leader who can bring everyone back to order, unity, and a higher purpose.

As he works to address the crisis among factions, Paul is not just saying “I believe in this” or follow me. Paul reminds the community that he is also making a deep commitment to ethical qualities in his work, that his work aims at service for all, and that he promotes core values on behalf of the entire proto-organization – not just his supporters. Paul affirms the collaborative aspects of his mission with earnest plain talk: “We all believe in Christ.” As if taking the advice of today’s leadership best practices, Paul is not only clarifying his own personal guiding principles, but he is also making sure that there is agreement on a set of shared values (including the establishment of emerging practices and nascent policies) among everyone he leads.

Paul is not for a few, some or the many in Corinth. He addresses division and explores what is dividing congregants into factions. Paul is a gentle but firm enforcer of this truth: we must subsume our particular interests, skills, passions, and “gifts” under the one true Christ. Paul sets the example of service to the Body by leading behind his true master (Christ crucified and resurrected), rather than boasting about his way.

To deal head on with the crisis that has emerged since the creation of the first houses of worship, Paul like many of today’s leaders depicted by Kouzes and Posner’s work, poses purposeful questions to re-orient his audience. A good leader poses questions that invite reflection and demand deeper discernment. In 1 Corinthians Paul asks proactively and provocatively:

Has Christ been divided?
 Was Paul crucified for you?
 Were you baptized in the name of Paul? (1:13)

The obvious answer is: no. But Paul signals to his audience that they are confused and may have run amok since his departure. No one leader within the group or standing outside it can deny what has happened, Paul reminds everyone. Christ-believers in Corinth are divided; they are taking sides. People are seeing in leaders different qualities and attributes that border on false worship (what in the 20th century we label as a cult of personality). Paul is uncompromising in his letter: No one possesses the truth save Christ Jesus whose crucifixion and resurrection Paul has come to preach.

Anyone who worships at the feet of this or that leader has missed the mark, entirely.

To the extent Paul honors spiritual gifts, as we shall see in the last case, he gives all the glory to God. By his own admission, Paul is a servant to God on behalf of the Gentiles for Christ. He wishes to remind the factions and emerging leaders in Corinth what is at stake by helping them navigate, to bring them back on course by facing the situation and modeling the way. But to do so, Paul positions himself as a judge. This could not be more different from the modern view of good leadership.

Second Case: Setting boundaries (1 Cor 5:1-4)

The situation

The situation is apparently simple: A man lives with his stepmother. Paul is outraged because he knows that the Torah forbids such ethical breeches (Lev 6:6-8), and because the Corinthians do not take prejudice at it. Paul is quick to add: This kind of situation is even unacceptable among the pagans, a statement corroborated by what is known of Roman law and other literary documents of that time.²⁶

The instructions Paul dispatches for dealing with the situation are simple: the Corinthians should exclude the man from the group (1 Cor 5:2). Paul's explanation of the effects of the removal on the delinquent are more challenging to grasp but nonetheless imperative: Paul says the Corinthians must deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus (5:5). Paul's counsel is not to issue a verdict of death which no group in Corinth, except the civil authorities, is authorized to carry out.²⁷ Paul's commands as a leader among leaders is to act now: the force of Paul's demand for exclusion is meant to prompt the man to amend his ways.²⁸ It is a lesson in leadership for local leaders who need to step up in the time that remains.

26. For an extensive discussion of Roman legal aspects on incest and how literary documents of that time portrayed incest, see Andrew J. CLARKE, *Secular and Christian Leadership*, pp. 75-98. Also, by saying that this situation is unacceptable among the pagans, Paul gives the impression that the members of the church of Corinth are not to be counted among the pagans.

27. The mention of flesh here, as elsewhere in Paul's letters (e.g., Rom 7:5, 14; 1 Cor 3:3; Gal 5:16-17), refers to the attitude that leads to sin by not trying to please God. By opposition, spirit refers to an attitude that seeks to attune to God's will.

28. As also argued in various commentaries, e.g., Michel QUESNEL, *La première épître aux Corinthiens* (Commentaire Biblique, Nouveau Testament, 7), Paris, Cerf, 2018, p. 125; Gordon D. FEE, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*² (The New International Commentary on the New Testament), Grand Rapids MI, Eerdmans, 2014, pp. 233-234; Christian WOLFF, *Der erste Brief des Paulus an die Korinther* (Theologischer Handkommentar Zum Neuen Testament, 7), Leipzig, Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1996, p. 104.

Paul's leadership style aside, the main thrust of his continued work with the Corinthians is to hold them accountable to ethical standards. He can stand for no rationalizations for conduct that poison the Body. The idea that the incestuous man would argue that the decision to live with his stepmother was made in the Lord Jesus is an anathema to Paul.²⁹ This would cohere with other instances where Paul reacts to the Corinthian attitude that assumes that everything is permitted (6:12), an attitude that could have arisen from what Paul said at some point.³⁰

By urging the Corinthians to expel the man who lives in an incestuous relationship, Paul acts like a standard-bearer and gatekeeper for those local leaders who fail to set boundaries. He also models the way to offer "tough love" so members can be redirected when they miss the mark. While the underlying concern of Paul may be to protect the church seen as the body of Christ from pollution as Martin has argued,³¹ the leadership challenge at this time was also how to maintain ethical boundaries for Gentiles who may have come to believe they were not under the Jewish Law.

Paul the Leader

When analyzing Paul's leadership according to the model proposed in *The Leadership Challenge*, one finds that, when faced with this difficult situation, Paul "challenges the process" in place among the house churches.³² Moreover, Paul, like any good leader in today's organizational landscape, "takes the initiative" (chapter 7). Rather than being passive and waiting the crisis out, Paul takes a major risk to his authority and legitimacy as a leader by issuing an order of expulsion. Issuing this order is a test of authority for any trans-local leader. It also tests the degree to which others see him as a legitimate leader with the power to direct action at a distance. The members of the Corinthian

29. Looking at the way 5:3b-4 is translated, E.P. Sanders remarks that most translations in the vernacular read something like: "3b I have already pronounced judgement 4 in the name of the Lord Jesus on the man who has done such a thing." (NRSV) This translation does not represent the word order in the Greek text that has the phrase "in the name of the Lord Jesus" at the end of the sentence. Cf. Ed Parish SANDERS, *Paul: The Apostle's Life, Letters, and Thought*, Minneapolis MN, Fortress, 2015, pp. 298-299.

30. For instance, how can one interpret 2 Cor 5:17: "If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!" By everything old that has passed away, one could understand that some moral rules have become obsolete. Hence, the members of the Corinthian church may have simply accepted the man's relationship as resulting from a decision made "in the Lord Jesus." Paul vehemently rejects this possibility and he works as a trans-local leader to undo it. The law, Paul argues, is still in force as a set of ethical boundaries that must be enforced for the good of all.

31. Dale B. MARTIN, *The Corinthian Body*, New Haven CT, Yale University Press, 1995, pp. 168-174.

32. See, for example, Practice 3, chapters 7 and 8 in Kouzes and Posner's work.

church could decide not to follow that order; in fact, they could ignore Paul, question his motives, or ask “who does he think he is?”³³

According to Posner and Kouzes’s book, leaders enable others to act.³⁴ Paul urges others to act but he removes the responsibility for such direct action from local leaders, partly by taking the fall for them. In modern vernacular, Paul becomes the so-called “fall guy.” Paul, according to his own account, takes God’s direction without hesitation: he judges the incest situation and calls out the member at fault. Paul leads the way by commanding others to take action while assuming responsibility for the consequences. At the same time, Paul calls upon the conscience of the Corinthians to examine what has happened in his absence and asks everyone to consider the wider implications. Moreover, by providing cover to house leaders, Paul has given a clear mandate – reportedly from God – to expel that man.

By today’s standards, Paul’s leadership style seems abrasive, arrogant and runs against many of the best practices described in *The Leadership Challenge*. First, in the incest case Paul shames his audience (vv. 1-2) with an attitude contrary to “encouraging the heart” (e.g., Practice 5). Second, Paul does not consult anyone from this church, steps over several local leaders from different houses, and breaks away from a collegial tone almost immediately when confronted with a moral breach. When setting ethical boundaries for the Corinthians, Paul shifts from his usual, inclusive form of address. He abruptly moves from the first person plural pronoun “we,” to the use of the emphatic first person singular “I, myself” to communicate his decision when he proclaims: “I, myself, have already pronounced judgment” (5:3). This is not a move Paul makes to placate or equivocate.

If Paul’s leadership style in this case shows some resemblances with the model proposed in *The Leadership Challenge*, one must recognize how much Paul is also at odds with modern discourses in this genre. Paul is ready to judge; he sees it as his duty to God. He is not a politician or CEO or director looking to win favor from subordinates in his employ.

Third Case: Recentering on core values among the host of gifts (1 Cor 12)

The Situation

Today’s leadership wisdom calls us to forge unity, but not to force it (e.g., Practice One, chapter 3). The situation for Paul was not that different. But to achieve a vision of unity, in Christ, Paul first outlines what is dividing the

33. In fact, nothing indicates that the Corinthians complied with Paul’s order. A modern leadership guru might warn Paul off of his authoritarian instincts and counsel him to get others to silently do the work behind the scenes. It is characteristic of Paul’s leadership style to put the fight out in the open for everyone to see for themselves.

34. See, for example, Practice 4, chapters 9 and 10.

Corinthian Body. He forces certain questions while forging a common understanding about what is happening with all the modes of worship in the houses.

Judging from the tone and substance of the letter, Paul feels obligated to acknowledge and respectfully recognize all the gifts of congregants, even those who have displayed their spectacular powers since his departure. Paul was a founder and he reminds everyone of his status. Carefully, he gives attention to those who now preach, those who speak in tongues, and those who have put forth renewed energies into the house churches since his departure. But rather than only highlight one type of worship (in this case, tongues) and tackle its implications alone, Paul enumerates all the types and forms of spiritual participation and engagement in the Corinthian Body. He examines each gift and explores the various talents.

This enumeration of the spiritual division of labor, so to speak, is instructive for those who seek to understand Paul's way of leading a fragmented, at times "puffed up" and disorganized people. 1 Cor 12 starts by noting that here are those who have "deeds of power," those who have "gifts of healing," those who have "gifts of assistance and administration," and those who have "gifts of various sorts of tongues." This varied and complex skill set likely tracked the various dispositions and inclinations of the Corinthians, some of whom had come to favor ecstatic forms of worship.

Paul seems concerned that recently the gift of speaking in tongues is being ranked above the other gifts. There appear to be those who can communicate in this medium; and those who cannot. This valuation of spiritual gifts implies that some in the congregation are more talented than others. For Paul, the question arises: For whose good and for what good are these gifts, dispositions, and skills on display? The impact on the body is visible to Paul's informants and co-workers in Corinth. So-called spiritual "gifts" are dividing rather than uniting the Corinthian Body, and worse, some may have placed themselves above the fray.

By analogy, Paul argues that the human body has many parts that form a whole. Each part is essential to a well-functioning constitution. Yet, no part is superior to the other. Paul places feet and the various senses, so to speak, on the same footing. Everyone must remain grounded in Christ. Similarly, he notes that the assembly is made up of many people with different gifts. All congregants' skill sets are essential; none are superior to another. Lest there be any confusion or dissembling, Paul "re-centers" as Posner and Kouzes might say, the congregation on the spiritual facts that hold them together in their walk with Christ in Corinth (1 Cor 12:12-13).

Paul the Leader

As a trans-local leader Paul can assert these spiritual facts and proffer various analogies, metaphors, and rhetorical moves to persuade the congregants. Paul had status as an early founder. He was one among many, including Peter and Apollos who ministered in Corinth, but his voice continues to count with local leaders, many of whom remain his co-workers.

Part of Paul's calling in Corinth is, as Posner and Kouzes say, to challenge assumptions. As a guide on the side and at a distance, Paul invites the members to re-consider the direction some are taking. He asks them to question on what basis they might think some gifts are superior to others. On what grounds they can assign honor and glory to some gifts over others? Paul answers that anyone committed to such a project is missing the mark.

He does this in two ways: First, he notes that there is an order to the gifts and he enumerates how they function best. He says "Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it." In a move unknown to corporate or educational leaders today, Paul then asserts that "God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues." While Paul is working in a relatively flat organizational world, he does see the need to prioritize who is leading whom. In his estimation, Christ is first – then come the apostles, prophets, and teachers.

Since Paul is an apostle, according to his own report dispatched by God, he can direct and re-direct the congregants back to salvation in Christ and right living. Paul invites everyone to "strive for the greater gifts" so that he can "show" each congregant "a still more excellent way" than practices currently on display. To unify the Corinthian Body under one mission, he prioritizes three core values (1 Cor 13:1-13). These core values – love, faith, hope – cannot be abrogated or rescinded based on preferences for pieces of the Gospel or particular styles of worship. Without these common, shared core values, Paul effectively says, all is lost in Corinth. He reminds everyone: If you are more interested in the means (your power, status, prestige) than the end which is collective salvation and serving in Christ, you have gone astray.

Paul's leadership vision, unlike the works of Posner and Kouzes, is God-derived. For Paul, the apostle, Christ unites Gentiles to Jews, God's people. Paul is not leading his own business, nor is he giving advice on best practices in the tent-making trade. He positions his work in Corinth as a spiritual leader: one who understands what the messianic event has brought into the world. There is urgency for Christ but also a recognition of what must be rendered and done for Caesar and this world.

Paul both comforts and challenges his congregants. In the time that remains, he gently but firmly chides those Corinthians who have forgotten the

Spirit. Paul recenters and revalues what is at stake with recent developments in Corinth when he says: "Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth" (1 Cor 13:4-6). These words emanate from Paul's deepest conviction "the truth" that Christ will return and the Corinthians will be united with God. With the courage of such convictions – whether at a distance or by their side – Paul is ready to judge, to re-direct, and to lead the hard cases without worrying about his authority to hold others accountable (cf. Practice 4, chapter 10, pp. 221-222). Paul has faith and hope that love will find a way in Corinth, but he also holds people accountable.

This kind of bold audacious leadership comes at a cost and there is evidence from 2 Corinthians that Paul may have paid a price for over-stepping, for pushing the people too far. Paul is willing to take such risks because he sees the stakes as higher than most. As a leader of a faltering congregation, Paul's correspondence with the Corinthians shows he is working to calibrate his message, while working with allies to ensure a more mature form of spiritual formation. Conflict over the emerging Gospel is inevitable from Paul's perspective; he is working in the Gentile world with adepts learning a new posture.

Conclusion

Paul's sense of the time that remains is indispensable to his leadership example. His sense of urgency, in addition to the gravity of his calling, give purpose to the formation of the early, largely Greek-speaking churches. The core values and practices of his project cannot be neatly separated into abstract social science or psychological categories devoid of spiritual context or eschatological content. Nor can culture, context, and history be subsumed under the notion of "universal" "best" "effective" leadership practices that place the reader in a world outside time.

The fact is, to modern eyes and ears, Paul's leadership style and tone can appear arresting, even tone deaf to the needs of the houses. From the point of view of modern best practices exemplified in Posner and Kouzes's work, Paul appears more like an amateur than a professional leader. He was, ironically, a man of business and trade yet he possesses few of the so-called "soft skills" that invite the customer to the table and aim at winning customers and clients.

On the other hand, Paul's leadership style and approach is refreshingly candid in its insistence on spiritual truth. The Paul that emerges as a trans-local leader in 1 Corinthians does not pander to various houses nor does he try to win popularity contests with his followers. He takes intellectual risks,

argues with his interlocutors, and marshals arguments. He demands high standards of intellectual and ethical engagement from his congregants. Paul is not talking to a few powerful elites in Corinth nor is he setting forth a political strategy to curry political favor to win the day.

Rather, as a leader Paul is authentic, inspired, and unrelenting in his pursuit of what matters to his view of Israel. Paul is not answering to a board of directors or a management team or entrepreneurs in these early Christ-following associations. Paul is, according to his claim of apostleship, serving God. Hence, his leadership model is distinctly more complicated than the case studies presented today on today's self-made leaders.

The Paul that emerges from our study both invites and resists today's discourse on good leadership, in part, because he has a different agenda. First and foremost, Paul was working on a tight time horizon for people whom he was compelled to bring toward Israel. The gathering of congregants through local, familiar forms of Corinthian association, for Paul, aims at return. He perceives that Christ is coming; his work in Corinth and other cities is helping to prepare the way.

Secondly, to see Paul's work with the Corinthians is to visualize a time-sensitive project, one that proceeds with a messianic expectation/horizon of the return of all nations to Israel. Paul did not choose to lead; Paul sees himself as chosen, dispatched to be exact. He is drawn to the realization that everything has changed since the time of Christ crucified and risen (ca 33 CE). For Paul, being-in-Christ as a diaspora Jew is connected to his work of collecting non-Jewish peoples who can become-for-Christ – in the time that remains. The time is now, so to speak, to start assembling the congregations in order to fulfill God's promise. Paul is up to the leadership challenge within the expectations of his own horizons.

Lastly, Paul's apostleship requires him to remind others that the time has come to become part of the Body of Christ and to live according to the Spirit. We see this as Paul's leading Gentiles towards living a form of Torah, one that is uniquely fitted to their circumstances. Paul leads by moral example, and he is committed to preaching Jewish ethics in Corinth. He rebukes pagan practices. Paul realizes that he asks a lot of his adepts, but he stresses that this is the time to live in the time that remains, in the formulation of Agamben, "as if/as not." To be in Christ is indeed a difficult posture because one realizes as one lives in Christ everything has changed, while one also feels that living in the world one now sees that nothing seems to be as it was.

How does one lead people who have proclaimed Christ but find it difficult to live in his walk? – this is what Paul has to teach us, moderns, about leadership. By example, Paul presses the question: Who is leading who? To where? For whose good? And most importantly, why?

Despite Paul's failings and missteps as a leader of the Corinthians, to the end, he remains optimistic. We can learn from leaders who hold themselves accountable as Paul did – no matter what time it is.

*Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University
Santa Clara CA*

SUMMARY

Paul of Tarsus sought to lead Gentiles toward Israel with a passion, style, and commitment that invite us to study his leadership model with a concrete congregation, the Corinthians. After discussing what is known about Paul and the Corinthian congregation, the article explains further his project for this group and how its adoption of Paul's message puts them in a delicate and difficult position. The article then presents three case studies (1 Cor 1:10-12; 5:1-4; 12) that examine how Paul exercises leadership relevant for today's leadership studies. Using a standard modern work, *The Leadership Challenge*, the article shows how Paul's exercise of leadership in 1 Corinthians converges with some best practices of leadership described by Kouzes and Posner, but also collides with these prescriptions. The article concludes that Paul appears as an audacious and refreshingly authentic leader dedicated to his commission to bring this group in proximity to Israel. From this study emerges the portrayal of a complex, principled leader who must lead at multiple levels within and across a community.

SOMMAIRE

Paul de Tarse s'est engagé à mener les Gentils vers Israël avec une passion, un style et un engagement qui incitent à étudier son type de leadership avec une communauté particulière, celle des Corinthiens. Après une discussion concernant ce que l'on connaît au sujet de Paul et de la communauté corinthienne, l'article explique quel est le projet de l'apôtre à l'égard de cette communauté et comment celle-ci, dans son adhésion au message promu par son fondateur, se trouve placée dans une position délicate et difficile. Suivent trois études de cas (1 Co 1,10-12; 5,1-4; 12) cherchant à voir comment la manière dont Paul exerce son leadership demeure pertinente aujourd'hui. Utilisant un ouvrage standard d'aujourd'hui, *The Leadership Challenge*, par Kouzes et Posner, l'article montre comment le leadership de Paul en 1 Corinthiens converge, mais aussi diverge par rapport aux meilleures pratiques de leadership décrites par ces auteurs. L'article conclut que Paul apparaît comme un leader audacieux, d'une authenticité rafraîchissante, indéfectible quant à sa mission de rapprocher ce groupe d'Israël. De cette étude se dégage le portrait d'un leader complexe, animé par des principes et exerçant son leadership à plusieurs niveaux dans et à travers la communauté.