

Paul's Pneumatology and the Unity of Christ's Body: Cosmological and Epistemological Aspects of the Spirit¹⁾

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1. Introduction

This study discusses Paul's use of the Stoic concept of *pneuma* (πνεῦμα or *spiritus* in Latin) and the body analogy in terms of Stoic thoughts. In 1 Corinthians, Paul utilizes one of the most popular philosophical traditions in his time to address the issue of factionalism in the Corinthian church.²⁾ The apostle's cosmology and pneumatology are better understood in Stoic terms. Paul's notions of the Spirit and Christ's body show various similarities with Stoic views on the *pneuma* and the body. However, this comparative study does not only discuss those similarities; it is also intended to expound Paul's pneumatology

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2) The wisdom of the Corinthians shows an apparent Stoic character. Tim Brookins, "The Wise Corinthians: Their Stoic Education and Outlook," *JTS* 62 (2011), 51-76. Those who caused internal conflicts were deeply influenced by Stoic thoughts. Albert V. Carcilazo, *The Corinthian Dissenters and the Stoics* (New York: Peter Lang, 2007), 11-78. The Corinthian church was familiar with Stoic thoughts. Terence Paige, "Stoicism, ἐλευθερία and Community at Corinth," E. Adams and D. Horrell, eds., *Christianity at Corinth: The Quest for the Pauline Church* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004), 208-218.

that is distinct from Stoic traditions.³⁾ In Paul's notion, the Spirit serves as God's revelatory agent for true knowledge of God, and this understanding of the Spirit has ethical implications for the divisive situation in the Corinthian church.

In Paul's view, the Spirit, like the Stoic *pneuma/spiritus*, functions as a tensional force to create and sustain the body of Christ. Based upon this understanding, our apostle persuades the Corinthian believers that they are interconnected with one another and form one organic entity, that is, Christ's body. Paul's pneumatology and the body analogy are designed to serve his purpose of transforming the recipients' cognition so that they could understand the organic unity among the believer and live accordingly. The apostle's pneumatology also shows a concept of the Spirit that is not found in the Stoic notion of *pneuma/spiritus*. The revelatory function of the Spirit is to transform believers' cognition and lead them to the right, transcending apprehension of reality. This epistemological aspect of the Spirit's work is critical for the believer to have true knowledge of the divine and change their attitudes and behavior. Paul intends his theological presentation of the Spirit and Christ's body to persuade the recipients to move from factionalism and toward ecclesial concord. The apostle's pneumatology shows obvious ethical implications.

2. The Spirit of God: Paul's Pneumatology for Concord

Zeno, under the influence of Aristotle's conception of an inborn bodily *pneuma*,⁴⁾ believed that *pneuma* was spread

3) Cf. Philip F. Esler, "Paul and Stoicism: Romans 12 as a Test Case," *NTS* 50 (2004), 106-124. Esler suggests that a comparative study between the Stoics and Paul should attend more to differences, not similarities.

throughout and vitalized the entire body.⁵⁾ He explained bodily sensation (αἴσθησις) as the movement of pneuma from the soul's command center (ἡγεμονικόν) to other regions of the body (SVF⁶ I.151). This conception of bodily pneuma was given a cosmological turn by Chrysippus.

Chrysippus applied the notion of a continuous, all-pervasive pneuma to the universe and, by doing so, could account for the mechanical operation of cosmic phenomena. He stated, "the soul is pneuma [which is] inborn in us, continuous, extended throughout the entire body, as long as there be the breath of vitality in the body" (SVF II.911).⁷⁾ In Stoic cosmology, the universe is like a living being. It is born, lives an allotted span of life, and dies.⁸⁾ Zeno and Cleanthes, for instance, believe

4) This notion of all-pervading bodily pneuma has its origin in medical tradition. The Hippocratic treatise *On Nourishment* explains that there is one confluence, one common vitality and that "all things are in sympathy" within the human body (DK 22. C2). Michael Lapidge, "Stoic Cosmology," John M. Rist, ed., *The Stoics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 175-176.

5) *Ibid.*, 168.

6) Hans Friedrich August von Arnim, *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, 4vols. Lipsiae: 1903-24. This study consults the digitalized edition found at the following internet archive: <https://archive.org/details/stoicorumveterum01arniuoft/mode/2up>.

7) Sang Mok Lee, "Paul's Understanding of the Spirit and Christ's Body and Its Communal Meaning – The Corinthian Church as an Alternative Society," *Korean New Testament Studies* 23 (2016), 451-452 [written in Korean]. Cf. David Sedley, "Chrysippus on Psychological Causality," Jacques Brunschwig and Martha C. Nussbaum, eds., *Passions and Perceptions: Studies in Hellenistic Philosophy of Mind* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 313-331.

8) Sedley, "Chrysippus on Psychological Causality," 180-182; Troels Engberg-Pedersen, *Cosmology and Self in the Apostle Paul: The Material Spirit* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 21-22. Cf. Howard Clark Kee, "Pauline Eschatology: Relationships with Apocalyptic and Stoic Thought," Otto Merk, ed., *Glaube und Eschatologie: Festschrift für Werner Georg Kümmel zum 80. Geburtstag* (Tübingen: J. C. B Mohr, 1985), 144-147. Elizabeth Asmis, "Myth and Philosophy in Cleanthes' Hymn to Zeus," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine*

that a universe turns into a creative fire and a subsequent universe is generated from the same creative fire. That is, the universe has the beginning and the end, and, after the demise, a new universe begins. The universe, like a living being, is animated throughout by vital breath.⁹⁾ Just as in the body, pneuma pervades the universe and creates a tensional force. This pneumatic tension holds the universe together as a living organism and sustains its shape (πνευματικὸς τόνος, SVF II.447). The cosmic pneuma connects all parts of the cosmos like the members or cells of a living organism (SVF II.546).¹⁰⁾ The connection causes those parts to remain in sympathy with one another. Chrysippus' originality is his generalization of the continuum theory of his predecessors into a field theory in which pneuma is the physical field that generates all properties of material objects.¹¹⁾ Chrysippus is regarded as the one who opens the hermeneutical windows to the view of pneuma in light of cosmic sympathy (cf. SVF II.912).¹²⁾

Chrysippus' notion of all-pervasive cosmic pneuma is also observed in the opinion of Seneca, Paul's contemporary Stoic, on *spiritus*. In *Natural Questions* II.9.4, Seneca explains the pervasiveness of *spiritus*, stating that *spiritus* "imparts tension not just to what is open, but to what is invisible and enclosed too."¹³⁾ *Spiritus*, which is the Latin equivalent for πνεῦμα,

Studies 47 (2007), 413-429. Cleanthes understands Zeus in philosophical term to act as an "ever-creative fire" (419).

9) Lapidge, "Stoic Cosmology," 163. As for Stoic view of cosmic pneuma, see the following: Samuel Sambursky, *Physics of the Stoics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 21-48, esp. 41-48.

10) A. A. Long, *Hellenistic Philosophy: Stoics, Epicureans, Sceptics*, 2nd ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 156.

11) Paul Hager, "Chrysippus' Theory of Pneuma," *Prudentia* 14 (1982), 102.

12) Lapidge, "Stoic Cosmology and Roman Literature, First to Third Centuries A.D.," Wolfgang Haase, ed., *Principat 36,3: Philosophie, Wissenschaften, Technik: Philosophie (Stoizismus)* (Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 1989), 1383.

imposes coherence upon matter while passing through everything; the air has no internal division, but only continuity.¹⁴⁾ This notion of *spiritus* alludes to the field theory of Chrysippus. In fact, Seneca emphasizes Chrysippus' cosmology as a good source of knowledge; he recommends, "Live with Chrysippus, with Posidonius: they will make you acquainted with things earthly and things heavenly ..." (*Moral Epistles* or *Ep.* 104.22).¹⁵⁾ The field of coherence encompasses and permeates every element in the universe. Through the permeation of *spiritus*, all parts of the universe breathe together.¹⁶⁾

The notion of such pervasiveness enables Seneca to assert the residence of *spiritus* in each human; "God is near you, he is with you, he is within you. This is what I mean, Lucilius: a holy spirit [i.e., *sacer spiritus*] indwells within us ..." (*Ep.* 41.1-2). Elsewhere, Seneca articulates the same idea of *spiritus* that god comes to men: "nay, he comes nearer, he comes into men. Divine seeds are scattered throughout our mortal bodies" (*Ep.* 73.16). These quoted statements indicate that *spiritus* both encompasses and permeates each person. The divine origin of *spiritus* connects the human race to the divine by letting humans know about god. Human reason is a portion of the divine in a human body (*Ep.* 66.12). The great and hallowed soul has descended to the human world and associated with humans so that they may have nearer knowledge of divinity (*Ep.* 41.5).

Paul's notion of God's Spirit serves as the basis for his

13) The translation is from the following: Seneca, *Natural Questions*, Harry M. Hine, trans. (Chicago; University of Chicago Press, 2010), 167.

14) The cohesiveness of the human body is an example of the unity by *spiritus*. Seneca, *Natural Questions*, II.6.6.

15) Seneca, *Epistulae Morales ad Lucilium*, 3vols., Richard M. Gummere, trans. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1917-1925). All translations of Seneca's moral epistles in this study are Gummere's.

16) Lapidge, "Stoic Cosmology and Roman Literature," 1400. Cf. Chrysippus' term *σμπνέω* as cited by Lapidge (1400).

advocacy of the unity of the Corinthian church in the same way that the Stoics' cosmological understanding of the pneuma enables them to advocate the unity of the body as well as of the universe. Paul likely entertains the Stoic understanding of pneuma to argue for unity, which considers it as the generative and the ordering force. At the same time, he does not pay much attention to a cosmological exposition of pneuma. His view of the Spirit supports his advocacy of the bodily unity of the Corinthian church.

The apostle understands the Spirit as the actual agent that forms the body of Christ (i.e., the Christian community). The body cannot exist without its members: "For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though being many, are one body, so also is Christ" (12:12).¹⁷⁾ It is the Spirit that admits members to the body. Believers are accepted into the body through the baptism by the Spirit:¹⁸⁾ "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body" (12:13).¹⁹⁾ The ecclesial members also drink of one Spirit: "we were all made to drink of one Spirit" (12:13). This drinking metaphor serves to accentuate the unity of believers.²⁰⁾ Our epistler employs

17) All translations of Paul's texts in this article are the author's unless noted otherwise.

18) Matthew Brook O'Donnell, "Two Opposing Views on Baptism with/by the Holy Spirit and of 1 Corinthians 12:13: Can Grammatical Investigation Bring Clarity?," Stanley E. Porter and Anthony R. Cross, eds., *Baptism, the New Testament and the Church: Historical and Contemporary Studies in Honour of R. E. O. White* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 311-336.

19) Cf. Charles H. Talbert, "Paul's Understanding of the Holy Spirit: The Evidence of 1 Corinthians 12-14," *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 11 (1984), 98. He comments, "the Spirit is not the baptizer but the one in whom all are baptized."

20) Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 478-479. Paul's ritualistic language for ecclesial unity is well attested in 1 Cor. 10:16-21. Ji Chul Kim, "Pneumatological Reflection on Paul's Understanding of Church," *Korean New Testament Studies* 7 (2000), 35-37 [written in Korean]. Cf. Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), 140-141.

ritualistic language to promote the ecclesial concord among the Corinthian recipients.

We observe the Spirit's unifying function in 5:3, too, in which the apostle points out his presence in spirit among the believers in Corinth despite his physical absence. A believer is connected to others in the Lord by the Spirit's work, which is the generative and the ordering power. Therefore, it will be a mistake to understand such presence of Paul in terms of extraordinary spiritual power in his possession. Paul asserts, "the one united to the Lord is one spirit [with him]" (6:17).

The Spirit's work to give coherence to Christ's body has two aspects in terms of internal and external relations of the body. One is that the Spirit forms and sustains the body, i.e., the believers' community; another is that the Spirit, while forming the body, also separates it from the world. The coherence of the body means both the unity of the believers and the distinction between those who belong in the body and others who do not. This boundary-drawing work of the Spirit is designed to found an exclusive community and form internal coherence.

The Spirit, baptizing members into one body, forms a more intimate relationship with them by dwelling in them: "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is within you ...?" (1 Cor. 6:19; cf. 3:16). This rhetorical question echoes Seneca's statement about the residence of the holy spirit (i.e., *sacer spiritus*) in a human body; *spiritus* comes into humans (see below). Though the cosmological dimension of spirit's all-pervasiveness is not entertained here,²¹⁾ Paul undoubtedly shows commonalities with the Stoic notion of the pervading

21) Rabens argues that Paul did not operate with the Stoic notion of *pneuma*. This view suggests an intriguing point of view; to discuss it in depth here beyond the scope of this short paper, though. It can be reserved for a future study to examine Rabens' notion of the Spirit working relationally. Volker Rabens, *The Holy Spirit and Ethics in Paul*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013).

spirit. The parallels between Seneca and Paul are striking as well as intriguing. For instance, we can compare each epistler's sentence to observe the point: our Stoic states, "*Sacer intra nos spiritus sedet*" (*Ep.* 41.2) while the apostle, "τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ θεοῦ οἰκεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν" (1 Cor 3:16).

The Spirit grants a variety of spiritual gifts to the members of Christ's body (1 Cor. 12:4-11). At both the beginning and the end of the passage, Paul declares that, despite those varieties, only one Spirit works through the gifts (vv. 4, 11): "But one and the same Spirit effects all these [i.e., spiritual gifts], distributing [them] to each one as the Spirit wills" (v. 11). Besides, all the gifts have one common purpose, that is, "the general good [τὸ συμφέρον]" (NJB 12:7). Therefore, the unity of the church is emphasized in terms of one Spirit's work and the shared purpose.²²⁾

In Paul's understanding, the Spirit forms and organizes the body of Christ. The Spirit works as both the generative force and the ordering force. The Spirit baptizes believers into Christ's body to form Christ's body and, also, establishes order for the unity of the body. The body is the composition of different members, and those body parts coordinate with each other for the common good. The various gifts the Corinthian church experiences are the phenomena of the Spirit's work in the congregation. The Spirit inspires those gifts and allocates them to each believer as the Spirit wills (1 Cor. 12:11). This work by the Spirit leads the church to the transcendent unity. The body of Christ must be in harmony because of the ordering

22) In Romans 12, Paul promotes ecclesial harmony in the Roman church by accentuating the cooperation of gifts without any relation to the Spirit. For Paul's discussion on the charisms in Romans, refer to the following: Sang Mok Lee, "Charismata in Romans 12 and Their Communal Meaning: Discord among Church Leaders and Paul's Exhortation of Concord," *Korean Journal of Christian Studies* 104 (2017), 55-82 [written in Korean].

work of the Spirit.

The Spirit, in Paul's view, functions as an actual agent of God's work. It comes from God and serves to form the church and, also, keep it in order. The divine origin of the pneuma (1 Cor. 6:19) can be understood in mechanical terms: the pneuma is the element from God that enlivens God's church.²³⁾ In this mechanical view, the pneuma can be assumed to hold a subordinate position under God and to be God's functioning power. It is not the case in Paul's understanding, however. The apostle's language is not merely mechanical. In salvific terms, Paul asserts that the Corinthian believers were washed, sanctified, and justified "*in the name* of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God" (6:11) [italics added]. This salvific work of the Spirit is not nominal but actual.

Believers go through the salvific process in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Spirit carries the process out. Moreover, in Paul's understanding, God and the Spirit are interchangeable; God's temple (3:16) is also called a temple of the Holy Spirit (6:19),²⁴⁾ and both the Spirit and God are the inspirers of spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12:6, 11). This interchangeability reminds us of Chrysippus' view on the cosmic pneuma. He considered the pneuma equivalent to god and divine reason,²⁵⁾ either nous (SVF II.634, 1027) or *logos* (SVF II.1091).²⁶⁾ Zeno and Cleanthes'

23) Dale Martin, *The Corinthian Body* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 174.

24) Cf. Seneca, *Ep.* 41.2, 73.16.

25) The etymological explanation of God (Dia) by the Stoics reflects the possible interchange of god and pneuma; like pneuma god pervades the universe (SVF II.1021, 1063).

26) Diogenes Laertius 7.138 (including 2.634) reads, "The world is directed by intelligence and providence ... since intelligence pervades every part of it, just like the soul in us." Aetius I.7.22 (SVF II.1027 part) tells, "The Stoics made god out to be intelligent, a designing fire which methodically proceeds towards creation of the world, and encompasses all the seminal principles ..." A. A. Long

creative fire was replaced by Chrysippus' pneuma.²⁷⁾ Paul seems to consider the Spirit and God to be equivalent to each other. The Spirit thus represents an imminent aspect of the divine.

3. The Body of Christ: Paul's Body Politic for Concord

In 1 Corinthians, Paul raises the issue of ecclesial factionalism. Immediately after the greeting and thanksgiving in the opening section, the apostle exhorts the recipients "by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree and that there be no dissensions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment" (1:10). This appeal indicates that factions existed in the church and that Paul was calling for unity among the Corinthian believers.²⁸⁾ The recipients insisted that they belonged to either Paul, Apollos, Cephas, or Christ (1:12). Even if this report by Paul may not reflect the actual situation of the church in numerical terms of the parties,²⁹⁾ it indicates

and D. N. Sedley, eds., *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, 2vols. (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 1:284, 274.

27) Lapidge, "Stoic Cosmology," 164, 170.

28) 1 Cor. 1:10 is the thesis of the entire letter. Martin, *The Corinthian Body*, 39; Margaret M. Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation: An Exegetical Investigation of the Language and Composition of 1 Corinthians* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993), 66. See 68-80 for political *topoi* and terms in 1:10.

29) The presumed parties belonging to Peter and Christ, respectively, are not discussed in the body of the epistle. They could be Paul's addition to stress the divisive situation. James D. G. Dunn, *1 Corinthians* (New York: T & T Clark, 2003), 28-29; Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians*, 142-145. It is likely that the actual conflicts are between the Pauline and the Abolonian party and the rest two are Paul's own addition for his rhetorical purposes. Sang Mok Lee, "The Spirit of God and the Ones Who Receive God's Spirit," *Korean Evangelical New Testament Studies* 14 (2015), 493-499 [written in Korean].

that the church certainly suffered internal discord. Throughout the epistle, Paul addresses the problem of divisions and advocates harmony among the believers. On three occasions, for example, Paul employs the term “faction” (σχίσμα)³⁰ to urge the recipients to be in unity. The first occasion is mentioned just above (1:10) and the others are 11:18, where the apostle reports divisions among the believers at the Lord's Supper, and 12:25, in which he advocates ecclesial concord by the body metaphor: “there may be no discord in the body.” Besides, the epistler refers to various instances of contrast and division in the church. He contrasts “you” and “we” using sets of opposite categories, such as the strong and the weak, the wise and the fool, and honored (ἔνδοξοι) and disrepute (ἄτιμοι) (4:10).

Factionalism in the Corinthian church was the consequence of the theological differences that resulted from different ideological constructions of the body. Paul considered the body a permeable entity jeopardized by external polluting agents. In contrast, his opponents viewed the body as a closed world and emphasized the hierarchical arrangement of the body and the proper balance of its constituents.³¹ These ideological and theological differences also show that they held different worldviews. Paul, therefore, attempts to change his opponents' worldview so they may consequently change their ideology and theology (see section 4).

Paul, advocating ecclesial concord against factionalism, employs the Greco-Roman rhetoric of *homonoia*.³² Our apostle urges the Corinthian believers to end their discord and become

30) The verb σχίζειν refers to factions in a political body (Acts 13:7; 14:4). Σχίζειν and στάσις have the same political sense. Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric*, 73. See also 71-74.

31) Martin, *The Corinthian Body*, xv, xvii.

32) Michelle V. Lee, *Paul, the Stoics and the Body of Christ* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 29.

reunited. He uses the appropriate rhetorical species, deliberative rhetoric, to treat this subject. It has been shown that the characteristics of deliberative rhetoric are found in Paul's first letter to the Corinthians.³³⁾ The deliberative argumentation was commonly employed in antiquity within an epistolary framework. Paul's choice of the letter genre for his deliberative rhetoric is compatible with the ancient tradition of rhetoric, and an appeal to seek *homonoia* was an appropriate and frequent topic of deliberative discourse in antiquity.³⁴⁾ From an ideological point of view, the *homonoia* discourse was intended to alleviate conflicts between an upper and a lower class; it buttressed the established social hierarchy.³⁵⁾ The *homonoia* rhetoric was a highly political device.

In Seneca's Stoic notion, the cosmos is a unified entity, and elements in the cosmos form a unity. Seneca articulates this idea of cosmological unity in terms of the relation of humans and gods, stating, "... we [i.e., god and human] are the parts of one great body. Nature produced us related to one another ..." (*Ep.* 95.52). Utilizing body analogy, Seneca asserts that god and humans belong to one great body and are related to one another. No qualitative differences are found between god and humans or among humans; they all share the same origin. This generic relation enables the Stoic writer to promote mutual affection and friendships among people (*Ep.* 95.52). This connection also extends to nonhuman creatures and the entire cosmos; a generic relationship exists not only between god and humans or among humans, but also all elements in the universe. Cosmic air (i.e., *spiritus*) is vital and active and nourishes all things in the cosmos. It exists in all constituents of the world, even in unanimated ones, such as rocks and dead bodies (*Natural*

33) Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric*, 23.

34) *Ibid.*, 64.

35) Martin, *The Corinthian Body*, 40-41.

Questions, VI.16.1).³⁶⁾

Seneca's body analogy is again conspicuous in his advocacy of political unity.³⁷⁾ Like the cosmos forming unity among all constituents, a state also has internal unity that is like an organic one: "As all the members of the body are in harmony³⁸⁾ one with another ... all are born for a life of fellowship" (*De Ira*, II.31.8).³⁹⁾ Each citizen of a state is a fellow to one another; they belong in the greater commonwealth. Seneca understands that society "is founded on the bonds existing between all human beings because they are all part of a vast organic whole."⁴⁰⁾ The whole and the parts cannot be considered separately; if the whole is revered, its components are also regarded as sacred. Like all members of the body, all members of the state are in harmony. To injure a fellow citizen is to break the unity of the political body. Its effect is not limited to the individual member but extends to the rest of the body, that is, the entire state.

This notion of the political body has a strong political implication of securing internal harmony and maintaining the security of the state. In this body metaphor, each citizen is supposed to live in concord and any conflict could be regarded as harmful to the commonwealth.⁴¹⁾ The status quo must be

36) Seneca's view of cosmological body is based upon his Stoic notion of *spiritus/pνεῦμα*.

37) Lee, "Paul's Understanding of the Spirit and Christ's Body and Its Communal Meaning," 444-447.

38) Cf. Seneca's *concentiunt* and Paul's *συνπάσχω*. For the Latin vocabulary of Stoic cosmology, refer to Lapidge, "Stoic Cosmology and Roman Literature," 1385-1392.

39) Seneca, *Moral Essays*, 3vols., J. W. Basore, trans. (Cambridge; Harvard University Press, 1928-1935). All translations of *De Ira* and *De Clementia* in this study are Basore's.

40) J. N. Sevenster, *Paul and Seneca* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1961), 169.

41) R. M. Thorsteinsson, "Paul and Roman Stoicism: Romans 12 and Contemporary Stoic Ethics," *JSNT* 29 (2006), 151; Yung Suk Kim, *Christ's Body in Corinth: The Politics of a Metaphor* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2008), 39-49. Cf. Troels

maintained. Seneca's body analogy can serve as an argument like the *homonoia* rhetoric.

This conservative ideology is evident in Seneca's appeal to Nero for the policy of mercy. The Stoic advises the young emperor concerning mercy, explaining, "... you [i.e., Nero] are the state's soul and the state is your body even reprobate citizens should have mercy as being the weak members of the body ..." (*De Clementia*, I.5.1). Although the body metaphor in *De Ira* (II. 31. 7-8) seems to concern the citizens of the state, here, Seneca applies the same analogy to the ruler of the state to advocate the political security of the state from the opposite direction. The state's ruler is the commanding faculty of the state, just as the soul is of the body.⁴²⁾ The soul and the body are in unity, just as the ruler and the state are. They cannot exist independently of each other. If the emperor is merciful to the ruled, he is, in fact, merciful to himself. Even the least respectable citizen should be treated with mercy; he is a member of the body of which the soul is the emperor. If the emperor is not merciful, the impact of his rage will be tremendous because he is the commander of the state.⁴³⁾ This line of thinking can function to minimize political disturbance in the state.

Seneca's argumentation for political security and unity is considered benevolent patriarchalism.⁴⁴⁾ He urges both the ruler and the ruled to come to harmony. If the emperor is merciful to the ruled, "That kindness of your [i.e., the emperor's] heart

Engberg-Pedersen, "Paul's Body: A Response to Barclay and Levison," *JSNNT* 33 (2011), 433-443.

42) Cf. E. A. Judge, "Contemporary Political Models for the Inter-Relations of the New Testament Churches," *Reformed Theological Review* 22 (1963), 69.

43) Cf. *De Clementia* I.5.2. ("For how small the harm the cruelty of a private citizen can do! But when princes rage there is war.")

44) Benevolent patriarchalism aims to sustain "social hierarchy by urging the lower class to submit to those in authority and the higher class to rule benevolently and gently ..." Martin, *The Corinthian Body*, 42.

will be diffused little by little throughout the whole body of the empire, and all things will be molded into . . . your likeness” (*De Clementia*, II.2.1). It must be noted that the ruled will be molded into the ruler's likeness. Harmony between the emperor and the ruled will be acquired. Subjects will submit themselves to the emperor who rules mercifully—in other words, benevolently and gently.

In 1 Cor. 12:12-27, Paul applies the body metaphor to the Corinthian factionalism. Believers, no matter what their ethnic backgrounds or social statuses are, form a collective body (v.13). They are baptized into one body. Like the body with many different members, all bodily members comprise one body (vv.12, 20). The body is undoubtedly composed of not one member but many (v.14). Just as the ruled of the empire are the body of the emperor (see above), Christian believers are the body of Christ, and each believer is a member of Christ's body (v.27).⁴⁵⁾ For this ecclesiological understanding, thus, Paul can assert, “sinning against the brothers [i.e., fellow church members] and wounding their conscience, you sin against Christ” (1 Cor 8:12).

The theme of co-suffering (*συμπάσχω*) and co-rejoicing (*συνχαίρω*) in 1 Cor 12:26 shows an apparent political topos for unity; “If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together.” This statement of Paul serves as an instance of ancient rhetoric for political unity and solidarity. Such rhetoric is the crucial point of the body analogy adopted to promote communal harmony.⁴⁶⁾ The theme of rejoicing together is intended for the collective good rather than individual satisfaction; the spiritual gifts are Spirit's manifestation to each believer for τὸ συμφέρον (v. 7). For this communal harmony,

45) The body metaphor is also observed in 1 Cor 6:12-20; 10:14-22; 11:29 (cf. 1:13).

46) Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric*, 162-3. See also the following: Kim, “Pneumatological Reflection on Paul's Understanding of Church,” 37-39.

believers should avoid schism (σχίσμα)⁴⁷⁾ in their congregation and have the same care for all the others (v. 25). For Paul, it is what God intends for the body, that is, the church; “God has so composed the body” (ὁ θεὸς συνεκέρασεν τὸ σῶμα,” v. 24). In this sense, factionalism is merely a human failing against God’s compositional purpose (3:1-4; 10:13; 15:32). This purpose of God demands believers to cooperate for concord in the church. The theme of co-suffering and co-rejoicing is a (church-)political *topos* for the unity of the community.

We observe a new political function in Paul’s ecclesiology of Christ’s body. In Greco-Roman political discourses, the body metaphor was commonly employed to promote political unity. The given metaphor serves politically to maintain the status quo: the present status hierarchy of the society.⁴⁸⁾ Paul challenges the status hierarchy of his times (12:22-25). He exhorts the recipients to give more honor to those who are weaker and less honored more than the ones who are stronger and more honored. That is, a believer’s honor in the church should not be determined by his or her social status outside the church: “... those [members] of the body which we consider less honorable we surround with more abundant honor...” (v.23). To Paul, every member of Christ’s body deserves the honor.⁴⁹⁾ The apostle tries to discourage conflicts and encourage unity in the church by means of changing the believers’ perspective on their cooperative relationship and their concomitant attitude to one another. It is in contrast to the politically conservative function of benevolent patriarchalism, which supports the *status quo*. Paul’s

47) It is the nominal form of the Greek verb σχίζω which means to split, cleave, separate and so forth. The Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek, 2015 ed., s.v. “σχίσμα.”

48) Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric*, 92, 94-96.

49) Yung Suk Kim, “Proclaiming Christ’s Body (*soma christou*): Embodiment of God’s Gospel in Paul’s Letters,” *Interpretation* 67 (2013), 21-22.

body metaphor is intended to correct the perspective that gives rise to factionalism.

4. The Spirit and God's Revelation: Transformation of Cognition for Concord

In the Hellenistic world of ideas, with some exceptions like Pyrrhonism, a substantive congruity is observed between the world of phenomena and true cognition.⁵⁰⁾ Humans perceive the cosmos not as it is but as reflected in their perception, and the cosmos does not exist separately from human cognition. Such a notion of congruity serves as a theoretical foundation of various transcendent intermediaries in philosophical and religious thoughts, such as Wisdom in the Jewish tradition, Pneuma and Logos in Greco-Roman philosophy and Hellenistic Jewish philosophy (e.g., Philo),⁵¹⁾ and *Angelus Interpres* (angelic interpreter) in Apocalyptic literature.⁵²⁾ Humans' experience of

50) Cf. David E. Aune, "Human Nature and Ethics in Hellenistic Philosophical Traditions and Paul: Some Issues and Problems," Troels Engberg-Pedersen, ed., *Paul in his Hellenistic Context* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 291-312. Aune explains that Stoicism, along with Platonism and Gnosticism, views the person "as microcosm of the universe" (303).

51) Henrik Tronier, "The Corinthian Correspondence between Philosophical Idealism and Apocalypticism," Troels Engberg-Pedersen, ed., *Paul Beyond the Judaism/Hellenism Divide* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 166-196. Cf. Vladimir de Beer, "The Cosmic Role of the Logos, as Conceived from Heraclitus until Eriugena," *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 59 (2014), 13-39.

52) For a more detailed discussion, refer to the following: Cornelis Bennema, "The Strands of Wisdom Tradition in Intertestamental Judaism: Origins, Developments and Characteristics," *Tyndale Bulletin* 52 (2001), 61-82; Caroline Vander Stichele, "Just a Whore: The Annihilation of Babylon According to Revelation 17:16," *Lectio difficilior: European Electronic Journal for Feminist Exegesis* 1 (2000), 1-11;

those intermediaries brings about a cognitive transformation. Those transcendent figures have two related aspects. One is a cosmological, object aspect, and the other a cognitive one.⁵³⁾

The cosmological activity of such transcendent figures is intended to bring about, uphold, or organize phenomena in the world. These figures keep the world together according to some cosmic order by establishing connections between different levels within the cosmos. Philo, for instance, understands that Logos stands “on the border and separates the creature from the Creator” (*Heir.* 42.205).⁵⁴⁾ Logos, nevertheless, also mediates the opposite ends: it “both pleads with the immortal as suppliant for afflicted mortality and acts as ambassador of the ruler to the subject” (*Heir.* 42.205; cf. 42:206). In Philo’s view, Logos holds together the universe like the tensional force of cosmic pneuma and administrates the entire universe. The Jewish philosopher also understands humans to stand between irrational animals and the divine. Humans share the essence of the biological

Andrei Orlov, “In the Mirror of the Divine Face: The Enochic Features of the Exagoge of Ezekiel the Tragedian,” G. J. Brooke, H. Najman, and L. T. Stuckenbruck, eds., *The Significance of Sinai* (New York: Brill, 2008), 183-199; Martin Hallaschka, “Zechariah’s Angels: Their Role in the Night Visions and in the Redaction History of Zech, 1, 7-6, 8,” *SJOT* 24 (2010), 13-27.

53) Henrik Tronier, “The Corinthian Correspondence between Philosophical Idealism and Apocalypticism,” 169-170; idem, “Hellenistic Hermeneutics and Paul’s Idea of the Spirit in First Corinthians,” G. A. Jónsson, E. Sigurbjörnsson and P. Pétursson, eds., *The New Testament in its Hellenistic Context: Proceedings of a Nordic Conference of New Testament Scholars, held in Skalholt* (Reykjavik: Gufræistofnun—Skálholtsútgáfan, 1996), 37-38. I briefly mentioned this point citing Tronier’s “Hellenistic Hermeneutics and Paul’s Idea of the Spirit” in the following study: Sang Mok Lee, “The Spirit, Gnosis, and the Corinthian Church: Paul’s View of Pneuma and Mystical Communion for Ecclesial Concord,” *Canon&Culture* 12 (2018), 241, n. 27.

54) Philo’s works in this study are quoted from the following: Philo, *The Works of Philo: Complete and Unabridged, New Updated Version*, C. D. Yonge, trans. (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2000).

life with animals whereas they have the essence of the soul, the divine breath (*πνεῦμα θεῖον*), in common with God (*Spec. Leg.* VI. 123; cf. *Det.* 79-95). Biological vitality and rationality coexist in humankind.⁵⁵⁾

The cognitive aspect serves to bring about a fundamental transformation of human cognition, from a merely empirical approach to the phenomena to the true, transcending apprehension of reality. The interpreter can comprehend the true nature and meaning of the phenomena that he experiences in the world.⁵⁶⁾ The cosmological organization is a hermeneutical construction of order and rationality. The change in cognition leads to the new construction of the cosmos. Empirical experiences are reinterpreted and reorganized according to one's perspective.⁵⁷⁾

Logos in Philo's philosophical notion can serve as an example of the cosmological and cognitive aspects. According to Tronier's analysis,⁵⁸⁾ as with the cosmological aspect, Philo's Logos upholds the world's diaretical order. It keeps reality together in a rational unity through its continuous process of diaretical divisions from the top to the bottom of the ontological hierarchy. Every phenomenon in the world is given its meaning in the diaretical hermeneutics.⁵⁹⁾ Concerning the cognitive aspect, a true comprehension of the world is possible through the revelatory activity of Logos,⁶⁰⁾ which functions as the hermeneutical

55) Richard A. Horsley, "Pneumatikos vs. Psychikos: Distinctions of Spiritual Status among the Corinthians," *Harvard Theological Review* 69 (1976), 273.

56) Tronier, "Hellenistic Hermeneutics and Paul's Idea of the Spirit in First Corinthians," 38.

57) *Ibid.*, 45.

58) *Ibid.*, 41-44.

59) *Ibid.*, 40-41.

60) Marian Hillar, "The Logos and Its Function in the Writings of Philo of Alexandria," *JRR* 7 (1998), 36-53, esp. 42-45. Cf. Jiri Hoblik, "The Holy Logos in the Writings of Philo of Alexandria," *Communio Viatorum* 56 (2014), 248-266.

principle of cognition. The structure of Logos' objective activity is identical to that of its cognitive activity. Through these two activities of Logos, the seemingly chaotic empirical world is given a rational structure and a new interpretive framework.

As we have seen above, Seneca's conception of *sacer spiritus* is influenced by Chrysippus' field theory of the cosmic pneuma. The all-pervasiveness of *spiritus* conducts the cosmological activity. Continuity among cosmic elements is based upon this theoretical foundation of the all-pervading cosmic spirit. It brings about cosmic coherence and organizes the entire universe.

This cosmological activity provides a hermeneutical framework. It facilitates Seneca's notion of bodily unity; each person is permeated by the *spiritus* and united with other people. There is an analogy between the cosmological coherence and the integration of the state advocated by Seneca: "That kindness of your heart ... will be diffused [*tradetur*] little by little throughout the whole body of the empire ..." (*De Clementia*, II.2.1), as every person has divine seeds in his or her mortal body (*Ep.* 73.16).

Seneca's *sacer spiritus* does not seem to serve the function of bringing about a fundamental transformation of human cognition. The great and hallowed, which has come down so that we may have a nearer knowledge of divinity, does indeed associate with us, but it still cleaves to its origin (*Ep.* 41.5). This near knowledge of gods, which humans gain through the all-pervading *spiritus*, seems not to accompany a transformation of cognition. The old hermeneutical framework remains. As for the conservative political function of the body's unity, the cosmological activity of *spiritus* is utilized to confirm the established structure of cognition. The moral aspect of the *spiritus* serves as another example to confirm the establishment.⁶¹⁾

61) Criteria of good and bad, in my view, do not seem reformative in Seneca's political notion in regard to his language of the body's unity (cf. *Ep.* 41.2).

In Paul's notion, the Spirit has both cosmological and cognitive aspects.⁶²⁾ First, concerning the cosmological activity, the Spirit brings about pneumatic unity in the body of Christ by bestowing various spiritual gifts. Different spiritual phenomena are rooted in transcendental unity. The Spirit functions like the diaretical activity of Philo's Logos. The community of believers turns into the pneumatic body of Christ (1 Cor. 13:12, 27).

Second, God's spirit, acting inside each human, serves to transform his or her cognition. Advocating the Spirit as an agency of revelation of God's mysteries ("θεοῦ σοφίαν ἐν μυστηρίῳ τῇν ἀποκεκρυμμένην," 1 Cor 2:7),⁶³⁾ Paul tries to have the recipients understand the possibility and, also, the necessity of cognitive transformation. He attempts to lead those readers to a fundamental change of cognition, that is, a change from the only empirical to the true understanding of reality. The apostle asserts that the Spirit functions as a revelatory agent for God; "for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God" (2:10). This revelation of the Spirit is selective because any revelation cannot be inclusive by its nature; some will receive, but others will not. In Paul's view, this characteristic of the Spirit's revelation is deeply related to the change of believers from ψυχικοί (natural or unspiritual ones) to πνευματικοί (spiritual ones).⁶⁴⁾ These two Greek terms are likely the

62) For more analysis and discussion, refer to Tronier, "Hellenistic Hermeneutics and Paul's Idea of the Spirit," 52-54.

63) Such a revelatory work by the Spirit is prominent in John's Gospel, too. Sang Mok Lee, "Jesus' Philoi vs. Jesus' Douloi: Conflicts over the Paraclete's Function and Authority in the Johannine Community," *The Expository Times* 129 (2018), 356-364. For a discussion on the Spirit and the Johannine community's situation, see the following: Eun-Geol Lyu, "Pneumatologie im Evangelium nach Johannes," *Korean New Testament Studies* 21 (2014), 993-1028 [written in Korean].

64) Paul's usage of πνευματικοί shows a clear ethical dimension. Lee, "Paul's Understanding of the Spirit and Christ's Body and Its Communal Meaning,"

expressions, at least, some Corinthian believers used to describe vertically different standings of their spiritual status. The ψυχικοί refer to the ones on a lower position in the hierarchy of spiritual status. Thus, they cannot enjoy spiritual intimacy with God. Since they are in lower phases of spiritual development, they need instruction to become spiritually mature. Before reaching spiritual maturity, they remain receptive to perverting influences, both earthly and bodily.

In contrast, the πνευματικοί, since spiritually mature, enjoy an intimate relationship with the divine and are no longer susceptible to those negative influences. The ψυχικοί cannot know God because they do not receive the Spirit and belong to the world; Paul states, “the world did not know God through wisdom” (1:21). The πνευματικοί, nevertheless, are taught by the Spirit and become able even to interpret spiritual things to the spiritual people (2:13). Our apostle presents to the Corinthian recipients a new criterion of spiritual status. Only the one who possesses knowledge through the Spirit is deemed spiritual or spiritually mature. Any conventional high-status indicators do not guarantee the believer’s corresponding spiritual status.⁶⁵⁾

Paul seems to assume two different kinds of knowledge. One is true knowledge of God and the other is imperfect knowledge that leads believers to arrogance.⁶⁶⁾ The apostle acknowledges that the Corinthian recipients possess knowledge; they “were enriched in him all speech and all *knowledge*” (1:5) [emphasis mine]. The Spirit’s revelation teaches them to know God whom

462-465. Cf. Han Soo Lee, “The Origin and the Characteristics of Paul’s Pneumatology,” *Presbyterian Theological Quarterly* 60 (1993), 59-85 [written in Korean].

65) Martin, *The Corinthian Body*, 63.

66) The discussion in this paragraph is dependent on the following: Sang Mok Lee, “The Spirit, Gnosis, and the Corinthian Church,” 236-237.

the worldly wisdom cannot know; “We have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things given to us by God as gifts” (2:12). The distinction between God’s spirit and the worldly spirit accordingly separates those who comprehend gifts from God and those who do not. However, there is a sort of knowledge that brings about conflicts in the Corinthian church. Such knowledge puffs up (*φυσιοῦ*) so to inhibit the edification of the church (8:1). Paul contrasts the worldly wisdom and God’s wisdom: “For it is written, ‘I [i.e., God] will destroy the wisdom of the wise [i.e., of humans, presumably] ...’” (1:19). The apostle rejects this world’s wisdom in opposition to God’s. Any knowledge that harms the unity of Christ’s body cannot be considered true knowledge of God. Paul certainly agrees with those Corinthian believers who insist that there is no God except the one whom Paul and those recipients worship together (8:4). For our apostle, not such knowledge but the attitudes that those believers have towards others in the church. Their divisive attitudes and behavior cause conflicts among believers. Thus, the knowledge they have is only imperfect one. This imperfect knowledge shows that those who claim such knowledge with divisive attitudes, in fact, do not know God (15:34).⁶⁷⁾

Our apostle directs his recipients’ attention to *being known* by God and away from *knowing* God. The knowledge of God does not stand first but remain subordinate to God’s knowledge of believers. For this reversal, the apostle gives a qualification to knowledge: love to build up (8:1). Paul’s primary concern is the church’s edification when dealing with the internal discord of the church. It is love that builds up Christ’s body. Paul’s emphasis on love is prominent in Ch. 12 and Ch.13. Paul reasons for the church’s unity in the former and promotes love as a

67) Seneca emphasizes knowledge in his critique of religious practice: “god is worshipped by those who truly know Him” (*Ep.* 95.47).

higher virtue. For the apostle, to have true knowledge of God means to have the virtue of love as well as knowledge. Believers can prove their true knowledge of God by contributing to the church's edification.

To gain true knowledge of God is to transform cognition, and this cognitive change requires a change of life in a practical sense. If anyone truly knows God, it is proved in his or her unity with others in the church and their edifying work for the faith community. Paul exhorts the Corinthian believers to know the church's organic unity, the vital character of the church, and to avoid internal conflicts. He suggests that the church's factionalism can be dealt with each believer's change of cognition and attitudes and behavior.

5. Conclusion

This paper argued that Paul, coping with the factionalism in the Corinthian church, attempts to transform the recipients' cognition. Such a cognitive transformation leads them to realize that their relationship with each other is that of organic quality. The Spirit and the body of Christ, in Paul's understanding, are designed to serve the purpose of transforming cognition. Similarities are observed, as discussed above, between Paul's and Stoic thoughts on the pneuma and the body. These similarities result from their common theoretical background: Chrysippus' cosmological pneuma, which creates unity in the entire universe. This cosmological unity also functions as the theoretical foundation of the body metaphor. Within the body, whether it is the Roman Empire or the church, every member is united. Accordingly, any internal conflicts should be avoided; they are against the nature of the body. However, differences are also observed between those two. For instance, Seneca's *sacer spiritus*

seems not to conduct a cognitive activity with epistemological aspects. In Seneca's notion, the pneuma and the body metaphor serve a conservative political purpose; he tries to mitigate conflicts while maintaining the establishment. In contrast, Paul, dealing with the ecclesial discord in Corinth, attempts to transform the believer's cognition. The Spirit and the metaphor Christ's body serve this purpose. The political orientations of Paul and Seneca are very different, too. The apostle admonishes the recipients to transform their cognition, that is, to give up the conventional status hierarchy and have the true knowledge of God. Like Logos in Philo's cosmology, the Spirit functions as God's revelatory agent that mediates God's secret and hidden wisdom. Each believer's possession of true knowledge is proven by his or her actual lifestyle as supporting the ecclesial concord.

<주요어>

로고스, 성령론, 바울, 그리스도의 몸, 고린도 교회, 인식 변화, 계시의 중개인, 스토아 철학

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<초록>

바울의 성령론과 그리스도의 몸의 일치

- 성령의 우주론적, 인식론적 측면 -

이상목

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본 연구는 성령에 관한 바울의 이해를 스토아 철학의 영 개념과 비교하여 연구한다. 이것은 양자의 유사점뿐만 아니라 차이점에 주목하여 바울의 성령론이 지닌 교회론적 의미를 고찰한다. 바울은 스토아 철학에서 발견되는 영 개념을 수용하여 초기 교회가 경험한 성령에 관한 자신의 이해를 신학화한다. 교회의 화합을 위한 바울의 신학적 권고는 철학적이며 우주론적인 영에 관한 이론적 논의를 기반으로 한다. 양자의 사상 속에서 영은 우주론적인 일치를 만들어 내며, 이 일치는 지체들의 유기적 관계와 화합을 강조하는 몸 비유의 이론적 토대가 된다. 그것이 로마제국이든 아니면 교회이든, 몸 안에서 모든 지체는 연합되었다. 이러한 의미에서 몸의 성원 간의 갈등은 제거되어야 한다. 세네카의 영 개념과 몸 비유는 보수적인 정치적 목적을 지닌 데 반해, 바울의 성령론과 그리스도의 몸 이해는 신자들 간의 위계를 역전하여 상호존중과 평등 지향적인 사상을 보여준다. 바울은 성령의 활동이 신자 개인의 인식 변화를 가져온다고 보았고, 이러한 변화가 크리스천 신앙윤리에 필수적이라 설명한다. 고린도 교회의 갈등을 해결하려는 바울에게 신자들의 인식 변화는 신자들 간의 새로운 관계 형성을 위해 필수적이었다. 교회 화합을 위한 신앙 행태의 변화는 신자의 인식 변화를 전제로 하고, 이것은 신자가 본질적인 것을 인식하고 신적 질서에 대한 참된 지식과 이해를 갖게 하는 성령의 활동으로 가능하다.

<Abstract>

**Paul's Pneumatology and the Unity of Christ's Body:
Cosmological and Epistemological Aspects of the Spirit**

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This article discusses Paul's use of the Stoic concept of the pneuma and the body analogy in comparison with Stoic thoughts. It is to expound the apostle's pneumatology in 1 Corinthians in terms of his theological and ethical exhortation for the recipients' concord. In 1 Corinthians, Paul utilizes one of the most popular philosophical traditions of his time to address the issue of factionalism in the Corinthian church. The apostle's cosmology and pneumatology are better understood in Stoic terms. Paul's notions of the Spirit and Christ's body show various similarities with Stoic views on the pneuma and the body. The pneuma creates cosmological unity, and this unity functions as the theoretical foundation of the body metaphor. Within the body, whether it is the Roman Empire or the church, every member is united. Any internal conflicts within the body should be avoided. However, this comparative study does not merely discuss those similarities; it is also intended to expound Paul's pneumatology. In Seneca's notion, the pneuma and the body metaphor serve a conservative political purpose; he tries to mitigate conflicts while maintaining the establishment. In contrast, Paul, dealing with the ecclesial discord in Corinth, attempts to transform the believer's cognition. The Spirit serves as God's revelatory agent for true knowledge of God. Paul's notions of the spirit and the body metaphor are intended to transform the recipients'

comprehension of reality and thus to change their divisive attitudes and behavior to remain in congregational unity.