New Test. Stud. 46, pp. 473–487. Printed in the United Kingdom

Mark – Interpreter of Paul[1]

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Claiming that Mark is a Paulinist does not require that he agree with Paul about everything, and plausible reasons can be advanced for a later Paulinist wanting to write the story of the earthly Jesus. Martin Werner's assertion that the agreements between Mark and Paul reflect general early Christian viewpoints is not valid with regard to the theology of the cross, which was a controversial Pauline emphasis and a stress that the later Gospels attenuated in editing Mark. Contrary to Werner, Mark and Paul agree in ascribing Jesus' death to a combination of human and demonic opponents.

It is time to revisit the question of the relation between Mark and Paul. Ever since the publication of Martin Werner's 1923 monograph *Der Einfluss paulinischer Theologie im Markusevangelium*,[2] most scholars have treated the question as closed, accepting Werner's arguments (or, more often, other scholars' acceptance of them) that the first Gospel was uninfluenced by the apostle to the

1 The title, of course, plays upon Papias's famous description of Mark as the interpreter of Peter (Eusebius, *E.H.* 3.39.15). There may be something to the suggestion of Rudolf Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium* (HTKNT 2; Freiburg: Herder, 1976) 1.8–9, that Papias's description, like the pseudonymous ascription of 1 Peter to Peter, is an attempt to reconcile the Pauline and Petrine wings of the church by attributing to Peter a work that highlights Pauline theology.

2 Martin Werner, *Der Einfluss paulinischer Theologie im Markusevangelium: eine Studie zur neutestamentlichen Theologie* (BZNW 1; Giessen: Töpelmann, 1923). The primary target of Werner's polemic was the nineteenth-century monograph by Gustav Volkmar, *Die Religion Jesu* (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1857), which claimed that Mark was an allegory in which Jesus stood for Paul, the family of Jesus stood for the Law-observant Jerusalem church led by James, the Pharisees stood for Paul's Pharisaic Christian opponents, etc.; cf. Volkmar's restatement of his position in *Die Evangelien oder Marcus und die Synopsis der kanonischen und ausserkanonischen Evangelien nach dem ältesten Text mit historisch-exegetischem Commentar* (Leipzig: Fues's [R. Reisland], 1870). The manifest weaknesses of Volkmar's monograph provided Werner with a perfect foil. But cf. the more positive, though balanced, assessment of William Wrede, *The Messianic Secret* (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co., 1971 [1901]) 284: 'The sum total of what is false and impossible in his work is great in things both great and small . . . [Yet] without a doubt Volkmar's book is the most perceptive and shrewd, and to my mind altogether the most important, that we possess on Mark.'

Gentiles.[3] Such has been the impact of Werner's work that even some of those who have pointed out similarities between Mark and Paul have been reluctant to posit a direct connection.[4]

But now the tide appears to be shifting, and several scholars have recently contended that Mark should be situated in the Pauline sphere of activity,[5] though without offering a detailed response to Werner's arguments. This renewal of the theory of Markan Paulinism reflects developments both in Synoptic criticism and in Pauline study. In the Synoptic area, redaction criticism's stress that Mark was not just a collector of traditions but also a theologian in his own right has led to a renewed attempt to situate him within the spectrum of first-century Christian theology, and this has naturally resulted in comparisons with his great predecessor, Paul.[6] In the area of Pauline studies, one important trend in post-war scholarship has been the re-emergence of Ferdinand Christian Baur's thesis that Paul was a polemical theologian, and that his opinions about subjects such as the Law and the theology of the cross were not consensus positions but embattled outposts.[7] If Paul was a lonely and contentious figure rather than a universally approved one, it is more remarkable than it would otherwise be that Mark frequently agrees with him. Mark, too, has been portrayed in post-war scholarship as a polemical writer,[8]

3 Exceptions have included Benjamin W. Bacon, *The Gospel of Mark: Its Composition and Date* (New Haven/London: Yale University /Oxford University, 1925), and John C. Fenton, 'Paul and Mark', in *Studies in the Gospels: Essays in Memory of R. H. Lightfoot* (ed. Dennis E. Nineham; Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1957) 89–112.

4 See e.g C. Clifton Black, 'Christ Crucified in Paul and in Mark: Reflections on an Intracanonical Conversation', in *Theology and Ethics in Paul and His Interpreters: Essays in Honor of Victor Paul Furnish* (ed. Eugene H. Lovering and Jerry L. Sumney; Nashville: Abingdon, 1996) 80–104, who prefaces his fine article on the canonical interplay between Paul and Mark with a ritual invocation of Werner (p. 185).

5 E.g. Michael D. Goulder, 'Those Outside (Mk. 4.10–12)', *NovT* (1991) 289–302; John R. Donahue, 'The Quest for the Community of Mark's Gospel', in *The Four Gospels 1992: Festschrift Frans Neirynck* (ed. Frans Van Segbroeck *et al.*; BETL 100; Leuven: Leuven University, 1992) 2.817–38; Wolfgang Schenk, 'Sekundäre Jesuanisierungen von primären Paulus-Aussagen bei Markus', in *The Four Gospels 1992*, 2.877–904; John R. Donahue, 'Windows and Mirrors: The Setting of Mark's Gospel', *CBQ* 57 (1995) 1–26; Heikki Räisänen, 'Jesus and the Food Laws: Reflections on Mark 7.15', in *Jesus, Paul and Torah: Collected Essays* (JSNTSup 43; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1992 [1982]) 127–48.

6 Cf. Black, 'Christ Crucified', 187–8.

7 See esp. the works of Ernst Käsemann: *New Testament Questions of Today* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1969 [1957]); *Perspectives on Paul* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971); *Commentary on Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980). See also Gerd Lüdemann, *Opposition to Paul in Jewish Christianity* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989); J. Louis Martyn, *Galatians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 33A; New York: Doubleday, 1997); *idem*, *Theological Issues in the Letters of Paul* (SNTW; Edinburgh/Nashville: T. & T. Clark/Abingdon, 1997).

8 See e.g. Willi Marxsen, *Mark the Evangelist* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1969); Theodore J. Weeden, *Mark: Traditions in Conflict* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971); Étienne Trocmé, *The Formation of the Gospel According to Mark* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1975 [1963]).

and it is natural that sooner or later the attempt would be made to compare and even to draw lines of influence between these two contentious theologians.

And, indeed, there are on the face of it a number of striking similarities between Paul and Mark. Both, for example, make the term εὐαγγέλιον a central aspect of their theology (e.g. Mark 1.1; Gal 1.6–9; Rom 1.16–17).[9] Both stress the significance of Jesus' crucifixion as the apocalyptic turning point of the ages (see below), although neither ignores the resurrection either.[10] Both highlight Jesus' victory over demonic powers (the Markan exorcisms; Rom 8.38–9; 1 Cor 15.24; etc.) and see his advent as the dawn of the age of divine blessing prophesied in the Scriptures (e.g. Mark 1.1–15; Rom 3.21–2). Both portray Jesus as a new Adam.[11] Both emphasize the importance of faith in Jesus and in God, sometimes picturing this faith in a dualistic way as a new mode of seeing that God grants to his elect people while condemning outsiders to blindness (Mark 4.10–12; Rom 11.7–10; 1 Cor 2.6–16).[12] In both cases, however, such dualism sometimes yields to a universalistic perspective (e.g. Mark 10.45; Rom 11.25–32). Both Mark and Paul have negative things to say about Peter and about members of Jesus' family (e.g. Mark 3.20–1, 31–5; 8.31–3; Gal 2). Both assert that Jesus came not for the righteous but for ungodly sinners (e.g. Mark 2.17; Rom 4.15; 5.18–19), on whose behalf he died an atoning death (Mark 10.45; Rom 3.25; 5.8), and that he came for the Jews first (πρῶτον) but also for the Gentiles (Mark 7.27–9; Rom 1.16; cf. Rom 11). And both think that the widening of God's purposes to incorporate the Gentiles was accomplished by an apocalyptic change in the Law that had previously separated Jews

9 Cf. Marxsen, *Mark*, 117–50.

10 On the resurrection see e.g., on the Pauline side, Rom 1.3–4 and 1 Cor 15, and, on the Markan side, Mark 9.9 and the Markan passion predictions (8.31; 9.31; 10.34), all of which end with a reference to the resurrection.

11 With regard to Paul, see Rom 5.12–21; 1 Cor 15.21–2, 45–9. With regard to Mark, it is commonly recognized that his temptation narrative has background in the Adam story; see e.g. Hermann Mahnke, *Die Versuchungsgeschichte im Rahmen der synoptischen Evangelien: ein Beitrag zur frühen Christologie* (BBET 9; Frankfurt am Main/Bern/Las Vegas: Peter Lang, 1978) 28–38. The Adamic background is more pronounced in Mark than in the Matthean/Lukan (Q) parallels, where a Mosaic/exodus typology predominates; see Dale C. Allison, *The New Moses: A Matthean Typology* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1993) 165–72. But it is not only the temptation narrative but also the entire sequence of which it is part, 1.9–15, that has Adamic background; see Ulrich Mell, 'Jesu Taufe durch Johannes (Markus 1.9–15) – zur narrativen Christologie vom neuen Adam', *BZ* 40 (1996) 161–78. The Markan transfiguration narrative also has Adamic features; in contrast to Matthew and Luke, for example, it is Jesus' *clothes* rather than his *face* that shine. This motif of radiant clothing corresponds to a widespread emphasis in early Judaism and Christianity on Adam's 'garments of glory'; see e.g. *Targum Yerušalmi* on Gen 3.7, 21; *Gen. Rab.* 18.56; 20.12; *Pirqe R. El.* 14; but cf. already Ezek 28.13. I hope to develop these and other aspects of the Adamic Christology of Mark in a future study.

12 Cf. Kazimierz Romaniuk, 'Le problème des paulinismes dans l'Évangile de Marc', *NTS* 23 (1976–7): 273–4.

from Gentiles, a change that included an abrogation of the OT food laws; in the new situation that pertains since Jesus' advent, all foods are pure (Mark 7.19; Rom 14.20).

Werner, however, had already weighed many of these points in the balance, and had found them wanting. On the penultimate page of his monograph (209), he summarizes his conclusions succinctly in three points:[13]

> 1. Where Mark agrees with Paul, it is always a matter of *general* early Christian viewpoints.
> 2. Where in Paul's letters special, characteristically Pauline viewpoints come to the fore, either Markan parallels are lacking or Mark represents exactly contrary standpoints.
> 3. Therefore there cannot be the least influence of Pauline theology on the Gospel of Mark.

I disagree with this conclusion. In this article, however, I do not intend to answer all of Werner's points in detail. But I *would* like to engage Werner on one subject, that of the comparison between Markan and Pauline Christology. This area of Christology is crucial for Werner's argument, as is indicated not only by the amount of space he devotes to it (nearly a quarter of his monograph) but also by the fact that he places it in the first position after his introduction. And within the general area of Markan Christology, I intend to focus especially on one all-important aspect of it: the theology of the cross.

A General Point – The Earthly Jesus

First, however, a general point:[14] a large part of Werner's monograph is devoted to showing that there are differences between Paul's theology and that of Mark, often on matters of fine detail. On the basis of these differences, Werner draws the conclusion that Mark is not a Paulinist. But does the conclusion necessarily follow? Are there not differences between Paul and the *other* Paulinists we know about from the early church? Luke, for example, considers himself to be a Paulinist, but there are enough differences between his theology and Paul's to have encouraged Philipp Vielhauer to write a largely persuasive essay about Luke's misunderstanding of Paul.[15] Similar remarks could be made about the author or authors of Colossians–Ephesians, assuming those letters are Deutero-Pauline, and

13 The translation is mine.

14 This point was made to me independently by three readers of an earlier version of this study: Dale Allison, John Barclay, and David Sim.

15 Philipp Vielhauer, 'On the "Paulinism" of Acts', in *Studies in Luke–Acts* (ed. Leander E. Keck and J. Louis Martyn; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980 [1963]) 33–50. Some aspects of Vielhauer's theses have been successfully attacked by Werner Georg Kümmel, 'Current Theological Accusations Against Luke', *ANQ* 16 (1975) 131–45 and Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke* (AB 28 & 28A; New York: Doubleday, 1981–5) 1.18–29. But the basic thesis remains valid.

of the Pastorals. Scholars have detected significant theological differences between these writers and Paul, and those differences have been an important part of the case against Pauline authorship. Yet the authors of these letters were Paulinists; indeed, they felt so Pauline that they signed Paul's name to their own compositions. Later Paulinists such as Ignatius of Antioch, too, do not agree with Paul in every particular, or put the emphasis in exactly the same places that Paul does. Ignatius, for example, is like Mark in that he puts more emphasis on the Jesus tradition than does Paul.[16] So even if there are differences between Paul and Mark – such as that Mark writes a story about the earthly Jesus whereas Paul seems to be relatively uninterested in him – that does not necessarily mean that Mark is unPauline.

I mention this particular difference because some scholars regard it as a crucial distinction between Paul and Mark.[17] In fact, however, there might be good reasons why a later Paulinist such as Mark might want to anchor Pauline theology in traditions about the earthly Jesus. As the continuation of this study will emphasize, Paul's theology was controversial; Mark, therefore, may have been trying to defend it against its detractors by demonstrating its conformity with the authoritative Jesus tradition. Other possible motivations, such as an attempt to combat incipient docetism, have been advanced in the scholarly literature.[18] My intent here is not to argue strongly for any particular explanation, but merely to suggest that a Pauline disciple might have had plausible reasons for doing what Paul did *not* do, namely incorporating the Jesus tradition into his kerygma.

For Werner, however, the problem is not only that Mark writes a Gospel while Paul does not, but that the decision to do so supposedly reflects such a different notion of Jesus' earthly life (pp. 51–60). The defining characteristic of the earthly Jesus in Mark, according to Werner, is the strength of the πνεῦμα, whereas the defining characteristic of the earthly Jesus in Paul is the weakness of the σάρξ (citing Phil 2.7–8; Rom 8.3; 2 Cor 8.9).

16 See the listing of Gospel traditions in Ignatius in the publication of the Committee of the Oxford Society of Historical Theology, *The New Testament in the Apostolic Fathers* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1905) 77–83. On Ignatius's use of Paul and of Gospel traditions, see Christine Trevett, *A Study of Ignatius of Antioch in Syria and Asia* (Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity; Lewiston/Queenston/Lampeter: Edwin Mellen, 1992), 15–23. On Ignatius's Paulinism, see David Sim, *The Gospel of Matthew and Christian Judaism* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1998) 260–70.

17 An early example is Martin Dibelius, 'Evangelienkritik und Christologie', in *Zur Formgeschichte des Evangeliums* (ed. Ferdinand Hahn; Wege der Forschung; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1985 [1935]) 53–4.

18 See Eduard Schweizer, 'Mark's Theological Achievement', in *The Interpretation of Mark* (ed. William Telford; IRT 7; Philadelphia/London: Fortress/SPCK, 1985 [1964]) 42–3; Ralph Martin, *Mark: Evangelist and Theologian* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979 [1972]) 156–62.

Werner achieves this contrast, however, only by concentrating one-sidedly on the picture of Jesus' miracles in the first half of Mark and ignoring the passion narrative's extraordinary emphasis on Jesus' suffering and weakness. These two Markan elements are, to be sure, in tension with each other, but as William Wrede already recognized, the discrepancy between them has to do with the conflicting aims of the Markan narrative,[19] and is to some degree endemic to the Gospel genre itself. On the one hand, Mark wants to express the conviction, which he shares with Paul and other early Christians, that Jesus' death and resurrection were the turning point of the ages, the beginning of the messianic aeon of revelation and spiritual power. On the other hand, Mark is making these points through a narrative about the earthly Jesus, and his picture of that *einmalig* figure cannot help but be coloured by his convictions about who Jesus *presently* is.[20] So there are revelations of messiahship and spiritual power within the narrative (e.g. the miracles); but usually these revelations are qualified by commands to silence or by incomprehension that point to the death-and-resurrection as the moment of unveiling.[21]

The truth is that, if the Pauline gospel is to be expressed in narrative form, that narrative *has* to be one that combines strength and weakness, glory and abasement, life and death in its picture of the earthly Jesus. A Gospel that only emphasized Jesus' lowliness, humanity, and suffering would not be good news, and it would not be true to Paul.[22] For Paul the word of the cross is not only foolishness; it is also the power of God (1 Cor 1.18). And since Mark does not go down the Lukan

19 See Wrede, *Messianic Secret*, 124–9.

20 For the *einmalig* terminology and the general point, see J. Louis Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* (Nashville: Abingdon, ²1979 [1968]).

21 On this 'history of revelation' interpretation of the messianic secret motif, see the description by Heikki Räisänen, *The 'Messianic Secret' in Mark's Gospel* (SNTW; Edinburgh: T. &T. Clark, 1990) 68–71 of the views of Ernst Percy, Georg Strecker, and others; cf. the treatment of the same view in Christopher M. Tuckett, ed., *The Messianic Secret* (IRT 1; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983) 15–17.

To take up Werner's two premiere examples of Markan revelation scenes that supposedly would be impossible for Paul, namely the baptism and the transfiguration: already at his baptism Jesus is proclaimed Son of God by a heavenly voice (1.11). But no one except Jesus hears the voice, and it thus remains within the realm of narrative silence that scholars term 'the messianic secret'; only at Jesus' death does a human being say with comprehension, 'Truly this man was the Son of God' (15.39). Similarly, at the transfiguration Jesus appears as a being of shining glory, and is proclaimed Son of God in the hearing of the disciples; but the latter do not appear to comprehend what is going on (9.6), and the whole experience is placed under a ban that will only be lifted at the resurrection (cf. 9.9).

22 One suspects, however, that Werner may have had a theological investment in precisely this sort of Christology; see e.g. his statement on p. 56: 'It is precisely in his existence κατὰ σάρκα [according to the flesh], and only so, that the earthly Jesus of Paul fulfils the soteriological goal of his appearance on earth.' This emphasis on the salvific nature of Christ's incarnation apart from any miracle strikes a modern and in some ways unPauline note (see e.g. the positive evaluation of miracles in passages such as 1 Cor 2.4 and Gal 3.4).

route of appending a history of the post-Easter church to his account of Jesus' life, he has no choice but to portray both the strength and glory of the risen Jesus, on the one hand, and the weakness of the earthly Jesus, on the other, through a narrative that is ostensibly set in Jesus' lifetime.

The Theology of the Cross

Having advanced the general point that a later Paulinist does not have to present his theology in a way that is *identical* to the manner in which Paul presents his, and having shown that the supposed differences between Paul and Mark on the question of the earthly Jesus are not as radical as has sometimes been urged, let me now turn to the crucial test case of my thesis, a comparison of the theology of the cross in Paul and Mark. Even Werner has to acknowledge that the similarity between the two authors on their soteriological evaluation of Jesus' death is one of the strongest arguments for the theory of Markan Paulinism, although he goes on to try to undermine that argument (pp. 60–72). Perhaps unsurprisingly, Werner does not go into the details of this similarity, but I will do so here.

Both Paul and Mark lay *extraordinary* stress on the death of Jesus. This theme dominates Paul's christological affirmations. Similarly, Mark's whole narrative, at least from 2.20 and 3.6 on, points toward the crucifixion scene that is its climax. So Martin Kähler was exaggerating a truth when he called Mark and the other Gospels 'passions narrative with extended introductions'[23] – but the description applies pre-eminently to Mark. In both Paul and Mark the death of Jesus on the cross is understood as an apocalyptic event, the turning point of the ages; this has been demonstrated recently by Clifton Black, who points to the apocalyptic metaphors 'this age', 'in a mystery', 'that which has been hidden' and 'revealed' in 1 Cor 1–2, and the cosmic darkness and rending of the Temple curtain in Mark 15. We may also note Gal 6.14, in which the cross of Jesus is the means for the crucifixion of the old world, and the fact that Mark 15.33 echoes Amos 8.9, in which the sun will go down at noon 'on that day' of God's judgment.[24] Jesus' subsequent resurrection *confirms* this eschatological change, but does not supersede it. Paul, consequently, can sum up his whole gospel as 'the word of the cross' and remind

23 Martin Kähler, *The So-Called Historical Jesus and the Historic Biblical Christ* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1964 [1892]) 80 n. 11.

24 Cf. Black, 'Christ Crucified', 201. On Paul's apocalypticism in general see J. Christiaan Beker, *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980) and J. Louis Martyn, *Theological Issues in the Letters of Paul* (SNTW; Edinburgh/Nashville: T. & T. Clark/Abingdon, 1997); on Mark's see Joel Marcus, 'Mark 4.10–12 and Marcan Epistemology', *JBL* 103 (1984) 557–74, and *idem*, *Mark 1–8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 27; New York: Doubleday, 1999) Introduction.

the Corinthians that he had decided to 'know' nothing in their midst except 'Jesus Christ and him crucified' (1 Cor 2.2).[25]

Mark is similarly focused on the cross. He prescinds from describing resurrection appearances[26] because for him, as J. Christiaan Beker puts it, 'The cross . . . is itself both the judgment of the world, and the victory over the world.'[27] He shapes his narrative in such a way that it climaxes with the point of apocalyptic revelation at which a human being for the first time recognizes Jesus' divine sonship – which is precisely the moment of his death (15.39).[28] Furthermore, the continuing reality of Jesus' crucifixion for both Paul and Mark is expressed in a shared grammatical feature: both use the perfect passive participle ἐσταυρωμένον to remind their readers that the Risen Jesus continues to be the Crucified One (1 Cor 1.23; 2.2; Gal 3.1; Mark 16.6).

Yet both Paul and Mark recognize that another reaction to this revelation, one that rejects the folly of a Messiah 'crucified in weakness' (2 Cor 13.4), is not only possible but inevitable. Both writers acknowledge that the proclamation of a crucified Messiah is scandalous and contrary-to-sense because it calls on human beings to see God's eschatological power, life, and glory displayed in a scene of the starkest human weakness, degradation, and death. Paul forthrightly terms the content of his proclamation τσὸ σκάνδαλον τοῦ σταυροῦ ('the *scandal* of the cross': Gal 5.11; cf. 1 Cor 1.23), and by his addition to the Christ-hymn in Phil 2 of the phrase θανάτου δὲ σταυροῦ ('even death on a cross'), he highlights 'the unusual degree of suffering and humiliation that was bound up with this death',[29] which was considered to be a form of death appropriate only for slaves.[30] Furthermore, in a deliberately provocative way, Paul emphasizes that Jesus died a death cursed by the Law (Gal 3.13; cf. Deut 21.23), one 'declaring him to be unclean and outside the divine covenant.'[31]

Mark does not accentuate in the same direct way the violation of Torah

25 See Ernst Käsemann, 'The Saving Significance of the Death of Jesus in Paul', *Perspectives*, 59: 'The theology of the resurrection is a chapter in the theology of the cross, not the excelling of it.'

26 On the question of the Markan ending, see the works cited below, n. 41.

27 Beker, *Paul the Apostle*, 201.

28 See Black, 'Christ Crucified', 198 n. 48. As Black notes, at this point in their narratives both Matthew (27.54) and Luke (23.47) 'in different ways ease the Markan paradox that revelation is mediated through *concealment* (4.11–12, 21–25)'.

29 Käsemann, 'Significance', 36.

30 Black, 'Christ Crucified', 196 n. 44 appositely cites Cicero, *In Verrem* 2.5.66 (LCL 293:654–7), on the crucifixion of Gavius of Messana: 'He hung there [to] suffer the worst extremes of the tortures inflicted upon slaves. To bind a Roman citizen is a crime, to flog him is an abomination, to slay him is almost an act of murder: to crucify him is – what? There is no fitting word that can possibly describe so horrible a deed.'

31 Käsemann, 'Significance', 36.

involved in Jesus' manner of death, but he does something analogous when he has the Temple curtain rip apart at the moment of Jesus' decease, thus proleptically symbolizing the end of the central institution of Judaism (15.38). And in a way similar to Paul's accent on the humiliation of the θανάτου δὲ σταυροῦ, he greatly stresses the elements of torture (14.65; 15.15, 19–20), disgrace (14.65b; 15.24),[32] mockery (14.65a; 15.16–19), and God-forsakenness (15.34) in the crucifixion.[33] Both writers deliberately highlight these negative elements in Jesus' death and thus require from their readers, and intend to induce in them, the adoption of a new epistemology that sees the power of God to be revealed nowhere else than in this seemingly God-deserted landscape.[34]

Peculiar emphases

But are these emphases peculiar to Paul and Mark? Recall that Werner claims that, whenever the two agree, it is not a matter of special Pauline themes but of general early Christian viewpoints. But is that really the case?

It is of course a problem to try to compare Paul with his contemporaries. His are the earliest Christian writings, and we know of no others that can be dated with any confidence until we reach Mark. It is impossible, then, to determine with certainty the extent to which Paul's theology of the cross was controversial. Still, there *is* some indirect evidence that suggests that it was a matter of intense debate.

The first sort of indirect evidence is polemics in Paul's letters against opposing theological positions. This does indeed imply that Paul's cross-centred theology was controversial among Christians, at least in some localities. In the Corinthian correspondence, for example, passages such as 1 Cor 4.8–13 point to Paul's oppo-

32 In 14.65 even the *servants* (ὑπηρέται) abuse Jesus. In 15.24 he is stripped naked.

33 Beker, *Paul the Apostle*, 201 asserts that there is a contrast between Paul and Mark in that Paul is a theologian of the *death* of Jesus whereas Mark is a theologian of Jesus' *sufferings*. But Paul discusses Jesus' sufferings in two important passages (2 Cor 1.5–7; Phil 3.10), linking them both with Jesus' death and with the sufferings of Christians. And in Mark, on the other hand, the dramatic point of apocalyptic revelation is not Jesus' sufferings but his death. It is then that the world is symbolically exorcised in Jesus (φωνῇ μεγάλῃ), the Temple curtain is ripped apart, and the divine glory hidden behind it begins to flood the world; as a result of that effluence, a human being for the first term discerns Jesus' true identity as Son of God (15.37–9). On Jesus' death as an exorcism, see below on p. 486.

34 For Paul the divine wisdom of this paradoxical concept is hidden from 'the rulers of this age' who are responsible for crucifying Jesus (1 Cor 2.7–8). This is similar to the way in which, in Mark, the blinded populace and leaders who have driven Jesus to the cross join in mocking his powerlessness in terms that recall the sentence of imperception enunciated earlier in the Gospel (ἵνα ἴδωμεν καὶ πιστεύωμεν 15.32; cf. ἵνα βλέποντες βλέπωσιν καὶ μὴ ἴδωσιν, 4.12).

On Pauline and Markan epistemology, see Martyn, 'Epistemology at the Turn of the Ages', *Theological Issues*, 89–110; Marcus, 'Mark 4.10–12'; Black, 'Christ Crucified', 203.

nents as people who take their cues from the glory and strength of the resurrected Christ rather than from the lowliness and weakness of the Crucified One. In the same letter, Paul embraces the adjective 'fool' and the noun 'foolishness' – surely polemical terms that were hurled at him in disparagement by his Corinthian Christian opponents. And this he does in passages close to those in which he affirms the 'foolish' preaching about Christ crucified (1 Cor 4.10; 1.18, 23; cf. 2 Cor 11.1). This suggests that his cross-centred proclamation brought him into disrepute. Similarly, in Galatians Paul presents the preaching of the cross as intrinsically scandalous (Gal 5.11). And in Philippians he refers to 'enemies of the cross of Christ' (Phil 3.18), who are probably Christians.[35]

Another sort of indirect evidence for the controversial nature of Paul's theology of the cross is his apparent redaction of pre-Pauline traditions, such as the addition of θανάτου δὲ σταυροῦ to the Philippian hymn.[36] Of course, this sort of analysis is necessarily speculative, and some exaggerated claims have been made for it.[37] Still, it is significant that Paul's distinctive 'cross/crucify' terminology, though not overwhelmingly frequent in his letters,[38] is absent in the reconstructed pre-Pauline traditions and is usually used by him polemically.[39]

Certain aspects of Paul's thought on Jesus' death, therefore, do seem to set him apart from other contemporary Christians, and to have made some of them angry.

As for the question of Mark's distinctiveness, he is not alone among the Gospel writers in devoting attention to the passion and death of Jesus. All the others do the same. Furthermore, all the evangelists regard Jesus' death as the apocalyptic turning point, and Matthew even emphasizes this conception more dramatically than Mark by adding an earthquake and a series of resurrections to his death scene (Matt 27.51–3). But the other Gospels do not concentrate on the cross as single-mindedly as Mark does. Nor do they share to the same extent the Markan emphasis that this apocalyptic demonstration of divine power took place in an arena of stark human weakness.

35 Cf. Gordon Fee, *Paul's Letter to the Philippians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995) 366–75; Davorin Peterlin, *Paul's Letter to the Philippians in the Light of Disunity in the Church* (NovTSup 79; Leiden/New York/Köln: Brill, 1995) 76–100.

36 On this phrase as a Pauline addition to a pre-Pauline hymn, see Ralph P. Martin, *Carmen Christi: Philippians 2.5–11 in Recent Interpretation and in the Setting of Early Christian Worship* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983 [1967]), *passim*.

37 See for example Käsemann, 'Significance', 57, who contends that 'before Paul, the cross of Jesus formed the question which was answered by the message of the resurrection'. But earlier in the same article (p. 45) Käsemann contradicts this blanket assertion when he acknowledges that 'long before Paul, theological reflection and the liturgical creeds emphasize the death of Jesus as saving event'.

38 Rom 6.6; 1 Cor 1.17, 18; 2.2; 2 Cor 13.4; Gal 2.19; 3.1, 13; 5.11; 6.12, 14; Phil 2.8; 3.18.

39 See however the summary and careful qualifications of Charles B. Cousar, *A Theology of the Cross: The Death of Jesus in the Pauline Letters* (Overtures to Biblical Theology; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990) 21–4.

In none of the other Gospels, for example, is the revelation of Jesus' divine sonship to human beings withheld until the precise moment of his death by crucifixion.[40] Furthermore, all the other Gospel writers depart from Mark's concentration on the cross by describing resurrection appearances.[41] And Luke (but not Matthew) strikes from Mark 16.6 the perfect passive participle ἐσταυρωμένον, which suggests the continuing relevance of Jesus' crucifixion.

In their different ways, moreover, both Matthew and Luke attenuate the Markan emphasis on the weakness and abandonment experienced by Jesus in the passion narrative. In the Gethsemane scene, for example, Luke eliminates Jesus' depression entirely, while Matthew retains it but changes Mark's graphic ἐκθαμβεῖσθαι ('he became depressed', Mark 14.33) to the less colourful λυπεῖσθαι ('he became sad', 26.37). In Mark (followed by Matthew), Jesus seems overwhelmed at the threat of death and *falls* to the ground to pray; in Luke, by way of contrast, he *bends his knees* and prays in a dignified and exemplary manner (Luke 22.41). Luke spares Jesus both of the beating scenes that follow his two trials in Mark, and his Jesus tells the daughters of Jerusalem that they should weep for themselves rather than for him (Luke 23.27–31). Nor is he totally abandoned on the cross, mocked even by his fellow victims of capital punishment, as in Mark (and Matthew); one of the brigands crucified with him becomes his adherent (Luke 23.39–43). Most strikingly, in the death scene Luke changes Jesus' last cry from 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' to 'into your hands I commit my Spirit' (Luke 23.46).

Matthew is less radical in his retouching of Mark, but he still qualifies Mark's *theologia crucis* somewhat. In the scene of Jesus' arrest, for example, he introduces a saying in which Jesus stresses that he could if he wanted, even at this moment, escape arrest by appealing for heavenly intervention (Matt 26.53–4). Although he retains the cry of dereliction, there is still more of an element of control in his version of Jesus' decease than there is in Mark's; the Matthean Jesus *gives up* (ἀφῆκεν) his spirit (Matt 27.50), rather than simply expiring (ἐξέπνευσεν), as in Mark 15.37.[42] Matthew also dilutes the cross-centredness of the narrative by changing the motivation for the centurion's acclamation of Jesus' divine sonship from percep-

40 In Matthew Peter proclaims 'the Christ, the Son of the living God' at Caesarea Philippi (Matt 16.16); in John a similar acclamation happens even earlier, at Nathanael's first encounter with Jesus (John 1.49); and in Luke it is already revealed to Mary before Jesus' birth that he will be the Son of the Most High, the Son of God (Luke 1.32, 34).

41 I am assuming that Mark was originally intended to end at 16.8. On the question, see Andreas Lindemann, 'Die Osterbotschaft des Markus. Zur theologischen Interpretation von Mark 16.1–8', *NTS* 26 (1980) 298–317; J. Lee Magness, *Sense and Absence: Structure and Suspension in the Ending of Mark's Gospel* (SBLSS; Atlanta: Scholars, 1986).

42 In Mark, significantly, ἀφίημι is applied not to Jesus' spirit, as it is in Matthew, but to his death scream.

tion of Jesus' *death* to observation of the earthquake and the accompanying phenomena (Matt 27.54).

John has nothing like the Markan death scene either. Indeed, he goes in exactly the opposite direction, emphasizing that Jesus is in control all through the passion events.[43] In John, Jesus does not even give up the ghost until he has decided that 'all has been accomplished', and at the end he says 'I thirst' not so much because he is prey to this human emotion as in order to fulfil the scripture (John 19.28–30). One would be hard-pressed, then, to affirm of the Johannine Jesus, as one can affirm of the Markan one: μορφὴν δούλου λαβών ('he took the form of a slave': Phil 2.8).

Mark, then, *is* distinctive among the Gospel writers in his treatment of Jesus' suffering and death. And this distinctiveness overlaps with Paul's peculiar emphasis on the cross as the paradoxical instrument for the revelation of the apocalyptic power of God in a devastated landscape of human weakness and death.

Werner's Argument

Werner's main counter-argument is that Mark and Paul have a different conception of the *nature* of Jesus' saving death. Although both authors attest the idea that that death was a vicarious sacrifice for human sin (Mark 10.45; 14.24; Rom 3.25; 5.9; 1 Cor 5.7; 11.25; 15.3), according to Werner this idea is far more prominent in the thought of Mark than it is in that of Paul. Paul merely takes it up from tradition. The 'Kardinaldogma' of Paul is rather that Jesus' death represented his triumph over the demonic powers that were responsible for crucifying him (1 Cor 2.8).[44] This idea leaves absolutely no trace in Mark, despite the fact that it is strongly present in two of the other Gospels (Luke 22.3; John 6.70; 12.31; 13.2, 27; 14.30).

But both the Pauline and the Markan sides of this contrast are exaggerated. As far as Paul is concerned, it may well be that he takes up from tradition the idea of Christ's death as a vicarious sacrifice, but he *does* take it up, and relatively frequently. Why would Paul appropriate it so often if he disagreed with

43 See e.g. the way in which he 'floors' those who come to arrest him and arranges for his disciples' escape (John 18.6–9), his assertion to Pilate that he would not have been delivered if his kingdom were of 'this world' and that Pilate would have no power over him if it had not been given to him by God (18.36; 19.11), and his calm provision for the mutual care of his mother and the beloved disciple (19.26–7). See Donald Senior, *The Passion of Jesus in the Gospel of John* (Wilmington: Glazier, 1991), *passim*; Raymond E. Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: From Gethsemane to the Grave. A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels* (ABRL; New York: Doubleday, 1994) *passim*.

44 These emphases on the merely traditional nature of the notion of vicarious atonement in Paul and on Paul's greater interest in the idea of Jesus' death as an apocalyptic triumph anticipate two of the major themes of Käsemann, 'Significance'.

it?[45] Mark doubtless inherited the idea from tradition too, as is shown by its appearance in his Last Supper story (14.24). Here he is obviously using a tradition, as is shown by the parallel with 1 Cor 11.23–6. Moreover, Mark does not introduce the idea into the death scene itself,[46] where, as we have already seen, the same sort of apocalyptic context dominates as in Paul's letters.

Werner, moreover, exaggerates and distorts when he contrasts the supposed Pauline 'Kardinaldogma' of demonic responsibility for Jesus' death with the supposed Markan view that Jesus' human enemies were culpable. 1 Cor 2.8 is the only passage that Werner cites for the Pauline 'Kardinaldogma' of demonic responsibility for Jesus' death,[47] and he acknowledges that elsewhere Paul attributes Jesus' death to the enmity of human beings (for example, 1 Thess 2.15).[48] It may be true, as Werner claims, that Paul would have seen those human beings as the tools of the demons, but this is probably Mark's view as well. As James M. Robinson has shown in an important monograph, and as Susan Garrett's insightful recent study confirms, the evangelist portrays the human opposition to Jesus, which is visible for example in the controversy stories, as an extension of the cosmic opposition, which is visible especially in the temptation narrative (1.12–13) and the exorcisms.[49]

This intertwined demonic/human opposition culminates in Jesus' crucifixion. Mark probably means his readers to understand that the Jewish leaders' conspiracy to liquidate Jesus (3.6; 11.18) reflects the demons' fear that he will liquidate *them* (1.24); the verb ἀπολέσαι is used in both cases and resurfaces in the description of a demon's intention to destroy a human being in 9.22. Various features of the Markan passion narrative imply that the climax of this reciprocal hostility is Jesus' death. Mark portrays the latter as a scene of cosmic darkness (15.33), and

45 See Cousar, *Theology*, 16–18.

46 See Black, 'Christ Crucified', 200 n. 55.

47 Since Werner's subject is Paul, he does not mention Deutero-Pauline passages that have themes similar to the ones he is discussing. In the Deutero–Pauline (?) Colossians (2.14–15), Jesus triumphs over the 'principalities and powers' (ἀρχαὶ καὶ ἐξουσίαι) through the cross, whereas in Ephesians (1.21) he defeats them at his resurrection. In the authentically Pauline 1 Cor (15.24), however, the final defeat of the powers is reserved for the parousia. On the tension between Paul's different statements about the defeat of evil powers, see Martinus C. de Boer, *The Defeat of Death: Apocalyptic Eschatology in 1 Corinthians 15 and Romans 5* (JSNTSup, 22; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1988).

48 Indeed, many recent interpreters have asserted that 1 Cor 2.8 itself speaks of human beings rather than demonic powers as the culpable parties in Jesus' death, an exegesis that would destroy Werner's contrast totally; see e.g. Mario Pesce, *Paolo e gli arconti a Corinto. Storia della ricerca (1888–1975) ed esegi di I Cor 2,6–8* (Brescia: Paideia, 1977). But in a good review of Pesce, George B. Caird, *JTS* 29 (1978) 543–4, asserts that the passage has in view *both* human *and* demonic ἄρχοντες.

49 James M. Robinson, *The Problem of History in Mark and Other Marcan Studies* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982 [1957]) 91–4; Susan R. Garrett, *The Temptations of Jesus in Mark's Gospel* (Grand Rapids/Cambridge: Eerdman, 1998).

darkness suggests demonic powers elsewhere in the NT (e.g. Eph 6.12) and in Jewish sources (e.g. 1QS 3.15–4.26). Mark himself, moreover, links an apocalyptic darkening of the sun with the disturbance of cosmic (demonic?) powers in 13.24–25. And at the climax of the passion narrative Mark uses exactly the same phrase to describe Jesus' death scream (φωνὴ μεγάλη, 15.34, 37) as he has employed previously to describe the screams of demoniacs who are in the process of being exorcised (1.26; 5.7), thereby suggesting that Jesus' death is equivalent to an exorcism.[50]

Conclusion

Thus Werner fails in his attempt to drive a wedge between Paul and Mark on the subject of Jesus' death. Both portray the death of Jesus in similarly overlapping ways. It is at the same time a defeat of the devil, a vicarious sacrifice for human sins, and the beginning of the new age in a scene of humiliation, weakness, and death whose true significance is accessible only to those who have learned to see in a radically new manner.[51] Because some of these themes are especially prominent both in Paul and in Mark, the thesis that Paul influenced Mark receives important support from the comparison of the two authors' theology of the cross.

Let me conclude simply with a claim that I will not now try to substantiate in detail: a similar demonstration to the one I have just made could be constructed about other aspects of Pauline and Markan theology. Not everyone agreed with Paul that the Law was passé for Christians – but Mark did. And he even expressed this point in terms that are remarkably similar to those of Paul in Rom 14 (καθαρίζων πάντα τὰ βρώματα, Mark 7.19; compare πάντα μὲν καθαρά, Rom

50 In 1.26 the demon cries with a loud voice (φωνῇ μεγάλῃ) as it *comes out of* the demoniac; cf. 9.26.

51 On the complementarity of these different ways of describing the death of Jesus in Paul and in Mark respectively, see Cousar, *Theology, passim*; Garrett, *Temptations*, 104–15.

Black, 'Christ Crucified', 204 suggests that Mark portrays Christ's death in an even starker fashion than Paul does: 'So muted is God's presence in Mark 15 (N.B. 15.34) that, even with the passion predictions in Mark 8–10 but lacking Paul's more explicit treatment in 1 Corinthians 1–2, Christian theology would be hard-pressed to discern *God's* wisdom within the centurion's cryptic comment.' To the extent that this is true, it is a reason for concluding that Mark's Gospel presupposes Paul's preaching, not only on a canonical level (as Black argues) but historically as well, since it is unlikely that an ancient audience would have read Mark as a manifesto for nihilism. But Black's suggestion perhaps underplays the revelatory import of the events described in 15.37–9: Jesus *dies*, the curtain of the Temple is *ripped apart* – not only to symbolize the Temple's approaching destruction but also to enable the divine glory concealed behind the curtain to escape – and as the initial effect of that illumination, a human being for the first time in the Gospel realizes Jesus' divine sonship.

14.20).[52] Not everyone was as negative as Paul about Peter and Jesus' family – but Mark was. And only Mark among the NT writers gives to one of his stories, that of the Syrophoenician woman, an interpretation that echoes Paul's formula 'to the Jew first, but also to the Gentiles'.[53]

If these are coincidences, they are amazing coincidences. If not – and I think not – they provide further evidence of Pauline influence on Mark.

52 See Räisänen, 'Jesus'.

53 As Sharyn Dowd pointed out at the SBL meeting in Orlando, November 1998, where I delivered a version of this study, both Paul and Mark also *undermine* this 'to the Jew first' scheme. Paul qualifies it by his olive tree metaphor, in which Jewish branches are cut off from the *heilsgeschichtlich* tree in order for Gentile branches to be grafted in, so that in the end the Jewish branches may be grafted back in also; thus, in a sense, the Gentiles precede the Jews into the kingdom, although *in principle* the Jews come first. Similarly, in Mark the Syrophoenician woman's reply in 7.28, although in principle accepting the idea of Jewish priority ('Yes, Lord . . .'), ends up asserting the *simultaneity* of Jewish and Gentile 'feeding'. The parable of the vineyard in 12.1–9 undermines the notion of Jewish priority even more radically; see Joel Marcus, 'The Intertextual Polemic of the Markan Vineyard Parable', in *Tolerance and Intolerance in Early Judaism and Christianity* (ed. Graham N. Stanton and Guy G. Stroumsa; Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1998) 211–27.