

CARL N. TONEY

Paul's Inclusive Ethic

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Paul's Inclusive Ethic

Resolving Community Conflicts
and Promoting Mission in Romans 14–15

Mohr Siebeck

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For Lisa

Preface

This monograph represents an adaptation of my doctoral dissertation, which was accepted by Loyola University Chicago in August 2007. I have made a few changes and included some works published since then. I would like to thank my Professors, especially my supervisor, Dr. Thomas Tobin, for providing his scholarly expertise and for sparking my interest in this topic. I also wish to thank both readers, Dr. Urban von Wahlde and Dr. Pauline Viviano, for their added insights. In addition, I would like to express my appreciation to the many Professors who shaped my scholarship throughout the years including Dr. Colin Brown, Dr. Donald Hagner, Dr. Ralph P. Martin, Dr. Marianne Meye Thompson, and the late Dr. David Scholer. In regards to the publication of this study in *Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2*, I am grateful to the series editors Professors Dr. Jörg Frey and Dr. Hans-Josef Klauck as well as to Dr. Henning Ziebritzki and the staff of Mohr Siebeck.

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August 2008

Carl N. Toney

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Chapter 1

Survey of Scholarship

Introduction

Scholars investigating Romans often have turned their attention toward Rom 1–11 rather than Rom 12–16.¹ Although flawed, the groundbreaking work of Paul Minear's *Obedience of Faith* helped to remind modern scholarship of the importance of Rom 14–15 as he used these chapters to reinterpret the rest of the letter.² Since Minear, monographs and dissertations continue to be generated on these chapters indicating a fertile interest in Rom 14–15;³ however, most studies focus upon Paul's aims in address-

¹ The following examples give the average pages per chapter where the first number is the average from Rom 1–11 and the second number is the average from Rom 14–16: 29 pp. vs. 20 pp. in Brenden Byrne, *Romans*, SP 6 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1996); 18 pp. vs. 9.5 pp. in Philip Esler, *Conflict and Identity in Romans: the Social Setting of Paul's Letter* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2003); 37 pp. vs. 30 pp. in Joseph Fitzmyer, *Romans: a New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 33 (New York: Doubleday, 1993); 7.5 pp. vs. 4.5 pp. in D. Hans Lietzmann, *Eingührung in die Textgeschichte der Paulusbrieve an die Römer*, 5th ed., HNT 8 (Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1971); 23 pp. vs. 16.5 pp. in Alphonse Maillot, *L'Épître aux Romains: épître de l'écuménisme et théologie de l'histoire* (Paris: Le Centurion, 1984); 64 pp. vs. 40 pp. in Douglas Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996); 31 pp. vs. 22 pp. in Dierk Starnitzke, *Die Struktur paulinischen Denkens im Römerbrief: Eine linguistisch-logische Untersuchung*, BWANT 163 (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 2004); 25 pp. vs. 6.5 pp. in Thomas Tobin, *Paul's Rhetoric in Its Contexts: the Argument of Romans* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2004); 12 pp. vs. 2 pp. in Stephen Westerholm, *Understanding Paul: the Early Christian Worldview of the Letter to Romans*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2004); 50 pp. vs. 24 pp. in Ulrich Wilckens, *Der Brief an die Römer*, 3 vols., EKK (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1978, 1982, 1993).

² Paul Minear, *The Obedience of Faith: the Purpose of Paul in the Epistle to the Romans*, SBTSS 19 (Naperville, IL: SCM Press, 1971). Recently Esler (*Conflicts and Identity*, 339) made a similar assessment. Minear is evaluated below.

³ A. Andrew Das, *Solving the Romans Debate* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007); Mark Reasoner, *Strong and Weak*, SNTSMS 103 (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1999); Volker Gäckle, *Die Starken und die Schwachen in Korinth und in Rom: zu Herkunft und Funktion der Antithese in 1 Kor 8,1–11,1 und in Röm 14,1–15,13*, WUNT 2/200 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004); Robert Bruce Magee, "A Rhetorical Analysis of First Corinthians 8:1–11:1 and Romans 14:1–15:13" (Ph.D. diss., New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 1988); Theodore Irl Zimmerman, "The Weak and the Strong: a

ing internal divisions within the Roman Christian community. Such studies include considering Rom 14–15 as a hypothetical construct (e.g., Robert Karris, Bruce Robert Magee)⁴ or understanding the weak and the strong in light of Greco-Roman philosophical categories (e.g., Stanley Stowers)⁵ or interpreting these chapters based on Jewish categories (e.g., Alphonse Maillot, J. D. G. Dunn).⁶ Of these choices, this study will argue for Jewish categories being behind the issues presented in Rom 14–15.⁷ Only a few scholars have attempted also to take into account external issues (e.g., Mark Nanos, John Barclay, Robert Jewett),⁸ and this study seeks to turn scholarly attention towards the important discussion of the external aims of Paul’s advice.

Further, this monograph is concerned with addressing how both the external and internal aims of Paul’s advice center on ethnic concerns in terms of the relationship between Jews and Gentiles in Rome. In the past, Mark Nanos’ work has been particularly helpful in generating dialogue about ethnic concerns. These ethnic concerns are highlighted especially when Romans is contrasted with Galatians, and questions are raised. Why does Paul in Galatians strongly discourage the Gentiles from following Jewish practices, while in Romans he encourages the Gentiles sometimes to follow Jewish practices? The answer may lie in understanding the importance for Paul of the freedom of the gospel. In Galatians, Paul defends the Gentile Christians’ freedom to maintain their ethnic identity as Gentiles by not being required to follow the Law. In Romans, Paul defends the Jewish

Study of Romans 14:1–15:13” (Ph.D. diss., Luther Seminary, 1994). These works are evaluated below.

⁴ For an analysis of these scholars, see below. Such studies are built upon the work of William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, ICC (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1911). Bruce Robert Magee, “A Rhetorical Analysis”; Robert Karris, “Romans 14:1–15:13 and the Occasion of Romans,” in *The Romans Debate*, rev. ed., ed. Karl Donfried (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991), 67–70.

⁵ See below for a critique of those scholars whose investigations are indebted to the thesis of Max Rauer, *Die “Schwachen” in Korinth und Rom, nach den Paulusbriefen* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1923). Stanley Stowers, *A Rereading of Romans: Justice, Jews, and Gentiles* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1994), 321–22.

⁶ For an evaluation of their works, see below. Maillot, *Romains*; J. D. G. Dunn, *Romans*, 2 vols., WBC 38A, 38B (Dallas: Word Books, 1988).

⁷ This will be argued in chapter two.

⁸ Each of these scholars is evaluated below. Minear, *Obedience of Faith*, 9. John M. G. Barclay, “Do We Undermine the Law?: A Study of Romans 14.1–15.6,” in *Paul and the Mosaic Law: The Third Durham-Tübingen Research Symposium on Earliest Christianity and Judaism* (Durham, September, 1994), ed. J. D. G. Dunn (Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1996), 287–308. Mark Nanos, *The Mystery of Romans: the Jewish Context of Paul’s Letter* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996); Robert Jewett, *Romans*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006).

Christians' freedom to maintain their ethnic identity as Jews by following the Law. Indeed, Paul gives different answers to different questions. It will be argued that these pluralistic answers are founded in Paul's inclusive ethic⁹ for uniting Jews and Gentiles because of their common identity as the people of God (not the church, not Israel). This inclusive ethic has the potential for generating further questions (which move beyond this study) about what a Jewish and Christian dialogue should look like today.

These above interests led to the primary goal of this monograph, which involves emphasizing how Paul's inclusive ethic in Rom 14–15 reflects a concern for internal unity in the Roman community and serves to promote an outward concern for mission among unbelieving Jews and Gentiles. The investigation of these combined internal and external concerns will involve surveying past scholarship (chapter one), rooting the issues presented in Rom 14–15 in Jewish concerns (chapter two), examining the arguments of Rom 14–15 (chapter three), grounding Paul's counsel in Rom 14–15 with Paul's concerns for Israel in Rom 11 (chapter four), and looking at the connection of Rom 14–15 to Paul's advice for accommodating behavior in 1 Cor 8–10 (chapter five). With these preliminary thoughts in mind, let us first turn to a survey of scholarship on Rom 14–15 noting each scholar's challenges and contributions to the interpretation of these chapters.

1. Traditional Scholars

Traditional interpretations typically define the “weak” and “strong” as Jewish and Gentile Christians who are divided over certain practices rooted in the Mosaic Law.¹⁰ The weak are Jewish believers whose weak

⁹ It should be noted that Jewett also presents an inclusive ethic; however, his Romans commentary focuses upon Paul's Spanish mission and teaching the Romans to include the Barbarians while this study focuses upon Jewish and Gentile relationships.

¹⁰ Examples include: Origen, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans: Books 6–10*, trans. Thomas P. Scheck (Washington, DC: Catholic Univ. of America Press, 2002). Origen's commentary has only survived in the form of Rufinus' Latin translation and abridgment (fifteen volumes reduced to ten); John Chrysostom, “Homily XXV” and “Homily XXVI,” in *The Homilies of St. John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople, on the Epistle of St. Paul the Apostle to the Romans*, 3rd ed. with rev. trans. (Oxford: James Parker and Co. and Rivingtons, 1877); Augustine, *Propositions from the Epistle to the Romans: Unfinished Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, trans. Paula Fredriksen Landes, Texts and Translations 23, Early Christian Literature Series 6 (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1982); Martin Luther, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. Theodore Mueller (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1954); Martin Luther, *Lectures on Romans*, trans. Wilhelm Pauck, LCC Vol. XV (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961); John Calvin, *Romans and Thessalonians*, trans. T. H. L. Parker, Calvin's NT Commentaries 8 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995).

faith causes them to still follow Jewish food practices and observe special days such as the Sabbath. The strong are Gentiles who do not follow these practices. Paul advises the weak to stop judging the strong and the strong to bear with the faults of the weak. Paul's advice is intended to promote peace and unity among believers. Of these early exegetes, Origen (*Comm. Rom.* 9.36.1–2) is significant because he is the first to note that the core difficulty in identifying the issues as being rooted in the Mosaic Law is that the Mosaic Law does not demand vegetarianism (Origen's *crux*).¹¹ In addition, John Chrysostom helpfully highlights the importance of using rhetoric for understanding Paul's purposes in Rom 14–15 as well as the labels of “weak” and “strong.”¹² Further, Augustine notes Paul's emphasis on unity and love as well as seeing a relationship between Rom 14–15 and 1 Cor 8–11.¹³ Jumping further ahead, Martin Luther is also significant for incorrectly associating the practices of the weak with legalism.¹⁴ As we shall see in our survey, future scholars will continue to interact with these issues and observations.

2. Early Modern Scholars

2.1 William Sanday and Arthur Headlam (1902)

Challenges to the traditional interpretations of the strong and weak begin arising with scholars using historical-critical methods. One of the first commentaries to employ these methods and to arrive at an alternative interpretation of Rom 14–15 is the *Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* written by William Sanday and Arthur Headlam. According to Sanday and Headlam, the weak and strong are not Jewish and Gentile Christians divided over the Mosaic Law because Paul's examples of vegetarianism and wine abstinence have nothing to do with typical Jewish practices (Origen's *crux*).¹⁵ Instead, the terms “strong” and “weak”

¹¹ “Origen's *crux*” is my term describing the problem involved in a Jewish interpretation of these issues. Origen's (*Comm. Rom.* 9.36.1–2; 9.38.1) solution is to see this problem as a clue that allegorical interpretation is also necessary. Thus, vegetarianism stands for the weak group's inability to understand God's word, while eating all food represents the strong group's ability to understand the word. Further, observing “all days” stands for the ability of those who are strong to understand every chapter of scripture.

¹² Chrysostom, *Homilies*, 417. Paul uses “weak” as a negative label and “strong” as a positive label. Chrysostom has the interesting view that Paul is really only addressing the weak in an attempt to persuade them to change their habits.

¹³ Augustine, *Romans*, 45, 49.

¹⁴ E.g., Luther, *Commentary on Romans*, 194–96.

¹⁵ Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 400.

refer to general, hypothetical characteristics. Paul refers to the strong as those who fully understand the freedom found in salvation by faith.¹⁶ Strong Christians know their freedom but voluntarily submit to church rules out of respect for authority and the value of external discipline. The strong are guided by the Spirit and follow what their “mind” (νοῦς) says is correct.¹⁷ Paul refers to the weak as those who have an inadequate understanding of salvation by faith (echos of Luther), and those who “make this salvation more certain by the scrupulous fulfillment of formal rules.”¹⁸ Rom 14–15 is written as general advice using the terms “strong” and “weak” to illustrate the need to lay aside differences in indifferent matters because the salvation of the individual and community’s peace and unity must be preserved.¹⁹ Christian love demands the consideration of other’s feelings and consciences.²⁰ Paul writes to the Romans these general principles in light of his past experiences in Galatia and Corinth because such controversies may someday arise in the Roman community.²¹

Sanday and Headlam are important because they write the first commentary to make a radical departure from traditional views. Their skepticism of traditional views will be picked up by future scholars (e.g., Dodd, Karris) as we shall see below. Their skepticism will also issue a challenge to other scholars (e.g., Marxsen, Dunn, Barclay, Reasoner) to find additional evidence to help root Rom 14–15 in a historical situation. The key problem with their view is that it fails to explain why Paul would add the *details* of vegetarianism and observance of days in Rom 14–15 if he is generalizing his advice from 1 Cor 8–10 concerning idol-food. This study intends to meet their skepticism by attending to the positions taken by Dunn and Barclay who more adequately ground Rom 14–15 in its historical context.

2.2 Max Rauer (1929)

Max Rauer’s *Die “Schwachen” in Korinth und Rom, nach den Paulus-briefen* is the first major work to focus on the issues of the strong and weak in both Rome and Corinth. In addition, this work provides the foundation (either directly or indirectly) for future scholars who argue that the weak are Gentile Christians whose abstinence of meat derives from their Greco-Roman backgrounds. Rauer argues that the weak are individual Gentile Christians whose abstinence from meat derives from their conversion from

¹⁶ Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 384.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 387.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 384.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 384, 386, 402–3.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 390.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 401.

Gnostic, Hellenistic mystery religions.²² Thus he writes, “Die römischen ‚Schwachen‘ waren heidnische Gnostiker, bevor sie Christen wurden” (“The Roman ‘weak’ were Hellenistic Gnostics before they were Christians”).²³

Against the traditional view, Rauer argues that the weak are not Jews, nor anyone concerned with the Mosaic Law, since the Law never commands vegetarianism (Origen’s *crux*).²⁴ Further, while Jews were known to shun Gentile meat out of concerns for purity (Dan 1:8, 12; Tobit 1:11; 1 Macc 1:65; 2 Macc 5:27; Josephus, *Vita* 14), there would be an available supply of clean meat in Rome.²⁵ Also, Rauer compares Paul’s harsh treatment of people following Jewish practices in Galatians and Colossians with the mild tone in Romans and concludes that Paul is not dealing with issues deriving from Jewish concerns.²⁶

Instead, Rauer looks to Greco-Roman backgrounds by noting that vegetarianism as a form of asceticism was widespread in the Greco-Roman world citing the Orphics (6th cent. BCE) who refused to kill animals and eat their flesh (Plato, *Leg.* 6.782c). He also provides several references to the Neo-Pythagoreans who were influenced by the Orphics. Diogenes Laertius (8.38) refers to Aristopho’s mockery of the Pythagoreans because they were careful only to consume herbs, vegetables, and water but still had poor hygiene. Philostratus (*Vit. Apoll.* 1.8; cf. 8.7.4) relates how Apollonius of Tyana renounced meat to become a disciple of Pythagoras. Seneca (*Ep.* 108) mentions the Pythagorean principle of abstinence from meat because animals have a soul. Plutarch (*De esu*) mentions Pythagoras’ vegetarianism and advises moderation in eating to curb vice. Porphyry (*Abst.* 4) provides a survey of ancient ascetics including Pythagoras, Egyptians, and Indians. This Gentile asceticism was motivated by dualistic concerns where the goal was the release of the soul from the body.²⁷

Rauer uses this survey of Gentile practices to argue that the weak are Gentile Christians who *formerly* practiced similar ascetic behavior. While they were once Gnostics, they are no longer Gnostics. Nonetheless, they are not able to free themselves entirely from their past convictions. Thus, their faith is determined to be weak. They continue a modified form of their past behavior because they believed their Christian piety should ex-

²² Rauer, *Die “Schwachen,”* 88, 95, 164–68, 184–85.

²³ *Ibid.*, 164.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 129–38.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 126.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 135. While Pauline authorship of Colossians is disputed, Rauer’s use reflects an assumption of Pauline authorship.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 148–51, 152–54, 161. Other examples include Diogenes Laertius 8.33; Porphyry, *Abst.* 4.18; Alexander Polyhistor, *Roma frag.* 48; Herodotus, *Hist.* 2.40.

ceed their former religious piety.²⁸ The slogan “nothing is unclean of itself” (οὐδὲν κοινὸν δι’ ἑαυτοῦ) is derived from their dualistic past.²⁹ However, instead of their former dualistic reasons, they now practice asceticism from an eschatological hope for a return of humanity to the days before Noah (Gen 9:1–3).³⁰ Paul knows that they have good intentions and is afraid of their renewed apostasy if the community continues to shun them, so he advises tolerance without approving of their views.³¹

Rauer sees an analogy between Rom 14–15 and 1 Cor 8–10 because both Rom 14–15 and 1 Cor 8–10 deal with issues surrounding former Gentile practices.³² In Romans, Paul probably gives them the label “weak” because of their similarity with those in Corinth, and through this word, he is judging them.³³ However, Rauer disagrees with Sanday and Headlam by noting that Romans is dealing with a unique historical situation³⁴ and that there are more differences than similarities between the two letters.³⁵ In 1 Corinthians the issue primarily centers on meat sacrificed to idols and fear of demonic activity, while in Romans the issues center on a modified form of ascetic piety derived from Hellenistic Mystery Religions.³⁶

Rauer (like Sanday and Headlam) is important because he expands the possible range of interpretations for Rom 14–15, and all subsequent scholarship must acknowledge and explain the ascetic practices found in the Gentile world. His view influences most scholars who include some form of Greco-Roman backgrounds behind Rom 14–15 (e.g., Dodd, Lietzmann, Barrett, Huby, Käsemann). Rauer also points the way for other scholars (Stowers, Reasoner) to look into the philosophical literature for explanations behind the concepts of strength and weakness. In addition, Rauer spurs other scholars (Marxsen, Dunn, Barclay) to find stronger proof for the issues having Jewish origins. However, as we shall see in chapter two, Rauer’s view fails to explain adequately Paul’s use of “unclean” (κοινός, Rom 14:14) and “clean” (καθαρός, Rom 14:20) which appear to be rooted in concepts of Jewish purity concerns. In addition, his view now suffers

²⁸ Rauer, *Die “Schwachen,”* 90, 92–93, 165–68, 184–85.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 165–66.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 166–68.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 185.

³² *Ibid.*, 76–78.

³³ *Ibid.*, 89. Both Chrysostom (*Homilies*, 417) and Calvin (*Romans*, 497–98) also think that Paul uses this label negatively.

³⁴ Rauer (*Die “Schwachen,”* 76–78) who writes “Die Grundlage der Untersuchung muß also sein: Paulus bespricht tatsächliche Verhältnisse in Rom, und zwar in objektiv richtiger Darstellung” (“The base of the investigation must be thus: Paul discusses actual conditions in Rome, and to be sure, in an objectively correct representation” [78]).

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 122–25.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 184–85.

from what current scholars would consider to be outmoded models of Gnosticism.³⁷

2.3 C. H. Dodd (1932)

In *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans* C. H. Dodd reflects the skepticism of Sanday and Headlam as well as by the arguments of Rauer concerning the Greco-Roman backgrounds. Dodd's skepticism is seen when he writes,

From the epistle itself we can learn little about the Roman church. Unlike other epistles, it has no particular reference to the internal conditions of the church to which it is addressed, and Paul has no direct acquaintance with them. All that we can legitimately *infer* is that, like most churches outside Palestine, it was a mixture of Jewish and Gentile membership...³⁸

Yet Dodd is not satisfied with such a general description of the weak and strong, so he chooses to infer what issues are dividing the community.³⁹ Like the traditional view, Dodd identifies the Jewish elements by noting that only the Jews would practice Sabbatarianism because the Gentiles ridiculed it. However, under the influence of Rauer, Dodd notes that vegetarianism could involve both Jews and Gentiles, since it was practiced by Orphics, Pythagoreans, Essenes, and James the brother of Jesus.⁴⁰ Further, for Christians, abstaining from meat may have been due to avoidance of idol-meat (cf. 1 Cor 10:25). Dodd also notes that Christian conduct is guided by conscience as well as the principle of love. Romans 14:1–12 deals with the importance of reasonable convictions. Romans 14:13–15:6 relates these convictions to the duty of Christian love. Convictions must be before God.⁴¹ The Christian lives under the “Reign of God” and lives in the Spirit.⁴² Conflicts generated by different views regarding the Sabbath and vegetarianism can be resolved if both parties remember Christ's example. Paul's aim is to strengthen the weak in faith, so that they eventually come to the position of the strong.⁴³ Dodd's view shows how the views of Sanday and Headlam as well as Rauer began to influence English scholar-

³⁷ This outmoded Gnostic model does not adequately take into account key Gnostic characteristics such as the creation myth or the Gnostic gods (e.g., Dunn, *Romans*, 2.818; Hans-Josef Klauck *1. Korintherbrief*, NEchtB 7 [Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1984], 8; Reasoner, *Strong and Weak*, 97–101). See also the critique of Nélío Schneider, *Die “Schwachen” in der christlichen Gemeinde Roms* (Münster: Lit, 1996).

³⁸ C. H. Dodd, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans*, MNTC 6 (New York: Harper and Bros., 1932), xxviii, italics mine.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 212, 214.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 212.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 212, 214–15.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 217–18.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 218–20.

ship. However, Dodd's view suffers from the same flaws as their works, such as not taking an adequate account the differences between 1 Cor 8–10 and Rom 14–15 (Sanday and Headlam) and not adequately explaining Paul's use of clean and unclean (Rauer).

2.4 D. Hans Lietzmann (1933)

The eminent D. Hans Lietzmann in his *Einführung in die Textgeschichte der Paulusbriefe an die Römer* provides an example of a German scholar who is influenced by Rauer's work. Lietzmann sees Paul addressing the strong who are the majority of Christians in Rome. On the one hand, the weak's practices of vegetarianism and wine abstinence cannot be linked to any particular background because asceticism was widespread in the Greco-Roman world and not particular to Judaism (e.g., Philostratus, *Vit. Apoll.* 1.8; Diogenes Laertius 8.38; Ps. Apuleius; Philo, *Contempl.* 37; Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 2.23.5; Epiphanius 30.15.3; *Hom. Clem.* 8.15; 12.6; Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.28). On the other hand, the observance of days are connected with the Sabbath and fast days of Mondays and Thursdays because of parallels with Col 2:16 and Gal 4:10 (cf. *Did.* 8).⁴⁴ Thus, Lietzmann sees a mixture of issues deriving from an assortment of Jewish and Gentile backgrounds. Unfortunately, Lietzmann does not add anything new to Rauer's argument and fails to explicate how Greco-Roman backgrounds could explain Paul's use of clean and unclean.

2.5 Adolf von Schlatter (1935 [English 1995])

Adolf von Schlatter in *Gottes Gerechtigkeit* (Eng. trans: *Romans: the Righteousness of God*) proposes several possibilities for the origins of the practices revolving around days and food. The issue of days could be Jewish Sabbaths and holy days or beginning to worship on Sundays.⁴⁵ Four proposals are given regarding the issue of food practices. First, the abstinence from meat and wine could be meant to discipline the body from sinful desires (similar to Chrysostom). Second, this could be a fast of sorrow for unbelieving Jews. He compared the weak's actions with some Pharisees who reportedly fasted from meat and wine after the destruction of the Temple (*t. Sotah* 15.11–15). Third, they could be abstaining from meat sacrificed to idols as in Corinthians (like Augustine). Fourth, the issue could also involve asceticism as in Greek religions (like Rauer).⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Lietzmann, *Paulusbriefe*, 114–15. While Pauline authorship of Colossians is disputed, Lietzmann's use here appears to reflect an assumption of Pauline authorship.

⁴⁵ Adolf von Schlatter, *Romans: the Righteousness of God*, trans. Siegfried Schatzmann (Peabody, MA: Hendrikson, 1995), 254–55.

⁴⁶ Schlatter, *Romans*, 251–53. See too, Chrysostom, *Homilies*, 419; Augustine, *Romans*, 45; Rauer, *Die "Schwachen,"* 148–51, 152–54, 161.

While he is unsure of the origins for abstaining from food or distinguishing days, he is confident that it is grounded in a historical situation in Rome (*pace* Sanday and Headlam) to which Paul is responding because of the unique reference to “eating only vegetables.”⁴⁷ Yet he also notes that both Galatia and Corinth involved situations where it was difficult to observe the common meal together.⁴⁸ Ultimately, he favors concerns over idol-meat.⁴⁹ Reading this passage with a Lutheran hermeneutic, he sees Paul combating issues of legalism and offering advice that is intended to avoid legalistic demands on either party.⁵⁰ Paul’s solution involves placing the strong and weak side by side to protect each group from the attacks of the other. “The basis and security of their fellowship rests in the fact that both are the Lord’s and both live for him.”⁵¹ The goal is the unity of the community.⁵² Schlatter contributes to the discussion of Rom 14–15 with his two fasting proposals, although he even fails to convince himself since he ultimately favors concerns over idol-meat. Further, his shotgun proposals illustrate the fragmented nature of early modern scholarship.

2.6 C. K. Barrett (1957)

C. K. Barrett in his *The Epistle to the Romans* is an example of a scholar who mixes the Lutheran position of faith versus works with the skepticism of Sanday and Headlam and the Greco-Roman backgrounds of Rauer. While the strong and weak may primarily be Gentile and Jewish Christians respectively, Paul’s distinction is not clearly along ethnic lines alone. Instead, Paul focuses upon beliefs and practices. Yet, even the specific views of these two groups are obscure. Like Rauer, Barrett objects that while Jews would abstain from meat and wine if they had an uncertain origin, the large Jewish population in Rome would make properly butchered meat accessible. Further, while Gentiles may follow certain ascetic food practices, there was no connection to observance of days.⁵³ Although Barrett occasionally cites parallels to 1 Cor 8–10, he sees Rom 14–15 as a distinct occasion.⁵⁴ His conclusion is that the heretics whom Paul will

⁴⁷ Schlatter, *Romans*, 251, 254, 249–50.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 249–50.

⁴⁹ Schlatter (*Romans*, 259) writes, “Since Paul here also mentions wine along with meat, he has in mind those who wanted to guard against any participation in pagan sacrifice by means of their continence.”

⁵⁰ Schlatter (*Romans*, 249) writes, “The return of the law would have destroyed the community because it would no longer be based on faith.”

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 256.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 253, 260.

⁵³ C. K. Barrett, *The Epistle to the Romans*, HNTC (New York: Harper & Row, 1957), 256.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 258.