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**THYATEIRA**

*A Festschrift*

For

**Archbishop Methodios**  
of Thyateira and Great Britain

*General Editor*

**DR. GEORGE DION. DRAGAS**

**1985**

**THYATEIRA HOUSE**

London W. 2

*A Festschrift*

In Honour of Archbishop METHODIOS of Thyateira and Great Britain, (1985).

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# THE "RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD" AND THE "ECONOMY OF GOD": TWO GREAT DOCTRINAL THEMES HISTORICALLY COMPARED

By

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It was a challenge from Archbishop Methodios himself that led to what is undertaken here, however imperfectly and in an initial way, a comparison and contrast of two great themes in theology. For he remarked, upon a visit in London in August of 1983, when presented with a volume from the United States Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue on Righteousness Justification<sup>1</sup>, and with long awareness of my interest in the varied meanings of *oikonomia* in Greek thought, "You must write about these two great themes in theology, justification and the economy of God."

Happily these themes span years of contact from Aksum to Thyateira, for it was a letter from Addis Ababa in 1976 that first introduced me to the church leader honored in this scholarly volume and whose friendship and services to theological learning I delight in saluting. For the then Metropolitan of Aksum had, in far-off Ethiopia, procured a copy of my dissertation, microfilmed, written in classical studies at an American University, and his alert eye determined that it was important enough, on "The Use of *Oikonomia* and Related Terms", to be published in full in instalments under his editorship<sup>2</sup>.

It was after he was translated to the Archdiocese of Thyateira and Great Britain that we finally met, and his gracious remark encouraged me to tackle two themes that have often been discussed but seldom together, the one all too frequently only in Eastern theology and the other only in the West. I was challenged to tackle them together, even in their magnitude.

It is not too often that one can, in writing for a Festschrift, deal with matters dear to one's own heart and career, while also taking up themes of interest to the person being honored. But the Greek word *oikonomia* has been a subject of professional investigation and personal interest ever since I puzzled over how to render it as a graduate student reading Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, and other of the church fathers. Over the years it has been possible to publish modestly on New Testament and some patristic applications, as well as, in a dissertation, deal with backgrounds in classical sources that may explain some of the twists and turns in usage during the Christian centuries<sup>3</sup>. As for righteousness/justification, there has been a scholarly love affair with that

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1. J. Reumann, "Righteousness" in the New Testament: "Justification" in the United States Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue, with responses by Joseph A. Fitzmyer and Jerome D. Quinn (Philadelphia: Fortress, New York: Paulist, 1982). The material in this volume was presented to the dialogue in 1980-81 as part of its seventh round of discussion, on Justification 1979-83).

2. "The Use of *Oikonomia* and Related Terms in Greek Sources to about A.D. 100 as a Background for Patristic Applications" (Ph. D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1957; Ann Arbor, Mich.: University Microfilms, 1957). Published as follows, to date: *Ekklesiastikos Pharos* (hereafter *E Ph*) 60, 3-4 (1978): 482-579, preface, and Part I. Previous Studies on the Topic; summary in *New Testament Abstracts* (hereafter *NTA*) 23, 3: 771.

"Part II. The Evidence: 1. *Oikonomia* and its Related Terms in the Sense of Household Management". *E Ph* 61, 1-4 (1979): 563-603; *NTA* 24, 1: 31.

"Part II. The Evidence: 2. *Oikonomia* and its Related Terms Applied to a Larger Household, in the State. "Ekklesia kai Theologia/Church and Theology (hereafter *EkT*) 1 (1980): 368-430; *NTA* 26,2: 418.

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"(Part II. The Evidence:) 3. *Oikonomia* and its Related Terms Applied to Arrangement Generally". *EkT* 2 (1981): 591-617; *NTA* 26,2: 418.

"(Part II. The Evidence: 3.) (cont.), Applications in Rhetoric, Ethical 'Arrangement' of Conduct". *EkT* 3 (1982): 115-40; *NTA* 28,2: 445.

To be published: "4. *Oikonomia* and its Related Terms Applied to the Largest 'Household', the Universe", and "Part III. Results".

3. In addition to the dissertation cited in n. 2, see "Stewards of God" - Pre-Christian Religious Application of *oikonomos* in Greek", *JBL* 77 (1958): 339-49; "OIKONOMIA = 'Covenant'; Terms for Heilsgeschichte in Early Christian Usage," *NovT* 3 (1959): 282-92; "*Oikonomia* as 'Ethical Accommodation' in the Fathers, and its Pagan Backgrounds," *Studia Patristica* III, ed. F.L. Cross (TU 78; Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1961): 370-79; "*Oikonomia*-Terms in Paul in Comparison with Lucan Heilsgeschichte," *NTS* 13 (1966-67): 147-67; "Heilsgeschichte in Luke: Some Remarks on its Background and Comparison with Paul," *Studia Evangelica* IV, ed. F. L. Cross (TU 102; Berlin; Akademie-Verlag, 1968): 86-115.

theme over twenty years. It has been possible to touch on it in the Weber lectures in 1964<sup>4</sup>, in a book on approaches to social justice from the contrasting theological bases found in the Second Vatican Council, the World Council of Churches in 1966, and in what Reformation Christians at their best might hope for<sup>5</sup>. Finally, ecumenically, it has recently been my task to take up every passage in the New Testament using terms from the root *dikaio-* in Greek, in the process of ecumenical dialogue<sup>6</sup>.

Neither of these two themes, of course, directly concerns that topic of "the person of Jesus Christ" on which Methodios G. Fouyas has especially written<sup>7</sup>, though each one does give us an occasionally used title in Christology: *Iesoun Christon dikaiion* (1 John 2: 1), Jesus is "the Righteous One" (Acts 3:14, 7:52, 22:14; 1 Peter 3: 18; more rarely and chiefly in the church fathers, Jesus as Steward or Manager (*oikonomos*)<sup>8</sup>. Yet in that *oikonomia* can denote the Incarnation and God's whole plan of salvation in Christ

4. "Justification: The Justification of the Unjust-Righteousness and Eschatology; The Justification of God -Righteousness and the Cross," *The Bulletin*, Moravian Theological Seminary (Bethlehem, Pa.), Fall, 1964, pp. 1-31. More technical is "The Gospel of the Righteousness of God: Pauline Interpretation in Romans 3: 21-31," *Interpretation* 30 (1966) 432-52, dealing with Paul's treatment of an even earlier Christian formulation about salvation.

5. With William Lazareth, *Righteousness and Society: Ecumenical Dialogue in a Revolutionary Age* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1967).

6. See note 1.

7. *The Person of Jesus Christ in the Decisions of the Ecumenical Councils: A historical and doctrinal Study with the relevant Documents referring to the Christological relations of the Western, Eastern and Oriental Churches* (Addis Ababa: Central Printing Press, 1976). I note with interest a reviewer's observation (in *Abba Salama* 10 (1979): 396) that here the author "treats his material with great sympathy toward the Ancient Oriental Orthodox Churches and his attitude toward the Roman Catholic Church is more irenic than in his other book, *Orthodoxy, Roman Catholicism and Anglicanism* (London: Oxford University Press, 1972)" (but cf. p. vii in that book). Christology, of course, always puts us on what is, or should be, common ground. I note also, as an American Lutheran especially involved in dialogue with theologians of the Roman Catholic Church, that not only is "righteousness" (in spite of the biblical evidence) seldom a theme for ecumenical discussions centering on Christology and the ancient creeds but also that, from our experiences and conversations, it could provide some insights in the face of ancient impasses. It is characteristic of the situation that, in *Orthodoxy, Roman Catholicism and Anglicanism* (p. 30), Bishop Gore, of the Church of England, can be quoted as saying that in the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion (not "of Faith") "the whole discussion of Justification and Predestination is antiquated and quite unenlightening" - a far cry from the view that Justification is that on which the church stands or falls! It should be remembered that Justification, like all ways of talking about salvation, is a way of stating the meaning of Christology.

8. Cf. J. Reumann, "Jesus the Steward," An Overlooked Theme in Christology," *Studia Evangelica* V, ed. F.L. Cross (TU 103; Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1968): 21-29; and, in light thereof, the entry in *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, ed. G. W.H. Lampe (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961-68), p. 944, s.v. "*oikonomos*," B, and p. 1567 (Addenda).

and *dikaio-syne* often refers to the saving righteousness wrought by Christ in accord with God's righteous will, both terms touch deeply the Christology that is, as Methodios has written, "the central theological concern of the Greek Church, for which salvation is an implication of Incarnation"; and we shall have to test, with regard to our topics, the extent to which his next statement holds, that "in the West, Roman Law took the place of Greek metaphysics as the controlling influence in theological thought"<sup>9</sup>.

If space and time permitted, one could probably relate both righteousness and *oikonomia* to the several other subjects of this volume, ecclesia and creation, as well as to salvation. For the church is those to whom Paul could write in Corinth, "You were washed (baptized), you were sanctified, you were justified *edikaiothete*" (1 Cor. 6: 11,) those "justified by faith (*dikaiothentes oun ek pisteos*)" who have "peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5: 1), those out of every nation who are righteous by faith (*ek pisteos dikairoi ta ethne*, Gal. 3: 8). And in contrast to long habits of reading righteousness /justification as an individual matter between each person and God in Christ, recent New Testament scholarship has mounted a case - correct, in my opinion<sup>10</sup> - for at least Paul's view of the matter as highly corporate (and therefore ecclesiastical), if not cosmic, seen against its background in the Old Testament scriptures. As for *oikonomia*, its whole heritage of pre-Christian Greek usage disposed it to include "God's management of the universe as his household (*oikos*)", especially in the Stoic philosophers<sup>11</sup>, and the Ephesians references (1:10; 3:2, 9-10) to the administration (*oikonomia*) of God's plan (*mysterion*) for creation and salvation includes the church (cf.

9. *The Person of Jesus Christ* (cited above, n. 7), p. 11.

10. Cf. "Righteousness" in the *New Testament* (cited above, n. 1), sections 32-33, 38, 44, 50, 67, 111, 130, 133, 155, 179, 299, and, for Father Fitzmyer's reservations, sections 361, 366, 381, 392, 396, 399, and p. 200 n. 7. This "cosmic" emphasis rests especially on the work of H.G. Reventlow, *Rechtfertigung im Horizont des Alten Testaments* (BEvT 58; Munich: Chr. Kaiser, 1971); H. H. Schmid, *Gerechtigkeit als Weltordnung* (BHT 40; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1968), and Schmid's "Creation, Righteousness, and Salvation: Creation as the Broad Horizon of Biblical Theology," in *Creation in the Old Testament*, ed. Bernhard Anderson ("Issues in Religion and Theology"; London: SPCK, Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), pp. 102-17; and the work of Ernst Käsemann, and his pupil, Peter Stuhlmacher, *Gerechtigkeit Gottes bei Paulus* (FRLANT 87; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1965), and Christian Müller, *Gottes Gerechtigkeit und Gottes Volk* (FRLANT 86; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1964). It is clear from the exchange with Prof. Fitzmyer that if the word "corporate" had been used in my presentation, rather than "cosmic", there could have been far more agreement; the point is well taken, for it is true that Paul's description of the meaning of Christ's work concern human beings and only rarely inanimate nature (as is the notoriously difficult phrase *ta panta*, as at 1 Cor. 15:27 or. 1: 20).

11. Cf. Part II, 4, pp. 391-485, in the dissertation referred to in n. 1 above (forthcoming in *EK T*).

3:10, *dia tes ekklesias*) in this great Epistle about the Church<sup>12</sup>.

We shall here, however, deal especially with righteousness and *oikonomia* in the sense of "salvation" though not overlooking certain other aspects of meaning. With each there is a large number of related terms - from *dike*, we have an adjective and adverb as well as the noun *dikaio-syne* and the verb *dikaioo*, plus *dikaio-ma* and even *adikos*; from *oikos* plus *nemein*, "to manage", a number of Greek words, including the related compound *dioikesis*<sup>13</sup>. By and large, we shall concentrate on nouns and verbs, with the phrases *oikonomia tou theou* and *dikaio-syne tou theou* as general (but with an awareness that even how to take the genitive, "righteousness of God", is disputed and that meaning may vary from passage to passage: is it "the righteousness that comes from God", the "righteousness that seeks God as objective," or righteousness as an attribute to God?)<sup>14</sup>.

Our method will be to compare the concepts, first in the Old Testament and the teachings of Jesus; then in the writings of the Pauline corpus, where each probably has its most significant usage in the Bible; next, in other parts of the New Testament and related writings; and finally in the church fathers and subsequent theology. We recognize that it is in the rich materials of these centuries from the second and third onwards that the most work needs to be done in the future and that we can provide only a preliminary and sketchy picture here for other investigators.

Finally, it must be remarked that both sets of terms are notoriously difficult to put into accurate English, though for different reasons. In the case of *oikonomia*, *oikonomeo*, etc., the problem is the range of different senses. Often we shall argue for a very specific meaning (as with Ephesians 1:10), but in other cases it will suffice or be wisest simply to transliterate the Greek form being used. With *dikaio*-language the problem is not only that often a Hebrew concept is being rendered, as at Romans 1:17 (*ho de dikaios ek pisteos zesetai* = Habakkuk 2:4) or Romans 4:3 and Galatians 3:6 (Abraham believed God *kai elogisthe auto, eis dikaiosynen* = Genesis 15:6) - so that one may say the Pauline usage rests on the Hebrew scriptures and their translation. It is also a problem of English usage where we have two possible sets of renderings, one from the Latin and the other

from Anglo-Saxon, both of which have been used in subsequent theological discussion:

	<i>adjective</i>	<i>noun</i>	<i>verb</i>
Latin:	just	justice, justification	justify
Anglo-Saxon:	right (eous)	righteousness	rightwise(n)

I do not believe one can make two separate concepts ("justification" and "righteousness") out of a single term in Greek (*dikaio-syne*) or Hebrew (*seduqa*) and so will often use "righteousness justification" as a compound rendering to catch up the several aspects of the original. The real debate comes with the verb form of "righteous": shall it be "declare righteous" (forensically) or "make righteous" (in terms of "sanctification" and even ethics)? Both aspects are present in the New Testament, one often more so in certain passages. We shall sometimes indicate what the evidence seems to us to call for, and other times avoid what is a false problem brought on by English usage, for we can shift to "justify" or simply quote the original (Greek)<sup>15</sup>.

#### I. Righteousness and *Oikonomia* in the Old Testament and in the Teachings of Jesus

There is really no comparison between these terms as to importance in the Hebrew scriptures and their Greek translations like the Septuagint (LXX). At best, *oikonomia* terms occur only some fifteen or twenty times, usually in late writings and in insignificant ways. *Dikaio*-terminology occurs some 500 times, with a variety of significant meanings, rendering words most of the time from the Hebrew root *sdq*, "(be, declare) righteous"<sup>16</sup>. In quantity and quality of meanings, righteousness/justification is the concept of the two that can be called important in the Old Testament.

The verb *oikonomein* occurs at Psalm 112 (LXX 111): 5, about the man who "conducts his affairs with justice" (Hebrew *kul* in the *piel*: cf. Basil the Great, *Ep.* 265 for the sense). At 2 Maccabees 3:2 and 14 it refers to making (financial) arrangements. The noun *oikonomia* occurs just twice (Isaiah 22:19

15. Ibid, sections 26, 100, 136-37, 180, 246, 359, 382. Cf. the index, s.v. "account righteous," "declare righteous," "make righteous," and "reckon righteous."

16. For exact references see S. Mandelkern, *Veteris Testamenti concordantiae hebraicae atque chaldaicae* (Berlin, Margolin, 1925, reprinted Graz: Akademischer Druck, 1955), and E. Hutch and H.A. Redpath, *A Concordance to the Septuagint and the Other Greek Versions of the Old Testament (Including the Apocryphal Books)* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1897, reprinted Graz: Akademischer Druck, 1954). Summaries in *E Ph* on *oikonomia*, etc., 60, 3-4 (1978): 548 n. 89 and 61, 1-4 (1979): 563-64 (diss., pp. 87 n. 89, 140-42, 609), and on *dikaio-syne*, etc. in J. A. Ziesler, *The Meaning of Righteousness in Paul: A Linguistic and Theological Inquiry* (SNTSMS 20; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), pp. 18-36 (for the Hebrew) and 52-67 (LXX).

12. Cf. "Oikonomia-Terms in Paul," *NTS* 13 cited above, n. 3): 164-65, and the similar, subsequent analysis in Markus Barth, *Ephesians* (AB 34; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1974), pp. 76 and 326.

13. On etymology, see *E Ph* 61, 1-4 (1979): 565-70 (diss. pp. 144-52).

14. Cf. "Righteousness" in the New Testament (cited above, n. 1), sections 119, 131, 138, 157, 387, for discussion and references in grammatical discussion (favoring a subjective genitive at, e.g., Rom. 3:5, but at times a genitive of authorship or source, cf. Phil. 3:9).

and 21) for the office and authority of an *oikonomos* (see below). The latter noun appears twelve times at most, usually for a palace official, the *'al-habayit*, who is "over the house (hold)," e.g. at 1 Kings (LXX 3 Kingdoms) 4:6, 16:9, or 18:3. These meager statistics result because *oikonomēin* is a Greek concept, used only occasionally in the LXX to translate Hebrew terms.

The one passage of some later importance is that at Isaiah 22. It has been used, especially by Roman Catholic scholarship, to present the role of Peter in Matthew 16<sup>17</sup>. In Isaiah 22 the prophet delivers an oracle against one of King Hezekiah's courtiers, Shebna, the steward who is over Hezekiah's household. At the lavish tomb that Shebna is having carved for himself, Isaiah predicts that Shebna will never use it, for the Lord will thrust him from his office (22:19, *oikonomia*) and he will die in exile. In v. 21 the passage then prophesies that God will give that office to Eliakim, son of Hilkiah: "I...will commit your authority (*oikonomia*) to his hand" (v. 21). Such an administrator was often second in command after the king and held the keys of office (v. 22, "the key of the house of David; he shall open and none shall shut; and he shall shut and none shall open"). It is to this latter idea, in connection with "the keys of the kingdom," for "binding" and "loosing" in Matthew 16: 19, that some appeal, making Eliakim a pattern for Peter's role there. (Besides the question of the singular "key" in the Isaiah verse and the plural in Matthew 16:19 and the textual corruption in the LXX here, the real problem lies in the messianic overtones of 22: 21–23, which do not apply to Peter; at best we have an ancient Near Eastern illustration of key(s) indicating authority).

It may be noted that the *oikonomos* over a king's household was thus not a concept from "biblical theology" but simply a reflection of widespread ancient practice, and the Davidic "investiture" language of vv. 21–23 causes problems for Matthean application if one is convinced that Matthew has this passage in mind. It also appears that Eliakim turned out to be a "peg" not that held fast (v. 23) but that gave way in time and failed ("it will be cut down and fall... cut off"), perhaps because of nepotism (cf. v. 25)<sup>18</sup>. Far more overt than this possible echo of

Isaiah 22 at Matthew 16 is the direct usage of the imagery for Christ, to whom "the keys of Death and Hades" are given at Revelation 1:18<sup>19</sup>. I have not been able to locate a tradition of Peter as God's *oikonomos* in subsequent usage.

Even when *dioikein* terms are added (Dan. 3:1 LXX, 3:2; Tobit 1:21, 22; 2 Esdras 8:36, ), the trail leads to nothing of theological significance for *oikonomia* in the Old Testament. Not so with *dikaio-*terminology. The problem is how to summarize, in short compass, the rich results of the literally hundreds of verses that speak of "righteousness/justification."

The verb *dikaion* occurs 45 times in the LXX (15 of these in the so-called Apocrypha), often with the sense of the Hebrew "to declare righteous, acquit" (*sdq*, especially in the hiph'il). With regard to non-verbal forms, Ziesler reports that" of 481 cases in the Hebrew O.T. only about 32 are not represented in the LXX by some form of *dikai-*."<sup>20</sup>

There has been debate over whether these Greek renderings may not narrow down too much the range of meanings found in the original Hebrew. Descamps<sup>21</sup> concluded that use of *dikaio-syne*, in passages like Isaiah 41 (*RSV*, v. 2, "victory"), has distorted the meaning of the Hebrew in the direction of *iustitia distributiva* (if so, is this an early example of "(Roman) Law...as the controlling influence in theological thought"?) and, Descamps went on, that in cases where the Hebrew suggests God's gracious, saving activity, the translation misses that point in its rendering. For example, Jeremiah 33:16, "The Lord is our righteousness" is missing, along with all of 33:14–26 in the LXX (40:1–13 only), probably because it was thought to duplicate earlier passages, in this case 23:6 (LXX *kyrios Iosedeck*); Isaiah 61:10, "garments of salvation... the robe of righteousness," has become in the LXX "*himation soteriou kai chitona euprosynes*": Psalm 24:5, "he will receive... vindication from the God of his salvation," has become tame (LXX 23:5) "*lempsetai... eleemosynen para theou soterou autou*".

A famous study by C.H. Dodd<sup>22</sup> reached the conclusion that the Greek translation often "polarised" the two aspects of the Hebrew *sdq* by rendering it as *dikaio-syne*, on the one hand, in the sense of "(strict) justice" and as *eleemosyne*, "mercy", when a "benevolent" meaning is present. In this way, *sdq* (*dikaio-syne*) would be stripped of its salvatory, gracious

17. E.g., *Peter in the New Testament: A Collaborative Assessment by Protestant and Roman Catholic Scholars*, ed. R. E. Brown, K. P. Donfried, J. Reumann (Minneapolis: Augsburg, New York: Paulist, 1973), pp. 96–97; Raymond E. Brown, *The Churches the Apostles Left Behind* (New York: Paulist 1984), p. 135.

18. For historical allusions, cf. 2 Kings 18:18 (Isa. 36:3) and 19:2 (Isa. 37:2), where Eliskim is "over the household" and Shebna is "secretary." On the problems of content, source and redaction, cf. Otto Kaiser, *Isaiah 13–39*, trans. R.A. Wilson (London: SCM, Philadelphia: Westminster, 1974), pp. 148–59. If Matthew, in writing 16: 13–23, had at all in mind the imagery and story of Isaiah 22: 15–25, then we must say that his dual picture of Peter as the rock when he confesses Christ (16: 16–19) and as the stone of stumbling when he denies Christ's

way of suffering (16: 21–23) is parallel to Eliakim as "a peg in a sure place," with the key of the house of David (22: 21–24), and as "the peg that was fastened in a sure place" that gives way and falls (22: 25).

19. Cf. "Jesus the Steward" (cited above, n. 8), pp. 24–25, where the contrast between Moses and Christ in Hebrews 3: 1–6, "in" and "over God's house" is discussed.

20. *The Meaning of Righteousness* (cited above, n. 16), p. 59.

21. "La Justice de Dieu dans la Bible grecque," *Studia Hellenistica* 5 (Louvain, 1948: ) 69–92, especially 75ff.

22. *The Bible and the Greeks* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1935), pp. 42–57, especially p. 53.

vindicating aspects and placed into an antithesis with mercy, goodness, and grace. In that case the tendency will also be to contrast sharply the words underlined below in Psalm 85:10 (LXX 84:11).

Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet,  
righteousness (*dikaioσύνη*) and peace will kiss  
each other.

Ziesler expresses doubts on both theories, but he allows "a tendency" to exist in this direction, if not "a general rule"<sup>23</sup>. One is admonished by this discussion, however, constantly to ask if the LXX has caught the sense of the Hebrew original.

As to the meaning of the Hebrew *sdq*, *sedaqa*, there is widespread agreement among Old Testament scholars that there is no other concept of "so central a significance"<sup>24</sup> for Israelite thought about God and all of life. While it is difficult to settle on a single master-theme behind all passages using the words—for, like *oikonomia*, it was destined to grow in use—Hebraic "righteousness" terminology occurs in all areas of Old Testament literature, law, prophets, psalms, wisdom, and apocalyptic. It especially occurs in books associated with Jerusalem, the Psalter, Proverbs, and Isaiah and Ezekiel. One may trace its way from a general ancient Near Eastern background, where it helped synthesize kingdom, wisdom, law, nature, cult, justice, and salvation, through a maze of uses about God and human beings. God is "the Righteous One" (Isa. 24: 16) who does "steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth" (Jer. 9:24). He calls for king and people to do justice and righteousness also (Jer. 23:5; Ps. 15: 1-2).

Out of the many things that might be said about righteousness/justification in the Old Testament, we shall highlight here several aspects important for later considerations.

It is often claimed, and not without reason, that *sdq* in the Old Testament is a "relationship" term. Sometimes this has been taken as "conformity to a norm", i.e., the law, but more often it involves God's conforming to what he himself is and to what the current situation calls for as "just" and "right". "Shall not the Judge of the whole earth do right (Hebrew *mispat*; Greek *krisin*)?" (Gen. 18: 25) is what everyone expects. (In that chapter about the righteous and the wicked in Sodom, what is "right" involves more than God's distributive justice, for God shows that "doing righteousness and justice," v. 19, includes mercy.

23. *The Meaning of Righteousness* (cited above, n. 16), p. 68; cf. his appended note, "The Inadequacy of *dikaioσύνη*," 67-69.

24. Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, New York: Harper & Row, 1962, 1965), Vol. 1, p. 370. For what follows, cf. "Righteousness" in the *New Testament* cited above, n. 1), sections 27-40, where further bibliography is cited, justifying and expanding many of the points made here.

The close relation to judgment that can be seen here we shall turn to shortly in more detail). But how justice/righteousness works out in specific cases produces some surprises. Often it relates to faithfulness in a relationship, and not to outward "moral" appearances or even the norms of law.

A famous example is the climax of the unsavory story of Judah and Tamar in Genesis 38. The action of Tamar, in posing as a prostitute and inveigling her father-in-law, Judah, to get her pregnant, seems immoral; she should be burned (38:24). But when she produces the signet, cord, and staff of "the man to whom these belong, by whom I am with child", i.e., Judah, it is acknowledged by Judah, "She is more righteous than I" (38:26, *dedikaiotai Thamar e ego*). Later commentators might term the whole thing an *oikonomia* of some sort. The Israelite explanation is that she has been true to what the relationship demanded that is prescribed in levirate marriage (Deut. 25: 5-10). Judah did not sincerely intend to give her another of his sons to "perform the duty of husband's brother" to her, so she forced Judah to fulfill himself what the relationship demanded.

The relational view of *sdq* in the Old Testament leads into another aspect that needs underscoring, especially in comparison with certain later treatments of righteousness/justification. The understanding of it in the Hebrew scriptures is dynamic, not static. We are dealing with "right" not in the abstract but in concrete situations (Like Tamar's!). Proper response to God is not just obeying precepts of a remote law but walking uprightly and humbly, doing justice and loving kindness in situations as they confront one. God's righteousness is not so much an attribute or a state but what God does. So also with humans. Perhaps the most important aspect of "righteousness/justification" to be stressed in this connection is that of *sdq sedaqa* as a gracious, saving activity on the part of God. Here is where the funneling of the Hebrew concept into the narrower confines of "distributive justice" ("to each, his own") is so unfortunate. For one of the periodic rediscoveries in the history of scriptural studies is that God's righteousness in the Old Testament means active, saving work on the part of God, not simply demands for right living by human beings or norms that God sets.

Isaiah 40-66 is a portion of the Old Testament where God's saving righteousness especially comes to the fore. Here "righteousness" is frequently paralleled with "salvation": 46:13 (*ten dikaioσύνην mou kai ten soterian*), or 51: 5, 6, and 8 (*he dikaioσύνη mou, to soterion mou*). We also encounter verses where the proper rendering of *sedaqa* is "vindication": e.g., Isaiah 62: 1-2 (*RSV*: *he dikaioσύνη mou*, parallel with *soterion*). One must especially cite Judges 5:11, in the Song of Deborah, one of the oldest passages in the Bible and what may be the earliest use of a noun from *sdq*:

there they repeat the triumphs of the Lord (*sidqot YHWH*),

The *triumphs* of his peasantry in Israel.

The LXX somewhat misses the point, especially if *dikaioyne* is not understood against its active, salvatory Hebrew background: *ekei dosousin dikaiosynas* (MS Alexandrinus: *dikaioyenen*) *kyrio*, followed by either (MS Vaticanus) *dikaioyenas auxeson en Israel* ("exalt (God's) triumphs in Israel," though one translator makes it, "O Lord, increase righteous acts in Israel")<sup>25</sup>, or, less acceptably, (MS A) *dikaioi enischusan en to Israel* ("the righteous gained strength in Israel"). In the LXX, God is to have righteousness ascribed to him (cf. Baruch 2:18), not win triumphs for Israel<sup>26</sup>.

Relational, dynamic, saving and victorious, God's righteousness in the Old Testament also involves in a number of passages a "law court" aspect. This means what has often in later theology been called the "forensic" side of justification, i.e., having to do with the "forum" or public meeting place and hence the courts that met there (cf. Acts 28:15, 19:38; 1 Cor. 4: 3-4). But it is here not so much a matter of the law in court but of God himself as judge (cf. Gen. 18: 25) and indeed as accuser of Israel, on "the day of the Lord", in history and eschatologically. One can, to make the links in English, scarcely think of the "justice of God" without an awareness of God as "Judge", yet precisely the God who also "justifies." Some Old Testament scholars like H. Wheeler Robinson, have seen the sense of "acquittal at the bar of God" as basic to the sense of *sdq*, a forensic sense<sup>27</sup>.

There are Old Testament passages that speak of righteousness/justification in the setting of a human tribunal (Isa. 5:23; Deut. 24:13). But recent scholarship has especially paid attention to a "covenant lawsuit" setting. Here, in court before God, Israel as a people is arraigned. God brings suit for infidelity (perhaps through the prophet's words, perhaps in the first person). Hosea 4:1 ff. begins such a "controversy" (Hebrew *rib*; Greek *kristis*) on the part of God with people and priests. Micah 6:1 ff. eloquently depicts God recalling "the saving acts of the Lord" (6:5, *Sidgot* YHWH: Greek *he dikaiosyne tou Kyriou*) in the exodus and Israel's history; yet Jerusalem has reacted against God even worse than did Samaria (6: 9-16). Psalm 50 recites this lawsuit theme in liturgical form; God the judge, whose righteousness is declared by the heavens (50:6), excoriates those who, even as they offer sacrifices, have no right to have God's covenant on their lips (50: 7-17). Only at the end is there a note of "the salvation of God"

(50: 23). Yet precisely those prophets who use this form, like Isaiah (1: 2-9) and Jeremiah (2: 4-13), can also offer a word of hope, indeed through God's saving righteousness (see above: cf. Jer. 23:6 in the context of v. 5, or 33: 16)<sup>28</sup>.

The final accent to underscore in the Old Testament picture of God's righteousness/justification has to do with the aspect of future expectation that increasingly entered in. This facet of the picture is the eschatological or apocalyptic element. It stemmed from the fall of Israel and then of Judah and the fact that many of the hopes raised by the prophets during the exile (even Isaiah 40 ff), turned out to be unfulfilled. The Davidic line of kings went into eclipse. The rebuilt temple did not capture the glory of the one that Solomon had built. Righteousness did not abound; justice was not served. The nation was oppressed under foreign rulers. And so the longing grew for what "the Lord our righteousness" would do, or for a messianic "righteous branch" from the stump of Jesse (Isa. 11: 1-2; Jer. 23: 5, 33:15), but increasingly projected into the future. The world was regarded as very evil; the hope was, as 2 Peter 3:13 would later put it, in a classic phrase, for "new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells". But that hope for righteousness is an echo of Isaiah 65: 17 and 66:22, the hope voiced in 2 Esdras 7: 43-44 (113-114), for "the day of judgement" and a time to come when "unbelief has been cut off, and righteousness has increased and truth has appeared." Precisely in this period "the righteousness of God" may have become a set formula in apocalyptic, for God's vindicating righteousness<sup>29</sup>.

Our concern has been to show something of the nature of the Old Testament view of righteousness/justification. We have stressed aspects often overlooked. There is, of course, also a strong "ethical" side to the Old Testament picture, but that has usually been amply present, though sometimes in a "moralized" form, in later understandings of the theme. If space permitted, we could also trace developments through documents and decades outside the scriptural material cited above. At points the forensic aspect was combined with legalistic piety. Second Baruch (the Syrian Apocalypse of Baruch) speaks of "those who proved to be righteous on account of my law" and "the righteousness of the law" (51: 3; 67: 6<sup>30</sup>; cf. Phil. 3:9; Rom. 3:21,

25. Lancelot Charles Lee Brenton, *The Septuagint Version of the Old Testament according to the Vatican Text* (London: S. Bayster and Sons, 1844), Vol. 1, p. 264, reading *Kyrie*.

26. Cf. Stuhlmacher, *Gerechtigkeit Gottes* (cited above, n. 10), pp. 108-111, 201.

27. H. Wheeler Robinson, *The Religious Ideas of the Old Testament* (London: Duckworth, 1913), pp. 168-69. Similarly Gustav Dalman, *Die richterliche Gerechtigkeit im Alten Testament* (Berlin, 1897).

28. Striking application of the "covenant-complaint" pattern is that made by Markus Barth in *Justification: Pauline Texts Interpreted in the Light of the Old and New Testaments* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971). He sees Romans 1:18-3:20 as serving this function (pp. 18-19, 25-34.)

29. So P. Stuhlmacher, *Gerechtigkeit Gottes* (cited above, n. 10), pp. 145-75. Further, in "Righteousness" in *The New Testament* (cited above, n. 1), sections 40, 93, 335.

30. See now the translation and introduction by A.F. J. Klijn, pp. 615-52, in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, ed. James H. Charlesworth, Vol. 1, *Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments* (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, 1983).

28). In the Dead Sea scrolls God's judgments and forgiveness, combined under the terms from *sdq* ("justification/righteousness"), are heightened alongside human aptivity to sinfulness<sup>31</sup>.

Against this Old Testament panorama that we have sketched, it is somewhat surprising that Jesus spoke relatively little in terms of righteousness/justification, but less surprising that he used *oikonomia* terms virtually not at all.

Statistically, "righteousness" terminology is not common in the gospels. The noun *dikaioyne* occurs just ten times, the adjective 33, the verb 7. As for the noun, the instance at Luke 1:75, in the Benedictus, "... to serve (God) in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life..." is good Old Testament language (cf. Joshua 24:14). The two examples in John 16: 8 and 10, about the Paraclete convincing the world about "righteousness and judgement," likely reflects the forensic, law-court setting, where the Spirit, speaking for God, sets people straight on how Jesus, in "going to the Father," has been vindicated<sup>32</sup>. The seven, striking cases of *dikaioyne* in Matthew are best taken up together, below in Section III, for they reflect an Old Testament theme, in the teachings of Jesus, but presented within a special perspective of Matthew's Gospel.

In the gospels the adjective *dikaios* occurs more frequently, 33 times, usually in the sense of a "just or righteous" person (like Joseph, Matt.1:19) or "innocent" (of Jesus, Matt. 27:19). But occasionally it is used ironically, as of scribes and Pharisees who "outwardly appear" "righteous," but inwardly are full of iniquity (Matt. 23:28). The hardest sense to decide is that in Jesus' saying, "I came to call not 'righteous people (*dikaious*)' but 'sinners'" (Mark 2:17, parallels at Matt. 9:13 and Luke 5:32). It could be ironic. The sense clearly is that Jesus' mission was above all to "sinners" (in the eyes of the religion of the day)<sup>33</sup>.

The verb *dikaion*, which Luke uses five times and Matthew twice, can have the ironic sense of "trying to justify oneself" (Luke 10:29; 16:15). There are juridical tones in the phrase to "be justified (or condemned) by your words" (Matt. 12:37). "Justifying (or vindicating) God" in a positive sense is what the tax collectors did in receiving baptism (Luke 7:29)—they acknowledged their guilt and God's vindicating righteousness. That "wisdom is justified (*edikaothe*) by her works" (Matt. 11:19) or "her children" (Luke 7:35) is another example of the verb in the sense of "vindicate". There is thus enough evidence to say that Jesus knew and reflected some aspects of the Old Testament theme of righteousness/justification.

The most interesting and debated example of such usage comes in Jesus' Parable of the Pharisee

and the Tax Collector (Luke 18: 9–14). When he says it was the tax collector, rather than the Pharisee, that went home from praying at the temple "justified" (*dedikaiomenos*), he certainly means "vindicated" by God. Some go further and see in this the seeds at least of Paul's doctrine of justification<sup>34</sup>.

Jesus, of course, in his central message about the kingdom of God (*basileia tou theou*), did speak of the impending judgment by God and called for repentance and faith (e.g., Mark 1:15)<sup>35</sup>. What may be called God's great "eschatological reversal" of things was prominent and imminent in his teaching. His emphasis was definitely on God's power to save, rather than on sin and condemnation. In all these ways what he taught was consonant with the Old Testament theme of "righteousness/justification", but he did not use excessively its terminology of *sdq* or *dikaioyne*. What he did say was enough to pave the way for developments after Easter to which we shall turn in Section II. Above all, his cross and resurrection would be the point from which interpretation began.

Our account of Jesus and *oikonomia*-vocabulary can be given more briefly, for, as with the Old Testament, there is relatively little to tell. The verb *oikonomo* occurs just once in the gospels, *oikonomos* four times, and *oikonomia* three times, all instances being in Luke and seven of the eight examples occurring in a single passage, the Parable about the Unjust Steward, Luke 16: 1–8. It could, of course, be argued that Luke's is the most Hellenistic of all four gospels and hence it is not surprising that terms for "steward(ship)" occur in his account. But it is also a fact that the Greek *oikonomos* was a loan word in the Hebrew of the Targums and Midrashim (though *oikonomia* was not, to the best of our knowledge): the loan word *'iqonômôs* meant "steward" or "town official", just as in the Greco-Roman world<sup>36</sup>. Given the cultural penetration of Greek language and social institutions into Palestine, it could have been quite possible for Jesus to have known by this title the sort of manager of a household or estate described in Luke 16.

Jesus' parable, found only in Luke, describes an *oikonomos* charged before his rich master with "wasting his goods" (16:1). Told to turn in the records of his stewardship (*ton logon tes oikonomias*), the steward resolves what to do help himself in the time

34. Ibid., sections 50, 247, 411.

35. Cf. Joachim Jeremias, *New Testament Theology, Part One: The Proclamation of Jesus* (London: SCM, 1971), pp. 96ff. He goes on to speak of Jesus "vindicating" the good news he preached by pointing to "sinners", to "the righteous" (who were farther yet from God in their need), and to God's gracious nature that reverses so much in ordinary human calculations.

36. *E Ph* 61, 1–4 (1979): 564 (diss., p. 141), citing Marcus Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babil and Yerushalmi and the Midrashic Literature* (New York Berlin: Verlag Choresb, London: E. Shapiro, Vallentine & Co., 1926), p. 60.

31. Details and literature in "Righteousness" in the New Testament (cited above, n. 1), sections 42–43, 363–64.

32. Ibid., section 256.

33. Ibid., section 224.

when his office of steward (*oikonomia*) is taken away (16: 3-4). He calls in his master's debtors and cuts the amounts of olive oil and wheat they owe according to these records. This "dishonest steward" (*oikonomos tes adikias*, a Semitic genitive usage) is then commended by the lord because he acted shrewdly (*phronimos*, 16:8). To this story are then attached a series of ethical exhortations (16: 9-13), about making friends by use of unrighteous (*adikias*) mammon (v. 9), being faithful with what is entrusted to you (vv.10-12), and serving God, not mannon (v. 13)..

We need not discuss here the likelihood that the steward was not so much dishonest (the only charge against him in v. 1 was waste) as crafty, and that in the bills he reduced he was simply cutting back the profits from usury that he had built in for himself, not cheating the master. We can even leave open whether the *kyrios* in the account at v. 8 might be Jesus, rather than the rich master, and that what Jesus then commended was the steward's prudence - with the hint that Jesus' hearers should act with similar dispatch in the face of the offer of God's kingdom<sup>37</sup>.

The one other Lukan reference to a steward can be noted in light of this passage. It is his description in 12: 42-48 of "the faithful and wise steward (*ho pistos oikonomos ho phronimos*) whom his master will set 'over his household'" (cf. the Hebrew '*al-habayit*.). Some think the picture there was intended for not only the disciples but also for later church leaders. The possibilities are by no means all flattering, for options for stewards include the drunkard who beats other servants (v. 45), the person who knows the lord's will but does not do it (v. 47), and the one who does not know his will and behaves badly (v. 48) - as well as the servant-steward who feeds the household at the proper time (v. 42). It may be that the passage reflects the description of a faithful servant (*pistos*) in 19: 17 combined with 16:10, and the steward in 16:8 who acted wisely (*phronimos*), emanating in a circle where *oikonomoi* were expected to be faithful<sup>38</sup>.

We may say that Jesus' description of stewards accords with insights that we have from Greek sources

about *oikonomoi*,<sup>39</sup> but it cannot be said that there is anything profoundly theological in these few references. Not much more is added if one includes the dozen references in the Synoptics to the *oikodespotes* or "master of the house"<sup>40</sup>, unless it be used, as Alivisatos once suggested<sup>41</sup>, to explain why *oikonomia* came into prominence rather than *dioikesis* in Christianity: namely, because the gospels employ *oikodespotes* (and a handful of *oikonomia* - words).

All in all, we must conclude that statistically and somewhat in content *dikaio*syne and related terms enjoy a preference over *oikonomia* and related terms in the material from and about Jesus in our gospels. But it is after Easter that each concept came into greater prominence.

## II. Righteousness and *Oikonomia* Terms in the Pauline Epistles of the New Testament

The statistics from the thirteen letters in the corpus Paulinum (Hebrews will be treated in Section III, below) are impressively weighted in favor of the importance of righteousness/justification<sup>42</sup>.

<i>dikaio</i> syne	57 examples	<i>oikonomia</i>	6 examples
<i>dikaio</i> oun	27	<i>oikomein</i>	none
<i>dikaio</i> s	17	<i>oikonomos</i>	5
<i>dikaio</i> ma	5		
<i>dikaio</i> s (adv.)	3		
<i>dikaio</i> sis	2		
<i>dikaio</i> krisia	1		

Even more significant than this disparity of 114 versus 11 examples in favor of *dikaio*-words is the spread and meaningfulness of the two concepts in Paul's letters. While righteousness/justification terminology occurs especially in two epistles, 63 of the above 114 examples being in Romans and 13 more occurring in Galatians, *dikaio*-vocabulary is spread over twelve of the thirteen letters (no example is found in Philemon, though it is sparse in 1-2 Thessalonians and Colossians). On the other hand, *oikonomia* and related terms appear in only seven letters, with the largest number of examples in 1 Corinthians and Ephesians (three each; none in 2 Corinthians, Philippians, 1-2 Thessalonians, 2 Timothy, or little Philemon). While *oikonomia* can be called a sub-theme in Ephesians and *oikonomos* a

37. Discussion and literature on these views in J. Reumann, *Jesus in the Church's Gospels: Modern Scholarship and the Earliest Sources* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1968; London: SPCK, 1970), pp. 189-98. Similarly, but with more recent views and options, I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke* (Exeter: Paternoster Press, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), pp. 614-24.

38. Cf. J.A. Fitzmyer, "The Story of the Dishonest Manager (Lk. 16: 1-13)," *Theological Studies* 25 (1964): 23-42, especially 29-30, reprinted in his *Essays on the Semitic Background of the New Testament* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, Missoula, Mont.: Scholars' Press, 1974), pp. 161-86, especially 168-69; H. Preisker, "Lukas 16, 1-7," *TLZ* 74 (1949): 85-92; I.H. Marshall *Luke* (cited above, n. 37), pp. 540-45, plus 616 for reference to Kamlah's suggestion about "steward" as a reference to Jesus' underlings.

39. *E Ph* 61, 1-4 (1979): 576-603, especially 602-603 (diss., pp. 162-205, esp. 204-205).

40. Matt. 10:25; 13: 27,52; 20: 1, 11; 21:33; 24:43; Mark 14:14; Luke 12:39; 13:25; 14:21, 22:11.

41. Hamilcar S. Alivisatos, *H OIKONOMIA kata to kanonikon dikaion tes Orthodoxou Ekklesias* (Athens: Aster Publishing House, 1949), p. 23, n. 1.

42. Data here and elsewhere from Robert Morgenthaler, *Statistik des neutestamentlichen Wortschatzes* (Zürich/Frankfurt: Gotthelf-Verlag, 1958) and H. Bachmann and W. A. Slaby, *Computer-Konkordanz zum Novum Testamentum Graece* (Berlin /New York: de Gruyter, 1980).

term of self-description by Paul in 1 Corinthian, *dikaio-syne* (*tou theou*) emerges as the theme of Romans and the central issue of dispute (along with Paul's apostleship) in Galatians.

Thus righteousness/justification has an importance in Paul that cannot be claimed for *oikonomia* there. He puts his entire gospel into *dikaio-syne* terms in his most carefully written epistle, Romans. *Oikonomia* gains a toe hold for future developments only in one of the later Pauline epistles, Ephesians, a document where righteousness/justification is by no means out of the picture.

Because of this preponderance of the theme of *dikaio-syne* in Paul and its chronological priority, we shall begin with righteousness/justification and only afterwards turn to the briefer but fascinating story of the rise of *oikonomia* as a biblical theological theme in the letters of Paul.

Precisely the statistics just cited about *dikaio-*terms have given rise to one charge against the "righteousness/justification" theme. It is claimed that the topic came into prominence only because of Paul's controversy with the "Judaizers" in Galatia over "righteousness by the works of the law" versus "righteousness through faith in Jesus Christ" (Gal. 2:16). It was, on this view, a product of polemic, not worthy of being regarded as any sort of center in Paul's thought. Albert Schweitzer classically made this case, demoting justification<sup>43</sup>. Quite apart from the wide spread of *dikaio-*terms in so many of Paul's letters, this theory faces (a) the fact that Romans, which was written in a relatively tranquil period to prepare Paul's way for a visit to a congregation not of his own founding in Rome, places the gospel pre-eminently in terms of the righteousness of God and justification (1: 16-17; 3: 21-28); and (b) the fact that letters traditionally dated late in Paul's career, namely Philippians (if written from Rome) and Ephesians, do make righteousness/justification a prominent theme (cf. Phil. 3: 6-11; Eph. 2: 4-10) in situations where the Judaizers of Galatia were no issue.

More recently, however, it has proven possible to mount another argument, even more significant. On the basis of linguistic and other observations it is possible to isolate in New Testament epistles (some of them not by Paul) snatches of hymns, creedal affirmations, and kerygmatic slogans that go back to the earliest days of Christianity, indeed prior to the time of Paul's letters and his dispute in Galatia in behalf of the apostolic faith. A surprising number of these pre-Pauline formulas, stemming in some cases from Jewish Christianity, use *dikaio-*terminology, particularly to present who Jesus was (Christology)

and the meaning of his cross (what can be called a primitive doctrine of the atonement or interpretation of what Jesus' death means).

For the U.S. Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue I have outlined seven such formulas from earliest Christianity, and six of them Father Fitzmyer accepted<sup>44</sup>. These include 1 Peter 3:18 ("the Righteous One suffered (or died) for those who are unrighteous"); 1 Timothy 3:16 (Christ "was manifested in the flesh, was vindicated (*edikaiothe*) in the spirit..."); 1 Corinthians 1:30 (Jesus Christ "became wisdom for us from God, both righteousness and sanctification and redemption..."); 1 Corinthians 6:11 ("you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God"); Romans 4:24, about Jesus our Lord who was put to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification (*dia ten dikaiosynen hemon*); and, above all, Romans 3: 24-26,

<sup>24</sup>being declared righteous (*dikaioumenoi*) as a gift through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,

<sup>25</sup>whom God put forward as a *hilasterion* ("expiation," possibly the Hebrew *kapporet* or sacrifice in the Day of Atonement ritual of Leviticus 17) in his blood (to be received by faith),

for showing God's righteousness (*eis endeixin tes dikaiosynes autou*), because of the passing over of former sins,

<sup>26</sup>in the forbearance of God. (Paul then goes on) for demonstrating his righteousness (*pros ten endeixin tes dikaiosynes autou*) in the present time, in order that God might be just even while justifying (or righteous in declaring righteous) the person who lives on the basis of faith in Jesus.

The passage on which we differed as to whether Paul composed it himself or is quoting earlier material is 2 Corinthians 5: 21; "The One who did not know sin God made to be sin (or, perhaps, "the sin offering" of Lev. 6:23, 14:19) in order that we might become God's righteousness (*dikaio-syne theou*) in him".

Naturally, many questions about details can be raised, but there is some considerable agreement in recent New Testament literature on such passages as reflections of common apostolic Christianity and not specifically Pauline theology. (Hence the appearance of the theme in letters other than those by Paul.) The importance of this finding is that righteousness/justification must then be recognized as a topic of reflection and means of expression on the part of very early Christians with regard to the heart of their

43. Schweitzer termed justification merely a "subsidiary crater" alongside the volcanic (but somewhat imprecisely defined) center that he preferred, "Christ-mysticism"; cf. *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle* (London: A & C. Black, 1931), pp. 220-21, 225.

44. Because extensive literature is cited and details discussed in "Righteousness" in the New Testament (cited above, n. 1), sections 58-76, the material is not repeated here; for Fitzmyer's views, see sections 368-75.

gospel. At this we should not be surprised, because what could be more natural than for them, Jewish Christians especially, to have expressed the meaning of the Christ event in terms most familiar to them from God's revelation in the Old Testament. It will be surprising when Christians use a term basically from the Greek world like *oikonomia* to talk of the Christ event. It was inevitable that they should use a theme so central as righteousness/justification to tell of Jesus Christ, his manifestation and its meaning, particularly the cross, and the significance for us and all the world.

Righteousness/justification, then, can be regarded as a key way of expressing the *euangelion* before Paul (or any one else) wrote a single epistle. In his early letters Paul occasionally reflects the Old Testament ethical sense of "righteous behavior" (1 Thess. 2:10) or that of God's "righteous judgment" (2 Thess. 1:5). First Corinthians already uses *dikaioyne* Christologically (1:30) and speaks of believers there having become justified and sanctified with baptism (6:11). In 2 Corinthians not only is Christ the source of believers becoming "God's righteousness" (2 Cor. 5:21); they also have a "ministry of righteousness," of reconciliation, and of the Spirit (3: 8-9, cf. 5: 18)<sup>45</sup>.

It is, of course, with Galatians that the theme of righteousness/justification comes more fully before us<sup>46</sup>. In some ways it is not *dikaioyne* that is at issue but rather how one becomes justified (*dikaioutai*), whether by obeying and doing "works of the law" or by faith in Jesus (2:16) and his cross (2:20; 6:14). Galatians 2: 15-21 serves as a summary of Paul's gospel in this situation but using early Christian and Old Testament vocabulary. His teaching is clear: Jew and Gentile alike are rightwised on the basis of faith in Jesus and in no other way. This is stated with increasing clarity as "the truth of the gospel" (2: 5, 14) in the face of the positions of Judaism (that salvation = the covenant of circumcision and doing all that is written in the law, cf. 3: 10), of the Judaizers (that salvation = Christ and then doing the works of the law, including circumcision), and even of Cephas (2: 11-14). Paul's words in 2: 15ff. may or may not have been spoken in the presence of Cephas (Peter) at Antioch, but they strike at the way he had drawn back from previous table fellowship (including the Lord's Supper?) with Gentile Christians. One cannot, in the face of Paul's vehement words, accept the later view of Chrysostom that this dispute between Peter and Paul was merely a mock fight (an *oikonomia*), staged in order to smoke out other views<sup>47</sup>.

45. Cf. *ibid.*, sections 77-97.

46. *Ibid.*, sections 98-106.

47. *Expos. in Gal. 2.5*; PG 61. 641. Trans. in A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, ed. Philip Schaff, Vol. 13, *Saint Chrysostom, Homilies on Galatians*, etc., (New York: Scribner's, 1905), p. 19.

Paul actually did have to defend the truth of the gospel, as righteousness/justification by faith, before those claiming to represent Jerusalem and James (2:12) and against the conduct of Peter (2:14) when he "judaized".

Paul's particular scriptural example of having righteousness reckoned to one by faith is Abraham (3: 6-9; cf. 4: 21-31). This precedent, with its proleptic gospel for Gentiles (3:8), Paul will also use and develop in Romans 4. It is to be noted that Paul's appeal is precisely to two Old Testament texts, Genesis 15:6 and Habakkuk 2:4 (Gal. 3:6 and 11), a phenomenon also repeated more systematically in Romans. It is also worth pointing out that, in this Letter to Galatia, where Paul first develops for us a sort of salvation history view based on justification, around Abraham, Moses, and Christ (3: 6-29)<sup>48</sup>, he also does not omit such Old Testament aspects of his theme as eschatology (5:5, "the hope of righteousness") and the ethical "walk" or conduct of Christians in the Spirit and in freedom, (chaps 5-6) that the power of the gospel of God's righteousness enables.

About Romans<sup>49</sup>, with its massive use of *dikaio-*vocabulary, enough has already been said to make clear that the righteousness of God is its theme. This righteousness/justification is revealed in the sin-expiating death of Jesus, so that those who believe are justified - and with justification comes peace with God, new life in the Spirit (5: 1ff.), and new light on all of existence and the world. Romans 1: 18-3:20 represents the negative side of *dikaioyne* in 1: 16-17, as judgment and as wrath revealed against all wickedness (*adikia*, 1:18) - possibly reflecting the Old Testament "covenant lawsuit" theme. The biblical illustration of Abraham in Romans 4 is to be noted again, exemplifying faith in "God who justifies the ungodly" (4:5; contrast Exod. 23:7 LXX, *ou dikaiouseis ton asebe heneken doron!*).

New in Romans is the way Paul uses the contrast between Adam and Christ (cf. 1 Cor. 15: 45-49) to teach how Jesus brings justification (and therefore life), not condemnation (5:16, 17, 18, 19, 21, each verse with *dikaio-*terms). Not to be overlooked is the ethical meaning, on Christians as instruments and obedient slaves of righteousness (6: 13-20). In a significant verse (14:17) Paul even defines Jesus' phrase, "the kingdom of God", in terms of righteousness: it means not "food and drink" but "*dikaioyne* and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit". Perhaps the most interesting insight from recent discussion of our topic in Romans is how chapters 9-11, on the fate of God's ancient people Israel, fits in both as a theodicy (or justification of God for bringing righteousness so freely in Christ to all who believe) and

48. Cf., in addition to "Righteousness" in the New Testament (cited above, n. 1), section 102, "*Oikonomia-Terms in Paul*" (cited above, n. 3), pp. 149 and 155.

49. *Ibid.*, sections 114-62.

as a reiteration of righteousness/justification based on faith (in contrast to that based on law, 9: 30-10:17, especially 10: 5-6)<sup>50</sup>. Paul's most systematic exposition of the Christian message is thus about "the God who justifies" (*theos ho dikaios*, 8:33; cf. Isa. 50:8).

To those who think Paul's interest in righteousness/justification does not extend beyond Galatians and Romans, attention must also be called to Philippians. Here Paul again, within the context of his own autobiographical experience, contrasts the "two kinds of righteousness" (3: 6-11) - of one's own, based on law, and from God, through faith in Christ - in a most artful way<sup>51</sup>. Important as this experiential starting point was for Paul (and for many subsequent Christians, like Augustine, Luther, and Wesley), it must not blind us to the corporate aspects to be seen in Romans and elsewhere. The Philippians passages also take cognizance of the eschatological and ethical aspects of justification (1:11, "fruits of righteousness that come through Jesus Christ" for "the Day of Jesus Christ"; cf. 4:8, where typically Greek virtues like "whatever things are just (*dikaia*)" are what Christians should think on).

In the other "captivity epistles" of Paul - whether because they reflect later situations in his life or are the work of pupils of the apostle in the Pauline school - a number of his themes undergo a certain change. This is true in Ephesians<sup>52</sup> in that the emphasis is less on the "last things" (*ta eschata*) than on *ta prota*, the "first things" (protology), and election by God "before the foundation of the world" (1:4). There is less of the perspective of the individual believer who has experienced rescue by God and more on the church through which "the principalities and powers" come to know the wisdom of God revealed in Christ (3:10). It is in this setting that *oikonomia* as God's administration of his plan for salvation will come to the fore (see below).

But salvation by grace through faith is not forgotten in Ephesians. Indeed, it is given its clearest articulation in the Pauline corpus in the hymnlike words of Ephesians 2: 4-10, "by grace you are saved through faith" (2: 5, 8), not by your own doing or works. In what later became a sort of paradigm slogan for Reformation theology it was scarcely noted that what has changed is the verb: Ephesians uses *sozo*, "saved," in place of *dikaioo*, justified/right-wised. This is probably because it was written for an audience that knew less and less about the Hebraic-Old Testament sense of *sdq* and thought instead of the more Hellenistic term, *soteria*. But Markus Barth has argued, particularly with regard to

6:14, about "the breastplate of righteousness," that Old Testament imagery is not lost (cf. Isa. 59: 17); in fact, Barth finds here imagery from the Old Testament "Holy War" theme and from the "cosmic lawsuit" motif. Specifically at 6:14, "the 'righteousness of God' is meant through which man is justified by grace alone (Rom 3: 21-31)"<sup>53</sup>.

We may look finally among the letters attributed to Paul at those called the Pastoral Epistles<sup>54</sup>. Again, in a different situation - depending on which imprisonment and when in Paul's life one decides for, or at a later time when pupils put together pieces of Paul's thought to serve new needs - the language of justification/righteousness continues. This is true not only in an ethical sense (1 Tim. 6: 11, 2 Tim. 2:22, "Pursue righteousness") but also in the fullest expressions that these documents provide about the meaning of the coming of Jesus Christ. Besides 1 Timothy 3:16 (cited above as a likely early hymn), 2 Timothy 1: 9-10 speaks in a way akin to Ephesians 2 above about salvation manifested (not by works but by grace) in Christ. Titus 2: 11-14 is similar, with its resulting call to live uprightly (*dikaiois*). Titus 3: 3-7 is closest to Paul's abiding formulations over the years: God "saved us not because of deeds done by us in righteousness" but by his mercy; that, "having been justified (*dikaiothentes*, cf. Rom. 5:1) by his grace, we might become heirs in hope of eternal life." Righteousness/justification thus remains part of "the deposit of faith" (2 Tim. 1: 12).

It cannot be denied that the theme of righteousness/justification experiences a certain development from the earliest to the latest uses of *dikaio*-terminology in the Pauline corpus. But that is true of all living themes in theology. There is also a remarkable constancy, rooted in the Old Testament and developed in light of Jesus as the Righteous One and the significance of his death. All subsequent theology that reckons seriously with Paul and wrestles especially with Romans cannot but help make an important place for God's righteousness and the justification of sinners through Christ.

In turning now to the relatively few (11) cases of *oikonomia*-terminology in the Pauline corpus, we may begin with the fact that Paul, growing up as the Greek-speaking Saul in Tarsus<sup>55</sup>, was doubtless familiar with the ubiquitous *oikonomoi* of the Greco-Roman world, both in the sense of (1) hou-

53. *Ephesians* (Anchor Bible 34, 34A; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1974), Vol. 2, p. 796.

54. "Righteousness" in the *New Testament* (cited above, n. 1), sections 178-87, cf. 428-37.

55. This is said aware of the contention by W.C. van Unnik, in *Tarsus or Jerusalem: The City of Paul's Youth* (London: Epworth, 1962), based on his interpretation of Acts 22:3 as a fixed pattern in Hellenistic rhetoric, that Paul, though born in Tarsus, "spent the years of his youth completely in Jerusalem" (p. 44). But Paul's knowledge of Greek makes clear that he would have known social-economic institutions like the Hellenistic *oikonomos*.

50. *Ibid.*, sections 155-60, reflecting Chr. Müller, *Gottes Gerechtigkeit* (cited above, n. 10).

51. See "Righteousness" in the *New Testament* (cited above, n. 1), sections 109-11, especially 110 on the chiasmic structure.

52. *Ibid.*, sections 166-77.

schold managers or stewards and (2) as administrators in city and other levels of government<sup>56</sup>. Indeed, Paul's list of greetings in Romans includes at 16:23 the statement, "Erastus, the city treasurer (*ho oikonomos tes poleos*), and our brother Quartus, greet you", the recipients in Rome (or Ephesus). An inscription, dated between A.D. 50 and 100, found in Corinth in 1929, actually speaks of an Erastus, who was then aedile or "commissioner of public works"; opinions have varied as to whether this Erastus is the same official in Corinth mentioned at Romans 16:23, and possibly the Erastus mentioned at Acts 19:21 and 2 Timothy 4: 20<sup>57</sup>.

A similar "secular" use of *oikonomos* occurs at Galatians 4:2 in Paul's analogy to how Christians have been freed from bondage to legalism by Christ's coming. The heir-to-be, he says, is "under guardians and trustees" (*epitropous... kai oikonomous*) until the time set by his father. The first term denotes the Latin *tutor* or guardian of a minor, but in Roman law the second term should have been *curator* (Greek, *kourator*). Has Paul substituted the general term for "administrator" (*oikonomos*) because of the servile connotation he has in mind, i.e., an *oikonomos* was often a supervisor of slaves and might be a slave himself (cf. v. 1, the heir "is no better than a slave")<sup>58</sup>? Such a sense for *oikonomos* is amply apparent in the world of the day.

Against this background we may turn to Paul's more theological usage of *oikonomia*-terminology. It begins with Paul's description of himself as a steward of God (1 Corinthians) but later (in Ephesians) talks of God (or Christ) as the administrator (*oikonomos* in each case). There will also be development from "administration of Paul's apostolic office" to "administration of a divine plan of salvation." Finally, often mixed into the discussion are references to the "mystery" or "mysteries" of God. While use

of *mysterion* develops, especially in Colossians and Ephesians, we are dealing with a term, it should be recognized, that for Paul has its roots not in Greek mystery cults (as history-of-religion enthusiasts have often claimed) but in a Semitic concept found especially in apocalyptic (cf. Dan. 2:28, e.g., and Qumran), for God's secrets revealed through his' prophets<sup>59</sup>.

To say, "It is required of stewards that they be found faithful" (1 Cor. 4:2) is simply a truism or even a proverb (cf. Luke 12: 42, above). This aphorism Paul has applied in 4:1 to himself and to other Christian missionaries (like Apollos and Cephas, 3:22), as "servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God" (*hyperetas Christou kai oikonomous mysterion theou*). Patristic commentators would see here a reference to the sacraments as "mysteries", but that is later usage. In Paul's context the reference is, as in apocalyptic, to God's revealed secrets, specifically "the mystery of God" (2:1), the wisdom of God hidden in a mystery (2:7), now revealed in "Christ and him crucified" (2: 2,8). For *oikonomoi mysterion theou* no precise parallel can be found in Greek cult, though temples had "administrators" and civil officials of that name had some religious duties. All in all, Paul, who has previously described himself and other missionaries as *diakonoi* (3:5) and *synergoi* for God (3:9), here is stressing that they are attendants of Christ and administrators of God's revealed secrets. And he claims to be a faithful *oikonomos*<sup>60</sup>.

In light of Paul's understanding of the apostolic preachers as *oikonomoi* of God, we may now turn to a phrase he uses in passing at 1 Corinthians 9:17. It comes as part of a strongly personal defense of his *apostole* (9: 1-2) and of his paradoxical right to waive financial support from his converts, because he wished to work with his own hands to meet his needs, so as to be able to present the gospel of freedom "free of charge" (9:18, *adapanon*). Paul says (9:17), "I have been and am entrusted with a commission (*oikonomian pepisteumai*), i.e., the office of steward/apostle (of the gospel, cf. *euangelizomai/euangelion* five times in vv. 16 and 17). It is attractive to punctuate so as to bring out the parallelism in what Paul says at 9:17:

For if willingly (*ei gar hekon prasso*) I am doing this (i.e., preaching the gospel without pay), I have a reward (i.e., grounds for boasting, vv. 15-16).

59. Cf. "Oikonomia-Terms in Paul" (cited above, n. 3), pp. 157, 160-61, and "Stewards of God'" (cited above, n. 3), p. 340.

60. Ibid., "Oikonomia-Terms," pp. 160-61; "Stewards of God," pp. 339, 341-42, 349. Hans Conzelmann's more recent commentary (German, 1969), *1 Corinthians* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), pp. 82-83, takes a similar line: "the language of administrations"; *mysterion* "provides the reference to the church," the "Christian touch."

56. Detailed survey in *E Ph* 61, 1-4 (1979): 563-603, and *Ekt I* (1980): 368-430.

57. C. E. B. Cranfield, *Romans* (ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark), Vol. 2 (1979), pp. 807-8, leaves the question open. There has been little change in the evidence available since Henry J. Cadbury wrote "Erastus of Corinth," in *JBL* 50 (1931): 42-58. Gerd Theissen, *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity: Essays on Corinth* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982), pp. 75-83, is inclined to identify the Erastus of the inscription with the man of Rom. 16:23, when he was quaestor.

58. So H. D. Betz, *Galatians* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), pp. 203-4. Lightfoot's old view that the two words mean respectively "guardians of person" and "guardians of property" is not regarded as tenable. The proposal of E. D. Burton (ICC *Galatians*, 1921), that we have two titles for one person, "guardians who are also administrators", runs afoul of the fact that we now have an inscription from Egypt (*OGIS* 669) that distinguishes *oikonomoi* and *epitropoi*; cf. my "Stewards of God" (cited above, n. 3), pp. 339-40, n. 2. On application of 4: 1ff. to "salvation history" in Paul's theology, cf. Oscar Cullmann, *Salvation in History* (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), p. 265, and James D. Hester, "The 'Heir' and Heilsgeschichte: A Study of Galatians 4: 1ff.," in *Oikonomia: Heilsgeschichte als Thema der Theologie*, ed. F. Christ (Hamburg-Bergstedt: Herbert Reich Verlag, 1967), pp. 118-25.

If, on the other hand, unwillingly, I have been entrusted with a commission (or have an *oikonomia* against my will, *ei de akon oikonomian pepisteumai*), what is then my reward?

Paul answers that it is preaching the gospel free of charge (v. 18). He sees himself a free man, working voluntarily, with apostolic authority, but also under a sort of compulsion and necessity (*anagke*, v. 16), so that, like many an *oikonomos* of the day, he is also a slave (v. 19, *edoulosa*) – to Christ. Paul's apostolic self-understanding was complex, but it included a view of himself as God's *oikonomos*, with an *oikonomia* of the gospel<sup>61</sup>.

The single reference to *oikonomia* in Colossians represents a significant advance, perhaps even in one way beyond what we shall find in Ephesians. For Colossians 1:25, in speaking of Paul's ministry (as *diakonos* of the church), says it is "according to the *oikonomia* of God that was given me for you..." (*kata ten oikonomian tou theou ten dotheisan moi eis hymas...*). What should be underscored is "economy of God." This is the first time that full phrase has occurred, and even Ephesians will not use this phrase with the genitive "of God," so well-known from Greco-Roman (Stoic) philosophy<sup>62</sup>. The *RSV* rendering, as "divine office," is too limited, though it does reflect the fact that Paul, who can elsewhere speak of "the grace that was given me" (Gal. 2:9) in his apostolic office, here used *oikonomia* to refer to his apostolic, commissioned task. But because *oikonomia tou theou* was such a common Hellenistic phrase for God's administration on the universe and would have included for Christian ears God's recent acts in Christ in his program of salvation for world, the phrase also includes the idea of God's plan and administration of salvation.

It must not be overlooked that, in this *oikonomia*, Paul, as minister of the church, is part of something even bigger, God's *oikonomia*. It is as a cog in this that the role has been given to him, specifically as v. 25 goes on, "to fulfill the world of God to you," i.e., to make known to the Gentiles what had been hidden for ages but was now revealed. Paul does this by proclaiming Christ. No other "apostle" is mentioned in Colossians, and one gets the impression from Colossians, Ephesians, and the Pastorals that Paul is "the

apostle," the key one in God's plan to bring Christ to the Gentiles<sup>63</sup>.

We have already intimated above that the three uses of *oikonomia* in Ephesians represent the crown and climax of this strand of thinking in the New Testament. Given what we have described above, none of the uses is surprising—simply more grandiose—and we have above and elsewhere suggested that the basic sense of "administration" fits all three<sup>64</sup>.

The almost liturgical thanksgiving of 1: 3–14, in speaking of the redemption (mystery, divine purpose) set forth in Christ (1: 7,9), describes all this as being "for the administration of the fulness of the times, that all things might be summed up (or brought together) in the Christ, things in the heavens and on earth". Against *RSV* and many commentators, I do not believe *oikonomia* here refers to a "plan of God" (if any Pauline term means that, it is *mysterion*, as in v. 9); rather it denotes how God "arranges", administers, or carries out his will. Markus Barth's more recent commentary offers five arguments for preferring "administration" over "plan". He goes even further, by rendering "that he (Christ) should administer the days of fulfillment", and arguing that Jesus is "the administrator," God's "arch-steward" over all other servants, in a "Christological concentration" that shifts from Paul as steward (in 1 Cor. 4:1 and Col. 1:25) to Christ as *oikonomos*<sup>65</sup>.

At Ephesians 3:9 Paul's functions as "minister (*diakonos*) (of the gospel) according to God's grace which was given to me" (3:7) are listed as "to preach good news to the Gentiles (v. 8) and "to make (all) see what the administration of the mystery means (*photisai (pantas) tis he oikonomia tou mysteriou*), the mystery which has been hidden from the ages by God who created all things..." Here Paul is the one carrying out the task as *oikonomos*, though Barth also brings in his idea of Christ as administrator by rendering, with an insertion, "...how the secret is administered (by the Messiah)..."<sup>66</sup> In any case, administering activity, not a "plan", is referred to here by our term, and I note the connection of this salvific work with God as Creator, a sense well-known for *oikonomia tou theou* in Greek classical usage.

The final Ephesians reference at 3:2 is the beginning of an aside as Paul begins his prayer for the strengthening of, indwelling of Christ in, and know-

61. Ibid., "Oikonomia-Terms," pp. 157–60; Conzelmann, *1, Corinthians*, pp. 157–58, regards the first "if"-clause (*hekon*), as "a foil for the real case of Paul": unwillingly he was laid hold of and given his apostolic destiny (cf. 1 Thess. 2:4; Gal. 1: 15–16; in Acts, chaps. 9, 22, and 26, the Damascus Road conversion).

62. Cf. Part II. 4, of the dissertation referred to in n. 2 (diss., pp. 391–485, summary 478–85).

63. Ibid., "Oikonomia-Terms," pp. 161–63; E. Lohse, *Colossians and Philemon* (German, 1968; Hermeneia, Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971), pp. 72–73, stresses "office" more than "plan" and Paul as "the Apostle to the nations".

64. "Oikonomia-Terms," pp. 163–65.

65. Ibid., p. 164. Barth, *Ephesians* (cited above, n. 53), pp. 76, 86–88, and (Comment XII: Christ the Administrator) 127–28 (without awareness of the article referred to above in n. 8).

66. Ibid., p. 164; Barth, pp. 326, 342–43.

ledge for, Gentile believers (3: 1, 14–19). It involves that strange anacolouthon, "...of indeed you have heard of the administration of the grace of God (*ten oikonomian tes charitos tou theou*) which was given me for you..." Unlike Colossians 1:25, the "which-was-given me" clause here modifies "grace" in the genitive, not *oikonomia*, a usage that echoes Galatians 2:9 (*charin ten dotheisan moi*). Commentators have variously taken 3:2 to refer to Paul's activity as a steward (cf. 1 Cor. 9: 17;); his office given by God's grace (cf. Gal. 2:9); his administration of the grace given to him (cf. Col. 1:25); God's plan (cf. Eph. 1:10 in the RSV); or God's administration of his mystery (cf. Col. 1:25 and Eph. 1:10, above). If *charitos* is an adjectival genitive, it means "God's graciously given office of apostle" that Paul has received; if a genitive of content, the divine arrangement of the message about grace, revealed in Christ and given to Paul to proclaim. I find it difficult to exclude either God's administering of the good news or Paul's role in sharing this. Here Barth, differently from his treatment of 1:10 and 3:9, favors as a rendering, "I was given God's grace in order to administer it to you," and so he speaks of Paul's "Stewardship of Grace for the Nations." This is taken in the senses of serving in the salvation of the Gentiles, with the caveat it means "defusion" of a gift, not "infusion" (or *gratia infusa*)<sup>67</sup>.

Of the two *oikonomia*-terms in the Pastoral Epistles, one reference is routine, the other debated in meaning. Titus 1:7, in a section about appointing elders (*presbyterous*), goes on, in listing requirements for them, with the statement, "For an overseer/bishop must be blameless, as God's steward (*dei gar ton episkopon anegkleton einai, hos theou oikonomon*)...." It would be attractive to argue that these presbyter/bishops in Crete should be understood as *oikonomoi* within the *oikonomia* that Paul carried out as the Apostle of the *oikonomia* of God. However, it is more likely that the concept stems from the house churches of early Christianity (cf. Col. 4:15; Rom. 16:5); in an *oikos* there must be an *oikonomos*. This is technically the first time we have had the phrase "steward of God", though cf. 1 Corinthians 4:1 for the same sense<sup>68</sup>.

First Timothy 1:5 recalls how Paul urged Timothy in Ephesus not to let certain people (*tinias*) teach different doctrines or give heed to "myths and endless genealogies that promote speculations rather than the economy of God that (is) in faith (*ekzetesei parechousin mallon e oikonomian theou ten en pistei*)." It thus presents a phrase that has been the bane of translators. First, one may exclude the King James Version rendering, "godly edifying", because it is based

on a Western reading, *oikodomen theou*, not preferred by text critics today<sup>69</sup>. The New English Bible takes *oikonomia* as "God's plan for us, which works through faith"; this is convincing if one thinks *oikonomia* = plan of salvation in previously considered passages in Paul. So one is left with the three options that RSV provides: God's "stewardship" (also adopted in the NEB note); or "order", either in the sense of church administration (so Moffatt's translation) or of "ordered living", ethically (J.B. Phillips); or "divine training" (RSV text). This last sense of "education in salvation", perhaps coming about by observation of the divine administration of the world and (for Christians) of salvation, has background in Stoic philosophy and later appears in the thought of Clement of Alexandria, among other fathers<sup>70</sup>.

If that is the right meaning (so G. Holtz), one must still decide whether "in faith" refers to Christian doctrines or personal faith. Holtz's commentary argues convincingly for "training in salvation received by faith." The interesting suggestion is also made that there is a reference to the Lord's Supper here: in a house church the overseer/bishop must manage (*prostenai*) his household well (3:4, cf. 15), i.e., the congregation as it celebrates the Lord's Supper, so that it enters into God's *oikonomia* and not into "speculations"<sup>71</sup>. But this is speculative.

These eleven Pauline uses of *oikonomia*-terminology provide a slim but developing base in the Bible for all the later patristic usages. In comparison to what Paul said about righteousness/justification, however, the economy of God was a very minor emphasis in his thought.

### III. Righteousness/Justification and *Oikonomia*-Terms in the Rest of the New Testament and in the Apostolic Fathers

The statistics on our two themes in the remaining books of the New Testament are very one-sided. Outside the gospels and the letters of Paul, we find:

<i>dikaiosyne</i>	24	examples	<i>oikonomia</i>	none
<i>dikaion</i>	5	»	<i>oiknomein</i>	none
<i>dikaios</i>	29	»	<i>oikonomos</i>	1 example
<i>dikaioma</i>	4	»		
<i>dikaios</i>	1	»		

69. For confusion of *oikodomen* and *oikonomia* in manuscripts of classical texts, cf. *Ek1* 3 (1982): 138, n. 170 (diss., p. 385, n. 170).

70. E.g., *Paed.* 1, 3, 3 (1, 91, 17;); 1, 74, 3 (1, 133, 17); 3, 99, 1 (1, 290, 6), etc. Stressed by O. Lillge, "Das patristische Werk *oikonomia*, seine Geschichte und seine Bedeutung bis auf Origenes" (diss., Erlangen, 1955), pp. 85–87.

71. *Pastoralbriefe* (cited above, n. 68), pp. 35–36: "Heilserziehung in persönlichem Glauben," though on p. 33 he has the rendering "Haushalterschaft Gottes, die im Glauben geschieht."

67. *Ibid.*, pp. 164–65; Barth, pp. 326, 328–29, 358–59.

68. Cf. Part III of the dissertation cited in n. 2, p. 555. Further, Gottfried Holtz, *Die Pastoralbriefe* (THKNT 13; Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 3d., 1980), p. 208.

Because I have discussed all the *dikaio*-references elsewhere, we shall here summarize only the highlights of use in selected New Testament books<sup>72</sup>. The single use of *oikonomos* at 1 Peter 4: 10 we shall allow to serve as springboard for some recent speculations about the *oikonomia* of God as an underlying, unifying theme in that epistle. Finally, to balance things somewhat, we shall note in this section, even though the distinction between canonical scriptures and documents outside the canon from the "church-building period" is to be taken seriously for church and theology, some references in the Apostolic Fathers. They are harbingers of things to come in the partistic period (Section IV).

Allusion has already been made to the seven occurrences of *dikaio* in the Gospel of Matthew as representing a particular perspective. All of them occur on the lips of Jesus, but two of them are in sayings where the parallel (in Luke) does not include the word (Matt. 5:6; 6:33), and the rest are in sayings unique to Matthew (3:15; 5:10; 5:20; 6:1; 21:32). For that reason in can be claimed the usage is redactoral. One example (6:1) has the very Jewish sense of "piety" (variant reading: reading: "alms-giving" as an interpretation). All the instances root in Old Testament usage, and the exegetical debate has been over which sense of the Hebrew *sdq* is involved, whether the reference is to ethical conduct or to God's saving activity. My own analysis<sup>73</sup> argued for at least two verses suggesting the gift of salvation: 5:6 ("hunger and thirst after righteousness") and 6:33 (where *dikaio* is parallel with God's "kingdom"), which in the teaching of Jesus represents a gift). Two others may reflect a Matthean idea of salvation history (3:15, God's righteous plan; 21:32, 21:32, "the way of righteousness" in which John the Baptist and Jesus came). Demand for righteous conduct is to be seen in 5: 10, 20, and 6:1. There is general agreement in Fitzmyer's response and in a more recent commentary treatment<sup>74</sup>. Matthew's represents a different way of looking at the Old Testament theme than Paul's.

The Epistle of James has always been a problem in discussions of righteousness/justification. Because of words in 2: 14–26 it appears that James contradicts Paul. Accordingly, it has, as a document, sometimes been dated quite early, as a reflection of Jesus' simple teachings, which did not speak of "justification (by

faith)." However, James is one of the few places in the New Testament where the phrase so prominent in Paul, the "righteousness of God", occurs (James 1:20) and is the place where "by faith alone" occurs (2: 24; in Paul, implied, but never in express words). For such reasons, as well as others – including the excellent quality of the Greek in James (best explained by a later date, when Christianity had advanced further into the Greco-Roman world)–it is better to view James as knowing of Paul's teaching, but in a form where poor disciples of the Apostle had misunderstood what Paul had said. James may then be regarded as an attempt to defend Paul's intent by carrying the opponents' views to absurd lengths. By "faith and works", unfortunate formula that it proved to be for measuring Paul, the author was trying to preserve what Paul had meant by the "obedience of faith" (Rom. 1:5; 16:26)<sup>75</sup>.

To an extent, 1 Peter can also be said to relate to Paul's views on many issues, including righteousness/justification (or is it that both are reflecting the earliest common apostolic Christianity, of which we spoke above?). Besides 3:18, already quoted (cf. 2:24, Christ died "that we might...live to righteousness"), 1 Peter speaks of God who "judges justly" (2:23), Christ the Righteous One, and Christians as righteous (3:12) who suffer for righteousness' sake (3: 14)<sup>76</sup>.

If 1 Peter is somewhat Pauline, Hebrews must be measured as having a quite different view on righteousness/justification than does Paul. Hebrews quotes, as Paul does, Habakkuk 2:4, but with 2:3 and for a different purpose (Heb. 10: 36–39). It talks of "the righteousness that comes by faith" (11:7) and stresses *pistis* throughout chapter 11, but Hebrews never uses the verb *dikaion*, and its understanding of faith (as "firm assurance") is different than Paul's. Hebrews has yet another way, then, of using *dikaio*-terminology<sup>77</sup>.

A good case can be made for 1 John as stressing God and Christ as righteous (1:9; 2:1, 29), the work of Christ as "expiation" (as in Paul; 1 John 2:2); and the need for doing righteousness" (3: 7, 10). Likewise for an interest, in Acts, in Christ as "the Righteous One" (3:14; 7:52; 22:14) and once for an echo of Paul's doctrine of justification in a sermon by Paul at Pisidian Antioch (13:39)<sup>78</sup>. But all this is simply to labor the obvious, the breadth and variety of *dikaio*-terminology and of righteousness/justification as a theme in the New Testament beyond Paul and the gospels.

The single *oikonomia*-term in all these books occurs at 1 Peter 4:10 in the context of gospel-based (4:1), eschatologically-oriented (4:7) paraenesis. "Practice

72. "Righteousness" in the New Testament (cited above, n. 1).

73. Ibid., sections 226–43.

74. Ibid., section 410. Cf. Robert H. Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on His Literary and Theological Art* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), pp. 50–51, 70, 72–73, 81–82, 101, 118–19, 422–23. Gundry well brings out the arguments for *dikaio*-*syne* as redactoral in Matthew. Not available to me: Heinz Giesen, *Christliches Handeln: Eine redaktionskritische Untersuchung zum dikaio*-*Begriff im Mattheus-Evangelium* (Europäische Hochschulschriften 23/181; Frankfurt/Bern: Lang, 1982 (diss., Biblical Institute, Rome, 1979).

75. Ibid., sections 266–83, 413–14.

76. Ibid., sections 301–304.

77. Ibid., sections 285–300, 415–17.

78. Ibid., sections 258–60 (1 John); 248–53 (Acts).

hospitality to one another without grumbling; each one, just as he/she received a grace-gift (*charisma*), use it in ministry for yourselves (*eis heautois auto diakonountes*), as good stewards (*kaloi oikonomoi*) of the varied grace (*charis*) of God" (4: 9-10). Though some commentators have applied this reference to money spent on others, specifically in entertaining guests (v. 9), the reference in the "grace-gift" coming from God's grace is probably broader than that. The imagery may recall a saying of Jesus at Luke 12:42 about the "faithful *oikonomos*," but any attempt there, as here, to limit the admonition to church leaders is wrong, for all Christians are meant. The sentiment is very much like that of certain passages in Paul (cf. 1 Cor. 12; Rom. 12: 3-8; Eph. 4: 7-12), but 1 Peter is not interested in listing a series of *charismata*, nor is the unifying appeal to "the body of Christ"<sup>79</sup>.

It is on the basis of such observations that John H. Elliott, in a sociological analysis of 1 Peter, has used 4: 10 to claim a much fuller "*oikonomia* theology" behind that book and in Asia Minor Christianity in general<sup>80</sup>. He argues that 4: 7-11 aims to encourage "group solidarity" in the Christian community, "toward one another" (v. 9), "for yourselves" (vv. 8, 10). The admonitions center around *diakonia* (vv. 10 and 11) and - Elliott's term - *oikonomia*. For he contends that *philadelphia* ("brotherly love", 1:22) and *philoxenia* ("hospitality", 4:9) were tied to "domestic order" (*oikonomia*), and he can invoke the various treatises from antiquity on "household management"<sup>81</sup>. The *oikonomoi* motif at 4:10 "is a characteristic Petrine adaptation of a traditional *topos*", injected into the common pattern of presenting *charismata* found in Paul's letters (Elliott, p. 162).

As further support, Elliott also invokes the *oikos tou theou* material in 1 Peter and references to *oiketoi* or "household servants" (2:18). He refers specifically to "the household of God" at 4:17 and the designation of God's people in Christ as an *oikos pneumatikos* at 2:5 ("household of the Spirit," as he takes it), to *oikonomia* as "management of the household of God" and as "God's arrangements for human redemption"<sup>82</sup>, Elliott suggests an "*oikos*-based theo-

logical symbolism", where "the believing community" is "household of God...and object of the divine *oikonomia*" (p. 265 n. 248). Inevitably, then, all Christians can be described "as *oikonomoi* and *oikeioi*", as at 1 Peter 4:10.

These proposals I find intriguing and wish they were so - or, better, could be convincingly demonstrated. This is not the first time that, in "biblical theology," *oikos*, *oikonomia*, and even *oikodome* have been brought together fruitfully<sup>83</sup>. Elliott's case could be strengthened by referring to some of the things said about "the economy of God" in Greek philosophy as a background to any Christian *oikonomia tou theou* and even, for the prevalence of his terms in documents (like 1 Peter) associated with Asia Minor, to the type of "Asia Minor theology" and its use of *oikonomia*- terms that emerge in the second century<sup>84</sup>. But, while welcoming for further exploration many of his proposals, I am hesitant to build so much on a single verse, especially when *oikonomia tou theou* does not occur in 1 Peter and the "house" concept can also have roots in the Old Testament and in the "house church"<sup>85</sup>.

Turning to the Apostolic Fathers, we find that the varied documents going under that name preserve something of the New Testament emphasis on *dikaiosisyne* as God's saving righteousness but also more and more treat it as something which a Christian is to do, often in terms of individualistic piety<sup>86</sup>.

We may illustrate with 1 Clement (ca. A.D. 95-96). Echoing Paul, Clement wrote to Corinth, "We too therefore... are being justified (*dikaiousmetha*), not through ourselves, nor through our own wisdom or understanding, or piety, or deeds that we have done in holiness of heart, but through faith, through which God the Almighty has justified (*edikaiosen*) all from the beginning" (1 Clem. 32.4). Abraham is cited (10.1) as an example: "he was found faithful". But this is then explained in terms of Abraham's being "obedient to the words of God" (10.1), of his "doing righteousness and truth through faith" (31.2), and even of his being given a son in his old age "on account of his faith and hospitality" (10:7). So strong is the emphasis on "faith and hospitality" that it has been suggested that 1 Clement reflects a situation in Corinth where, with rival groups of clergy, there were

79. Further references in E. G. Selwyn, *The First Epistle of St. Peter* (London: Macmillan, 2d ed. 1947), p. 218, and in Elliott (cited in the next note), pp. 146-47, 161-62 n. 145.

80. *A Home for the Homeless: A Sociological Analysis of 1 Peter, Its Situation and Strategy* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981), especially pp. 145-48 with n. 145; 156-70 (with correction of the widely held view of 2: 4-10 as "cultic" or 2:5 as "spiritual temple"); 191-82; 200-208, and n. 248. For sake of brevity, I omit Elliott's attention to a possible "pilgrim theology," suggested by *paroikos* (2: 11, cf. 1:1).

81. *Ibid.*, pp. 170-82 and 213-15, with nn. 43 and 217 especially. I would prefer to start with Xenophon and Aristotle, etc., and not Philo, and not simply to bring in these writings *peri oikonomias* in connection with "household codes" (*Haustafeln*) in presenting an "*oikonomia* tradition" (p. 214). Cf. *E Ph* 61, 1-4 (1979): 563-603 (diss., pp. 153-205).

82. *Home for the Homeless* (cited above, n. 80), p. 192, referring to, among others, the first two titles in n. 3 above; Elliott seems, however, not to know the other material referred to in nn. 3, 2, and 8.

83. Cf. Helge Brattgard, *God's Stewards: A Theological Study of the Principles and Practices of Stewardship* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1963), pp. 22-51.

84. So F. Loofs, *Leitfaden zum Studium der Dogmengeschichte* (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1906), summarized in *E Ph* 60: 3-4 (1978): 512-14, 518, 529, 548 (diss., pp. 30-33, 39, 57, 87-88, cf. 606-7).

85. As Elliott himself (cited above n. 80) shows, pp. 182-200.

86. Cf. *Righteousness and Society* (cited above, n. 5), pp. 86-93. Compare also Stuhlmacher, *Gerechtigkeit Gottes* (cited above, n. 10), pp. 11-13, who sees the difference in a shift from Paul's eschatology of the "two ages".

uncertainties about offering and accepting hospitality and so *philoxenia* is stressed alongside faith<sup>87</sup>. Elsewhere, Clement writes, "Blessed are all those who enter in and pursue their way in holiness and righteousness", using the "gate of righteousness" (Ps. 118: 19) that opens into life, the gate which is "in Christ" (1 Clem. 48. 2-4).

The *Epistle of Barnabas* (late first or early second century) also refers to Abraham who, by believing alone, was established in righteousness" (*monos pisteusas, et ethe eis dikaiosynen*, 13.7; *sola fide?*). *Barnabas* even retains Paul's future side of justification: "do not live in solitude, retiring by yourselves, as if already justified (*hos ede dedikaiomenoi*, 4-10), for "being made alive by faith in the promise and in the word, we shall live, exercising lordship over the land" (6:17). On the ethical side, the document speaks of "the way of righteousness" (1.4; 5.4, where the Lord "travelled together with me," *synodeusen*), in contrast to a "way of darkness." The three basic doctrines of the Lord are (1.6).

- . hope (of life), the beginning and end of our faith; righteousness, the beginning and ending of judgment;
- love, a witness of joy and gladness, of works of righteousness.

Those on "the way of death" get "no reward of righteousness" (20.2). The "righteous ordinances" (*dikaiomata*) of God loom large (1.2; 4.11; 10.2, 11; 16.9; 21. 1,5). While mostly the tone is one of admonition to learn and walk in these commands (21.1), the *dikaiomata* may also at times suggest God's righteous acts in the sense of saving actions toward the Christians addressed: they are so "great and rich toward you" that joy abounds over the grace and the implanted gift of the Spirit that they have received (1.2)<sup>88</sup>.

We find both emphases in Ignatius of Antioch. He wishes "to be justified through" Jesus' cross, death, and resurrection and "faith through him" (*Philadelphians* 8.2). Moreover, "I am not thereby justified," he writes *Romans* 5.1, echoing Paul at 1 Cor. 4:4), when "I battle with wild beasts" (cf. 1 Cor. 15:32) –the famous "ten leopards"– on his way to Rome and martyrdom. Yet *dikaïos* is used in its sense of "moral uprightness" (e.g., *Magnesians* 12 = Prov. 18: 17).

In 2 Clement the talk is more of "doing righteousness": "Let us do (*praxomen*) *dikaïosyne*, in order that we may at the end be saved" (19.3). "Though in the

midst of the engines of the devil, I strive to pursue *dikaïosyne*" (18.2). In the *Shepherd* of Hermas, "faith" and "practicing righteousness" are just two items in a list of virtues (*Mandates* 8. 9-10).

When Polycarp wrote to the Philippians (3. 1-3) "concerning righteousness", it was not a reflection of what Paul had written to them on justification (Phil. 3: 6-11) but rather about being able, from Paul's letters, "to be built up into the faith given to you, which is 'mother of us all', with hope following and love going before... If one be within these, he/she has fulfilled the command of righteousness" (cf. 4.1; 9. 1-2). Yet Polycarp can also quote Ephesians 2: 8-9, "saved by grace, not works" (*Philippians* 1.3) and can speak of not the Holy Spirit as our guarantee (*arrabon*) but Christ and his cross (*Phil.* 8.1).

All in all, the Apostolic Fathers hold on to both aspects of the biblical view of righteousness/justification – God's saving work and the human response, perhaps with more of a nod to the latter.

*Oikonomia*—terms in the Apostolic Fathers show, on the other hand, not only a continuation of "secular" meanings from classical Greek and a reflection of New Testament usages, but also a further development that points toward the patristic proliferation of meanings to come.

The *Martyrdom of Polycarp* describes, for example, how, when some martyrs were scourged, "the arrangement (*oikonomia*) of their flesh was seen, right down to the inner veins and arteries" (2.2.)<sup>89</sup>. The *Epistle to Diognetus* 4.5 speaks of "the arrangements of God (*tas oikonomias tou theou*) and the changes of the seasons" in the divine ordering of the creation.

Reflective of the New Testament, as well as of the world of the day are Ignatius's words to the Christian community: "Give heed to the *episkopos*... Toil together with one another, train together, run together, suffer together, rest (or sleep in death) together, rise together, as God's stewards and assistants and attendants" (*theou oikonomoi kai paredroi kai hyperetai*; *To Polycarp* 6.1; cf. 1 Cor. 4:1). Ignatius, *Ephesians* 6.1, says with regard to an *episkopos*—whom one is to fear so much the more when the bishop keeps silent (cf. 15.1)—"Everyone whom the master of the house (*oikodespotes*) sends for his management of the house (*eis idian oikonomian*), him we must receive, as the one who sends him himself." This is a reflection of the rabbinic principle, perhaps reflected in Matthew 10:40, "The one sent by a person is as the person himself"<sup>90</sup>. Diognetus 7.1 says with regard to the rank (*taxis*) to which all Christians are appointed, "It is a management not of human mysteries with which we are entrusted" (*oude anthropon oikonomian mysterion pepisteintai*; cf. 1 Cor. 4:1 and 9:17).

87. Ibid., *Righteousness and Society*, pp. 89-90, citing H. Chadwick, "Justification by Faith and Hospitality," *Studia Patristica* IV, ed. F. L. Cross (TU 79; Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1961): 281-85.

88. Ibid., *Righteousness and Society*, pp. 90-91; cf. Robert A. Kraft, *Barnabas and the Didache* ("The Apostolic Fathers: A New Translation and Commentary," 3, ed. R.M. Grant; New York: Nelson 1965), pp. 31-32, 81-83.

89. For classical parallel of this use, cf. *Ekt* 2 (1981): 601.

90. Cf. K. H. Rengstorf, "apostolos," *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. G. Kittel (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans), Vol. 1 (1964): 414-30, especially 415.

It is in presenting God's arrangement of salvation through Jesus Christ that the greatest advance comes in the use of our terms beyond the New Testament. There is, first, a problematic reference in *Diognetus* 9.1 when the plan (*boule*) of God is being discussed and how "God revealed through his beloved son (or servant, *pais*) and manifested the things prepared from the beginning" 8.11). "All things therefore he (God) knew (*edei*) by himself together with his son (*pais*) 'economically' (*oikonomikos*), and... he allowed us to be carried along... by pleasures and lusts" (cf. 1 Cor. 12:2; Rom. 1:24, 9:32). So at least the single manuscript, dating from the 13th or 14th century, that preserves *Diognetus*, was reported as reading. (This codex, Argenteratensis, was accidentally burned during the siege of Strasbourg in 1871. However, with Lachmann, most editors read...*ede... oikonomikos* (perfect participle, rather than adverb), i.e., "Therefore, having planned (or arranged) all things by himself together with his son, God...")

Most significant are two passages in Ignatius, *Ephesians* 18.2 and 20. 1. After a reference to the cross at 18.1, reflecting 1 Corinthians 1: 20–24, Ignatius goes on in a creed-like sentence (18.2), "For our God, Jesus the Christ, was borne in the womb by Mary, according to an arrangement (*kat' oikonomian*) of the seed of David and of the Holy Spirit (cf. Rom. 1: 3–4), who was born and baptized in order that by his passion he might cleanse the water (of baptism). Then follows a reference in 19.1 to the "three mysteries", Mary's virginity, her child-bearing and the death of the Lord. Some manuscripts and versions add to *oikonomia* the words *to theou*. Some commentators see here the origins of the patristic doctrine of "reserve", for it is said that the three *mysteria* "were wrought in the silence of God". But while the sense is of God arranging salvation in Christ, and that specifically through the Incarnation (when the word came "out of silence", *Magnesians* 8.2), we are not yet for *kat' oikonomian* at such later technical senses as "incarnation" or "reserve".

The final Ignatian reference (20.1) proposes that "in the second little book" which the bishop hopes to write, "I will make clear to you the 'arrangement' for the new man Jesus Christ, an arrangement which I began (to present) (*hes erxamen oikonomias eis ton kainon anthropon*), in his faith and in his love, in his passion and resurrection...., Here *oikonomia* refers to the whole "Christ event", how God planned and carried it through. Here, as in 18. 1–2 and 19.1, and elsewhere in Ignatius, the birth, death, and resurrection of Jesus are treated together.

These last examples, early in the second century, point to one type of development, along salvation history lines, so that eventually *oikonomia* will come to mean "incarnation" but also other aspects of God's management of salvation.

In the Apostolic Fathers, therefore, the biblical senses of righteousness/justification continue, but

new applications for *oikonomia* have begun to appear.

We may tie our two themes together with a passage from *Diognetus*. In the chapter about the "plan of salvation," with its textually disputed reference to God either having "planned" everything together with the Son or having known all "economically", the author goes on to offer a sort of paraphrase summary of Paul's Letter to the Romans. While he can be accused of dropping the phrase *dikaioyne tou theou* in favor of words his audience would more readily appreciate, like God's "goodness and power" (*chrestotes kai dynamis*; but cf. Rom. 2:4; 11:22; and 1:16 and 20) or his "philanthropy and love" (*philanthropia, agape*, 9.2; but cf. Titus 3:4), our author does speak of Christ's death as ransom (*lytron*), and how he took upon himself our sins (2 Cor. 5:19), "the Righteous One for the unrighteous" (1 Peter 3:18), and then goes on to describe the "sweet exchange" (cf. Luther's "froehliche Wechsel"): "What else could have covered our sins but that One's righteousness? In whom was it possible for us, lawless and impious, to be justified (*dikaiothenai*, Rom. 4:5) except in the Son of God alone? O, the sweet exchange! O, the inscrutable (cf. Rom. 11:33) creative act! O, the unexpected benefactions! That the wickedness of many be concealed in one Righteous One, that the righteousness of One should justify many lawless ones (cf. Rom. 5: 12–13, 18)" (*Diognetus* 9. 3–5).

In this panegyric, the Pauline depiction of redemption in terms of righteousness/justification in Romans is made the substance of the plan God "arranged" (*oikonomein*) in Christ.

#### IV. The Two Doctrines in Patristic Thought

It would be attractive to conclude on this high note in the *Epistle to Diognetus*, combining "justification" and "the economy." But in the brief space still available something must be said in outline about the fortunes of these two great themes in succeeding centuries, for there were significant developments. Our survey can be only that, a survey, often indicating where existing research points and what needs more study, as righteousness/justification wanes and occasionally waxes and *oikonomia* comes into its own in Greek theology and beyond with many new senses.

In general, the impression often given about righteousness/justification is that it went into eclipse after Paul's day and thereafter resurfaced only occasionally, chiefly in Western theology, usually in controversies at that – Augustine vs. Pelagius and then in the Reformation debate of Luther against the Church of Rome<sup>91</sup>. If comparisons are made with the East,

91. So, e.g., Gerhard Müller, *Die Rechtfertigungslehre. Geschichte und Probleme* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus Gerd Mohn, 1977), pp. 12–24; Vittorio Subilia, *Die Rechtfertigung aus Glaube: Gestalt und Wirkung vom Neuen Testament*

justification as a "Protestant" doctrine is likened with *theosis*.<sup>92</sup>

This impression is correct to the extent that Paul on the whole (not just with regard to justification) went out of style in some quarters already by the end of the first century, and many of his themes proved for successors "hard to understand" and subject to twisting (2 Peter 3:16). We may list as reasons, besides the fact that the situations to be faced had shifted,

(1) changes in eschatology, so that his (Jewish) framework of the "two aeons" – the present evil age (Gal. 1:4) and the new age already impinging in Christ on the "now time" (Rom. 3:26) – was replaced by the notion of a prolonged period, expecting a distant parousia;

(2) an increasing emphasis on "ontology," whereby, in contrast to Hebraic ways of looking at the world, Greek metaphysics became "the controlling influence in theological thought"<sup>93</sup>;

(3) the championing of Paul by Marcion (and Gnostics too at times). When Marcion came to be regarded as archheretic, the Apostle whom he made so central (with Galatians first in his canon) was tainted too, or at least subsequent thinkers were made to handle Paul only with care. That Origen did a commentary on Romans (preserved only in Latin by Rufinus), with characteristic Origenistic thoughts such as his remark on Romans 1:16, "the righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel so that no one, whether Jew or Greek or barbarian, is excluded from salvation" (and thus universalism), probably did not

*bis heute* (Italian, 1976; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1981), pp. 42–54; George H. Tavard, *Justification: An Ecumenical Study* (New York: Paulist, 1983), pp. 17–30; O.H. Pesch and A. Peter, *Einführung in die Lehre von Gnade und Rechtfertigung* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1981), pp. 1–42 ("the significant silence of the early fathers"; but note, p. 12, the suggestion that "grace" has the same function as *oikonomia* in Eastern theology in expressing God's saving work). The impression stated above is given even by the U. S. Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue statement "Justification by Faith" (*Origins* 13, 17 (Oct. 6, 1983): 277–304, because it works backwards from the sixteenth century only to Augustine (sections 5–20) and does not carry its biblical insights (sections 122–47) into the centuries between the New Testament and Middle Ages (cf. section 148).

92. *Ibid.*, sections 6 and 103. The paper for the dialogue by William G. Rusch, "How the Eastern Fathers Understood What the Western Church Meant by Justification," published in "Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue, 7," *Justification by Faith* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1984), deals primarily with "divinization" or "defication." One ought to ask how the Eastern Fathers treated the biblical material on righteousness/justification.

93. These first two points are emphasized by Stuhlmacher, *Gerechtigkeit Gottes* (cited above, n. 10), pp. 12–13, though he is concerned more strictly only with the phrase *dikaioyne theou*, which he maintains became an "exegetical relic" by the second century. He draws heavily on K. H. Schelkle, *Paulus Lehrer der Väter: die altkirchliche Auslegung von Römer 1-11* (Düsseldorf: Patmos Verlag, 1956), which goes through Romans section by section, citing patristic views.

help Paul's doctrine either in some quarters (PG 14. 861B).

(4) We must also mention the fact that Christianity, after the first century, soon and increasingly distanced itself from its Semitic roots. That meant that a theme like righteousness/justification, which was so derived from the Hebrew scriptures and concepts in them (cf. Paul's use of Gen. 15:6 and Hab. 2:4), would become more and more difficult to understand. Perhaps even for so gifted an exegete and preacher as John Chrysostom the "anti-Judaism" of his day gave problems in grasping and presenting Paul's thoughts. Chrysostom's homilies on Romans, for all the enthusiasm over Paul, do "not take the opportunity to discuss" the "great dogmatic problems" dealt with there<sup>94</sup>, and one has the feeling that Chrysostom was happier speaking about the autobiographical details of Galatians 1–2:15 than the doctrinal matters of 2:15–21 in his homilies.

Marcion's approach to Paul bears further examination. In championing "the gospel of an 'Alien God' (*ho theos allotrios, kainos*)" and rejecting the Old Testament but stressing Paul, Marcion had to split asunder the gospel of righteousness/justification in Romans. He contrasted "the God who is righteous (or just, *dikaios*)", the Demiurge, with the "good God" revealed in Christ. In his ensuing sharp distinction between "law" and "gospel" Marcion evidently allowed that, just as law had value over against evil and sin, so *dikaioyne* and related terms are objectionable only in the manner in which the Demiurge employs them. Thus Marcion's expurgated Bible still contained Romans 1:17a ("God's righteousness is revealed in the gospel") but not 1:17b (Hab. 2:4). It included 5:1 ("justified by faith") but on 3:31–4:25 (on Abraham); Romans 10:4 (*eis dikaioynen panti to pisteuonti*), but not 10:5–11:32. But that meant that he could no longer preserve Paul's full view of God's righteousness, rooted in the Hebrew scriptures, any more than he could admit any real incarnation, an *ensarkos Christou oikonomia*<sup>95</sup>. In a dualism where grace overcomes justice, the saving righteousness of God the judge was shattered<sup>96</sup>. It is unlikely that Paul's view of justification can ever stand apart from the Old Testament.

What is needed is a fuller survey than I have found anywhere of how the Greek and Latin fathers commented on, preached about, and theologized over all the Old and New Testament passages on *dikaioyne*, recognizing that they also often necessarily missed some of the original meanings or felt it neces-

94. J. Quasten, *Patrology*, Vol. 3, *The Golden Age of Greek Patristic Literature* (Utrecht: Spectrum, Westminster, Md: Newman, 1960), p. 442.

95. For references, cf. Adolf von Harnack, *Marcion: Das Evangelium vom fremden Gott* (TU 54; Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1921), pp. 86–87, 161–53, 109.

96. E.C. Blackman, *Marcion and his Influence* (London: SPCK, 1948), p. 71.

sary to speak differently in their later situations. Even with all the changes in scene indicated above and the paucity, often, of our sources, there is a fair amount of material to be considered.

Even a quick perusal, for example, of the Oxford *Patristic Greek Lexicon* (cited above, n.8), which has nine columns of entries for some twenty-five terms (compared with some eight and a half columns for six *oikonomia*-terms, excluding *oikos* and *oikodome* and *dioikeo*-terms), indicates the plentitude of evidence. While senses that are not theological abound (*dikaioo* as "deem right", or *dikaiois* as "meet" or "fitting," or *dikaioisynai* as "judgments") one is struck by the continuing examples with regard to God or Christ. "The righteousness of God is good, and his goodness is righteous" (Clement of Alexandria, *Protrepticus* 6.14)<sup>97</sup>. Chrysostom, on Romans 3:26, about "the *endeixis* (proof) of God's righteousness: not only that 'he himself is righteous', but also that he makes others who are rotting away in sin suddenly righteous" (*Homily* 7.2 on Romans; PG 59.9. 485D). "To seek Jesus is to seek the word and wisdom and the righteousness and truth and power of God" (Origen, *Commentary on John* 32. 31 (19); GCS 4. 478.28; PG 14. 825C). Origen even calls Christ *autodikaioisyne* (*ibid.*, 6.6. (3); p. 115, 4; PG 14. 212B.) a term he uses elsewhere alongside *auto-sophia*, *autoaletheia*, and *autobasileia* (*Commentary on Matthew* 14.7; GCS 12, 289.20; PG 13. 1197B).

However, in such references *dikaioisyne* may be either justifying or judgmental. "The lawlessness of sinners was not so great as the righteousness of him who dies for them" (Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catecheses* 13.33; PG 33. 813A). On the other hand, "The Son is the power of the Father. Those saved through the Son were saved by the power of the Father, and those being judged by him undergo the judgment by the justice of God. For Christ is the *dikaioisyne* of God which is revealed through the gospel" (Gregory of Nyssa, *Contra Eunomium* 6; Jaeger ed. 2, p. 136. 15; PG 45. 724D).

The verb *dikaioo*, for all its other uses, still keeps the sense of justify, often with the phrases attached "by grace" and "through faith", and even "faith alone" (examples from Basil the Great and Theodoret on p. 371 of the *Lexicon*, to which can be added instances from Origen, Chrysostom, Cyril of Alexandria, Ambrosiaster, Pelagius, Augustine, and Hilary)<sup>98</sup>. But the forensic sense may lessen, the eschatological

tension drop away, and the process of justification may also involve works, orthodox belief, or "spiritual sacrifice". And alongside of Abraham as an example, we have now cited also Noah and Enoch (Eusebius, *Demonstratio Evangelica* 2.3; GCS 6, 91.22; PG 22. 161B), the Queen of Sheba (Theodoret, *Quaestiones in 3 Reg.*, 1. 479, Schultz-Noesselt ed.; PG 80), and even, through philosophy, the Greeks (Clem. Alex., *Stromateis* 1.20, GCS 2, 63.19; PG 9. 816C).

For the task of sorting out and classifying such varied references, there are other approaches too. Stuhlmacher, using especially the data gathered by Schelkle from patristic commentaries on Romans, seeks to classify fathers on the basis of how they define *dikaioisyne theou*, especially at Romans 1:17; 3: 25-26; and 10:3. The dominant view in Origen and most of the Latin fathers except Augustine is to see God's justice as a *distributiva iustitia* at work or as *aequitas*, an impartiality, or equanimity, in judgment. Even when *dikaioisyne* stands in these writers as an abbreviation for the justifying event or refers to a gift from God, it is the just judgment of God that is overarching. Thus Theodoret (*Interpretationes in Pauli epistulas, Rom.*, 60; PG 82) at one point takes *dikaioisyne theou* as God's own righteousness which accepts the atoning satisfaction of Christ<sup>99</sup>. Acacius of Caesarea (*Fragmenta in Rom.*, ed. Staab, p. 53) saw it as recompense for those who have done the right, as God's wrath is revealed over his enemies. For Origen it was not only God's possession as *aequitas* but also, grouped under that term, both Christ (1 Cor. 1:30) and faith<sup>100</sup>.

This same view can be found in Gregory of Nyssa (cf. the quote from him above), Arethas of Caesarea, and Photius. One should probably also place here Clement of Alexandria from whom justification meant moral transformation, being "blended with the Holy Spirit" (*Strom.* 7. 87, GCS 17 (Clement 3), 62, 9ff.; PG 9. 521A); and Ephraem the Syrian and Philoxenus of Mabbug, with their unified view of God's justice and goodness yet with the two as contrasting poles<sup>101</sup>. Tertullian, Irenaeus (who in *Adv. haer.* 4. 22.2 first tackled the topic from Romans 3: 21-31), and Ambrosiaster (who stressed Philippians 3:9 and God's faithfulness - to his Old Testament promise) may also fit here, but a church father's views are often quite complex.

The second major patristic view that Stuhlmacher proposes stresses the character of *dikaioisyne* as gift. Augustine is his particular example, *iustitia* as gift

97. GCS (*Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte* (Leipzig: Hinrichs), 15 (Clemens Alex., vol. 2), p. 486, line 29; PG (Migne, *Patrologie Graeco-Latina*) 9. 332A. Patristic references will be cited hereafter in the text itself above, using such standard abbreviations and editions; in some cases, if not in CGS or PG, by the editor's name.

98. Schelkle, *Paulus* (cited above, n. 93), p. 112 n. 1; "Righteousness" in the *New Testament* (cited above n. 1), p. 221 n. 51.

99. Schelkle, *ibid.*, p. 41, his references above. Theodoret (60) = PG 82. 104C, but consult also 40 = PG 82. 83D.

100. Stuhlmacher (cited above, n. 10), p. 13.

101. *Ibid.*, pp. 13-15. Cf. also Jouko Martikainen, *Gerechtigkeit und Güte Gottes: Studien zur Theologie von Ephraem dem Syrer und Philoxenus von Mabbug* (Göttinger Orientalforschungen, ed. F. Junge, 1. Syriaca, 20; Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1981).

of righteousness or of justifying faith or of grace itself, but Greek fathers taking this position included Theodore of Mopsuestia, Diodore of Tarsus, John Chrysostom, Servian of Gabala, Gennadius of Constantinople, and Oecumenius<sup>102</sup>.

One passage in Theodor of Mopsuestia (Karl Staab, *Paulus-kommentare aus der griechischen Kirche*, NTab 15 (Münster, 1933), 150, 36), on Romans 10:3, contrasted with "their own righteousness" that the Jews sought, "the righteousness promised us from Christ by grace." Gift that it is, this concept of *dikaïosyne* led to a view of faith (alone) as "trustful waiting," because for it the fulfillment is future at the resurrection. This led to Swete's summary that, for Theodore, "the Pauline doctrine of justification by faith resolves itself into the fact of the believer's daily struggle towards perfection,"<sup>103</sup> so that "it is necessary to run towards the righteousness which is by faith" (Staab, 115, 9, on Rom. 1:18) and even therefore "to believe (or trust) the laws" (*to peithenai tois nomois*, on Rom. 7: 13, Staab, 129, 16–17). Wickert's more recent treatment qualifies Swete's judgment to this extent: a person does not have a righteousness of his own but one which, as God gave it to him, he makes his own by good work, now in promise and imitation (*kata mimesin*), then in actuality (*ergo*)<sup>104</sup>.

We may also illustrate from Chrysostom's eloquent and magisterial treatment<sup>105</sup>. Though *dikaïosyne* is a quality of God, God's own righteousness, it is also a gift. Paul is said to call it God's righteousness by faith "because its entirety is from the grace above, and it means to be justified not by labors but by the free gift of God" (*Homily 17 on Romans*, PG 60.565). Once there is belief by a person, there is justification (*Homily 7.4*; PG 60. 447). The precise moment comes in baptism (*Homily 15.2 on Rom. 8:30*, God justified by the regeneration of the washing

or the laver; PG 60. 541). Yet in a note of reality, perhaps from experience about the sinfulness of believers, Chrysostom the preacher says, on Romans 6: 3–4, about baptism, "At the time of illumination, we undergo a change for ten or twenty days, but then take up our old doings again. Not for a set number of days but for our whole life Paul requires of us such a 'walk'" (*Homily 10.4*; PG 60. 480).

Perhaps these examples are enough to show the richness of patristic treatments of righteousness/justification, especially in the Greek fathers. There is no silence, no uniform view, no total pattern of "East versus West." What is needed is study not of how such fathers reacted to a "Western" (Augustinian) doctrine, nor even a classification based on such Latin terms as *iustitia distributiva* or *aequitas*, but a study of how each writer, in his situation, handled the biblical theme of righteousness/justification. Then one could test the interesting thesis of Ernst Benz, "The East accepted the Paul of the Corinthian Letters, while the West accepted the Paul of the Letter to the Romans"<sup>106</sup>. Romans stresses God's justifying righteousness; 1 Corinthians has apostles as *oikonomoi* and an *oikonomia* with which they are entrusted.

Somewhat surprisingly, when we turn to *oikonomia*-terms in the church fathers, for all that needs to be studied on that topic there is perhaps more available in surveys and specialized monographs than on *dikaïosyne*! (This is in part due to the efforts of those interested in Greek theology.) Not only do we have the wealth of references now in Lampe's *Patristic Lexicon* (above, cited n. 8), but also the interpretation of a good deal of this material by one of his predecessors on the project, G.L. Prestige<sup>107</sup>. Prestige has spelled out something of the history of *oikonomia* in the sense of God's management of the world ("providence") and of salvation (in the "covenanted dispensations of grace") and in individual lives (as "divine interpositions") and even the sacraments ("administration" of the Eucharist). Prestige has also traced the use of the same term in connection with the "economical Trinity" and its other uses in the patristics picture of God, as well as for the Incarnation. On many of these matters there also exist surveys in the various histories of dogma and

102. *Ibid.*, Stuhlmacher, p. 18, cf. 15–16.

103. H.B. Swete, *Theodori episcopi Mopsuesteni in epistolas B. Pauli Commentarii, the Latin Version with Greek fragments*, 2 vols., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1880–82), 1, p. lxxxvii.

104. Ulrich Wickert, *Studien zu den Pauluskommentaren Theodors von Mopsuestia als Beitrag zum Verständnis der Antiochenischen Theologie* (BZNW, 27; Berlin: Töpelmann, 1962), pp. 133–46, especially 146.

105. Besides Stuhlmacher and Schelkle, I have found helpful J. Coman, "Le repport de la justification et de la charité dans les homélies de Saint Jean Chrysostome à l'Épître aux Romains," *Studia Evangelica* V (cited above, n. 8), pp. 248–71, especially p. 271 (faith as decisive; love and righteousness as one, with the former dominant over the juridical), and the paper for the Lutheran–Roman Catholic Dialogue (see above, n. 92) by Robert Eno, "Some Patristic Views on the Relationship of Faith and Works in Justification," also appearing in another version in *Revue des Études Augustiniennes* 30 (1984). Neither these writers nor I have had access to J. a Jesu Macias, "La doctrina de la justificación en el comentario de S. Juan Crisostomo a los Romanos" (diss., Gregorian University, Rome, 1951).

106. "Das Paulusverständnis in der morgenländischen und abendländischen Kirche," *ZRGG* 3 (1951): 291, cited in H. J. Schoeps, *Paul: The Theology of the Apostle in the Light of Jewish Religious History* (London: Lutterworth, Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961), p. 273. Schoeps, pp. 262–80, provides as succinct a treatment as can be found anywhere on the history of Pauline interpretation, and his comments reinforce many of the points made above; see especially p. 267: "righteousness was no longer understood on Pauline lines as the righteousness of Christ disclosed to the believer in the act of faith... but as a right disposition by which man becomes righteous."

107. *God in Patristic Thought* (London: Heinemann, 1936; 2d ed., SPCK, 1952) especially chaps. 3 and 5. Summary in *E Ph* 60, 3–4 (1978): 532–37.

in specialized monographs<sup>108</sup>. I find it interesting that Harnack's *History of Dogma*, from which a fair amount of material can be ferreted out on *oikonomia*, takes up "justification" (according to his Index) only when he gets to Westerners like Victorinus and Augustine and deals with the "righteousness of God" chiefly under the doctrine of God as the view that "the gods are *just*, because they reward and punish," so that "in almost all the Fathers the attributes of goodness and justice stood asunder"<sup>109</sup>.

For *oikonomia*-words, perusal of the *Patristic Lexicon* provides an overview. This shows that in the fathers, the old "secular" uses continued, for management, administration, physical "organization" (of the body), or mental "disposition." Such uses were also drawn into church life, e.g., for ecclesiastical administration by *oikonomoi* of revenues and property (the term no doubt as diversely used as in the classical world). But every article, on the verb, the noun *oikonomia*, and even *oikonomos* (not to mention *dioikeo* and *dioikesis*), shows applications to God and to Christ. The examples are numerous on God's managing, dispensing, planning, and ordering things in the word providentially and for salvation. Especially is application made to the supreme example of this, the coming of Christ in the flesh. But *oikonomia* is not only used of his incarnation but also for various events in the earthly ministry, especially the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Hence it has to do with the person of Christ, as the equivalent of *enanthropesis*; there is an excellent illustration in Theodoret, *Eranistes (Dialogue)* 2.92 (PG 83.129 C); "the becoming-man (*enanthropesin*) of the Word of God we call *oikonomia*". New other references show how *oikonomia* (Latin, *oconomia*) became an early term to describe the inner functional organization of the Trinity. One is also struck by the number of applications of our terms for acting prudently, making concession, accommodating oneself (used even of God), and employing "strategy". But all these senses, I have argued elsewhere, go back to classical usages, inherited via Jewish writers like Philo<sup>110</sup>.

One way of course, to organize this material is to proceed father by father, perhaps picking out the particular emphasis each makes in using *oikonomia*-terminology. Thus, Lillge's findings are generally correct, that Irenaeus employed the words especially

in a redemptive-history sense; Tertullian in a structural way, with regard to the Trinity; and Clement of Alexandria in an ethical sense, for training and a method of acting that involves accommodation, in the divine pedagogy and the human imitation<sup>111</sup>. But such focuses may miss the diversity in each father. Moreover the approach may miss backgrounds in pre-Christian Greek, as well as in biblical thought, and the controversial evidence from Gnostic sources which is very important for *oikonomia*. Lillge's treatment of Irenaeus does pick out a sense not highlighted in the *Patristic Lexicon*, that of *oikonomia* as *Heilsgeschichte*. While I differ with Oscar Cullmann that *oikonomia* has this sense already in the New Testament, I do agree it is the patristic word for this concept<sup>112</sup>.

My own preference, as an approach, would be to try to trace patristic meanings in light of those already existing, at the time of each father, from classical and biblical usage and then in prior Christian sources. We can readily see how the classical senses of (1) *oikonomia* and related terms in the sense of household management and (2) application to a larger household, simply carried over into Christian use, often with regard to management of a church or monastery. The Greco-Roman sense (3), of *oikonomia* applied to arrangement generally, had carry-over, in medicine and rhetoric or for managing one's life and in ethical "arrangement" of conduct (e.g., all theories of "accommodation"). But it is under heading (4), applied to the larger "household," the universe, that development was largest. Here, I think, the old Stoic idea of a divine management of the world readily lent itself to Christian use, and this could be connected to God's *oikonomia* or managing of redemption, as already in Colossians, Ephesians, and Ignatius, the latter applying it to Christ's incarnation (and death and resurrection).

It is this final area (4) that so expands in patristic usage, but the developments need detailed recounting. In the dissertation on *oikonomia*, examples are cited of tentative applications of the classical backgrounds to such things as Tertullian's trinitarian usage, *oikonomia* as a legal will or testament and therefore "covenant", and history as "divine economy"<sup>113</sup>. Within such treatment must be seen also such specialized uses as, in connection with the incarnation, the Son's accommodation in the *kenosis*- "the whole economy of both emptying and humbling himself" (Eusebius, *Demonstratio evangelica* 10.8, GCS 23 (Eusebius 6), 489.15; PG 22. 785C).

One may even wish to look for how references to *oikonomia (tou theou)* and related terms connect with

108. Cf. *E Ph* 60, 3-4 (1978): 501-60, especially 546-53 on Otto Lillge's dissertation, cited above, n. 70.

109. Harnack's *History of Dogma* (German, 3d ed., 1894-97; trans., Boston: Little, Brown, 1903-7, reprinted New York: Dover, London: Constable, 1961) is summarized on *oikonomia* in *E Ph* 60, 3-4 (1978): 508-12 (diss., pp. 22-29). For "justification," see especially Harnack (Eng. trans.), Vol. 5, p. 36 n. 1 and 204ff.; for "righteousness," see Vol. 3, chaps. 2 and 4, quotations above from Vol. 3, pp. 245-46.

110. See "Oikonomia as 'Ethical Accommodation'" (cited above, n. 3).

111. Dissertation cited above in n. 70.

112. For Cullmann's views, see *E Ph* 60, 3-4 (1978): 554-60 (diss., pp. 97-108); discussion in "*Oikonomia*-Terms in Paul" and "*Heilsgeschichte* in Luke," cited above, n. 3.

113. Op. cit., above n. 2; diss., pp. 537-608.

“righteousness/justification”. For example, Chrysostom, in his sermons on Romans, commented on the phrase in 1:3, “born of the seed of David according to the flesh”, that Paul began thus and not from some “higher” point because Matthew, Luke, and Mark also begin their gospels in this way; in a phrase that reflects “Christology from below” and the incarnation, he wrote, “For the One who was going to lead people to heaven, it was necessary to lead them upwards from below; for thus also the matter was ‘arranged’ (to *pragma okonomethe*).” Later, discussing 4:25, Chrysostom said, “For this reason he both died and rose, in order that he might make people righteous (*dikaious ergasetai*)”. To this extent, justifying righteousness for us is the outcome of the whole economy (*Homily* 1, PG 60. 397; *Homily* 9, PG 60. 467A).

Clement of Alexandria, strong on *oikonomia* language, reflects Romans 1:17 in the following way (typical of how Clement redoes Paul): in the Word of God’s “holy economy” (almost his “office,” as Instructor), all peoples are his; “dispensing (*parashon*) in former times to some his precepts (the Jews and the law), to others (the Greeks) philosophy, now at length by his own personal coming, he has closed the course of unbelief, which is henceforth inexcusable (cf. Rom. 1:20); Greek and barbarian being led forward by a separate process to that perfection that is through faith” (*Stromata* 7.2, 5,6–11,2, GCS 17, 6, 3–9, 17; PG 9. 409A–413D).

Theodoret commented on Romans 3:21 (“Now the righteousness of God has been revealed apart from law”), “What was the hidden mystery of the economy, he (God) has made manifest to all” (to *gar kekrymmenon tes oikonomias mysterion delon pepoieken hapasin*) (*Interpretatio in quatuordecim epistolas S. Pauli* 43; PG 82. 83B). Later, in connection with 3:26, in speaking about God “preparing in advance the medicine of salvation (*tes soterias to pharmakon*)”, he says of the paradoxical Pauline phrase that God is “just and justifying”: “justly and with philanthropy the God of the universe administered all things for us (*dikaious kai philanthropos ho ton holon theos ta kath’ hemas okenomese*), and everyone who believes Christ the Master reaps the fruits of the righteousness that is by faith” (*ibid.* 44, PG 82.85B; cf. also 21 and 22, PG 82.57C and 60A: the *dikaiousyne theou* in 1:17 is “not only that supplied to us but also that shown openly in the mystery of the economy”, in the way God “managed” our salvation)

## V. Conclusions

Many of our findings have been stated above, in each section of the paper. But we may summarize thus.

1. Righteousness/justification, a major or, for some, the central theme in the Old Testament, takes on new applications in light of Christ in the New

Testament. This is true above all for the Pauline letters, where it is of similar major or even central proportions. It has a variety of uses in the rest of the New Testament. It did not totally die out in the Apostolic Fathers, and it continues in the church Fathers with a variety of nuances, not only as righteousness demanded and the justice with which God judges but also as a gift, i.e., justifying righteousness. The terms are used of God, Christ, salvation, and a righteous life and just conduct.

*Oikonomia*-terms, on the other hand, coming from the Greek world, have virtually no LXX use. From a parable and saying about a steward and metaphorical application to apostles, the terms find limited usage in the Pauline letters for the apostle’s function or office and for God’s arranging for salvation. From this small base in the Bible they expand through use in the Apostolic Fathers (once in connection with the incarnation), into widespread patristic applications concerning the triune God, Christ, salvation history, church life, and ethics.

The two concepts can, and occasionally in the fathers, do interconnect. More work is needed on each one, however, as well as on the two together.

2. *Dikaiousyne*-terms, with their Hebraic roots, early faced the problem of making themselves properly understood in a church that became more and more Gentile. *Oikonomia*-vocabulary appealed to a Greek (and Latin-) speaking and thinking church but subsequently faced the problem of emerging senses that are without biblical roots (e.g., ethical “accommodations” can contrast with “what is right” in a relationship). The burden for righteousness/justification terminology was to speak meaningfully in a changing world; for *oikonomia*, to remain biblically theological in a world where many of its nuances were secularly popular. While we cannot “play Semite” in our thinking always, the church continually faces the peril from forms of Marcionism.

To answer a question posed earlier (above, p. 3), the sequence, for these terms, has been that Greek metaphysics replaced Old Testament insights, such as the forensic, with regard to righteousness; Roman law in the West undoubtedly led things further away from the biblical outlook, but in this case courtroom aspects were present from the time of the Old Testament prophets in the root *sdq*.

3. An ecumenical comment may be ventured. The Eastern Church has treasured *oikonomia* categories. In the West there have been several occasions when righteousness/justification as an expression of the gospel gave new life in the church—e.g., Augustine, Luther, Wesley (though the history of the understanding of this theme, as of “the economy of God”, is a complicated one). Neither East nor West will understand the other without grasping the other’s theme here and vocabulary. But they do combine: God’s economy, at its heart, in Jesus Christ, had as its aim that the righteousness of One justify many lawless ones (*Diog.* 9.5).