CHRISTIAN VOCATION
IN 1 AND 2 THESSALONIANS

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The original thesis of the present excerpt, without pretending to exhaust the interesting topic, seeks to go deeper into the theology of Christian vocation in St. Paul as reflected in 1 and 2 Thessalonians, emphasizing new perspectives latent in his writings and unwinding its content. It is an attempt to offer a vital aspect on the whole Pauline thought regarding the concept of Christian vocation seen under the light of the teachings of the Second Vatican Council.

In undertaking this task, the different vocation-related terms on the said letters are studied and then used in the analysis of the different vocation-related texts. From here we come up with a synthesis which captures Paul’s thought regarding Christian vocation.

The present excerpt includes the Introduction, and Chapter 4 of the thesis. The Introduction presents to us especially the modern views on 1 and 2 Thessalonians and the different studies on the theology of vocation in Paul. The former serves as a firm ground for the study and the latter as a base to continue where they have stopped. Chapter 4 presents the synthesis of the theology of the Christian vocation gathered from the previous chapters. These parts substantially comprise the whole thesis and reflect our study and findings which are as follows:

1. Paul’s theology, and so his theology of vocation, is characterized by its Trinitarian structure.

2. Paul’s Theology of Christian vocation has eschatological perspective: the purpose of divine vocation is the acquiring of God’s kingdom and glory, oriented towards the final union with Jesus Christ.

3. To fulfill this perspective, Paul emphasizes the Christian vocation’s present perspective: This calling has to be lived here and now, i.e., each Christian has to seek sanctity wherever he is, and in whatever circumstances he is or whatever his state in life is. This preparatory sanctity necessary for the Parousia becomes the object of
Christian vocation. The obligation to seek sanctity is rooted in the condition of every Christian of being *en Christo* which corresponds to the presence of the Holy Spirit in the soul.

4. His exhortations on the necessity to work embody that conviction of the vocational sense of work: what a Christian should sanctify is his work. It is a response to his bondage with Christ.

We would like to take this opportunity to express our deepest and sincerest gratitude in the first place to Prof. Dr. Claudio Basevi who, in spite of the great amount of work he has, has directed our work «like a nurse taking care of her children» (1 Thes 2:7) and at the same time «like a father with his children» (1 Thes 2:11), with his patience and with his decisive suggestions in order to undertake this study systematically and to reach its good port. To the Faculty of Theology who has provided us a with good scientific theological preparation in all these three years of study, our sincerest gratitude, too.

And lastly, it would be a lie and a great injustice not to mention the debt we owe to the Blessed Josemaría Escrivá de Balaguer whose life and teaching has always been our inspiration behind this work. Perhaps, we would not have undertaken this task had it not been for the light that his preaching full of theology has shed on us.
INDEX OF THE THESIS

TABLE OF CONTENTS.......................................................... III
ABBREVIATIONS................................................................... IX
TRANSLITERATION............................................................. XIX
PROLOGUE ................................................................. XXIII

INTRODUCTION.................................................................... 1
1. Modern Views Regarding 1 and 2 Thessalonians................. 4
   a. 1 Thessalonians....................................................... 5
   b. 2 Thessalonians..................................................... 20
2. Studies on the Theology of Vocation in Paul...................... 35
3. Aim of the Study........................................................ 38
4. Method and Sources.................................................... 40
5. Structure of the Study.................................................. 41

CHAPTER I
THE LETTERS AND THEIR CONTEXT

1. The Milieu of Thessalonica............................................. 46
   a. Historical and Social Circumstances............................ 46
   b. The Religious Atmosphere........................................ 47
   c. Civic Cults.............................................................. 51
2. The Implantation of the Faith in Thessalonica..................... 53
3. Occasion, Purpose, Date and Place.................................. 55
   a. 1 Thessalonians....................................................... 55
   b. 2 Thessalonians..................................................... 59
4. Doctrinal Value of the Two Letters.................................. 61

CHAPTER II
LEXICAL STUDY

A. Call (καλέω) Word Group................................................ 68
   1. In Classical Greek................................................... 68
   2. In the Old Testament............................................... 70
   3. In the New Testament.............................................. 77
      a. Outside the Corpus Paulinum..................................... 77
      b. In the Corpus Paulinum.......................................... 82
B. Election (ἐκλογή) Word Group....................................... 99
   1. In Classical Greek .................................................. 99
   2. In the Old Testament.............................................. 102
   3. In the New Testament.............................................. 106
C. Slave (δοῦλος) Word Group ................................................................. 114
   1. In Classical Greek ............................................................. 114
   2. In the Old Testament ...................................................... 116
   3. In the New Testament ...................................................... 119
      a. Outside the Corpus Paulinum ........................................... 120
      b. In the Corpus Paulinum ............................................... 122

D. Holy (ἁγιός) Word Group ......................................................... 129
   1. In Classical Greek ............................................................. 129
   2. In the Old Testament ...................................................... 132
   3. In the New Testament ...................................................... 140
      a. Outside the Corpus Paulinum ........................................... 140
      b. In the Corpus Paulinum ............................................... 144

CHAPTER III
ANALYSIS OF SELECTED TEXTS

1. 1 Thes 1:4 ................................................................................... 154
2. 1 Thes 2:12 .............................................................................. 166
3. 1 Thes 4:7 .............................................................................. 177
4. 1 Thes 5:24 .............................................................................. 189
5. 2 Thes 1:11 .............................................................................. 199
6. 2 Thes 2:13-14 ................................................................. 210

CHAPTER IV
THEOLOGY OF CHRISTIAN VOCATION IN 1 AND 2
THESSALONIANS

1. The Trinitarian Activity in the Process of Election and Calling .......... 228
   a. The Father ........................................................................ 229
   b. The Son ........................................................................... 230
   c. The Holy Spirit ............................................................... 233
2. The Realization of the Divine Call in Time .................................. 235
   a. The Experience of Paul .................................................... 235
   b. The Mission of Paul ......................................................... 237
   c. The Faith of the Called Ones ........................................... 239
3. The Eschatological Perspective of the Christian Vocation ................ 244
4. Christian Vocation's Present Perspective: Sanctity in the Middle of the World ................................................................. 250
   a. The Sanctity of Every Christian ....................................... 252
   b. Sanctity in the World ...................................................... 256
   c. Christian Vocation to Work .......................................... 260
   d. Theology of Work in Paul .............................................. 263
Conclusions........................................................................................................... 269
Bibliography......................................................................................................... 281
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INTRODUCTION

The richness of the Pauline thought ferries many theologians into a vast field of investigation which at times can be complicated. At the same time such richness offers a vast range of opportunities by which to consider things from different angles. Each time that one goes deeper and starts to drink from the juice of Paul’s genius, he discovers new horizons that lead to a better understanding of the realities of life.

With the aim of capturing the mind of Paul looking at one side of the same prism, we thought it wise to study at length his two letters to the Thessalonians. These two letters provide us with a solid base for a study of the Pauline thought: «If we consider the conversion of St. Paul to have occurred in the beginnings of the fourth decade of the first century, there must have been twenty years of Christian or apostolic life, of theological reflection, of work of contact with the primitive community that go into the preparation and formation of this thought whose manifestation breaks out in the epistles to the Thessalonians» ¹.

1. Modern views regarding 1 and 2 Thessalonians

Since the two letters to the Thessalonians are the main Pauline writings we intend to study, it would be useful to first see some modern discussions about them in order to have a firm ground and point of departure in our work.
a. 1 Thessalonians

The style and vocabulary of 1 Thes are so typically Pauline, and the external history of the text and its transmission so well-established, that relatively few serious critics have placed its authenticity in doubt. In general we can say that the authenticity of 1 Thes is today commonly affirmed by even the most radical of critics. To negate it would be practically equivalent, as J. E. Frame put it, «to asserting that Paul never lived, or that no letter from him has survived» ².

Towards the middle of the 19th century, F. C. Baur and a few Protestants of the school of Tübingen did negate the Pauline authorship of 1 Thes, arguing that no polemic against the Judaizers could be detected in the letter ³. Then, at the start of the 20th century, R. Scott presented the thesis that 1 Thes was the result of a fusion of two writings: one of Timothy (1 Thes 1-3 & 2 Thes 3) and another of Silas (1 Thes 4-5 & 2 Thes 1-2); this material was supposedly gathered and published by Timothy towards 70-80 A.D. ⁴. R. Scott’s theory, however, did not win support from other critics.

In the last four decades, the hypothesis of the plurality of documents has resurfaced ⁵. We may divide the modern theories into three groups:

1. Some affirm the possibility that small interpolations have been added to the letter.

   a) B. A. Pearson ⁶ has suggested that 2,13-16 is an interpolation into 1 Thes performed by a writer of the post-70 period. Briefly, his basic contentions are as follows: (i) Verse 13 introduces an unexpected and inappropriate additional thanksgiving in the letter. Without the verses 13-17, a smoother transition from 2, 17 to 3, 13 can be drawn; (ii) The final judgment upon the Jews is reflected on v. 17, an outlook inconsistent with that of Rom 11, 25ff; (iii) This verdict on the Jews is thought of as the destruction of Jerusalem in 70.A.D.; (iv) Verses 15ff contain traditional formulae which reflect anti-Judaism, sentiments current after 70 A.D., but which is not reflected in Gal 1-2, Rom 9-11, and Phil 3, 5-6; (v) The interpolation reflects a relationship with an anti-Jewish polemic in Mt 23, 31-36. His arguments have been refuted by different modern authors. J. Coppens ⁷ contends that the interpretation of v. 17 as anti-Jewish in general is
mistaken. The term «unbelieving Jews» and the harsh language on their condemnation can also be found in Paul together with his hopes for the Jews' conversion (2 Cor 11, 24; Phil 3, 2). W. Marxsen points out that the topic of persecution alluded to is a factor of unity of the whole of 2, 2-16. W. D. Davies asserts that such description of Paul is due to his lack of clarity regarding the place of the Jews in God's plan.

b) G. Friedrich, for his part, has proposed that 5, 1-11 is an interpolation by a posterior writer who belonged to the Lukan school with two motives: to correct Paul's belief that the Parousia was very near, and to deal with the problem caused by the delay of the Parousia. His arguments, based on the style, vocabulary and contents of the passage mentioned, are as follows: (i) The passage deals with the false security regarding the delay of the Parousia which is different from that of 4, 13-18; (ii) The disputed section lacks Paul's originality in vocabulary and theme, for it is characterized by the traditional phraseology pertaining to the common Christian paraenesis (e.g., χρόνοι καὶ καυροί in 5, 1; εἰρήνη καὶ ἁσφάλεια in 5, 3; etc.); (iii) The language and thought, such as Christ died (πέρι) for us, and the dominant lack of distinction between the fate of the dead and of the living in the Parousia are non-Pauline; (iv) The previous chapter is the model of the section under question; (v) The situation of the readers addressed by 4, 13-18 describes an expectation of an imminent Parousia, whereas 5, 1-10 describes an incipient realized eschatology. In other words, the emphasis now is no longer on the imminence but on suddenness and unexpectedness. The term παρουσία in 4, 15 is replaced by «the day of the Lord», and that while chapter 4 promotes calm and inspires confidence, chapter 5 is full of warning; (vi) There is great evidence of similarity in vocabulary and content with Rom 13, 11-14, but this passage still regards an imminent Parousia; (vii) Parallels with Luke can also be traced, specifically in Lc 21, 34, 36 and 12, 45; (viii) The pro-Pauline interpolator also wishes to save Paul, who had expected to witness the Parousia before his own death, from error, and so like Luke, he replaced imminence with suddenness. Then if the disputed passage is removed, the text goes smoothly, for 5, 12 matches smoothly with 4, 18 and the paraenesis of 5, 14 refers back to the idle, sexually perverted, weak and discouraged faithful described in chapter 4. B. Rigaux, has pointed out that the
redactional activity of Paul is evident in the way he has used the traditions in order to promote his own vision of a Christian era bounded by the death and resurrection of Jesus on the one side and by the *Parousia* of the Lord on the other. The section is divided into three parts and that the terminology used in each of the three parts is similar to that used in Jewish apocalyptic, at Qumran, and by the Synoptic tradition, but the vision and style and manner of expressions are typically Pauline. These characteristics point to the redaction of traditional material by Paul himself. Rigaux then concludes that the thesis of Friedrich is «more ingenious than convincing». W. Marxsen 12, too, rejects it as wholly unconvincing.

Thus, we may say that the modern theories regarding small interpolations in 1 Thes lack cogency.

2. A second type of theory holds that the letter has been subjected to a whole series of interpolations.

a) In 1957, P. Carrington proposed that the author of the eschatological sections of the letters to the Thes could have been one of the many «prophets» of the primitive Church, and perhaps Silas 13. b) C. Demke 14 has more recently suggested the possibility that a genuine Pauline epistle (whose complete version no longer exists) provided basic material for 1 Thes, and that post-Pauline material was added (1, 2-2, 16 in the beginning; 3-12-4, 8 in the middle; and 5, 23-27 at the conclusion) to produce a two-part writing in which Paul is made to appear as an example to the Church (1, 2-3, 13) and the Church is called to perseverance in sanctity and maintenance of the apostolic tradition (4, 1-5, 28). His theory is mainly based on matters of vocabulary and ideology: (i) Paul's use of παρουσία in 3, 13 and 5, 23 in the Christological sense is strange, for within the corpus Paulinum only 1 Cor 15, 23 possesses this meaning; by analogy with Phil 1, 6 and 1 Cor 1, 18 we should expect «day»; (ii) In 2, 19; 3, 13 he uses εἰμπροσθεν where we should expect ἐνώπιον, for he uses the latter with τοῦ θεοῦ to indicate the presence of God; (iii) The variation is due to the fact that in 1, 9f; 3, 12f; 5, 23 salvation is future, and the Pauline «already» is unknown. Basing on his exegesis of 4, 3,4,7,8 he concludes that in 3, 13 holiness is used as an attribute of the eschatological world of God where man enters the *Parousia*. Hence the root ἁγια- is not applied on the Christians in their present
condition as reflected in Rom 1, 6-7, 1 Cor 1, 24, Phil 1, 1 but rather in their eschatological state; (iv) The verb καλεῖν does not indicate God's effectual call at conversion which constitutes man in a new relationship with God, but is simply God's call to faithful service. He sees in the use of election terminology (ἐκλογή) rather than call terminology (κλησίς) in 1 Thes 1, 4 the support of this interpretation; (iv) The observed difference from Paul's other letters is confirmed by an examination of the relation of Word and faith which shows that it is not Gospel as word which is power, but the power and authority of the Gospel reside more in the conduct of the apostles and the converts. Paul is presented here as unknown by the readers and thus he serves only as an example to them. The redactor centers more on the imitation of the apostle and on the effects of faith rather than on its content. Demke expressly describes his own essay as a Diskussionsbeitrag, whose results are provisional by nature. I. H. Marshall \(^{15}\) considers his arguments as insufficient. First, he raises serious questions about the credibility of a writer who could work interpolating as described producing a composition with so small a Pauline content. Second, a methodological problem running through the essay can be traced: Demke does not consider how long a composition must be in which a writer does not express his characteristic theological motifs. Hence the Pauline «already» is present in 5, 1-11. There is no reason why an author may not use the same motif in a different section. Third point, Demke's point of departure assumes that Paul must always express himself in the same way and use the same vocabulary. There is no reason why Paul should not have used the term προοιμία in some cases and «day» in others; he is simply tending to use more the latter. Paul uses εἰμπροοθεν in an eschatological context in 2 Cor 5, 10 (and Demke does not regard this as non Pauline), and it is found too in eschatological contexts in Lc 12, 8;21, 36; Mt.25, 32, 32. And lastly Demke's understanding of salvation as purely future in the theology of 1 Thes is erroneous. The occurrence of the «in Christ» formula (and its variants) throughout the epistle (1, 1; 2, 14; 3, 1; 4, 1, 16; 5, 12, 18) makes his arguments senseless. Demke gives the impression of trying to be more Pauline than Paul. R. F. Collins \(^{16}\) on the same line with I. H. Marshall criticizes Demke's view on the incompatibility of eschatology of 1 Thes with
the realized eschatology of Rom. He questions whether Demke has constituted Rom as the canon within the canon and with Rom as his norm used to reject Pauline authorship as it now stands.

3. A third type of theory is that which sees 1 Thes as a combination of two or more existing documents.

a) K. H. Eckart 17, starting from on the assumption that 1 Thes in its present form is none other that a «conglomeration of texts», has claimed that he has discovered in 1 Thes nothing less than the second (authentic) letter to the Thes; the letter is actually known by the name of 2 Thes, according to him, ought to be rejected as spurious. The genuine first letter to the Thes was simply a document of identification and greeting that was consigned to Timothy, and has survived in its entirety in 1 Thes 1, 1-2 + 2, 17 - 3, 4 + 3, 11-13. The «genuine» second letter, in turn, was written after the arrival of Timothy, who had brought rather disturbing news with him; Eckart thinks that the essential part of this letter has been conserved in the following passages of 1 Thes: 3, 6-10; 4, 9-10a; 4, 13 - 5, 11. The first letter was written in Athens; it can also be supposed for the second letter. K. Eckart apparently observes the non-Pauline material because of (i) its lack of concreteness, i.e., it makes no reference to the situation of the letter; (ii) its having a parallel structure which is indicative of traditional catechetical or paraenetic origin; and (iii) the contradictions between these verses and the genuine Pauline part: whereas 4, 1ff deals with an exhortation for a better conduct, 1, 7 already has qualified the readers as acting uprightly.

His hypothesis has not found support among scholars, although aspects of it have been developed by Demke (cf. supra on the theory of post-Pauline interpolation) and Schmithals (cf. infra on the theory of combination of Pauline letters). E. Best 18 argues against the allegations of Eckart: (i) The non-concrete nature of the material is also present in the other Pauline letters (Rom 12, 9ff.; Phil 4, 8ff.); (ii) The traditional paraenetic material of the early church was in common use and is present in many of the NT letters; it is not strange to find such material in a stylized structure as Paul employs it in 1 Thes just as he also does in other letters; (iii) Eckart has overdone the parallelistic structure of the paraenetic passages in 1 Thes; (iv) The passages considered by Eckart as edited are full of Pauline conceptions
and words. Few years before Best wrote his commentary, W. G. Kümmel has already taken issue against the theory of Eckart. We may sum up his full criticism as follows: (i) the parallelism of Paul's paraenesis is explained by the fact that Paul is using a traditional material already moulded in literary form; (ii) The praise for the community together with the exhortation to brotherly love is not strange for a similar juxtaposition can be found also in Phil, 1 Cor and Col. (iii) Paul's use of παραλαμβάνειν was not restricted to dogmatic assertions (cf. Phil 4, 9; 1 Cor 11, 2); (iv) the two passages considered by Eckart as inauthentic—4, 1-12 and 5, 12-22—are suffused with Pauline vocabulary; (v) To present a paraenetic material in parallel form is characteristic of Paul's literary style. (vi) Eckart's assertion that 2, 13-16 is of a non Pauline origin is baseless; he did not sufficiently study the characteristic traits of both Paul's description and the traditional description of the eschatological event; (vii) The link between 3, 1 and 3, 6 is tenable, but the theory would require that ἐπεμψάμεν (3, 2) is an epistolary aorist; this is baseless since it is not classed in this manner by the grammarians and normally the context lays it bare when an aorist is to be regarded as epistolary; (viii) The change in number of the verb from plural to singular is quite insignificant and 3, 5 is not an obtrusive verse. (ix) No slightest indication can be found that the material contained in 2, 17-3, 13 pertains to two different letters; (x) 4, 13-5, 11 constitutes a single unit of material most probably written in response to a report or letter from Thessalonica. Hence there is no reason for considering this unit as alien corpus of 1 Thes as there is no reason to consider that at some time 4, 9-12 and 5, 12-14 did not belong to the present letter at hand. The epistolary style and the circumstances which prompted the composition of 1 Thes sufficiently explain the paraenetic section of the letter. All in all it is generally agreed that the methods used by Eckart to defend the theory were defective.

b) W. Schmithals holds that the refutation of Eckart's theory does not completely rule out the possibility that the letter is a secondary composition. He proposes his own theory, which takes in 1 Thes as well as 2 Thes into consideration, and sustains that four genuine letters of Paul have been combined to produce the two which we now possess: (1) 2 Thes 1, 1-12; 3, 6-16 (sent upon hearing news of disturbing
happenings in the church); (2) 1 Thes 1, 1-2, 12; 4, 2-5, 28 (a further attempt to help church members to bear the influence of visiting preachers with «Gnostic» message); (3) 2 Thes 2, 13-14; 2, 1-12; 2, 15-3, 3, (5), 17ff. (Paul's reply to the news that a letter, falsely ascribed to him, has circulated and has encouraged apocalyptic enthusiasm); (4) 1 Thes 2, 13-4, 1 (Paul's reactions after he has sent Timothy to clear up the problems in the church). As far as 1 Thes is concerned, this theory has the merit of proposing a simple partition of the letter into two parts, which is a much more plausible procedure than the elaborate interweaving of material proposed by Eckart and Demke.

The basic argument of the theory lies in that 3, 11-4, 1 contains the elements of the concluding section of a letter and that 2, 13-16 belongs closely with what precedes it. However, the arguments Schmithals offers in support of his theory have also been judged wanting by other scholars: C. Demke 22, and E. Best 23, demonstrate that there is no fixed pattern represented in all Paul's letters. The prayer in 3, 11-13 is not necessarily the sign of conclusion and the inclusion of paraenesis (4, 1) after a doxology at the end of a letter is never found in the Pauline letters. E. Best 24 continues to argue that there are no discrepancies of thought between 2, 13-3, 12 (or 2, 13-4, 2) and the remainder of the epistle which might suggest they were written in the light of different situations but rather a unity of theme 25.

Summing up, none of the theories for dividing up 1 Thes into various original documents commends credibility. Although the possibility that the letter contains disparate materials cannot be dismissed outright, it seems more in keeping with sound exegetical sense to understand the letter as a unity.

From our brief survey of modern theories of the non-Pauline origins of 1 Thes, it becomes clear that such theories are off the track, because they depart from baseless suppositions and seek a solution in the infinite realm of possibilities. We could say that greater adherence to the facts and due consideration of the letter-writing psychology of the ancient writers would always discourage such an adventure. The opinions of non-authenticity cited, therefore, continue to be isolated voices. The great majority of modern authors consider as certain the authenticity of the first letter to the Thessalonians.
As P. Rossano has rightly pointed out, the existence and usage of 1 Thes in the Church may be traced as far back as the Canon of Marcion (144 A.D.), which includes the first and second letters to the Thessalonians among the letters attributed to St. Paul. After this testimony, in the second half of the century we find that of the Muratorian Canon; finally, towards the close of the century, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian repeatedly cite the letter. Then also, prior to this explicit and official testimony, we have the text of an admonition by Polycarp (around 110 A.D.) indicated by Rigaux which seems to be a clear reminiscence of 1 Thes 5,22, ἐν τῷ πάντῳ κακοῦ ἐπεχέσθη; in addition, some phrases of Ignatius of Antioch (around 110 A.D.) seem to echo passages from the first letter to the Thes.

b. 2 Thessalonians

The critical questions regarding the second letter to the Thessalonians arise rather inevitably upon confronting it with 1 Thes. It becomes evident that there is a striking similarity, and at the same time a notable contrast, between the two letters, written, as is supposed, within a relatively short space of time.

The parallel between the letters is indisputable and substantial. In the first place, the structure and wording of 2 Thes show impressive similarities with those of 1 Thes. Not only do the same sender and audience figure in both letters, but also the exordium of the second clearly recalls the praise of virtue to be found at the beginning of the first letter. The affinity with the first letter continues in the course of the second letter: the theme of the election and of the calling to salvation; the news of the persecution and the invitation to persevere in the faith; the exhortation to good order and peace in the community; the precept of work and daily effort; the recalling to the personal example of the Apostle and of the instruction imparted; and, above all, the great theme of eschatology, are all topics that form the common fabric of the two letters, forming in an evident parallel. The question thus arises: Why did Paul, in drafting his second letter to the Thes, so slavishly follow his earlier letter?
The problems of 2 Thes do not come only from its likeness in form and content to 1 Thes; the differences that exist between these two letters also provoke important questions. In the first place we encounter a nuance, a variation in tone and a different fashion of presenting the same doctrinal points. In particular, the personal discourse seems to be almost entirely lacking in the second letter; cloud of remembrances upon which the preceding letter was based is here reduced to 2 mere trace (2, 5; 3, 7); then, too, the spontaneous and affectionate immediacy of the first letter gives way in the second to a paler and more impersonal phraseology (cf. 1, 3 ff.) and; the obligation to work, likewise, is proclaimed with an insistence in the face of idleness which, in the author's view, is intolerable (3, 6 ff.); finally, the order in the community seems to be greatly disturbed by illegitimate spiritual effervescence (2, 2,15).

The most notable differences are to be found in the matter of eschatology: the first letter laments a certain situation of incertitude and of incoherence in the faith (4, 13) with respect to the attitude towards the dead, but presupposes a sufficient knowledge of the evangelical doctrine regarding the time and moment of the Parousia (5, 1ff.). The second letter, on the other hand, warns against an erroneous teaching that was insinuating itself under the guise of supposed spiritual revelations or affirmations by Paul, according to which the moment of the Parousia was imminent, as one hypothesis says. This is the motive for the Apostle's intervention; St. Paul reminds them of the teaching received regarding the signs and the preludes that ought to precede the end (2, 1-4).

In short, whereas 1 Thes emphasizes the imminence and unexpectedness of the Parousia, 2 Thes attacks the view that the Day of the Lord has come and insists that various other events must precede the Parousia. The question thus arises: How can this contrast in tone and theological content be explained in the case of writings which were written close in time to one another?

The complex set of similarities and differences have thus given rise to what may be called «the problem» of 2 Thes, a problem still open and current among critics. Quite a number of them have attempted to resolve it in a radical fashion, negating the Pauline authenticity of the letter and placing its origin towards the end of the 1st century or at the beginning of the 2nd.
The first to question the authenticity of 2 Thes seems to have been J.E.C. Schmidt, who was joined by several authors in the course of the 19th century (F. CH. Baur, A. Hilgenfeld, J. Holtzmann). However, by the end of that century, the argument these authors commonly employed (the supposed contradiction between the eschatology of 1 Thes and 2 Thes) did not seem too convincing to the majority of scholars, and in 1900 G. G. Findlay could affirm that a return in favor of the authenticity had taken place among critics.

In 1903 W. Wrede reopened the problem. He paid less attention to the eschatological teaching, which he regarded as a less forceful argument, and based himself instead upon the literary similarities between the two letters. The second letter, according to him, showed numerous points of literary dependence which have a cumulative force. It was not possible to attribute to Paul two letters so evidently dependent upon each other; 2 Thes had to be a false literary product based on 1 Thes and composed towards the end of the first century. Replies to this theory came from J. Wrzol and J. Graafen as well as from commentators. In fact, no one among the important figures of New Testament criticism of the time (von Dobschütz, Harnack, Dibelius) accepted Wrede's hypothesis.

Nevertheless, the negative opinion continued to make headway in the 20th century. K. Grayston and G. Herdan published a statistical study in 1960, pointing to the unusually low number of words peculiar to 1 and 2 Thes when compared with the other Pauline epistles; they concluded that the most probable explanation was that the author of 2 Thes copied from 1 Thes.

Others, too, opined against the Pauline authorship of 2 Thes: C. Masson, G. Bornkamm, H.J. Schoeps, R. Bultmann, K.G. Eckart, W. Marxsen, and H. Braun. Braun's theory is worth mentioning, since it proposed to add a third argument to the traditional ones of eschatology and literary dependence: that of the theological significance of certain terms, which in the second letter would appear to be charged with a moral value alien to Paul. The views of these scholars were examined and refuted by E. Best, B. Rigaux, D. E. Whiteley, and W. G. Kümmel.

Thus, by the start of the decade of the 70's, probably a majority of scholars regarded 2 Thes as a genuine letter of Paul, or at least held
that the arguments advanced by scholars against its authenticity were not convincing. Since then, a current favouring inauthenticity as the solution to the problems of 2 Thes has arisen anew among critics. In all cases, the essence of the hypothesis remains the same: the letter is post-Pauline in literary style and theology, and thus ought to be considered as a pseudepigraph, an imitation of 1 Thes, designed to teach a different lesson. An unknown author must have written the letter to deal with a group of apocalyptic enthusiasts who were claiming Paul's authority in favour of their belief in the imminence of the Parousia. This anonymous author sought to quench their views by himself assuming the mask of Paul and insisting on the delay of the Parousia.

We may enumerate the scholars who have recently proposed this view: P. Vielhauer 46, who represents an extreme position; J.A. Bailey 47, who offers a good summary of modern arguments against authenticity; W. Trilling 48, whose study may be considered to be a major work among those inclined against authenticity; A. Lindemann 49, who suggests that 2 Thes was written to discredit and replace 1 Thes.

J. Bailey 50 centers on the problem of eschatology in 2 Thes (the End preceded by signs) as contradictory to that of 1 Thes (the End as something imminent). He argues that «Paul might have said both things—in differing situations to one church, or to different churches—but he can hardly have said both things to the same church at the same time, i.e., to the Thessalonian Church when he founded it. Moreover, corresponding to Paul's different messages to them, the situations in the two churches are quite different». Furthermore, 2 Thes 2, 2 is a correction of statements in 1 Thes which had been misunderstood. Such misunderstandings are being corrected by a redactor other than Paul. Regarding the situation of the letter, Bailey sees that the opponents of the author of 2 Thes were Gnostics who had abandoned belief in cosmic Parousia in favour of the view that salvation had fully come. The letter then is to be dated around 90-100 A.D.

To explain his view that 2 Thes was written to discredit and replace 1 Thes, A. Lindemann 51 argues that since 2 Thes closely resembles 1 Thes and yet does not make any reference to it is an indication that it was meant to be understood as Paul's only letter to
Thessalonica. The writer's aim was to rid early Christianity of belief in the imminence of the Parousia. The opponents are not Gnostics but apocalyptically minded Christians who believed that the Day of the Lord was immediately at hand. The date of the writing is towards the end of the first century. The reference to the temple is part of the pseudepigraphic machinery.

The arguments of W. Trilling, on the other hand can be summed up as follows: (i) He asserts that no weight can be placed on arguments from vocabulary of 2 Thes on its own; (ii) 2 Thes contains very little metaphor by comparison with 1 Thes; (iii) There are unusual phenomena: the use of compound verbs in 1, 3, 4, 5, 10; the unusual expressions although individually carry little weight, are significant if they are taken collectively in a short document; the use of the stems δοξ-, αξιω-, and ταγ-, and the use of κύριος; (iv) 2 Thes has a formal, «official» tone and strikes as impersonal and stiff; (v) The use of brief sentences, rhetorical questions, sharp imperatives and the like are non-Pauline features and reveal the lack of Paul's originality; (vi) Using the form-critical analysis of the epistle shows that it is from one author who is not Paul, that the various individual forms have similar characteristics which link them together, and hence the epistle is not a letter to a particular community but a didactic and paraenetic tract which claims apostolic authority: in the prescript which is close in wording to that of 1 Thes, Paul does not repeat himself word for word, the additional words are awkward, and there is nothing personal in the details; 2 Thes 1, 3-12 is one long complicated sentence very distinct from the opening thanksgiving in 1 Thes. It does not sound like a living address to an actual community but rather reveals a biblical knowledge, especially of apocalyptic material and the didactic tendency of a later period; the material about prayer in 3, 1-5 is formal compared with that in 1 Thes; the paraenesis in 3, 6-13 deals with only the topic and accentuates heavily the apostolic authority of the redactor; the closing greeting lacks personal details and warmth; (vii) On the theological arguments: the theological structure of 2 Thes reveals signs of a period later than Paul and is better understood in post-Pauline context. There is the appeal to Pauline tradition; the Christian life is pictured as sad and tense, distinct from the joy and freshness of the early days of the Pauline period; the representation of
God and Christ has taken on Old Testament cultic and apocalyptic dramatic traits.

At the present stage, we can say that within this group there remains a considerable divergence of opinion regarding the circumstances that led to the composition of 2 Thes, although most of these authors agree that it is to be dated towards the end of the first century.

I. H. Marshall has analyzed these arguments and comes up with his own posture:

1. Answering Bailey's position, he observes that 1 Thes implies that the teaching about the imminence of the *Parousia* was part of Paul's original preaching at Thessalonica, and that probably the arrival of 1 Thes encouraged existing hopes of the near *Parousia* rather than caused them. This serves as an explanation to the language of 2 Thes 2, 2 which suggests that various causes lay behind the misunderstanding of the Thessalonians. Seeing the correction made by Paul at Corinth (1 Cor 5, 9-13) it is not strange why Paul should not do such correction in Thessalonica. The obscure teaching of 2 Thes is hardly likely to be the work of a later writer who was trying to correct Paul's teaching in a convincing way; it presumes some knowledge on the part of the readers. In the Jewish eschatology the coming of the End is preceded by signs, and that the gospel tradition contains the same juxtaposition of the suddenness and unpredictability of the End and of the prophecy of premonitory signs as can be found in the two epistles. Hence, there is no real disharmony between the two letters.

2. The understanding of Lindemann that the writer understood the destruction of the temple as part of the end-drama, is quite mistaken. It would seem that the effect of the letter would be to encourage belief that the end could not be far distant, rather than to quench expectation of the imminent *Parousia* altogether.

3. Responding to W. Trilling's objections, Marshall forwards the following arguments: (i) It is not a fair judgment to claim that no weight can be placed on arguments based on vocabulary used. To a document claimed to be Pauline and which demonstrates Pauline vocabulary, normally it is fair to claim that the argument from vocabulary must be held to give some support to the document's claim to Pauline authorship. In fact, there are some various small features
which would have been difficult for an imitator to produce (e.g., the Pauline article εἰτερ in 1, 6; ὠεσσυ in 1, 7; the Pauline-type compound ὑπερανξάνεν in 1, 3); (ii) On the unusual phenomena seen in the use of compound verbs, Trilling ignores the fact that Paul likes such verbs and the unique form ὑπερανξάνεν is the kind of word that he likes to coin. The use of πας is also seen in Phil; the preferred words are used again just like any other author would do depending on the subject matter (the use of ταγ in the discussion of the idlers; the use of δικ in reference to the vindication of the persecuted). The frequency of κύριος is the continuation of the tendency already visible in 1 Thes; (iii) On the official and cold tone of the letter. To consider «we ought to give thanks as is fitting» (1, 3) as cold and formal expression is unfounded (cf. Phil 1, 7). The personal concern of the author for the readers shines through the letter; (iv) On close wording with 1 Thes. There is no reason why Paul should not give substantially the same greeting in a second letter (compare 1 Cor 1, 1-3 and 2 Cor 1, 1ff.); (v) On the contrast between the opening thanksgiving. There is no reason why Paul could not express himself in a different way. And to argue that Paul adapted the apocalyptic material in 2, 1-12 to the situation of the church in his own day favours more the authenticity. In 1 Thes 4, 13-18 Jesus' apocalyptic teaching underlies; (vi) the material about prayer in 3, 1-5 is no less personal than Phil 4, 4-7; (vii) About the paraenesis in 3, 6-13 Trilling is disputing the fact that in reality the paraenesis does deal with a concrete situation in the Church and is trying to show that there is a false impression of concreteness; (viii) Regarding the closing greeting, it is questionable whether the purpose of v. 17b is to authenticate the letter against forgeries; it is more plausibly regarded as a means of underlining the authority and importance of the contents of the letter and it has clear analogies in other Pauline epistles (cf. 1 Thes 5, 27). One may question, too, whether the tone of 1 Thes is any warmer than the closing greeting of 2 Thes. All in all against those who attack the authenticity of 2 Thes because of its less personal tone, Marshall argues that the same can be said of the main body of Romans which is conspicuously lacking in personal material and the personal greeting lacking in Galatians.

With regard to the theology of 2 Thes it is comparable to the character of 1 Thes. Many of the fundamental theological ideas of
Paul as are known to us from the *Hauptbriefe* (Rom, 1 and 2 Cor, Gal) are more or less completely missing in 1 Thes. The reason is that Paul was not facing the same situation in 1 Thes as in those letters mentioned. The Christology of 1 Thes is close to that of 2 Thes. Both letters place Jesus alongside the Father, and the frequent use of the «Lord» in 2 Thes is matched in 1 Thes. As to the claim that the theology of the letter is essentially Jewish rather than Christian, something similar has been said of James.

Marshall comes to conclude then, just as Best had concluded his examination of earlier hypotheses, that neither singly nor cumulatively do their arguments suffice to disprove Pauline authorship; Marshall concludes, furthermore, that the dating of 2 Thes in the late first century supposes considerable difficulties, and offers no advantage over an early date in Paul’s career.

In a manner similar to P. Rossano, he employs the argument of antiquity in favour of authenticity: the early Church had no doubts about the Pauline authorship of 2 Thes; the later we set the date of the letter, the more difficult it becomes to explain its unopposed acceptance into the Pauline corpus.

Summing up, the arguments of both old and modern critics against the Pauline origin of 2 Thes have remained unchanged: literary dependence upon 1 Thes, theological differences, contradiction in eschatological doctrine. However, the hypothesis of a later, apocryphal origin encounters serious difficulties to situate this letter within the primitive Christian literature, and, in general, many more problems arise when its authenticity is negated than when it is affirmed. In reality, the similarities between the two letters are understandable since both of them are by the same author and are written with very little difference in time; the differences, too, are normal, since they are two distinct letters, and the second letter complements or clarifies some aspects of the first. For these reasons, the opinion in favour of the authenticity of 2 Thes has continued to prevail among modern critics.
2. Studies on the Theology of vocation in Paul

From what we have seen, the discussions on the two epistles revolve around their authenticity focusing on their style, vocabulary date, and the question of the Parousia. There are also a great number of books and articles about the theology of St. Paul, but all focusing more on Christology, Soteriology, Ecclesiology, Eschatology, and Moral Theology. We may also find works which touch on the topic of the theology of vocation. A great work of L. Cerfau 56 studies the Christians in the theology of Paul. It, however, does not specifically study the Christian calling as such. An article by W. Klein 57 focuses on Paul's use of κολασίν by a sentence structure analysis of the Pauline passages but does not go into the theology of it; it is a linguistic study. R.F. Collins 58 has published an article dealing with the Theology of Paul in 1 Thes and has touched on the basic elements of divine vocation as revealed in the said letter. He has not, however, dwelt extensively on this topic since it was not the focus of his essay. J. Luzarraga offers the biblical spirituality of vocation, but does not focus on Pauline theology 59. I. H. Marshall 60, a professor in Aberdeen, delivered a paper at the Louvain Congress on the Thessalonian Correspondence and has given many suggestive and enlightening points which serve as a proper tool to a better understanding of Paul's concept of election and calling. Earlier books have been published on vocation in St. Paul which do give materials to work on as a point of departure. W. Bieder 61, a professor of New Testament and Missiology at Basel, traces in his work the concept of vocation in the NT as it applies to the Christian in general and especially to the missionary. His aim is not to provide practical suggestions but to elaborate a theory which shows the unity and the nature of vocation in the NT and thus gives a framework in which the Christian and the missionary can think through the problems facing him. He considers the vocation of the Apostles and Paul and that of the Christian community. In the same year, W. A. Beardslee 62, a minister of the Reformed Church in America and professor of Bible at Emory University, published his work which examines Paul's understanding of «history», the over-all setting within which the self is called to work. It examines, too, Paul's view of work, progress, the apostolate, the slave and servant of God, and the work
of Christ in comparison with the work of the chosen man. In 1963, D. Wiederkehr \(^6\), published his doctoral dissertation. It gives a brief examination of \(\kappa\alpha\lambda\varepsilon\iota\nu\) as a central concept in the personal structure of salvation-history in the Old Testament (especially in Deutero-Isaiah), Qumran literature, the Synoptics and Acts. The core of the study is an analysis of 26 instances of «vocation» in the Pauline writings. He synthesizes this exegesis into a theology of vocation and then draws from it a consideration of the origin and development of the Pauline theology of vocation. There may be other articles which deal tangentially on the subject matter but we think that the works mentioned are the basic ones which deal directly with the concept of vocation in Paul. The last three works, indeed, do give an ample material that could serve our purpose. We do not pretend here to exhaust the bibliography on this line of study knowing the array of works on Paul and complexity of the Pauline studies, but just to give a bird’s-eye view of the field of study we are in.

3. Aim of the Study

Many of the questions raised on 1 and 2 Thes originate, in reality, from specific methodological options. The most noxious of them all is that of separating «science» from the faith, as if the faith of the Church would have nothing to do with the authenticity and veracity of 1 and 2 Thessalonians. It is evident that there is a wide area for free research, but it can not be denied that behind some of these «scientific» postures lies a fascination for positivism, historical determinism, and rigid philology. Our purpose is not to make a history of how 1 and 2 Thes were written, but rather to do «theology», regarding these books as inspired.

With the earlier works mentioned we feel that the moment has come for resuming the whole topic and studying the vocation of the Christians in the world. For this reason the present work of research is an attempt to offer an aspect which we believe to be important on the whole Pauline thought regarding the Christian realities: the concept of Christian vocation seen under the light of the teachings of Vatican Council II. This is the moment to remove the thorns of the
Lutheran controversy from the dispute regarding the essence of the Theology of St. Paul in order to recover all the freshness which the writings of the Apostle have regarding our true center of interest: the sanctification of the Christian.

We shall limit our study on the two episdes to the Thessalonians, knowing their importance as we have stated earlier, and taking them as authentically Pauline. Hence, this investigation shall not deal on the authenticity of the two letters, nor on the eschatology —although the two letters center more on the eschatology, they are not devoted solely to this topic—but shall deal mainly, as we have said on Paul’s theology of vocation and its implications as seen under the prism of the last Ecumenical Council.

4. Method and Sources

In this work we hope to make a contribution to biblical theology of the New Testament. It is not our aim to make a linguistic-philological study of the term vocation, but since in any exegetical work the study of the different terms is indispensable we do devote a chapter on the study of the different terms which we deem important. The analysis of these important words only shall serve us as a tool to make clear our terminologies from the beginning and hence land safely in our work of theology. Neither is our work of research a study of history of religion, but we reiterate, a biblical theology which is «that sacred science which analyses the Christian reality as attested and interpreted by the various New Testament writers according to the manner it was revealed to them, and which seeks, whilst remaining within biblical thought-categories, to realize a synthesis which those authors did not formulate».

We have consulted E. Aland and E. Nestle’s work as a guiding text for the Greek version of the two epistles, except for some words which we think should be written in another manner following other manuscripts. For the English translation, we have resorted to the Revised Standard Version, but always with the precaution of changing some terms in accordance with the Greek text we deem opportune to translate on our own as the case requires. The texts of
the documents of the Vatican Council were taken from a group of translators headed by A. Flannery.

5. Structure of the Study

In order to arrive safely at the goal we are pursuing, we have deemed it wise to first have a general overview of the two letters to the Thessalonians and the socio-religious-political environment in Thessalonica when the letters were written from which we could situate ourselves to see the general setting when Paul talks of the calling of the Christians.

Once we see the literary Sitz im Leben of the two letters in which the Christian vocation is described, we find it necessary to analyze four basic terms used by Paul which makes reference to the divine calling. In this way we hope to capture the profoundness of each term and what they really mean in the vocabulary of Paul.

Having studied the four basic terms in Chapter III we offer an analysis of six texts containing the occurrences of «vocation» which we believe are the basic ones in order to understand the mind of St. Paul. From the data gathered, in Chapter IV, we have tried to sketch the fundamental points and concepts regarding our subject matter in the said letters. In this way a «synthetic» view of what St. Paul understands by «vocation» is reached, the contribution which we hope to make to biblical theology.
We present four sections which we think would display Paul's doctrine on Christian vocation as revealed in his two earliest epistles: 1. the Trinitarian role in the act of election and calling; 2. the realization of the call in time; 3. the eschatological perspective of vocation; and 4. the Christian vocation's present perspective: a universal calling to sanctity in the world.

1. The Trinitarian Activity in the Process of Election and Calling

Although the theology of Paul does not primarily develop a systematic doctrine about the Trinity, all his theology is characterized by its Trinitarian structure. This is reflected much more in our two letters. Without a systematic exposition on the Trinitarian activity in the process of election and vocation the two letters already do reveal a solid Trinitarian doctrine, a proof of a revelation from his conversion-redemptive experience and catechesis received from the Christian community and not a product of Hellenistic development.

a. The Father

Paul frequently uses the expression *God the Father* with all its variations in our two letters, especially evocative of his fervent acts of thanksgiving, petitions, and prayers. Other times he just employs
the word \textit{God} (ο Θεός). But what is certain is that Paul consistently attributes to God the Father the initiative in the act of election and calling. The source of the divine decree, of the eternal purpose in which the Thessalonian’s election is embedded is God the Father (1 Thes 1, 4; 1 Thes 5, 24, 2 Thes 2, 13-14). He is the one who elects and who calls, for which reason the calling is His work. That initiative flows from his eternal love, with which God conceived and realized his eternal plan: His love is the determining factor of the salvific plan. As this love is eternal it pervades the process of vocational activity. The Father does not call only once and then forgets, he continually calls—he is καλοῦντος—and even provides the necessary support which will bring to fulfilment that for which he calls.

\textit{b. The Son}

Although Paul does not develop a full-blown Christology here, he nevertheless exposes in simple formulae Jesus Christ’s role in the story of man’s entrance in God’s salvific plan. That is logical, for the Damascus experience wherein God the Father has manifested his son to Paul in order to preach him to the Gentiles (Gal 1,15-16) has produced a great impact on Paul, a total Copernican revolution in his life. Indeed, his understanding of the text of Isaiah about the servant of Yahweh as applied to Jesus would give light on the character of all his apostolic activity which is the \textit{raison d’être} of his own vocation to Christianity.

The call in the first place is communicated through the Gospel preached to the Thessalonians. Paul alternately uses «word of the Lord» [sounding forth from the Thessalonians in Macedonia] (1 Thes 1, 8) and the «gospel of Christ» (1 Thes 3, 8) or «gospel of our Lord Jesus» (2 Thes 1, 8) to indicate the Christians’ entrance into the faith, their acceptance of the truth and the saving work of Christ, the Son of God. It is through the reception of the word (1 Thes 1, 6; 2,13) that Christ enters into the life of every believer. All the instructions for the Christians, the content of Paul’s paraenesis in these letters (1 Thes 4, 1-5, 22; 2 Thes 3, 1-15) derive their authority—thus the apostolic authority—from Christ (1 Thes 2, 1-12; 5, 12); they are given «by the word of the Lord» (4, 13) and «through the Lord Jesus».
(1 Thes 4, 1, 2). As such, the Christians are also required to live such exhortations «in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ» (2 Thes 3, 6) and through the recommendation of the Lord Jesus (2 Thes 4, 2).

The new state of the Christians and the spiritual life they are to live are said to be «in Christ» (ἐν Χριστῷ) 77. No relationship should exist without its focal reference in Christ. It is in Christ where their vocation finds its significance and transcendence. The Christian vocation is none other than to reproduce the image of Christ, to imitate Him, being steadfast in sufferings (1 Thes 1, 6) and enduring everything «in the patience of Christ» (2 Thes 3, 5). The crowning glory of living in Christ is in dying with Him. Hence, the Thessalonians’ departed loved ones have the hope of resurrection for they are the «dead in Christ» (1 Thes 4, 17). Indeed, Christ’s death and resurrection is the foundation of Christians’ hope of Christ’s second coming (2 Thes 1, 5) and their definitive salvation (1 Thes 4, 14)78. The Christians are destined to be eternally with the Lord. Deliverance from wrath (1 Thes 1, 10; 2 Thes 1, 8), acquiring of salvation (1 Thes 5, 9) and Christ’s glory (2 Thes 2, 14), and living with Him (1 Thes 5, 10) are achieved through the merits and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thes 2, 12).

c. The Holy Spirit

In his primitive kerygma, Paul cannot leave behind the truth about the action of the Holy Spirit in the history of each Christian. The gospel came to the Thessalonians, «not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit» (1 Thes 1, 5) 79. The Holy Spirit is the undeniable sign and seal of an authentic divine election. Indeed, the Holy Spirit is the sanctifier from the very beginning (2 Thes 2,13) 80; thus, they were able to receive the word with joy, to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit Himself, through which they became imitators of the Lord, amidst much affliction (1 Thes 1, 6). Upon receiving the gospel, they also received the person of the Holy Spirit given by the Father (1 Thes 4, 8) whose presence in each believer’s soul is necessary in order to belong to Christ. Precisely, in this indwelling of the Holy Spirit in each Christian, an experience of Trinitarian life in itself, is the root of the Christian’s mode of conduct (1 Thes 4, 1-8), the call to holiness is
manifest in the present gift of the Holy Spirit. Christian are to fight against the flesh and their concupiscence and struggle constantly towards sanctity, in order not to despise God who gives them the Holy Spirit which is in them (1 Thes 4, 7-8) 81. In fact the Christians should be obedient to the inspirations of the Holy Spirit, not «quenching the Spirit» nor doing something which will obstruct His action on them.

The action of the Trinity in the process of divine vocation proves to be present in our letters, God the Father is the source of the Christian's divine election and the call to believe in the gospel of Christ; Jesus is the one preached, the model to be imitated, the authority of the directives on Christian conduct, the avenger of this observance and through whom the eschatological glory is conferred; the Holy Spirit is the revealer of the Christian vocation, descending in the soul of each faithful, sanctifying him and consecrating him to the sanctity required at the Parousia 82.

2. The Realization of the Divine Call in Time

A consideration on the Trinitarian activity in the process of election and vocation as revealed by our two letters introduces us to the scrutiny of God's universal plan of salvation, central in Paul's theology in which God's very same act of election and calling is inserted. Our analyses, in fact, prove once more that it is through the vocational process that God reveals his eternal salvific plan which is the execution of His divine decree.

God intervenes in the history of mankind, in the present messianic times, to communicate His will. And this he realizes through the historical act of calling to the faith using human instruments for this same purpose.
a. The Experience of Paul

The phenomenon of Paul is distinct from that of the Christians. Paul is a privileged one. He did not receive the call through the evangelization of the apostolic message and consequently he had to give his response of faith different from the way the Christians did. His was a direct calling, through the vision of the risen Christ whom he was to preach to the gentiles (Gal 1, 5), and who was the direct testimony of his response of faith. He responded with all freedom, yet accompanied by the irresistible power of God which guided him; his was a response similar to the prophets of the Old Testament and similar to the Apostles who also received a direct calling from the Lord Himself. As is reflected by the narration of the same apostle his personal vocation included that mission of preaching Jesus Christ the risen one: these two elements are united in one and identical divine revelation.

It is the Apostle Paul whom God chose to be his instrument to bring the message of salvation to the pagans (1 Thes 2, 4). Paul is perfectly conscious of his vocation and he relies much on this conviction. He has a self-understanding of his «prophetic-apostolic» position as that someone absorbed completely by the sacred and that nothing in his task would be meaningful without its relation to the preaching he was to do. Paul makes this patent as he contrasts his authority and the rectitude of his role as an apostle with the position of believers (2 Thes 2, 10).

b. The Mission of Paul

Paul becomes the «synergetic» presence of God in the midst of the Gentiles and serves to be the voice of God which reaches the heart of the people. His action is the salvific action of God. He carries the message of salvation, the focus in the communication of the divine calling. In our epistles we find the most elemental form of this message: christianizing an apocalyptic theme of Hellenic Judaism—the whole pagan world is found under the threat of the imminent judgment of God—Paul preaches Jesus Christ the Son of God who died and whom God has raised and designated as the Parousiac Sovereign Lord and Judge. Salvation is belief in this same risen Jesus Christ and preparedness for his coming (1 Thes 1, 9-10; 4, 14; 5, 9-10).
c. The Faith of the Called Ones

The preaching of Paul is at the same time an initiation. Through his gospel which unfolds the salvific message (2 Thes 2, 14) and the incorporation of the hearers into the divine design, the unbelievers open their way to salvation «their entrance into Christianity» by their acceptance of this same message through faith (1 Thes 2, 13; 2 Thes 1, 10; 2 Thes 2, 13) 92. Faith is the response to that invitation, to that preaching of the Christian message. In many instances Paul points out this response to the message describing the Christians as the ones who have accepted the word (δεξαμενοι τὸν λόγον) (1 Thes 1, 6) 93 or who heard and received the word (παραλαβόντες λόγον ἰδανίς) (1 Thes 2, 13) 94 and who believed in the truth (πίστει ἀληθείας) (2 Thes 2, 13) 95. Faith is not pure sentiments of the heart. It supposes a noetic element. Faith is an intellectual adhesion—not a pure intuition of the mind—to the divine testimony. It presupposes preaching —λόγος ἰδανίς (2 Thes 2, 13)— since it is to be presented to man's external senses, «Fides ex auditu» 96. To adhere to the divine testimony implies conviction which supposes an assent of the mind: that is the task of the intelligence. Faith devoid of the intellect's role is inconceivable 97. And such adhesion to the divine testimony (formal object of faith), precisely because the preaching of the Apostles is based on the authority of God, is to accept the word of God (1 Thes 1, 5), the gospel (material object of faith). This acceptance implies knowledge: knowledge of Christ and at the same time of the divine plan of salvation. For knowledge of Christ, knowledge of the divine plan, and knowledge of the goods of salvation go hand in hand, «as if the definition (περιγραφή) of Christ coincided with the conception of the divine plan, as if Christ were the realized knowledge of God» 98. Indeed the conversion to Christianity is an accession to the knowledge of God through Jesus Christ 99. Paul uses the expression «those who do not know God» (μὴ εἰδόται τὸν Θεὸν) (Thes 4, 5; 2 Thes 1, 7-8), a formula typical in the Old Testament 100 which distinguishes the pagans from the Jews, to distinguish now the pagans from the Christians 101. In Paul's language «to know God» envelops all the consequences of the religious and moral life which is placed under the sign of Christ 102.
Faith precisely, as a response to the Christian message involves total confidence (inherent in the act of faith) where the believer's whole being submits to the authority of God and confesses implicitly the truth of his message. This is what the theologians call «pius credulitatis affectus» 103. Man’s whole being bows to the divine which works within him that obedience of the mind and of the heart that conforms in everything 104. This is why a believer (2 Thes 2, 10, 13) — a title preferred by Paul because faith is the vast and universal sentiment which epitomizes best the Christian character 3105 — can be rightly called δούλος Χριστοῦ. It implies the total submission — an act of a δούλος to Christ and the fulfilment of the obligations which Christianity imposes 106.

That initial act of faith thus extends throughout man’s life. It is not only an instantaneous act for the call of God does not end in one instantaneous moment. Thus, since God’s call is continuous and his power and help do not cease until the consummation of the end for which man is called 107, man’s response also has to be continuous, expressed by his prompt and steadfast acceptance and identification with the divine will.

The communication of God’s calling has man’s faith for an answer. Faith is man’s yes to the salvific message. It is the origin of man’s salvation, because it is the first essential disposition that orients him towards God; «it is the foundation of our salvation because everything rests upon it; ... it is the root of our salvation because ... it concurs with divine assistance in producing and sustaining the other supernatural dispositions» 108 throughout one’s life. And hence faith is the principle of justification 109 which introduces man to the eschatological event which awaits him (2 Thes 2, 13).

3. The Eschatological Perspective of the Christian Vocation

The Christian vocation, essentially a call by God the Father, is oriented to the fellowship of his resurrected and glorious Son. Paul makes an overriding emphasis on this eschatological orientation of
the Christian vocation in our two epistles, since at this point of his apostolic career he focuses more on Christ’s function at the Parousia. The content of the Christian message preached by Paul supposes a «turning away from idols, to serve a living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven» who died for us so that we might live forever with him (1 Thes 5,10). In the Parousia all those who are called to the faith shall meet and gather around Our Lord (2 Thes 2,1); through Jesus God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep (1 Thes 4,14) and those alive shall be caught up with them in heaven where the final and definitive encounter shall take place (1 Thes 4,17), and wherein they shall obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thes 2,14).

Seen from an angle it may be said that the Christian life may be defined as that «waiting for the Son» who comes from heaven whom the Father raised from the dead (1 Thes 1,10) since salvation is anchored on this faith that God has raised Jesus Christ. And it is upon this faith in the Parousia that the demands of the Christian vocation are founded. Paul formulates the exhortation on vigilance always in view of the Parousia. The Christians must be sober and vigilant (1 Thes 5,4-8). They are to practice the virtues of faith, hope, and charity (1 Thes 5,8). His demands on sanctity always contain that parousiac flavour (1 Thes 3,13), for he believes that the Christians are not destined to the divine wrath but predestined to acquire God’s glory through our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thes 5,9).

His motivation to keep all his moral exhortations— that process of sanctification— rests on his conviction that «the parousiac Lord is also a Judge». But it is not a dark picture for the Christians, for he sees the parousiac event as salvific for Christians, precisely because those who have accepted the Christian faith are those who await Jesus as Saviour. The final reward of the Christians, the ultimate end of Christian vocation, which is the reality of salvation—is to be with Christ (σὺν Χριστῷ). Paul looks forward to the Parousia especially as the time when the people of Christ will be «established in holiness» by him in the presence of God. Furthermore, the Christian περιπατεῖν (1 Thes 2,12) is in view of God’s kingdom and glory. This apocalyptic picture of the kingdom of God generally envelops
an ethical demand. Paul uses the traditional apocalyptical language to emphasize that the call of God implies a claim of service from those whom he has chosen. This service is a joyful and hopeful one inspite of tribulations (θλίψεις, πάθηματα) for it keeps in view that happy meeting. In fact tribulations and persecutions are viewed as characteristics of the Christian life: it is the vocation of each faithful to reproduce the features of Christ, to reproduce the Lord's own tribulations and persecutions suffered. It is a sign of divine election to bear everything with patience in the midst of trials (1 Thes 1,4-6). To pass through messianic tribulations in order to reach the Parousia forms part of the Christian vocation: the tribulations are a pledge of eternal salvation.

As such the eschatological perspective of the Christian vocation establishes the hope of the Christians. The confidence in the one who calls them to his kingdom and glory is strengthened by the certainty of the resurrection of Christ, the truth contained in the Christian message. The vocation of each faithful has hope for its object. That hope indeed differentiates him from the pagans who do not possess it (1 Thes 4,13). The hope of the mystery cults are none other than «bacchic frenzies» and ecstasies. Neither does the hope of the Jews reach the Christian level. The principal object of the Christian hope which awakens the enthusiasm of the faithful is the coming of Our Lord (1 Thes 1,3), which brings, together with the joy and crown of honour in Our Lord's Parousia (1 Thes 2,15), the salvation. Indeed, Christianity has heaven and eternity for its horizon.

4. Christian Vocation's Present Perspective: Sanctity in the Middle of the World

Paul, in our two epistles, grounds and heavily links the Christian vocation with sanctity. Every one called is called to sanctity (1 Thes 4,7). This springs from the will of God (1 Thes 4,3). As we have just seen, for the Christian the final end of the vocation which is the kingdom of God to which the Resurrection and the Parousia of Our
Lord is a necessary passage, is the ostentatious motive imposed by Paul for the Christian to live a holy life. For Paul, salvation, albeit a future event, has already been inchoated here in the present life. The final event is connected to the present by means of the divine purpose executed in the election and calling, which constitutes the believer in that situation of «salvation anticipated»; the faithful now finds himself in a realized eschatology. The converts upon accepting the gospel (1 Thes 1,5), have changed masters (1 Thes 1,9), have adhered to Christ, have received the Holy Spirit (1 Thes 4,8) and thus have been incorporated collectively and individually into the life of Christ, an incorporation which implies a new creation. Indeed, as St. Thomas Aquinas explains, a new creation can be spoken of when there is a change or novelty at the level of being, and this happens when a man passes from the state of sin to the state of grace because without the latter man is nothing before God.

a. The Sanctity of Every Christian

In our two letters we may not find expressions such as «sons of God» or «filiation»—they would only appear in his later letters—but Paul does speak of the present life as life ἐν Χριστῷ (1 Thes 5,10, 18). To be in Christ is to be intimately united to him and to live his life. The Christian is precisely ἐν Χριστῷ.

It is in this doctrine that Paul will later declare «it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me» Christ is the life of the Christians. Christ with His taking possession of our life, identifies Himself with the «new creature» resulting from that adhesion to the faith and baptism. But it is the personality of Christ which is superimposed on each Christian, removing the old «I» and liberating each one from his sins and miseries. It is the personality of Christ which becomes the foundation of the personality of each Christian. To be ἐν Χριστῷ indicates already the fundamental act of insertion into God's new eschatological event which will be completed at the coming of our Lord. But Paul is not interested in apocalyptic schemata as such when describing the final end of the Christian. The centre of his concern is the «salvation wrought by Jesus Christ» through His death and resurrection. It is in this that the believer
becomes ἐν Χριστῷ. It indicates the Christian’s enjoyment of messianic goods while still on earth through his participation in the merits of Jesus Christ. For no one receives any good if not through Christ. To be ἐν Χριστῷ then evokes that title of a «son of God», a title which every Christian receives at baptism and which enables him to cry «Abba, Pater!» 143.

It is here where we should find the solid bases of the Christian morality and its rigor 144. The convert should respect his baptismal vocation which brings with it the demand for sanctity. Hence, Paul relates vocation and sanctity, but this time with a certain shift: the preparatory sanctity to reach and to acquire the heavenly one in the Kingdom comes to be the object of vocation 145.

We have seen how the will of God is closely associated with His call. Sanctification is the object of God’s call to Christianity 146. Everyone is called to sanctity (condition) (1 Thes 4,7), but an active and personal effort of sanctification (1 Thes 4,3) which is based on the objective state of sanctity is needed 147. Everyone, without exception, is obliged to sanctify oneself. And that personal effort is required not only to maintain that state of holiness but also to nurture and make it grow. Paul himself has shown how he takes good care of each soul, concerning himself in the personal formation of each individual 148. The life of grace received in baptism is a personal one and each one is responsible for the growth and nourishment of this grace (1 Thes 4,8). Paul is not speaking of a «band-wagon» type of sanctity where everyone just joins and thinks that everything else will automatically be taken care of with hardly any personal effort; rather, though he speaks of the first act of sanctification, he still does insist on the personal correspondence of each one to cultivate that which he is lacking. Paul may contrast this effort to seek sanctity against the sin of impurity at first glance because that is what calls more the attention of the Apostle as something which opposes the state of sanctity that each one possesses and that each one should nurture. It remains clear that Paul exhorts all Christians, by their very state of being Christians, to the «plenitude of Christian life and to the perfection of charity». Sanctity, therefore, is not limited to a group of people but is demanded from everyone. Paul echoes then, as reflecting the doctrine he received from our Lord and from the early catechesis,
the teaching of our Jesus himself: «Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.» (Mt 5,48; cf. Lc 6,36); «and you shall love the Lord with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.» (Lc 12,30). Hence he himself sees the need for prayer and work of faith to continue living in holiness.

b. Sanctity in the World

In his effort to unite «time and eternity» Paul makes us see that the same salvation and the acquiring of glory are ferried from heaven to the present life (2 Thes 2,13ff). Paul addresses the Thessalonian faithful, the ordinary Christians, as he gives his exhortation on sanctification (1 Thes 4,3-12) which comprises the need for purity, hard work and charity. The Christians have been called to live in this material world the life of salvation, which is the life of God, in sanctity. He has not asked the Christians to abandon this world but precisely to live in holiness where they are. How positive is the preaching of Paul on Christian vocation—breathed from primitive Christianity—as contrasted from the concept of election of the Essenes! For the Essenes the conversion which follows the calling is not lived in the same place where one has lived up to the time when one is called. They separate from the people and go to the desert to live a distinct way of life. They do not seem to see the logic of continuing after the calling, to stay where they were; this precisely is due to their utopian concept of the world. The community desires a world higher than that of the angels; it is the court of the throne of God where the angels reunite. What they intend is to reach this world already in the present life on earth by fleeing from the world and from the cult. For Paul the Christian vocation does not take the faithful out of the world. On the contrary, as his exhortations prove, he affirms that the baptismal vocation of each faithful requires that sanctification be carried out in the middle of the world. Thus, the eschatological perspective of the Christian vocation preached by Paul does not take away man's responsibility of seeking sanctity in the world where he lives. To understand the contrary would lead to escapism which is to avoid all the demands of the Christian vocation, an attitude on which St. Paul would lament and would correct his Thessalonian converts
as we shall explain later. This concept of escapism may manifest, besides, a flavor of Lutheran doctrine which advocates that human nature is irremisibly corrupt as a fruit of the original sin and that therefore man cannot merit any good: everything human which happens in history is irrelevant before the action of God who is the only one who saves. Hence, it is a total negation of the positive note of the world and human actions. Paul’s preaching precisely reflects our Lord’s teaching: «I do not pray that thou shouldst take take them out of the world but that thou shouldst keep them from evil» (Ioh 17,15)\(^{153}\).

His exhortation on purity is clearly directed to every ordinary Christian in the world (1 Thes 4,3-8)\(^{154}\). While contrasting with the pagan’s way of life Paul does not ask his neophytes to leave their respective places and cease having social relations with other men. Seen from one interpretation of the text, what he asks is to live the marriage life clearly with all the fidelity it entails. That requires that each one—husband and wife—respect, too, his own body\(^{155}\). Precisely, being in the world entails the sanctification of the things of this world, one’s body included. Paul has clearly in mind the sanctity of marriage. His rabbinic formation may still have a hold on him as these words found in Rabbinic literature may be applied to his thinking: «It is not he who marries who sins, the sinner is the unmarried man who spends all his days in sinful thoughts»\(^{156}\). But the Christian Paul does not regard marriage in terms of just sinning or not sinning. His positive outlook to conserve the sanctity of marriage\(^{157}\) speaks more of a profound conviction: marriage in its vocational sense\(^{158}\). That baptismal vocation should be lived in this state; it is where each faithful called to marriage should seek to please God\(^{159}\). The observance of Christian chastity is also applied to those who are not married, if one interpretation is to be followed. Everyone in effect should know how to have dominion of his own body, to use it according to the order established by God. This is to live that Christian περιποιεῖν that leads every Christian to be ἐμέμπτως before the One who calls him to sanctity. This is to live one’s life as a vocation. This is to live one’s vocation.
c. Christian Vocation to Work

Since one's divine vocation affects all his existence, it is the *raison d'être* of his whole existence, it is also due to this baptismal character that a Christian finds the vocational sense in his daily work. When God calls, he calls for something. That sanctity to which he calls every Christian has as specification the seeking of sanctity in the place and in the work where he finds himself. This is the vocational sense of the work of every Christian.

Paul does not miss to point to that direction in his early preaching in speaking about the Christian vocation. The hopeful expectation for the *Parousia* of our Lord was for many of the Thessalonians a testimony of their living faith, but for others, those who became faint-hearted after seeing the event as something imminent, the *Parousia* became a motive of regarding work as futile, and thus, a motive to remain idle. In his exhortation on sanctification, Paul corrects this attitude and defends the necessity and excellence of work. Indeed, in so doing, Paul places in the right focus the true meaning of Christian hope: true Christian hope is tightly related to faith which moves man to work out his personal sanctification necessary to achieve the end of his vocation. That precisely requires work, work in its ordinary sense where one sanctifies himself as he cooperates in reestablishing the order in the world willed by God, a true manifestation of his faith. And so Paul exhorts his Thessalonian faithful regarding the necessity of work (1 Thes 4,10b-11) «But we exhort you, brethren, to do so more and more, to aspire to live quietly, to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands, as we charged you». In our analysis on 2 Thes 1,11 we have already noted that aside from the activity of God in making them worthy Paul points out, too, the need for the believers' work of faith (ἐργού πιστεώς) which, compared with 1 Thes 1,3, means the effort that springs from faith, a product of man's good will (ἀγαθός), the capacity of every believer to make effective his activity, that is, to live a life of faith. And among these works of faith we find work in its ordinary secular sense. Paul goes further and gives his own personal example: «For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us; we were not idle when we were with you, we did not eat anyone's bread without paying but with toil and labor we worked night and day, that we
might not burden anyone of you» (2 Thes 3,7-8) 165. His exhortation 166, which may indeed reflect the example of the adolescent Jesus 167 and improve the rabbinic teachings 168, demands a life of work and industriousness. This is indicative of his clear understanding of the natural and divine law: Man was created to work 169. And he reaches the point of commanding openly as he ends his second letter: «If anyone will not work, let him not eat» (2 Thes 3,10) 170. He sees in work the affirmation of the dignity of man 171 and the service he can offer to the others (1 Thes 4,12) 172.

d. Theology of Work in Paul

Paul's appeal to his converts may be in terms of traditional and practical reasons for doing their work, but it reflects a deep conviction of Paul's theology. Paul's attitude towards his work may reflect his Pharisaic background and contrast sharply with Hellenistic thought in that he sees physical work as a normal conduct of obedience to God. And in this respect just as he considers his work as a response to his bondage with Christ, so too he sees in the performance of the daily work and ordinary duties of a Christian in his own sphere of competence a normal aspect of the Christian's obedience to Christ 173. The Christian does not live for himself now and hence all his activities should reflect his faith and obedience to Christ. He believes that man's entrance into the new condition gives fuller meaning to the importance of ordinary work 174 with all human competence and hence human perfection 175 and progress it entails 176. Any kind of honest work 177, then, whether as a street sweeper, a worker, a bank manager, a cook, or a domestic helper can be a means of sanctification 178 as work acquires its value from union with Christ 179.

Hence, for Paul work is constitutive of one's own divine vocation 180 for it is the means through which he fulfils the divine design of God meant for every faithful. It is just what the ordinary Christians should do «sanctify their profession or job, regardless of differences of social environment, to sanctify themselves in that work and sanctify with that work» 181. This is what Paul conveys. He opens up another horizon, a horizon «old as the gospel and as the gospel new»: he unravels the evangelical doctrine of finding Christ in the midst of
one's work realized precisely in the world. Paul underlines the insertion of man in the world, or that «secular (note of) Christian existence»¹⁸². That note, «positive and properly theological in itself»¹⁸³, indeed, properly corresponds, by virtue of his baptismal vocation, to an ordinary faithful, the layman¹⁸⁴ in his task of sanctification¹⁸⁵.

Paul has therefore already unveiled in his two epistles to the Thessalonians the doctrine that the Christian vocation is an on-going quest for honest and fruitful ways of living in the world without being worldly. The baptismal character and their being in Christ enables the Christians to discover the vocational sense of marriage upholding its sanctity and to undertake that task of sanctification in the middle of the world through their ordinary secular work and through which they give witness of their faith, hope, and love, a sign of their election and calling which is God’s work.
NOTES

1. L. CERFAUX, Jesucristo en San Pablo, Bilbao 1960, p. 7: «Si datamos la conversión de San Pablo de los comienzos de la cuarta década del siglo primero, resultan casi veinte años de vida cristiana o apostólica, de reflexión teológica, de trabajos y de contactos con la comunidad primitiva, los que han venido preparando este pensamiento cuya manifestación se inicia con las epístolas a los Tesalonicenses».


5. For a more detailed survey of these hypotheses, cf. R. F. COLLINS, Apropos the Integrity of 1 Thes, in ETL 55 (1979) 67-106.


8. W. MARXSEN, Der erste Brief an die Thessalonicher (Zürcher Bibelkommetare, Zürich 1979, pp. 47 ff.


12. MARXSEN, o. c., p. 27.


25. A. Suht, Paulus und seine Briefe, Gütersloh 1975, pp. 92-110, offers, too, an extensive discussion and lands in the same conclusion as E. Best that Schmitals has not established this part of his hypothesis.


28. Cf. Irenaeus, Adv. haer., 5, 6, 1; 5, 30; Clement of Alexandria, Paedag., 1, 5, 12; Strom., 2, 6, 53; Tertullian, De resurr. carnis, 24; Adv. Marc., 4, 6.


30. Cf. Ignatius Of Antioch, Rom., 2,1 = 1 Th 2, 4; Polyc., 6,1 = 1 Th 5, 8.


36. G. Bornkamm, Paulus, in RGG, 5, 163.

37. H. J. Schoeps, Paulus, Tübingen 1958, p. 44.


42. E. Best, a.c., pp. 50-58.

43. B. Rigaux, a.c., pp. 124-152.


50. J. A. Bailey, a.c., pp., 136f.

51. A. Lindemann, a.c., pp. 35-47.


53. I. H. Marshall, Pauline Theology in the Thessalonian Correspondence, in M. D. Hooker-

54. Idem, 1 and 2 Thessalonians..., cit. p. 45.

55. Rigaux, o.c., 140

56. L. Cerfaux, El Cristiano en San Pablo, Bilbao 1965.


60. I. H. Marshall, Election and Calling in 1 and 2 Thessalonians (pro manuscripto), in XXXVIII CBL, Louvain 1988.


64. D. M. Stanley, Christ's Resurrection in Pauline Soteriology, Rome 1961, p. 2. It is interesting to note how he discusses the importance placed by many authors in this branch of Theology.


69. τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ πατρός ἡμῶν in 1 Thes 1:3 and 1 Thes 3:13; ὁ Θεός καὶ πατὴρ ἡμῶν in 1 Thes 3:11; ἐν Θεῷ πατρὶ ἡμῶν in 2 Thes 1:1; ὅπο τοῦ Θεοῦ πατρὸς in 2 Thes 1:2. We may see the same expressions in his other letters: Rom 6:4; 15:6; 1 Cor 8:6; 15:24,28; 2 Cor 1:3; 11:31; Eph 1:3,5,20; 2:18; 4:5; 6:23; Col 1:3; 3:14.

70. Cf. Rom 8:30; 9:12, 24ff; 1 Cor 1:9; Gal 1:15; Phil 3: 14.

71. In our analysis on 1 Thes 1:4 we have seen how Paul uses the expression «beloved by God» (ἡγαγημένοι ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ) to the Thessalonians who are object of the divine election and calling.


76. See our analysis on 1 Thes 1:4.

77. L. Cerfaux, *La Iglesia en San Pablo*, Bilbao 1959, p. 78, opines that in the two letters to the Thessalonians, the expressions «in Christ Jesus» (Our Lord), «in the Lord», «in the Lord Jesus» do not have the «mystical» meaning which is attributed to them. Such are the examples in 1 Thes 3:7ff.; 4:1, 16; 5:12, 18; 2 Thes 3:4. We believe that this is a mistaken notion. His theory of the evolution of Pauline thought betrays him. This is actually what the study of the eschatological formulæ of 1 Thes demonstrate; cf. P. Rossano, *Lettere ai tessalonicisci*, in S. Garofalo (dir.), *La Sacra Biblia*, Torino/Roma 1965, pp. 27-44.


81. Cf. our analysis on 1 Thes 4:7.


88. In 1 Cor 15:11 he would record his discovery of this apostolic conscience.


91. A great majority of authors have identified 1 Thes 1:9-10; 4:14; and 5:9-10 as pre-Pauline Credal Formulae which Paul received from early apostolic catechesis: B. Rigaux, *Vocabulaire chrétien antérieur a la premiere épître aux Thessaloniciens*, in J. Coppens-

92. See our analysis on this verse. Cf. also Rom 1:5; 1 Cor 2:5; 15:14-17; Gal 3:2-3; where clearly faith is shown as the response to the message received. With the aorist of πίστευω –indicating a punctiliar act in the past–, the believers are introduced into Christianity through an act of faith rendered absolutely to the message. Aside from 2 Thes 1:10, cf also Rom 13:11; 1 Cor 3:5; 15:2, 11; Gal 2:16; cf 1:13. Cf. R. Bultmann, Πιστεύω, κτλ., in GLNT X, 488.

93. Cf. 2 Cor 2:4. R. F. Collins, *The Faith of the Thessalonians*, in LouvStud (1979) 249-269, p. 254, republished in his *Studies* cit., p. 214, qualifies δέχομαι as «not only to hear with one's ears; it is to welcome warmly from the depths of one's being... and not only of internal assent, but of a true commitment as well».

94. See our analysis on this text.

95. Παραλαμβάνω does not only mean «to receive» but «to receive something transmitted by someone». The substantive ακοη in modal genitive is the word of hearing, that word heard which passes through the ear and reaches the mind. With the genitive of author τοῦ Θεοῦ and qualifying παρ ηµετέρων in 1 Thes 2:13 the whole phrase redounds to «the word of God given by hearing which we have transmitted to you». Hence it designates the tradition received. Cf. G. Kittel, ἀκοη, κτλ. in GLNT, I. 582-606, esp. 596-597. In 2 Thes 3:6 παραλαμβάνων has tradition for its direct object. Cf. also 1 Cor 15:1; Col 2:6; Phil 4:9 for a later use of Paul. For an examination of Jewish element here see W. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism. Some Rabbinic Elements in Pauline Theology*, London 1948.


97. Thus, how far then is the Protestants’ idea of faith. M. Luther’s definition of it as «a certain and profound confidence in the divine goodness and in the grace manifested and known by the Word of God» cannot explain how confidence can be certain if an intellectual faith does not precede it. F. Prat, *The Theology of St. Paul*, Westminster 1927, p. 233.


100. Ier 10:25; Ps 79:6.
103. F. PRAT, *o. c.*, p. 239.
106. In our lexical study on δούλος we have seen that Paul's use of this term always implies the special relation of the Christians with Christ, the redeemer from the slavery of sin. We may recall that when this term is applied to Paul himself it contains always that nuance of being an apostle of Christ.
109. C. BASEVI, *La justificación en los comentarios de Pelagio, Lutero y Santo Tomás a la epistola a los Romanos*, in ScrTh 19 (1987) 113-176, through his brilliant analysis of St. Thomas's commentary on the Epistles to the Romans, puts to its proper place Paul's concept on justification which was wrongly interpreted by Pelagius and Luther.
110. Thus, the chief doctrinal value of the two letters lies in their teaching about the Parousia of Christ the characteristic note that distinguishes them from the other epistles.
111. Cf. 1 Thes 2:12, and see our analysis. We shall recall that kingdom and glory are messianic-eschatological realities already pronounced in the OT for the future time: 2 Chro 13:8; Ps 17:4; Sap 10:2; Is 5:40.
114. Paul uses words here in the metaphorical sense. To sleep means the conduct of those of the night which corresponds to every kind of unconsciousness and of a relaxation of the moral responsibility. To be watchful is the attitude of a guard in expectation of the day which signifies to be alert and to be attentive having the two eyes open to see and detect any kind of attack from the enemy. To be sober points out exactly to the control of the sensible appetite. P. ROSSANO, *Leterae ai Tessalonicenses*, in C. Garofalo (dir.) *La Sacra Bibbia. Nuovo Testamento*, Torino-Roma 1965, p. 117.
116. See our analysis on 1 Thes 2:11; cf. 1 Thes 1:11; M. SAENZ GALACHE, «Dios no nos ha destinado a la cólera» (1 Thes 5,9). *Angustia existencial del hombre y premio escatológico de Dios*, in CDios 87 (1974) 107-134, highlights the positive aspect of this passage.
past event, which has present implications through sanctification; 2) sanctification, a present event, dependent upon a past event, justification, which has future implications, viz. salvation; 3) salvation, a future event, already anticipated and partially experienced in justification and sanctification and clearly dependent upon them».

121. J. DUPONT, ΣΥΝ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ. La union avec Christ suivant saint Paul, Bruges 1952, is of the opinion that the formula σων Χριστοῦ points to the final salvation.


123. See our analysis on 1 Thes 2:12.


126. Ibid.

127. L. CERFAUX, Jesucristo cit., p. 59.

128. The theme of judgment in the epistles has a double function: to incite to humility which leads to fraternity and to be aware at all moments that one depends on divine grace; it is also a motive of hope, since it pushes one to patience and to perseverance.


130. W. BURKERT, Greek Religion. Archaic and Classical, Oxford 1985, p. 282, notes that in the initiation of the cult of Cabirus there is no mention of any expectation of an after life. We think that the proposition of R. JEWETT, The Thessalonian Correspondence. A Millenarian Piety, Chicago 1986, that the description of Christ's coming may have been modelled by the coming of Cabirus, the bearded young man worshipped in Thessalonica and that it is patterned by the millenarian piety at that time is exaggerated and off the track. We can not just look for models with which to pattern the belief in the Second Coming of Christ.

131. L. CERFAUX, Jesucristo cit., p.57.

132. It should be recalled that the term salvation is what Paul uses more in our two epistles. «Justification» will come later in his letter to the Romans.

133. It should be recalled that the ethical vision of the Qumran is founded in a strong apocalyptic and eschatological tension. A. GONZALEZ LAMADRÍ, Los descubrimientos del mar muerto, Madrid 1971, thus describes the eschatological conscience of Qumran: «la comunidad de Qumrán tiene conciencia de hallarse en vísperas de los tiempos escatológicos, entendido este término en sentido amplio; en algunos textos vive la inminencia de los acontecimientos escatológicos en sentido estricto; y, finalmente, hay textos que expresan la convicción de una escatología realizada». On the other hand, in the preachings of Christ the moral demands are linked with the parables which have eschatological content: the parable of the marriage feast, Mt 22:1-14; the parable of the wise and foolish virgins, Mt 25:1-13; the parable of the talents, Mt 25:14-30. The parallelism that can be observed between the Qumran and the NT does not imply dependence between the two. A. GONZALEZ LAMADRÍ, a.c., pp.168-169 follows the observation of H.W. KUHN, Enderwartung und gegenwärtiges Heil. Untersuchungen zu den Gemeinlediern von Qumrán, Gottinga 1966: «Las convicciones y presupuestos teológico en los textos de Qumrán se funda en la idea de que la comunidad se consideraba a sí misma como escenario de la acción salvifica de Dios, mientras que en el NT el fundamento es Cristo, personificación y encarnación de las realidades escatológicas. En cierta manera, el paralelismo de Qumrán es mayor con la comunidad cristiana primitiva, en cuanto que ésta se consideraba a sí misma como el lugar de la presencia y acción divinas, pero, al estar apoyada sobre la cristología, esta
autoconcepción de la Iglesia primitiva se coloca en una perspectiva distinta de la de los esenios». Véase uno de los trabajos más grandes de J. M. Casciaro, *Quirán y el Nuevo Testamento*, Pamplona 1982, para una discusión más completa sobre el tema.


136. Para el uso de δοῦλος, véase nuestro estudio sobre este término.

137. 1 Thes 1:1 έΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ. Como sabemos, este término ha sido usado desde los tiempos apostólicos para designar a la Iglesia, el nuevo pueblo de Dios, fundado por Jesús Cristo. Tomamos la oportunidad de citar aquí las palabras del *Vaticano II*, en LG 9: «Todas aquellas, que en fe miran hacia Jesús, el autor del salvamento y la base de la unión y la paz, Dios ha juntado y establecido como la Iglesia para que cada uno y todos puedan ser el visible sacramento de su salvación».


146. Véase nuestro análisis en 1 Thes 4:7.

147. *LG 40* nos da esta certeza: «...todos los cristianos en cualquier estado de vida o de trabajo son llamados a la plenitud de la vida cristiana y a la perfección del amor, y por esta gracia más hombre en la vida humana en la sociedad, de modo que trabajen con el amor de Dios en todas sus acciones, de tal manera que, siguiendo a Cristo y conformados a su imagen, se dediquen con toda la voluntad y devoción a la gloria de Dios y al servicio de su vecindario».

148. Véase nuestro análisis en 1 Thes 2:12.

149. J. L. Illanes, *Llamada a la santidad y radicalismo cristiano*, en *La misión del laico en la Iglesia y en el mundo. VIII Simposio Internacional de Teología de la Universidad de Navarra*, A. Sarmiento - T. Rincon - J. M. Yangus - A. Quiros (dirs.), Pamplona 1987, pp. 803-824, indica que la santidad es un patrimonio común de todos los cristianos...
and thus he calls it «radicalismo cristiano». In pp. 818-819 he writes: «La santidad no es patrimonio de una categoría concreta de cristianos, sino meta a la que todo cristiano debe tender y a la que todo cristiano debe contribuir desde la condición de vida en la que, por voluntad divina, le corresponde vivir y de acuerdo con la misión que esté llamado a desarrollar (...) La llamada a amar a Dios o es llamada a una plenitud de respuesta o no es llamada en modo alguno. La llamada a crecer en la caridad y la firme y plena decisión de responder a esa llamada, es decir, el radicalismo, no son, pues, rasgo especificador de una concreta vocación cristiana, sino dimensión común a todas».

150. See our analysis on 2 Thes 1:11.

151. See our analysis on 2 Thes 2:13.


153. P. Delhaye, La exigencia cristiana cit., pp.683-684, observes the continuity of this teaching in Paul's other letters: «San Pablo no exhorta, pues, al cristiano a la evasión. (...) el cristiano debe vivir una vida toda ella celestial; pero es aquí abajo, dolorosamente, donde debe vivirla, haciendo morir sin cesar por el Espíritu las obras de la carne (Rom 6, 12; Gal 5, 17ss; Rom 8, 5.13.14). Lejos de ser un desertor de la ciudad terrena, el cristiano la construye porque la caridad «edifica» (1 Cor 8, 1) una ciudad que responde a las exigencias del hombre creado a imagen y semejanza de Dios y, por tanto, hecho para amar».

154. See our analysis on 1 Thes 4:7 for further specifications on this.

155. Paul would later reveal more explicitly in 1 Cor 7 his doctrine on the significance of human sexuality. C. Basevi, La doctrina di san Paolo sulla sessualità umana e la condizione della donna in 1 Cor. Studio di 1 Cor 7 e 1 Cor 11,3-15, in AnTh 1 (1987) 51-72, offers a very sound and instructive discussion on the Pauline thought on celibacy and marriage as two ways to reach sanctity; IDEM., La Corporeidad y la sexualidad humana en el «Corpus Paulinum», in J.M. Cascia-PJ. Viladrich (dirs.), Masculinidad y Feminidad en el mundo de la Biblia, Pamplona 1989, pp. 671- 823, in this exhaustive study has stressed, among other points, that Paul's teaching reveals that man is incorporated in the divine plan of salvation with and by means of his body and therefore according to a «sexualized mode».


158. In our analysis on 1 Thes 5:24 we have seen that the calling of God is permanent and hence irrevocable. One specification of this baptismal vocation, which is also definitive is marriage. P. Rodriguez, Vocación Trabajo Contemplación, Pamplona 1987, pp.28-32 points out the definitive character of the Sacrament of Order and Matrimony in its relation with Baptism: «El cristiano ordenado –a través del ministerio sacerdotal– y el cónyuge cristiano –a través de su vida matrimonial– confiesan, en su respectiva condición y desde su peculiar estructura sacramental, la situación escatológica –definitiva, irrevocable–, que es propia de todo creyente en Cristo. ... Lo radicalmente irrevocable es el Bautismo y la vocación bautismal; por eso pueden darse y se dan en la vida del cristiano otras situaciones definitivas, algunas de ellas con estructura sacramental (Orden y Matrimonio)».

159. The attitude of the Church echoes this clear doctrine as is expressed by Vatican Council II, GS 48: «Spouses,...are fortified and, as it were, consecrated for the duties...
and dignity of their state by a special sacrament; fulfilling their conjugal and family role by virtue of this sacrament, spouses are penetrated with the spirit of Christ and their whole life is suffused by faith, hope, and charity; thus they increasingly further their own perfection and their mutual sanctification, and together they render glory to God. For a view on marriage lived as Christian vocation with a special attention on its sacramental aspect see A. Sarmiento, Matrimonio y radicalismo cristiano, in La misión del laico cit., pp.1007-1014.


161. C. Spicq, Les Thessaloniens «inquiets» étaient-ils des païsieux? in ST 10 (1956) 1-13 sees in these faint-hearted ones a false spirit. They have not assimilated the whole teaching of the Apostle.

162. In the same way as the Rabbis misunderstood that the future event is like Sabbath wherein the «curse» of work shall be totally eliminated, they misunderstood the eschatological morality, considering the time here on earth as a time of work. Cf. Ps 104:23, Ioh 9:14, Apc 21:4.

163. C. Basevi, La corporeidad cit., p. 707, observes that «la espera del juicio futuro, lejos de paralizar las fuerzas del cristiano, despierta su voluntad de OyaGcGcoauvri y le mueve a las épya: y no es descabellado pensar, precisamente porque se trata de establecer una sociedad que viva «en orden» (ταξινόμησις) con Dios, que entre las obras de la fe esté también el trabajo, el trabajo como dominio del mundo material, entendido en su sentido más amplio».


165. Cf. 1 Thes 2:9.

166. Cf. 1 Thes 4:10b-11.


170. H. L. Strack-P. Billerbeck, III, cit., pp.641ff., points to the rabbinc nature of this phrase. But this command is common sense. C. Basevi, La Corporeidad cit., pp. 703-704, goes deeper and gives to this passage its proper focus: «es toda una síntesis no sólo del sentido común, sino también de la visión general de la santidad cristiana, que se forja precisamente en lo ordinario. La breve frase de S. Pablo, eco de su predicación directa, disipa por sí sola toda tentación de una escatología inminente y hace descubrir el valor santo y santificador de las realidades más ordinarias». For considerations on the aspect of Christian - church community and Christian - civil community relations see S. Zedda, Relativo e assoluto nella morale di san Paolo, Brescia 1984, p. 257.

171. It is in this, too, that the Thessalonians give testimony of their faith and through which the heathen who do not know God respect the evangelical teaching.

172. We may notice in the gospels how our Lord in his preaching gives parables of the workers: Mt 20:6; 21:31; Lc 15:25. The Apostles also worked hard: Lc 12:4; 17:7-10. Our Lord, after calling the Apostles in the midst of their work, did not dispense them from continuing working: Lc 5:4-6, Ioh 21:6.
NOTES


174. *Ibid.*, p.63, agrees in one way with our propositions: «Work in its everyday sense is not a divine ‘vocation’ for Paul except as it can have meaning in the context of that work which is the divine vocation, namely the work of communicating the gospel. The latter is the true vocation of every Christian, though not all perform it by preaching or proclamation». However, he fails to see the further insight that Paul gives: that ordinary secular work is part and parcel of the divine vocation. The two are two sides of the same coin which cannot be separated.

175. The assertion of G. BERTRAM, ‘Εργον, κτα., in GLNT III, col. 864., that the belief in God’s presence in the world hinders man’s effort for human excellence seems misleading and off the track.

176. L. F. MATEO-SECO, *Trabajo humano y progreso*, in *La misión del laico en la Iglesia y en el mundo. VIII Simposio Internacional de Teología de la Universidad de Navarra*, A. SARMIENTO -T. RINCON-J.M. YANGUAS-A. QUIROS (dirs.), Pamplona 1987, pp. 905-917, underlines the value of work, as such, as a human person’s act that, done properly, contains an objective importance in the eyes of God as it inserts man in the work of creation and redemption.

177. Here we can see the difference from the Essenes’ (including the Qumran community) conception of work. W.A. BEARDSLEE, *a.c.*, p. 64 «Among the Essenes the interpretation takes the form of a sanctification of a given social form of work, while in Paul the external social form is almost inconsequential»; S. Ausin, *Los Laicos en Qumran y en el Nuevo Testamento*, in *La misión del laico en la Iglesia y en el mundo. VIII Simposio Internacional de Teología de la Universidad de Navarra*, A. SARMIENTO -T. RINCON-J.M. YANGUAS-A. QUIROS (dirs.), Pamplona 1987, pp. 233-246, demonstrates that the laymen in Qumran are confined to accepting the teachings of the priests who are considered the «saints». They therefore fulfil a passive role in the community and are considered inferior to the priests. Such was the base opinion on the laymen by this community. We see the clear contrast from Christianity as expressed by the the Vatican Council I, GS 43: «The laity are called to participate in the whole life of the Church; not only are they to animate the world with the spirit of Christianity, but they are to be witnesses to Christ in all circumstances and at the very heart of the community of mankind».

178. To remind all the faithful of this reality the VATICAN COUNCIL II, *LG* 41, writes: «All those who engage in human work, often of a heavy kind, should perfect themselves through it, help their fellow citizens, and promote the betterment of the whole human society and the whole of creation; (...) they should imitate Christ who plied his hands with carpenter’s tools and is always working with the Father for the salvation of all; and they should rise to a higher sanctity, truly apostolic, by their everyday work itself». (Italics ours).

179. W.A. BEARDSLEE, *a.c.* p. 65, gives his whole interpretation: «For Paul it is the present eschatological gift of faith and the Spirit, and the forward-looking eschatological reference of work, that give it meaning. As men are caught up into the on-going purpose of God, which in his time reached so critical a juncture, their work becomes no longer their own work, but God’s, and so bears fruit for the final consummation of God’s purposes».


183. A. Del Portillo, *Fieles y Laicos en la Iglesia. Bases de sus respectivos status jurídicos*, Pamplona 1981, p.201.: «La secularidad no es, simplemente, una nota ambiental o circunscriptiva sino una nota positiva y propiamente teológica. Hasta que vengan el nuevo cielo y la nueva tierra, la inserción del hombre dentro del mundo es absolutamente necesaria, es voluntad divina, pues de lo contrario se rompería la unidad cósmica del Universo; éste perdería su posibilidad de dar gloria formal a Dios. Pues bien, esta inserción del hombre en lo temporal, en las tareas de dominio y transformación del mundo, es la secularidad. No otra cosa es el *saeculum* que las tareas profanas o mundanas».

184. For a complete and profound juridical and theological analysis on the distinction of the two terms faithful and layman, see A. Del Portillo, *o.c.*, Pamplona 1981.

185. The *VATICAN COUNCIL II*, LG31, affirms and upholds this specific task of the laymen: «By reason of their special vocation it belongs to the laity to seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and directing them according to God’s will. They live in the world, that is, they are engaged in each and every work and business of the earth and in the ordinary circumstances of social and family life which, as it were, constitute their very existence. There they are called by God that, being led by the spirit to the Gospel, they may contribute to the sanctification of the world, as from within like leaven, by fulfilling their own particular duties. Thus, especially by the witness of their life, resplendent in faith, hope and charity they must manifest Christ to others. It pertains to them in a special way so to illuminate and order all temporal things with which they are so closely associated that these may be effected and grow according to Christ and may be to the glory of the Creator and Redeemer». 
INDEX OF EXCERPTUM

Presentation ................................................................. 11
Index of the Thesis ......................................................... 13
Bibliography of the Thesis ................................................. 17

Christian vocation in 1 and 2 Thessalonians
Introduction ........................................................................ 43
1. Modern views regarding 1 and 2 Thessalonians ............... 43
   A. 1 Thessalonians ...................................................... 44
   B. 2 Thessalonians ...................................................... 51
2. Studies on the Theology of vocation in Paul ..................... 59
3. Aim of the study ................................................................ 60
4. Method and sources ....................................................... 61
5. Structure of the study ...................................................... 62
Theology of christian vocation in 1 and 2 Thessalonians ........ 63
1. The trinitarian activity in the process of election and calling .. 63
2. The realization of the divine call in time ............................ 66
3. The eschatological perspective of the christian vocation ....... 69
4. Christian vocation's presents perspective: sanctity in the middle of the world ............................................. 71
Notes .................................................................................. 79