

# PAUL AND HIS COLLABORATORS

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## 0. Preaching of the Gospel, a teamwork

One of the characteristics of Saint Paul's pastoral style is team work, as is evident by the number of collaborators who helped him in different fronts of his apostolic mission. Indeed, he surrounded himself with women and men, youths and adults, in his mission to preach the Gospel, in his vocation to found and organize Christian communities, in the invention of the necessary strategies to confront and deal with the pastoral questions of his time. This Pauline trait of team work is not an innovation in the history of Christianity. Yet we can see in the gospels that Jesus sent the apostles two by two: "After this the Lord chose another seventy-two men and sent them two by two" (Lk 10:1; cf. Mk 6:7). Evangelization is such a noble mission and so demanding that it can only be done in teams. It is not surprising that "in the Acts of the Apostles, as it is also in the gospels, the word apostle always appears in its plural form and never in the singular form. It is because the apostle's vocation cannot be lived in isolation. One can only be an apostle in a team, in the Church."<sup>1</sup> Paul clearly understood this. Hence the importance he gives to collaboration, more over to team work, in his apostolic mission.

Given the nature of this conference which is more hermeneutical than exegetical, we will develop an essentially synchronic exegesis, avoiding a detailed inquiry on the history of the texts analyzed. After a general overview of the collaborators of Paul, we will concentrate on Barnabas, Timothy and Apollos, three of the main figures who, with Paul, preached the Gospel.

## 1. A multitude of men and women for one Gospel

There is a multitude of collaborators of Paul in his preaching of the Gospel. Let us name for example: Barnabas, Mark, Silas, Timothy, Titus, Luke, Aquila, Epaphroditus, Apollos, Epaphras, Tychicus, Aristarchus, Demas and Sylvanus. As for women, we can name amongst others: Damaris, Lydia, Priscilla, Phoebe, Mary, Tryphaena, Tryphosa, Nympe, Euodia and Syntyche. It is a diversified team, a sturdy team and this list is certainly not exhaustive.

### 1.1. From apostolic work to a true friendship

In most passages of Paul's writings, the names of his collaborators are quoted and accompanied by a title, a position or a qualification that defines his relationship with them.

Thus, Paul indicates some of his collaborators in conjunction with the task they undertake in their mission to preach the Gospel, by applying to them the qualities linked to their mission (apostolate):

"Timothy, servant of Christ Jesus" (Phil 1:1); "my fellow workers Mark, Aristarchus, Demas and Luke" (Philem 1:24); "Timothy my fellow worker" (Rom 16:21); "As for Titus, he is my partner and works with me to help you" (2Cor 8:23); "Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers" (Rom 16:3); "Epaphras, a servant of Christ Jesus" (Col. 4:12); "Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ's service" (Rom. 16:9).

As it is evident, the professional qualifications convey the dynamism of Paul's pastoral team. Servant, *'doulos'* in Greek, literally means slave and suggest someone who works in the total

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<sup>1</sup> WAWA, R., *Paul de Tarse. L'Homme et son œuvre*, Kinshasa, Médiaspaul, 2009, p. 23-24.

availability to the Master, in this case, Christ Jesus. No doubt, it is this attachment to Christ, like a real *'doulos'*, that will propel Paul to say: "So that it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me" (Gal 2:20). Moreover, the word collaborator (*synergos*) refers certainly to the commitment to apostolic work. On that subject, it befits to mention that despite Paul's collaboration with Priscilla and Aquila in the profession of tent maker (cf. Acts 18:2), there is no mention of this type of work in the Pauline Corpus. This means for Paul that the word collaborator is to be understood only in the context of the ministry in the Church. The expression 'my collaborator(s)' can refer to those who "exercise a ministerial responsibility, not only in assisting Paul, but also with regard to the Church and, ultimately, to the Gospel"<sup>2</sup>.

Besides these qualities typically linked to the apostolic work, Paul also refers to his collaborators full of affection:

"Our brother Timothy" (2 Cor 1:1; Col 1:1; Philemon 1:1); "Timothy who is my own dear and faithful son in the Christian life" (1Cor 4:17); "Timothy, my true son in the faith" (1Tim 1:2); «Timothy, my child» (1Tim 1:18); «Timothy, my dear son» (2Tim 1:2); «our brother Titus» (2Cor 2:13); «Titus, my true son in the faith» (Titus 1:4); «Luke, our dear doctor» (Col. 4:14); "Brother Apollos" (1Cor 16:12); «Andronicus and Junia, fellow Jews» (Rom 16:7); «Epaphras, who is in prison with me» (Philem 1:23); "to my dear friend Persis" (Rom 16:12); "You too my faithful partner" (Phil 4:3); "My companion Titus" (Gal 2:3).

In the above list we find a unusual expression: 'in prison with me' which we should take in its metaphorical sense. It refers to companions who have endured the same sufferings for the good cause of the Gospel.<sup>3</sup> It is the same for another expression 'companion in the fight' (cf. Phil 2:25), which recalls the metaphor of the spiritual combat so present in the Pauline Corpus (cf. 2Cor 10:4; Ephesians 6 : 12-17; Phil 1:30; 1Tim 1:18; 6:12; 2Tim 4:7).

Finally, there are other passages where Paul shows his affection and recognizes professional qualities of his collaborators:

"Timothy, our brother and co-worker for God in the gospel of Christ" (1Thess 3:2); "Epaphroditus my brother and co-worker and fellow soldier" (Phil 2:25); "Phoebe our sister who serves also the Church at Cenchreae" (Rom 16:1-2); "Philemon, our beloved and our co-worker" (Philem 1:1); "Tychicus, my beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord" (Ephesians 6:21).

Those various professional and emotional qualities that Paul attributes to his collaborators are proof that the apostolic work done as a team, sometimes at the cost of many sacrifices, generates sympathy, respect and friendship. Hence, such expressions as 'beloved', 'my brother', 'my child', 'my companion', etc. The professional relationships based on the harmonious collaboration between Paul and his collaborators, in the preaching of the Gospel, have finally lead to real and sincere caring.

## ***1.2. Paul worries for his collaborators***

The apostle doesn't limit himself to attributing professional and affectionate qualities to his collaborators. He really cares about them, he prays for them, he remembers their kind deeds, and effectively involves himself in their well-being. In any case, beyond the relations that were forged through missionary work, there developed between Paul and his collaborators a profound friendship recognizable in many ways in the Pauline Corpus.

In some passages, the apostle expresses praises and gratitude towards his collaborators:

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<sup>2</sup> PENNA, R., *Lettera ai Filippesi. Lettera a Filemone*, Roma, Città Nuova, 2002, p. 193.

<sup>3</sup> POU CUTA, P., *Paul, notre ancêtre. Introduction au Corpus paulinien*, Yaoundé, Presses de l'UCAC, 2001, p. 37.

“Greet Mary who has worked so hard for you” (Rom 16:6); “Greet Tryphaena and Tryphosa who work in the Lord’s service” (Rom 16:12); “Euodia and Syntyche have worked hard with me to spread the Gospel (Phil 4:2); “Mark is helpful to me in the ministry” (2Tim 4:11). Paul praises Timothy’s faith (2Tim 1:5), he praises Epaphras for his constancy in prayer (Col 4:12).

And when a collaborator quits, the friendship generated by the apostolic work, becomes deception, regret, nostalgia:

“Demas, in love with this present world, deserted me and went to Thessalonica, Crescens went to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia” (2Tim 4:10); “All deserted me” (2Tim 4:16). He feels nostalgia for Timothy (cf. 2Tim 1:4), he regrets the absence of Titus at Troas (cf. 2Cor 2:12-13).

Concerned for the well-being of his collaborators, he recommends them to the care of various Christian communities:

“I recommend to you our sister Phoebe, who serves the church at Cenchrae. Receive her in the Lord’s name, as God’s people should, and give her any help she may need from you; for she herself has been a friend to many people and also to me” (Rom 16:1-2); “As for Titus, he is my partner and co-worker in your service; as for our brothers, they are messengers of the churches, the glory of Christ. Therefore, openly before the churches, show them the proof of your love and of our reason for boasting about you.” (2Cor 8:23-24). He will do the same for Timothy (cf. 1Cor 16:10), for Euodia and Syntyche (cf. Phil 4:2-3).

Paul remembers his collaborators in his prayers:

“I give thanks to God, whom I serve with a clear conscience, as my ancestors did. I thank you as I remember you always in my prayers night and day” (2Tim 1:3); “I give thanks to my God always, remembering you in my prayers” (Philem 1:4).

In moments of hardship and solitude, he doesn’t hesitate to express clearly the desire to benefit the company of his collaborators:

“Get Mark and bring him with you for he can help in my ministry” (2Tim 4:11); “When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, do your best to come to me at Nicopolis”(Titus 3:12).

In the next two points, we will study more closely three collaborators of Paul whose relationship with him reveals the richness, the twists and turns and the hazards of collaboration in the mission’s field. They are Barnabas, Timothy and Apollos.

## **2. Barnabas, a Teacher, a collaborator**

It is convenient to note that no passage of the Scriptures defines clearly the nature of the relation between Paul and Barnabas. The literary allusion witnessing to a close collaboration between the two is the frequent use of “Paul and Barnabas” or “Barnabas and Paul” which appears often in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 13:43.46.50; 14:3.12.14; 15:2.12.22.35). The two have worked closely during the first missionary journey (cf. Acts 13:2–14:28) and at the Council of Jerusalem where they certainly defended the same point of view (cf. Acts 15:2-26).

### ***2.1. A real son of consolation***

Joseph by his real name, this great collaborator of Paul entered history with a nickname given to him by the apostles: Barnabas, which means ‘son of prophecy’ (bar nab’), a name interpreted in the Acts of the Apostles in the sense of a prophecy that consoles. Barnabas is thus the son of consolation (cf. Acts 4:36).

What characterizes him in his behaviour is that he always intervenes to bring something in the ecclesial community. He lays down at the feet of the apostles the revenues from the sale of his land (Acts 4:36), he intervenes to accredit Paul to the apostles (Acts 9:27), he has the church of Antioch recognized by mother church of Jerusalem (Acts 11:22-30), he integrates Paul in the community of Antioch (Acts 11:25-26), he associates Mark to the missionary duo Barnabas-Paul in the second missionary journey (Acts 15:36-40), which outrages Paul. Barnabas, as the meaning of his name indicates, is thus a real son of consolation, a providential and benevolent man for the community. He always acts to enrich the Church by his money (cf. Acts 4:36), or by integrating a new member into it (cf. Acts 9:27). He gives more than he receives, putting into practice the Lord's word in the Acts of the Apostles: "There is more happiness in giving than in receiving" (Acts 20:35).

For having helped Paul to integrate himself in the community of Jerusalem (cf. Acts 9:26-27) and for having brought him in the community of Antioch (cf. Acts 11:25-26), Barnabas can be considered as Paul's spiritual father inasmuch as he accompanied the apostle of the nations in the difficult times of his life. Furthermore, as leader of the first missionary journey, Barnabas is for Paul a master in the apostolate.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, during the first missionary journey, Barnabas appears in the forefront whereas Paul comes second, as the sequence tells "Barnabas and Saul/Paul" in Acts 13:2.7.

We can wonder about the importance that Barnabas attributes to Paul. What prior relation existed between these two people? The Acts of the Apostles don't tell us much about this, but Cicero<sup>5</sup> estimates that Barnabas, being from Cyprus (cf. Acts 4:36), a Greek island annexed to Cilicia, province from which Paul comes, the two would certainly have evolved together, all the more so because Tarsus was only about 100 kilometres from Cyprus.

Nevertheless, it is important to underline that the presence of Barnabas next to Paul is also dictated by an intention of preserving literary coherence. It is not easy to admit Paul, a former persecutor, in the community of the disciples. An imposing figure such as Barnabas must play mediator between Paul and the Christian community. No doubt, for the Church in Jerusalem, Barnabas must have been known for his mediation and discernment charisma: delegated by the Apostles in Antioch, he will be able to evaluate the work of the Holy Spirit in the midst of the antiochian Christianity (Acts 11:20-24). Therefore, his positive witnessing has certainly played a key role for the integration of Paul in the Christian community of Jerusalem (cf. Acts 9:27-28) and Antioch (cf. Acts 11:25).

## 2.2. Paroxysmos: *disagreement or stimulation*

The hot discussion in Antioch between Paul and Barnabas about Mark, which ended with the separation of these two collaborators in the preaching of the Gospel, deserves to be evoked in a special way. The Greek word *paroxysmos* (disagreement, stimulation?) in Acts 15:39 expresses the intensity of the discussion which opposed Paul and Barnabas. The brutal separation of these two people who have collaborated so closely in the preaching of the Gospel in the Acts of the Apostles is surprising, as attested by the binomial Paul and Barnabas that Luke uses under many forms: Barnabas and Saul (Acts 13:2.7); Paul and Barnabas (Acts 13:43.46.50; 14:3; 15:22.35-36); Barnabas and Paul (Acts 14:12.14; 15:12.25).

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<sup>4</sup> MARTINI, C., *Saint Paul face à lui-même*, Kinshasa, Saint-Paul Afrique, 1984, p. 96.

<sup>5</sup> In *Epistulae ad Familiares*, 1,7.

In the New Testament, *paroxysmos* is an ambiguous word that is used sometimes in a positive way and sometimes in a negative way. If in Hebrews 10:24 it means encouragement or stimulation, in Acts 5:39 it seems to have a negative connotation that can be translated into disagreement or discussion, etc. Nevertheless, in regards to the literary context in Acts 15-16, *paroxysmos* can take on a totally ambiguous signification: negatively, *paroxysmos* conveys the discussion that provokes the divorce of Paul and Barnabas (cf. Acts 16:39); positively, *paroxysmos* suggests the stimulation resulting from that divorce. Indeed, the separation between Paul and Barnabas has been a true stimulation inasmuch as this new situation solicits more his responsibility, his personal involvement. Thus, right after that incident, Paul launches himself in a long missionary journey that will allow him to bring the Good News in Europe, particularly in Macedonia (cf. Acts 16:12ff). *Paroxysmos*, the disagreement with Barnabas, has finally been a real stimulation for the preaching of the Gospel.

### 2.3. *The conflict between Paul and Barnabas in the light of Luke's literary genius*

In the Acts of the Apostles, the Gospel often spreads itself in the middle of conflicts, as seen in the following table:

Context	Consequence
Persecution of Christians (Acts 8:1)	Preaching of the Gospel in Samaria (Acts 8:5)
Conflict between Paul and Barnabas (Acts 15:36-39)	Second missionary journey and preaching of the Gospel in the towns not visited during the first journey (Acts 15:41ff)
Conflict between Paul and the Jewish authorities (Acts 25)	Captivity journey and preaching of the Gospel in Rome (Acts 28:14-31)

In the first case, the persecution brought on by the death of Stephen forces the disciples to flee from Jerusalem, so leading to the spreading of the Gospel outside the holy city. It is in this context that Philip will preach the Good News in Samaria. As for the conflict between Paul and Barnabas, it is noteworthy that it caused the separation of these two disciples and the opening of a breach that will allow Paul to visit certain regions of the world not seen in the first missionary journey: Galatia, Troas, Macedonia (Philippi, Thessalonica), Athens, Corinth, and Ephesus<sup>6</sup>. In this way, Paul will reach Europe (Macedonia) during this missionary journey. Finally, protesting against the decisions of Jewish justice which would have transferred him from Caesarea to Jerusalem (cf. Acts 25:2-3), Paul appeals to the Roman emperor (Acts 25:10-11; 26:32). Consequently, thanks to the conflict which opposes him to the Jewish authorities, the apostle will have the opportunity to preach the Gospel in Rome. In short, in the book of the Acts of the Apostles, the conflicts serve as a springboard for the preaching of the Gospel.

Then, the disagreement between Paul and Barnabas, far from being the consequence of a conflictive relationship between those two heralds of the Gospel, is to be understood as a literary technique put forth by Luke in the Acts of the Apostles, serving to show the advancement of the Gospel through conflicts. Everything leads to his initial goal in Acts 1:8: "You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth". Even persecution, rivalries, conflicts, etc. are put at the service of this missionary goal: to bring the Gospel forward to the ends of the earth.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. COTHENET, E., *Cahiers Évangile* no 26, p. 26.

Paul and Barnabas, now separated, seem to take divergent options: Paul, by the grace of God, embarks on a new apostolic itinerary, whereas Barnabas goes back to Cyprus, his province of origin, as shown in the following table (cf. Acts 15:39-41):

<b>Person</b>	<b>Journey companion</b>	<b>Destination</b>
Barnabas	Mark	Cyprus
Paul	Silas and the grace of God	Syria, Cilicia, Derby, Lystrus, etc.

A close look to the preceding table shows that Barnabas' journey is done more in a family context instead of a missionary one. His companion is Mark, his cousin (cf. Col 4:10), and chooses as destination Cyprus, his province of origin (cf. Acts 4:36). Journey back to his birth country! Practically, this journey marks the end of Barnabas' mission in the Acts of the Apostles.

It is noteworthy that in the Pauline Corpus, there is no trace of a disagreement between Paul and Barnabas. In some of his letters, Paul talks about his collaboration with Barnabas in a positive context which leaves no doubt about the good memories the apostle has in regards of his companion (cf. 1Cor 9:6; Ga 2:1.9.13). Moreover, Mark who is, according to Luke, the reason for the conflict between Paul and Barnabas (cf. Acts 15:37-38), reappears amongst Paul's collaborators in Philemon 1:24. The apostle praises him (cf. 2Tim. 4:11). Hereafter, we can schematize differences between the Acts of the Apostles and the Pauline Corpus in the way to understand the collaboration between Paul, Barnabas and Mark.

	<b>Acts of the Apostles</b>	<b>Pauline Corpus</b>
<b><i>Barnabas</i></b>	separates from Paul after a hot argument (cf. Acts 15:39)	continues to collaborate with Paul (cf. 1Cor 9:6)
<b><i>John-Mark</i></b>	Paul ends his collaboration with him (Acts 15:37-38)	Paul still considers him a worthy collaborator (cf. 2Tim 4:11; Phil 1:24; Col 4:10)

In the light of these considerations, the violent discussion between Paul and Barnabas acquire a more balanced significance. In the context of the Acts of the Apostles which often present conflicts as an element of change of the missionary work, this disagreement stems from a literary strategy implemented by Luke to allow Paul to become emancipated in his mission for the spreading of the Good News.

### **3. Timothy: a son turned collaborator**

Grandson of Lois and son of Eunice, both converted to Christ because of Paul (cf. 2Tim 1:5), Timothy is one of Paul's closest collaborator both on a pastoral and personal level. He seems very young when he meets Paul who remembers the tears of Timothy when he joined Paul on his journey because he had to leave his family behind (cf. 2Tim 1:4). Timothy's moral rectitude brought on the admiration of the people of Lystra (cf. Acts 16:2). It is very likely the reason why Paul is so attached to him.

### 3.1. *Beloved son and collaborator*

When Paul addresses Timothy personally, especially in the two letters that are written to him, we often see the expression: “Timothy, my beloved son” (cf. 1Tim 1:2.18; 2Tim 1:2). But in other letters, Paul gives him the title of servant (Phil 1:1), collaborator (Rom 16:21), brother (1Thes 3:2). That is explained by the fact that Paul has two types of relationships with Timothy: on one hand, on a totally personal level, the apostle considers him as a spiritual son; on the other hand, on the apostolic level, he is a collaborator, a brother, etc.

Thus, Paul knows to put things right: he doesn't confuse the affection of a spiritual father towards his beloved son and the consideration and respect towards a collaborator in the mission. In other words, Paul refrains from a paternalist behaviour so avoiding to keep the son in a constant infantile psychological state. Although a son, Timothy learns to grow next to Paul to the point of becoming a mature collaborator, worthy of that name.

### 3.2. *The man of difficult missions*

Paul entrusts to Timothy delicate missions as well as in Thessalonica (1Thes 3:2) and in Corinth (1Cor 4:17).<sup>7</sup> He is also his delegate in the Christian community of Philippi (cf. Phil 2:19). This confidence in him can be justified not only by Timothy's devotion, “The beloved son and faithful in the Lord” (1Cor 4:17), but also by the strength he demonstrated on the doctrinal level (cf. 1Tim 4:6). It is then with good reasons that Paul associates him in the combat against “foreign doctrines” in Ephesus (cf. 1Tim 1:3). In Corinth, he will have the task of reminding the community of the “principles which I follow in the new life in union with Christ Jesus and which I teach in all the churches everywhere” (cf. 1Cor 4:17). Timothy's mission will bring the expected results as we can see in 2Cor 1:19 where the apostle cites him amongst the missionaries of the church of Corinth. This presupposes, on the part of Timothy, a better understanding of Paul's doctrine on Christ.

However, the atmosphere within the community of Corinth is not reassuring. We know how Paul himself was the target of bitter criticism in this same community (cf. 2Cor 10:10). Knowing this, the apostle invites the Corinthians to insure his collaborator a serene visit: “If Timothy comes your way, be sure to make him feel welcome among you, because he is working for the Lord just as I am. No one should look down on him” (1Cor 16:10-11).

As for Timothy's mission in Thessalonica, it is worthy to stress the aggressive context of this city where Paul and Silas, confronted to persecution, barely escaped (cf. Acts 17:1-15). Whereas, according to the Acts of the Apostles, Timothy and Silas, escaping from Thessalonians agitators, must meet Paul in Athens (cf. Acts 17:15); in 1Thes 3:2, Paul sends Timothy back to Thessalonica.<sup>8</sup> That Paul would delegate Timothy in such a hostile city to missionaries proves that Timothy is gifted with many qualities like flexibility, temperance, mediation, etc. The beloved son is now a collaborator capable of dealing with difficult pastoral situations: he can truly exercise his ministry well in the city of Thessalonica from which Paul, his spiritual father, was evicted.

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<sup>7</sup> *Idem*, p. 29.

<sup>8</sup> Concerning this disagreement between Acts 17:5 and 2Thes 3:2, refer to: LEGASSE, S., *Les épîtres aux Thessaloniens*, Paris, Cerf, 1999, p. 178-179.

## 4. Paul and Apollos: difference, autonomy and complementarity

### 4.1. *Two missionaries, two pastoral options*

With Apollos, a North African missionary, originally from Alexandria, Paul entertains another form of collaboration characterized by difference, autonomy and complementarity. In comparing these two missionaries, we realize that there are major differences both in their intellectual formation and doctrinal level. If Paul attended Gamaliel's rabbinic school (cf. Acts 22:3), Apollos, a good orator (cf. Acts 18:24), probably studied in Mediterranean rhetorical schools. Thus the eloquence which differentiates him from Paul who is rather timid according to some Christians in Corinth (cf. 2Cor 10:10).

Besides this difference in terms of human qualities, the two missionaries have different pastoral orientations. Apollos, probably initiated in Baptist circles, only knows John's baptism (cf. Acts 18:25), whereas Paul baptizes in the name of Jesus (cf. Acts 19:5). The differences between these two leaders, at the level of their personalities and their pastoral options, will be in the basis of a certain division between Christians. Paul talks about it more than once: "Let me put it this way; each one of you says something different. One says 'I follow Paul'; another 'I follow Apollos'; another 'I follow Peter'; and another 'I follow Christ' (1Cor 1:12; cf. 3:4). There is the risk of conflict that Paul tries to deal with by inviting Corinthians to welcome the different missionaries as gifts of God: "No one, then, should boast about what men can do. Actually everything belongs to you: Paul, Apollos and Peter, this world, life and death, the presence and the future" (1Cor 3: 21-22). This presupposes a supernatural gaze directed on Christ: "all these are yours, and you belong to Christ and Christ belongs to God" (1Cor 3:21-22).

### 4.2. *From difference to complementarity*

On a rational point of view, we notice Apollos' great autonomy in regards to Paul. Called by Paul to go to Corinth, the African missionary does not obey; he prefers to make the trip on his own schedule (cf. 1Cor 16:12). This is explained by the fact that Apollos is absolutely not a collaborator at Paul's pay. However, in the Acts of the Apostles, Luke presents Apollos to us as a missionary formed by Priscilla and Aquila (cf. Acts 18:26), two collaborators of Paul (cf. Rom 16:23). By perfecting his doctrinal formation with collaborators of Paul, Apollos becomes, under Luke's pen, a missionary in the circle of Paul's companions. In Ephesus, Paul will have to perfect the evangelisation work of Apollos by baptizing the disciples in the name of Jesus (cf. Acts 19:5). As mentioned by Simon Légasse: "Luke made it so that Apollos never appears as a preacher on his own: this Judaeo-Christian needs to be incorporated into an evangelisation that is first and foremost the one of Paul with whom Priscilla and Aquila are partly linked."<sup>9</sup>

As it appears from the Acts of the Apostles, there is no need to imagine an Apollos particularly skilled on the pastoral level. He is immediately placed under the dependence of Paul, one of the predominant figures of the Acts of the Apostles. First of all, the concern of Luke is to preserve the authenticity of the Gospel as transmitted by Jesus to the apostles. According to the Acts, Christ has entrusted the mission of being "witnesses in Jerusalem, in all of Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8) to the apostles. Later, Paul will also receive the mission of witness of Christ (cf. Acts 22:15; 26:26). Thus, he shares with the apostles a unique privilege: Christ himself has entrusted them with the mission of witnessing. Therefore, under Luke's pen, Paul, who has personally received from Christ his mandate, will perfect Apollos' preaching (cf. Acts 19:5). In short, in the Acts of the Apostles, the image of Apollos is elaborated in regards to Luke's mission which consists in the advancement of the Gospel through the direct witnesses of Christ. However,

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<sup>9</sup> LÉGASSE, S., *Paul apôtre. Essai de biographie critique*, Paris, Cerf-Fides, 1991, p. 172.



in the Pauline Corpus, we see the image of an experienced Apollos, autonomous in regards to Paul. How did Paul receive these differences between Apollos and himself?

Paul is aware of the differences between himself and Apollos, both at the level of their personal qualities and their pastoral style: the two have preached the Gospel to the Corinthians “according to what the Lord has given” (cf. 1Cor 3:5). But the difference doesn’t refrain Paul from feeling a special respect towards the one he calls “Apollos the brother” (1Cor 16:12). We see the appearance of the word ‘brother’ that Paul applies also to Timothy (cf. 2Cor 1:1; Col. 1:1; Philem 1:1) and to Titus (2Cor 2:13). Also, Paul considers Apollos, like himself, a model that the Corinthians must imitate (1Cor 4:6). Appreciated and respected, Apollos becomes a collaborator whose mission is complementary to that of Paul. The difference is clearly perceived in terms of complementarity when Paul evokes the metaphor of the seed to illustrate the part that each of them brings to the evangelization of the community of Corinth: “I planted the seed, Apollos watered the plants, but it is God who matters because he makes the plant grow” (1Cor 3:6).

In the end, Paul and Apollos give us a good example of a mature collaboration: the difference that is often the cause of separation becomes a condition of “collaboration in complementarity”.

## Conclusion

The links that Paul has with his collaborators are essentially twofold: on the one hand, he considers them as collaborators, co-operators, companions in the preaching of the Gospel; on the other, those typical pastoral links have generated a sincere and deep affection seen in the affectionate qualities that Paul attributes to his collaborators: beloved, brother, sister, child, etc. The cases of Barnabas, Timothy and Apollos constitute, in our opinion, the paradigm of collaboration in the Pauline sense. Next to Barnabas, Paul learns to grow in collaboration. In the beginning, Paul is a second rate figure as in the expressions like “Barnabas and Saul/Paul” (cf. Acts 13:2.7; Acts 14:12.14; 15:12.25); later, Paul will pass to the first rank: “Paul and Barnabas” (cf. Acts 13:43.46.50; 15:2.22.35-36). He will thus have grown in collaboration.

However, in regards to Timothy, collaboration will be for Paul an opportunity to make him grow: Timothy, the beloved child (cf. 1Tim 1:2.18; 2Tim 1:2), will become a collaborator capable of dealing with difficult pastoral situations in Corinth (1Cor 4:17) and in Thessalonica (cf. 1Thes 3:2). If, with Barnabas and Timothy, Paul collaborated with people who had his missionary style, with Apollos, Paul learns to respect diversity in collaboration. Thus, difference, far from being a threat, becomes a springboard to promote collaboration in complementarity. This form of collaboration is of course the most demanding.

In short, collaboration in the ‘Pauline’ sense is a place for respect of differences and growth in both senses: to grow and allow the other to grow. Paul learns to grow working with Barnabas; he learns to allow the other to grow when he forms Timothy, his spiritual son; and he learns to respect difference, when he speaks of complementarity between Apollos and himself.

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