

τὸ τέλειον and the status of the πνευματικοί in 1 Corinthians 13:8-12

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DECLARATION

I, **Tsholofelo Jeffrey Kukuni**, declare herewith that the thesis entitled τὸ τέλειον and the status of the πνευματικοί in 1 Corinthians 13:8-12, which I herewith submit to the North-West University is in compliance with the requirements set for the degree: *Master of Theology with New Testament*, is my own work, has been text-edited in accordance with the requirements and has not already been submitted to any other university.

DEDICATION

This thesis inspired by the Lord would not have been successfully completed if it were not for the dedication of the love of my life, Keitu Kukuni. I have the privilege of graduating, but behind the success of this research is you as my bedrock. I count myself extremely privileged and grateful to have you in my life. I could write another thesis expressing my gratitude to you. Ka go rata Keitumetse. It is to the Lord Jesus and Keitu that I dedicate this thesis.

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ABSTRACT

Debates have persisted as to whether “the perfect” (τὸ τέλειον 1 Corinthians 13:10), as described by Paul, was a thing which, by its coming would cause the gifts of prophecy (προφητεῖαι 1 Corinthians 13:8b), tongues (γλῶσσαι 1 Corinthians 13:8b), and knowledge (γνῶσις 1 Corinthians 13:8b) to cease; or whether “the perfect” refers to something yet in the future that the Corinthians will experience which will cause these spiritual gifts to cease. According to McDougall (2003) and Houghton (1996), “the perfect” should be understood as something that will come to the Corinthians in their era, initially specific to them and then to subsequent recipients of this letter. Thus, it is a recurring experience. On the other hand, there are those like Grudem (2000), who maintain that “the perfect” is exclusively futuristic or eschatological and metaphoric with reference to the *parousia* event, which all believers throughout the ages will experience together. To reach the focus on the text this way and to reach these conclusions these above scholars utilise the historical-grammatical method of interpretation.

Other scholars such as Smit (1991), Witherington (2005) and Biatoma (2010) have sought to analyse 1 Corinthians 13 by focusing on the rhetorical aspect of the passage in which the permanency of love (ἀγάπη) featured prominently in their analyses. In their analyses of 1 Corinthians 13 they rely on either classical or modern rhetorical models to interpret the passage. Their efforts highlight the rhetorical features of this text that are often left not addressed comprehensively by those who utilise the grammatical-historical method of interpretation.

The focus of this study is to investigate an alternative approach for interpreting 1 Corinthians 13:8-12 using a text immanent approach called TGPA (Genade, 2015). The focus using this methodology is to test whether TGPA of 1 Corinthians 13:8-13 may present a better understanding of Paul’s persuasive intent behind this topic of spiritual gifts and their status thereof in the Corinthian community. This methodology focuses on identifying and analysing the dominant rhetorical strategy of the text by answering the two primary questions:

- How can one describe the author’s primary rhetorical objective in the particular section?
- How does the author set about achieving this objective?

To answer these questions this study offers a detailed analysis of Paul’s rhetorical strategy in 1 Corinthians 13, the supporting strategies, and the rhetorical techniques he uses to enhance the effectiveness of his communication.

Key terms

“the perfect” (τὸ τέλειον), spiritual gifts (πνευματικοί), love (ἀγάπη), persuasion, rhetorical analysis, text-generated persuasion-analysis (TGPA).

OPSOMMING

Debate dur voort oor die vraag of die “volmaakte” (1 Korintiërs 13.10), soos deur Paulus beskryf is, iets was, wat by die koms daarvan, die rede sou wees dat die gawes van profesie (1 Korintiërs 13.8b), tale (1 Korintiërs 13.8b) en kennis (1 Korintiërs 13.8b) tot niet gaan; of verwys die “volmaakte” na ‘n toekomstige ervaring deur die Korintiërs wat sal veroorsaak dat die geestelike gawes tot niet gaan. Volgens McDougall (2003) en Houghton (1996) moet die “volmaakte” verstaan word as iets wat na die Korintiërs sal kom gedurende hulle era, aanvanklik spesifiek vir hulle maar ook vir die toekomstige ontvangers van hierdie brief. Hierdie ondervinding word dus herhaal. Aan die anderkant, is daar diegene soos Grudem (2000), wat volhou dat die “volmaakte” uitsluitlik toekomstig of eskatologies en metafories is met verwysing na die parousia-gebeurtenis, wat elke gelowige deur die eeue saam sal ondervind. Om sodoende die doel van die teks te begryp en tot hierdie gevolgtrekkings te kom, gebruik hierdie bogenoemde geleerdes die histories-grammatiese metode van ontleding.

Ander geleerdes soos Smit (1991), Witherington (2005) en Biatoma (2010) het gestreef om 1 Korintiërs 13 te ontleed deur te fokus op die retoriese aspek van die gedeelte waarin die permanentheid van liefde (ἀγάπη) die hoofsaak in hul ontleding was. In hulle benadering van 1 Korintiërs 13 het hulle staat gemaak op òf klassieke òf moderne retoriese modelle om die gedeelte te ontleed. Hulle pogings het die retoriese aspekte van hierdie teks beklemtoon wat dikwels nie omvattend vertolk word deur diegene wat die grammaties-historiese manier van ontleding gebruik nie.

Die doel van die studie is om ondersoek in te stel na ‘n alternatiewe benadering van 1 Korintiërs 13:8-12 deur ‘n teksimmanente benadering genaamd ‘n “text-generated persuasion-analysis” (TGPA) te gebruik (Genade, 2015). Die doel om hierdie metode te gebruik, is om te vas te stel of ‘n teks-gegenereerde ooredingsanalise van 1 Korintiërs 13:8-18 ‘n beter begrip van Paulus se doelwit oor die onderwerp van geestelike gawes en hul gebruik daarvan in die Korintiëse gemeenskap. Hierdie metode het ten doel om die dominante retoriese strategie van die teks te identifiseer en te ontleed deur die twee primêre vrae te beantwoord:

- Hoe kan ‘n mens die skrywer se hoof doelwit in die betrokke deel beskryf?
- Hoe gaan die skrywer hierdie doelwit bereik?

Om hierdie vrae te beantwoord, bied hierdie studie 'n omskrywende ontleding van Paulus se retoriese strategie in 1 Korintiërs 13, die ondersteunende strategieë en die retoriese tegnieke wat hy gebruik om die doelwit van sy kommunikasie te beklemtoon.

Sleutel terme

“die volmaakte” (τὸ τέλειον) , geestelike gawes (πνευματικοί), liefde (ἀγάπη), oortuiging, retoriese ontleding, teksgegenereerde oorreringsanalise (TGPA).

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Ἡ ἀγάπη οὐδέποτε πίπτει· εἴτε δὲ προφητεῖαι, καταργηθήσονται· εἴτε γλῶσσαι, παύσονται· εἴτε γνῶσις, καταργηθήσεται. ἕκ μέρους γὰρ γινώσκομεν καὶ ἕκ μέρους προφητεύομεν· ὅταν δὲ ἔλθῃ τὸ τέλειον, τὸ ἕκ μέρους καταργηθήσεται. ὅτε ἤμην νήπιος, ἐλάλουν ὡς νήπιος, ἐφρόνουν ὡς νήπιος, ἐλογιζόμην ὡς νήπιος· ὅτε γέγονα ἀνὴρ, κατήρηκα τὰ τοῦ νηπίου. βλέπομεν γὰρ ἄρτι δι' ἐσόπτρου ἐν αἰνίγματι, τότε δὲ πρόσωπον πρὸς πρόσωπον· ἄρτι γινώσκω ἕκ μέρους, τότε δὲ ἐπιγνώσομαι καθὼς καὶ ἐπεγνώσθην. Νυνὶ δὲ μένει πίστις, ἐλπίς, ἀγάπη, τὰ τρία ταῦτα· μείζων δὲ τούτων ἡ ἀγάπη.¹

Love never fails, but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part, but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away. When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child. When I became a man, I did away with childish things. For we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known. Now these three remain: faith, hope, and love—but the greatest of these is love².

1 Corinthians 13:8-13

1.1 Background

The so called “love chapter”, 1 Corinthians 13, remains one of the most researched, preached, quoted, and known chapters of the New Testament, (Biatoma, 2010: iii; Prior, 1993:225). Scholars have made a considerable contribution specifically in the interpretation of 1 Corinthians 13:8-13.

Some scholars are of the opinion that the author of 1 Corinthians intends to communicate that “the perfect” (τὸ τέλειον) in 1 Corinthians 13:10 has already come and that the three

¹ For this study, the text of the New Testament Greek is based on the Nestle-Aland 28th edition.

² Unless otherwise stated, English scripture quotations are taken from the Christian Standard Bible® (CSB), copyright © 2017 by Lifeway, One LifeWay Plaza, Nashville, Tennessee. Used with permission.

“spiritual gifts” (πνευματικοί) mentioned in 1 Corinthians 13:8, namely προφητεῖαι (prophecies), γλῶσσαι (tongues), and γνῶσις (knowledge) have ceased:

- Compton (2004:98) interprets the “the perfect” in 1 Corinthians 13:10 as referring to the completed New Testament canon. Thus, he understands the cessation of the miraculous gifts as occurring at the end of the first century. To arrive at this conclusion, Compton uses the historical-grammatical method of interpretation.
- McDougall (2003:177) approaches the subject of the cessation of the πνευματικοί from a different perspective. Although he also applies the historical-grammatical method of interpretation, he does not view “the perfect” in 1 Corinthians 13:10 as referring to the completed canon of the New Testament. He writes that the timing of the cessation of the πνευματικοί depends on the meaning of τὸ τέλειον. He (2003:213) understands the πνευματικοί in 1 Corinthians 13:8 as revelatory and argues that they cease at a point not specified in time, but before or at the maturation of the church. McDougall (2003:177) thus concludes that the future coming of “τὸ τέλειον” in 1 Corinthians 13:10 inaugurates the consequential cessation of the πνευματικοί, namely προφητεῖαι (prophecies), tongues (γλῶσσαι), and knowledge (γνῶσις) in 1 Corinthians 13:8, making the coming of “τὸ τέλειον” in 1 Corinthians 13:10 the focal point of the passage.
- Fee (1987:642) contends that the cessation of gifts in 1 Corinthians 13:8-9 is Paul’s focal point of 1 Corinthians 13. His argument is that although the mention of the noun ἀγάπη lingers on the surface, the greater urgency of the passage is with the nature of the πνευματικοί. According to him, the argument is arranged to heighten the order of importance of scenarios raised. Thus, what is introduced last, namely “love never fails” (ἡ ἀγάπη οὐδέποτε πίπτει) in 1 Corinthians 13:8, contrasted with the cessation of πνευματικοί in 1 Corinthians 13:8, is climactic. The methodology that Fee (1987) employs to arrive at this conclusion is the historical-grammatical method of interpretation. He seeks to explain the words of 1 Corinthians by showing how it was understood in its original, cultural, and social setting. He emphasises the need to consider the original languages and the historical context, because this method requires such (Kaiser & Silva, 2007:335).

Other scholars are of the opinion that “τὸ τέλειον” in 1 Corinthians 13:10 has not yet come and that these πνευματικοί in 1 Corinthians 13:8 are still continuing today:

- Keener (2005:110) says the gifts will remain until the return of Christ. He sees the present time as a time to practice these gifts in love. To come to this conclusion, Keener uses a socio-historical approach, including rhetorical criticism.
- Grudem (2000) follows a systematic theological methodology. Virkler & Ayayo (2007:10) offer the definition of systematic theology as “systematic theology organises the biblical data in a logical rather than historical manner. It attempts to place all the information on a given topic together so that we can understand the totality of God’s revelation on that topic”. Regarding what the whole bible says about the topic of spiritual gifts, Grudem (2000:1025) argues that the entire bible teaches a permanent possession of the spiritual gifts. He concludes that both the Old and New Testaments require a reading of 1 Corinthians 13:8-13 that points to “τὸ τέλειον” in 1 Corinthians 13:10 as a reference to the Lord’s return, implying that the spiritual gifts last until that day (Grudem, 2000:1037).

Other scholars hold on to the view that 1 Corinthians 13:8-13 is about the permanency of ἀγάπη:

- Biatoma (2010:5) focuses on how Paul uses contemporary literary forms and poetry to achieve his purpose of making the Corinthians understand the use of the word πνευματικοί. However, he further argues that Paul’s primary intention is not to correct the misuse of πνευματικοί. His analysis is based on the understanding that 1 Corinthians 13 is *epideictic*³ rhetoric. He argues that even though Paul knew that the Corinthians misused πνευματικοί or did not understand what being spiritual entails, he wrote to them to encourage them to seek the greater gift (1 Corinthians 12:31a). He invoked anticipation of a joyous event that will establish love among them. He did so not to criticise them for the misuse of πνευματικοί nor to prohibit their use. Instead, he indirectly corrected them by urging them to know more about something as exalted as love.

³ Epideictic rhetoric is the means of communicating in public ceremonies, whereby the speaker blames or praises a particular value held by certain individuals within the public gathering he or she addresses. The gathering is either blamed or praised and urged accordingly to adapt their present practices or standards to fit the speaker’s persuasion (Biatoma, 2010:4, 59; Lanham, 1991:164).

Biatoma (2010:84-86) concludes that Paul begins explaining how love is magnified using *epideictic* rhetoric, a ceremonial oratory of display. Being concerned with virtue, he praises and magnifies ἀγάπη, *encomium*, by speaking of its prominence (1 Corinthians 13:1-3), its perfection (1 Corinthians 13:4-7), and its permanence (1 Corinthians 13:8-13).

- Witherington (2005), likewise, in his Greco-rhetorical tradition commentary, sees 1 Corinthians 13 as mainly about love's guidance in the use of πνευματικοί.

Challenges remain in the interpretation of 1 Corinthians 13. One of the challenges is that the text of 1 Corinthians 13:8-13 is often interpreted with reference to other texts that address the topic of spiritual gifts, rather than analysing and remaining within the ambit of 1 Corinthians 13:8-13. Emblematic of this scholarly dissent are Grudem and MacArthur. The latter MacArthur (2013:148) uses, 2 Corinthians 5:8, Ephesians 4:11-13, and James 1:25 to understand 1 Corinthians 13:10. The former Grudem (2000:1033) cites Genesis 23:20, Deuteronomy 5:4, Judges 6:22 and Revelation 22:4 to understand 1 Corinthians 13:10.

In recent years, a method of interpretation with a different approach in rhetorical analysis has been developed. Snyman (2009:1) explains this method as “a description of all the means in the text which the author uses in order to persuade his readers to accept his point of view”. According to Snyman, this approach analyses the text by firstly identifying the dominant rhetorical strategy within the text, secondly by identifying supporting strategies and techniques that the author uses to enhance his rhetorical objective – with the focus on the text. Genade (2015:23) attributes the name, “text-generated persuasion-analysis” (TGPA)⁴, to this method.

1 Corinthians 13 has never been interpreted by using the TGPA. The question is, how can 1 Corinthians 13 be interpreted by doing TGPA and how can such an interpretation contribute to the understanding of 1 Corinthians 13:8-13⁵?

⁴ Hereinafter referred to as TGPA.

⁵ It became pertinent after the commencement of this research, that the scientific way to analyse 1 Corinthians 13:8-12 is in context. For this reason this study picked up the context from 1 Corinthians 12:31 and demarcated 1 Corinthians in the following way: phase 1: 1 Corinthians 12:31b-13:3, phase

1.2 Problem Statement

The questions to be answered are: what is the rhetorical function of τὸ τέλειον in the context of the πνευματικοί in 1 Corinthians 13:8-12? Will a rhetorical analysis of the text, using TGPA, render new insights into an old interpretive challenge?

1.3 Research Methodology

To interpret 1 Corinthians 13:8-12 by remaining within the parameters of the text, a text-centred approach, called (TGPA) as proposed by Genade (2015:22) is used in this study. Genade (2007:52) was led in his method of interpretation by Tolmie (2004) who embarked on a quest to discover whether rhetorical strategies can be reconstructed from the text itself. Tolmie (2004:13-39) is of the view that the vast majority of rhetorical scholars impose ancient rhetorical categories on the text, whereas descriptive analyses of the author's persuasive intent can be constructed from the text itself.

Tolmie led a breakaway journey for those who followed after him, namely Genade and Snyman. Genade (2007:52) claims that this methodology is a text-centred approach, involving an analysis of the rhetoric of a text that focuses primarily upon identifying and describing rhetorical strategies from the text itself instead of imposing pre-selected systems or rhetorical models upon the text and making the text fit into such systems or models. In other words it is the text that is central in persuading the audience, rather than ancient rhetorical models or systems imposed on the text.

Tolmie (2004:37) first suggested a text-centred descriptive analysis of how the author attempts to persuade his audience by formulating an analytical guide called a "minimal theoretical framework". Genade (2015:21-22) formalised this guideline into orderly steps that are involved in this methodology. The five steps followed in this methodology are:

Step 1: Identify the dominant rhetorical strategy of a section. This involves answering two primary questions:

2: 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a, phase 3: 1 Corinthians 13:8b-13. Hence the reference 1 Corinthians 13:8-13.

- How can one describe the author's primary rhetorical objective in the particular section?
- How does the author set about achieving this objective?

The answer to the above questions enable one to describe the dominant rhetorical strategy of the section, which is then expressed in a single sentence.

Step 2: Create a detailed analysis of the author's rhetorical strategy in a particular section. While flexibility is maintained with regard to the approach for each section, a general rather than a fixed methodological approach is followed to achieve the following outcomes:

- A description of the main characteristics of the author's strategy in a particular section, which may involve describing the following;
- The type of argument or the nature of a specific argument; or
- The way in which an author argues or employs a process of argumentation to achieve a particular rhetorical objective.

Step 3: Where deemed necessary, identify the supportive rhetorical strategies important for the overall argument of a section or for the entire discourse. Strategies that cannot be directly related to the dominant rhetorical objective fall into this category.

Step 4: Identify the rhetorical techniques within a section. These involve the way in which an author enhances the effectiveness of his or her communication, e.g., metaphor, rhetorical questions, paronomasia (word play), the way sentences are constructed, and chiasmus.

Step 5: Describe the organisation of the argument in the letter as a whole.

1.4 Research questions

The intended research can be subdivided into the following research questions:

- What is the rhetorical situation that occasioned the writing of 1 Corinthians 13?
- How does Paul persuade the Corinthians to pursue unity by extolling the excellencies of ἀγάπη in 1 Corinthians 12:31b-13:3?

- How does Paul persuade the Corinthians to pursue unity by vilifying the practice of πνευματικοί without ἀγάπη in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a?
- How does Paul persuade the Corinthians to pursue unity by extolling the coming permanency of τὸ τέλειον in 1 Corinthians 13:8b-13?

1.5 Research aims and objectives

1.5.1.1 Research aim

The aim of this study is to analyse 1 Corinthians 13:8-12 in terms of (TGPA).

1.5.1.2 Research objectives

The research objectives are:

- Interpret the rhetorical situation that occasioned the writing of 1 Corinthians 13.
- Interpret the Paul's persuasion of the Corinthians to pursue unity by extolling the excellencies of love in 1 Corinthians 12:31b-13:3.
- Interpret the Paul's persuasion of the Corinthians to pursue unity by vilifying the practice of πνευματικοί without ἀγάπη in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a.
- Interpret the Paul's persuasion of the Corinthians to pursue unity by extolling the coming supremacy of "τὸ τέλειον" in 1 Corinthians 13:8b-13.

1.6 Central theoretical argument

In this study the hypothesis is that TGPA of 1 Corinthians 13 will yield rhetorical insights that provide a better understanding of Paul's rhetorical strategy in 1 Corinthians 13:8-12 by reconstructing it from the text itself.

1.7 Demarcation of the research

The dominant rhetorical strategy by Paul in 1 Corinthians 13 can be summarised as follows: in response to the rhetorical situation in 1 Corinthians (addressed in chapter 2), Paul aims at unity in the church and builds his argument – with some changes in his rhetorical strategies – from illustrating the futility of practicing πνευματικοί without ἀγάπη in 1 Corinthians 12:31b-13:3 (addressed in chapter 3) to presenting the nature of ἀγάπη in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a (addressed in chapter 4), to climaxing with the eventual cessation of the usage of πνευματικοί three times in 1 Corinthians 13:8b-13 (addressed in chapter 5). He structures his argument in a way that seems intent on first disillusioning the Corinthians relating to the phenomenon of πνευματικοί which is

not only inadequate without ἀγάπη but will also be caused to come to an end (καταργηθήσονται) and cease (παύσονται) by something greater. In relation to τὸ τέλειον, Paul's intention seems to be the evocation of anticipation and excitement within his audience.

Thus, the present study considers it rhetorically significant to treat 1 Corinthians 12:31b-13:3, 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a and 1 Corinthians 13:8b-13 as separate sections because they advance Paul's dominant objective from their respective perspectives as marked by rhetorical changes embedded in 1 Corinthians 13.

1.8 Chapter division

1. Rhetorical situation that occasioned the writing of 1 Corinthians 13.
2. Phase 1: 1 Corinthians 12:31b-13:1-3: persuading the Corinthians to pursue unity by extolling the excellencies of love.
3. Phase 2: 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a: persuading the Corinthians to pursue unity by vilifying the practice of πνευματικοί without ἀγάπη.
4. Phase 3: 1 Corinthians 13:8b-13: persuading the Corinthians to pursue unity by extolling the coming supremacy of τέλειον.
5. Chapter summary and conclusion.

CHAPTER 2 THE RHETORICAL SITUATION THAT OCCASIONED THE WRITING OF 1 CORINTHIANS 13

2.1 Introduction

The messages of the books of the Bible are better understood when the purpose of these writings can be properly discerned. There are different ways to understand the purposes of writings. Writings can either be interpreted from a historical point of view or from a rhetorical point of view. Scholars like Kaiser and Silva (2007) and Zuck (1991), for example, use the historical critical method of interpretation to understand the historical situation that occasioned the writing of a text. Genade (2007), Snyman (2009) and Tolmie (2004), however, aim at understanding the rhetorical situation that occasioned the writing of a text.

The difference between these two ways of understanding the purpose of writings is that the historical critical method attempts to get behind the text to understand the social setting during the time it was written to discern how it birthed a text. The rhetorical method aims to discern the situation that necessitated the writing from the text itself. The rhetorical situation is the basis upon which persuasive intent or strategies are based, (Bitzer, 1968:6).

Zuck (1991:16) for example advocates for a detailed inquiry into the extrabiblical historical situation to be incorporated into one's interpretation of biblical texts. Kaiser and Silva (2007:33) and Bartholomew (2015:337), likewise, are concerned with the socio-historical settings that gave birth to the text. Kaiser and Silva (2007:33) explain that this method is concerned with answering the questions, what were the various historical factors and sources that contributed to the birth of biblical texts as we now have them? According to Thomas (2003:203-207) the aim is then to find the meaning of words within the historical context within which a piece of a text was written.

In rhetorical analysis the presupposition is that the situation within which a text functions rhetorically may be constructed from the text itself without relying on historical data, namely, the world behind the text. The focus is thus on the text. Wuellner (1987:456) says the text itself makes the appeal and the argument for the meaning is found in the text. If this can be achieved, then a text-based analysis is possible. The rhetorical situation, rather than a historical situation, is what needs to be identified. Genade (2007:56) explains that "it is the text-centredness of the approach that distinguishes it from the conventional historical critical categories".

The construction of the rhetorical situation from the text is done to discover what occasioned the writing of the text being studied. This is called a rhetorical situation. Bitzer (1968:6) defines a

rhetorical situation as “a complex of persons, events, objects, and relations presenting an actual or potential exigence which can be completely or partially removed if discourse, introduced into the situation, can so constrain human decision or action as to bring about the significant modification of the exigence”. The foundational importance of this is that it allows the reader to acquire a plausible understanding of a situation that enables one to construct the persuasion strategy from the text itself, (Tolmie, 2004:37).

Genade (2007:55) defines the concept ‘rhetorical situation’ as “based on the presupposition that every discourse owes its existence to a particular situation that necessitated its creation”. The concept ‘rhetorical situation’, although corresponding somewhat to Bitzer’s definition, Genade (2007:56) proposes an approach that is not historically orientated. The approach Genade proposes encourages the rhetorical critic to be preoccupied with the text in order to reconstruct the argument from the rhetorical situation that may be detected from the text of scripture. Genade (2007:56) concludes by coining this approach, a ‘text-centred’ approach, which he claims, “distinguishes it from conventional historical categories”.

Thus, the text centeredness of Genade’s approach is concerned with identifying the makeup of the rhetorical situation from within the text itself, rather than finding it outside the text. For example, if the rhetorical problem that confronts the author can be detected from the text, the analysis of the response may also be constructed from the same text. Such occurs in 1 Corinthians, an epistolary genre where Paul responds to what appears to be a situation that indicates that his authority was undermined.

From 1 Corinthians 9:1-3 one may detect Paul’s authority being undermined. Upon perceiving that his authority may be undermined, Paul introduces his writing by conditioning the readers to accept his authority. In 1 Corinthians, such an example is found in the letter opening where Paul conditions his audience to be persuaded of his arguments because his authority is derived from God when he claims “Paul, called as an apostle of Christ by God’s will” (Παῦλος κλητὸς ἀπόστολος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ διὰ θελήματος θεοῦ 1 Corinthians 1:1).

In addition, 1 Corinthians 9:1-3 hints at Paul bringing up possible challenges to his apostolic authority. He asks a series of rhetorical questions in 1 Corinthians 9:1,4-7:

- οὐκ εἰμι ἐλεύθερος; Am I not free?
- οὐκ εἰμι ἀπόστολος; Am I not an apostle?
- οὐχὶ Ἰησοῦν τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν ἑώρακα; Have I not seen Jesus our Lord?
- οὐ τὸ ἔργον μου ὑμεῖς ἐστε ἐν κυρίῳ; Are you not my work in the Lord?
- μὴ οὐκ ἔχομεν ἐξουσίαν φαγεῖν καὶ πεινῆν; Don’t we have the right to eat and drink?

- μη οὐκ ἔχομεν ἐξουσίαν ἀδελφὴν γυναῖκα περιάγειν ὡς καὶ οἱ λοιποὶ ἀπόστολοι καὶ οἱ ἀδελφοὶ τοῦ κυρίου καὶ Κηφᾶς; Don't we have the right to be accompanied by a believing wife like the other apostles, the Lord's brothers, and Cephas?
- ἢ μόνος ἐγὼ καὶ Βαρναβᾶς οὐκ ἔχομεν ἐξουσίαν μὴ ἐργάζεσθαι; Or do only Barnabas and I have no right to refrain from working?
- Τίς στρατεύεται ἰδίῳις ὀψωνίοις ποτέ; τίς φυτεύει ἀμπελῶνα καὶ τὸν καρπὸν αὐτοῦ οὐκ ἐσθίει; ἢ τίς ποιμαίνει ποίμνην καὶ ἐκ τοῦ γάλακτος τῆς ποίμνης οὐκ ἐσθίει; Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat its fruit? Or who shepherds a flock and does not drink the milk from the flock?

A rhetorical analysis of 1 Corinthians 13 must be preceded by an understanding of the rhetorical situation that occasioned the writing of 1 Corinthians. The focus of this chapter is to interpret the rhetorical situation of 1 Corinthians. This will be done by firstly looking at the hints of the rhetorical situation in 1 Corinthians as a whole. The reason for this is premised on the understanding that the rhetorical situation directs the response by the author. After examining hints of the rhetorical situation in 1 Corinthians, this study will examine the purpose of the writing of 1 Corinthians 13, within 1 Corinthians 12-14, within the completed letter.

2.2 Hints of the rhetorical situation in the complete letter of 1 Corinthians

There are two texts that are widely regarded as giving us insight into the rhetorical situation that necessitated the creation of 1 Corinthians (Kennedy, 1984:87; Pogoloff, 1992:273-274; Schüssler-Fiorenza, 1987:395; and Snyman, 2009:132). The first text is 1 Corinthians 1:11. The author says in 1 Corinthians 1:11 “for it has been reported to me about you, my brothers and sisters, by members of Chloe’s people, that there is rivalry among you” (ἐδηλώθη γάρ μοι περὶ ὑμῶν, ἀδελφοί μου, ὑπὸ τῶν Χλόης ὅτι ἔριδες ἐν ὑμῖν εἰσιν). Paul claims to have been informed, presumably verbally, by Chloe’s people that there was schism in the church which he aims to address in this letter.

Biatoma (2010:27), Collins (1999:78), and Snyman (2009:2) discuss the rhetorical situation by remarking on 1 Corinthians 1:11. They suggest Chloe’s people reported the state of affairs to Paul by telling him of the alarming situation the divisions had caused. In addition, Chloe’s people supplied Paul with a written letter that contained questions the Corinthians had for Paul. This prompted Paul to see it necessary to respond promptly to the situation. Rhetorically, this gives credence to the report because Paul was appraised not by hearsay but through people who knew the situation intimately.

The second text that gives us insight into the rhetorical situation that necessitated the creation of 1 Corinthians is 1 Corinthians 7:1, which implies that Paul was supplied with a letter detailing a series of questions they had for him (Schüssler-Fiorenza, 1987:393-394; Witherington, 1995:170, Fee, 1987:266-267). Paul says in 1 Corinthians 7:1 “Now in response to the matters you wrote about: It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman (περὶ δὲ ὧν ἐγράψατε, καλὸν ἀνθρώπῳ γυναικὸς μὴ ἄπτεσθαι). Schüssler-Fiorenza (1987:395) summarises it by saying that those of Chloe’s household “were the official messengers of the community” who not only supplied Paul with oral background information, but also presented the written communication of the Corinthian community to him. Paul addresses their written communication to him as mentioned in 1 Corinthians 7:1, 1 Corinthians 7:25, 1 Corinthians 8:1, 1 Corinthians 8:4; 1 Corinthians 12:1, 1 Corinthians 16:1, and 1 Corinthians 16:12; which are all introduced with the transitory phrase “now concerning” (περὶ δὲ).

The written communication in 1 Corinthians is about the issues the Corinthian community had questions about. The lack of agreement on these issues caused divisions in the church. Snyman (2009:132) explains that 1 Corinthians was probably written in response to a variety of practical theological issues the Corinthians disagreed about or needed clarity from Paul, hence they wrote a letter to him. The major issues which needed to be settled were issues concerning marriage and sexuality issues (1 Corinthians 5-7), meat sacrificed to idols (1 Corinthians 8:1-11:1), worship (1 Corinthians 11:12-14:40), the resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:12-37), and issues concerning the collection for the saints (1 Corinthians 16:1-4). The Corinthians were divided on the exact practice of these issues, resulting in strife between them.

Fee (1987:6) is of the opinion that notwithstanding the fact that internal strife in the church was a major concern for Paul, an anti-Pauline view of things was the major contributor to the divisions in the Corinthian community. Such a view can be compellingly defended since texts such as 1 Corinthians 1:12,13 and 1 Corinthians 9 hint at the fact that Paul is defending his apostleship and the gospel that he preached. Schüssler-Fiorenza (1987:397–398) claims that according to some within the Corinthian community, Paul was not competent enough to deal with the spiritual phenomena.

The Corinthians were preoccupied with spiritual gifts (πνευματικοί), but they were ignorant of practicing the gifts in love for the edification of all the members of the Corinthian church. In the same process, they were undermining the authority of Paul. Smit (1991:196) points out that Paul concludes the explanation of the spiritual phenomena introduced in 1 Corinthians 12:1-3, concluded in 1 Corinthians 14:37-40, by declaring that the true sign of the pneumatic rests upon the recognition of both Paul and Jesus’ authority. Towards the end of the exposition of the section

on the pneumatic in 1 Corinthians 14:37-38, the Paul concludes that anyone who claims to be spiritual must recognise that his writings are tantamount to the commandments of Jesus. Failure to recognise this by remaining ignorant leads one to being ignored by God.

Snyman (2009:132) makes the conclusion on the reconstruction of the rhetorical situation of 1 Corinthians by saying that Paul's attempt to persuade the Corinthians to recognise his apostolic authority and his gospel is pervasive throughout 1 Corinthians. It is important to note that Paul emphasises persuading the Corinthians to recognise his authority. He is not dealing with one issue, but a myriad of issues using a variety of dominant rhetorical strategies, supporting rhetorical strategies rhetorical techniques, and rhetorical devices (Snyman, 2009:2).

Central to reconstructing a text-centred rhetorical situation is to take a closer look at the people mentioned in the letter, their relationships to one another, their actions, and intended outcomes from the author's persuasive intent. Paul, as mentioned above, writes to persuade those who claimed to be spiritual, to accept his instructions. This is borne out of a relationship he had with them.

The fact that Paul focuses on dealing with problems that confront him, means one should look at the persons, and their relation to one another as part of the make-up of the rhetorical situation. Genade (2007:56) notes that this is how a book like 1 Corinthians should be approached, by considering the role of people mentioned in the letter, because that constitutes an integral part of the interpretation of such a letter. Persons and their relations oriented towards the text help us understand the rhetorical situation and the author's persuasive intent in the discourse. 1 Corinthians, then, is written by Paul (Παῦλος 1 Corinthians 1:1) to the Corinthians "to the church of God at Corinth" τῆ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ τῆ οὔση ἐν Κορίνθῳ 1 Corinthians 1:2).

In this study an interpretation of the rhetorical situation will be done by firstly considering the introduction of Paul himself, followed by the relationship between himself and the Corinthian believers, then Paul and the opponents in Corinth, finally culminating in considering why 1 Corinthians 13 is located between 1 Corinthians 12 and 1 Corinthians 14. The reason for this is to attempt to understand and gain insight into the rhetorical situation that occasioned the writing of 1 Corinthians 13 and what Paul's persuasive aim is.

2.2.1.1 Paul and his introduction of himself to the Corinthians

The focus in this study is not on the historical Paul, but on his presentation of himself in the 1 Corinthians letter. Paul firstly introduces himself as an author who did not appoint himself to deal with the rhetorical situation. Not only does he introduce himself as the author (1 Corinthians 1:1),

but he also mentions his calling as an “apostle” (ἀπόστολος) modified by the genitive noun “of Christ Jesus” (Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ) in 1 Corinthians 1:1. This designation carries the authority and authenticity that are foundational to the overall rhetorical situation of 1 Corinthians. The rhetorical strategy Paul employs at the beginning of the letter to establish the basis of his authority, is to emphasise the legitimacy of his letter, which is divinely inspired “by God’s will” (διὰ θελήματος θεοῦ in 1 Corinthians 1:1).

By making use of three anarthrous nouns, i.e., without the use of a definite article in front of his title - (Παῦλος ἀπόστολος, apostle Paul), Jesus’ title (Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ, Christ Jesus), and “God’s” (Θεοῦ, God) - he thus designates himself an apostle of Jesus by the will of God in 1 Corinthians 1:1. Genade (2007:64) explains that when Paul makes use of anarthrous nouns he not only communicates his understanding of the equality of Jesus and God, but he also communicates his understanding of his authority which is divinely mandated. Paul relates himself to Jesus and God. Subserviently, his authority is imparted to him, as opposed to God’s which is intrinsically inherent. In this sense, Paul conditions the Corinthians to accept that his authority is located with God.

Later in the book Paul makes it clear why he inserted the basis of his authority into the greeting. Witherington (1995:87) explains it by saying that whenever Paul’s authority was challenged, he inserted the epistolary prescript, an emphasis of the divine legitimacy of his ministry. Paul makes it clear that his designation is by the will of God. When the Corinthians read that he is an agent of Christ, they can only be persuaded to conclude that his designation is by the will of God. For example, Paul argues in 1 Corinthians 14:37-38 that his words are the Lord’s commands (γράφω ὑμῖν ὅτι κυρίου ἐστὶν ἐντολή 1 Corinthians 14:37) and that if anyone ignores this, that individual will be ignored (εἰ δὲ τις ἀγνοεῖ, ἀγνοεῖται 1 Corinthians 14:8).

The basis of divine legitimacy is important for him to emphasise and remind the Corinthians of the authority with which he writes to persuade them. This given authority is the only authority he relies on to persuade them to listen to him. The dominant rhetorical strategy he employs by this, as Genade (2007:63) states, is “to emphasise the divine basis of legitimate ministry”. There are other parts in the body of the letter where Paul advances the basis of the legitimacy of his ministry.

In 1 Corinthians 4:4-6 Paul says he does not judge himself, but the Lord who is qualified to judge, judges him. In 1 Corinthians 9:1-27 he gives a defence of his apostleship based on this divine basis as mentioned in 1 Corinthians 9:3, “my defence to those who examine me is this” (ἡ ἐμὴ ἀπολογία τοῖς ἐμὲ ἀνακρίνουσίν ἐστιν αὕτη). In 1 Corinthians 9:19-22 he argues that he served the Corinthians with distinction, by being and doing all things for the sake of the gospel. “I have become all things to all people, so that I may by every possible means save some” (τοῖς πᾶσιν γέγονα πάντα, ἵνα πάντως τινὰς σώσω 1 Corinthians 9:22).

In 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 he explains that he exercised self-control in the Christian race so as to not be disqualified after preaching to others (ἀλλ' ὑπωπιάζω μου τὸ σῶμα καὶ δουλαγωγῶ, μή πως ἄλλοις κηρύξας αὐτὸς ἀδόκιμος γένωμαι 1 Corinthians 9:29). In chapter 15:9-10 he says although being least of the apostles and not worthy to be called an apostle, he received grace as divine authorisation of his apostleship (Ἐγὼ γὰρ εἶμι ὁ ἐλάχιστος τῶν ἀποστόλων ὃς οὐκ εἶμι ἱκανὸς καλεῖσθαι ἀπόστολος, διότι ἐδίωξα τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ θεοῦ· χάριτι δὲ θεοῦ εἶμι ὃ εἶμι, καὶ ἡ χάρις αὐτοῦ ἢ εἰς ἐμὲ οὐ κενὴ ἐγενήθη, ἀλλὰ περισσότερον αὐτῶν πάντων ἔκοπίασα, οὐκ ἐγὼ δὲ ἀλλ' ἡ χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ [ἢ] σὺν ἐμοί).

Based on the divine basis of the legitimacy of his ministry, in chapter 12-14 Paul gives instructions (1 Corinthians 12:31; 1 Corinthians 14:1), corrections (1 Corinthians 13:4-7; 1 Corinthians 14:13-40), reproof (1 Corinthians 12:1-3), and teaching (1 Corinthians 12:4-30) on spiritual gifts.

Having explained the basis of the legitimacy of Paul's ministry as part of his rhetorical situation, this study now turns to the basis of the relationship between Paul and the Corinthian believers. Determining his level of responsibility and concern for the Corinthians may shed light on why he was appraised with the rhetorical situation in Corinth, and on how effective his strategy will be in persuading the Corinthians to respond favourably to what he has written.

2.2.1.2 Paul and his relationship with the Corinthians

The internal evidence of 1 Corinthians suggests that Paul was very fond of the Corinthian believers. In 4:14 he calls them his “dear children” (τέκνα μου ἀγαπητὰ), and in 4:15 he refers to them as his “paternal offspring in Christ” (ἐν γὰρ Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ διὰ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου ἐγὼ ὑμᾶς ἐγέννησα). Many times in the letter he affectionally calls them “brothers”⁶ (ἀδελφοί in 1 Corinthians 1:10, 1 Corinthians 1:11, 1 Corinthians 2:1, 1 Corinthians 3:1, 1 Corinthians 4:6, 1 Corinthians 7:29, 1 Corinthians 10:1, 1 Corinthians 11:33, 1 Corinthians 12:1, 1 Corinthians 14:20, 1 Corinthians 15:1, 1 Corinthians 16:15).

⁶ The word ἀδελφοί appears twenty times in 1 Corinthians 1:10,11,26; 2:1; 3:1; 4:6; 7:24,29; 10:1; 11:33; 12:1; 14:6,20,26,39; 15:1,31,50,58; and 16:15. Although in its masculine plural form it is normally translated as “brothers”, Louw and Nida (1988:125) propose that it is advisable to translate it as relatives or those who believe in Christ. In this study, it is taken to carry the connotation of “brothers and sister”. Collins (1999:70) and Fee (1987:52) are of the same view, that in its vocative, masculine, plural form, it means “brothers and sisters”. Additionally, in 1 Corinthians 1:10 and 1 Corinthians 2:1 Paul uses it to refer to both male and female audience in the Corinthian church, not to draw an anthropological distinction between male and female.

In the opening letter, Paul acknowledges the Corinthians' status as being called as saints (κλητοῖς ἁγίοις) in 1 Corinthians 1:2. At the same time, he uses the same designated term for himself when he says he was called as an apostle (κλητὸς ἀπόστολος) in 1 Corinthians 1:1. Paul makes it clear that he and the Corinthian believers were called by the same God. He uses a play of words to catch their attention in these two verses. Paul is "called" (κλητοῖς), the Corinthians are "called" (κλητὸς), together with those who call on the name of the Lord (πᾶσιν τοῖς ἐπικαλουμένοις τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ 1 Corinthians 1:2).

Throughout the body of the letter Paul uses a language of inclusivity. He uses the phrases "our brother" (ὁ ἀδελφὸς 1 Corinthians 1:1), "our Lord" (κυρίου ἡμῶν 1 Corinthians 1:2), "God our Father" (θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν 1 Corinthians 1:3), "our glory" (δόξαν ἡμῶν 1 Corinthians 2:7), and "our instruction" (νουθεσίαν ἡμῶν 1 Corinthians 10:11). This technique of emphatic clustering is rhetorically effective because Paul wants his readers to know that despite their shortcomings, he regards them as ministry fellows. This is elucidated by the rhetorical strategy Paul uses in 1:1-3 where he explains his divine-apostolic sanctioning, the Corinthians' calling, and their sanctification.

Snyman (2002:2) explains that Paul emphasises that he is called as an apostle (κλητὸς ἀπόστολος), that the Corinthians are saints by calling (κλητοῖς ἁγίοις), and thus adapts the salutation to emphasise their equally important divine callings. The emphasis is on the divine work that God did in the Corinthians' lives which has an effect when Paul uses himself as an example of how to use spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 12-14. If Paul succeeds in engraving it in the minds of the Corinthians that he shares in their calling, he may succeed in persuading them to act the same way he does in the use of spiritual gifts.

2.2.1.3 Paul and the opponents in Corinth

The opponents in the body of the letter of 1 Corinthians may be identified as those who seemingly caused divisions and opposed Paul. In the first instance, Carson and Moo (2005:445) point out that when one surveys 1 Corinthians 1:10-4:21 the division that existed in the Corinthian community may be detected. Paul mentions that divisions existed in 1 Corinthians 1:10 when he remarks "Now I urge you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree in what you say, that there be no division among you, and that you be united with the same understanding and the same conviction (Παρακαλῶ δὲ ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί, διὰ τοῦ ὀνόματος τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἵνα τὸ αὐτὸ λέγητε πάντες καὶ μὴ ᾖ ἐν ὑμῖν σχίσματα, ἥτε δὲ κατηρτισμένοι ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ νοῖ καὶ ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ γνώμῃ).

Furthermore, Paul remarks on the reports that there were divisions over certain individuals mentioned in 1 Corinthians 1:12-13. This loyalty to certain individuals that caused division is corrected by Paul in 1 Corinthians 3:1-15. In 1 Corinthians 3:5 Paul asks “what then is Apollos? What is Paul? They are servants through whom you believed, and each has the role the Lord has given” (Τί οὖν ἐστὶν Ἀπολλῶς; τί δέ ἐστὶν Παῦλος; διάκονοι δι’ ὧν ἐπίστεύσατε, καὶ ἐκάστῳ ὡς ὁ κύριος ἔδωκεν). Such partisan views were contrary to Paul’s teachings.

The discourse on Paul addressing his opponents continues and concludes in 1 Corinthians 4. In 1 Corinthians 4:1 Paul does not name the opponents. White (2017:389) regards the omission of the opponents’ names as intentional by Paul. Here Paul employs the rhetorical device of *periphrasis*⁷, not naming the opponents, as a confrontation of those who opposed him in 1 Corinthians 4:1-2. Paul says “a person should think of us in this way: as servants of Christ and managers of the mysteries of God. In this regard, it is required that managers be found faithful” (Οὕτως ἡμᾶς λογιζέσθω ἄνθρωπος ὡς ὑπηρέτας Χριστοῦ καὶ οἰκονόμους μυστηρίων θεοῦ. ὣδε λοιπὸν ζητεῖται ἐν τοῖς οἰκονόμοις, ἵνα πιστός τις εὐρεθῇ 1 Corinthians 4:1-2). This is because probably there were those within the Corinthian community who did not think this way.

In 1 Corinthians 6:1⁸ Paul talks of believers who took one another to court. Furthermore, in 1 Corinthians 6:12-20⁹ Paul addresses some who were sexually promiscuous that some believers apparently tolerated. With regards to these and other issues upon which the Corinthians were divided, there are opponents who adopted anti-Pauline views on these

⁷ Lanham (1991:194) defines *periphrasis* as circumlocution, to speak around something.

⁸ “If any of you has a dispute against another, how dare you take it to court before the unrighteous, and not before the saints” (Τολμᾷ τις ὑμῶν πρᾶγμα ἔχων πρὸς τὸν ἕτερον κρίνεσθαι ἐπὶ τῶν ἀδίκων καὶ οὐχὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἀγίων 1 Corinthians 6:1).

⁹ 1 Corinthians 6:12, 15, 18, “Everything is permissible for me, but not everything is beneficial. Everything is permissible for me, but I will not be mastered by anything. Don’t you know that your bodies are a part of Christ’s body? So, should I take a part of Christ’s body and make it part of a prostitute? Absolutely not! Flee sexual immorality! Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the person who is sexually immoral sin against his own body” (Πάντα μοι ἔξεστιν ἀλλ’ οὐ πάντα συμφέρει· πάντα μοι ἔξεστιν ἀλλ’ οὐκ ἐγὼ ἐξουσιασθήσομαι ὑπὸ τίνος. οὐκ οἶδατε ὅτι τὰ σώματα ὑμῶν μέλη Χριστοῦ ἐστίν; ἄρα οὖν τὰ μέλη τοῦ Χριστοῦ ποιήσω πόρνης μέλη; μὴ γένοιτο· Φεύγετε τὴν πορνείαν. πᾶν ἁμάρτημα ὃ ἐὰν ποιήσῃ ἄνθρωπος ἐκτὸς τοῦ σώματός ἐστιν· ὃ δὲ πορνεύων εἰς τὸ ἴδιον σῶμα ἁμαρτάνει).

issues (c.f., 1:12; 4:3, 6, 18-20; 9:3; 10:29-30; 14:37; 15:12). For this reason, Paul asserts his authority in 1 Corinthians 7:12 and 1 Corinthians 14:37-38.

The opposition in 1 Corinthians seems to stem from those who sharply deviated from Paul's teachings on spirituality. Carson and Moo (2005:446); Fee (1987:6); and Malcolm (2013:113) argue that at the heart of the opposition within the Corinthian community lies the fact that the so-called spirituals who were puffed up and ignorant¹⁰, were convinced that they occupy a higher position of authority that is even above that of Paul. They had confidence in their own spirituality¹¹. This is opposed to God and his gospel. The opponents deprive the believers of fully experiencing and serving God until the *parousia* event.

In 1 Corinthians 1 one finds the first internal division within the Corinthian community dealt with by Paul. The Corinthians were divided over preachers (μεμέρισται 1:13) and over baptisers (βαπτίζων 1:14-16). Paul deals with this by appealing to the Corinthians, invoking the name of the Lord, to be united (1 Corinthians 1:10). This is a clear persuasive argument based on divine involvement when Paul exhorts the Corinthians to give up their disputes, and for Christ's sake "be united" that there be no division among you" (καὶ μὴ ἦ ἓν ὑμῖν σχίσματα 1 Corinthians 1:10).

Paul's rhetorical objective is to persuade the Corinthian believers, and indeed the *ekklesia* beyond the existence of the Corinthian community, to not make certain spiritual gifts nor spiritual persons the basis of spirituality. Snyman (2009:131) says "all of this was opposed to both Paul and his gospel and resulted in boasting and false confidence, which needed to be addressed". In chapters 1-11 Paul addresses various issues of contention among the Corinthians. These include the rivalry over which leaders the Corinthians preferred, according to who baptised who (1 Corinthians 1:12-17).

¹⁰ "Now concerning spiritual gifts: brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be unaware" (Περὶ δὲ τῶν πνευματικῶν, ἀδελφοί, οὐ θέλω ὑμᾶς ἀγνοεῖν 1 Corinthians 12:1).

¹¹ "If anyone thinks he is a prophet or spiritual, he should recognise that what I write to you is the Lord's command" (Εἴ τις δοκεῖ προφήτης εἶναι ἢ πνευματικός, ἐπιγινώσκέτω ἃ γράφω ὑμῖν ὅτι κυρίου ἐστὶν ἐντολή 1 Corinthians 14:37).

It is within this rhetorical situation where Paul responds to a report from Chloe's people (1 Corinthians 1:11); by writing about marriage and sexuality (1 Corinthians 5-7), about meat sacrificed to idols (1 Corinthians 8-11:1), about orderly public worship (1 Corinthians 11:2-14:40), about the veracity of the gospel based on how Christ's death and resurrection is foretold in the scriptures (1 Corinthians 15:1-11), about the resurrection of the dead (1 Corinthians 15:12-37), and about the collection for the saints (1 Corinthians 16:1-4) that 1 Corinthians 13 is situated.

Since Paul wrote 1 Corinthians in general to respond to a rhetorical situation he was appraised with, it can probably be concluded that 1 Corinthians 13 is also a response to a situation that necessitated it. As is the case with all the sections that begin with the phrase "now in response" (περὶ δὲ in 1 Corinthians 7:1, 25; 8:1; 11:2, 17; 12:1; 15:12; 16:1) one can only deduce from the response in 1 Corinthians 13 what the possible question or issue was about. The purpose of 1 Corinthians 13 within 1 Corinthians 12-14 needs to be discerned in order to attempt to do a text based rhetorical analysis of Paul's rhetorical strategy that can be reconstructed from the text.

The language of 1 Corinthians 12:31 and 1 Corinthians 14:1 leads one to conclude that 1 Corinthians 13 forms an integral part of Paul's strategy in these three chapters. The strategy centres around dealing with a topic introduced by the phrase περὶ δὲ in 1 Corinthians 12:1. The topic introduced is the topic concerning "the spirituals" (πνευματικοί). Both 1 Corinthians 12:31 and 1 Corinthians 14:1 make mention of the topic of spiritual gifts. McDougall (2003:178) observes that 1 Corinthians 12:31 introduces the idea of desiring greater spiritual gifts (ζηλοῦτε δὲ τὰ χαρίσματα τὰ μείζονα), and similarly 1 Corinthians 14:1 mentions desiring spiritual gifts (ζηλοῦτε δὲ τὰ πνευματικά). Not only does 1 Corinthians 14:1 mention desiring spiritual gifts, it mentions the pursuit of love (διώκετε τὴν ἀγάπην), which Paul calls a better way in 1 Corinthians 12:31b (ὑπερβολὴν ὁδὸν), a topic which Paul elaborates in all of 1 Corinthians 13.

2.3 The purpose of 1 Corinthians 13 within 1 Corinthians 12-14

Talbert (2002:108-109) regards the purpose of 1 Corinthians 13 as a correction of the loveless use of the spiritual gifts within the Corinthian community. The motivation of the spiritual gift practitioners, as 1 Corinthians 12:7 diagnoses, was wrong because it was not for the common good. Talbert (2002:109) explains that according to Paul, love, not

regulation, is the only motivation for the proper use of spiritual gifts. 1 Corinthians 13 falls within the overall argument of 1 Corinthians 12-14, the overall argument bracketed by the introductory phrase of a new topic, *περὶ δὲ* in 1 Corinthians 12:1, concluded by the conjunction marker of result *ὥστε* in 1 Corinthians 14:39. Mitchell (1991:271) goes so far as to see 1 Corinthians 13 as applicable to the entire letter and considers it as the antidote to factionalism that is found in this letter. Mitchell (1991:271) says, “each of the epithets of love in 1 Cor 13:4-7 (8a), from both a lexical and a rhetorical point of view, constitutes a direct response to Corinthian factionalism as described by Paul throughout this letter”.

In the immediate context of 1 Corinthians 13 Paul deals with the spiritual phenomena (*προφητείαν*, gift of prophecy, 1 Corinthians 13:2; *προφητεῖαι*, prophecies, 1 Corinthians 13:8; *γλῶσσαι*, tongues, 1 Corinthians 13:8; *γνῶσις*, knowledge, 1 Corinthians 13:8). Bruce (1992:124) sees Paul blending the correct use of spiritual gifts with addressing the opponents who sought to contradict him. Without love, their spirituality meant nothing. Robertson and Plummer (1958:286-287) add that the practitioner of spiritual gifts is nothing without love. Love gives meaning to the practice of spiritual gifts. It appears that this fact was missing from the opponents, and indeed in the Corinthian community (Fee, 1991:637). Paul writes, then, to persuade the Corinthians to anchor their practice of spiritual gifts on love.

Although love (*ἀγάπη*) appears 8 times in chapter 13 (verses 1,2,3,4,4,8,13,13), the point is still the use of spiritual gifts. What Paul says is that they were not using the spiritual gifts (*πνευματικοί*) in love (*ἀγάπη*). MacArthur (1984:50), and more poignantly Prior (1993:226) point out that “because of its impressive grammatic style, and because it beautifully stands out, and because it is regarded as one of the most excellent pieces of literature that Paul wrote it may be easy to not acknowledge its linkage with the immediate context of Paul’s discussion of spiritual gifts”. Prior (1993:227) further says if chapter 13 is not studied within the context of chapter 12 and 14, the discourse on love becomes mere words, because one will not be able to understand the logical progression of Paul’s thought as he develops it from chapter 12-14. In addition, one will not be able to make sense as to what Paul refers when he says, for example, love is patient, love is kind, love does not envy, love is not boastful, love is not arrogant (*ἡ ἀγάπη μακροθυμεῖ, χρηστεύεται ἡ ἀγάπη οὐ ζηλοῖ, ἡ ἀγάπη οὐ περπερεύεται, οὐ φυσιοῦται* 1 Corinthians 13:4). Love bears all these qualities, as opposed to what?

How, then, does 1 Corinthians 13 function in context? It functions according to the dominant rhetorical strategy in 1 Corinthians 12-14. The dominant rhetorical strategy in 1 Corinthians 12 will first be focussed on, then the dominant rhetorical strategy in chapter 14.

2.4 The dominant rhetorical strategy in 1 Corinthians 12

The dominant rhetorical strategy in 1 Corinthians 12 can be summarised as follows: Paul persuades the Corinthians to unify the body by serving the body with the diverse gifts they have, knowing that their giftedness is for the mutual edification of everyone, for the perfect has not yet come. Before the perfect comes (1 Corinthians 13:10), they should pursue love which builds up. Love is the proper motivation for the practice of spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:31). To achieve this objective, Paul persuades the Corinthians in the following supportive strategies:

- by saying that no spiritual person can say that Jesus is accursed or Lord except by the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:1-3);
- by saying the Spirit works all the gifts as He wills (1 Corinthians 12:4-11);
- by saying many members of the body are one body (1 Corinthians 12:12-26; and
- by reinforcing that the church functions as one body with different parts (1 Corinthians 12:27-31).

2.4.1.1 Persuading by saying no spiritual person can say Jesus is accursed or Lord except by the Spirit: 1 Corinthians 12:1-3

1 Corinthians 12:1 begins with Paul addressing the so called πνευματικῶν. Debates persist as to whether πνευματικῶν in 1 Corinthians 12:1 should be translated “spirituals”, referring to people, or “spiritual gifts”. Should the phrase τῶν πνευματικῶν be translated in the masculine genitive plural or neuter genitive plural? Keener (2005:100) proposes that it should be translated as “spirituals and spiritual gifts” because it can refer to both. That it may refer to “spirituals” is particularly applicable in 1 Corinthians 12:1 because Paul addresses people who think themselves specially endowed by the Spirit. Suurmond (1998:103-106) says, “it is not so much a matter of having a gift, as of being a gift”. Thiselton (2000:901-902) argues that the solution is found in the exegesis of the passage, which he convincingly shows that irrespective of how the phrase is translated, spiritual

gifts are exercised by people. In a way, you cannot have a gift without a person exercising that gift. Similarly, Paul could not be referring to spiritual persons who do not have spiritual gifts. The two are inextricably linked.

Paul is mainly concerned with the so-called spiritual individuals in the Corinthian church who looked down on others – he asked the so-called spirituals whether they despise the church of God (ἢ τῆς ἐκκλησίας τοῦ θεοῦ καταφρονεῖτε 1 Corinthians 11:22) and humiliate those who have nothing (καὶ καταισχύνετε τοὺς μὴ ἔχοντας 1 Corinthians 11:22). In their ignorance, the Corinthians held in high esteem some spiritual gifts and spiritually gifted persons over others. 1 Corinthians 12:21 represents a group of the spiritually esteemed. “The eye cannot say to the hand, I don’t need you, or again, the head can’t say to the feet, I don’t need you” (οὐ δύναται δὲ ὁ ὀφθαλμὸς εἰπεῖν τῇ χειρὶ· χρεῖαν σου οὐκ ἔχω, ἢ πάλιν ἡ κεφαλὴ τοῖς ποσίν· χρεῖαν ὑμῶν οὐκ ἔχω 1 Corinthians 12:21). 1 Corinthians 12:22 is marked by an adversative contrast, (on the contrary, ἀλλὰ) which Collins (2016:460) recognises as Paul making a contrast between the supposedly honourable and less honourable spiritual gifts practitioners. Paul underscores that the presumably weaker, or less preferable spiritual gifts, are necessary.

Paul, then, is not commending them when he calls them the “spirituals” (πνευματικῶν) in 1 Corinthians 12:1. Carson (1987:108) remarks that the so-called spiritual individuals failed to be considerate of their brothers and sisters within the Corinthian community. Instead of displaying love, thereby building them up, they displayed immaturity and evil in their thinking.

The implication in 1 Corinthians 12:1 is that the Corinthians were ignorant. Thiselton (2000:911) and James (2004:4) discuss the implications of the phrase “I do not want you to be unaware” (οὐ θέλω ὑμᾶς ἀγνοεῖν 1 Corinthians 12:1). The phrase implies that the Corinthians had quickly forgotten that when they were pagans, they were led astray to mute idols (1 Corinthians 8:1-6; 1 Corinthians 12:2). Although claiming to be spiritual, their ignorance shows itself in that they did not know that “no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, ‘Jesus is accursed’; and no one can say, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ except by the Holy Spirit” (1 Corinthians 12:3). The implied question to this is: how can one measure whether something is of the Holy Spirit or not? Verse 2 and verse 3 give us the answer, which

Mare (1994:640) helpfully points out that it provides us with the test whether a person is endowed with the Spirit or not.

The phrase “I want you to know” (διὸ γνωρίζω ὑμῖν 1 Corinthians 12:3), similarly, repeated in chapter 15:1, (γνωρίζω δὲ ὑμῖν), is ambiguous. Does it mean they did not know, or they had forgotten? It appears as though they knew what Paul was about to tell them, but still they were ignorant as if they did not know. “To make known” means they were not acting in accordance with the knowledge they had. In 1 Corinthians 12:2 Paul says “you know that when you were pagans, you used to be enticed and led astray by mute idols (οἴδατε ὅτι ὅτε ἔθνη ἦτε πρὸς τὰ εἰδωλα τὰ ἄφωνα ὡς ἂν ἤγεσθε ἀπαγόμενοι). Therefore (διὸ 1 Corinthians 12:3) he challenges them to respond on the basis of the acquired knowledge. It is the same as in chapter 15. They knew the gospel, but they were not acting in accordance with what it teaches concerning the resurrection. Paul is indirectly rebuking them by implying that they had not matured according to Fee (1987:574).

Some members within the Corinthian community were saying Jesus is cursed (ανάθεμα Ἰησοῦς 1 Corinthians 12:3). Ἀνάθεμα is a strong word. It is not the same as saying “cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree” (ἐπικατάρατος πᾶς ὁ κρεμᾶμενος ἐπὶ ξύλου Galatians 3:13b). As Bromiley (1985:57) states, saying Jesus is accursed is a sharp incongruence for a Christian. The reason for this, as Fee (1987:578) explains, is that the source of the information that Jesus is ἀνάθεμα cannot be the Holy Spirit. Bartling (1969:72) says the only information that the Corinthian believers can claim comes from the Holy Spirit is that Jesus is Lord. This means a person cannot say that the Holy Spirit revealed it to him that Jesus is ἀνάθεμα.

A mature person should know that the Holy Spirit has revealed it in the scriptures that Jesus is Lord. Such information has to be attributed to the source. Thomas (1978:11) states that if this information can be attributed to the source, who is the Holy Spirit, then whoever has such knowledge would know for what purpose it should be used and who it should serve. Keener (2005:100) remarks that ultimately, the purpose of spiritual gifts is to exalt Jesus, therefore those endowed with spiritual gifts should focus on the giver of the gifts. This does not imply that the gifts are unimportant, but rather the gifts should cause one to be fully devoted to Jesus.

2.4.1.2 Persuading by saying the Spirit distributes gifts to each person as he wills: 1 Corinthians 12:4-11

The shift in Paul's persuasive strategy is marked by the conjunction $\delta\epsilon$ in 1 Corinthians 12:4. After this shift, attention is drawn to the Corinthians to recognise that the use of spiritual gifts is trinitarian in nature. Keener (2005:100) explains that Paul's use of triple repetition of the word *different* ($\delta\iota\alpha\rho\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\epsilon\iota$) in 1 Corinthians 12:4,5, and 6 emphasises the point that gifts come from God who works in people as he wills. Spiritual gifts do not emanate from individuals themselves. Using the rhetorical *anaphora*¹² (a repetition of the word *different* ($\delta\iota\alpha\rho\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\epsilon\iota\varsigma$) three times at the beginning of verse 4,5, and 6), he persuades them that these gifts do not exist in and of themselves.

Keener (2005:100-101) highlights that Paul employs three different nouns, "gifts" in 1 Corinthians 12:4, "ministries" in 1 Corinthians 12:5, and "activities" in 1 Corinthians 12:6. The purpose of the use of three different nouns is not to emphasise that the three gifts are different. It is taken for granted that they are different. However, even though they are different, the emphasis lies on the fact that they produce different ministries. The word *different* ($\delta\iota\alpha\rho\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\epsilon\iota\varsigma$) is repeated three times in 1 Corinthians 12: 4, 5, 6:

- $\delta\iota\alpha\rho\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\epsilon\iota\varsigma \delta\epsilon \chi\alpha\rho\iota\sigma\mu\acute{\alpha}\tau\omega\upsilon\upsilon \epsilon\iota\sigma\iota\nu$ (there are different gifts);
- $\delta\iota\alpha\rho\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\epsilon\iota\varsigma \delta\iota\alpha\kappa\omicron\nu\iota\omega\upsilon\upsilon \epsilon\iota\sigma\iota\nu$ (there are different ministries); $\kappa\alpha\iota$ (but)
- $\delta\iota\alpha\rho\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\epsilon\iota\varsigma \acute{\epsilon}\nu\epsilon\rho\gamma\eta\mu\acute{\alpha}\tau\omega\upsilon\upsilon \epsilon\iota\sigma\iota\nu$ (there are different activities).

These spiritual gifts are meant to produce varieties of ministries (1 Corinthians 12:5). This will ultimately progress to varieties of effects. Just as there are varieties of gifts, the ministries will differ. Similarly, if the ministries differ, the effects will not be the same. "A manifestation of the Spirit is given to each person for the common good" ($\acute{\epsilon}\kappa\acute{\alpha}\sigma\tau\omega \delta\epsilon \delta\iota\delta\omicron\tau\alpha\iota \acute{\eta} \phi\alpha\nu\acute{\epsilon}\rho\omega\sigma\iota\varsigma \tau\omicron\upsilon \pi\nu\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\mu\alpha\tau\omicron\varsigma \pi\rho\acute{\omicron}\varsigma \tau\omicron \varsigma\omicron\mu\phi\acute{\epsilon}\rho\omicron\nu$ 1 Corinthians 12:7). According to Keener (2005:100), Paul employs this *anaphora* for a rhetorical purpose, an appealing technique for the rhetorically sharp Corinthians. Paul's persuasive intent is to provide clarification for the Corinthian believers to notice that God is gracious in distributing the

¹² In his *Handlist of Rhetorical Terms*, Lanham (1991:11, 190) defines *anaphora* as, "a repetition of the same word at the beginning of successive clauses or verses".

gifts. Once those who have been endowed with the gifts recognise this point, then they will not boast in their gifts, nor will they use them for selfish purposes.

The Corinthians were to recognise this variety and acknowledge that they will not be the same. Even though they were not the same, they were to work in unity (1 Corinthians 12:7). This unity is perhaps seen in the words, “Spirit” (πνεῦμα 1 Corinthians 12:4), “Lord” (κύριος 1 Corinthians 12:5), and “God” (θεὸς 1 Corinthians 12:6). Ciampa and Rosna (2010:567) point out that this alludes to the Trinity in unity. By making use of the rhetorical *anaphora* “same Spirit” (δὲ αὐτὸ πνεῦμα) in 1 Corinthians 12:4, “same Lord” (ὁ αὐτὸς κύριος) in 1 Corinthians 12:5, and “same God” (ὁ δὲ αὐτὸς θεὸς) in 1 Corinthians 12:6, Paul intends to persuade the Corinthians that just as the three distinct persons of the Godhead are not divided, likewise the Corinthians should not be divided. As Garland (2003:451-452) similarly notes, in the economy of the trinity, the three persons of the Godhead have different roles, yet they are the same and work in unity. In the same manner, the Corinthians had to serve one another in the practice of spiritual gifts.

Fee (1987:583) concludes that the point Paul seeks to clearly make is to persuade the Corinthian believers of what is essential for the health of the church - *unity in diversity*. It is repeated throughout 1 Corinthians 12 that *unity in diversity* is God’s desire for the Corinthian church. God gives the gifts to individuals as he wills. They come from one God for the common good of one body, as Paul says:

- there are different activities, but the same God produces each gift in each person (1 Corinthians 12:6 διαιρέσεις ἐνεργημάτων εἰσὶν, ὁ δὲ αὐτὸς θεὸς ὁ ἐνεργῶν τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν);
- a manifestation of the Spirit is given to each person for the common good (1 Corinthians 12:7 ἐκάστῳ δὲ δίδεται ἢ φανέρωσις τοῦ πνεύματος πρὸς τὸ συμφέρον);
- one and the same spirit is active in all these, distributing to each person as he wills (1 Corinthians 12:11 πάντα δὲ ταῦτα ἐνεργεῖ τὸ ἓν καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ πνεῦμα διαιροῦν ἰδίᾳ ἐκάστῳ καθὼς βούλεται); and
- as it is, God has arranged each one of the parts in the body just as he wanted (1 Corinthians 12:18 νυνὶ δὲ ὁ θεὸς ἔθετο τὰ μέλη, ἓν ἕκαστον αὐτῶν ἐν τῷ σώματι καθὼς ἠθέλησεν).

This idea that gifts are for the common good of the church body, from one God is mirrored in the economy of the trinity. There are three distinct persons of the Godhead, and they are united yet diverse in their roles. Fee (1987:583) argues that this theological reasoning by Paul is for corrective purposes. The Corinthians treated spiritual gifts as an end in themselves, thereby focussed on the gifts rather than the giver of the gifts. They should have been focussing on God who would have helped them in being united.

2.4.1.3 Persuading by saying many members of the body are one body: 1 Corinthians 12:12-26

The idea of “oneness” is key to the understanding of Paul’s persuasive strategy in the context of 1 Corinthians 12-14, particularly as it relates to one’s understanding of 1 Corinthians 13. In 1 Corinthians 12:12-26 Paul talks about:

- one body (σῶμα ἓν ἐστὶν 1 Corinthians 12:12);
- one Christ (οὕτως καὶ ὁ Χριστός 1 Corinthians 12:12; and
- one Spirit (ἐνὶ πνεύματι 1 Corinthians 12:13).

The metaphor of the body, the body with different parts, is the most basic metaphor that one can use to persuade someone of the idea of interdependence of other members within the same body. Fetherolf (2010:89) explains that Paul chose it deliberately to enhance his argument for the need for unity in the Corinthian community. The different body parts function as a whole. In fact, “body” is called “body” not only because of the parts it has, but because of how body parts function in relation to other parts. It resonated with the Corinthians, as Fetherolf (2010:97) states, to remember that the proper functioning of the body is dependent on the functioning of all body parts.

Having introduced the argument that the body functions as one with many different parts, Paul develops this argument to persuade the Corinthians to think of themselves as one body. The first place where this is indicated is in 1 Corinthians 12:12 by the conjunction marker (for just as, καθάπερ γὰρ). The second place where this is indicated is in 1 Corinthians 12:13 where Paul encourages the Corinthians to remember that they were all baptised by one spirit into one body (ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι ἡμεῖς πάντες εἰς ἓν σῶμα ἐβαπτίσθημεν 1 Corinthians 12:13). Witherington (1995:258) remarks that the baptism of

the Spirit into one body occurred at conversion and continues in the life of believers as the Spirit works to sustain the unity established when believers became part of the body.

The Corinthians formerly were not part of this body (1 Corinthians 12:13). Before they were baptised into this body, they did not have the gifts they now possess as part of the body. The gifts are given exclusively to those who belong to the body, the Christians. Swindoll (2017:183) sees the Corinthians as those baptised by the Spirit, who did not seek spiritual gifts, but received them according to the will of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:11). They are those that Paul identifies in the letter opening as “the church of God” (ἐκκλησία τοῦ θεοῦ 1 Corinthians 1:2), “sanctified in Christ Jesus” (ἡγιασμένοις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ 1 Corinthians 1:2), “called as saints” (κλητοῖς ἁγίοις 1 Corinthians 1:2), “who call on the name of Jesus Christ” (ἐπικαλουμένοις τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ 1 Corinthians 1:2). These gifts were given to each individual member of the Corinthian body when they became part of the body, as Calvin (2005:404) states, so that every member will at least have a gift to participate in the contribution towards unity. They were made part of the body by being baptised into this body, so they were to function as part of the body.

Keener (2005:101) says Paul’s emphasis is to solidify the understanding within the Corinthian community that spiritual gifts originate with God rather than with “spiritual” individuals. Paul’s persuasive point is also to emphasise the fact that notwithstanding the fact that spiritual gifts are given to individual members, they are for the common good of the whole body. Bartling (1969:74) reaches a similar conclusion as Keener. He concludes that the chief emphasis for Paul is that each of the gifts, irrespective of what the gift is, are indispensable. The Spirit distributes different gifts to different members in the body according to how He graciously chooses to bestow them. The aim is the goal the Spirit wishes to achieve – preservation of unity in the body.

From verse 14 of 1 Corinthians 12, Paul further extends the metaphor of the body. Fee (1987:608) says in this section, “part of the key to understanding these analogies lies in their structure”. Firstly, we find Paul using the rhetorical device of *prosopopoeia*¹³ (personification, attributing to body parts functions they cannot perform) to refer to certain

¹³ Paul personifies the body parts by saying they talk to one another.

body parts that talk to themselves in 1 Corinthians 12:15-16. The foot says, “because I’m not a hand, I don’t belong to this body” (ὅτι οὐκ εἰμι χεῖρ, οὐκ εἰμι ἐκ τοῦ σώματος 1 Corinthians 12:15). The ear says, “because I’m not an eye, I don’t belong to this body” (ὅτι οὐκ εἰμι ὀφθαλμός, οὐκ εἰμι ἐκ τοῦ σώματος 1 Corinthians 12:16).

Secondly, the reader finds in 1 Corinthians 12:21 Paul referring to some body parts directing speech to other parts. The eye says to the hand, “I don’t need you” (χρείαν σου οὐκ ἔχω 1 Corinthians 12:21) On the other hand the head says to the feet, “I don’t need you” (χρείαν ὑμῶν οὐκ ἔχω 1 Corinthians 12:21). In 1 Corinthians 12:17 Paul offers a reply to the personification in a pair of rhetorical questions:

- If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? (εἰ ὅλον τὸ σῶμα ὀφθαλμός, ποῦ ἡ ἀκοή;); and
- if the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? (εἰ ὅλον ἀκοή, ποῦ ἡ ὄσφρησις;).

In 1 Corinthians 12:22-24 Paul says “on the contrary, those parts of the body that are weaker are indispensable. And those parts of the body that we consider less honourable, we clothe these with greater honour, and our unrespectable parts are treated with greater respect, which our respectable parts do not need” (ἀλλὰ πολλῶ μᾶλλον τὰ δοκοῦντα μέλη τοῦ σώματος ἀσθενέστερα ὑπάρχειν ἀναγκαῖά ἐστιν, καὶ ἃ δοκοῦμεν ἀτιμότερα εἶναι τοῦ σώματος τούτοις τιμὴν περισσοτέραν περιτίθεμεν, καὶ τὰ ἀσχήμονα ἡμῶν εὐσχημοσύνην περισσοτέραν ἔχει, τὰ δὲ εὐσχήμονα ἡμῶν οὐ χρειαν ἔχει. Ἄλλ’ ὁ θεὸς συνεκέρασεν τὸ σῶμα τῷ ὑστερουμένῳ περισσοτέραν δοῦς τιμὴν 1 Corinthians 12:22-24).

In response to some body parts saying they have no need of the others; Paul uses the emphatic adversative ἀλλὰ (on the contrary) strongly contradicting any notion that some parts have no need of others. Paul says that those parts are indispensable (1 Corinthians 12:22). Some commentators say this refers to the supposed “spiritual” or “strong” believers saying they have no need of the weak (Witherington, 1995; Keener, 2005; and Thiselton, 2000).

The body of a human being has many parts. Visible outward parts, and invisible inward parts. Oxymoronically one could argue that the outward parts are the most important since we use them daily and we can see when we use them. But the counter argument

Paul makes is that the inward parts are equally important as well “and those parts of the body that we consider less honourable, we clothe these with greater honour, and our unrespectable parts are treated with greater respect” (καὶ ἃ δοκοῦμεν ἀτιμότερα εἶναι τοῦ σώματος τούτοις τιμὴν περισσοτέραν περιτίθεμεν, καὶ τὰ ἀσχήμονα ἡμῶν εὐσχημοσύνην περισσοτέραν ἔχει 1 Corinthians 12:23). Witherington (1995:259) sees a reference to the genitals and internal organs in 1 Corinthians 12:22-24. These parts we cover with clothes to keep private, and the internal ones are important as well. Though we use our hands, legs, eyes, ears, mouths, and noses more than the rest, we need parts like the brain, lungs, the heart, and others for all to function.

Paul persuades the Corinthians that they need one another by saying “the body is not one part, but many” (τὸ σῶμα οὐκ ἔστιν ἓν μέλος ἀλλὰ πολλά 1 Corinthians 12:14). Paul says in verses 14-16 that irrespective of which part of the body one is, all belong to the body. If different parts were the same, “where would the body be?” (1 Corinthians 12:19). Paul builds on his persuasion strategy by saying there are those parts which seem weaker but are indispensable (τὰ δοκοῦντα μέλη τοῦ σώματος ἀσθενέστερα ὑπάρχειν ἀναγκαῖά ἐστιν 1 Corinthians 12:22), we clothe these with greater honour (τούτοις τιμὴν περισσοτέραν περιτίθεμεν 1 Corinthians 12:23), and our unrespectable parts are treated with greater respect, which our respectable parts do not need (καὶ τὰ ἀσχήμονα ἡμῶν εὐσχημοσύνην περισσοτέραν ἔχει, τὰ δὲ εὐσχήμονα ἡμῶν οὐ χρεῖαν ἔχει 1 Corinthians 12:23-24). Paul advances this argument so that there may be no σχῆμα (division) in the body.

2.4.1.4 Persuading by reinforcing that the church functions as one body with different parts: 1 Corinthians 12:27-31

The rhetorical questions in these verses are meant to silence the Corinthians and to show them that in the body there is no gift that is greater than another gift:

- Are all apostles? (μὴ πάντες ἀπόστολοι; 1 Corinthians 12:29);
- Are all prophets? (μὴ πάντες προφῆται; 1 Corinthians 12:29);
- Are all teachers? (μὴ πάντες διδάσκαλοι; 1 Corinthians 12:29);
- Do all do miracles? (μὴ πάντες δυνάμεις; 1 Corinthians 12:29);
- Do all have the gifts of healing? (μὴ πάντες χαρίσματα ἔχουσιν ἰαμάτων; 1 Corinthians 12:30);

- Do all speak in tongues? (μὴ πάντες γλώσσαις λαλοῦσιν 1 Corinthians 12:30); and
- Do all interpret? (μὴ πάντες διερμηνεύουσιν 1 Corinthians 12:30).

Two concluding points that Paul emphasises with these rhetorical questions is that, hypothetically reasoning, even if there were greater gifts, how would they function without the other members? Keener (2005:104) adds that the other point that Paul emphasises with these rhetorical questions is that since the church functions as one body with different parts, not all members will have the same gifts. Can all have the same gifts? The rhetorical questions that Paul asks in verses 29 and 30 begin with μὴ and all demand a negative answer (Witherington, 1995:261). Dominy (1983:56) summarises 1 Corinthians 12:27-30 by concluding that these rhetorical questions serve as proof that all members are indispensable and in need of one another.

In a text-based analysis proposed in this study, the presupposition is that the purpose of the writing of a text may be discerned from the text itself. The purpose may either be implied or stated explicitly. As per the explicit reason stated by Paul why he wrote 1 Corinthians 13, there is no mention of the purpose. The only mention of what Paul wants to achieve in 1 Corinthians 13 is implicitly stated in 1 Corinthians 12:31. 1 Corinthians 12:31b says, “And I will show you an even far more supreme way” (Καὶ ἔτι καθ’ ὑπερβολὴν ὁδὸν ὑμῖν δείκνυμι). Presumably, 1 Corinthians 13 informs the reader of the supreme way. The question is, what is the supreme way?

Cox (1996:529) discusses the varying polarities within the Corinthian church. He says what was evidently missing within the Corinthian church was love, the far more supreme way. An area where the way of love was mostly evidently missing was in the area of spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 12 and 14. 1 Corinthians 13, then, serves as an antidote to the loveless use of spiritual gifts. Cox (1996:529) further explains that 1 Corinthians defines love as the essence of spiritual gifts. Implicitly, then, the far more supreme way in 1 Corinthians 12:31b is a supreme way of what has gone before, namely 1 Corinthians 12:1-31a, and what follows, namely 1 Corinthians 14:1-40. Smit (1991:195) suggests considering the ambit within which the discussion of the contents of 1 Corinthians take place. As it is suggested herein, 1 Corinthians falls within the discussion that commences at 1 Corinthians 12:1.

The phrase “now concerning” (περὶ δὲ) in 1 Corinthians 12:1 implies that Paul is responding to a series of questions the Corinthians asked him. What is not easy to determine is the content of the questions they asked him. Exegetes such as Collins (2016:251-252), Fee (1987: 266-267), Schüssler-Fiorenza (1987:395), and Snyman (2009:2), do their best to try to deduce from Paul’s responses the possible questions they asked him. Perhaps those he corrected were hoping that Paul would solidify their misuse of spiritual gifts in his response.

What we find in 1 Corinthians 12 is a general guide on the attitude the Corinthians must have in their use of spiritual gifts. This is further expounded in 1 Corinthians 13 which emphasises that love is the only way spiritual gifts are to be exercised.

2.5 The dominant rhetorical strategy in 1 Corinthians 14

Chapter 14 is a different kind of response from Paul. 1 Corinthians 14:1 picks up on the topic of love expounded in 1 Corinthians 13, with a caveat. Paul encourages the Corinthians to pursue love (διώκετε τὴν ἀγάπην 1 Corinthians 14:1) and desire spiritual gifts (ζηλοῦτε δὲ τὰ πνευματικά 1 Corinthians 14:1) and especially that they may prophesy (μᾶλλον δὲ ἵνα προφητεύητε 1 Corinthians 14:1). Fee (1987:570) takes 1 Corinthians 14 to be *corrective* instead of *instructive*. He sees the problem that Paul corrects as the abuse of tongues. Tongues are as great as prophecy, provided that they are interpreted. “The person who prophesies is greater than the person who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets so that the church may be built up” (μείζων δὲ ὁ προφητεύων ἢ ὁ λαλῶν γλώσσαις ἐκτὸς εἰ μὴ διερμηνεύῃ, ἵνα ἡ ἐκκλησία οἰκοδομῆν λάβῃ 1 Corinthians 14:5).

The situation in 1 Corinthians 14 is key to the situation that occasioned 1 Corinthians 13 which will be analysed later in this study. 1 Corinthians 14 focuses mainly on two spiritual gifts, namely tongues and prophecy. Paul writes to correct the disorder that was created in the church by not using the gifts correctly. Witherington (1995:360) says, the disorder cannot be attributed to the gifts because the gifts themselves do not create disorder and division. The way those endowed with the gifts used the gifts was the cause for disorder and division within the Corinthian church. Thus the strategy in this section can be summarised as: Paul urges the Corinthians to avoid disorder by seeking the gifts that edify, whether they be intelligible tongues or prophecy. To achieve this objective, Paul persuades the Corinthians in the following supportive strategies:

- Urging the Corinthians to seek intelligible gifts that edify: 1 Corinthians 14:1-19;
- Urging the Corinthians to think maturely about the gifts that edify: 1 Corinthians 14:2—25; and
- Instructing the Corinthians to conduct their worship orderly: 1 Corinthians 14:26-40.

2.5.1.1 Urging the Corinthians to seek intelligible gifts that edify: 1 Corinthians 14:1-19

In 1 Corinthians 14:1-5 Paul urges the Corinthians believers to earnestly seek the gifts that edify (διώκετε τὴν ἀγάπην, ζηλοῦτε δὲ τὰ πνευματικά, μᾶλλον δὲ ἵνα προφητεύητε 1 Corinthians 14:1). Porter (1993:330) views the present imperative verb (διώκετε 1 Corinthians 14:1) elucidated in 1 Corinthians 14:5. He states that the reason Paul emphasises “especially that you may prophesy” is because 1 Corinthians 14:12 reveals the point of prophecy, and indeed of the use of spiritual gifts; which is to seek to excel in building up the church (πρὸς τὴν οἰκοδομὴν τῆς ἐκκλησίας ζητεῖτε ἵνα περισσεύητε 1 Corinthians 14:12).

In 1 Corinthians 14:2 Paul gives the reason for this. If one speaks in a tongue that is not intelligible one does not edify the church (ὁ γὰρ λαλῶν γλῶσση οὐκ ἀνθρώποις λαλεῖ ἀλλὰ θεῷ, οὐδεὶς γὰρ ἀκούει). In verse 3 Paul provides the contrast. If one prophesies, instead, then the church is edified (ὁ δὲ προφητεύων ἀνθρώποις λαλεῖ οἰκοδομὴν καὶ παράκλησιν καὶ παραμυθίαν). In verse 5 Paul clarifies that he does not discourage tongues, because if tongues are interpreted, they serve the same purpose as prophecy (μείζων δὲ ὁ προφητεύων ἢ ὁ λαλῶν γλώσσαις ἐκτὸς εἰ μὴ διερμηνεύῃ, ἵνα ἡ ἐκκλησία οἰκοδομὴν λάβῃ).

Throughout this passage, Paul’s argument that prophecy and tongues are equal when tongues are interpreted, hangs on the phrase εἰ μὴ (unless in 1 Corinthians 14:5) or ἐὰν μὴ (unless in 1 Corinthians 14:6). The word “unless” has a strong rhetorical significance in this passage. For example, in 1 Corinthians 14:5 Paul says of tongues and prophecy, “I wish all of you spoke in other tongues, but even more that you prophesied” (θέλω δὲ πάντας ὑμᾶς λαλεῖν γλώσσαις, μᾶλλον δὲ ἵνα προφητεύητε). According to Paul, the person who prophesies is greater than the person who speaks in tongues, *unless* he interprets so that the church may be built up (μείζων δὲ ὁ προφητεύων ἢ ὁ λαλῶν γλώσσαις, ἐκτὸς εἰ μὴ διερμηνεύῃ, ἵνα ἡ ἐκκλησία οἰκοδομὴν λάβῃ). The rhetorical

significance of this verse is the two gifts and their nature which Paul states in apposition. The contrast is between the one who speaks in tongues and the one who prophesies. Paul says the one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, *unless* someone interprets. The reason Paul emphasises this is because he is more concerned about edification than about the use of the gift.

Horsley (2011:82-182) explains that the valuable nature of gifts is that they edify. Vine (1996:194) defines οἰκοδομῆν (to edify, 1 Corinthians 14:3) as denoting to the act of building. Louw and Nida (1988:677), on the other hand, define οἰκοδομῆν as, “to increase the potential of someone or something, with focus upon the process involved”. In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul uses it figuratively to refer to the building up of the body to spiritual maturity. Thus, the one who uses spiritual gifts should use them for their intended purpose only, namely to build or to increase the potential of the members of the Corinthian body. According to Hays (2011:236) Paul is not concerned with the hierarchy of spiritual gifts as some within the Corinthian community were preoccupied. For Paul, the primacy of spiritual gifts rests on one unifying purpose, namely community edification.

Rhetorically, what Paul is appealing for is synonymous with the way of love (1 Corinthians 12:31b), which builds up. To enhance his argument, Paul discusses at length the two gifts and their nature. Talbert (1985:101) says this unit is held together at two points. The first is 14:1 and the second is 14:39. The first section’s thesis, 1 Corinthians 14:1-5, is that prophecy is to be preferred over tongues unless tongues are interpreted. Talbert (1985:101) explains that “the ultimate test of comparison is benefit for the church, so that the church may be edified”. What follows are two clusters of arguments to substantiate and elaborate this point. Talbert (2002:110) notes that 1 Corinthians 14:6-19 is divided into two rhetorical clusters. The first cluster is 1 Corinthians 14:6-12 in which Paul presents arguments in favour of prophecy. The second cluster is 1 Corinthians 14:13-19 in which Paul presents arguments in favour of tongues. These two clusters should be considered as forming the rhetorical situation that occasioned 1 Corinthians 13 and elaboration on the rhetorical objective.

(a) Cluster 1: 1 Corinthians 14:6-12

In the first cluster, Paul continues with his rhetorical intent, that the Corinthians should seek to abound for the edification of the church, since they are zealous for spiritual gifts

(1 Corinthians 14:12). For the church to be edified, Paul argues that speaking prophetically enhances this end more effectively than non-interpreted tongues. He drives home this point by asking a rhetorical question in 1 Corinthians 14:6: “So now, brothers and sisters, if I come to you speaking in tongues, how will I benefit you unless I speak to you with a revelation or knowledge or prophecy or teaching”? The only implied answer to this question is that there is no way Paul could benefit them. The reason is that non-interpreted tongues will sound like a foreign language to them.

The language of 1 Corinthians 14:6 harks back to 1 Corinthians 2:1 where Paul argues that when he went to the Corinthians, he did not speak to them with brilliance of speech but in language they understood. Fee (1987:661-661) and Hays (2011:237) understand Paul to be defending himself for failure to announce the gospel with brilliance of speech. Paul’s defence is that speaking in plain language that they all understood was to their benefit. He likens this to musical instruments that should be recognisable when played (1 Corinthians 14:7).

Mitchell (1991:280) concludes her rhetorical analysis on this section by stating that liturgical language is measured by its recognisability, intelligibility, and edification for all. Language which people in the church cannot understand is fruitless. Rather than achieving its intended purpose, to edify, it achieves the opposite. Paul reasons hypothetically in 1 Corinthians 14:6 using himself as an example of how unprofitable it would be to the believers if he spoke to them in a language they do not understand (ἐὰν ἔλθω πρὸς ὑμᾶς γλώσσαις λαλῶν, τί ὑμᾶς ὠφελήσω) and in 1 Corinthians 14:11 he says that if a person speaks to another in a language he or she does not understand, the speaker and listener would be foreigners to each other (ἐὰν οὖν μὴ εἰδῶ τὴν δύναμιν τῆς φωνῆς, ἔσομαι τῷ λαλοῦντι βάρβαρος καὶ ὁ λαλῶν ἐν ἐμοὶ βάρβαρος). By so concluding, Paul wants the Corinthians to know that it would be inconceivable even for an apostle sent to them by the will of God to not edify the church as God wills.

In verses 7-9 of 1 Corinthians 14, Paul reinforces his argument of the primacy of edification through intelligible speech by using rhetorical analogies. In the first analogy in 1 Corinthians 14:7 he explains that the flute and harp must make distinct notes in order for what is played to be recognised. Hays (2011:236) elaborates that even in a musical orchestra, different players cannot play random sounds as they please. There must be

harmony in order for the listeners to benefit from the distinct sound. In the second analogy in 1 Corinthians 14:8 Paul uses a military metaphor to argue that if the bungle calls soldiers to battle in a sound they cannot recognise, they will not be able to prepare for battle.

Paul further says, in 1 Corinthians 14:10-12, all languages in the world have meaning. This means that all those who speak the same language are able to understand one another, and thus work together. No language is without meaning, and if there is going to be meaningful communication, communication that edifies in the church, then the speaker needs to speak in a language that all can understand. Based on near context, 1 Corinthians 12:7; 1 Corinthians 14:5, and 1 Corinthians 13:8-10 McDougall (2003:194-195) contends that edification in the church should never cease, and if done in love, it should be for the benefit of others, because love does not seek its own (1 Corinthians 13:5). He further argues that the lack of focus on the content of the gifts is probably what resulted in the Corinthians not giving attention to edification, which amounts to grave injustice.

(b) Cluster 2: 1 Corinthians 14:13-19

Because of the key phrase “unless he interprets” (ἐκτὸς εἰ μὴ διερμηνεύῃ) in 1 Corinthians 14:5, Paul will now argue for the use of tongues in public worship in verses 13-19 of 1 Corinthians 14. The goal of the use of spiritual gifts, even the practice of speaking and interpreting tongues, is the edification of the church (διὸ ὁ λαλῶν γλώσση προσευχέσθω ἵνα διερμηνεύῃ 1 Corinthians 14:13). Paul elaborates on this by saying, “for if I pray in another tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful”. Even though Paul says, when he prays in tongues, his spirit prays, and his understanding is unfruitful (ἐὰν [γὰρ] προσεύχωμαι γλώσση, τὸ πνεῦμά μου προσεύχεται, ὁ δὲ νοῦς μου ἄκαρπός ἐστιν 1 Corinthians 14:14), what he means by this is that in order for understanding and fruitfulness to be acquired, there needs to be interpretation of the tongues, especially by the tongue speaker personally (ὁ λαλῶν γλώσση προσευχέσθω ἵνα διερμηνεύῃ 1 Corinthians 14:13). The goal is still edification. Thomas (1999:96) argues that this verse is about the fruitlessness of uninterpreted tongues. Paul explains that a tongue speaker is effective when their tongues are interpreted because the audience will benefit. Once again, hypothetically, Paul uses himself as an example of the point he makes.

That Paul used himself as an example of the unfruitfulness of uninterpreted tongues even if spoken by him, has rhetorical significance. He argues that he will not use uninterpreted tongues but will rather use words that the Corinthians understand (ἀλλ' ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ θέλω πέντε λόγους τῷ νοί μου λαλήσαι, ἵνα καὶ ἄλλους κατηχήσω, ἢ μυρίους λόγους ἐν γλώσση 1 Corinthians 14:19). It is a rhetorical strategy that Paul employs to persuade the Corinthians to imitate him. Continuing with his persuasive intent, verse 14 could be posed as a question, which would make it hypothetical and negative: If I were to pray in an unknown tongue without interpretation, would my understanding be fruitful? It can only result in prayer without fruitful understanding.

2.5.1.2 Urging the Corinthians to think maturely about the gifts that edify: 1 Corinthians 14:20-25

If there is any doubt about how 1 Corinthians 13 refers to spiritual gifts, then 1 Corinthians 14:20 makes the connection to 1 Corinthians 13:11 unequivocally clear. In 1 Corinthians 14:20 Paul says, “brothers and sisters, don’t be childish in your thinking, but be infants in regard to evil and adult in your thinking” (ἀδελφοί, μὴ παιδία γίνεσθε ταῖς φρεσὶν ἀλλὰ τῇ κακίᾳ νηπιάζετε, ταῖς δὲ φρεσὶν τέλειοι γίνεσθε). The references to “childishness” (νήπιον, 1 Corinthians 13:11) and “self-centredness” (οὐ ζητεῖ τὰ ἑαυτῆς, 1 Corinthians 13:5) are about how the Corinthians used spiritual gifts immaturely. Thiselton (2000:1119) convincingly shows that the reference to childishness in 1 Corinthians 14:20 speaks explicitly about childishness in 1 Corinthians 13, because “childishness” and “thinking” are paired similarly in these two verses in the same context. Paul does not argue that the use of spiritual gifts in question is childish. What he argues is that if they are used to serve oneself without edifying the church, then that displays an immature and loveless attitude, as love is not self-seeking (cf., 1 Corinthians 13:5 οὐ ζητεῖ τὰ ἑαυτῆς, 1 Corinthians 14:17-19). The solution he offers is a cognitive change (γίνεσθε ταῖς φρεσὶν, ταῖς δὲ φρεσὶν τέλειοι γίνεσθε 1 Corinthians 14:20). To achieve this, he persuades them from what he coins “the law” (ἐν τῷ νόμῳ γέγραπται 1 Corinthians 14:21).

Paul says, it is written in the law, “I will speak to this people by people of other tongues and by the lips of foreigners, and even then, they will not listen to me” (ἐν τῷ νόμῳ γέγραπται ὅτι ἐν ἑτερογλώσσοις καὶ ἐν χείλεσιν ἐτέρων λαλήσω τῷ λαῷ τούτῳ καὶ οὐδ’ οὕτως εἰσακούσονται μου). Tolmie (2004:108) observes that when Paul reasons by

quoting from elsewhere in the scripture, he does this to persuade his audience that his reasoning is divinely sanctioned. Tolmie (2004:108) further explains that this kind of argument is a rhetorical strategy called, *argument based on the authority of scripture*.

Tolmie (2004:108) claims that Paul uses arguments based on authority of scripture to reinforce his point and to connect the hearers with the bond they share with those who hold scripture in high regard. This argument based on scriptural authority is usually embedded within Paul's arguments. In the body of the letter of 1 Corinthians for example, we find a spread of authority from scripture¹⁴.

Reasoning based on authority from scripture is a well-used rhetorical strategy by Paul, to explicate his point. The point, concurring with Thiselton (2000:1121) is that those who want to hear God's message want to hear it in intelligible language. Unintelligible speech serves as some form of judgment. It is not something one wishes to hear, like unintelligible speech.

Thus, Paul's point in 1 Corinthians 14:21 is substantiated because it is, enhanced rhetorically effectively by scripture. Stanley (1998:723) comments on the effectiveness of this strategy. He infers from instances where Paul used quotations from scripture as part of his persuasive strategy, that Paul's audience understood and venerated the scriptures. Paul uses arguments based on scripture because he knows his audience understood the scriptures, which made it easy for them to be persuaded. Admittedly, as Tolmie (2004:108) also attests to, we can only speculate to arrive at a logical conclusion of the effectiveness of the argument based on scripture, that if the Corinthians did not understand the scriptures, probably Paul hoped that their respect for their scriptures persuaded them to seek clarity from the scriptures. Either way, this strategy is effective, otherwise it might not be clear why Paul appears to enhance his arguments by quoting scripture. Hays (2011:238) adds that thinking about scripture and how it applies to the worship gathering in Corinth will move the Corinthians from childishness to maturity.

¹⁴ 1:19; 1:31; 2:9; 2:16; 3:19; 3:20; 5:13; 6:16; 9:9; 10:7; 10:26; 14:21; 14:25; 15:27; 15:32; 15:45; 15:54; 15:55

In 1 Corinthians 14:21 Paul develops his argument further. He says, “it is written in the law, I will speak to this people by people of other tongues and by the lips of foreigners, and even then, they will not listen to me” (ἐν τῷ νόμῳ γέγραπται ὅτι, ἐν ἑτερογλώσσοις καὶ ἐν χείλεσιν ἑτέρων λαλήσω τῷ λαῷ τούτῳ καὶ οὐδ’ οὕτως εἰσακούσονται μου, λέγει κύριος 1 Corinthians 14:21). The quotation in 1 Corinthians 14:21 is from Isaiah 28:11-13. In the broader context of Isaiah, reference is made to God teaching those who are matured and willing to hear the word of God. Those who were unwilling to hear God spoke to them in a language they do not understand. Thiselton (2000:1121) says they dismiss God’s plain message in simple language as childish.

Thinking themselves as “wise”, Hays (2011:238) perceives 1 Corinthians 14:20 as a suggestion that some of the Corinthians were unwise. The unwise Corinthians were the ones who did not see the value of serving others effectively through the use of spiritual gifts. As a result, they were childish, immature, unwise. These Corinthians who dismiss the plain message of how spiritual gifts are meant to be used, miss out on the intended purpose of the gift of tongues, due to the fact that they are preoccupied with making the spiritual gifts an end in themselves.

In 1 Corinthians 14:22 Paul responds to these individuals. This response is challenging to understand. Thiselton (2000:1121) states it upfront that he finds it difficult to interpret. The challenge for him lies in the fact that it is not easy to see where the emphasis for Paul lies in 1 Corinthians 14:22. Hays (2011:239) claims that he finds this text greatly confusing, because it seems as though Paul offers an exegetical comment on 1 Corinthians 14:21-22, which requires one to undertake a study of the context of Isaiah 28 where the quotation emanates. Hays (2011:240) believes that even if one were to study the context of Isaiah 28, Paul’s argument remains obscure and insufficiently explained. Keener (20005:115) similarly finds Paul’s interpretation of Isaiah 28:11 as strange, but he suggests that this interpretation can be understood if the context of Isaiah 28 is understood. The presupposition in this study is that Paul used an argument based on scripture because he perhaps expected his readers would understand scripture or in any case, be persuaded by it.

Although 1 Corinthians 14:21-22 may be a passage that is difficult to interpret, the strategy remains the same. In fact, the rhetorical strategy, *argument based on scripture*,

that is persuading the Corinthians to think maturely accounts for why Paul wants the Corinthians to use their minds to think about scripture. Thinking leads to maturity. While also recognising the difficulty of Paul's logic in 1 Corinthians 14:22, Dominy (1983:64) advises that if the effects of 1 Corinthians 14:23-25 could be understood, then Paul's logic could be understood.

In 1 Corinthians 14:22 Paul says uninterpreted tongues are a sign to the unbelievers (αἱ γλῶσσαι εἰς σημεῖον εἰσὶν οὐ τοῖς πιστεύουσιν ἀλλὰ τοῖς ἀπίστοις). The unbelievers cannot respond to the message that comes through tongues even if it is a message of warning, something beneficial for them. Therefore, in verse 23, it would be to the unbelievers' disadvantage if they entered an assembly where people spoke in tongues foreign to them. But if all prophesy and the unbeliever enters, they will be convicted and accountable to those who spoke to them (ἐὰν δὲ πάντες προφητεύωσιν, εἰσέλθῃ δὲ τις ἄπιστος ἢ ἰδιώτης, ἐλέγχεται ὑπὸ πάντων, ἀνακρίνεται ὑπὸ πάντων 1 Corinthians 14:24).

Stendahl (1976:115-116) argues that it is not only the message of warning that the unbelievers need to hear. Therefore, the believers should prioritise prophesying a message that the unbelievers can understand and be convicted by it, because love is not self-seeking (1 Corinthians 13:5). The believers should change their mindset about this and choose only that which edifies, seeking the edification of those they claim to love. This requires a level of maturity promoted and argued for in 1 Corinthians 14:20 (Ἀδελφοί, μὴ παιδία γίνεσθε ταῖς φρεσὶν ἀλλὰ τῇ κακίᾳ νηπιάζετε, ταῖς δὲ φρεσὶν τέλειοι γίνεσθε, brothers and sisters, don't be childish in your thinking, but be infants in regard to evil and adult in your thinking), because love finds no joy in unrighteousness (οὐ χαίρει ἐπὶ τῇ ἀδικίᾳ 1 Corinthians 13:6).

2.5.1.3 Instructing the Corinthians to conduct their worship orderly: 1 Corinthians 14:26-40

1 Corinthians 14:26 begins with a conclusion marker, "what then, brothers and sisters? (τί οὖν ἔστιν, ἀδελφοί). This section concludes with Paul issuing instructions that emphasise that orderly worship through the gifts that edify is of paramount importance in the gathered assembly. In verse 26 Paul says "everything is to be done for building up" (πάντα πρὸς οἰκοδομὴν γινέσθω). When the church is gathered, members bring a variety of gifts which all have the sole purpose of edifying, which is in keeping with the point of 1

Corinthians 14. In verses 27 and 28 Paul further regulates that two or three tongue speakers are permitted to speak, each taking turns supplemented by interpretation. Similarly, James (2004:13) observes that in verse 29 two or three prophets are permitted to speak, supplemented by an evaluation of what is prophesied “two or three prophets should speak, and the others should evaluate” (προφηται δὲ δύο ἢ τρεῖς λαλείωσαν καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι διακρινέτωσαν). Keener (2005:117) comments that by prophesying and speaking in tongues in this orderly manner encourages others to learn and to be edified, because the goal is edification. This is so because God is a God of peace (ὁ θεὸς ἀλλ’ εἰρήνης 1 Corinthians 14:33).

The section from verse 33b-35 is controversial among scholars.

Ὡς ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις τῶν ἁγίων, αἱ γυναῖκες ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις σιγάτωσαν, οὐ γὰρ ἐπιτρέπεται αὐταῖς λαλεῖν, ἀλλ’ ὑποτασσέσθωσαν, καθὼς καὶ ὁ νόμος λέγει. Εἰ δέ τι μαθεῖν θέλουσιν, ἐν οἴκῳ τοὺς ἰδίους ἄνδρας ἐπερωτάτωσαν· αἰσχρὸν γάρ ἐστιν γυναικὶ λαλεῖν ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ.

As in all the churches of the saints, the women should be silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak, but are to submit themselves, as the law also says. If they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home, since it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church.

1 Corinthians 14:33b-35

At the heart of the controversy is whether Paul prohibited women from speaking publicly in the gathered church during the time of the writing of this letter and exactly what the application is for us today:

- Grudem (2006:42) is of the view that Paul is not completely prohibiting women from speaking in the church. He remarks that in 1 Corinthians 11:5 Paul permits women to pray and prophesy in the church. His understanding of what Paul means in 1 Corinthians 14:34 is that women are only prohibited from judging prophecies that are uttered by men (1 Corinthians 14:29);

- Spurgeon (2011:333) suggests that Paul's commands for women to remain silent or ask their husbands at home were *permissive instructions*. By this he means that the women in Corinth were already practicing remaining silent instead of speaking in the church, so Paul authorises their already held stance. Additionally, he interprets 1 Corinthians 14:35 to mean that the women found it embarrassing to ask questions in church, so Paul authorised their preference to ask their husbands at home;
- Kowalski (2017:173) proposes that if 1 Corinthians 14:33-35 is read within the 1 Corinthians' situation, it provides a better understanding of Paul's persuasive intent. 1 Corinthians 14 addresses order in worship, including orderly practice of spiritual gifts, and the ministry of women. Concerning the practice of spiritual gifts, Kowalski (2017:174-175) notes that everyone in the congregation is not explicitly permitted to speak, save two or three tongue speakers or prophets. By implication, all men and women except those speaking, are to remain silent. Concerning the woman, γυναίκα, in 1 Corinthians 14:33, Paul draws a distinction between women in general and married women. He concludes that the women who are not permitted to speak are only those who are married because it would be shameful for them to criticise and judge their husbands' prophecies publicly. "If they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home" (εἰ δέ τι μαθεῖν θέλουσιν, ἐν οἴκῳ τοὺς ἰδίους ἄνδρας ἐπερωτάτωσαν 1 Corinthians 14:35a).
- Allison (1988:29, 52-53) reads 1 Corinthians from a sociological, egalitarian, eschatological perspective. He says the predominant problem in Corinth was the so called "spirituals" who included males and females. Both groups brought problems into the church that were characteristic of those outside the church. In order to solve the problem, he says the "men" suggested a Jewish-type solution where women were excluded from congregational worship. However, their solution did not resolve the problem because they excluded unmarried women in the process. He says Paul rebukes them in 1 Corinthians 14:36 when he asks, "Or did the word of God originate from you (men), or did it come to you only?"
- Strauch (1997:63) says in 1 Corinthians 14:33-38 prohibits women from all forms of public speaking in the context of a local church. He argues that Paul supports his instructions by appealing to scripture as the divine basis for the legitimacy of his prohibition.

Irrespective of which way the interpretation leans, the rhetorical strategy cannot be missed. This study is concerned with the way Paul attempts to persuade his audience. Therefore, it is contended herein, that whichever way the exegete leans, Paul's primary concern of orderly, love filled worship, remains. This is Paul's authoritative rule - the love-guide of worship in the Corinthian church, as in all the churches of the saints (ὡς ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις τῶν ἁγίων 1 Corinthians 14:33b).

Fee (1994:710), Thiselton (2000:1161), and Witherington (1998:259) concur that the Corinthians, men and women, were tempted to assume authority over Paul, reject his apostolic authority, and make up their own authoritative rules that were not based on the Word of God. Witherington (1998:259) commenting on the closing verse, verse 36, says, "this summary statement applies to all, not just women, for he uses the word μόνους instead of μόνοας probably to indicate a mixed audience."

Paul closes this section, in verse 37-40 like a skilled rhetorician would. Adapting the conclusion, he reiterates in unequivocal terms that his words and his authority are divinely mandated (If anyone thinks he is a prophet or spiritual, he should recognise that what I write to you is the Lord's command, εἴ τις δοκεῖ προφήτης εἶναι ἢ πνευματικός, ἐπιγινωσκέτω ἃ γράφω ὑμῖν ὅτι κυρίου ἐστὶν ἐντολή). Therefore, if one rejects Paul's words, Keener (2005:119) says they themselves will be judged by God.

The summary of the rhetorical strategy in 1 Corinthians 14:1-40 is to urge the Corinthians to be united in the practice of their diverse spiritual gifts. Being united while practicing diverse gifts edifies the church, as 1 Corinthians 13:4-5 implies that love encourages the practice of spiritual gifts in a way that edifies, that does not seek self-interest. As a foundational exhortation in 1 Corinthians 14:1, Paul urges the Corinthians to pursue love, as he just expounded in 1 Corinthians 13:1-13, to be zealous to prophesy as prophecy is great (1 Corinthians 14:5) and it edifies (1 Corinthians 14:3). This, however, should not come at the expense of neglecting interpreted tongues, which edify (1 Corinthians 14:5,39). The summary objective is that all things must be done decently and orderly (1 Corinthians 14:40).

2.6 Summary of the rhetorical situation that occasioned the writing of 1 Corinthians 13

The rhetorical situation reconstructed from the text, gives us insight into the rhetorical occasion of 1 Corinthians 13. This was done from a TGPA perspective, analysing 1 Corinthians as a whole to detect hints of the situation that Paul writes in response to. This study discovered hints of the rhetorical situation from 1 Corinthians 1:11 which makes mention of Chloe's people who appraised Paul with information pertaining to the divisions and anti-Pauline views in the Corinthian church. In addition, key texts such as 1 Corinthians 7:1, 1 Corinthians 7:25, 1 Corinthians 8:1, 1 Corinthians 8:4, 1 Corinthians 12:1, 1 Corinthians 16:1, and 1 Corinthians 16:12; which are all introduced with the phrase "now concerning" (περὶ δὲ), or as the Christian Standard Bible renders it, "Now in response to the matters you wrote about", hint at the fact that the Corinthians wrote to Paul to address issues they had questions about.

To enhance one's understanding of the rhetorical situation, this study surveyed the people and their relationship as presented by Paul in the body of the letter of 1 Corinthians. Paul first writes about himself, declaring upfront the basis of the legitimacy of his ministry calling which the Corinthians should recognise as by the will of God (1 Corinthians 1:1). Paul then proceeds to write fondly of the Corinthians, calling them loved ones, and highlights the fact that together they share a special bond (1 Corinthians 4:14-15). However, within the Corinthian church there were the supposed "spiritual individuals" who divided the church on a variety of issues. Paul attempts to persuade the Corinthians to recognise his authority over others who might have spoken on the same issues. One of those issues was the misuse of spiritual gifts.

As a solution to the situation, Paul wrote to *persuade the Corinthians to unify the body by understanding the diversity of the body and how to edify others through their gifts*. An extensive section devoted to this is 1 Corinthians 12-14. This study proposes that each of these three chapters have their dominant rhetorical strategy that Paul employs to persuade the Corinthians.

Firstly, herein, the dominant strategy in 1 Corinthians 12 is summarised as Paul *persuading the Corinthians to be a united in the practice of spiritual gifts, like a body with many parts functions as one, for the edification of all until "the perfect" comes*.

1 Corinthians 12 was analysed accordingly, although not exhaustively, *section-by-section* to show the flow of Paul's argument. Beginning with 1 Corinthians 12:1-3, this study identified the supporting strategy as Paul arguing that no spiritual person can claim they received the information on whether Jesus is accursed or Lord apart from the Spirit. In the second place, the supporting strategy in 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 was identified as an argument that spiritual gifts are distributed according to the spirit. In the third place, the supporting strategy in 1 Corinthians 12:12-26 was identified as Paul *persuading the Corinthians to see themselves as members of one body*. Lastly, the supporting strategy in 1 Corinthians 12:27-31 as Paul adapting the reinforcement that although consisting of diverse parts, the church functions as one body.

Continuing with the interpretation of Paul's development of his argument, this study proceeded to identify the dominant rhetorical strategy employed by Paul in 1 Corinthians 14. The dominant strategy in 1 Corinthians 14 may be summarised as Paul *urging the Corinthians to apply love as the motivation for the practice of spiritual gifts*. Love leads to the avoidance of disorder and promotes edification, whether in tongues or prophecy. 1 Corinthians 14 was consequently analysed, although not exhaustively, *section-by-section* to show the flow of Paul's argument by identifying supporting rhetorical strategies in 1 Corinthians 14:1-40.

An analysis of the way in which Paul argues from 1 Corinthians 14:1-19 was described as Paul *urging the Corinthians to seek spiritual gifts that edify the church*. Secondly, in 1 Corinthians 14:20-25 the argument may be described as Paul *spurring the Corinthians to maturity in respect of practicing spiritual gifts to edify the church*. Lastly, in 1 Corinthians 14:26-40 the argument was described as an instruction from Paul to the Corinthians to excel in orderly worship. Herein, rhetorical techniques that Paul used to enhance the effectiveness of his persuasion were also identified.

This above interpretation of the rhetorical situation serves as the basis upon which this study will now undertake to analyse Paul's rhetorical objective in 1 Corinthians 13. The analysis of 1 Corinthians will be based on its demarcation. Its demarcation comprises of three sections. The first section is 1 Corinthians 12:31b-13:3. The second section is 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a. The third section is 1 Corinthians 13:8b-13. In the end, to accept Paul's authority and follow his instructions on the spirituals (τῶν πνευματικῶν in 1

Corinthians 12:1) the task now at hand is for Paul to persuade the Corinthians of the greater way of practicing spiritual gifts they ought to pursue. This way, as Paul calls it in 1 Corinthians 12:31b, is indeed a better way which should be preferred above any other way in the practice of spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:31). Thus, the aim of the next chapter is to examine 1 Corinthians 13 in light of this rhetorical situation that occasioned its writing.

CHAPTER 3 PHASE 1: PERSUADING THE CORINTHIANS TO PURSUE UNITY BY EXTOLLING THE EXCELLENCIES OF LOVE: 1 CORINTHIANS 12:31b-13:3

Καὶ ἔτι καθ' ὑπερβολὴν ὁδὸν ὑμῖν δείκνυμι. Ἐὰν ταῖς γλώσσαις τῶν ἀνθρώπων λαλῶ καὶ τῶν ἀγγέλων, ἀγάπην δὲ μὴ ἔχω, γέγονα χαλκὸς ἤχων ἢ κύμβαλον ἀλαλάζον. καὶ ἐὰν ἔχω προφητείαν καὶ εἰδῶ τὰ μυστήρια πάντα καὶ πᾶσαν τὴν γνῶσιν καὶ ἐὰν ἔχω πᾶσαν τὴν πίστιν ὥστε ὄρη μεθιστάναι, ἀγάπην δὲ μὴ ἔχω, οὐθέν εἰμι. κἂν ψωμίσω πάντα τὰ ὑπάρχοντά μου καὶ ἐὰν παραδῶ τὸ σῶμά μου ἵνα καυχῆσωμαι, ἀγάπην δὲ μὴ ἔχω, οὐδὲν ὠφελοῦμαι.

And I will show you an even far more supreme way. If I speak human or angelic tongues but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith so that I can move mountains but do not have love, I am nothing. And if I give away all my possessions, and if I give over my body in order to boast but do not have love, I gain nothing.

1 Corinthians 12:31b-13:3

3.1 Introduction

The analysis of Paul's persuasive strategy in 1 Corinthians 12:31b-13:3 will be considered in light of the rhetorical situation interpreted in **chapter 2**. It became clear that Paul does not want the Corinthian believers to be divided (1 Corinthians 12:4-7). He wants them to be mature (1 Corinthians 12:1; 1 Corinthians 14:20-25), and to excel in orderly worship by practicing spiritual gifts in a way that edifies the body (1 Corinthians 14:12). In 1 Corinthians 12:31b, Paul proposes "a far more supreme way"¹⁵ (ὑπερβολὴν ὁδὸν) to

¹⁵ According to Louw and Wolvaardt (2015, 1 Cor 12:31b) the noun ὑπερβολὴν means, "a degree which exceeds extraordinarily a point on an implied or overt scale of extent". In 1 Corinthians 12:31 it can be translated as "far more supreme way" to capture the intensity of the degree that Paul expresses. Hereinafter and aforementioned ὑπερβολὴν ὁδὸν is translated as "a far more supreme way" based on Louw and Wolvaardt's definition

persuade the Corinthians to pursue unity by extolling the excellencies of love. This is the rhetorical objective that will be analysed in this chapter.

In respect of persuading the Corinthians to unity by extolling the excellencies of love, Paul uses the verb “desire” (ζηλοῦτε 1 Corinthians 12:31a) which is the main verb that introduces a new section, followed by the accusative noun “the gifts” (τὰ χαρίσματα) as the direct object, modified by the adjective “greater” (τὰ μείζονα). This is the irony explained by Paul to desire the greater gifts when the context of 1 Corinthians 12:27-31a has shown that there are no such gifts in the body. If this is established, then the introduction of the rhetorical strategy follows in 1 Corinthians 12:31b. Since there are no great gifts, Paul proceeds to say to the Corinthians in the indicative verb “I will show” (δείκνυμι) “a way” (ὁδὸν), not just a way, but a far more supreme way (ὑπερβολήν), which begins in 1 Corinthians 13:1.

Thus, the first phase of the rhetorical strategy may be formulated based on the irony introduced by Paul of the concept of a far more supreme way. Paul picks up this development of the far more supreme way in 1 Corinthians 13:1 by showing what he personally becomes (γέγονα 1 Corinthians 13:1c) if (ἐὰν 1 Corinthians 13:1) he practices the miraculous acts outlined in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 without love (ἀγάπην δὲ μὴ ἔχω 1 Corinthians 13:1-3). Emanating from this hyperbole in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3, a picture is seen of how Paul aims to persuade the Corinthians.

Each part of the pericope of 1 Corinthians 12:31-13:4, shows how words, phrases and clauses relate and where the key emphasis lies (Kantenwein, 1979:1). Proceeding from the identification of where the grammatical emphasis lies, one can begin to formulate and analyse Paul’s supportive rhetorical strategy.

To reiterate, this section of the analysis focuses on the supportive rhetorical objective in 1 Corinthians 12:31b-13:3 described as *persuading the Corinthians to pursue unity by extolling the excellencies of love.* This strategy is governed by the use of a series of four

third class conditional clauses¹⁶, plus a contraction conjunction “and if” (κἄν) at the beginning of 1 Corinthians 13:3 to make it five conditional clauses:

- “if” (ἐὰν 1 Corinthians 13:1)
- “if” (ἐὰν 1 Corinthians 13:2)
- “if” (ἐὰν 1 Corinthians 13:2)
- “and if” (κἄν 1 Corinthians 13:3)
- “if” (ἐὰν 1 Corinthians 13:3)

These clauses refer to uncertain but likely conditions that may occur in the future. These ἐὰν (if) conditional clauses invite the Corinthians to consider the implications of practicing spiritual gifts without love (ἀγάπην μὴ). Taken collectively, the *protasis* ἐὰν (if) appearing in 1 Corinthians 13:1, 2, and 3 suggests that there is one rhetorical strategy at play in 1 Corinthians 12:31 ending with 1 Corinthians 13:3.

Chapter 3 focuses on analysing the way in which Paul persuades the Corinthians to consider his point of view, namely the pursuit of unity based on the excellency of love. This persuasion begins with Paul’s exhortation to desire “the far more supreme way” in 1 Corinthians 12:31b-13:3. The exhortation to desire “the far supreme way” (1 Corinthians 12:31b-13:3) will be analysed beginning with understanding Paul’s rhetorical strategy introduced in 1 Corinthians 12:31, ending at 1 Corinthians 13:3. In the process of the analysis of the rhetoric of a text, Genade’s adapted “text-centred” approach will be followed to understand Paul’s strategy and how he aims to achieve this intent (Genade, 2007:52-54). The analysis will incorporate the ways in which he enhances the effectiveness of his communication based on Tolmie’s suggestion to follow his “minimal theoretical framework”, namely a flexible approach of identifying and analysing the

¹⁶ Mounce (2003:341), Mounce (2009:329) and Wallace (1995:679-712) discuss the meaning and impact of conditional clauses on one’s exegesis. The significance of their impact on one’s exegesis is whether they refer to a likely or unlikely future occurrence. If they refer to a likely situation, then Paul is understood as being realistic. If they refer to an unlikely situation, then Paul may be understood as being hypothetical. Mounce and Wallace say there are three conditional clauses that are predominantly used in Greek New Testament. The first is a simple conditional clause or a statement of conditions of fact which means if the *protasis* is true, then the *apodosis* is taken as true for the sake of the argument the author makes. The second class states a condition of fact in the *apodosis* and *protasis* even though it is not factual. The argument makes it plain that the assumptions are false. The third class presents an uncertain but likely condition that may occur in the future. If the hypothetical *protasis* turns out to be fact, then the *apodosis* is true as well.

author's argument and techniques that are used in a particular section (Tolmie, 2004). Meynet says this is tantamount to letting the text speak for itself and to trust in its own logical presentation of the author's persuasion (Meynet, 1998:177).

3.2 Analysis of Paul's rhetorical strategy in 1 Corinthians 12:31b-13:3

1 Corinthians 12:31b marks a shift in Paul's rhetorical objective that he concludes in 1 Corinthians 12:31a. Louw and Wolvaardt (2015, 1 Cor. 12:31b) highlight the rhetorical shift to the next objective that is supported by a notable "marker of sequence" conjunction "and" (καί). Dana and Mantey (1955:249-250) remark that in 1 Corinthians 12:31b, the conjunction serves to mark the sequence of a transition to a new idea that is connected to the ongoing discussion. In the ongoing discussion, Paul *persuades the Corinthians to desire "the far more supreme way" which is the only proper motivation for practicing spiritual gifts (πνευματικοί)*. The "far more supreme way" is the only way that edifies the body because Paul does not present nor discuss any other way, (Thurén, 2001:99).

The understanding of Paul's persuasion is "an elusive task", (Sindo, 2014:27). Scholars are of the opinion that one's understanding of persuasion in 1 Corinthians 13 is informed by one's understanding of the function of the verb "desire" (ζηλοῦτε 1 Corinthians 12:31a). The function of the present active verb "desire" (ζηλοῦτε) could either be viewed as an imperative verb or indicative (Conzelmann 1975; Horsley 2011; Keener 2005; and Morris 1958). There seems to be two ways of interpreting ζηλοῦτε that inform the reconstruction of Paul's persuasive strategy in 1 Corinthians 13. The first way is the realist understanding (Conzelmann 1975:217; and Morris 1958:180). The second way is the ironic understanding (Horsley 2011:175 and Keener 2005:107). The analysis in this chapter that will follow later under the discussion on the technique of implicit contrasting, will indicate which way of interpreting ζηλοῦτε this study leans towards. But first, this study looks at the areas of different opinions among scholars concerning Paul's use of rhetoric in 1 Corinthians 12:31.

Thurén (2001:100-101) asks whether it is plausible to derive Paul's interpretation of irony based on a technical rhetorical sense. He concludes that the technical sense is not essential for Paul. The likely intention for Paul is to use hyperbole functionally, in a way that those who are not trained in ancient rhetoric will be able to easily understand. Thurén (2001:104) argues that what makes it easy to understand is the fact that Paul analyses

his rhetoric for us in 1 Corinthians 13. The significance of Paul analysing his rhetoric for us is that his persuasive device does not lead to a theological misunderstanding that ironically he corrects in 1 Corinthians 12-14.

Thurén (2001:111) convincingly points out and concludes that it is possible to detect in Paul's persuasion in 1 Corinthians 12:31 that he was skilled in ancient rhetoric. The skill he had in the use of rhetorical devices of his day enabled Paul to carefully craft his persuasion uniquely in a way that appeals both to the intellectual and emotional side of the Corinthians.

Furthermore, Porter and Dyer (2016:i) regard the surrounding context within which Paul lived as having influenced Paul's thought. They claim that Paul's possible training in rhetoric advances our understanding of how Paul used rhetoric to construct the style of his writing. Such understanding of Paul's adaptation of ancient rhetoric helps the modern readers of Paul to understand his supposed use of irony in 1 Corinthians 12:31. Porter and Dyer suggest that in order to achieve this, one should not be quick to conclude Paul's use of rhetorical techniques fit neatly into an ancient rhetorical system. They point out that if one wants to understand Paul's argumentation, it is imperative to understand the goal of Paul's argumentation as it is not easy to objectively decide if Paul's use of rhetoric is exactly as that of his contemporaries (Porter & Dyer, 2016:157).

However, it is important to note that Porter and Dyer (2016:157), Thurén (2001:111), Horsley (2011:175), and this author recognise that in 1 Corinthians 12:31b Paul introduces his audience to his use of hyperbole which is a rhetorical device used by some of his contemporary thinkers. The extent to which Paul might have been exposed to rhetoric in his day is a matter of scholarly contention and speculation. According to Porter and Dyer (2016:157) the way Paul uses the rhetoric of irony either conforms to strict adherence to ancient rhetorical use of irony, or Paul adapts irony to be aligned with the Corinthians' situation and his main persuasion.

Martin (1999:52) argues that Paul's letters themselves exhibit evidence of one who had a classical background of Greco-Roman rhetoric. Biatoma (2010:2) takes it on face value that Greco-Roman rhetoric was taught in school in the Roman world, hence Paul was exposed to it. Likewise, Mitchell (1991:6) proposes that Paul's letters should be studied through the lens of Greco-Roman rhetorical tradition because it was the prevailing method

and art of persuasion that was operative during the time of the writing of his epistles. Heil (2005:4) tentatively conclude that Greco-Roman rhetoric influenced Paul but argued that one cannot detect from reading his letters whether he was influenced formally (i.e., directly in school) or indirectly through what Schellenberg (2013:6) calls “general rhetoric” or the “way of speaking” utilised in the communities where Paul resided. This conclusion is reached because it seems that Paul adapted the use of rhetoric for the purposes he had that were different from the achievements reached through the employment of Greco-Roman rhetoric (Heil, 2005:4).

Despite the scholars dissenting on whether Paul was schooled in rhetoric and which rhetorical method did he use to persuade his audience, it seems clear that scholars accept that in one form, or another, Paul used rhetoric as a means of persuasion to persuade his audience to see his point of view, (Vos, 2008:47). Meynet (1998:21) poignantly reminds us that even though we may have divergent views on this, the common goal of any rhetorical analysis is to seek to understand the text. One may not know with a satisfactory degree close to certainty which ancient rhetoricians shaped Paul’s method of persuasion. Despite this, a convincing speculation is that the reading of 1 Corinthians 13 presents with challenges. 1 Corinthians does not provide sufficient internal evidence to help one determine the exact rhetoric Paul used. The one convincing speculation is that Paul’s rhetoric is unique because he developed and adapted his own rhetoric that may be seen in 1 Corinthians.

Danahoe (2008: ii, 120) contends for this use in 1 Corinthians 13. She argues that Paul adapts the use of the rhetorical figure of speech and uses “covert allusions”. She says Paul uses “covert allusions” because he intends to use irony. A covert allusion is successful because Paul enjoins his audience to take pleasure in figuring out for themselves what he intends to communicate. For this reason, Horsley (2011:175) sees part and parcel of Paul’s use of Hellenistic intellect blended with his dynamic use of love which follows irony that Horsley sees as relational. It is relational because Paul uses it in a special way to appeal to the Corinthians’ thoughts and emotions specifically for their situation.

In respect of how Paul adapts his use of rhetoric specifically for the Corinthians’ situation, Fiore (1985:85-86) argues that 1 Corinthians hints at the possibility that Paul may have

not used rhetoric in the common way it was used in ancient rhetorical thought. He argues that Paul deliberately adapted the use of rhetoric to soften the criticism that might be directed at his letter to the Corinthians by those who may analyse it using formal rhetorical thought. Fiore also argues that Paul used “covert allusions”, enjoining the Corinthians to joyfully discover their mind and emotionally engaging persuasion.

Aristotle’s understanding of irony is helpful. Aristotle (1984:4914) explains irony as comprising of the use of iteration often at the end of one’s discourse. Irony concludes a long discussion in a way that Aristotle (1984:4854) says befits a gentleman if the irony is modest. Irony provides a solution to a problem. According to Biatoma (2010:8) Paul certainly adapts some form of Greco-Roman irony to apply his proposed “far more supreme way” (1 Corinthians 12:31b) in comparison to the Corinthians’ way as a solution to the problem. In a modest way, Paul provides a solution to the problem of using spiritual gifts without love. Ironically, he pretends to say something he does not say, calling something by a name contrary to the word he uses (Aristotle, 1984:4914). Paul does not use the words, “your way is not supreme, but mine is”, even though that is what he implies. He commands the Corinthians to desire the greater gifts, yet the entire discourse in 1 Corinthians 12 is devoted to proving that the Corinthians’ notion of greater gifts is not accurate, and by implication, it is not based on love.

If Paul relied on rhetoric to persuade the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 12:31, then he interprets his rhetoric for us in 1 Corinthians 13. It is based on this conclusion that this researcher finds it compelling enough that Paul adapted his rhetoric to fit the Corinthian context instead of fitting neatly into an ancient rhetorical system. If understood this way, it allows for figures of speech of ancient rhetoric to carry similar meanings to English thought of figures of speech. Today’s reader of Paul is in a position to understand Paul’s simplified rhetoric because Paul intends for his theology to be understood. Furthermore, whether 1 Corinthians 12:31b is understood as irony or realistic, Paul still intends for his own interpretation of his proposal of “a far more supreme way” to be understood in its own terms outlined in 1 Corinthians 13.

With regards to the realist understanding, Paul is taken to instruct the Corinthians to desire the greater gifts according to how Paul ranked the gifts in 1 Corinthians 12 and how he emphasises the greater gifts that build up in 1 Corinthians 14. In relation to the

ironic understanding, those who lean towards this interpretation understand Paul to be using sarcasm in 1 Corinthians 12:31 because the premise of the argument in 1 Corinthians 12 is that no gift is greater than the other.

In order to explore Paul's strategy in 1 Corinthians 12:31b-13:3, it appears important to attempt to understand whether Paul is being ironic or realistic when he announces his strategy by saying, "and I will show you a far more supreme way" (καὶ ἔτι καθ' ὑπερβολὴν ὁδὸν ὑμῖν δείκνυμι 1 Corinthians 12:31). This understanding sheds light on what Paul says the "far more supreme way" is that he wants to show the Corinthians. This understanding also sheds light on how 1 Corinthians 13 functions as Paul's "far more supreme way".

Conzelmann (1975:217) prefaces the analysis into whether Paul is ironic or realistic, and what the interpretation of 1 Corinthians 12:31 is by pointing out interpretive challenges that need to be resolved during the process of analysing 1 Corinthians 13. His preface notes three interpretive challenges that he claims make 1 Corinthians 13 a "self-contradictory unit". Even though he finds the unit contradictory, he nonetheless maintains that in the context of 1 Corinthians 12, it is grammatically correct to regard love in 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 as "the far more supreme way" that Paul announces in 1 Corinthians 12:31b.

At the core of Conzelmann's contention, is the linkage of 1 Corinthians 12:31b to 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 which he finds as problematic. He contends that it is problematic because if one makes such a link, it leads to the conclusion that love in 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 is "the far more supreme way" that Paul introduces in 1 Corinthians 12:31b. According to Conzelmann, that linkage cannot be reconciled with 1 Corinthians 13:13 which he understands as saying there are three higher gifts, which love is one of the gifts. Conzelmann thus concludes by arguing that the degrading of certain gifts by Paul, means that both the gift of prophecy and love are the greatest gifts that Paul urges the Corinthians to desire in 1 Corinthians 12:31a and 1 Corinthians 14:1, leaving 1 Corinthians 13 as a "self-contradictory unit" that says both love and prophecy are supreme gifts while there are two other gifts that Paul says are supreme in 1 Corinthians 13:13.

It seems as if these supposed difficult interpretive challenges arise when one considers love in 1 Corinthians 13 to be a spiritual gift. Furthermore, it seems strange to not interpret love as supreme even though 1 Corinthians 13:13 explicitly says “love is supreme” (μείζων δὲ τούτων ἡ ἀγάπη). Nonetheless, 1 Corinthians 14:1 is not an exhortation to pursue love and only the spiritual gift of prophecy. In 1 Corinthians 14:1 Paul urges the Corinthians to pursue love’s way of using all spiritual gifts. For this reason, Conzelmann’s view that 1 Corinthians 13 is a self-contradictory unit, and that love is a supreme spiritual gift that contradicts Paul’s notion of “supremacy” in 1 Corinthians 12:31, is not convincing enough. Despite this view, this study finds it helpful that Conzelmann acknowledges that 1 Corinthians 13 is “the far more supreme way” that Paul introduces in 1 Corinthians 12:31b.

Morris (1958:180) is of a similar view as Conzelmann. He takes the discussion further, contributing where Conzelmann slightly lacks. In Morris’ contribution, Paul is understood as ranking spiritual gifts according to the order of their supremacy to the least. The order of spiritual gifts’ supremacy to the least is found in 1 Corinthians 12:28:31a. Morris claims that the context of 1 Corinthians 12 shows that the Corinthians pursued the superior gifts but lacked in two areas. The first area of lack is failing to recognise that even the least of these gifts are necessary, which is why God has bestowed honour to all the gifts (1 Corinthians 12:23-26). The second shortfall is that the Corinthians missed something that was far more superior than the gifts which should accompany those with “high ranked” and “humble gifts”. Morris thus concludes that because the Corinthians missed love, 1 Corinthians 13 should then be understood as Paul urging all the Corinthians who either possess superior or humble gifts, to pursue love for its own sake, not love as “the far more supreme way” to the gifts.

McDougall (2003:178) contributes his insight by looking at the setting of 1 Corinthians 13 that helps to ascertain the nature of Paul’s strategy. He claims that determining the nature of “desire” (ζηλοῦτε) both in 1 Corinthians 12:31 and 1 Corinthians 14:1 is key to making sense of Paul’s point in 1 Corinthians 13. To make sense of Paul’s point, McDougall suggests that the present active verb “desire” (ζηλοῦτε) of 1 Corinthians 14:1 should not be taken to be the same present active verb “desire” (ζηλοῦτε) of 1 Corinthians 12:31a. The reason for this is that it is only certain aspects of the desire of 1 Corinthians 12:31a that carry over to 1 Corinthians 14. In this way, he stresses that the urge to desire the

supreme gifts in 1 Corinthians 12:31a refers to the ranked gifts in 1 Corinthians 12:28, “first apostles, second prophets” (πρῶτον ἀποστόλους, δεύτερον προφήτας). He believes these two are the supreme gifts, but he claims the gift of apostleship is not available anymore, which makes the gift of prophecy the supreme and the only currently existing supreme gift. In support of a realist interpretation, McDougall concludes by claiming that the cessation of apostleship accounts for why Paul exhorts the Corinthians to desire only prophecy as the supreme gift in 1 Corinthians 14:1.

Keener (2005:107) approaches 1 Corinthians 13 as a digression wherein Paul offers love’s ethical way of using spiritual gifts in the Corinthian body. He says when Paul urges the Corinthians to desire the greater way in 1 Corinthians 12:31a he meant the Corinthians should desire the best gifts. The best gifts, according to Keener, are those that edify, especially the gift of prophecy mentioned in 1 Corinthians 14:1. As a result, love defines which of the ranked gifts in 1 Corinthians 12:28, is the greatest. Keener concludes that the context makes it clear that the greatest gift that builds the body up more than any other that is mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12-14, is the gift of prophecy.

Horsley (2011:175) finds support for an ironic rather than a realistic interpretation in 1 Corinthians 12:31. He builds his case by foremost suggesting that in order to make sense of what “the far more supreme way” is, it should be considered that Paul used irony. The reason Horsley (2011:175) believes 1 Corinthians 12:31 irony is based on viewing some aspects of 1 Corinthians 12 as Paul challenging the Corinthians’ view of placing hierarchy over spiritual gifts. Horsley argues that Paul should be understood as having just downplayed any notion that there are any greater gifts in 1 Corinthians 12. If Paul is understood having persuaded the Corinthians this way, he thus mocks the Corinthians’ pursuit of spiritual gifts that they view as great. This means that the verbal phrase “desire the greater gifts” (ζηλοῦτε δὲ τὰ χαρίσματα τὰ μείζονα 1 Corinthians 12:31) may be understood as ironic.

Paul’s intention of irony in 1 Corinthians 12:31a, as Horsley (2011:175) concludes, is to ensure that the force of the statement in 1 Corinthians 12:31b is effective. The statement is ironic in that, on the surface, Paul appears to advocate for something contrary to his entire argument in 1 Corinthians 12:1-30. On the whole, the argument in 1 Corinthians 12:1-30 is that members of the body are indispensable in relation to one another, so in

the body there is no greater gift. Consequently, the urge to “desire the greater gifts” (ζηλοῦτε δὲ τὰ χαρίσματα τὰ μείζονα 1 Corinthians 12:31a) is a rhetorical opposite of what Paul expresses as being the statement he aims to make. Spiritual gifts are given to individuals and do not function independently. The purpose of the gifts is for the common good, not to be greater than others.

In light of the strengths presented in favour of the ironic interpretation, and if the interpretation of the context of 1 Corinthians 12 that is preferred in the preceding chapter of this study is acceptable, then Paul can be understood as showing the Corinthians that there are no greater gifts in the body. This study thus finds the ironic interpretation as bearing more weight than a realistic interpretation. Most importantly, however, both views commonly find it necessary to determine the nature and application of the present active verb “desire” (ζηλοῦτε) and its impact on 1 Corinthians 13. Determining whether this is ironic or realistic is key for the understanding of Paul’s persuasion in 1 Corinthians 13. Hence, decoding this irony is the first step in understanding what Paul means by ‘the supreme way’ he says he will now show the Corinthians.

Whatever the meaning of the “far more supreme way” (ὑπερβολὴν ὁδὸν 1 Corinthians 12:31b) may be, it stands in contrast with how Paul says the Corinthians practice spiritual gifts to how he hopes to persuade them to practice spiritual gifts. In order for that to be achieved, their use of spiritual gifts must be motivated by the greater way. The greater way is the ingredient to edification that is evidently missing among the Corinthians. The contrast between “desire the greater gifts” (ζηλοῦτε τὰ χαρίσματα τὰ μείζονα 1 Corinthians 12:31a) and “I will show you a far more supreme way” (ἔτι καθ’ ὑπερβολὴν ὁδὸν ὑμῖν δείκνυμι 1 Corinthians 12:31b) will be explored further under the interpretation of explicit contrasting (**Section 3.3.1.1**).

Paul now turns to show the Corinthians what exactly that supreme way is. Commentators generally agree that love is the greater way that Paul speaks about in 1 Corinthians 12:31b, Witherington (1995:265-266), Malcolm (2013:88), Thiselton (2000:1025-1026), and Keener (2005:107). What seems different between these scholars is the extent to which they apply the “far more supreme way” of love in the context of 1 Corinthians. Either it applies to the immediate context beginning in 1 Corinthians 8:1 (Thiselton, 2000) or 1

Corinthians 12:1-14:40 (Keener, 2005) or to the entire situation in 1 Corinthians (Witherington, 1995).

Thiselton (2000:1027) is of the view that the argument concerning the way of love takes place among the discussion on worship that begins in 1 Corinthians 8:1¹⁷. He draws parallels between the statement “love is not arrogant” (ἡ ἀγάπη οὐ φυσιοῦται 1 Corinthians 13:4) and the statements “knowledge puffs up” (ἡ γνῶσις φυσιοῖ 1 Corinthians 8:1) “but love builds up” (ἡ δὲ ἀγάπη οἰκοδομεῖ 1 Corinthians 8:1). He thus regards all these statements as addressing similar subject matters. In Thiselton’s opinion, the discourse on love in 1 Corinthians 13 belongs within the discussion commenced in 1 Corinthians 8.

Keener (2005:107) limits the application of “the far more supreme way” to the discourse on spiritual gifts that begins in 1 Corinthians 12:1. He regards 1 Corinthians 13 as a digression. He understands Paul to be digressing with the purpose of showing the Corinthians the ethical way of practicing spiritual gifts. The Corinthians were zealous for gifts such as prophecy and tongues but without love. Hence Keener regards 1 Corinthians 12:31 and 1 Corinthians 14:1 as framing the discussion on how to let love advice the Corinthians which gifts edify the church that they should seek.

Witherington (1995:264-265) understands 1 Corinthians 13 as a guiding principle in everything that the Corinthians do, including but not limited to the practice of spiritual gifts. Similar to Thiselton, he regards 1 Corinthians 13 as a counterpart of the guiding principle in worship. Love is the opposite of what does not build up. Some of the occurrences which were not upbuilding in the Corinthian community at the time which Witherington contends, to be the misuse of spiritual gifts. Therefore, like Keener, he regards 1 Corinthians 13 as a digression by Paul to focus on addressing the matter at hand.

Whether one accepts the diverse delimitation of 1 Corinthians 13 by commentators, the picture of what Paul proposes as the greater way, remains. It remains the same even

¹⁷ The concept of worship in 1 Corinthians 8-14 is classified by Thiselton (2000:1027) as falling into four aspects relating to worship. The first is in relation to foods sacrificed to idols (1 Corinthians 8-10). The second is in relation to clothing (1 Corinthians 11:1-16). The third relates to the Lord’s Supper (1 Corinthians 11:17-34). The last relates to worship regarding the charismata (1 Corinthians 12-14).

among the commentators who broaden or narrow the context of 1 Corinthians 13. They see it as the way that stands in contrast to the Corinthians' way in 1 Corinthians 12 and 14 and Paul's characterisation of the greater way in 1 Corinthians 13. Fee (1987:624-629) is thus helpful when he explains that Paul is primarily giving context to spiritual gifts.

Fee surveyed the view that understands the application of "the far more supreme way" as relating only to 1 Corinthians 12-14 and the view that understand the application of "the far more supreme way" as relating to other aspects in the body of the letter of 1 Corinthians. The results of his survey show that its primary application is in relation to spiritual gifts. One piece of the results is 1 Corinthians 12:1 which introduces the topic of spiritual gifts with a phrase "now concerning spiritual gifts" (περὶ δὲ τῶν πνευματικῶν 1 Corinthians 12:1). This topic on spiritual gifts is sustained to the end of 1 Corinthians 14. The introduction of 1 Corinthians 13 as the "far more supreme way" is bracketed by the present active verb "desire" (ζηλοῦτε) the gifts in 1 Corinthians 12:31a and 1 Corinthians 14:1. Even though these texts appear to delimit "the far more supreme way" to the immediate context of 1 Corinthians 12-14, fluidity should be maintained in respect of how much of 1 Corinthians 13 as "the far more supreme way" applies to other aspects within the body of the letter of 1 Corinthians.

Although much of the problems that Paul addresses throughout the letter can be solved by love as an antidote, this study aligns itself with the view that understands Paul to be applying the way of love to the immediate context of spiritual gifts. Paul chose to insert the description of what he calls "the far more supreme" in 1 Corinthians 12:31b as opposed to other problems¹⁸ he addressed in the letter. Therefore, it seems convincing that the application of the supreme way in 1 Corinthians 12:31b is in relation to the practice of spiritual gifts (περὶ δὲ τῶν πνευματικῶν 1 Corinthians 12:1). The immediate application of "the far more supreme way" transpires in the context where Paul charges the Corinthians of destructing the church by not building one another up and by not

¹⁸ Marriage and sexuality (1 Corinthians 5-7), meat sacrificed to idols (1 Corinthians 8:-11:1) with the exception of "knowledge puffs up, but love builds up (ἡ γνῶσις φυσιοῖ, ἡ δὲ ἀγάπη οἰκοδομεῖ), clothing and eucharist (1 Corinthians 11:2-34) veracity of the gospel based on how Christ's death and resurrection is foretold in the scriptures (1 Corinthians 15:1-11), the resurrection of the dead (1 Corinthians 15:12-37) and about the collection for the saints (1 Corinthians 16:1-4).

practicing spiritual gifts for the common good of all (1 Corinthians 12:25-26). Paul proposes “the far more supreme way” in comparison to the Corinthians’ way.

If Paul is to be effective in persuading the Corinthians to accept “the far more supreme way” of love, in what way then, one might ask, is the way of love far more supreme? Or in which way does the way of love make the practice of spiritual gifts supreme? What does Paul mean when he says he will show the Corinthians “the far more supreme way” (καὶ ἔτι καθ’ ὑπερβολὴν ὁδὸν ὑμῖν δείκνυμι) in 1 Corinthians 12:31b? It is hinted herein that on the surface it is supposedly clear to see that “love” is the supreme way that Paul is embarking on showing the Corinthians. What needs attention in the analysis of Paul’s persuasive strategy is to underscore that for love to be supreme it means it must not be a spiritual gift, otherwise Paul would be contradicting himself (Conzelmann, 1975:217).

Witherington (1995:261) remarks that love is not a gift. In context it refers to the incomparable way and the correct context within which spiritual gifts operate. He says the indicative, present active verb “show” (δείκνυμι) in 1 Corinthians 12:31b could mean “reveal” because the truth about love in the practice of spiritual gifts had not dawned on some Corinthians, or there is no evidence in the letter to suggest they had previously been taught about love. Fee (1987:625) supports this argument when he notes that nowhere does Paul call love a spiritual gift, and that the imperative to desire the greater gifts in 1 Corinthians 12:31a is contrasted with the supreme way in 1 Corinthians 12:31b.

This argument that Paul is not saying love is a gift seems acceptable since one can possibly see Paul embarking on his rhetorical objective of showing the Corinthian believers how to let love guide them in the use of spiritual gifts so that they may practice them for the common good of all (1 Corinthians 12:7; 1 Corinthians 14:1-5). Practicing spiritual gifts based on the way of love will solve the schism that was caused by the preoccupation of certain spiritual gifts.

3.3 Argument based on disillusionment

This study makes a discovery of *the argument based on evoking a sense of disillusionment*. The argument based on disillusionment is seen in the protasis “if I” (ἐὰν ἔχω 1 Corinthians 13:2, 3), a third-class conditional clause, which invites the Corinthians to think of the possibility and outcome of having spiritual gifts without love. Kistemaker

(1993:452) highlights the contrast between the reality of the conditional clauses and what the implication of the absence of love is on these protases. If the Corinthians practice spiritual gifts without love, they would be like a musical orchestra without harmony. This study highlighted in **chapter 2** how Hays (2011:236) and Witherington (1995:360) point to a situation of disorder that Paul addresses by using an illustration of how music depends on harmony. Theirs was disorderly, thereby threatening unity and edification that orderly use of spiritual gifts enhances in the church.

It is for this reason Paul instructs the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 14:26-40 to pursue unity by conducting their spiritual gifts in an orderly, harmoniously manner. The penultimate reason he advances is that this is imperative “since God is not a God of order but of peace” (οὐ γάρ ἐστὶν ἀκαταστασίας ὁ θεὸς ἀλλ’ εἰρήνης 1 Corinthians 14:33a). If the Corinthians miss the persuasion to achieve the cultivation of a harmonious worship in the church, then they will be persisting in their stubbornness detected in their pride they placed on certain spiritual gifts and spiritual gifts’ practitioners. Not being persuaded brings about devastating outcomes. The outcome is undesirable and disappointing.

The outcome is undesirable and disappointing because Paul says if having spiritual gifts without love were to happen, it would be a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal (γέγονα χαλκὸς ἤχων ἢ κύμβαλον ἀλαλάζον 1 Corinthians 13:1b), become nothing (οὐθέν 1 Corinthians 13:2c), and gain nothing (οὐδὲν ὠφελοῦμαι 1 Corinthians 13:3c). Hence, with the use of the argument based on disillusioning the Corinthians, Paul intends to stir a sense of disillusionment in respect of the inadequacy of spiritual gifts without love. In addition, the argument seems intent on evoking a sense of anticipation for something greater than the spiritual gifts (πνευματικῶν). Later in the passage, Paul says the three spiritual gifts alluded to in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 will be ended by the arrival of “the perfect” (τὸ τέλειον 1 Corinthians 13:10). The matter at hand, before Paul gets to letting the Corinthians know that the gifts will pass away, is to disillusion the Corinthians about the value of spiritual gifts if not based on love. Hence Paul extolls the excellency of love from the onset to motivate the Corinthians to be united based on love.

This *argument based on disillusionment* is somewhat different to the argument that Genade (2007:127,129,184) terms *self-vilification*. Genade explains the *argument based on the use of self-vilification* as serving the purpose of evoking disgust with regards to a

conduct that is undesirable, so that the hearers may be persuaded to adapt to a conduct that the author proposes. These two arguments share similar characteristics in that in the context of 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 Paul uses himself as an example of undesirable behaviour that the Corinthians should shun. However, Paul does not to evoke disgust, as in *self-vilification*, even though he says he will amount to nothing if he practices spiritual gifts without love. Some form of vilification will be used later in the passage where Paul persuades the Corinthians to pursue unity by vilifying their loveless use of spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 13:4-8a).

Argument based on disillusionment also corresponds in some ways to *argument based on experience* as termed by Tolmie (2004:99,100,139). Tolmie explains that this argument is effective rhetorically because it points people to something they rarely deny, namely their own experiences. Even though Paul is using his hypothetical experience in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3, the Corinthians will agree that even if it were them practicing spiritual gifts without love, like Paul, they would be nothing. In fact, one might argue that a survey of the Corinthians' practice of spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 12 points directly to their experience of practicing spiritual gifts without love. Even though there is a hint of argument based on experience in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3, the overall objective for Paul in 1 Corinthians 13 is to disillusion the Corinthians regarding the status of spiritual gifts (πνευματικοί).

Fee (1987:629) sheds light on aspects in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 that exhibited great spiritual flaws among the Corinthians. The dire impact of such flaws is that the spiritual practitioner himself or herself becomes nothing if they practice spiritual gifts without love. Paul uses the example of himself, a position some Corinthians are in, to show the Corinthians what is at stake if they persist in loveless practice of spiritual gifts. As is pointed earlier, the outcome bears disastrous, disappointing fruit. Furthermore, Paul will not end there with the prognosis. He concludes later in the text, that not only is the spiritual practitioner personally nothing if they practice spiritual gifts not based on the characteristics of love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a, but the gifts they so cherish, namely prophecy and tongues, will pass away (1 Corinthians 13:10).

If one harks back to 1 Corinthians 12:1b, where Paul implies that the Corinthians are ignorant (James, 2004:4; Carson and Moo, 2005:446) it is beginning to come full circle

that indeed the Corinthians are ignorant. They are ignorant concerning the practice of the pneumatic in love. Their ignorance manifests itself in boasting about certain gifts by saying they are greater than others (1 Corinthians 12:29-30). Their ignorance is also displayed in how they neglected the purpose of the gifts, namely edification and for the common good (1 Corinthians 12:7). If the Corinthians are persuaded by Paul's argument concerning the nothingness of spiritual gifts without love by extolling the excellencies of love, then they hopefully ought to be disillusioned concerning their own, personal loveless practice.

Now, a sense of shock is induced. Shock is presumably induced when the Corinthians discover that the spiritual gifts of tongues and prophecy that they highly esteemed can potentially come to nothing and lack excellency without love (1 Corinthians 13:1-3). In addition, a congregation that prized certain spiritual gifts highly is going to be shocked when Paul explains which gifts are going to pass away by extolling the supremacy of what is to come (καταργηθήσονται καὶ παύσονται) in 1 Corinthians 13:8b-10.

Holladay (1990:97) describes the claim by Paul that certain spiritual gifts will pass away in 1 Corinthians 13:8a as underscoring the ultimate finality of love as opposed to spiritual gifts which do not bear the same finality. Spiritual gifts are partial, yet the Corinthians treat them as though they possess ultimate finality. At some point, they will pass away. It will be explained later that this disillusionment evokes anticipation at the same time because what Paul presents as the greater way apparently remains forever and will be replaced by what Paul calls "the perfect" (τὸ τέλειον 1 Corinthians 13:10).

3.3.1.1 Explicit contrasting

To enhance the effectiveness of his argumentation, Paul uses explicit contrasting in 1 Corinthians 12:31. This technique is used to explicitly contrast two things. Paul contrasts the desire for greater gifts by the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 12:31a) and what Paul aims to persuade the Corinthians of, namely the greater way (1 Corinthians 12:31b). Since the point that Paul just made is that all spiritual gifts are interdependent (1 Corinthians 12:12-21), is he then being sarcastic when he says they should desire the greater gifts? (1 Corinthians 12:31a). MacArthur (2013:146) suggests that the solution lies with the choice of translation. Should the verb "desire" (ζηλοῦτε in 1 Corinthians 12:31) be interpreted as

an imperative, denoting a command, or should it be interpreted as an indicative, denoting a factual statement?

Louw and Nida (1988:298), Dominy (1982:57), and MacArthur (2013:146) see the possibility of translating ζηλοῦτε as indicative in 1 Corinthians 12:31a. If one translates it as an indicative, 1 Corinthians 12:31a says, “you set your hearts on the more important things”. In this way, Dominy (1983:57) says the indicative verb describes the attitude of the Corinthians.

On the other hand, Thiselton (2000:1024-1026) aligns himself with Smit (1991:196) by taking ζηλοῦτε to be imperatival. The imperatival rendition is convincing, because of the reason advanced by Thiselton. As imperative, according to Thiselton (2000:1025), only Paul should define what is “supreme” (μείζονα in 1 Corinthians 12:31a) since he is the one who introduces the concept to the Corinthians. In other words, “supreme” is not a reference to what the Corinthians regarded as better. Also, what is “far more supreme” in relation to the gifts, is not a reality because all gifts are equal. The logic is as follows.

When the Corinthians read 1 Corinthians 12:27-31 they hopefully understood that Paul meant to silence them by showing them that in the body there is no gift that is greater than another gift. When they hear something to the contrary, namely the command “desire the greater gifts” (ζηλοῦτε δὲ τὰ χαρίσματα τὰ μείζονα 1 Corinthians 12:31a) one expects them to respond by exclaiming that there are no greater gifts as Paul just persuaded them in 1 Corinthians 12:12-30. The imperative still stands, albeit ironic or sarcastic.

Since there is no greater gift according to Paul, the notion of what is “far more supreme” is defined by Paul’s following presentation in 1 Corinthians 13. He defines it as “far more supreme”. Notwithstanding this definition, Paul is not discouraging the Corinthians or quenching their zeal for spiritual gifts. Thiselton’s interpretation of “desire the greater gifts” (ζηλοῦτε δὲ τὰ χαρίσματα τὰ μείζονα 1 Corinthians 12:31a) points to an understanding that Paul defines for the Corinthians how “supreme” practice of spiritual gifts should look like in worship since he is the one who claims that there are no better gifts. Paul wants to enhance unity among them by advocating of an excellent way of love. So, the imperative is positive.

The support for rendering ζηλοῦτε as imperatival is found in Collins (2016:471) who notes that the logic of Paul's argument in 1 Corinthians demands that ζηλοῦτε be interpreted as an imperative because that would bring closure to Paul's argument. In addition, Collins views the rhetorical argument in 1 Corinthians 12:27-31a as one unit, with 1 Corinthians 12:31b marking a new section.

Considering the argument about the “far more supreme way” (ὑπερβολὴν ὁδὸν 1 Corinthians 12:31b) that follows, ζηλοῦτε should be taken as an imperative while noting the rhetorical use of sarcasm¹⁹ and irony. There is no spiritual gift that is greater than the other (1 Corinthians 12:27-30), therefore any spiritual gift may be desired and will serve the same purpose as any gift. The purpose is “for the common good” (πρὸς τὸ συμφέρον 1 Corinthians 12:7) and the building up of the church (1 Corinthians 14:5). The only thing, as Thiselton (2000:1025) concludes, that makes any gift great is the way of love that Paul presents beginning in 1 Corinthians 13:1. Hence Paul persuades them to pursue unity based on the extolled principle of love as contrasted to their way of handling things.

The explicit contrast is considered well made by Paul, to say to the Corinthians: “stop desiring your ways but desire this way” as it were. In the contrast, Paul does not directly say that there is no greater gift. He has just made the point to that effect, concluding that the gifts are interdependent for the common good. The Corinthians supposedly missed that aspect, which explains the pervasive disunity among them, so Paul corrects them.

In the correction, Paul does not tell the Corinthians to abandon their spiritual gifts. He instead urges them to add the way of love to their practice of spiritual gifts. Evidently, their way and view of spiritual gifts misses the antidote to their inconsideration towards one another concerning spiritual gifts. Therefore, Paul implies that he urges the Corinthians to desire his way as opposed to maintaining their way. Contrasted with their way, the way that Paul presents is “far supreme” because it is the way of love which causes all the gifts to serve their optimum purpose and results in unity in the church.

¹⁹ Lanham (1991:192) explains irony and sarcasm as “mocking of someone and leaves them with no answer”. In 1 Corinthians 12:31a Paul mocks the Corinthians but leaves them only with his answer of what the great way is.

Witherington (1995:264) finds love as an “incomparable way” and the proper context in which all gifts should be exercised. The understanding that love is an incomparable way is solidified by Smit (1991:196) who finds that spiritual gifts in comparison to love, are far surpassed.

3.3.1.2 Conspicuous words and metaphors

Through the use of conspicuous words and metaphors, Paul continues to persuade the Corinthians to desire “the far more supreme way” of love. Smit (1991:199-201) observes eleven times where Paul used conspicuous words and metaphors in 1 Corinthians 13 to enhance the effectiveness of his persuasion towards unity. According to Smit (1991:199-200) there are four conspicuous words and metaphors used in 1 Corinthians 12:31-13:3.

- Smit (1999:199) observes that in 1 Corinthians 12:31 the accusative noun “way” (ὁδὸν) and the indicative verb “I will show” (δείκνυμι) is present which Smit claims are metaphorically paired together like no other place in the New Testament; hence he finds them conspicuous²⁰. Louw and Wolvaardt (2015, 1 Cor. 12:31b) define the accusative noun “way” (ὁδὸν) as a pathway where movement occurs. Louw and Wolvaardt explain although ὁδὸν may mean ‘road’ or ‘way of life’, Paul uses it figuratively in 1 Corinthians 12:31 to explain the way he pursues the Corinthians to follow in the practice of spiritual gifts.

As Paul is the only author in the New Testament who combines the noun and verb “I will show the way” (ὁδὸν δείκνυμι 1 Corinthians 12:31b) in the New Testament, this combination stands out as unique. Not only does it stand out as unique, but it also thus suggests that we may trust Paul to speak for himself and let the logic of his text explain itself. Paul provides “a far more supreme way” to the Corinthians, as the unique way of living out the spiritual gifts to achieve unity by extolling love’s excellency. Godet (1893:234) aptly points out that our understanding of the way

²⁰ A metaphor (μεταφάρειν) simply refers to a comparison (Virkler and Ayayo, 2007:153) whereby a concrete thing such as a way which normally means a literal way where people walk is used to give meaning “the way of life”. Smit (1991:199) finds that although the metaphor “way of life” (ὁδὸν) is used elsewhere in the New Testament, and the verb “show” (δείκνυμι) is used by Paul, the combination “I show you the way” (ὁδὸν ὑμῖν δείκνυμι) is rare.

should not be mysterious, as it was not for the Corinthians. The reason is that Paul proceeds to explicitly demonstrate (δείκνυμι 1 Corinthians 12:31b), to draw the attention of the Corinthians towards the supremely excellent way of practicing spiritual gifts.

- In addition, Smit (1991:200) finds the “bipartite onomatopoeia”²¹ formulation of noisy gong or a clanging cymbal (χαλκὸς ἤχῳν ἢ κύμβαλον ἀλαλάζον 1 Corinthians 13:1) as rare. According to Smit, the loquacious orators were compared to annoying instruments. Lockwood (2010:266-267) claims that the Corinthians were familiar with theatre instruments and could determine what constitutes a melodious sound and distinguish it from what makes a loud, hallow, annoying sound.

The conclusion that the Corinthians were able to determine what Paul was referring to makes sense in light of the disagreements among scholars on the precise nature of noisy gong or a clanging cymbal (χαλκὸς ἤχῳν ἢ κύμβαλον ἀλαλάζον). Whether cymbals and gongs are always annoying and never melodiously pleasant, Morris (1960:182), or whether they were used as worship instruments in some form of temple worship, Mare(1994:643), Paul thus still compares the speaker to musical instruments that have no tune or are out of tune. Both views are not at odds with regards to the point that Paul makes. Without the excellencies of love, the speaker is undesirable, being noisy and clanging who practices spiritual gifts in no way that edifies and unifies the church.

As onomatopoeic, Thiselton (2000:1037-1039) and Louw and Wolvaardt (2015, 1 Cor.13:1) draw attention to the fact that the use of the verbal phrase “I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal” (χαλκὸς ἤχῳν ἢ κύμβαλον ἀλαλάζον 1 Corinthians 13:1) points to the speaker himself or herself sounding hallow and reverberating. This is the state that one would have acquired if they practiced spiritual gifts without

²¹ Onomatopoeia is a word whose meaning sounds like the word it is referring to (Lanham, 1991:186). In 1 Corinthians 13:1 there are two words that sound like their meaning, namely “noisy gong” (χαλκὸς ἤχῳν) and “clanging cymbal” (κύμβαλον ἀλαλάζον).

love. The perfect tense verb becomes (γέγονα), which alludes to this statement by Paul.

- Furthermore, the use of the metaphor “faith so that I can move mountains” (πίστιν ὥστε ὄρη μεθιστάναι 1 Corinthians 13:2), is rare in that it is a technique that is used to advance the argument of another technique; the hyperbole, namely the “if” (ἐάν) *protasis* in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3. Smit says the adjective “all” (πάντα καὶ πᾶσαν 1 Corinthians 13:2) indicates that Paul uses a ‘grotesque metaphor’ to further enhance the hyperbolic point he makes in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3, namely without love “all” (πάντα καὶ πᾶσαν) is nothing (οὐθέν 1 Corinthians 13:2).
- The rarity of the verb “I give away” (ψωμίσω 1 Corinthians 13:3) stands out. According to Smit (1991:200), it stands out because it appears only twice in Pauline literature. Smit observes that this verb is rare because it only appears twice in Pauline literature. The other place where it appears in Pauline literature is in Romans 12:20. In Romans 12:20 Paul uses the *argument based on authority of scripture*. Smit describes it as probably an allusion to biblical archaism. If that is so, Paul may be understood as using an *argument based on allusion to authority of scripture*, an argument which slightly differs from the *argument based on authority of scripture* discussed earlier (**chapter 2**).

Argument based on authority of scripture consists of a direct quotation from the scriptures that Paul uses to explicate his point. *Argument based on allusion to scripture* implies that the concept may be taken from scripture elsewhere, especially when Paul omits the quotation but leaves open the possibility of drawing inference from scripture. If that is so, then it is another form of “covert allusion” wherein Paul enjoins the Corinthians to explore the meaning, so that they may find fulfilment for discovering the persuasive objective for themselves. Paul aids the Corinthians in that he demonstrates to them regarding what he is talking about.

Incidentally, the other place where the verb (ψωμίζω) is used by Paul is in the context where he exhorts his readers to let love be without hypocrisy (ἡ ἀγάπη

ἀνυπόκριτος Romans 12:9)²². As Paul's supportive strategy in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 is to present to the Corinthians that the gifts they prized highly are nothing without love, Garland (2003:611), he then concludes by saying one's most generous philanthropic acts in 1 Corinthians 13:3 are worthless without love. Paul further explicates that if one were to hypothetically volunteer to martyrdom, if that individual lacks love his or her actions are worthless (Morton, 1999:13-14; Conzelmann, 1975:222-223).

The Corinthians who do not want to become worthless noise makers (1 Corinthians 13:1), nothing (1 Corinthians 13:2) or gain nothing (1 Corinthians 13:3) should see from Paul's presentation of one facet of the way of love that there is no value in any way of using spiritual gifts without love (Prior, 1993:228). Scholars thus agree, despite the different meanings they draw from 1 Corinthians 13:1-3, that Paul urges the Corinthians to desire a "far more supreme way"²³ (1 Corinthians 12:31b) that he expounds in 1 Corinthians 13.

3.3.1.3 Binary

The concept of binary is dealt with comprehensively by Meggitt (1998:1-9). Meggitt's crux of the argument is that binary exhibited itself in the economic disparities that played an important factor in the life of the Corinthians. The speculation that the Corinthians came from different economic classes also demonstrated itself with how the church apparently treated one another in the eating of the Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11:17-26), and how they viewed different spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:12-24). Friesen (2004:323) suggests that binary categories factored even in the practice of worship in Corinth. If one grasps

²² The use of the verb ψωμίζω in Romans 12:20 is in the context where Paul addresses similar rhetorical objectives as in 1 Corinthians 13. Romans 12:10 says the Romans should love one another. The exhortation in Romans 12:9 is sustained to the end of the chapter. In Romans 12:10, 20 Paul says the Romans should show people love giving them food when in need. It is sacrificial love just as 1 Corinthians 13:3 that talks about giving one's possessions to people. Therefore, the explicit reliance based on the authority of scripture is explicit in Romans 12:20 but implicit in 1 Corinthians 13:3, possibly pointing to Paul relying on the same understanding of sacrificial giving in both contexts, one positive and the other negative. Even the negative in 1 Corinthians 13:3 aims to correct the Corinthians to do what they do in love.

²³ Louw and Wolvaardt (2015, 1 Cor. 12:31b).

this suggestion, then it paves the way for the effort to understand the rhetoric of binary in the body of the letter of 1 Corinthians (Friesen, 2004:323,339).

The argument advanced therefore, is that the rhetoric of binary is relatively visible in the body of the letter of 1 Corinthians. For instance, the Corinthians had the tendency of being extreme in leaning towards one direction as opposed to the other. They struggled to think of the coexistence and unity of polar opposites. Paul often corrected them, persuading them to change from their inclinations from false ideas to desirable ideas. When he corrected them, using the rhetorical technique called “correction”, Paul often derived his persuasive strategies from their intellectual tradition or existing practices (Asher, 2000:3; Tolmie, 2004:48). Even though one may argue that they were ignorant pertaining to certain things, they nonetheless had the knowledge base upon which Paul could enhance his persuasion, (Carson & Moo, 2005:446).

The persuasion of Paul to the Corinthians to pursue unity in 1 Corinthians 13:1 is enhanced by the employment of the rhetoric of binary. The two opposite sets of languages, “human and angelic tongues” (γλώσσαις τῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ τῶν ἀγγέλων 1 Corinthians 13:1) constitute two spheres. This existence of the two spheres of languages caused the Corinthians to think that being in the sphere of speaking “human tongues” (γλώσσαις τῶν ἀνθρώπων 1 Corinthians 13:1), is earthy and of a lesser degree, and being in the sphere of speaking “angelic tongues” (γλώσσαις τῶν ἀγγέλων 1 Corinthians 13:1), is heavenly and of a higher degree, and thus could potentially lead to division (Collins, 2016:472).

Concerning polar opposite views and how to persuade the Corinthians to pursue unity, Paul successfully used arguments that one can pick up from interpreting the body of the letter of 1 Corinthians as being effective rhetorically (Asher, 2000:116). For instance, evidence of this is seen when Paul rhetorically engages the Corinthians on how to think about the human body and how it will be transformed at the resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:35). The Corinthians apparently could not conceive of the possibility of the resurrection of the dead because it violated their understanding of the distinction between the earthly and heavenly realms (Asher, 2000:118). Paul explains in 1 Corinthians 15:40-46 that the earthly bodies will be replaced with the heavenly bodies at the resurrection, thus

reconciles the idea of the earthly realm and the heavenly realm as part of the Christian puzzle.

This puzzle is not complete presently because the completion of the puzzle is yet to occur in the future. Part of the Corinthian problem in their church was a failure to grasp the fact that heavenly existence is yet future, (Malcolm, 2013:243). They also failed to determine that spiritual gifts were given for the present age and will fall away in the future, (Bruce, 1971:128). This means that the Corinthians failed to realise that their present existence of spiritual gifts was a mere taste of something far more supreme that the believer will be endowed with at the *parousia*, Garland (2003:620). In relation to spiritual gifts, one may see that this failure to reconcile the present with the future includes even the ignorance of seeing the “partial” (ἐκ μέρους 1 Corinthians 13:10) status of spiritual gifts compared with “the perfect” (τὸ τέλειον 1 Corinthians 13:10) which their current practice of spiritual gifts lacked.

If it is plausible that binary of different spheres existed and that caused the Corinthians to battle to unite polar opposite ideas, then it may be understood why Paul embarked on the quest to persuade the Corinthians to be united. There are areas identified herein where the Corinthians had to be united, hence they wrote to Paul and Paul responded to the situation he was appraised with (1 Corinthians 1:11). One of those is the area pertaining broadly to worship (1 Corinthians 11:12-14:40). More specifically, Paul wants the Corinthians to be united in their use of spiritual gifts. To achieve this, he proposes to them the way of love (1 Corinthians 12:31b). The way of love is the only antinode presented by Paul in 1 Corinthians, that has the ability to unify the Corinthians who were so divided on many areas of life, including their economic statuses. Therefore, Paul uses the two realms of human versus angelic language and proposes to the Corinthians that just as it is possible for them to be united on the various areas where they have variety, they can be united even in the area of tongues. Whether earthly or heavenly, the common unifying factor is love (ἀγάπη) because after all spiritual gifts serve one purpose (1 Corinthians 12:7). If they heed Paul’s persuasion of extolling the excellencies of love (ἀγάπη) in 1 Corinthians 12:31b-13:3, then they will be united.

3.3.1.4 Hyperbole

According to Kaiser and Silver (2007:146), “hyperbole is a type of overstatement used in order to increase the effect of what is being said”. In this way, Zuck (1991:154) explains that when the author uses hyperbole, he or she deliberately says “more than is literally meant”. When Paul uses hyperbole, he is conscious of the deliberate exaggeration. In 1 Corinthians 13:1-3, Paul carefully, and deliberately overstates his abilities by hypothetically stating that he is capable of performing extraordinary acts from their lowest to their highest degrees. Paul may not intend for some of the extraordinary miraculous acts to be taken literally, but surely, he expects the Corinthians to exercise some spiritual gifts in a way he proposes. This section of this study attempts to explain how Paul seems to use hyperbole in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3.

In 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 Paul seems to use hyperbole to demonstrate his argument that the practice of spiritual gifts (πνευματικοί) without the excellencies of love (ἀγάπη) is nothing because it results in conflict. Morris (1958:181) and Kistemaker (1993:452) interpret Paul’s use of the third-class conditional “if” (ἐάν) as part of hyperbole, which alludes to a hypothetical occurrence. According to Sigountos (1994:252-254) to “understand all mystery and all knowledge”, for example, is not possible. Therefore, Paul uses a hyperbolic expression of his miraculous abilities.

Prior (1993:228), however, is convinced that no matter how tempting it may be to interpret Paul’s language in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 as hyperbole, it is not. He argues that what Paul aims to persuade the Corinthians of, is that the use of the spiritual gifts of prophecy, tongues and knowledge are given their full value by the motivation of the excellencies of love behind them. Prior then concludes that Paul would not be putting forward this argument if he did not believe that the Corinthians are capable of exercising these gifts realistically in love. Similarly, Conzelmann (1975:221) concludes that although the concept such as “angelic tongues” may be interpreted as hyperbolic, Paul alludes to the reality that the Corinthians found relatable.

Cognote (2009:15-16) is also against understanding Paul’s argument in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 as hyperbole. He makes the case that Paul is not exaggerating because he and the Corinthians thought of the tongues of angels and the other extraordinary miraculous works as likely to be performed by people like Paul. However, the repetitive third-class

conditional clauses (ἐάν), as Bauer (2021:237) suggests, renders this unlikely. Paul employs hyperbole, intended to make the Corinthians wonder that even such a person would be nothing if they did not have love but had miraculous abilities from both sides of the spectrum. On balance, a sense of reality in Paul's argument is seen in his intent to not cause the Corinthians to desire these impossibilities, but the alternative that he offers.

The apparent contentious concept of whether or not Paul uses hyperbole in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 by using the "if" (ἐάν) conditional clause is discussed at length by Mounce (2003:341) and Wallace (1995:679-712). Mounce discusses ἐάν as a third-class conditional clause – which is a clause that generally refers to hypothetical conditions and conditions of doubt. Due to the fact that it is not assertive and does present a future that might be true, context should determine its likely rendering.

Wallace (1995:679-712), discusses in depth what he claims is the persisting misconceptions about Greek conditional clauses. Wallace (1995:679-712), describes three essential approaches employed in the analysis of conditional clauses. The first approach Wallace observes that is employed is the approach that analyses conditional clauses as conveying simple cause and effect (if the *protasis* is true, then for argument's sake the *apodosis* is assumed true). The second approach that Wallace explains is the pragmatic approach whereby the *apodosis* can be a "threat or a promise of a reward" as in a threat "if you do this, then such a negative consequence will follow" or a promise "if you do this, the reward will follow", Wallace (1995:681). The third concept of the conditional clause that Wallace describes is the structural or formal as in the case of ἐάν in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 which denotes a hypothetical condition, Wallace (1995:681).

There are guidelines for interpreting conditional clauses, especially in instances where the relationship of conditional clauses to reality is concerned. Hence Wallace (1995:681-712) and Mounce (2003:341) provide a general guide that explains that the first-class conditional clause (εἰ) assumes reality for the sake of argument. When interpreting the second-class conditional sentence if the *protasis* (εἰ) is in the "indicative past tense; negated by μή, and the *apodosis* (ὅτι) shares the indicative tense with the *protasis*" as Mounce, (2003: 341) explains that in this instance what is presented in the *protasis* (εἰ) is contrary to fact even if it is presented as true.

To summarise, Wallace (1995:696) classifies that third-class conditional sentences serve the purpose of alluding to a fulfilment that is improbable. The “if” (ἐάν) clause is nuanced in that the argument can be built on something factual, Wallace (1995:698) as in Paul saying, “if he has prophetic, and tongues” (1 Corinthians 13:1-2) abilities. Yet these supposed real powers lead to hypothetical abilities, namely understanding all mysteries and all knowledge and moving mountains (1 Corinthians 13:2). In this way, third class “if” (ἐάν) can flexibly allow the speaker to argue from reality to a hypothetical condition according to Wallace (1995:698).

This study is in favour of Wallace’s hyperbolic interpretation that allows for the formation of a pattern of argument from reality to the hypothetical. This hybrid, nuanced, and fluid interpretation is an approach Conzelmann (1975:221) seems to agree with when he says the wording of the expressions may be hyperbolic. However, he does not commit himself fully to a hyperbolic understanding. Conzelmann’s realistic interpretation adds value to this study’s understanding of Paul’s persuasion in that Paul uses real gifts that the Corinthians had as something that will resonate with them yet removes any notion that he is likening his abilities with the Corinthians’ loveless practice.

Paul does not make a statement about what is realistic and what is not. Paul may be heightening the existing spiritual gifts, and even deliberately exaggerating about some unrealistic concepts to make the point that any spiritual gift and practitioner at their climax are nothing without love. Dodd (1999:118) makes a balanced observation that Paul’s use of the *protasis* “if” (ἐάν) together with the first person singular “I” is intended to emphasise the Corinthians’ enthusiasm over spiritual gifts apart from love, because Paul intends for it to sound like something to the effect of saying, “If I have the gifts without love”. It would profit the Corinthians nothing even if they had extraordinary spiritual gifts without love. On the contrary, if they had love, which is what Paul intends for them to have, they would seek to serve others, unite, and build them up rather than boast in their spiritual abilities.

Sigountos (1994:253) also argues against the realistic interpretation, using 1 Corinthians 13:1 to illustrate why Paul is hypothetical. Sigountos builds the case from the placement of the words in 1 Corinthians 13:1. The important illustration of the word order is seen in the verb (λαλῶ 1 Corinthians 13:1) which is placed emphatically in relation to human languages. Paul emphasises that he speaks human languages (γλώσσαις τῶν

ἀνθρώπων) without a doubt. However, in relation to angelic tongues (τῶν ἀγγέλων), Paul does not place the emphatic verb (λαλῶ) in front of angelic tongues which casts doubt on whether this refers to a spiritual gift given to the Corinthian believers. Therefore, interpreting 1 Corinthians 13:1 as hyperbole makes more sense due to the fact that nowhere in the context does Paul explain the meaning of “strange things” such as “angelic tongues, noisy gong or a clanging cymbal, move mountains, and giving up of the body”.

3.3.1.5 Parallelism

More than just mere hyperbole, 1 Corinthians 12:31-13:3 exhibits impressive beauty in the way in which Paul drives home the point he makes to persuade the Corinthians by using parallelism. Zuck (1991:138) states that parallelism may be seen in instances where the author repeats in the second line what he or she said in the first line by using synonyms. Smit (1991:197) describes the two ways that Paul employs parallelism in 1 Corinthians 12:31-13:3, repeating the similar thought but using synonyms to persuade his audience. The first is a chiasm arrangement in 1 Corinthians 12:31, that Kaiser and Silva (2007:333) explain as “a literary technique that inverts the elements into two parallel phrases”, or the inversion of the order of repeated words such as the form in 1 Corinthians 12:31:

1 Corinthians 12:31

(a) verb “desire” (ζηλοῦτε)

(b) object “the gifts” (τὰ χαρίσματα)

(c) comparative apposition “the superior” (τὰ μείζονα)

(c) comparative apposition “far more supreme” (ὑπερβολήν)

(b) object “way” (ὁδὸν)

(a) verb “I will show” (δείκνυμι).

According to Smit (1991:197) the other form of parallelism is further used by Paul in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 where there is a pattern of (a) positive conditional *protases*, (b) negative conditional *protases*, concluded by their respective (c) *apodoses* in the following way:

1 Corinthians 13:1-3

These three periods which form parallelism may be conceptualised as follows:

(a) If (protasis) I (subject) speak human or angelic tongues

(b) but do not have love

(c) then (implied apodosis) I (subject) am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal

(a) If (protasis) I (subject) I have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith so that I can move mountains,

(b) but do not have love

(c) then (implied apodosis) I (subject) am nothing

(a) And if (protasis) I (subject) give away all my possessions, and if I (subject) give over my body in order to boast

(b) but do not have love

(c) then (implied apodosis) I gain nothing.

In all of them, the “I” (ἐγώ) or “*ethos argument*”, as Collins (2016:4720) coins it, is repeated three times as the main subject. In this structure, love (ἀγάπην in 1 Corinthians 13:1, 2,3), which is anarthrous, i.e., not preceded by a definite article, functions as a direct object. The effectiveness of the argument of *ethos* is amply explained by Anderson (2000:61-62) that it is used by the author to reinforce his or her trustworthiness. Moreover, Prinsloo (2022:6) shows that it brings to the fore the emotional connectedness the author has with the audience. In 1 Corinthians 13:1 Paul repeats the first person “I”. The argument of *ethos* reinforces the trustworthiness of the speaker, which is why the “I” (ἐγώ) is used three times to emphasise his trustworthiness and to avail himself to scrutiny should the scenario that he introduces to the Corinthians, namely displaying miraculous gifts without love. then the Corinthians should vividly imagine, engaging their emotions, that Paul says he will become nothing nor gain anything.

The argument of *ethos* reinforces Paul’s aim to persuade the Corinthians to pursue unity by extolling the excellencies of love. He does this by cognitively inviting the Corinthians to think of the phenomenon of “human or angelic tongues” (γλώσσαις τῶν ἀνθρώπων λαλῶ καὶ τῶν ἀγγέλων 1 Corinthians 13:1). The rhetorical movement in the language takes the audience from imagining the existence of a heavenly phenomenon of angelic

language to thinking of the existence of a human language in a humble state. The hypothetical scenario that Paul raises regarding this chasm is geared towards the rhetorical persuasion that Paul aims to achieve in this section. Whether one speaks in angelic tongues or human tongues (possible disunity), they can be brought together by what Paul proposes as the “far more supreme way” of love that they can have. If one has love, irrespective of the language they speak that may be different from others in the same congregation, the quest for unity is nonetheless diminished. The problem Paul aims to correct is disunity, hence he extols love in pursuit for people of different linguistic paradigms to be united.

There is also rhetorical gradation in the parallelism in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3, where Collins (2016:472) says Paul argues from the lesser to the highest by arranging the protases to ascend to intensity. Paul says he speaks in tongues of men in the present active verb (γλώσσαις τῶν ἀνθρώπων, 1 Corinthians 13:1) in the lesser degree, and languages of angels (γλώσσαις τῶν ἀγγέλων, 1 Corinthians 13:1) in the higher degree. He then says if he has the gift of prophecy (ἐὰν ἔχω προφητείαν, 1 Corinthians 13:2) in the lesser degree, and he knows all mysteries and all knowledge (εἰδῶ τὰ μυστήρια πάντα καὶ πᾶσαν τὴν γνῶσιν, 1 Corinthians 13:2) in the higher degree. Fee (1987:633) finds the last part where Paul says he has faith to move mountains (ἔχω πᾶσαν τὴν πίστιν ὥστε ὄρη μεθιστάναι, 1 Corinthians 13:2), he gave away all his possessions (ψωμίσω πάντα τὰ ὑπάρχοντά μου, 1 Corinthians 13:3), and he has surrendered his body (παραδῶ τὸ σῶμά μου, 1 Corinthians 13:3) as the climax.

The beauty of the parallelism in 1 Corinthians 12:31-13:3 should not be observed without an attempt to detect the author’s aim. Kaiser and Silva (2007:130) and Zuck (1991:142) explain that paying attention to the author’s artistic beauty of parallelism points one to the objective of the author’s communication. Snyman (1986:201, 211, 212) reaches a two-fold aim of Paul’s parallelism, particularly in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3. The first aim, Snyman claims, is the gracious effect that Paul advances. Seeing that Paul may be aiming to persuade the Corinthians to pursue unity by extolling the excellencies of love, Paul presents the way of love in a way that has a charming effect. He uses the beautiful effect of parallelism to correct the Corinthians. Snyman further claims that the second aim of Paul’s use of parallelism in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 is to persuade the Corinthians in such a way that the parallels he uses have the effect of stirring and appealing to the emotions of

the Corinthians, to affectionally desire the greater way Paul proposes in 1 Corinthians 12:31b.

3.3.1.6 Repetition

Tolmie (2004:149,178) understands repetition as comprising of two kinds. The first kind is the repetition of words or phrases which enhances the importance of what is repeated. This kind of repetition is intended for the reader to not miss the repeated phrases. The second kind is a repetition of sounds. 1 Corinthians 12:31-13:3 is replete with repetition of words, phrases, and sounds. Regarding the repetition of words, the noun “love” (ἀγάπην) is repeated three times (1 Corinthians 13:1,2,3), the *protasis* “If (ἐάν) is repeated five times (1 Corinthians 13:1,2,2,3,3), the verbal “I have” (ἔχω) is repeated five times (1 Corinthians 13:1,2,2,2,3), and the adjective “all” (πάντα καὶ πᾶσαν) is repeated twice (1 Corinthians 13:2,2). Regarding the repetition of phrases, the negative phrase “but do not have love” (ἀγάπην δὲ μὴ ἔχω) is repeated three times (1 Corinthians 13:1,2,3).

Regarding the repetition of sounds, the verbal pronoun “I am nothing” (οὐθέν εἰμι 1 Corinthians 13:2) and “I gain nothing” (οὐδὲν ὠφελοῦμαι 1 Corinthians 13:3) have a similar effect, namely “I am nothing and I gain nothing”. Paul plays with words (I am nothing and I gain nothing) which corresponds to the meaning of these words even though they sound ever so slightly the same (οὐδὲν and οὐθέν), Nida *et al.* (1983:24) points out that the technique of repetition is used to play similar words and their similar meaning such as the words pronouns “nothing” (οὐθέν 1 Corinthians 13:2) and “nothing” (οὐδὲν 1 Corinthians 13:3).

The significance of the repetitions observed in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3, is understood by Biatoma (2010:74-75) as serving a cohesive purpose. Determining the significance of the purpose of cohesion is a crucial aspect that contributes to the understanding of repetition. Whilst Biatoma correctly observes that repetition serves a cohesive purpose, he falls short on elaborating how in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 repetitions are an instrument of cohesion. In this regard, Biatoma’s contribution regarding the emphatic nature of repetitions and how repetition is visible in the aforementioned verses, serves as an important observation one may build upon to understand how cohesion works in a 1 Corinthians 13:1-3.

Muilenburg (1953:98) emphasises that repetition alone should not be observed. That is why Van Neste (2002:121) explains how cohesion works in the text with regard to repetition. According to Van Neste, the mere fact that words and phrases are repeated in a section does not mean the author employed the technique of repetition as repetition must lead to cohesion. What the author adds after repeating what is already stated is what makes the repetition stand out. Hence in 1 Corinthians 13, 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 in particular, repetition stands out because of its intended purpose and light it sheds on surrounding phrases.

An examination of 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 shows the purposeful employment of the technique of repetition by Paul. The rhetorical role of the *protasis* ἐὰν in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 has already been noted herein under the interpretation of Paul's *argument based on disillusionment* (**Section 3.3**) and Paul's use of hyperbole (**Section 3.3.1.4**) respectively. Suffice to note at this juncture, is that Paul repeats the conjunction ἐὰν four times in this section, or five times if one considers the contraction κᾶν at the beginning of 1 Corinthians 13:3. Except for the first time, the second to the fourth time it is used with the conjunction καὶ. Thus, in 1 Corinthians 13:2 we find the phrase "and if" (καὶ ἐὰν) repeated twice and the third repetition is found in 1 Corinthians 13:3.

In the first instance in 1 Corinthians 13:1, "If" (ἐὰν) is used to contrast two kinds of tongues (γλώσσαις). The one is "human tongue" (γλώσσαις τῶν ἀνθρώπων) and the other is "angelic tongue" (τῶν γλώσσαις ἀγγέλων). In respect of the contrast between the two kinds of tongues, the two are cohesively put together to emphasise a simple fact of showing the worthlessness of both gifts without love, (Sigountos, 1994:252).

In the second instance, "If I have the gift of prophecy (καὶ ἐὰν ἔχω προφητείαν 1 Corinthians 13:2) leads to "and understand all mysteries and all knowledge" (καὶ εἰδῶ τὰ μυστήρια πάντα and καὶ πᾶσαν τὴν γνῶσιν). This contrast also serves to emphasise Paul's simple point, that the great gifts of prophecy and ability to understand all mysteries and all knowledge profit nothing if they are not based on love.

In the last instance, "if I give away all my possessions, and if I give over my body (κᾶν ψωμίσω πάντα τὰ ὑπάρχοντά μου καὶ ἐὰν παραδῶ τὸ σῶμά μου 1 Corinthians 13:3) without love leads to nothing. Paul is in 1 Corinthians 13:3 ending or reaching the climax of his argument that any practice that is not accompanied by love does not gain anything

for anyone. Therefore, the repetitious use of “and if” (καὶ ἐὰν) or simply “if” (ἐὰν) and “if I have” (ἐὰν ἔχω) cohesively solidifies the argument Paul makes in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3.

The repetition observed in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 also shows the progression and result of having these gifts, which incidentally, the Corinthians had some of them. In 1 Corinthians 12:28 Paul says they had various kinds of tongues (γένη γλωσσῶν)²⁴. In 1 Corinthians 14:29 Paul says the Corinthians had prophets in the ekklēsia²⁵. There is a significant importance in relation to the reason why Paul highlights the gifts of tongues and prophecy in the repetition. Collins (2016:471) describes the highlighted repetition as setting the stage for the development of the use of prophecy and tongues in 1 Corinthians 14.

The repetition of the “excellency” (tongues, prophecy, faith, giving away all possessions and body 1 Corinthians 13:1-3) without the excellencies of love, as Calvin (2009:418) classifies it, brings to sharp focus the problem that Paul sees with having the excellent gifts of prophecy and tongues without the excellent way of love. As Paul develops the idea of practicing the gifts of prophecy and tongues by applying the excellent way of love, the repetitive negative aspect in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 is not on the gifts themselves.

3.3.1.7 Rhythm

Rhythm is another technique that Paul employs in 1 Corinthians 12:31-13:3. According to Hendrick (2005:61), Paul deliberately capitalises on the inflected forms of the Greek language, such that he crafts 1 Corinthians 13 in such a way that its rhythm is beautiful. Smit (1991:191) notes rhythm in the enunciation and delivery of 1 Corinthians 13:1-3. The threefold mention of phrases plays an important role in accentuating rhythm in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3.

Smit regards the identical repetition of threefold refrain “but do not have love” (ἀγάπην δὲ μὴ ἔχω) that moves to conclude all three points of the protases as drawing attention to the rhythm in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3. Robertson and Plummer (1958:258) observe from the pattern of Paul’s presentation of the greater way in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 what they term

²⁴ 1 Corinthians 12:30, 14:2,4,5 also allude to the Corinthians possessing the gift of tongues.

²⁵ Prophetesses were part of the ekklēsia in 1 Corinthians 11:5, and 1 Corinthians 14:1,3,4,5 alludes to the gift of prophecy in operation in the Corinthian ekklēsia.

“rhythmical beauty” which is easy and pleasant to read and sounds pleasant to the ear. One needs to read it out loud to hear the music that this is to the ear and to see why a scholar like Fee (1987:625) characterises it as a much-loved piece of literature.

3.3.1.8 Antithesis

Black (1987:183) explains antithesis as a placement of contrasting ideas in opposition to each other. Tolmie (2004:43) says antithetical expressions are more persuasive than mere propositional statements of truth. In 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 Paul uses implicit and explicit antithesis. The contrasted ideas are between having excellent spiritual gifts explicitly contrasted with not having love. The other contrast is between having all three mentioned spiritual gifts (πάντα καὶ πᾶσαν) explicitly contrasted with “nothing” and “nothing” (οὐθέν καὶ οὐδέν).

Malcolm (2013:199) aptly demonstrates that the overall antithetical contrast in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3, if 1 Corinthians 13 is read through the lens of the broader rhetorical unit of 1 Corinthians 12-24, is implicitly between what builds the other members within one body and what builds up oneself. Furthermore, the contrast is between what causes conflict leading to disunity and what unifies. Paul is opposed to the one who builds himself or herself up but does not edify nor unite the church (ἑαυτὸν οἰκοδομεῖ 1 Corinthians 14:4) but hopes for the use of excellent spiritual gifts for the building up and unification of the church (ἡ ἐκκλησία οἰκοδομῆν 1 Corinthians 14:5).

3.4 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to construct and analyse Paul’s persuasive strategy from 1 Corinthians 12:31b-13:3 itself, without an externally predetermined category. As such, the overall rhetorical objective in 1 Corinthians 12:31b-13:3 was constructed as *to persuade the Corinthians to pursue unity by extolling the excellencies of love*. Paul does this by showing the Corinthians “the far more supreme way”. This study found that the supreme way is the way of using spiritual gifts in love. The way of love stands in contrast to the way the Corinthian believers practiced spiritual gifts. Their practice of spiritual gifts was void of love, which ultimately resulted in the Corinthian body divided and not being edified.

Edification and the common good are the main goal why spiritual gifts are given because they unify and hold the body together. Love is the proper motivation that ensures that edification and common good are achieved. To persuade the Corinthians towards this goal, Paul enhanced his communication and argument by the use of *argument based on disillusionment*. This argument induced a sense of shock in the Corinthians regarding spiritual gifts they prized highly (Thiselton, 2000:1035). Without love, those gifts and the practitioner are nothing. In addition, these gifts will pass away one day. Moreover, excitement is evoked because the gifts' passing will be replaced by what Paul calls "the perfect" (τὸ τέλειον 1 Corinthians 13:10).

The analysis of Paul's persuasive strategy in 1 Corinthians 12:31b-13:3 is made effective by the rhetorical techniques used by Paul to enhance his persuasion. The rhetorical techniques employed in 1 Corinthians 12:31b-13:3 include explicit contrasting, conspicuous words and metaphors, hyperbole, parallelism, repetition, rhythm, and antithesis.

CHAPTER 4 PHASE 2: PERSUADING THE CORINTHIANS TO PURSUE UNITY BY VILIFYING THE PRACTICE OF THE ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΙΚΟΪ WITHOUT ἀγάπη: 1 CORINTHIANS 13:4-8a.

Ἡ ἀγάπη μακροθυμεῖ, χρηστεύεται ἡ ἀγάπη οὐ ζηλοῖ, ἡ ἀγάπη οὐ περπερεύεται, οὐ φυσιοῦται, οὐκ ἀσχημονεῖ, οὐ ζητεῖ τὰ ἑαυτῆς, οὐ παροξύνεται, οὐ λογίζεται τὸ κακόν, οὐ χαίρει ἐπὶ τῇ ἀδικίᾳ, συγχαίρει δὲ τῇ ἀληθείᾳ· πάντα στέγει, πάντα πιστεύει, πάντα ἐλπίζει, πάντα ὑπομένει. Ἡ ἀγάπη οὐδέποτε πίπτει.

Love is patient, love is kind. Love does not envy, is not boastful, is not arrogant, is not rude, is not self-seeking, is not irritable, and does not keep a record of wrongs. Love finds no joy in unrighteousness but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends.

1 Corinthians 13:4-8a

4.1 Introduction

The rhetorical objective in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a is *to persuade the Corinthians to pursue unity by vilifying the practice of the spiritual gifts (πνευματικοί) without love (ἀγάπη)*. This rhetorical objective is marked by Paul's introduction of the characteristic of love (ἀγάπη) in 1 Corinthians 13:4. Paul writes: "love is patient" (ἡ ἀγάπη μακροθυμεῖ 1 Corinthians 13:4a) and ends with "love never ends" (ἡ ἀγάπη οὐδέποτε πίπτει 1 Corinthians 13:8a). The characterisation of love, what it does and does not do, is bracketed by the above opening and closing statements concerning love.

The concept of practicing spiritual gifts based on love is developed fully in this phase of the analysis of the rhetorical strategy that is constructed from the text. Paul's aim is to shift from merely persuading the Corinthians to desire "the far more supreme way" (1 Corinthians 12:31b) of love, to persuading them that love is the motivation that ensures that the purpose why spiritual gifts were given is achieved. The purpose is the building up of the believers (1 Corinthians 12:7). Without the excellencies of love, spiritual gifts and spiritual gifts' practitioners are nothing, and end up causing division in the church

instead of building one another up. Anchored on love, the practice of spiritual gifts achieves the ultimate goal of why Paul says in 1 Corinthians 12:7 spiritual gifts were given, namely for the common good (πρὸς τὸ συμφέρον).

The common good is the building up of the believers (ἡ ἐκκλησία οἰκοδομῆν 1 Corinthians 14:5). While this study leans towards understanding “the far more supreme way” (1 Corinthians 12:31b) that Paul persuades the Corinthians of as the way of love, the concept of the way of love is yet to be fully developed in this study. Having understood the way of love as “the far more supreme way”, one might ask, why is ‘love’ and no other alternative such as “joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control” to name a few, that which Paul says builds up? The analysis of 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a will begin by inquiring what about the concept of love compelled Paul to use it to enhance his argument. Thereafter, a description of the rhetorical objective will be done, followed by the type of argument and the rhetorical techniques that Paul employs to enhance his rhetorical objective.

4.2 Concept of love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a

How should “love” be interpreted in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a? When Paul describes love in 1 Cor 13:4-8a, does he describe the “far more supreme way” (1 Corinthians 12:31b) or does he list the typical characteristics of love to be seen in the practising of the other spiritual gifts? Is love on its own a “far more supreme way” (1 Corinthians 12:31b), or is love the necessary ingredient in the practice of all spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:31b)? Smit and Thurén represent the diametrical positions created by the interpretation of love in relationship to spiritual gifts.

4.3 Love as distinct and superior to spiritual gifts

Smit (1991:215) interprets 1 Corinthians 13 to devalue spiritual gifts compared to love. He views it as rhetorically important for Paul to persuade the Corinthians of this since they esteemed spiritual gifts more valuable than any other virtues in the church. Smit (1991:203, 215) argues that spiritual gifts are valueless, for the following reasons:

- According to Smit (1991:215) Paul devalues spiritual gifts because they are temporal in nature (1 Corinthians 13:8-12);

- Paul sought to bring order in the Corinthian church, and so he restricted the value the Corinthians attached to spiritual gifts (Smit, 1991:215).

Smit's view that Paul presents love as distinct and superior to spiritual gifts is challenged by Thurén who represents a view opposite to this.

4.4 Love as ingredient

Thurén (2001:99) finds that the lack of the mentioning of “the way” in Paul’s discussion of spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 makes it challenging to interpret “the far more supreme way” (ὑπερβολὴν ὁδὸν 1 Corinthians 12:31b) comparatively – in other words Thurén does not consider love in this context to be the better way compared to spiritual gifts. Thurén (2001:97) also considers interpreting “a more excellent way” (ὑπερβολὴν ὁδὸν 1 Corinthians 12:31b) as a superlative form, meaning it is Paul’s way to say that love is something “extraordinary”, “exceptional”, and “beyond all measure” and “*conditio sine qua non*” (Thurén, 2001:99). In the end, however, Thurén (2001:99) chooses to interpret the expression “I will show you a far more supreme way” (ὑπερβολὴν ὁδὸν ὑμῖν δείκνυμι 1 Corinthians 12:31b) as adjectival, meaning that Paul introduces his description of what love is, with the words “I am showing you the way, by means of a hyperbole or some exaggeration”.

Next, Thurén (2001:101, 104) contends that Paul’s use of exaggeration in 1 Corinthians 12:31 is probably not technically rhetorical. He builds his argument based on the concept of love that Paul introduced in 1 Corinthians 8:1. In 1 Corinthians 8:1, Thurén (2001:101) suggests that Paul explains to the Corinthians in a way that they could understand that “love builds up” (ἀγάπη οἰκοδομεῖ 1 Corinthians 8:1e). Even if one possessed the knowledge of theology proper²⁶ or monotheism²⁷, that knowledge does not build up the church in any aspect of church life if love is absent. In the same manner, Thurén (2001:101-102) thinks the Corinthians should be in a position to make the connection

²⁶ Macarthur and Mayhue (2017:33) define theology proper as “the doctrine of the existence and being of God, including the trinity of God”.

²⁷ Grenz, Guretzki, and Nordling define monotheism as “the belief in one God as opposed to the belief in many gods”.

regarding spiritual gifts and love in the same way Paul clarified to them in 1 Corinthians 8:1. He reasons that in 1 Corinthians 8:1 Paul emphasised how love for the neighbour is vital and adds value to the works that people do, even the practice of spiritual gifts.

The connection the Corinthians are expected to arrive at is that the possession of spiritual gifts without love amounts to nothing just as the knowledge of theology proper or monotheism without love amounts to meaninglessness. The core of our relationship to one another should be premised on love, just as Paul says in Galatians 5:14 Paul that loving one's neighbour is the core of the law (Thurén, 2001:102). The superiority of the practice of spiritual gifts based on love compared to spiritual gifts void of love, is what Thurén (2001:102) argues that Paul focuses on.

4.5 Concluding findings on aspects advanced by Smit and Thurén on the nature of love in 1 Corinthians 13

Although it is agreed in this chapter that love is incomparable (Thurén, 2001:104). Paul does not relativise, diminish, and devalue spiritual gifts (Smit, 1991:215). Paul argues in 1 Corinthians 12 that all spiritual gifts are indispensable, and all must be based on love to achieve their optimal purpose of building the body up (1 Corinthians 12:7). Therefore the concept of love seems to be a key concept in Paul's persuasion. This concept should be properly interpreted to make some sense of Paul through the rhetorical analysis of the "far more supreme way" (1 Corinthians 12:31b). The superlative of love in 1 Corinthians 13 should advisably not be read in apposition to spiritual gifts, but as adding value to the understanding and practice of spiritual gifts.

Other commentators, Witherington, 1995; Holladay, 1990; Godet, 1890; and Bruce, 1971 who discuss the concept of love as the "far more supreme way", consider its bearing on 1 Corinthians 13 in the context of spiritual gifts. The role of love is constructive. Witherington (1995:265) argues that Paul's rhetorical use of the concept of love should be differentiated. He bases his insight on 1 Corinthians 8:1 that states, "knowledge puffs up, but love builds up" (ἡ γνῶσις φυσιοῖ, ἡ δὲ ἀγάπη οἰκοδομεῖ) in a context that compares eating of food sacrificed to idols and understanding of one's theology proper. Witherington (1995:265) finds this comparison suggestive of how Paul uses love to enhance his argument for the value that love adds to spiritual gifts. Love builds up, both in 1 Corinthians 8:1 and 1 Corinthians 13, which is what Witherington (1995:265) considers

as an antidote of the shortfalls that plagued the Corinthian community in a broader way than just the two mentioned texts.

Witherington (1995:265) claims that Paul juxtaposes the positive concept of love with the negative behaviour of the Corinthians. As an antidote to the Corinthian problems, Witherington (1995:265) views love as the cure to the jealousy and strife (ζήλος καὶ ἔρις 1 Corinthians 3:3), arrogance (φυσιοῦσθε 1 Corinthians 4:6), dishonour (καταισχύνει 1 Corinthians 11:4), and lack of putting the interests of others first (1 Corinthians 8-10) – the juxtaposing begins at 1 Corinthians 3:3 where Paul chides the Corinthians for being “jealous” (ζήλος 1 Corinthians 3:3), “puffed up” (φυσιοῦσθε 1 Corinthians 4:6), easily provoked to the point of taking one another to court (1 Corinthians 6:1), self-interest seekers (1 Corinthians 8-10), and “shameful” (καταισχύνει 1 Corinthians 11:4), (Witherington (1995:265). All these maladies find direct parallel to what love is not in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a, so that Witherington (1995:265) sees each clause on love as antidote for the problems in the Corinthian church.

Witherington, and Mitchell (1991:271), are partially correct that the epithets of love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a serve as the antidote to the wide range of problems that existed in the Corinthian church. However, even though one may exegetically make that connection, which is plausible, Paul makes it clear that the area in which love was evidently missing was in the practice of spiritual gifts. This does not exclude the fact that love was missing in the Corinthians’ relationships with one another, but where this study parts slightly from Witherington and Mitchell is in the fact that the loveless use of spiritual gifts is the prevailing area Paul focuses on in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a.

At this juncture, love is a missing factor that if the Corinthians are persuaded to put on, then they will be unified because they will see how vilifiable their practice of spiritual gifts without love was. In 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a, Paul then rhetorically elevates to the surface the negative practice and behaviour of the Corinthians on the one side and the positive, desirable behaviour and practice of spiritual gifts that Paul desires for them to attain. Thus, Witherington (1995:265) concludes that 1 Corinthians 13 is not a mere paean of praise for love. Paul is saying love. Love is the way of life. It is for this reason Paul presents himself as an example – a position earlier reached by Holladay (1990:88-89) which Witherington (1995:265) cites to support this view – of a person who conducts

himself (1 Corinthians 13:1-8a) according to the way of love which serves as a chiding for the Corinthians' loveless childishness.

When one tracks the flow of Paul's argument in the body of the letter of 1 Corinthians, one can pick up at various points where Paul presents himself as a personal illustration of the behaviour, he persuades the Corinthians to follow. Witherington (1995:266) refers to the rhetorical method where Paul used himself as an example in 1 Corinthians 8-10. It is more obvious in 1 Corinthians 9 and 1 Corinthians 12-14. Equally, Paul sometimes introduces concepts early in his writings which he aims to develop later in his persuasion (Fee, 1987:28; Thiselton, 2000:86) One of the places where he does this is with the concept of love in 1 Corinthians 8:1. The other places are implied references gleaned by Witherington (1995:265) that Paul's teaching on the characteristics of love that Paul in 1 Corinthians 13, parallels by contrast with the earlier behaviours of the Corinthians. Witherington (1995:266) advises that being reasonably familiar with Paul's method of persuasion and style of communicating, helps one to understand how he communicated with his audience. For example, assuming his audience understood Paul's style and method of communication one can assume that the Corinthians may make the connection between the persuasion concerning love in 1 Corinthians 8:1 and love in 1 Corinthians 13. Witherington (1995:265) claims that in 1 Corinthians 13 the Corinthians are already familiar with love and the concept of building up (1 Corinthians 12:7). Therefore, one can see how Paul's persuasion applies to spiritual gifts since love is an antidote to all the other Corinthian problems.

Holladay (1990:80-89) considers 1 Corinthians 13 as Paul's ethical presentation of himself for the Corinthians to imitate. He draws parallels between ethical imperatives found in 1 Corinthians 8-11 and 1 Corinthians 13 to understand how the concept of love is used. He picks up the hint in 1 Corinthians 8:13 where Paul refers to himself. Paul says in order to not cause fellow believers to fall, he will elect to not eat meat sacrificed to idols as an act of showing love according to 1 Corinthians 8:1, thereby building them up. In addition, Holladay (1990:80-89) sees 1 Corinthians 9 as providing a further hint of how Paul gives an account of himself and how he served in love as an apostle. While he served the Corinthians, as an act of love he preached the gospel free of charge (ἀδῶσανον 1 Corinthians 9:18) even though he had the right to earn an income from

preaching (1 Corinthians 9:15-18). He did this to prioritise building them up, a sure sign of love.

Holladay (1990:84) concludes that 1 Corinthians 13 is a summary of how Paul wants the Corinthian believers to imitate him. He builds this view based on the verb δείκνυμι in 1 Corinthians 12:31b which he interprets as “demonstrate”. In this way, Paul’s ethical life is presented as a demonstrative paradigm, beginning with the hyperbole in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3. According to Holladay (1990:84), love is not an abstract concept we are enjoined to seek and to understand. Love is the way of life that Paul led and was witnessed by the Corinthians.

Godet (1890:235,243-245) also emphasises the ethical features on the part of Paul in this passage. He likens love to the mirror through which the Corinthians were to examine their practice of spiritual gifts. He further claims that the Corinthians had forgotten this guiding virtue of love in the use of spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:1). In particular, they had forgotten love with its two predominant features, the negative and positive. As a way of a reminder of what to do and what not to do, how and why to practice spiritual gifts motivated by love. Godet (1890:243-245) concludes that in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a Paul presents to the Corinthians the way of love they know as a reminder and urge to evaluate their behaviour through love’s ethical guide.

Bruce (1971:124) considers the reliance on the concept of love as hinted by Paul towards the end of the discourse of 1 Corinthians 12. First, Bruce (1971:124) bases his reliance on understanding Paul’s concept of love gleaned from the conclusion he claims was reached by Paul in 1 Corinthians 12:27-31. Contained in 1 Corinthians 12:27-31 is Paul’s argument that not all Corinthians have all spiritual gifts. The effect of this in Paul’s persuasion of the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 12:29-30 is that since they had diverse gifts, there had to be a common concept upon which the Corinthians would be united as they practice spiritual gifts. Therefore, love is the one virtue that Bruce (1971:124) argues all the members of the body may possess as a common denominator. Second, Bruce (1971:124) argues that if some spiritual gifts are lacking in the body, there may be signs of life in the congregation provided love is present. He concludes that the exercise of greater gifts cannot make up for the absence of love.

Bruce (1971:124) makes an important contribution which means that he understands Paul to say that the church body is alive and healthy even if it does not have spiritual gifts. According to Bruce (1971:124), this may further be substantiated based on Paul's allusion that certain spiritual gifts will cease (1 Corinthians 13:10). However, even though Bruce (1971:124) does not conclude that spiritual gifts are useless, it is not easy enough to accept his claim that the natural reading of 1 Corinthians 13 leads one to conclude that Paul argues for the acceptance of a situation where spiritual gifts are absent as long as love is present. Paul has already argued that the Corinthians are not lacking in any gift (1 Corinthians 1:7). It would be an anomaly for the Corinthians if all gifts were not present but are guided to practice spiritual gifts in love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a.

Spiritual gifts are not negative. Bruce's (1971:124) reading may unwittingly cause some to conclude that spiritual gifts are trivial. Besides, Paul accepts that gifts will be present. This is substantiated by the fact that Paul encourages the believers to desire spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 14:1, especially those that edify (1 Corinthians 14:5). Even though the spiritual gifts mentioned in 1 Corinthians 13:8 will come to an end, it is only three gifts that Paul says will cease. Concerning all spiritual gifts, love makes them all serve one purpose, the purpose of edification which love helps to make a reality in the body. Bruce (1971:124) accepts that this is where Paul's emphasis lies. It is probable, however, that Paul persuades the Corinthians regarding a reality that may occur, namely only the cessation of spiritual gifts mentioned in 1 Corinthians 13:8. The purpose for this is to show the Corinthian believers that the body will not be lacking even if these gifts are not present. Whenever that may come to pass, the Corinthians would have been persuaded to accept Paul's point that the way of love in the use of any spiritual gifts, is incomparably "a far more supreme way" (1 Corinthians 12:31b).

4.6 Summary of the concept of love

Scholars describe the concept of love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a from different perspectives. One perspective is to describe love as the "far more supreme way" mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12:31b. The other perspective is to say Paul lists the typical characteristics of love seen in the practice of spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a. Whichever way one leans, the interpretation of the concept of love should form the basis

for interpreting Paul's persuasive strategy of the Corinthians, which is the vilification of the practice of spiritual gifts without love.

Smit (1991:215) understands Paul to devalue spiritual gifts with the purpose of showing the Corinthians that spiritual gifts are provisional, thereby end up valuing love above spiritual gifts. Thurén (2001:99) on the other hand, does not consider love to be valuable compared to spiritual gifts. He understands love as a way incomparable to anything, including spiritual gifts, hence love is "exceptional, and beyond all measure".

This study finds that both Smit and Thurén contribute to the view that love is incomparable. However, Paul does not devalue spiritual gifts. The concept of love that Paul uses to persuade the Corinthians to pursue unity by vilifying the practice of the spiritual gifts without love, is the only superlative virtue that Paul proposes as the "far more supreme way" (1 Corinthians 12:31b). Love is the only missing ingredient in the behaviour of the Corinthians that caused them to practice spiritual gifts in a way that does not edify the body (1 Corinthians 12:7). Therefore, love is the only antidote that Paul suggests will help the Corinthians to behave decently and in order.

Paul demonstrated the ethical life of practicing spiritual gifts without love, so that the Corinthians can imitate him (Holladay, 1990:84; Godet, 1890:243-245). They can imitate him because even though not all have all spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:27-31), and since they have diverse spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:29-30), they can nonetheless all attain love which unites and achieves the purpose for why spiritual gifts were given (Bruce, 1971:124). Therefore, all can edify, and all can achieve the same purpose despite the kind of gift they have (1 Corinthians 12:7). The body does not lack anything if there is love in all the actions of the body, which is why Paul concludes by stating that some gifts will cease (1 Corinthians 13:8), but love will never cease and the purpose of edification which love causes spiritual gifts to fulfil will never cease. This summary maintains that Paul's persuasive strategy to be interpreted is ultimately his persuasion of the Corinthians to pursue unity by vilifying the practice of the spiritual gifts without love.

4.7 Analysis of Paul's rhetorical strategy in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a

The shift in rhetorical objective in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a is marked by a notable introduction of the characteristics of "love" at the beginning of 1 Corinthians 13:4, and

similarly repeated in 1 Corinthians 13:8a to indicate that Paul is dealing with another phase in the strategy. Verses 4-8a spell out the immeasurable way of love. In 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a fifteen actions of love are mentioned. These verbs all stand in contrast with how the Corinthians behaved toward one another. The sixteen verbs and verses are grouped by Louw & Wolvaardt (2015, 1 Cor 13:4-8a) under the heading “the excellence of love”:

- **1 Corinthians 13:4 (a-e)**
 - a) “Love is patient” (ἡ ἀγάπη μακροθυμεῖ)
 - b) “love acts kindly” (χρηστεύεται ἡ ἀγάπη)
 - c) “it is not jealous” (οὐ ζηλοῖ)
 - d) “love does not boast” (ἡ ἀγάπη οὐ περπερεύεται)
 - e) “it is not proud (οὐ φυσιοῦται)

- **1 Corinthians 13:5 (a-d)**
 - a) “it does not behave indecently” (οὐκ ἀσχημονεῖ)
 - b) “it does not seek the things of itself” (οὐ ζητεῖ τὰ ἑαυτῆς)
 - c) “it is not upset” (οὐ παροξύνεται)
 - d) “it does not keep record of the devil” (οὐ λογίζεται τὸ κακόν)

- **1 Corinthians 13:6 (a-b)**
 - a) “it does not rejoice in the unjust deed” (οὐ χαίρει ἐπὶ τῇ ἀδικίᾳ)
 - b) “But rejoices with the truth” (συγχαίρει δὲ τῇ ἀληθείᾳ)

- **1 Corinthians 13:7 (a-d)**
 - a) “it endures all circumstances” (πάντα στέγει)
 - b) “it believes all things” (πάντα πιστεύει)
 - c) “It hopes in all circumstances” (πάντα ἐλπίζει)
 - d) “it bears up in all” (πάντα ὑπομένει)

- **1 Corinthians 13:8 (a)**
 - a) “love never fails” (ἡ ἀγάπη οὐδέποτε πίπτει)

Godet (1893:254) observes that this passage is a direct application to the discussion on the way Paul wants the Corinthians to apply spiritual gifts based on the objective outlined in 1 Corinthians 12. Paul shows the Corinthians the positive features of love, what is expected of them as they practice spiritual gifts. Therefore, Paul vilifies the practice of the spiritual gifts without love in order to persuade the Corinthians to achieve unity.

Garland (2003:616) aptly points out that all the actions – that love does and does not do - are descriptions of love in verbal forms. The observation that “love acts” is consistent with Paul’s argument that he wants the Corinthians to behave in a certain way. Morris (1958:181) describes Paul’s objective that is sustained from 1 Corinthians 12 as to persuade the Corinthians that love does not seek the things of self, but of the common good of others.

4.8 Definition of all the characteristics of love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a

The definition of the different actions that love does will be discussed below for the Corinthians to align their practice of spiritual gifts with love. These characteristics of love are all in verbal form, which are correctly translated by Louw and Nida (1988) as reflective of their verbal nature. Therefore, the translations of the characteristics of love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a will be taken from Louw and Nida (1988).

(a) Love demonstrates patience

Paul begins by personifying love by stating positively using the indicative present verb, that “love demonstrates patience” (ἡ ἀγάπη μακροθυμεῖ 1 Corinthians 13:4a). Holladay (1990:94) remarks that being patient toward one another in the Corinthian body is what should characterise and shape the behaviour of the Corinthians. The verb “is patient” is a compound verb. It is translated from the words *μακρός* which alludes to the long duration of time, and the *θυμός* which alludes to tranquil emotional feelings all the time (Mounce, 2009:501). In this way the believer’s love is characterised by tranquillity towards one another. The context suggests that love means that feelings of jealousy are not aroused when others have different spiritual gifts. Louw and Nida (1988:307) explain that the context indicates that under difficult circumstances, the love filled believer will demonstrate patience like one waiting to receive a promised reward.

Morris (1958:184) points out that “love is patient” refers to being patient with the people rather than with circumstances. He reasons that love is not an abstract action, which means its patience can only be seen when demonstrated towards other individuals. In the context of 1 Corinthians 12, these may be taken as the people who are supposedly weak. These are the people that Paul claimed the Corinthians classified as the less honourable spiritual practitioners in 1 Corinthians 12:21-22. Showing patience results in loving such individuals and it takes the form and shape that Paul describes in 1 Corinthians 12:21-22.

(b) Love acts kindly

Building on to the patient aspect of the practice of spiritual gifts, Paul further says “love is kind” (χρηστεύεται ἡ ἀγάπη 1 Corinthians 13:4b). This is understood as Paul saying love is extremely generous. Louw and Nida (1988:750) explain the generous aspect of love as a kind of love that generously provides for someone, as opposed to giving away one’s possessions without love (1 Corinthians 13:3). Horsley (2011:177) regards the patience and kindness of love as relating to each other. In that way, they both point to a behaviour that believers should display toward one another at the same time, all the time.

Paul further explains what practicing spiritual gifts in love looks like with the use of the adverb “does not” (οὐ 1 Corinthians 13:4c). This is the first of the seven occurrences of the “does not” (οὐ) statements about love in this phase. Fee (1987:637) recounts that all the seven verbs, despite the negative adverb “does not” (οὐ) which Louw and Wolvaardt (2015, 1 Cor. 13:4c, d, e; 5a, b, c, d; 6a) define as “markers of negative propositions”, are about how Christians positively ought to behave. They all stand in contrast with how the Corinthians behaved toward one another, thereby solidifying the vilification of the Corinthians’ practice to spur them to cultivate unity.

(c) Love does not express strong envy and resentment

Paul says love does not envy (ἀγάπη οὐ ζηλοῖ 1 Corinthians 13:4c). This stands in contradiction to the competitive behaviour of the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 3:5-4:23; 1 Corinthians 12). Holladay (1990:95) draws parallels between the jealousy in 1 Corinthians 3:3 directly, and the jealousy in 1 Corinthians 1:10-17 indirectly and applies the same meaning to 1 Corinthians 13:4c. The Christian love gives generously, and one of the

generous things it gives is the deliberate choice to actively rejoice with another Christian and celebrate their victories (Witherington, 1995:269-270). This is contrary to worldly character which encourages rivalry and enmity towards those one disagrees with. Paul is vilifying such a character and promoting the rhetoric of reversal, for the Corinthians to reverse rivalry with rejoicing.

1 Corinthians 3:3 characterises an attitude of jealousy as akin to worldliness when it says, “you are still worldly, for since there is envy and strife among you, are you not worldly and behaving like mere humans?” (σαρκικοί ἐστε. ὅπου γὰρ ἐν ὑμῖν ζῆλος καὶ ἔρις, οὐχὶ σαρκικοί ἐστε καὶ κατὰ ἄνθρωπον περιπατεῖτε 1 Corinthians 3:3). Louw and Nida (1988:760) define ζηλώω as showing strong resentment for another person. It is for this reason the Corinthians were failing to build one another up successfully (1 Corinthians 12:14-29). Their resentment toward one another led to schism in the church. They were divided on the practice of certain spiritual gifts, which is why they elevated certain spiritual gifts over others. In the process of elevating certain spiritual gifts, they thought they were building themselves up only to be told by Paul, as Fee (1987:637) states, that they neglected the betterment of others. Love seeks the success of others.

The verb ζηλώω also carries negative and positive connotations. In the case of a negative connotation, the first occurs in 1 Corinthians 12:31a where Paul uses sarcasm, and the positive occurs in 1 Corinthians 14:1 where Paul urges the Corinthians to desire spiritual gifts that edify. Since the verb ζηλώω could be negative or positive, in what sense is Paul using it in 1 Corinthians 13:4? Garland (2003:617-618) says Paul uses the verb ζηλώω negatively in 1 Corinthians 13:4 to point to how the zeal for spiritual gifts by the Corinthians led them to being jealous of one another, thereby exhibiting conduct that did not build up.

(d) Love does not brag

In addition, Paul says love is not boastful (ἡ ἀγάπη οὐ περπερεύεται 1 Corinthians 13:4d). Even though the word περπερεύεται is a Pauline *harpax legomenon*, there are instances where the concept of boasting is found in the body of the letter of 1 Corinthians that shed light on how to not practice spiritual gifts boastfully. The first is where Paul presents himself and other ministers of the gospel as co-workers of the same mission (1 Corinthians 3:4-6). Between him and Apollos, Paul says in 1 Corinthians 3:4-6, there was

nothing exhibiting any notion of boasting that may result in the Corinthians pledging allegiance to the one who boasts more and follow him (Donahoe, 2008: xxxviii).

Danahoe (2008) and Holladay (1990:95) similarly examine 1 Corinthians 4:1-21; 9:1-27; 13:1-3; 15:30-32 as examples of Paul presenting himself as an example of how he shunned being boastful. The verb “proud” (φουσιοῦται 1 Corinthians 13:4e) refers to one who brags about their accomplishments or using their acquired knowledge to serve others. Louw and Nida (1988:765) refer to 1 Corinthians 4:6 where Paul cautions the Corinthians to not despise others, such as they presumably were doing by pridefully saying certain spiritual gifts were better than others. For those who are puffed up, Paul classifies them as “ignorant” (ἀγνοεῖν 1 Corinthians 12:1).

(e) Love does not behave shamefully

Paul continues to say, “love is not rude” (οὐκ ἀσχημονεῖ 1 Corinthians 13:5a). Louw and Wolvaardt (2015, 1 Cor. 13:5a) explain the meaning of ἀσχημονεῖ as behaviour characterised by moral embarrassment, bringing about shame. Earlier in the body of the letter of 1 Corinthians, particularly 1 Corinthians 6:12-20, Paul addresses impermissible sexual promiscuity that was apparently tolerated in the Corinthian body. It seems, such an indecent behaviour exhibits itself even in the practice of spiritual gifts whereby the Corinthians were rude towards one another (1 Corinthians 12:21). The Corinthians were even using spiritual gifts in a scandalous way, being childish (1 Corinthians 14:20) and appearing childish before the outsiders who may witness all speaking in tongues simultaneously without interpretation in 1 Corinthians 14:23 (Dominy, 1983:64 and Stendahl, 1976:115-116), covered in **chapter 2** under (**section 2.5.1.2**).

Following this correction about indecency, Paul turns to show the Corinthians that when one practices spiritual gifts, they should not do so to seek their own interests. This harks back to Paul’s encouragement to the Corinthian believers to seek to build up, because no one should seek his or her own good, but the good of the other person (μηδεὶς τὸ ἑαυτοῦ ζητεῖτω ἀλλὰ τὸ τοῦ ἑτέρου 1 Corinthians 10:24) – this is an exhortation to exercise decency. Thiselton (2000:1049) comments that decency is relative, dependant on what society generally accepts as decent. Presumably, the Corinthians could make up what is meant because God is not a God of confusion (1 Corinthians 14:33), but of decency and order (1 Corinthians 14:40).

(f) Love does not try to covert

Paul further develops the kind of behaviour love exhibits by saying love does not seek (ζητεῖ 1 Corinthians 13:5b) from someone, something that does not belong to them (Louw & Nida, 1988:565). As the well-established point that Paul makes in 1 Corinthians 12:7 that spiritual gifts are for the common good, it is easy to see what fruit is produced when one seeks their own interests. Thiselton (2000:1050-1051) surveys a few instances in 1 Corinthians where self-interests negatively disturbed peace, order, and unity in the church. The first instance is where the Corinthians thought it beneficial to disregard the good of others in the eating of meat sacrificed to idols (1 Corinthians 10:25), an act Paul says has the potential to offend those who do not partake of such. The second instance is in 1 Corinthians 11:22-23 where those who had the means to eat more than others despised the church by humiliating those who had nothing. The third instance is in 1 Corinthians 14:27-33 where it seems the Corinthians interrupted one another in the practice of spiritual gifts, not willing to wait for one another nor give one another chances to speak. To this end, Paul put order in respect of those who wish to practice spiritual gifts in order and peace.

Garland (2003:618) rightly observes that the repetitious nature of this exhortation to not be self-seeking (1 Corinthians 13:5b) indicates that this might have been one of the major problems in the Corinthians church. Seeking the interests of self is contrary to Christ who sought the interests of many, so that he may save them. Paul purposefully alludes to this in the closing of 1 Corinthians 10:33 by saying, “just as I also try to please everyone in everything, not seeking my own benefit, but the benefit of many, so that they may be saved. Imitate me, as I also imitate Christ” (αθῶς κάγω πάντα πᾶσιν ἀρέσκω μὴ ζητῶν τὸ ἑαυτοῦ σύμφορον ἀλλὰ τὸ τῶν πολλῶν, ἵνα σωθῶσιν. μιμηταί μου γίνεσθε καθὼς κάγω Χριστοῦ 1 Corinthians 10:33-11:1). In relation to the practice of spiritual gifts, Paul enjoins the Corinthians to adopt this attitude of Christ in 1 Corinthians 14:31, exhorting the Corinthians to take turns in prophesying, “so that everyone may learn, and everyone may be encouraged” (ἵνα πάντες μανθάνωσιν καὶ πάντες παρακαλῶνται 1 Corinthians 14:31).

(g) Love is not provoked

When one surveys the tensions that ensued in 1 Corinthians 1:11, 7:1, 8:1, 12:1, 12:14-19 to mention a few, it is easy to reasonably conclude that intense feelings of provocation

were a part of their lives. After all, as Kistemaker (1993:460) observes; everyone is susceptible to irritation caused by others within the body. Kistemaker (1993:460) points out areas that stirred anger in the Corinthians, namely divisions (1 Corinthians 1:11), taking one another to court (1 Corinthians 6:1), matters concerning sexuality (1 Corinthians 7) and the eating of foods sacrificed to idols (1 Corinthians 8:1). These hotly contentious issues had the potential to lead one to feeling angered. Notwithstanding this, there is ability to exercise self-control, hence Paul writes to the Corinthians to address matters about which they wrote to him (1 Corinthians 7:1).

When a person is facing some of the tremendously character testing pressures such as impatience, unkindness, envy, arrogance, irritability that Paul alludes were present in the Corinthian church in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a, Morris (1958:184) is right to point out how a person endowed with love always seeks to see the best in others. Even when wronged, a love-filled person believes the best and takes no offence. Even when one is offended, Morris (1958:184) argues that love compels a person to choose to not harbour ill feelings, plot revenge, and in resentment repay evil in kind to whoever they felt offended by, Bruce (1971:127). Godet (1983:246) goes so far as to say even if the ill is not acted out, it may relate to internal feelings of evil counted against an individual one feels aggrieved by.

Godet (1983:246) goes on to say that not only does one have the ability to control themselves to not act on the evil they feel, but they also equally have the ability to positively turn those emotions into good. So, there is a deliberate action to choose to bear the wrong by others (1 Corinthians 6:7). The overall goal is to love even those that may cause you irritation. Even if no one causes irritation, love compels the irritated person to orient their emotions towards refusing to be upset.

(h) Love does not keep a record of evil

1 Corinthians 13:5c leads naturally to 1 Corinthians 13:5d which Kistemaker (1993:460-461) illustrates that it means Christians are not bookkeepers of wrongs done to them. There is no list of wrongs done that a Christian keeps. There is no book with pages to turn in order to pay back injury with injury. Garland (2003:618-619) points to 1 Corinthians 6:7 to elaborate this point. In 1 Corinthians 6:7 Paul enjoins the Corinthians to let themselves be wronged. This is a genuine action set on ensuring that no record is kept for future purposes to use against individuals one feels aggrieved by, Louw & Nida,

(1988:346). One can only imagine how the divisions and loveless use of spiritual gifts in the Corinthian body tempted others to keep a list to show where they have been wronged. In fact, the fact that they wrote to Paul means that presumably they had a mental record of evil done to some of them.

If a record of wrongs done is kept and used against someone without seeking justice to make things right with the concerned individual, one can see that that type of action as lacking love and is unjust. Injustice is tantamount to unrighteousness, which is why Louw and Wolvaardt (2015, 1 Cor 13:6a) explain ἀδικία as an unjust deed. In 1 Corinthians 6:7-8, as Holladay (1990:95) points out, it seems as though the Corinthian believers took a record of wrongs to court instead of resolving matters among themselves. Horsley (1998:177) links the resentful attitude to 1 Corinthians 6:1-8. In 1 Corinthians 6:1-8 we find Paul cautioning the believers to not let the unbelievers evaluate their disputes, especially since the believers are going to judge the world (1 Corinthians 6:2). If they are going to judge the world on matters that are non-trivial, they should thus be in a position to be able to treat one another justly now and for always.

(i) Love does not enjoy the state of happiness

Louw and Nida (1988:303) qualify that when they say love does not enjoy a state of happiness, it means that love is not glad when unjust deeds are done. The type of not rejoicing that Paul alludes to here is similar to Colossians 1:24 where Paul said he rejoices as he suffers for the Colossians, and in 2 Corinthians 6:10 when he said although we may be saddened, we will always rejoice (Louw and Nida, 1988:303). Garland (2003:619) rightly dissents from Sigountos (1994:258) who sees 1 Corinthians 13:6a as a direct reference to 1 Corinthians 5:2. It is helpful to draw inference from context to see how Paul wants the Corinthians to shape their practice of spiritual gifts. Therefore, in reference to treating one another unjustly, the idea only appears in 1 Corinthians 6:8 where Paul says the Corinthians are acting unjustly (ἀδικεῖτε) by taking one another to court. The other appearance is in 1 Corinthians 13:6a where Paul tells the Corinthians to align their practice of spiritual gifts to just deeds (ἀδικία). Paul is reassuring the Corinthian believers that they are equipped with spiritual gifts to deal with their differences rather than subjecting one another to lawsuits concerning matters they can internally resolve.

(j) Love enjoys a state of happiness

Love rejoices with the truth (συγχαίρει δὲ τῇ ἀληθείᾳ 1 Corinthians 13:6b). Fee (1987:639) takes a leap too far to link truth in this verse to gospel truth. It may be correct because the overall letter of 1 Corinthians is written to the believers of the same gospel faith. However, Louw and Wolvaardt (2015, 1 Cor. 13:6b) explain that the kind of rejoicing with the truth that Paul is talking about is a state of joy and wellbeing that is shared in a community in the practice of spiritual gifts. In other words, one cannot rejoice with the truth while excluding others who should participate with him or her in the state of happiness.

Put together with “truth” (ἀληθείᾳ), Louw and Wolvaardt show that this is acquired truth that came by revelation from God when Paul informed the “ignorant” (ἀγνοεῖν 1 Corinthians 12:1). Paul introduced 1 Corinthians 13 by promising the Corinthians to “show” (δείκνυμι 1 Corinthians 12:31b) or “reveal” the truth about spiritual gifts in love, because it is that particular truth about love in the practice of spiritual gifts which had not dawned on some Corinthians, Witherington (1995:261). The truth that Paul is referring to came to those who are a body like the Corinthians. Collectively, they are able to discern and determine what is true and beneficial for all and thus rejoice collectively.

Lockwood (2010:271) remarks that in a congregation as diverse as the Corinthian church, with varying gifts, forms of jealousy, rivalry, rudeness, pride, and self-seeking attitudes are inevitable. Paul is aware of this because it was reported to him, hence he devoted at length a discourse on how believers can serve one another while having different gifts (1 Corinthians 12:4-6). Lockwood (2010:271) further explains that according to 1 Corinthians 12:26, in the practice of spiritual gifts in love, “if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honoured, all the members rejoice with it” (εἴτε πάσχει ἐν μέλος, συμπάσχει πάντα τὰ μέλη· εἴτε δοξάζεται [ἐν] μέλος, συγχαίρει πάντα τὰ μέλη). This is the love attitude that should characterise members of the same body.

The concluding characteristics concerning love in 1 Corinthians 13:7a-d all begin with a cluster of the adjective (all) πάντα. The first is “love puts up with difficulty” (πάντα στέγει 1 Corinthians 13:7a). The second is “love believes all things” (πάντα πιστεύει 1 Corinthians 13:7b). For the third, Louw and Nida (1988:296) explain that “love hopes, in a sense of looking forward with confidence to that which is good and beneficial” (πάντα

ἐλπίζει 1 Corinthians 13:7c). The last is “love demonstrates endurance” (πάντα ὑπομένει 1 Corinthians 13:7d).

In the first cluster, “love demonstrates endurance, or puts up with difficulty and suffering” harks back to Paul saying in the spread of the gospel, he bears all things (στέγομεν 1 Corinthians 9:12d) so that he may be an example of one who is not a hindrance in the advancement of a good cause, (Holladay, 1990:95). This refers to a patient enduring, putting up with circumstances that have the potential to cause annoyance or difficulty, Louw & Nida (1988:308). The Corinthians should recall from Paul’s presence among them that he put up with them. Similarly, perhaps those of Chloe’s household who went to report to Paul about the difficulties and annoying practices in the church were exemplary of how to put up with difficulty. Perhaps those who boasted about their ability to prophesy or speak in tongues uninterpreted were an annoyance akin to a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. As all the Corinthians had to correct themselves through the lens of the far more supreme way, they need tremendous endurance because annoyance may not go away instantaneously.

Lockwood (2010:271) describes the four descriptions of love in 1 Corinthians 13:7a-d as demonstrative of love’s tenacity. When one endures in the midst of difficulty, he or she is exhibiting one of the most important characteristics needed in the life of a believer, (Lockwood, 2010:271). Garland (2003:619), Keener (2005:109) and Thiselton (2000:1056) explain that “all” (πάντα) speaks of the boundless enduring nature of love. While it bears with all things, it nonetheless does not remain gullible. Kistemaker (1993:461) describes its attitude as one that discerns and applies wisdom even in testing situations. In 1 Corinthians 14:27, 29 Paul refers to evaluation and discernment taking place while the spiritual gifts of tongues and prophecy are in operation. The goal of love’s endurance is so that “all may learn, and all may be encouraged” (ἵνα πάντες μανθάνωσιν καὶ πάντες παρακαλῶνται 1 Corinthians 14:31).

The next verbal phrase, that love “believes all things” (πάντα πιστεύει 1 Corinthians 13:7b) is marked by Godet (1893:247) as logically solidifying the fact that love endures all things. He remarks that it endures because it believes the best of all people and circumstances. Rhetorically one may conclude that the very act of writing to the Corinthians by Paul signifies that he too believes the Corinthians’ conduct will improve for

the better. They will mature and know how to use spiritual gifts to build one another up. Holladay (1990:95) links “believes all things” (πάντα πιστεύει) and “hopes all things” (πάντα ἐλπίζει) because he sees Paul affirming his steadfast hope in the Corinthians that they will grow in their faith.

It is an act of love to let the Corinthians know that although it may seem as if their practice of spiritual gifts is in a chaotic state, love believes the best of everyone and sees the best possible outcome in difficult situations (Morris, 1958:185). Fee (1987:640) leans towards a contrary view by asserting that love does not always believe the best of circumstances and everyone. He claims that love only endures and can only have tenacious faith and hope that circumstances or individuals will turnout for the good. Fee (1987:640) is partly correct because in a difficult situation one’s faith and hope may not result in people changing, for it is not up to the individual with this tenacious faith and hope that can change situations. However, that assumes individuals with this kind of love will only endure and not do anything actively to convert a difficult situation into good. The kind of love Paul talks about in 1 Corinthians 13:7 is a love that actively seeks to persuade others as in the case of 1 Corinthians 12:7 and 1 Corinthians 14:5. This is precisely what Paul is doing by writing to the Corinthians. It seems logical then, that if people are not conforming to Paul’s purpose for addressing the Corinthian situation, the believers will love one another by dealing with the lack of acceding to Paul’s requirements.

4.9 Argument based on implementing the characterisation of love

In this phase, Paul aims to shape the behaviour of the Corinthians by proposing to them the characteristics of love. Since all the items listed in the characterisation of love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a may be linked to a situation Paul is addressing in the body of the letter of 1 Corinthians as discussed under (**sections 4.7**) and (**section 4.8**) above, the nature of the overall argument may be described as *argument based on implementing the characterisation of love*.

Patterson (2009:88) says the *argument based on implementing the characterisation of love* may also be understood as praise for love because of its qualities. Although these characteristics of love may be linked to Christ’s character, Witherington (1995:269) states that this is not Paul’s persuasive point at this stage. This study aligns itself with Witherington’s view because Christ is not the explicit focus of Paul’s persuasive strategy

at this point. His persuasive strategy is to get the Corinthians to change their behaviour from lacking in showing one another love in the use of spiritual gifts, to implementing the characteristics of love laid out above.

How Christ's love character looks like is shown in various portions in 1 Corinthians. The first is seen in 1 Corinthians 1:10 where Christ is the unifier, and in 1 Corinthians 1:13 he does not cause division. In 1 Corinthians 1:30 Christ is wisdom from God. In 1 Corinthians 3:11 Christ is the foundation that establishes unity among those who labour in the gospel. In 1 Corinthians 11:1 Christ does not divide in a sense that he does not cause offence. In this sense one can see how some commentators²⁸, as Witherington (1995:269) alleges, may be drawn to assume that 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a points to Christ's character.

Prior (1993:229) says a loving person who loves in accordance with 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a shows that they have been endowed with the love of God because God desires his people to use spiritual gifts to build one another up (1 Corinthians 12:7) and the pursuit of love complies with God's desire (1 Corinthians 14:1-5). Therefore, their dispensing of love comes from the love supplied to them by God (1 Corinthians 2:9, 8:3, 13:1-3). Living out love is the continual dispensing of Christlikeness that God wants to shape the believers to be (1 Corinthians 11:1), so in this way Suurmond (1998:106) sees the link with the hope that the Corinthians will display love and that ability comes from God who is the one who established the faith of the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 1:1-2).

Snyman (2009:3) refers to the description of the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 1:1-2 as the church of God, sanctified in Christ Jesus, as establishing the fact that their establishment is a work of God and the rhetorical argument employed here is called "argument based on divine involvement", traversed in **(section 2.2.1.3) of chapter 2**. Therefore, since love is not an abstract concept, one can conclude that part of the divine establishment of the Corinthians as God's people, (Thiselton 2000, 73-73 and Snyman, 2009:3), is to be a people who act out the love that Paul persuades them of in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a. Love comprises of actions that must be displayed towards one another. In this instance, in 1 Corinthians 13, Paul says the Corinthians must display love to one another.

²⁸ Prior (1993:229), Mare (1994:643), and Strauch (2006:9).

It becomes a reality when those who can magnify love puts it on display for it to be praised. Their existence, or entry and qualification to be in a position to be the ones who will put love on display for its praise, is established by God, solidified by Paul by employing and *argument based on divine authorisation* (Snyman, 2009:3). Authorised by God, Paul can then appeal to the Corinthians to follow his advice which comes with the enablement and will of the God who authorised their divine calling (1 Corinthians 1:1). Therefore, their lives must mirror the praiseworthy character of love.

Presented as such, the Corinthians have no other alternative but to adapt their behaviour accordingly. Thiselton (2000:73) comments that the genitive description of the Corinthians as “the church of God” (τῆ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ 1 Corinthians 1:2) is possessive, meaning the church belongs to God and should do as God pleases. The very act of God making the Corinthians his very own people is an act of love. As a church that is divinely loved, Snyman (2009:4) sees it as rhetorically significant that the Corinthians are accountable to the one who called them even though Paul is the one divinely authorised to write to them.

The other rhetorically significant aspect pointed out by Snyman (2009:4) is that the letter-opening of 1 Corinthians describes the Corinthians as “those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called as saints” (ἡγιασμένοις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, κλητοῖς ἁγίοις 1 Corinthians 1:2) who are caused by God to be able to live out the calling with which they are called. Louw and Wolvaardt (2015, 1 Cor.1:2) define the verb “sanctified” (ἁγιάζω) as “to dedicate to the service of and to loyalty to deity”. In this instance, loyalty will not be to Paul but to God who has called and consecrated and enabled the Corinthians to live out the kind of love Paul persuades them to pursue in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a.

Witherington (1995:269), Holladay (1990:94-97), and Morris (1958:180-181) emphasise that love is the way of life that shapes everything we do. In particular, it shapes our interaction with one another. This is why Paul relied on persuading the Corinthians to live out the way of love in the present because he hoped the Corinthians would be convinced without hesitation. Thurén (2001:103) draws an important parallel between the limited time spiritual gifts enjoyment and the permanency of love from how Paul used a similar idea in 1 Corinthians 7:29-30. In 1 Corinthians 7:29 Paul urges the Corinthians to make full use of things given to us now because in the future they will not be there. The same

applies to certain spiritual gifts, which Thurén (2001:103) points to as emphasising the value of practicing love now, especially spiritual gifts in love now because unlike love, spiritual gifts do not abide forever (1 Corinthians 13:10, 13).

4.9.1.1 Personification

Personification, also called *prosopopoeia*, is a device employed by Paul where he ascribes to body parts functions that may only be performed by human beings, such as body parts talking to themselves and him replying to the body parts, because the talking function can only be performed by human beings. Human characteristics are ascribed to inanimate objects (Zuck, 1991:151). Such personification occurs in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a where Paul ascribes to love actions that are performed by human beings.

By means of personification the inanimate object or idea, as in the concept of love, is presented as if it were able to speak or perform actions that are performed by human beings (Lanham, 1991:123). Anderson (1998:163), for example, advises that personification should be used at the end of one's discourse because it is emotional in nature, so the speaker should only appeal to emotion when they wrap up their discourse. Tolmie (2004:110) argues contra this view because he views context as driving the use of personification. Tolmie alludes to the way in which Jewish speeches used personification, which was not always emotional nor at the end of the speech. Tolmie's (2004) view allows for personification to be used in the middle of a speech like Paul does in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a.

In some instances, Anderson (1998:192) appears to be confusing because he seems to allude that personification is only used by Paul when he says "scripture says". It appears as though Anderson proposes that unless personification is stated explicitly, such as "scripture says" or "if the foot should say" (ἐὰν εἴπῃ ὁ πούς 1 Corinthians 12:15a), personification cannot be generated from the text. Tolmie (2004:110) argues against this assumption because he says the Jews were well acquainted with the personification of scripture. Therefore, he proposes that personification should be understood as the Jews understood it, not how ancient rhetorical theorists understood it.

Paul personifies love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a to enhance the effectiveness of his communication the way the Corinthians would have understood him. As he began by

using himself as an example in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 (elaborated in **chapter 3** under **section 3**). The view that Paul presented himself as an example is aptly argued by Holladay (1990:88-89) that 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 is an apostolic paradigm because Paul employs the first person singular “I” (ἐγώ) in a way that appears to be self-referential, so this is Paul’s own presentation of himself as an example. If this is plausible, then Paul can now appeal to the Corinthians to display a distinct quality of loving like him, (Collins, 2016:474, 485). When Paul says “Love is patient, love is kind. Love does not envy, is not boastful, is not arrogant” (1 Corinthians 13:4), he personifies love but indirectly says this is how he behaved among the Corinthians and as such they should emulate his example, an apostolic paradigm as Holladay (1990:94-97) claims. Love is described with human actions, as all the characteristics of love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a are verbs, but this is how the Corinthians should act, which is why Paul uses personification to enhance his expectations from the Corinthians (Collins, 2016:174).

4.9.1.2 Conspicuous words

In chapter 3 it was explained how Smit (1991:199-200) identifies the use of conspicuous words and metaphors in 1 Corinthians 13. These words and metaphors enhance Paul’s persuasion of the Corinthians to desire “the far more supreme way” of using spiritual gifts in love. There are three of these used in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a. The first is the indicative present verb “acts kindly” (χρηστεύεται in 1 Corinthians 13:4b). This interesting word is a New Testament *hapax legomenon*. Louw and Nida (1988:750) explain that it denotes the idea of benevolence. It denotes the idea of acting kindly for the benefit of someone. The need to be beneficial was pertinent in the Corinthian church because in the partaking of the Lord’s supper the Corinthians were not kind to one another (1 Corinthians 11:17-34). But more especially in the use of spiritual gifts where there is an apparent lack of practicing spiritual gifts for the benefit of others (1 Corinthians 12:15, 1 Corinthians 14:5).

Similarly, the verb “boast” (περπερεύεται 1 Corinthians 13:4d) is also a New Testament *hapax legomenon*. Louw and Wolvaardt (2015, 1 Cor. 13:4d) refer to it as a kind of love that does not excessively brag or praise oneself. This fits well with the context of spiritual gifts since Paul expects the Corinthians to edify one another, thereby not leaving room to praise oneself. After all, love too does not seek things of itself (οὐ ζητεῖ τὰ ἑαυτῆς 1 Corinthians 13:5b).

4.9.1.3 Parallelism

When one identifies parallelism in the process of analysis, this is where it seems challenging to possibly link the author's style to his or her rhetorical analysis of the text (Snyman, 1986:201). In order to attempt to link Paul's style to his rhetoric, Thiselton (2000:1029) directs his readers to Fee (1987:626-627) who rightly cautions that paying unnecessary attention to the stylistic beauty of this passage may lead to decorating it outside its context or miss Paul's intention with his choice of style. However, Fee (1987:626-627) only wishes to promote and advance the quest to do some level of exegesis that Paul intends to convey to the Corinthians, presupposing that they understood Paul's persuasion.

Conzelmann (1975:223-224) helps us to see that the very fact that Paul does not define what love is, or all of the characteristics of love, means that the Corinthians understood the actions expected from them. Therefore, the parallelism²⁹ has an aim. When the Corinthians read each of the lines in the parallelism, as will be shown in the next paragraph below, they are expected to know what actions are required from them. Lockwood (2010:270) explains that what is expected of the Corinthians is to bear the unfailing fruit of love which emanates from God as the ultimate example character to follow for showing the Corinthians the kind of love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a.

Smit (1991:202) observes the eight negations that are followed by a verb, all appearing in "the third person singular present". There are seven that are preceded by the negation adverb οὐ, and the eighth's used the negation adverb (οὐκ 1 Corinthians 13:5). Thus, we find the parallelism depicted as following:

not jealous (οὐ ζήλοῖ 1 Corinthians 13:4c)

does not boast (οὐ περπερεύεται 1 Corinthians 13:4d)

²⁹ Zuck (1991:138) states that parallelism may be seen in instances where the author repeats in the second line of what he or she said in the first line by using synonyms. Lanham (1991:189) adds that sounds and words may be parallel if they sound the same, or parallelism is when two clauses are the same length. This study has already noted instances were Smit (1991:197) pointed out the use of parallelism in 1 Corinthians 12:31-13:3. Kaiser and Silva (2007:333) similarly explained how this technique may be detected.

not proud (οὐ φυσιοῦται 1 Corinthians 13:4e)

does not behave indecently (οὐκ ἀσχημονεῖ 1 Corinthians 13:5a)

does not seek things of itself (οὐ ζητεῖ 1 Corinthians 13:5b)

not upset (οὐ παροξύνεται 1 Corinthians 13:5c)

does not keep record of evil (οὐ λογίζεται 1 Corinthians 13:5d)

does not rejoice in the unjust deed (οὐ χάρει 1 Corinthians 13:6a)

4.9.1.4 Chiasm

Brouwer (2018:195) broadly defines chiasm as looking at the order of words then arranges them in such a way that themes, phrases in the first line or thought are inverted in the second half. It resembles parallelism. Parallelism, as Breck (1999:254) reiterates, is one of the most easily noticeable rhetorical form in writing. It simply involves one or two lines, then repeated or modified in the next one or two lines yet saying the same thing. However, this study has already recognised that in some instances it is not this simple because parallelism may involve the author's passionate plea with the audience, thereby ordering his words in a way that signal grace in his or her persuasion, (Smit, 1986:212).

So rhetorical techniques such as parallelism or chiasm may be noticed in the author's writing on account that they were deliberately inserted by the author for a specific purpose, or the readers may notice a rhetorical feature that the author never intended to use. In order to enhance the effectiveness of his persuasion for the believers to align their practice of spiritual gifts with love, Paul purposefully uses chiasm to charm the reader with beautifully crafted persuasion. Breck (1999:255) explains that one of the most important features of chiasm is that instead of noticing the parallels, the author inserts the meaning of the message in the centre of the chiastic structure. The technique of chiasm that Paul uses to bolster his argument in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 is seen in the characteristics of love arranged in an (a)(b)(b)(a) pattern:

(a) [love] bears all things (πάντα στέγει)

(b) [love] believes all things (πάντα πιστεύει)

(b) [love] hopes all things (πάντα ἐλπίζει)

(a) [love] endures all things (πάντα ὑπομένει)

This is a simple chiasm observed in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. The central portions about love, such as love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things are the central emphasis of the basic meaning of what love does. Collins (2016:478) observes a rather complex use of chiasm in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. He conceptualises it in the following way:

Positive affirmation:

Love is patient (ἡ ἀγάπη μακροθυμεῖ 1 Corinthians 13:4a)

Love is kind (χρηστεύεται ἡ ἀγάπη 1 Corinthians 13:4b)

Negative affirmations:

Love does not envy (οὐ ζηλοῖ 1 Corinthians 13:4c)

Is not boastful ([ἡ ἀγάπη] οὐ περπερεύεται 1 Corinthians 13:4d)

Is not arrogant (οὐ φουσιῶται 1 Corinthians 13:4e)

Is not rude (οὐκ ἀσχημονεῖ 1 Corinthians 13:5a)

Is not self-seeking (οὐ ζητεῖ τὰ ἑαυτῆς 1 Corinthians 13:5b)

Is not irritable (οὐ παροξύνεται 1 Corinthians 13:5c)

Does not keep a record of wrongs (οὐ λογίζεται τὸ κακόν 1 Corinthians 13:5d)

Finds no joy in unrighteousness (οὐ χαίρει ἐπὶ τῇ ἀδικίᾳ 1 Corinthians 13:6a)

Positive affirmation:

Rejoices with the truth (συγχαίρει δὲ τῇ ἀληθείᾳ 1 Corinthians 13:6b)

Bears all things (πάντα στέγει 1 Corinthians 13:7a)

Believes all things (πάντα πιστεύει 1 Corinthians 13:7b)

Hopes all things (πάντα ἐλπίζει 1 Corinthians 13:7c)

Endures all things (πάντα ὑπομένει 1 Corinthians 13:7d)

As Paul expected his letters to be read publicly (Keener, 2008:221), it is expected that Paul would have to structure his rhetorical techniques in such a way that his audience benefit by understanding that they are being persuaded to pursue unity. If Paul achieves this, then he has succeeded in crafting his letter persuasively. In this section, 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a Paul indirectly wants to contrast the Corinthians' behaviour and vilifiable practice of spiritual gifts. Without directly telling them that their practice of the spiritual gifts lacked "love" and how undesirable that is, he praised love through chiasm so that the Corinthians would be persuaded to align their practice of spiritual gifts in a way that displays "love". Through a chiastic structure, Paul crafted in ways that are easy to see the positive affirmations of love, and negative connotations associated with not practicing the spiritual gifts without being violent, (Kennedy, 1984:12). In addition, chiasm serves as a mirror for the Corinthians to see how their way led to divisions in the church, so it would be beneficial for them to change their conduct. Keener (2008:240) says this incorporates an argument based on probability, adopted from Aristotle, aimed at leaving the audience to ponder the probability of the scenarios the Paul persuaded them to think about.

4.9.1.5 Repetition

The use of the rhetorical technique of repetition is explained in detail in chapter 3. We find the repetition of words and sounds (Tolmie, 2004:149,178) repetition for cohesive purposes, and repetition for the purpose of emphasising the persuasion (Biatoma, 2010:74-75). The other aspect that was explained in the preceding chapter is that repetition alone serves no purpose unless the significance of the meaning of what the author repeats is explained and shown to contribute to the overall rhetorical strategy of the author.

Garland (2003:616) suggests that the repetitions of words, such as "love", "is not" (οὐ), and "all" (πάντα), together with phrases which have the same tone such as, "bears all things" (πάντα στέγει 1 Corinthians 13:7a), "believes all things" (πάντα πιστεύει 1 Corinthians 13:7b), "hopes all things" (πάντα ἐλπίζει 1 Corinthians 13:7c), and "endures all things" (πάντα ὑπομένει 1 Corinthians 13:7d) in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a are not coincidental by Paul. Garland (2003:616) claims that Paul wants the Corinthians to evaluate themselves through the lens of love to see what they were lacking in their

congregation. He remarks that Paul intentionally frames the actions of love in present tense to impress it on the Corinthians that the actions required of them are to be continuous in the use of spiritual gifts and in all situations.

A noteworthy correlation between what Paul mentioned earlier about the conspicuous presence of spiritual gifts in the Corinthian church (1 Corinthians 1:7) and the apparent conspicuous absence of love in the Corinthian church is highlighted by Sigountos (1994:256-257). A careful reading of 1 Corinthians 12 shows that the Corinthians have a wide range of spiritual gifts, such that they even prized others highly than themselves. Yet, as conspicuous as it may seem that the Corinthians were gifted with many spiritual gifts; Holladay (1990:98) concludes that it is equally conspicuous that love was absent in their practice of spiritual gifts, hence the glaring imperfections identified by Paul in the repetition to vilify their practice.

Sigountos (1994:256-257) once more aptly highlights the glaring irony with which Paul writes 1 Corinthians 13. The irony is that while Paul praises love for its far more supreme acts, it is not love as an abstract concept that does these acts. It is the acts of those spiritually endowed that are expected to be aligned with the far more supreme way. Holladay (1990:98) even claims that Paul subtly refers to himself as an example of who the Corinthians should emulate if they were to practice the far more supreme way. Still more, Sigountos (1994:257) notices the subtly underlying factor in the repetitions of the negative aspects of love by concluding that it is not love but ironically, the Corinthians who practiced spiritual gifts in a way that exhibited what love does not do through their acts.

4.9.1.6 Rhythm

The rhythmical element in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a presents us with words and phrases paired together in a way that is pleasant to the ear when read in the Greek language. Smit (1991:204) and Biatoma (2010:77) note what they call a “bipartite chiasm” followed by a “two-fold ἀγάπη”. This is followed by eight οὐ negations already discussed herein.

What proceeds from this, as Smit and Biatoma point out, is “alliteration, homoioteleuton³⁰ and equality of the number of syllables connect verbs”, grouped thus:

οὐ ζηλοῖ - οὐ περπερεύεται - οὐ φυσιοῦται - οὐκ ἀσχημονεῖ

οὐ ζητεῖ - οὐ παροξύνεται - οὐ λογίζεται - οὐ χαίρει ἐπὶ

συγχαίρει δὲ

The way Paul’s rhythm in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a is pleasant and desirable to the ear, harks back to 1 Corinthians 13:1 where he challenged the Corinthians that if they do not have love they are like an unpleasing noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. He crafts his rhetorical techniques in such a way that it sounds melodiously harmonious and orderly just as he instructs them to pursue unity by practicing spiritual gifts in an orderly manner because “God is not a God of disorder but of peace” (1 Corinthians 14:26-40). Hays (2011:236) and Witherington (1995:360) have already illustrated that Paul’s persuasion that has hints of musical orchestra was probably familiar to the Corinthians since they knew how music depends on harmony. In the same manner, Paul’s persuasion is rhythmical, pleasant, and beautiful. Aristotle observes that we delight in rhythm because it contains order and order is in accordance with nature, (Aristotle, 38.30).

4.9.1.7 Epanalepsis or resumption

In the above chiasm under **section 4.9.1.4** we see another rhetorical device employed by Paul called epanalepsis. Epanalepsis or resumption is defined by Bullinger (1898:206) as the repetition of the same word in the same discourse. It may be repeated at the beginning or at the end of sentences, or even in the middle. He explains that epanalepsis differs from anaphora which Lanham (1991:190) defines as the repetition of the same word in a successive fashion. Although epanalepsis repeats the same word, it is a repetition after a slight deviation. In 1 Corinthians 13:1-4 Paul explicitly mentions the noun love. In 1 Corinthians 13:5-7 there is no explicit mention of love. In 1 Corinthians 13:8a Paul returns to the explicit mention of love after slightly deviating from its explicit mention.

³⁰ Lanham (1991: 83, 189) defines homoioteleuton as simply meaning “rhyme”. In a sentence or verse, various words with similar endings constitute a rhyme.

In 1 Corinthians 13:8b-12 there is no explicit mention of love. Paul explicitly mentions love again in 1 Corinthians 13:13 and 1 Corinthians 14:1. One may even see the first mention of love in 1 Corinthians 8:1.

Paul's aim is to impress it on the minds of the Corinthians that love is a key factor in the practice of spiritual gifts that he wants them to adhere to. Hays (2011:228) picks up on the deviation from the explicit mention of love in 1 Corinthians 13:1-4, its omission in 1 Corinthians 13:5-7, and the ultimate return to its explicit mention in 1 Corinthians 13:13. Hays (2011:228) concludes that the epanalepsis is intended to deal with the problem of the over emphasis of spiritual gifts in the Corinthian church, and the apparent diminished focus on the non-ceasing virtue of love. The deviation from love in 1 Corinthians 13:1-7 to the discussion of the cessation of spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 13:8b-12 is intended to strongly emphasise the temporal nature of spiritual gifts compared to love. So, in a way, the way 1 Corinthians 13 may be read rhetorically is to read it by keeping on emphasising that the fact that in the middle of talking about the excellency of love Paul used an unavoidable technique meant to vilify the practice of the Corinthians' most prized gifts compared to the permanency of love.

4.9.1.8 Sygkrisis

Sygkrisis is an ancient rhetorical device which Collins (2016:479) says Paul uses effectively to make it easy for the Corinthians to practice what he expects of them. Collins also explains that Plato used this device effectively to enhance his communication. It is a simple device that compares two ideas so that a person may know the exact action required from them.

To illustrate, Paul says in 1 Corinthians 13:6 love finds no joy in unrighteousness (οὐ χαίρει ἐπὶ τῇ ἀδικίᾳ) but it rejoices with the truth (συγχαίρει δὲ τῇ ἀληθείᾳ). By comparison, the Corinthians should find no joy in unrighteousness such as taking part in divisions, and they should rejoice with the truth when someone uses spiritual gifts that they do not have to share the truth. Love does not rejoice, but at the same time it rejoices. It does not rejoice in an unjust deed, defined by Louw and Wolvaardt (2015, 1 Cor.13:6a) as doing what is wicked. Yet, love rejoices in the opposite, which is truth defined by Louw and Wolvaardt (2015, 1 Cor.13:6b) as aligning itself with the actual truth of what actually happened. The Corinthians know when they have rejoiced and aligned themselves with

falsehood, such as when Paul addressed the untruthful opponents in 1 Corinthians 4:1-2 and should change their behaviour to align themselves with the truth.

4.9.1.9 Homoeoprophoron or alliteration

This is a technique that is easy to spot when one reads the text in the Greek language (Biatoma, 2010:68). Lanham (1991:54, 109) claims that alliteration is easy to notice because the author makes use of words that have the same opening or ending syllables. There are alliterations in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7a that should be easy to spot.

For example, οὐ περπερεύεται (1 Corinthians 13:4), οὐ φυσιοῦται (1 Corinthians 13:4), οὐ παροξύνεται (1 Corinthians 13:5), τῇ ἀδικίᾳ (1 Corinthians 13:6), τῇ ἀληθείᾳ (1 Corinthians 13:6), πάντα στέγει (1 Corinthians 13:7), πάντα πιστεύει (1 Corinthians 13:7), πάντα ἐλπίζει (1 Corinthians 13:7), and πάντα ὑπομένει (1 Corinthians 13:7). As these examples may seem merely artful, Tolmie (2004:149) does see the possibility of alliteration functioning as artful display not connected to the lexical meaning of the repeated syllables. Bullinger (1898,171) on the other hand, sees it as possibly emphasising a point that the author makes. Not only can the rhetorical technique of alliteration emphasise a point, but it can also serve the function of keeping the coherency of the rhetorical technique that the author makes (Genade, 1007:129). It seems that all these possible functions are detectable in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. Through the use of the rhetorical technique of alliteration, Paul enhances the persuasion of the Corinthians to pursue unity by vilifying the practice of the spiritual gifts without love, by artistically arguing for the Corinthians to base the practice of their spiritual gifts on love. He further emphasises his persuasion and holds the argument together through the use of alliterations.

4.9.1.10 Antithesis

Antithesis is detected in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a where Paul places contrasting positive virtues of love against negative vices inconsistent with love (Black, 1987:183). Notice that all the positive virtues are listed explicitly, but the negative vices that are inconsistent with love are not explicitly mentioned which means they are reasonably implied.

Positive Virtues of love	Negative Vices inconsistent with love
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Patient (1 Corinthians 13:4a)	Impatience
Kindness (1 Corinthians 13:4b)	Unkindness
Non envious (1 Corinthians 13:4c)	Envy
Humble (1 Corinthians 13:4e)	Boastful
Not arrogant (1 Corinthians 13:4e)	Arrogance
Non irritable (1 Corinthians 13:5c)	Irritability
No keeping of record of wrongs	Record keeping of wrongs
Finds joy in righteousness (1 Corinthians 13:6a)	Finding joy in unrighteousness
Rejoicing with the truth (1 Corinthians 13:6b)	Rejoicing with falsehood
Bearing all things (1 Corinthians 13:7a)	Non-bearing
Believing all things (1 Corinthians 13:7b)	Unbelieving
Hoping all things (1 Corinthians 13:7c)	Hopeless
Enduring all things (1 Corinthians 13:7d)	Non-enduring

The persuasive value of antithesis is that it does not invite one to only consider the opposites, but to align their practice with the positive aspects and shun the negative opposite aspects (Tolmie, 2004:43). Biatoma (2010:67) goes a step further to claim that litotes³¹ is also at play in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a. This means that there is the presence of a rhetorical technique to enhance another technique. In this instance, litotes enhances antithesis. Lanham (1991:95-96) explains that litotes functions to not only implicitly or

³¹ Litotes is a figure of speech whereby the author affirms something by denying it with the exact opposite.

explicitly contrast ideas, but to mean more than is said in a way that intensifies what is merely stated.

Love is patient in more than the use of spiritual gifts. Love is also kind. Being kind and patient, love never envies and never boasts, nor is it arrogant, self-seeking, irritable, and never keeps a record of wrongs. Love finds no joy in unrighteousness; it puts that off. In contrast, it puts on rejoicing in the truth. In its patience it endures all things, believes all things good in people than keeping a record of bad things. Love hopes and endures. The all-encompassing and emphatic “all” (πάντα 1 Corinthians 13:7) as points to the permanent perfection that acts of love produce (Kistemaker, 1993:461-462; Bruce, 1971:127; Garland, 2003:619-620; and Morris, 1958:185-186).

4.10 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to construct and analyse Paul’s persuasive strategy from 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a. The results yielded were based on the presupposition that *prima facie*, in this phase of the persuasion Paul wants the Corinthians to pursue unity by vilifying their practice of spiritual gifts without love, thereby persuading them to adapt their behaviour accordingly.

The main argument towards this end is *argument based on the characteristics of love* delineated in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a. These characteristics of love mean that if one practices them, they achieve the adequacy required to practice spiritual gifts the way they are intended to be practiced (1 Corinthians 12:7). Indirectly, Paul says the Corinthians lacked these characteristics of love, but he writes in such a way that shows that he is hopeful because of God’s involvement in the church at Corinth that these qualities are achievable.

Paul enhances his strategy and argument by using various rhetorical techniques such as, conspicuous words and metaphors, parallelism, chiasm, repetition, rhythm, epanalepsis or resumption, Sygchrisis, Homoeoprophoron or alliteration, and antithesis which all collectively enhance Paul’s rhetorical intent of persuading the Corinthians of the inadequacy of practicing spiritual gifts without love.

CHAPTER 5 PHASE 3: PERSUADING THE CORINTHIANS TO PURSUE UNITY BY EXTOLLING THE COMING SUPREMACY OF τὸ τέλειον: 1 CORINTHIANS 13:8b-13

Εἴτε δὲ προφητεῖαι, καταργηθήσονται· εἴτε γλῶσσαι, παύσονται· εἴτε γνώσις, καταργηθήσεται. ἕκ μέρους γὰρ γινώσκομεν καὶ ἕκ μέρους προφητεύομεν· ὅταν δὲ ἔλθῃ τὸ τέλειον, τὸ ἕκ μέρους καταργηθήσεται. ὅτε ἤμην νήπιος, ἐλάλουν ὡς νήπιος, ἐφρόνουν ὡς νήπιος, ἐλογιζόμην ὡς νήπιος· ὅτε γέγονα ἀνὴρ, κατήργηκα τὰ τοῦ νηπίου. βλέπομεν γὰρ ἄρτι δι' ἐσόπτρου ἐν αἰνίγματι, τότε δὲ πρόσωπον πρὸς πρόσωπον· ἄρτι γινώσκω ἕκ μέρους, τότε δὲ ἐπιγνώσομαι καθὼς καὶ ἐπεγνώσθην. Νυνὶ δὲ μένει πίστις, ἐλπίς, ἀγάπη, τὰ τρία ταῦτα· μείζων δὲ τούτων ἡ ἀγάπη.

But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part, but when the perfect comes, the partial will come to an end. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, and I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put aside childish things. For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I will know fully, as I am fully known. Now these three remain: faith, hope, and love – but the greatest of these is love.

1 Corinthians 12:8b-13:13

5.1 Introduction

1 Corinthians 13:8b-13 is viewed in this study as the climax of Paul's dominant rhetorical strategy of 1 Corinthians 13 - persuading the Corinthians of the eventual cessation of the three spiritual gifts (πνευματικοί) that are mentioned in 1 Corinthians 13:8b.

The primary objective of **chapter 5** is to rhetorically analyse Paul's rhetorical strategy in 1 Corinthians 13:8b-13 which may be outlined as Paul *persuading the Corinthians to pursue unity by extolling the supremacy of τὸ τέλειον*. At first, in Paul's rhetorical strategy in 1 Corinthians 13:8b-13 will be briefly analysed, followed by the arguments he uses to persuade the Corinthians to be united around the extolling of the supremacy of the coming "perfect". The various rhetorical techniques being used to enhance the effectiveness of

Paul's persuasion of the Corinthians to extol the supremacy of "the perfect", will be identified and explained.

5.2 Analysis of Paul's rhetorical strategy in 1 Corinthians 13:8b-13

Paul ended the section in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a by saying "love never ends" (ἡ ἀγάπη οὐδέποτε πίπτει). In 1 Corinthians 13:8b-13 Paul informs the Corinthians that the spiritual gifts mentioned in 1 Corinthians 13:8 will end when "the perfect comes" (1 Corinthians 13:10). Yet Paul encourages the Corinthian believers that contrary to temporal spiritual gifts that end, love never ends (1 Corinthians 13:8a), which is what they should pursue. This implies that if they do not want to be vilified, they should pursue unity through the pursuit of a love-infused practice of spiritual gifts. Love is incomparable, extraordinary, and has no limits. Next, Paul highlights the permanence of love, and hence its superiority over the transience of spiritual gifts. This argument underscores that love is the lifeline of a congregation (Collins, 1999:484).

After underscoring the permanence of love, Paul, in 1 Corinthians 13:8b-10, contrasts it with the temporaneous spiritual gifts: prophecies, tongues and knowledge (1 Corinthians 13:8b). The potential cause of discouragement that the gifts they valued will end, is mitigated by the evocation of a sense of anticipation for something that will not end. Paul has already laboured to convince the Corinthians to see the value of love in the practice of spiritual gifts. What follows in Paul's persuasion is to generate excitement for what will come once spiritual gifts have ceased.

The generation of excitement for what will come once spiritual gifts have ceased, may be detected from the arguments through which Paul enhances his persuasion in 1 Corinthians 13:8b-13. The significance of the order of spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 13:8b is the first argument that Paul uses to enhance his persuasion. Building on the first argument, is the second argument wherein only the cessation of three spiritual gifts is mentioned in 1 Corinthians 13:8. Paul further argues by using different verbs in 1 Corinthians 13:8b to indicate the end of spiritual gifts.

5.3 Significance of the order of the spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 13:8b

Commentators offer divergent insights as to the order of spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 13:8b used as an argument to enhance the persuasion of the pursuit of love compared to

temporaneous spiritual gifts. Godet (1893:249), Biatoma (2010:18-19) and Lockwood (2010:272) see it as effective rhetorically for the emphasis of the permanency of love to be contrasted with the most prized gifts or the gifts the Corinthians were most divided over. Godet argues that in order to persuade the Corinthians of the permanency and importance of love, Paul had to pick the three gifts which they supposed were permanent. Fee (1987:643) reasons that prophecy is Paul's preferred choice of spiritual gift to use in the church because of its role in edifying the church (1 Corinthians 14:5), which is why he mentions it first. In addition, it is important to note the significance of tongues following prophecy because in 1 Corinthians 14:5 Paul emphasises the edifying role of tongues provided they are interpreted, otherwise prophecy remains greater.

Once prophecy and tongues are used for edification, they edify through the knowledge that they produce, which may explain why knowledge logically follows after prophecy and tongues. Carson's (1987:37) contribution to the significance of the order of spiritual gifts seems to support the argument that the three spiritual gifts complement one another. Carson (1987:37) understands prophecy as producing knowledge. In other words, Carson sees the spiritual gifts as diverse yet producing the same results. After all, the purpose of all spiritual gifts is for the common good (1 Corinthians 12:7).

Some commentators seem to understand the mention of three spiritual gifts as representative of all spiritual gifts. Meyer (1983:280) categorises spiritual gifts into three categories, which means all spiritual gifts fall into the category of prophecy, tongues, or knowledge which is why he says Paul mentions only these three gifts. McDougall (2003:180) believes the grouping of spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 12:8-11 sheds light on the mention of only three spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 13:8b. He particularly emphasises that in 1 Corinthians 12:8-11 Paul explains that one Spirit gives different gifts, yet the oneness of the Spirit is emphasised in 1 Corinthians 12:11 to show that the Corinthians are given different gifts for the common good. This means that through the mention of different gifts Paul intends to encourage unity of purpose that is to be pursued.

Compton (2020:36) also adds that the order of spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 13:8b represents all spiritual gifts. In particular, Compton (2020:36) argues that instead of listing all the gifts that Paul has already listed in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, Paul categorises them

into three representative gifts in 1 Corinthians 13:8b. What Paul says about the spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 13:8b is applicable to any spiritual gift.

The divergent insights from commentators seem to complement one another. One may argue that in one of the questions they asked Paul concerning spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:1) Paul could pick up that the Corinthians valued the spiritual gifts of prophecy and tongues and were divided over valuing them over other spiritual gifts. In addressing their question, Paul uses their question to cause them to think about the impermanency of spiritual gifts contrasted with something they were missing, namely the supremacy of love. Furthermore, they need not divide over these spiritual gifts because all spiritual gifts serve the same purpose, the common good (1 Corinthians 12:7). The conspicuous mention of knowledge serves to persuade the Corinthians that it is not to the good of the church to neglect the fact that all spiritual gifts are to be pursued for the common good, the unity of the believers, and the pursuit of the permanency of love since spiritual gifts are temporal.

5.4 Significance of the use of different verbs to indicate the end of spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 13:8

When Paul begins to discuss that prophecies (προφητεῖαι 1 Corinthians 13:8) will come to an end, he uses the future passive verb (καταργηθήσονται 1 Corinthians 13:8). Likewise, when he explains that knowledge (γνῶσις 1 Corinthians 13:8) will come to an end he uses the future passive verb. When he proceeds to further hint that tongues (γλῶσσαι 1 Corinthians 13:8) will cease he uses a future indicative verb (παύσονται 1 Corinthians 13:8). Fee (1987:643) is emphatic that Paul chose the three different verbs to merely indicate that they are temporal, and Paul's purpose is to sensitise the Corinthians to the eschatological reality pertaining to the temporal nature of spiritual gifts rather than imply more from the use of different verbs.

Fee (1994:206) entertains the possibility that the change in verbs may be for rhetorical purposes. He sees Paul using a play of words because he argues that it will be reading too much into the text to argue that there is a significant intention by Paul attached to the different use of different verbs other than for rhetorical purposes. Fee is supported by Fisk (2000:89) who argues that Paul uses different verbs to avoid being tedious. Oropeza (2018:492-493) adds his contribution by observing that the use of different verbs is

intended by Paul to form a chiasmic A-B-A pattern which highlights only that the gift of tongues that the Corinthians valued highly, will also come to an end like prophecy and knowledge. The chiasmic structure makes tongues stand out in this pattern:

A) Prophecy will pass away (ροφητεῖαι καταργηθήσονται)

B) Tongues will cease (γλῶσσαι παύσονται)

A) Knowledge will pass away (γνώσις καταργηθήσεται)

Toussaint's view (1963:314-315) is more assertive in his theory of the significance implied in the change of verbs. Toussaint (1993:314-315) argues that the use of different verses means there is a difference between what causes prophecies and knowledge to come to an end and what causes tongues to cease. What causes prophecy and knowledge to come to an end is "the perfect" in 1 Corinthians 13:10, while nothing indicates what causes tongues to cease. He reiterates his position emphatically that the omission of the reference to tongues in 1 Corinthians 13:9, 11, and 12 makes it clear that tongues will not cease when "the perfect" comes, which he interprets as the *parousia*. So, he concludes that at the *parousia*, which is what he argues 1 Corinthians 13:12 alludes to, it seems as if tongues would have already ceased before this event. Notwithstanding this view, Toussaint wishes to emphasise that Paul intends to sensitise the Corinthians to be ready for the inevitable ending of the temporal gifts at the *parousia* or before.

Fee (1987:642) and Grudem (2016:1033) summarise the argument of the significance of the use of different verbs by imploring scholars to not make the mundane technical issues in the text the focus of Paul's strategy. Fee (1987:642) reminds us that irrespective of where one leans, the persuasive point that Paul makes in 1 Corinthians 13:8b-23 is that the greater urgency of this passage is the fact that spiritual gifts will pass away. Having laid that down as Paul's rhetorical objective, Paul persuades the Corinthians to pursue unity by extolling the coming supremacy of τὸ τέλειον which will cause at least the spiritual gifts mentioned in 1 Corinthians 13:8 to cease.

5.5 Argument based on evoking a sense of anticipation

In **chapter 3** it was argued that Paul employed an *argument based on evoking a sense of disillusionment* to sensitise the Corinthians that exercising spiritual gifts without love

has disastrous effects on the church. Additionally, Paul intended to induce a sense of shock when he announced to the Corinthians that the spiritual gifts they elevated will pass away. However, this disillusionment and shock anticipated something positive that Paul says will come, namely the perfect (τὸ τέλειον 1 Corinthians 13:10) (Thiselton, 2000:1065).

The *argument based on evoking a sense of anticipation* is seen in the promise Paul gives the Corinthians that “when the perfect comes, the partial will come to an end” (ὅταν δὲ ἔλθῃ τὸ τέλειον, τὸ ἐκ μέρους καταργηθήσεται 1 Corinthians 13:10). What at first seems negative, namely that three gifts will pass away, turns out to have a positive corollary. It may seem that it carries negative undertones to describe the three spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 13:8 as “partial” (ἐκ μέρους 1 Corinthians 13:9). However, the word “partial” does not carry negative connotations in this context. “Partial” does not describe the quality of the spiritual gifts vis a vis better, namely “the perfect” (τὸ τέλειον 1 Corinthians 13:10).

The noun translated “partial” (μέρους 1 Corinthians 13:9) refers to something being a part of something else, like parts of the body or it could refer to something that is imperfect (BDAG, 2021:561). In fact, in 1 Corinthians 12:27 Paul uses the same word to explain that all the members of the body who are all part of the body are equal. Being equal, they are individually important because all contribute to the edification and unification of the body (1 Corinthians 12:7). Similarly, the spiritual gifts that are in part are not diminished in quality but are quantitatively part of the collective contribution that all spiritual gifts make.

Paul, by describing the gifts as “partial”, is using what Malcolm (2013:12, 15-64, 227) calls “the rhetoric of reversal”. Malcolm presents the rhetoric of reversal as Paul challenges the Corinthians to change their ethical behaviour from doing what God deems as wrong to doing what God accepts as right. Malcolm (2013:45) claims that the pattern of reversal was introduced to Paul early in his journey as an apostle. Thus, he claims that Paul’s introduction of himself to the Corinthians as one called as “an apostle of Jesus Christ” (κλητὸς ἀπόστολος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ 1 Corinthians 1:1) and “sent to proclaim the gospel” (ἀπέστειλέν εὐαγγελίζεσθαι 1 Corinthians 1:17) points to an ethical behaviour he hopes the Corinthians will embark on as he also had to embark on. On this basis, Malcolm (2013:169) contends that logically therefore, those who have been brought into union with

Christ are called to imitate him in sacrificially and selflessly living their lives to build others in the body of believers. The Corinthians too practiced reversal, by erring through treating the partial gifts as possessing ultimate finality whilst on the earth, (Holladay,1990: 97).

In order to evoke a sense of anticipation, Paul makes use of different strategies:

- Parallelism
- Antithesis
- Repetition
- Rhythm
- Conspicuous words and metaphors, and
- Ellipsis.

5.5.1.1 Parallelism

Paul uses parallelism, which is the method used by the author to repeat the second line that was said in the first line. Sometimes the parallel repetition may be identical words or synonymous words (Zuck, 1991:138).

The first portion of the parallelism is found in 1 Corinthians 13:8b, d, and f. The parallels all begin with “if” (εἴτε) and end with the three suffixes “ται”, presented in the following way:

- εἴτε δὲ προφητεῖαι, καταργηθήσονται (1 Corinthians 13:8b-c) “but as for prophecies, they will come to an end”.
- εἴτε γλῶσσαι, παύσονται (1 Corinthians 13:8d-e) “as for tongues, they will cease”; and
- εἴτε γνώσις, καταργηθήσεται (1 Corinthians 12:8f-g) “as for knowledge, it will come to an end”.

The next portion of the parallelism is found in 1 Corinthians 13:8d-e marked by the repetition of the suffix “αι”, presented in the following words:

- γλῶσσαι “languages”
- παύσονται “they will stop”

The next portion of the parallelism is found in the reason provided by Paul for why these three spiritual gifts will come to an end in 1 Corinthians 13:9a, b, and 1 Corinthians 13:10b, in the following way with the repetition of **ἐκ μέρους**:

- **ἐκ μέρους** γὰρ γινώσκομεν (1 Corinthians 13:9a) “we know in part”.
- **ἐκ μέρους** προφητεύομεν (1 Corinthians 13:9b) “we prophesy in part”; and
- **ἐκ μέρους** καταργηθήσεται (1 Corinthians 13:10b) “the partial will come to an end”.

Paul develops the persuasion through the rhetorical gradation, a rhetorical technique embedded in another technique to enhance another rhetorical technique, (Collins, 2016:472) in these parallelisms. Gradation is when an argument is arranged from the lesser to the greater. The anticipated gradation from the phrase “we know in part” (**ἐκ μέρους**) is supported in 1 Corinthians 13:10, which says “but when **the perfect** comes, **the partial** will come to an end” (ὅταν δὲ ἔλθῃ τὸ τέλειον, τὸ ἐκ μέρους καταργηθήσεται). The gradation is illustrated in 1 Corinthians 13:11-12 where Paul says “When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put aside childish things. For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I will know fully, as I am fully known” (ὅτε ἤμην νήπιος, ἐλάλουν ὡς νήπιος, ἐφρόνουν ὡς νήπιος, ἐλογιζόμην ὡς νήπιος· ὅτε γέγονα ἀνὴρ, κατήργηκα τὰ τοῦ νηπίου. βλέπομεν γὰρ ἄρτι δι’ ἐσόπτρου ἐν αἰνίγματι, τότε δὲ πρόσωπον πρὸς πρόσωπον· ἄρτι γινώσκω ἐκ μέρους, τότε δὲ ἐπιγνώσομαι καθὼς καὶ ἐπεγνώσθην).

In 1 Corinthians 13:11 Paul says to the Corinthians what is in part (the lesser) will progress to being replaced by what is not in part but in full (the greater). This is akin to growing from being a child to being a man. It is no longer reasoning like a child to putting aside childish things. Furthermore, it is a development from temporarily seeing only a reflection in a mirror, to seeing face to face. Here we find gradation intertwined with parallels.

Smit (1991:202) notes this gradation is an instance of antithetical³² parallelism from 1 Corinthians 13:9-11. It is noted that in the parallel between knowledge and prophecy, Paul parallels them with what is partial: “we know in part” (**ἐκ μέρους γὰρ γινώσκομεν** 1

³² Contrasted parallelism.

Corinthians 13:9) which is antithetical³³ to “as for knowledge, it will come to an end” (εἴτε γνώσις, καταργηθήσεται 1 Corinthians 13:8). In addition, Paul says “we prophecy in part” (ἐκ μέρους προφητεύομεν 1 Corinthians 13:9). This is paralleled with “as for prophecies, they will come to an end” (εἴτε δὲ προφητεῖαι, καταργηθήσονται 1 Corinthians 13:8).

The question these parallelisms raise is, why we do not find an antithetical parallelism about the tongues (verse 9)? Commentators do not comprehensively address this issue³⁴. This gap and possible solutions are addressed above under (**section 5.3** to **section 5.5**).

The persuasion that spiritual gifts will cease is presented to the Corinthians in a way that shows them that it will be gradual and not negative at all. There is a plan that will benefit them. Since they value the spiritual gifts of prophecy and tongues, it may not be easy for them to accept that they will cease one day. But the effectiveness of presenting the eventuality that the spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 13:8 is presented in a gracious and charming way which is intended to make it easy for the Corinthians to accept the inevitable (Snyman, 1986:212).

5.5.1.2 Antithesis

Antithesis in 1 Corinthians 13:8-13 is a form of comparison (Lanham, 1991:147). Collins (2016:483) prefers to rather call it sygkrisis which is a good example of comparison that is displayed by Paul in 1 Corinthians 13:8-13. There are a number of features that clearly exhibit antithesis to enhance the effectiveness of Paul's communication:

- The first feature of antithesis that we detect in 1 Corinthians 13:8b-13 is the antithesis between the value the Corinthians placed over certain spiritual gifts as opposed to love, (Collins, 2016:483). The reason why Paul highlights this antithesis is because love does not fail, yet spiritual gifts do (Smit, 1991:203).
- The second feature of antithesis that we detect in 1 Corinthians 13:8b is Paul comparing the mature and immature by using the analogy of developing from childhood to adulthood. Paul indicates to the Corinthians that the time will come

³³ Contrasted.

³⁴ Meyer (1983), Compton (2020), McDougall (2003).

when they will progress from childhood to adulthood (1 Corinthians 13:11). Fee (1987:644-645) is of the view that it is not the believers themselves who will progress from childhood to maturity, but the spiritual gifts. But the contrary is the point that Paul argues. It is the Corinthian believers who are expected to use spiritual gifts in love (Witherington, 1995:271). Therefore, they are to use them not as children (for now they are in part), but to grow to become adults and do away with childish things (1 Corinthians 13:11).

5.5.1.3 Repetition

Zuck (1991:142) remarks that often when repetition is used it makes an emotional impact. Furthermore, Zuck (1991:142) summarises repetition as part of the literary quality of the Bible that points to its artistic beauty to help the reader be captivated by the content that is being communicated.

The first important repetition that we observe in 1 Corinthians 13:8-12 is the anaphora (Smit, 1991:203) conjunction “if” (εἴτε) in three successive times in 1 Corinthians 13:8. Louw and Nida (1988:786) explain that this conjunction can take the equivalent meaning of “if” (εἰ) which Wallace (1995:685) describes as a conditional clause that guides us to understand the reality followed by the conditional clause. In 1 Corinthians 13:8 the tripartite “if” (εἴτε) followed by prophecies (προφητεῖαι), tongues (γλῶσσαι), and knowledge (γνῶσις) points to the reality of the existence of these three spiritual gifts in the Corinthian body.

In other words, Paul may be understood to be stating it as a fact that whether, or the fact that there are these three spiritual gifts, means that the Corinthians should be aware of their temporal nature. Earlier in the study it was mentioned that Tolmie (2004:149, 178) picks up on two prominent purposes for the use of the technique of repetition. The third purpose not mentioned before but picked up from Compton (2004:109) is to corroborate Paul’s anticipation of what will become of temporal spiritual gifts, that they will inevitably cease. They will cease not because of their negative status, but because the coming τὸ τέλειον which will unite them unlike they fail to use the diverse gifts to unite them.

In addition, καταργεομαὶ is repeated four times:

- καταργηθήσονται (1 Corinthians 13:8c); “they will come to an end”

- καταργηθήσεται (1 Corinthians 13:8g); “it will come to an end”
- καταργηθήσεται (1 Corinthians 13:10b); “will come to an end”; and
- κατήργηκα (1 Corinthians 13:11f). “I put aside”.

Furthermore, “ἐκ μέρους” is repeated four times:

- ἐκ μέρους “partially” (1 Corinthians 13:9a);
- ἐκ μέρους “partially” (1 Corinthians 13:9b);
- ἐκ μέρους “partial” (1 Corinthians 13:10b); and
- ἐκ μέρους “in part” (1 Corinthians 13:12c).

The function of why there are four repetitions of καταργεομαὶ, rhetorically is to appeal to the emotions of the Corinthians to be emotionally prepared for the coming to end of spiritual gifts. On the other hand, the repetition of ἐκ μέρους four times is to make it clear to the Corinthians that by insisting on holding on to their valued gifts, they are holding on to what is partial, but should emotionally progress to what is perfect. The other repetition that we find is of γινώσκομεν with its variations. The conjunction “when” ὅτε (1 Corinthians 13:11) is repeated two times, while the adverb “then” τότε (1 Corinthians 13:12) is also repeated two times. Lastly, the word “small child” νήπιος is repeated five times in 1 Corinthians 13:11.

The other word that is repeated three times in three variations of the word is the word “know” - “we know” (γινώσκομεν 1 Corinthians 13:9a), “I know” (γινώσκω 1 Corinthians 13:12:c), and the cognate “I shall understand” (ἐπιγνώσομαι 1 Corinthians 13:12d). The repetitions serve the purpose of emphasising that firstly, spiritual gifts will come to an end, and secondly, this is because the knowledge that spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 13:8 is partial, and lastly there is a promise repeated that the non-partial, full knowledge will come in the future.

The final repetition we find in 1 Corinthians 13:9,12 is the repetition of γινώσκομεν with its four variations. The conjunction ὅτε in 1 Corinthians 13:11 is repeated two times, while the adverb τότε in 1 Corinthians 13:12 is also repeated two times. Lastly, the word νήπιος is repeated five times in 1 Corinthians 13:11. What seems to be repeated and emphasised is the transition that will occur from having partial knowledge to full knowledge, from being

a child once to becoming grown. These are positive aspirations the Corinthians should long for with the hope that they will be united, showing love, and having that which is perfect.

5.5.1.4 Rhythm

Rhythmical beauty is the arrangement of words in a way that is pleasant to the ear when read. There is a rhythmical arrangement, in particular of the repetition of the threefold use of ἐκ μέρους in 1 Corinthians 13:9, threefold use of νήπιος in 1 Corinthians 13:11, the alliteration πρόσωπον πρὸς πρόσωπον in 1 Corinthians 13:12, and a threefold variation of the word γινώσκω in 1 Corinthians 13:12 (appearing as γινώσκω, ἐπιγνώσομαι, and ἐπεγνώσθην). Smit (1991:204-205) rounds off the identification of rhythmical arrangement by claiming that the concluding verse in this section, 1 Corinthians 13:13, visibly displays the rhythm of the three playing an important role in this fashion:

Νυνὶ δὲ μένει (now these three remain)

πίστις ἐλπίς ἀγάπη (faith, hope, love)

τὰ τρία ταῦτα (these three)

μείζων δὲ τούτων ἡ ἀγάπη (the greatest of these is love).

5.5.1.5 Conspicuous words and metaphors

Through the use of scant conspicuous words and metaphors in 1 Corinthians 13:8-12, Paul continues to persuade the Corinthians to desire “the far more supreme way” of love. The scant conspicuous words and metaphors are brief in this section as Smit (1991:201) also observes. The first metaphors are “child” (νήπιος) and “man” (άνήρ) in 1 Corinthians 13:11. In 1 Corinthians 13:11 Paul says “when I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put aside childish things” (ὅτε ἤμην νήπιος, ἐλάλουν ὡς νήπιος, ἐφρόνουν ὡς νήπιος, ἐλογιζόμην ὡς νήπιος· ὅτε γέγονα άνήρ, κατήργηκα τὰ τοῦ νηπίου). The second metaphors are “we see” (βλέπομεν) and “through a mirror” (δι’ ἐσόπτρου) in 1 Corinthians 13:12. In 1 Corinthians 13:12 Paul says “for now we see only a reflection as in a mirror, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I will know fully, as I am fully known” (βλέπομεν γάρ ἄρτι δι’ ἐσόπτρου ἐν

αίνιγματι, τότε δὲ πρόσωπον πρὸς πρόσωπον· ἄρτι γινώσκω ἐκ μέρους, τότε δὲ ἐπιγνώσομαι καθὼς καὶ ἐπεγνώσθην).

A metaphor is a figure of speech which when used can perform various functions. Tolmie (1992:408) sees it as creating a shift of expectancy. Quintilian (35-95) explains the necessity of the use of metaphors for purposes of making the meaning clear. Aristotle (384-322BC) sees one of the functions of metaphors as providing clarity. In 1 Corinthians 13:11-12 we can detect Paul using the metaphor of being like a child, speaking like a child for the purpose of creating a shift in expectancy among the Corinthians. He employs it this way because he expects them to shift from what is likened to a childhood use of spiritual gifts to adulthood. This provided the clarity of the employment of the metaphor in 1 Corinthians 13:11-12. The use of the metaphor may result in the meaning becoming clear, but Paul leaves it to the Corinthians to discover the meaning for themselves. The discovery of the meaning of the metaphors is to be derived from the textual context of 1 Corinthians 13 and from the rhetorical situation that necessitated the creation of the persuasion of 1 Corinthians 13. Once this is done, then the meaning that the metaphor carries will become clear within the argumentative context supported by other rhetorical strategies that Paul uses (Tolmie, 1992:409).

The third is the conspicuous word which is a New Testament *harpax legomenon*. It is the noun αίνιγματι which Louw and Nida (1988:281) define as “an indirect or indistinct visual image”, correlating with the metaphor of looking through a mirror that is not clear and being unable to see yourself clearly. Similarly, the phrase “face to face” (πρόσωπον πρὸς πρόσωπον) is a New Testament *harpax legomenon*, a play of words called paronomasia and also Homoeoprophoron which in the Greek language repeats the same syllable at the beginning of words in sequential or quick succession as in “face to face” (πρόσωπον πρὸς πρόσωπον 1 Corinthians 13:12b) (Biatoma, 2010:68). The repetition in quick succession refers to a time that is soon to come where there will be no partial use of spiritual gifts because the perfect would have come to make the use of spiritual gifts perfect like being able to see clearly and plainly through a clear mirror.

5.5.1.6 Ellipsis

Ellipsis is described as a rhetorical technique that involves the omission of certain words that are deemed necessary to complete a sentence (Anderson, 2000:41). Biatoma

(2010:67) explains that even though these words are omitted, the intended communication is understood by the reader. The pivotal illustration of this is found in 1 Corinthians 13:12 where Paul omits “we see” (βλέπομεν) when he says, “but then face to face” (τότε δὲ πρόσωπον πρὸς πρόσωπον 1 Corinthians 13:12b). The information that completes the sentence is found in deducing from “for now we see” (βλέπομεν γὰρ ἄρτι 1 Corinthians 13:12a), and then logically concluding that Paul means the Corinthians will see in the future. Anderson (2000:41) mentions that this technique heightens emotions because it causes the reader’s emotional engagement to be emphasised. The effectiveness of heightening emotions when ellipsis is used is consistent with the *argument based on evoking a sense of anticipation*. When the reader supplies the omitted word, they do not do so cognitively only, but emotionally as well.

5.6 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to construct and analyse the last supportive strategy of Paul’s overall rhetorical strategy in 1 Corinthians 13. This supportive strategy is Paul’s climax of the dominant rhetorical strategy of 1 Corinthians 13. The climax supportive rhetorical strategy was analysed as *Paul persuading the Corinthians to pursue unity by extolling the supremacy of τὸ τέλειον in 1 Corinthians 13:8b-13*. The analysis of the rhetorical strategy showed that by persuading the Corinthians to pursue unity by extolling the supremacy of “the perfect”, Paul was preparing the Corinthians to pursue love which never ends contrary to the spiritual gifts which end. Spiritual gifts will end when “the perfect comes”. The coming “perfect” implies graduating from what is partial, to what is impartial, from childhood, to adulthood, and from not seeing clearly to seeing clearly.

This sort of incentive, that spiritual gifts will end yet there is something else worth pursuing, is further embellished by Paul through evoking a sense of anticipation for something that will not end, namely the permanence of love, and its superiority over the transience of spiritual gifts. Paul generated excitement among the Corinthians through the argument concerning the significance of the order of the cessation of spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 13:8b, then the argument based on using only three spiritual gifts, and lastly through using different verbs for the ending of the three spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 13:8b. The main argument that Paul used to achieve this objective was to evoke anticipation among the Corinthians for the coming “perfect” (1 Corinthians 13:10). “The

perfect” will cause the spiritual gifts they valued to come to an end, but at the same time they will grow from childhood to maturity and see clearly and no longer in part.

In order to evoke a sense of anticipation, Paul made use of different rhetorical strategies such as, parallelism, antithesis, repetition, rhythm, conspicuous words and metaphors, and ellipsis.

CHAPTER 6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

The goal of this thesis is to study τὸ τέλειον and the status of the πνευματικοί in 1 Corinthians 13:8-12 through TGPA or minimal framework theory which makes the text the starting point of the analysis. It attempts to reconstruct Paul's dominant rhetorical strategy, supporting strategies, and rhetorical techniques from the text itself. This method moves away from analysing the text through the lens of the historical-grammatical method of interpretation, because of its lack of offering detailed rhetoric the author used to persuade his audience.

The central theoretical argument upon which this research is based is outlined in **chapter 1** as follows: In this study the hypothesis is that TGPA of 1 Corinthians 13:8-12 will yield rhetorical insights that provide a better understanding of Paul's rhetorical strategy in 1 Corinthians 13:8-12 by reconstructing the rhetorical strategy from the text itself.

This hypothesis is guided by the methodology that Tolmie (2004:37) first called a "minimal theoretical framework" but was adapted and improved by Genade (2015). Genade (2007:52) first preferred a formalised methodology by naming it a "text-centred" approach, then later attributed the name TGPA to this methodology (Genade, 2015:23).

As the methodology suggests yielding new insights into the rhetorical objective by Paul in 1 Corinthians 13:8-12, this chapter attempts to show whether applying this methodology to interpret 1 Corinthians 13:8-12 yielded insights that provide a better understanding of Paul's rhetorical strategy in 1 Corinthians 13:8-12. It will be shown how the rhetorical insights that were yielded, are from the dominant rhetorical strategy employed by Paul in 1 Corinthians 13.

6.2 The dominant rhetorical strategy of 1 Corinthians 13

The dominant rhetorical strategy reconstructed in 1 Corinthians 13 and presented in three phases (supportive strategies) is summarised as follows: Paul illustrates the futility of practicing spiritual gifts (πνευματικοί) without love (ἀγάπη) and presents love (ἀγάπη) as superior, necessary and indispensable, climaxing with the eventual cessation of the three spiritual gifts (πνευματικοί) mentioned in 1 Corinthians 13:8. Paul persuades the

Corinthians that the cessation of spiritual gifts (πνευματικοί) will be realised when something superior, namely “the perfect (τὸ τέλειον), is inaugurated. Paul structures his argument in a way that first seems intent on disillusioning the Corinthians relating to the phenomenon of the spiritual gifts. Thereafter, he persuades them that the practice of spiritual gifts without love is inadequate. Not only is it inadequate, but spiritual gifts will come to an end when something greater is inaugurated. This great thing which will cause spiritual gifts to end is called “the perfect” which Paul persuades the Corinthians to anticipate its inauguration with excitement. The greater objective is to persuade his audience of the temporaneous nature of spiritual gifts and on the other hand of the superiority of “the perfect”.

Each phase of the demarcated dominant rhetorical strategy addressed the overall rhetorical objective from different perspectives, with their supporting rhetorical arguments and rhetorical techniques which enhance the effectiveness of Paul’s persuasion. A step-by-step argument of the overall rhetorical objective is analysed to test whether Tolmie’s novel rhetorical approach, a text-centred approach, together with Genade’s adapted methodology called TGPA yielded insights into understanding Paul’s rhetorical objective in 1 Corinthians 13, as it purports to offer a meaningful alternative to existing rhetorical models.

6.3 Insights yielded from the rhetorical situation that occasioned the writing of 1 Corinthians 13 in chapter 2

Chapter 2 surveys the different approaches that are utilised by scholars to understand the purpose of the writing of books of the Bible. Some scholars such as Kaiser and Silva (2007) and Zuck (1991) interpret the Bible from a historical point of view called the historical critical method of interpretation to understand the historical situation that occasioned the writing of a text. Other scholars such as Genade (2007), Snyman (2009) and Tolmie (2004), however, aim at understanding the rhetorical situation that occasioned the writing of a text.

In this study the rhetorical method is used to discern the situation that necessitated the writing from the text itself. Using this method the text is studied as functioning rhetorically based on the rhetorical situation that is constructed from the text itself, relying on the text alone to persuade the audience from the meaning that is constructed from the rhetorical

objective embedded in the text (Wuellner, 1987:456). It is this text-centredness approach that distinguishes the approach followed in this study from the *historical* point of view (Genade, 2007:56).

Based on the situation that necessitated the writing of 1 Corinthians constructed from the text, this study found that Paul is addressing the division that arose over the practice of spiritual gifts. Hints are also detected that Paul is addressing those who opposed his teachings and sought to sway the Corinthians from his teaching. Paul reinforces that his teaching is based on the divine mandate bestowed on him by God in 1 Corinthians 1:1. In addition, Chloe's people in 1 Corinthians 1:11 appraised Paul regarding the issues facing the church, and supplied Paul with a series of questions that came from the Corinthians which Paul begins to address in 1 Corinthians 7:1, 1 Corinthians 7:25, 1 Corinthians 8:1, 1 Corinthians 8:4; 1 Corinthians 12:1, 1 Corinthians 16:1, and 1 Corinthians 16:12; which are all introduced with the transitory phrase "now concerning" (περὶ δὲ).

Among this array of issues Paul had to address, the outstanding one in this study begins in 1 Corinthians 12:1, which is concerning spiritual gifts. Eventually it leads to linking 1 Corinthians 13 to 12-14 regarding the purpose as summarised as the purpose of 1 Corinthians 13 as a correction of the loveless use of the spiritual gifts within the Corinthian community. The loveless use of spiritual gifts disturbed order and unity in the church. As a result, Paul wrote 1 Corinthians 13 to persuade the Corinthians to be united in the practice of spiritual gifts, like a body with many parts functions as one (1 Corinthians 12), for the edification of all in love until the perfect comes.

6.4 Insights yielded from phase 1 of Paul's persuasion of the Corinthians: 1 Corinthians 12:31b-13:3

In **phase 1** in **chapter 3** the objective is to show how Paul *persuades the Corinthians to pursue unity by extolling the excellencies of love*. The key urge to pursue unity is taken from the verb "desire" (ζηλοῦτε 1 Corinthians 12:31a) which is the main verb that introduces a new section, followed by the accusative noun "the gifts" (τὰ χαρίσματα 1 Corinthians 12:31a) as the direct object, modified by the adjective "greater" (τὰ μείζονα 1 Corinthians 12:31a). It is established that this is ironic because 1 Corinthians 12 does not seek to convince the Corinthians that there are greater gifts. That was their own

manufacture which caused some of the divisions. The point that Paul makes in 1 Corinthians 12:7 is that all gifts are equal and serve one purpose.

Therefore, by use of irony Paul proposes to show the Corinthians in the indicative verb “I will show” (δείκνυμι 1 Corinthians 12:31b) “a way” (ὁδὸν 1 Corinthians 12:31b), which is the “far more supreme way” (ὑπερβολὴν 1 Corinthians 12:31b), which begins in 1 Corinthians 13:1. As this “supreme way” stands in contrast to the way of the Corinthians, the question that arises is what exactly the supreme way is. It is the way of love, a theme Paul first developed in 1 Corinthians 8:1, and more fully in 1 Corinthians 13 (Malcolm, 2013:88; Thiselton, 2000:1025-1026). This love is the excellency they need to pursue to achieve unity.

Paul persuades them by first disillusioning them. The *argument based on evoking a sense of disillusionment* is seen in the protasis “if I” (ἐὰν ἔχω 1 Corinthians 13:2, 3), a third-class conditional clause, which invites the Corinthians to think of the possibility and outcome of having spiritual gifts without love. Because this is not possible, then love cannot be extolled, and unity cannot be achieved. To further enhance his argument Paul uses various rhetorical techniques which include explicit contrasting, conspicuous words and metaphors, binary, hyperbole, parallelism, repetition, rhythm, and antithesis. All these enforce the need for the purpose of spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:7) namely edification, that love is the only proper motivation and supreme way of using spiritual gifts and concluded with a devastating caution that those who do not practice spiritual gifts in love; they together with their gifts are nothing (1 Corinthians 13:1-3).

6.5 Insights yielded from phase 2 of Paul’s persuasion of the Corinthians: 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a

Chapter 4 analyses the concept of love presented as incomparable, and therefore there is no other virtue to guide the church to use spiritual gifts properly. Since love is the only virtue that builds up and helps the church to achieve unity, Paul shows the inadequacy of practicing spiritual gifts without love.

The *argument based on the characterisation of love* is explained in detail. Paul persuades the Corinthians to implement the characteristics of love in their use of spiritual gifts in the church. The characteristics of love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a serve as the mirror through

which the Corinthians can evaluate their conduct to see if they adequately practice spiritual gifts the way they were intended (1 Corinthians 12:7).

Paul enhances his rhetorical objective in this phase by the use of the *argument based on evoking a sense of anticipation*, and rhetorical techniques such as parallelism, antithesis, repetition, rhythm, conspicuous words and metaphors, and ellipsis.

6.6 Insights yielded from phase 3 of Paul's persuasion of the Corinthians: 1 Corinthians 13:8b-13

After having constructed the rhetorical strategy from the text, **phase 3** of **chapter 5** is the phrase interpreted as the climax of Paul's dominant rhetorical strategy in 1 Corinthians 13. In this phase of the analysis, Paul persuades the Corinthians to *pursue unity by extolling the coming supremacy of "the perfect"* (τὸ τέλειον 1 Corinthians 13:10). "The perfect" is that which, by its arrival, will cause the Corinthians to mature and possibly put an end to the schism and disunity that resulted from the misuse of spiritual gifts.

"The perfect" (1 Corinthians 13:10) is presented as superior and necessary to cause the Corinthians to move from childhood (1 Corinthians 13:11) to adulthood (1 Corinthians 13:11). Moreover, what is in part, namely prophecy, tongues, and knowledge will pass away because they will be completed by "the perfect". It is at that time that the Corinthians will no longer see dimly but will see as face to face (1 Corinthians 13:12). Most importantly, when "the perfect" has come the Corinthians will no longer know in part, and love will abide forever (1 Corinthians 13:13).

To enhance the effectiveness of his persuasion Paul began by persuading the Corinthians by the arguments that show the temporal nature compared to the permanent nature of spiritual gifts from two argumentative angles. The first is the argument concerning the significance of the order of the spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 13:8b. The second argument is the significance of the use of different verbs to indicate the end of spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 13:8b. The main supportive argument of the supportive rhetorical strategy is the *argument based on evoking a sense of anticipation* followed by rhetorical techniques such as parallelism, antithesis, repetition, rhythm, conspicuous words and metaphors, and ellipsis.

6.7 Conclusion

The finding of this study is that in 1 Corinthians 13 there is one dominant rhetorical strategy reconstructed and summarised in three phases. Following the identification of the dominant rhetorical strategy, this study demarcated Paul's strategy into three phases, namely phase 1 from 1 Corinthians 12:31b-13:3, phase 2 from 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a, and phase 3 from 1 Corinthians 13:8b-13 based on the rhetorical considerations in the text.

All of Paul's argumentations in three phases demonstrate the need for using spiritual gifts in a way that edifies and unites the church. Spiritual gifts edify and unite the church when they are practiced in love, which is preeminent, permanent, and a far more supreme way of practicing spiritual gifts. More than that, spiritual gifts are temporaneous in nature, so Paul had to persuade the Corinthians to see the eternal value of love and to be eager for "the perfect" which will help them to overcome the schism that was caused by ignorance, and an immaturity pertaining to spiritual gifts.

Paul left the Corinthians with the desire to pursue unity by extolling the supremacy of the coming perfect. He left them assured that if they are persuaded of his point of view, that love is the supreme way of practicing spiritual gifts, and that love is excellent in and of itself, and that if they practice spiritual gifts without love, they will be vilified. Not only will they be vilified, but they will also indeed see that in relation to the phenomenon of the spiritual gifts, they are inadequate without love. Furthermore the spiritual gifts will be caused to come to an end by something greater, namely the perfect. In relation to the perfect, this study found that the climax of Paul's persuasion seems to be the evocation of anticipation and excitement within his audience.

This study has proved that an interpretation of 1 Corinthians 13:8-12 by applying TGPA yields rhetorical insights that provide a better understanding of Paul's rhetorical strategy in 1 Corinthians 13:8-13. The TGPA followed in this study proves that the rhetorical strategy may be constructed from the text itself without relying on pre-existing rhetorical models, classical or modern. The dominant strategy, supporting strategies, and rhetorical techniques used to enhance Paul's argument are all constructed from the text from phase 1 climaxing with phase 3. Therefore, this provides a meaningful alternative contribution to the study of the rhetoric of Pauline texts.

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