INSIGHTS FROM CICERO ON PAUL'S REASONING IN 1 CORINTHIANS 12–14

LOVE SANDWICH OR FIVE COURSE MEAL?

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Summary

The 'love chapter' in 1 Corinthians is usually thought to be a digression by Paul from his main argument about spiritual gifts. However, applying the tool of classical rhetoric to the passage reveals a previously unnoticed structure behind our chapter divisions. From the principles of good speech preparation (explained by Cicero in De Partitione Oratoria*) Paul has arranged his discussion of spiritual gifts into the five standard parts: introduction, statement of facts with thesis statement, presentation of positive arguments, refutation of opponents' views and conclusion. In this way one can identify the key summary statements, the skilful argumentation of Paul, the apparent views of his opponents, and the contextual function of chapter thirteen. This paper makes a thorough analysis of these chapters according to the theory in Cicero's handbook, summarised in a chart at the end.*

I. Introduction

In Grant's article which outlines 'Hellenistic Elements in 1 Corinthians', he summarises his conclusions regarding chapter thirteen by explaining that

> the rhetorical skill with which Paul has worked out his clauses and his sentences in this chapter is by no means spontaneous. It reflects a careful study either of rhetorical manuals or of some literary model or models. Admittedly we have no idea of what Paul's sources were. It seems certain that they existed.[1]

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[1]   Robert Grant, 'Hellenistic Elements in 1 Corinthians' in *Early Christian Origins: Studies in honour of Harold R. Willoughby*, ed. Allen Wikgren (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1961): 60–66.

The quest for 'sources' is invariably difficult and inconclusive, but in this paper I propose a specific rhetorical pattern, reflected in one 'manual' in particular, which apparently significantly influenced Paul's construction not only of 1 Corinthians 13, but also of the whole argument of 1 Corinthians 12 to 14.

Why should we use rhetorical criticism?

Recent rhetorical studies of 1 Corinthians generally agree that chapters twelve to fourteen form a single distinct argument in the epistle, primarily because of their unity of subject matter and the clear literary breaks indicated in 12:1 and 15:1.[2] Witherington recognises that the introduction with Περὶ δέ ('But concerning …') in 12:1 marks a new topic within the broader section of problems in Corinthian worship (11:2–14:40) and mentions two examples of analyses which look for the particular elements of a complete rhetorical speech within these chapters. He eventually dismisses the conclusions of both Smit and Standaert, preferring the commonly held simple progression from general argument (ch. 12) to digression (ch. 13) to specific application (ch. 14). Even so, he classes these three chapters as a 'single rhetorical unit with a three-part argument', or a single 'argument' with three 'divisions', and in so doing implicitly acknowledges their rhetorical unity. If one agrees with Witherington that this is a distinct rhetorical argument, this gives justification for further analysing the argument's rhetorical arrangement according to the rules of accepted rhetorical practice, whether or not one arrives at the particular conclusions of Standaert and Smit.

How should we use rhetorical criticism?

With Witherington, I find the analyses of Smit and Standaert unconvincing, primarily because of their method of selecting and applying certain rhetorical terms and practices such as *partitio*

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[2]   E.g. Ben Witherington, *Conflict and Community in Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids/Carlisle: Eerdmans/Paternoster, 1995): 251; Margaret M. Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1991): 266. Some place it within the context of a larger section of proof extending from 11:2 to 14:40, e.g. Wilhelm Wuellner, 'Greek Rhetoric and Pauline Argumentation' in *Early Christian Literature and the Classical Intellectual Tradition: in honorem Robert M. Grant*, ed. William R. Schoedel and Robert L. Wilken (Paris: Éditions Beauchesne, 1979): 177–188, here p. 187, and Mitchell, *Reconciliation*: 258, n. 402.

(partition) or *digressio* (digression) in a fairly loose fashion, without following any particular handbook or rhetorical tradition consistently. Standaert is more consistent than Smit, but remains consciously eclectic. Both Standaert and Smit conclude that chapter thirteen is a digression in the argument. Standaert sees chapters twelve and fourteen as *exordium* + *narratio* (introduction + statement of facts) and *argumentatio* (argumentation) respectively (an unusually long *narratio*). Smit instead divides each of these chapters up using the *partitio*, relying on a somewhat forced interpretation of several passages.[3] Even so, Smit's discussion of the *exordium* and *peroratio* (conclusion) is detailed and generally convincing, although perhaps overemphasising Paul's concern to establish his own apostolic authority throughout the argument.

Smit's rhetorical analysis, though, unlike that of Standaert, makes no mention of a fairly common understanding in handbooks of classical rhetoric from around the time of Paul that a correctly structured speech should as a general rule have five parts,[4] regardless of whether it is forensic, deliberative or epideictic. The speech's genre certainly affects how each part is treated, even to the point of leaving one out if its function has already been fulfilled in some other way, but to create an incomplete speech in this manner there must be good reason.[5]

For example, the discussion in *Rhetorica ad Herennium* of the deliberative speech instructs the orator to develop the cause as a whole by means of an Introduction (*exordium*), a Statement of Facts

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[3] Benoit Standaert, 'Analyse rhetorique des chapitres 12 à 14 de 1 Cor' in *Charisma und Agape*, ed. Lorenzo de Lorenzi (Serie Monografica di Benedictina 7; Rome: Abbey of St. Paul, 1983): 23–34; Joop Smit, 'Argument and Genre of 1 Corinthians 12–14' in *Rhetoric and the New Testament*, ed. Stanley E. Porter and Thomas H. Olbricht (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993): 211–230.

[4] Some added a sixth (*partitio/propositio* (proposition)) between *narratio* and *confirmatio* (proofs), although Quintilian considered this an introductory statement appropriate to every part of the speech, and therefore not a separate part in itself (*Institutio Oratoria* 3.9.2-3); others considered *confirmatio* [*probatio* (proofs)] and *refutatio* [*confutatio*] (refutation) to be two aspects of a single part, that of 'proofs' (more common to deliberative speeches in which there is nothing to 'refute'), but generally the five parts were recognised as basic – see Harry Caplan's discussion in the Loeb volume of *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 2.18.28 (note *b*).

[5] Lausberg comments that, 'The speech of the *genus iudiciale* … is chosen as the model case since … it displays the individual parts of the speech in a particularly developed form. The parts of the speech demonstrated in this model case can be transferred analogously to the two other *genera*.' – Heinrich Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric*, ed. David E. Orton and R. Dean Anderson (Leiden: Brill, 1998): §261 (p. 120) [cf. §§284–287, 337, 429, 441–442].

(*narratio*), Proofs (*confirmatio*), Refutations (*confutatio*), and Conclusion (*conclusio*), explicitly cross-referencing the earlier lengthy discussion of the same 'rules for developing an argument artistically' found in the treatment of the forensic speech.[6] Likewise the epideictic speech should as a rule involve an Introduction, a Statement of Facts, Praise and Censure (explicitly corresponding to Proofs and Refutations, but having differing arrangements depending on the subject being discussed), and Conclusion.[7]

Similarly Cicero's *De Oratore*, while often emphasising the orator's freedom in constructing his speech to suit the occasion, still affirms the same general principle in terms of the 'nature' of rhetorical discourse:

> to make some prefatory remarks, then to set out our case, afterwards to prove it by establishing our own points with arguments in their favour and refuting our adversary's points, then to wind up our case and so to come to our conclusion – this is the procedure enjoined by the very nature of oratory[8]

Quintilian also treats both deliberative and epideictic rhetoric in a similar way to forensic, like the orators mentioned above, explaining how particular parts of the speech such as *exordium* and *narratio* are worked out in practice in these genres.[9]

It follows, therefore, that in analysing this distinct argument of Paul we should look for the structure of the rhetorical unit in a similar way – first considering the arrangement of the argument according to the normal division into five parts of a speech, and only if the speech is incomplete or amplified appealing to a change in genre. The handbook we will use below discusses the five parts often in the context of forensic rhetoric, where all five parts naturally occur. However the rhetorical theory for each part can apply equally to the deliberative rhetoric we find in our passage, the type most common in Paul's letters.

'Micro-Rhetoric'

A further relevant point addressed in *Rhetorica ad Herennium* concerns the issue of 'micro-rhetoric' (as Witherington terms it), in which 'a particular argument functions as a speech in itself and so has all the necessary rhetorical parts from *exordium* to *peroratio*'.[10] Witherington,

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6   *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 3.4.7–5.9, referencing 2.18.28–19.30.
7   *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 3.6.10–8.15.
8   *De Oratore* 2.76.307.
9   *Institutio Oratoria* 3.9.1–5, 3.8.6–11.
10   Witherington, *Conflict*: 253, n. 2.

though accepting the general idea,[11] chooses not to apply it to our passage, preferring to work through the logic of Paul's argument within the larger rhetorical structure simply on the basis of apparent meaning. *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, however, provides the justification for considering the 'micro-rhetoric' of each individual argument within a rhetorical speech:

> Our Arrangement will be based on the principles of rhetoric when we observe the instructions that I have set forth in Book I – to use the Introduction, Statement of Facts, Division, Proof, Refutation, and Conclusion, and in speaking to follow the order enjoined above. It is likewise on the principles of the art that we shall be basing our Arrangement, not only of the whole case throughout the discourse, but also of the individual arguments, according to Proposition, Reason, Proof of the Reason, Embellishment, and Résumé, as I have explained in Book II. This Arrangement, then, is twofold – one for the whole speech, and the other for the individual arguments – and is based upon the principles of rhetoric.[12]

Earlier, this handbook explained that this two-fold arrangement both assists the orator in memory, and enables the hearer to 'perceive and remember the distribution of the parts in the whole cause and also in each particular argument.' (2.18.27)

One rhetorical practice often cited to explain chapter thirteen is the 'epideictic digression',[13] but even if this is a correct explanation, it should not affect one's analysis of the speech according to the five parts. Quintilian makes it quite clear that

> As for Digression (*egressio*, or *excessus*, as it has begun to be called more commonly), if it is outside the Cause it cannot be a part of the Cause, and if it is in the Cause it is an auxiliary or embellishment of the parts of the Cause from which it digresses.[14]

The *excursus* should serve to amplify one of the five parts of the speech or an individual argument within the *probatio* or *refutatio*. If it is argued that chapter thirteen constitutes such an *excursus*, one must demonstrate which part of speech the *excursus* follows; on which part it is elaborating. It is therefore still important to analyse the whole speech according to its parts, and from that to determine the extent and nature of any apparent *excursus*.

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[11] Witherington, *Conflict*: 47, n. 140; cf. his treatment of ch. 15 on p. 292.

[12] *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 3.9.16–17

[13] e.g. Smit, 'Argument': 226–227; Standaert, 'Analyse': 29–30; Witherington, *Conflict*: 264; Wuellner, 'Argumentation': 187-188; Mitchell, *Reconciliation*: 274-275 (seeing just 13:4–7 as the digression).

[14] *Institutio Oratoria* 3.9.4

Rhetoric for beginners, according to Cicero

If we are to examine the rhetorical structure (*dispositio*) of the argument in 1 Corinthians 12 to 14 as micro-rhetoric, that is according to its five parts, we must clarify which rhetorical standards for the five parts we are using. Common rhetorical standards of Paul's time may be found in any one of several rhetorical 'manuals' (handbooks) circulating in the Hellenistic world. Smit's analysis made use of four handbooks he considered well-suited to a rhetorical 'school' setting, providing 'a good impression of the rhetoric that was generally practised in Paul's time and surroundings'.[15] Of these four, I have chosen to focus on one in particular, Cicero's *De Partitione Oratoria* (*Part. Or.*), not because of any detailed comparison I have made between the four, but rather because the instructions in this one seem to correspond so exactly to what we find in 1 Corinthians 12 to 14. A rhetorical handbook better at explaining this passage may well exist and, furthermore, I have yet to investigate whether these guidelines also fit other arguments in Paul's writings as precisely as this one. Recognising my considerable inexperience in the field of rhetorical criticism, and the need for much more research in various areas, I am proposing here one possible tool for studying Paul's letters that may open up new and fruitful lines of exegesis. Porter comments in his general overview of Pauline rhetorical scholarship that 'only a few of the [analyses of Pauline epistles] attempt to follow one of the [Greek and Roman rhetorical handbook] traditions or one of the authors faithfully, most of them being consciously eclectic.'[16] This paper will confine its analysis exclusively to one author and one handbook, following this handbook in detail to establish points of comparison.

George Kennedy's *New History of Classical Rhetoric* describes *De Partitione Oratoria* in the following way:

> Subsequently, perhaps between 54 and 52 B.C., Cicero wrote a very different, much shorter work [than *De Oratore*] on rhetoric, *Partitiones Oratoriae*, or *Classifications of Oratory*. It is a rhetorical catechism, unrelieved by characterization, digression, or adornment, intended to provide his son with a Latin statement of the rhetorical theories of invention and arrangement he had been studying in Greek. Modern students have sometimes found it a convenient

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[15] Smit, 'Argument': 212.

[16] Stanley E. Porter, 'Paul of Tarsus and his Letters' in *Handbook of Classical Rhetoric in the Hellenistic Period [330 B.C. – A.D. 400]*, ed. Stanley E. Porter (Leiden: Brill, 1997): 533-585, here p. 541.

short introduction to the parts of the oration and stasis theory as understood in the first century B.C.[17]

It is fairly clear, then, how suitable such a handbook would be for rhetorical education, written as it was by one of the greatest classical orators. Paul, being a citizen of Tarsus (known for its rhetorical education) and educated in the Hellenistic city of Jerusalem, may conceivably have studied such a handbook in his rhetorical education[18] and when writing to a city like Corinth it would have been natural to use the principles of correct speech he had learned in school and through later experience.[19] Further conclusions arising from comparison with this handbook can only be addressed once the parallels have been laid out clearly.

II. Comparison with *De Partitione Oratoria* VIII-XVII

This discussion will necessarily be in outline form rather than comprehensive, since the interpretation of each point and verse could be debated in great detail, and by those much more knowlegeable than myself. However I trust that by setting out the apparent correspondences in a very basic way, the full extent of the parallel might provide some support for particular interpretations. For each section I will compare point by point the relevant material from Cicero's handbook and the text of 1 Corinthians 12 to 14. I will be considering the entire discussion of Arrangement in *De Partitione Oratoria*, to which readers are encouraged to refer throughout to verify for themselves the detailed points of comparison being made. The translation being quoted is that of Rackham in the Loeb Classical Library (1942).

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[17] George A. Kennedy, *A New History of Classical Rhetoric* (Princeton: University Press, 1994): 146.

[18] Porter, 'Paul': 534-535. This is a matter of some debate still, but it is largely agreed that Paul would have been exposed to rhetorical education of some kind as a young man.

[19] Again, this view is not altogether without its problems. However, 1 Cor. 2:1-5, often quoted to disprove use of rhetoric in Paul, concerns the unrefinement of Paul's initial evangelism amongst the Corinthians, rather than his own rhetorical ability (which he says was restrained by choice at that point in time, for a particular purpose). Paul also quotes the Corinthians' own stated recognition that his letters are 'weighty and strong', contrasting with his personal presence (2 Cor. 10:10).

(1) The Exordium (12:1-3)

Cicero	*Paul*
'introductory passages' derived 'either from the persons or from the facts of the case' (8.28)	'persons' = 'brethren' (12:1) 'facts' = brethren are those characterised by utterances of 'the Spirit of God' (12:3), directly contrasting with their former way of life (12:2)
Three-fold intention of introduction: 1) 'to secure … a friendly hearing' (8.28) • based on personality of speaker, judges or opponents	• 'judges' are 'brethren' (not opponents) (12:1)
• indicates 'some reason for or expectation of agreement with the persons deciding the case'	• Paul wants to ensure their 'knowledgeable-ness' concerning *pneumatika* – a desirable object (12:1)
2) 'an intelligent hearing' (8.29) intro-ducing 'the actual facts themselves' by: • stating 'the class and nature of the case';	• 'class': 'I make known to you…' (12:3) = deliberative case, 'nature' = involving supernatural speech;
• defining it; and	• pneumatika are 'spiritual' because of their origin in 'the Spirit of God';
• dividing it into parts which should be clear and distinct, unmixed and few in number	• anyone declaring Jesus to be 'Lord' is 'spiritual', anyone declaring otherwise is not 'spiritual'
3) 'and an attentive hearing.' (8.30) • appealing to 'the actual facts themselves'	
• introducing matters either: (i) of great importance, (ii) inevitable or (iii) having some connection with the actual members of the court	• 'members of the court' (iii) = Corinth-ian believers (12:2); 'connection' = men-tion of their former pagan lifestyle, which links present topic to their new identity

(2) The Narratio (12:4-7)[20]

Cicero	**Paul**
'the statement [of the case] is an explanation of the facts and as it were a base and foundation for the establishment of belief' (9.31)	

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[20] One may object that *narratio* should surely be a narrative. A *narratio* does indeed set out 'the order of events' (Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria* 3.8.11), but if the topic is spiritual gifts, the 'events' are no more than the giver(s), the giving (cf. 12:7) and the gift(s). A clear example of a rhetorical treatise in which Cicero himself includes no 'order of events' *per se* in his *narratio*, but only a 'statement of facts', is his *Tusculan Disputations 1*, 18-25 (ed. & tr. A. E. Douglas; Warminster/Chicago: Aris & Phillips/ Bolchazy-Carducci, 1985: 30-35), in which he discusses the merits of death. [I am grateful to P. James for this example.]

Cicero	*Paul*
Three rules should be followed: 1) 'clarity' (9.32)	
• the quality 'most frequently applauded' in 'exposition and elucidation' of the *narratio* is 'brevity'	• three succinct statements combine to present a complete picture of the three-fold identity and activity of Paul's God
2) 'convincingness' (9.32) • facts narrated 'in accordance with the persons, the times and the places'	• the 'persons' involved can clearly see the diversity of gifts and yet the same Lord worshipped
• 'set out the cause of every action and occurrence'	• 'every action and occurrence' = the use of the many *pneumatika*, 'the cause' = simply 'God'
• 'based on evidence … in agreement with … religion'	• for 'evidence' cf. 12:3, parallel between 'God', 'Lord' and 'Spirit' assumes normal Christian beliefs
• 'indicates honesty in the speaker, integrity …'	• see below in 12:7
3) 'charm' (9.32) • 'comprises causes for surprise and suspense and unexpected issues'	• Paul links matter of *pneumatika* with the ultimate orthodox doctrine – the unity of God (despite diversity of function among the three persons)
Cicero makes no mention of the *propositio*, suggesting possibly that he includes its function within 'statement of the case'; [cf. Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria* 4.4.1-9, who quotes Cicero][21]	12:7 seems to complete vv. 4-6, yet is separate also from the specifics of the following list. It is either part of the *narratio* or a separate *propositio*, i.e. a summary statement of following arguments. If it is part of the *narratio*, it brings further 'convincingness' – mention of 'the common good' shows Paul's concern for his hearers.

(3) The Confirmatio (12:8–14:12)

The *confirmatio* is the first of Cicero's two divisions intended to persuade the members of the court. Matters brought forward for proof may fall into one of three types of questions: relating to the case's reality, or its identity or its qualities (9.33).[22] Each will be treated separately below.

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[21] Cf. also Lausberg, *Handbook*: §346.

[22] In a forensic speech, for example, the first might establish by 'inference' how, where, and by whom the individual died; the second might establish that the death is correctly 'defined' as a murder; the third might establish the 'qualities' of the murder, i.e. that it was justified considering what the victim was about to do.

(A) Questions of reality (12:8-27)[23]

Cicero	Paul
'Inference' about the case's reality 'is based entirely on probabilities and on the essential character of things.' (10.34)	The common source of the 'varieties of gifts' in the Spirit must be explained (probable) instead of assumed (essential)
Probabilities	
• come 'from the parts … of the statement'	• 'varieties of gifts' from 12:4, 'the Spirit' from 12:4, 7
• 'deal with persons, places, times, actions, occurrences' (10.34)	• discussion of *pneumatika* deals primarily with the 'action' itself, 'persons' = God (not believers)
• 'actions and occurrences are either matters of design or unintentional' (11.38)	• 'distributing to each one individually *just as he wills*' (12:11, emphasis added)
• consider all this and 'arrive at an inference from each in turn'	• 'one and the same Spirit works all these things' (12:11)
'the greatest corroboration is supplied to a probable truth by' (11:40)	
• 'first an example'	• 'to one is given the word of wisdom' (12:8-10)
• 'next the introduction of a parallel case'	• 'just as' (Καθάπερ) the body has variety in unity, 'so also' (καί) is Christ (12:12)
• 'also sometimes an anecdote, even though it be a tall story'	• 'If the foot should say' (12:15-16), 'the eye cannot say to the hand' (12:21)
	• 12:27 = an *inclusio* with 12:12, reiterating the 'parallel case' of the human body and 'Christ's body'

(B) Questions of identity (12:28–13:13)

Cicero	Paul
	'some of one kind (οὒς μέν) God has placed in the church first apostles' (12:28) – Paul chooses to focus here on the 'seemly', 'honourable' members (cf. 12:22-24, 26) to make a general point about *pneumatika*, applying equally to 'lesser' gifts.
The 'identity' of case requires an explanation of 'the class to which a thing belongs and of some special property that distinguishes it' (12.41)	'Greatness' of a Spirit manifestation is not determined by the number of people who possess it (12:29-30); it depends instead on its 'special property'.
	The gifts are stated again in reverse order (tongues – 13:1, prophets & teachers & works of power – 13:2, apostles – 13:3) to show that even the greatest gift loses its

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23 Although 12:8 certainly continues on from 12:4-7, a new section begins here with the change from stating the case to proving it, indicated by the use of 'for' (γάρ).

Cicero	*Paul*
	greatness without love, the special property of *pneumatika*.
'there usually arises a great deal of disagreement about special properties' (12.41), so definition is necessary, using:	13:4-13 fulfils the need for 'definition', but is also 'amplification', considered below under Cicero's discussion of The Peroration (15.52–17.58).
• 'opposites'	• 'not jealous … does not rejoice in unrighteousness' (13:4-6)
• 'unlike or … like objects'	• unlike: transitory gifts (13:8-10), like: 'faith, hope' (13:13)
• 'descriptions'	• seven positive qualities of love (13:4, 6-7)
• 'enumerations of consequences'	• consequences = maturity (13:11) & seeing 'face to face' (13:12)
• 'explanation of a term or a name'	• term = 'love'

(C) Questions of qualities (14:1-11)

Cicero	*Paul*
'questions as to quality' (12.42) of an action may argue that:	'action' = use of *pneumatika*; 'quality' of the action depends on its suitability for 'edification' of the church (14:3, 4b-5). *Pneumatika* are 'rightly done' when used:
1) it was 'rightly done' a) 'for the sake of avoiding or avenging pain', or	
b) 'in the name of piety or modesty or religious scruple or patriotism', or 2) it was done wrongly 'because of necessity or ignorance or accident'	• for 'the common good' (cf. 12:7), or 'edification of the church' (14:12); cf. 'patriotism' (1b)
• The inquiry 'usually' concerns 'whether the action was done lawfully and rightly or not' (12.43).	• To establish when public *pneumatika* are used 'rightly', Paul highlights two: - tongues edifies self, but - prophecy edifies the church (14:4)
	Three examples or parallel cases are used to make the point (14:6-11): 1) Paul's visit to Corinthian church for edification (14:6) 2) 'lifeless things' used for a purpose (14:7-9) 3) cross-cultural communication requires meaning (14:10-11)

[Peroratio – 14:12]

This verse concludes both the section on 'qualities' and also the *confirmatio* as a whole; 'edification of the church' (14:12) recalls the argument of 14:1-5, and also links back to 'the common good' in the introductory statement of the case (12:7). In the *confirmatio*, three arguments have been set forth and supported by a variety of means:

first, the 'reality' of *pneumatika* is that they are deliberate gifts of the one Spirit to all believers (with the parallel case of the body); second, the 'identity' of *pneumatika* is founded on their 'special property' of 'love' (with an extended definition of 'love'); and third, the 'qualities' of *pneumatika* are found in their usefulness or otherwise for 'edifying' the whole church (with three examples). In his conclusion of this section Paul refers to the Corinthian believers' own position on *pneumatika*, which leads nicely into the *refutatio*.

(4) The Refutatio (14:13-33)

The *refutatio* is the second part focusing on persuading members of the court. Here the rhetorician refutes opposing arguments rather than defending his own, and Cicero advocates three types of refutation: questioning the foundations of the arguments, or their logic, or their conclusions. Discerning the views of the Corinthians within Paul's writing involves the tricky business of 'mirror-reading', except for example in verses like 14:12, where his audience's views are stated. Even so, it can be assumed that Paul was aware of views contrary to his own, or else was able to anticipate the arguments others might use to disagree. Acknowledging our lack of complete certainty, we will attempt to discover the views Paul was setting out to refute in this section.

Cicero writes that, 'Either you must deny the whole of what your opponent has assumed in arguing his case, if you are able to show that it is imaginary or untrue, or you must rebut the statements that he has assumed are probable' (12.44) The arguments Paul is refuting don't assume what is 'imaginary' or blatantly 'untrue', therefore the statements must each be rebutted. Cicero proposes three ways this may be done, which will be dealt with separately.

(A) Argument 1 (14:13-19)

Cicero	Paul
'you must rebut the statements that he has assumed are probable, and must show…' (12.44) 1) '…first that doubtful points have been taken for certain'	• The situation addressed seems to relate to praying (14:13-15) or singing (14:15) in a tongue in a public gathering of believers (14:16). • Proposed opposing argument: 'The gift of tongues is the most suitable God-given medium for public thanksgiving.'

Cicero	Paul
	• Paul argues instead: i) If the mind is unoccupied, how is one giving thanks? (14:13-15) ii) Hearers can't respond with 'Amen' if tongues are used in a public gathering (14:16-17). iii) Paul himself would prefer to speak words of instruction in a church setting (14:18-19).

(B) Argument 2 (14:20-25)

Cicero	Paul
'you must rebut the statements that he has assumed are probable, and must show…' (12.44) 2) '…next that the same statements can also be made in the case of things manifestly false'	• Stated opposing arguments: 'tongues are for a sign … to those who believe', whereas 'prophecy [is for a sign] … to unbelievers' (14:22) • Proposed explanation: Corinthian believers formerly served 'dumb idols' (12:2) who spoke through their prophets ('oracles'), but now the true Speaking God gave heavenly languages to them; surely then tongues is the distinctive 'Christian' gift, the mark signifying the true believer. • Paul refutes this by providing alternative contexts in which these statements are 'manifestly false': i) In the time of Isaiah (Isa. 28:7-13) God's people rejected His prophets, so He changed His prophet's message to meaningless syllables as a sign of coming judgement (1 Cor. 14:20-21). ii) To those who don't speak in tongues and who enter a Corinthian church meeting, tongues will in effect be the 'mark signifying the true lunatic', but prophecy will bring conviction of the truth of who believers are (14:24-25).

(C) Argument 3 (14:26-32)

Cicero	Paul
'you must rebut the statements that he has assumed are probable, and must show…' (12.44) 3) '…then that the results that he desires do not follow from his assumptions'	• The situation addressed seems to involve a time 'when you assemble' as a church (14:26), and 'each one has' a contribution to bring; 14:27 & 31 imply

Cicero	*Paul*

that multiple tongues or prophecies were brought at the same time.

• Proposed opposing argument: 'Whenever one is given a revelation by the Spirit it must be brought publicly; it has clearly been given by God for a purpose.'

• Paul argues instead:

i) If the aim is for all the *pneumatika* to be used, these include the divinely ordained gifts of response – 'interpretation' with tongues (14:27-28; cf. 12:10), and 'judgement of spirits' with prophecy (14:29; cf. 12:10).

ii) If the aim is to benefit from all the *pneumatika* God gives ('let all things *for edification* be done' – 14:26), simultaneous delivery of several revelations will rather prevent 'all' from hearing, let alone learning and being 'exhorted' – prophets should control not what, but when, they speak (14:30-32).

[Peroratio – 14:33]

In verse 33, Paul moves from discussing how particular *pneumatika* should be used to a more general summary statement about the nature of the God who gives these gifts, recalling similar theological reasoning in the introductory statement of the case (12:4-7). As with the *confirmatio* (14:12), the *refutatio* also has a concluding verse rounding off the part of the speech. Three opposing arguments were rebutted by Paul in three different ways in the *refutatio*. First, the 'doubtful point' that 'speaking in tongues is the most suitable medium for public thanksgiving' had been 'taken for certain', but actually intelligible speech is far better. Second, the 'same statements', regarding tongues being a better distinguishing mark of the believer than prophecy, applied to the situation of Isaiah's contemporaries, or even of their own church gatherings, would be 'manifestly false'. Third, 'the results' desired by the church, to use and benefit from all the revelation and exhortation God has to give, 'do not follow from [the] assumptions' that divine revelation must be expressed whenever it is received. The one-verse *peroratio* (ending) of 14:33 succinctly summarises the arguments of the *refutatio*: it deplores the 'confusion' associated with giving thanks in tongues, using tongues in the company of the ungifted, and bringing revelations in an unrestrained manner;

and it appeals for the 'peace' of intelligible thanksgiving, convicting prophecy, and ordered contributions in meetings.

*Tips for Developing the Argument (*Part. Or. *13.45–14.51)*

Cicero proceeds after a discussion of the *refutatio* to consider how one should develop an argument, and then how one should handle witnesses. This section may perhaps belong more appropriately to Cicero's treatment of style earlier in the handbook. Even so, Paul shows familiarity with these principles of argumentation, as demonstrated in the points selected below.

Cicero	***Paul***
'there are two kinds of argumentation' (13.46):	
1) 'directly', proposing and then defending the proposition	• e.g. 12:8-27 – here the proposition is carried over from the statement of the case in 12:7
2) 'backward', assuming what will be established, 'exciting emotion', and then stating the propostition	• e.g. 14:20-25 – 14:20 appeals to emotion, 14:21 appeals to the Law, and then 14:22 states the proposition
• 'we put a question to ourselves' (13.47)	• e.g. 14:15 – 'What [shall I do] then? I shall pray'
• 'make an appeal'	• e.g. 12:31; 14:1, 12, 20
• 'express a desire'	• e.g. 14:5 – 'I wish that all of you spoke in tongues'
• 'avoid monotony by not always starting from the point we are making'	• e.g. 12:28–13:13; 14:1-11, 13-19, 20-25
• 'not prove all our points by advancing arguments'	• e.g. 14:26-32 – most points are proved indirectly through his various instructions
• 'lay down quite shortly statements that will be sufficiently obvious'	• e.g. 13:13 – 'the greatest of these is love', 14:32 – 'the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets'
• 'do not always hold it necessary formally to draw the [obvious] conclusion that will follow'	• e.g. 12:27, 30; 14:11, 19, 25
When 'evidence of witnesses … [is] discrepant with statements made by someone else, the method is to meet them with a mere refutation' (14.48, 51).	cf. 14:18 – invalidating the Corinthians' appeal to their own testimony with a reference to his own more powerful testimony, which is conclusive and final

*Tips for Amplification (*Part. Or. *15.52–16.58) (1 Cor. 13:4-13)*

In this final section of Cicero's discussion of the rhetorical speech, he focuses on the fifth part of the speech, the *peroratio*, or conclusion. The conclusion 'falls into two divisions, amplification and recapitulation', but the mention of 'amplification' leads Cicero into an

extended discussion of the proper use of this rhetorical tool anywhere
in the speech. Amplification is required in the conclusion, but optional
everywhere else, and it is 'when something has been proved or refuted'
that the opportunity arises for 'turning aside to amplify'. Amplification
is defined as 'a sort of weightier affirmation, designed to win credence
in the course of speaking by arousing emotion' (15.53). Most of Paul's
arguments here are fairly straightforward, the various examples
providing adequate proofs (e.g. 14:6-11, 21, 23-25), but the second
argument of the *confirmatio* gave Paul an opportunity to excel in
amplification. Commentators have often wrongly assumed chapter
thirteen to be an example of epideictic rhetoric within this deliberative
speech. This probably arises from the similarities of style and method
epideictic rhetoric shares with this technique of amplification. Even so,
Cicero's distinctions are quite clear between the two, as explained
below, and there is no question that 13:4-13 fits the requirements of
amplification rather than epideictic rhetoric.

    Rather than noting the comparisons in point form, for this section
I will quote complete sentences from Cicero (15.53–16.56), inserting
the proposed words or passages from 1 Corinthians 13:4-13 which
might fit Cicero's descriptions.

    'Words must be employed that are powerfully illuminating without
being inconsistent with ordinary usage [e.g. οὐ ζητεῖ τὰ ἑαυτῆς, 'not
seeking its own [things]'], weighty [e.g. μακροθυμεῖ, 'patient'], full
[e.g. ζηλοῖ, 'jealous'], sonorous [e.g. ἀσχημονεῖ, 'shameful'],
compounds [e.g. συγχαίρει, 'rejoice together with'], coinages [e.g.
χρηστεύεται, 'kind'; περπερεύεται, 'boastful'], synonyms [e.g.
περπερεύεται, 'boastful' and φυσιοῦται, 'puffed up'], unhackneyed
[e.g. λογίζεται, 'reckon'], exaggerated [e.g. πάντα ὑπομένει, 'endures
all things'] and above all used metaphorically [e.g. φυσιοῦται, 'puffed
up'; στέγει, 'bears'; πίπτει, 'falls']. This as to single words; in the
sentences the words must be disconnected – *asyndeton* as it is called –
so as to make them seem more numerous [e.g. vv. 4-7]. Enlargement is
also effected by repetition [e.g. πάντα, 'everything' – v. 7, εἴτε, 'as
for' – v. 8, ἐκ μέρους, 'in part' – vv. 9-10], iteration [e.g. ὡς νήπιος,
'as a child' – v. 11], doubling of words [e.g. δὲ πρόσωπον πρὸς
πρόσωπον, 'face to face' – v. 12] and a gradual rise from lower to
higher terms [e.g. πίστις, ἐλπίς, ἀγάπη, 'faith, hope, love' – v. 13]'.
Regarding 'Amplification of facts … very effective are accumulations
of definitions [e.g. vv. 4-7], recapitulation of consequences [e.g. vv. 8,

13], juxtaposition of contrary, discrepant and contradictory statements [e.g. ἄρτι … τότε … Νυνί, 'now … then … now' – vv. 12-13], and statements of causes and their consequences [e.g. vv. 10, 12], and especially analogies and instances [e.g. ὅτε ἤμην νήπιος, βλέπομεν … δι᾽ ἐσόπτρου ἐν αἰνίγματι, 'when I was a child', 'we see … in a mirror dimly'] … if the case allows, one must introduce matters that are supposed to be of high importance'. Concerning examples of such matters which 'seem important … in our experience of them' there are 'three kinds available for amplification – inasmuch as men are moved either by love, for instance love of the gods … or by affection, for instance for their brothers … or by moral considerations, for instance respect … especially for those virtues that promote human fellow-feeling and generosity.' It would almost seem that Cicero's directions were written with Paul and the Corinthians in mind.

Cicero is quite clear what kinds of topics should be used in amplifications within the three different types of speeches (17.58): in epideictic ('decorative') speeches 'for the purpose of giving pleasure', 'we should employ the topics that are capable of arousing anticipation, wonder and delight'; however in deliberative speeches ('exhortations'), 'enumerations and instances of things good and evil will have most effect'; and in forensic speeches ('trials'), 'the prosecutor must chiefly employ topics that conduce to anger and the defendant for the most part those that conduce to compassion'. There can be little doubt that the topics discussed by Paul in 13:4-7, and also arguably in 13:11 and 13:13, could be best described as 'enumerations and instances of things good and evil', rather than topics capable of 'arousing anticipation, wonder and delight'. The whole passage has been written in order to 'exhort' the Corinthians to 'pursue love' (14:1), rather than simply to revel in the wonder of this glorious virtue.[24] Chapter thirteen best fits the category of deliberative rhetoric, with liberal doses of 'amplification' throughout, and since amplification is generally appropriate 'when something has been proved or refuted', our observation that 13:4-13 is an amplification of the preceding proof (12:28–13:3) finds additional support.

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[24] The verses which describe the future coming of the 'perfect', when we shall see 'face to face' and 'know fully' (13:10, 12), stir anticipation in the believer, but the reason for this is more because they are 'instances of things good' which appeal to the 'goodly' person.

(5) The Peroratio (14:36-40)

Now we may return to the *peroratio* of the larger speech, beginning at
14:36. Following on naturally from verse 33, where Paul concluded his
refutatio with an appeal to common practice in 'all the churches of the
saints', verse 36 asks the Corinthian church whether it was 'from you'
(rather than Jerusalem) that the word of God went forth, or whether it
was 'to you only' (rather than to 'all the churches') that it has come.
The style has an abrupt change at this point, from statement of general
principles in verse 33, to pointed rhetorical questions in verse 36, even
though the subjects of divine revelation and the significance of the
individual congregation remain the same.

(A) Amplification (14:36-38)

Cicero	Paul
'Amplification … [is] designed to win credence in the course of speaking by arousing emotion.' (15.53)	The conclusion begins by launching straight into emotionally charged language criticising any remaining opponents (14:36-38).
• 'obtained from all the same topics from which were taken the statements made to secure credence' (16.55)	• '…the word of God went forth?' (14:36, cf. 12:8, 28; 14:3, 19, 24-25, 31), 'prophet' (14:37, cf. 12:28, 14:29, 32), 'spiritual' (*pneumatikos*, 14:37, cf. 12:1, 14:1)
• 'definitions' (16.55)	• Being 'prophetic' or 'spiritual' is linked to acknowledgement of Paul's authority (14:37).
• 'juxtaposition of contrary, discrepant and contradictory statements'	• The 'things which I write to you' are actually 'the Lord's commandment' (14:37).
• 'statements of causes and their consequences'	• 'But if anyone does not recognise [this], he is not recognised.' (14:38)
• 'matters that are supposed to be of high importance'	• The Corinthians' recognition by God is dependent upon agreement with Paul (14:38).
• 'doubling of words' (15.54)	• ' εἰ δέ τις ἀγνοεῖ, ἀγνοεῖται.' ('If anyone does not recognise, he is not recognised', 14:38)
• 'in exhortations … instances of things good and evil will have most effect' (17.58)	• recognising Paul's authority = good (14:37), not recognising = evil (14:38)

(B) Enumeration (14:39-40)

Cicero	Paul
Two occasions for enumeration (17.59): 1) 'owing to … the length of your speech you distrust the memory of your audience'	• This speech is long (eighty-four verses), but in this instance (2) is probably more relevant.

Cicero	*Paul*
2) 'your case will be strengthened by … briefly setting forth the main points of your argument'	• The three points raised 'briefly' are what Paul most wants to be remembered from his speech – the 'main points': 1) 'zealously desire to prophesy' (14:39) = main point of the *confirmatio* (12:8–14:12)
Methods of enumeration: 'avoid the appearance of childishness involved in [parading] one's powers of memory' (17.60) One should not 'repeat all his very small points'. 'briefly touching on them one by one brings into focus the actual values of the facts'	2) 'do not forbid speaking in tongues' (14:39) = countering a potential misunderstanding of both *confirmatio* and *refutatio* 3) 'let all things be done … in an orderly manner' (14:40) = main point of the *refutatio* (14:13-33)

[Parenthetic instruction – 14:34-35]

At this point in *De Partitione Oratoria* (17.60), Cicero finishes discussing the speech and its structure, and moves on to the topic of 'the question' (17.61ff.). Likewise, Paul's speech finishes here with the *peroratio* (14:36-40) and following this he moves immediately into another 'speech', concerning the matter of the resurrection (15:1-58). The precise correspondence between Cicero's instructions and Paul's speech in these three chapters is extensive, even down to exactly one argument fitting each of Cicero's categories in *exordium*, *confirmatio* and *refutatio*. Compared with this precision, the two verses positioned between the *peroratio* of the *refutatio* (14:33) and that of the whole speech (14:36-40) don't seem to fulfil any required rhetorical function. Text-critical evidence shows evidence of dislocation of these verses in some manuscripts, and it has been argued that they were inserted at this or another point by either Paul or a very early editor of the letter. 14:34-35 contains much vocabulary characteristic of the surrounding passage, and can certainly be read in ways that fit the conceptual context of the passage.[25] Though it is therefore likely that Paul did indeed write these verses, it remains fairly clear that the verses are a parenthesis in his rhetorical argument, not corresponding recognisably to any part of the basic rhetorical speech. This is not a reason to reject the verses as un-Pauline, but rather to reflect on why they are important enough to interrupt the flow of Paul's precise argumentation.

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[25] See especially E. Earle Ellis' insightful article on the verses in *New Testament Textual Criticism: Its Significance for Exegesis*, ed. Eldon Jay Epp and Gordon D. Fee (Bruce M. Metzger *festschrift*; Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 1981): 213-220.

III. Conclusion

In the course of eighty-two verses Paul has set out before the Corinthians a coherent speech on the subject of *pneumatika*, consisting of *exordium*, *narratio* (including *propositio*), *confirmatio*, *refutatio* and *peroratio*. Each of these five sections conform exactly to what we would expect in a deliberative speech written by intentionally following the same basic guidelines for the composition of a correct rhetorical speech as were taught by Cicero.   (1) Paul's *exordium* apportions one verse to each of the three types of 'hearing' sought in an introduction.   (2) His *narratio* exhibits the three qualities of a good statement of facts – clarity, convincingness, and charm (plus a concise and convincing *propositio*).   (3) His *confirmatio* devotes one argument to each of the three types of argument, followed by a one-verse *peroratio* – the first argument, concerning 'reality', makes use of a parallel case as Cicero advises, the second, 'identity', makes use of a definition as advised (plus a considerable amount of expert 'amplification'), and the third uses three examples to confirm the true 'qualities' of the subject.   (4) His *refutatio* similarly devotes one argument to each of the three types of argument, also followed by a one-verse *peroratio* – the first argument addresses the foundations of opponents' arguments, the second argument questions the logic of their arguments, and the third argument reconsiders the conclusions of their arguments.   (5) His *peroratio* finally wraps up the speech by amplifying in three verses, and then recapitulating in the final two.

This reconsideration of the rhetorical structure of 1 Corinthians 12 to 14 is useful for discerning Paul's meaning in these chapters. The distinction between general summary statements (12:4-7; 14:36-40), positive proofs defending certain positions (12:8–14:12) and negative proofs attacking certain positions (14:13-33) is quite vital for the interpretation of these verses. This is also not intended by any means to be the final word on the rhetorical structure of these chapters but rather a preliminary sketch of the ways in which this interpretative tool might be applied to the passage. Furthermore, this analysis is intended to provide a reasoned alternative to the common and in my view over-simplified division of these three chapters into a 'love-sandwich'. Following is a basic outline of the rhetorical structure of 1 Corinthians 12 to 14 (imitating Smit's article) as suggested by this comparison with Cicero's *De Partitione Oratoria*.

IV. Dispositio of 1 Corinthians 12–14

1. ***Exordium*** 12:1-3
   Content
   Securing a 'friendly hearing' (12:1)
   Securing an 'attentive hearing' (12:2)
   Securing an 'intelligent hearing' (12:3)

2. ***Narratio*** 12:4-7
   Content
   A three-fold explanation of the facts as a foundation for the establishment of belief (12:4-6)
   Summary statement (***propositio***) of entire speech (12:7)
   Method
   Clarity, convincingness, charm

3. ***Confirmatio*** 12:8–14:12
   A. Argument 1 (question of reality) 12:8-27
   Content
   Thesis: The *pneumatika* are given through the Spirit to 'all' believers (12:8-11).
   Proof: God has created the body in the same way (12:12-27).
   Method
   Example/parallel case, anecdotes
   B. Argument 2 (question of identity) 12:28–13:13
   Content
   Thesis: Pneumatika (the greater ones as examples) are defined by love (12:28-13:3).
   Proof: Definition of terms – explaining what 'love' is (13:4-13)
   Method
   Opposites, unlike objects, like objects, descriptions, consequences, amplification (including words 'ordinary', 'weighty', 'full', 'sonorous', 'compounds', 'coinages', 'synonyms', 'unhackneyed', 'exaggerated', 'metaphor'; sentences 'disconnected', 'repetition', 'iteration', 'doubling', 'gradual rise'; also 'definitions', 'recapitulation of consequences', 'discrepant statements', 'causes and consequences', 'analogies and instances', 'matters of high importance')
   C. Argument 3 (question of qualities) 14:1-11
   Content
   Thesis: Pneumatika are rightly used when motivated by 'common good' (14:1-5).
   Proof: Three examples – Paul's visit, musical instruments, cross-cultural communication (14:6-11)
   Method
   Examples
   D. Peroratio 14:12
   Content
   Be seekers of *pneumatwn* in order to edify the church

4. ***Refutatio*** 14:13-33
   A. Argument 1 (foundations of opponents' arguments) 14:13-19
   Content
   Anti-thesis: There is no better means of public thanksgiving than tongues.
   Refutation: (i) The mind is unoccupied when using tongues (14:13-15)
                       (ii) The fellow believer cannot say 'Amen' (14:16-17)
                       (iii) Paul himself would rather speak intelligibly (14:18-19)

METHOD
Examples
B. Argument 2 (logic of opponents' arguments) 14:20-25
  CONTENT
  Anti-thesis: Tongues is the ultimate mark signifying the true believer
  Refutation: (i) The opposite was true in the time of Isaiah (14:20-22)
  (ii) The opposite is true in present-day church meetings (14:23-25)
  METHOD
  Scripture, examples
C. Argument 3 (conclusions of opponents' arguments) 14:26-32
  CONTENT
  Anti-thesis: God gives specific revelations on various occasions, which must be brought publicly
  Refutation: (i) Interpretation and discernment of spirits are also gifts which should be used as God intends (14:26-29)
  (ii) Each revelation must be heard separately for all to benefit (14:30-32)
  METHOD
  Application/appeal
D. *Peroratio* 14:33
  CONTENT
  God is not 'of confusion'; rather, God is 'of peace'

Parenthetic instruction: 14:34-35
  CONTENT
  Women (wives) should remain silent in churches
  METHOD
  Appeals to 'the Law' and to what is 'disgraceful'

5. *Peroratio* 14:36-40
A. Amplification 14:36-38
  CONTENT
  The Corinthian church has no unique status; truly 'spiritual' people will know this is God's voice
  METHOD
  Amplification (i.e. 'definitions, 'discrepant statements', 'causes and consequences', 'matters of importance', 'doubling')
B. Enumeration 14:39-40
  CONTENT
  Seek to prophesy; allow tongues; let all things be done properly and in an orderly manner
  METHOD
  Selection of three most important points for application from the whole speech