

**ECHOES OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL'S THEOLOGY OF
THE NATURE OF CHRIST IN THE VALENTINIAN SOURCES
FROM THE NAG HAMMADI LIBRARY**

by

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The opinions expressed in this dissertation do not necessarily reflect the views of the South African Theological Seminary.

DECLARATION

I hereby acknowledge that the work contained in this dissertation is my own original work and has not previously in its entirety or in part been submitted to any academic institution for degree purposes.

Michael David Makidon

August 31, 2014

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A wise individual once compared the Fourth Gospel to a pool. At the edge, it is shallow enough for a child but deep enough at its centre that an elephant could swim. This has been proven true for me after spending many years studying the gospel. When I began this dissertation, I dove into the deeper waters only to find them deeper than I ever could have imagined.

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ABSTRACT

This study seeks to demonstrate that the nature of Christ in the Fourth Gospel influenced the Valentinian Sources from the Nag Hammadi Library. It begins by looking at their respective backgrounds in order to demonstrate availability, similar language, purpose, and recipient communities, investigating the nature of Christ in the cultural milieu that they were born out of, and comparing passages in the Valentinian Sources that show signs of influence by the Fourth Gospel's nature of Christ. This intertextual comparison begins by setting passages side-by-side. Similarities in their contexts are then discussed, followed by parallel language employed by the authors. This study demonstrates that while the nature of Christ in the two bodies of literature seems quite different at a superficial level, it appears surprisingly similar after an in-depth, intertextual comparison. The Fourth Gospel begins with the Logos in the cosmic realm and begins intertwining this with the earthly realm in John 1:14. This enfleshed Logos lives and dies in the flesh in order to save those that believe in him. In the Valentinian Sources, the Logos also resides at the cosmic level but gives flesh to the saviour so that he can restore the spirituals back to the Pleroma through the Valentinian co-incarnational model. While Christ in the Fourth Gospel embodies both divinity and humanity, the Valentinian Sources describe his spiritual flesh as co-incarnated with the church and his physical flesh as only a temporary garment that was removed at the cross. The Valentinians have reinterpreted the nature of Christ in the Fourth Gospel to fit their myth, but an enfleshed Logos concept, a two-level drama, and quotations from and allusions to the Fourth Gospel point to a strong intertextual link between the nature of Christ in the Fourth Gospel and the Valentinian Sources from the Nag Hammadi Library.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

1 Apol	<i>The First Apology</i> (Justin Martyr)
1 Thess	<i>First Thessalonians</i>
2 Macc	<i>Second Maccabees</i>
Agr	<i>De Agricultura Noë</i> (Philo)
Ant	<i>Antiquities of the Jews</i> (Josephus)
AÖAW	<i>Anzeiger der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften</i>
Ap Jas	<i>The Apocryphon of James</i>
Arb	Aristobulus
Bapt	<i>De baptismo</i> (Tertullian)
BASP	<i>Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists</i>
BBR	<i>Bulletin for Biblical Research</i>
BDB	<i>Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon</i>
BibSac	<i>Bibliotheca Sacra</i>
BTB	<i>Biblical Theology Bulletin</i>
BTNT	<i>A Biblical Theology of the New Testament</i>
Carn	<i>On the Flesh of Christ</i> (Tertullian)
Cher	<i>De cherubim</i> (Philo)
Conf	<i>De Confusione Linguarum</i> (Philo)
Congr	<i>De Congressu Quærendæ Eruditionis Gratia</i> (Philo)
CT	<i>Ciencia Tomista</i>
CTR	<i>Criswell Theological Review</i>
EH	<i>Ecclesiastical History</i> (Eusebius)
Enn	<i>Six Enneads</i> (Plotinus)
Det	<i>De eo quod deterius potiori insidiatur</i> (Philo)
Dig	<i>Digest of Justinian</i> (Roman Law)
Disc	<i>Discourses</i> (Epictetus)
Ep Pet Phil	<i>The Letter of Peter to Philip</i>
EQ	<i>Evangelical Quarterly</i>
Ex	<i>Exodus</i>
Exc	<i>Excerpta ex Theodotus</i> (Clement of Alexandria)
FG	<i>Fourth Gospel</i>
Fin	<i>De Finibus Bonorum</i> (Cicero)
frg	fragment
Fug	<i>De Fuga et Inventione</i> (Philo)
Gen	<i>Genesis</i>
Gos Thom	<i>The Gospel of Thomas</i>
GOTR	<i>Greek Orthodox Theological Review</i>

GP	<i>The Gospel of Philip</i>
GT	<i>The Gospel of Truth</i>
Haer	<i>Against Heresies</i> (Irenaeus)
HALOT	<i>The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i>
Her	<i>Quis Rerum Divinarum Heres Sit</i> (Philo)
HTR	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
IK	<i>The Interpretation of Knowledge</i>
Immut	<i>Quod Deus sit immutabilis</i> (Philo)
In Jo	<i>Commentary on the Gospel of John</i> (Origen)
Is	<i>Isaiah</i>
JAC	<i>Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum</i>
JAMA	<i>Journal of the American Medical Association</i>
JBL	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JCS	<i>Journal of Coptic Studies</i>
JEA	<i>Journal of Egyptian Archeology</i>
JEH	<i>The Journal of Ecclesiastical History</i>
Jer	<i>Jeremiah</i>
JETS	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
JGES	<i>Journal of the Grace Evangelical Society</i>
JSNT	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
Jwar	<i>Wars of the Jews</i> (Josephus)
KD	<i>Kerygma and Dogma</i>
Leg	<i>Legum allegoriae</i> (Philo)
LetFl	<i>Letter to Flora</i> (Ptolemy)
Lk	<i>Luke</i>
Luc	<i>Epistulae morales ad Lucilium</i> (Seneca)
LXX	<i>The Septuagint</i>
MDAI	<i>Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts</i>
Mic	<i>Micah</i>
Migr	<i>De Migratione Abrahami</i> (Philo)
Mos	<i>De vita Mosis</i> (Philo)
Mut	<i>De Mutatione Nominum</i> (Philo)
NHL	<i>Nag Hammadi Library</i>
NKGWG	<i>Nachrichten von der Königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen</i>
NovT	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NT	<i>New Testament</i>
OL	<i>Orientalistische Literaturzeitung</i>
Opif	<i>De Opificio Mundi</i> (Philo)
Or	<i>Orientalia</i>

OS	<i>Orientalia Suecana</i>
OT	<i>Old Testament</i>
Pan	<i>Panarion or Against Heresies</i> (Epiphanius)
Phys	<i>On Aristotle, Physics</i> (Simplicius)
Plant	<i>De plantatione</i> (Philo)
Post	<i>De posteritate Caini</i> (Philo)
Praem	<i>De Praemiis et Poenis</i> (Philo)
Praep Evang	<i>Praeparatio Evangelica</i> (Eusebius)
Praescr	<i>The Prescription Against Heretics</i> (Tertullian)
Prob	<i>Quod Omnis Probus Liber</i> (Philo)
Ps	<i>Psalms</i>
PoSol	<i>Psalms of Solomon</i>
Qex	<i>Questions on Exodus</i> (Philo)
Qge	<i>Quaestiones in Genesim</i> (Philo)
RE	<i>Review and Expositor</i>
Ref	<i>Refutations of all Heresies</i> (Hippolytus)
RTR	<i>Reformed Theological Review</i>
Sac	<i>De sacrificiis Abelis et Caini</i> (Philo)
SBT	<i>Studies in Biblical Theology</i>
Shir Rab	<i>Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah</i>
Sir	<i>Sirach</i>
SJT	<i>Scottish Journal of Theology</i>
Sobr	<i>Resipuit; Noë, seu De Sobrietate</i> (Philo)
Som	<i>De Somniis</i> (Philo)
SNT	<i>Sahidic New Testament</i>
Spec	<i>De Specialibus Legibus</i> (Philo)
ST	<i>Studia theologia</i>
Strom	<i>Stromata</i> (Clement of Alexandria)
SVF	<i>Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta</i>
TD	<i>Theology Digest</i>
TDNT	<i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i>
Teach Silv	<i>The Teachings of Silvanus</i>
TJ	<i>Theologische Jahrbücher</i>
TheoR	<i>Theologische Rundschau</i>
TR	<i>The Treatise on the Resurrection</i>
TT	<i>The Tripartite Tractate</i>
TWOT	<i>Theological Wordbook of the OT</i>
Val	<i>Against the Valentinians</i> (Tertullian)
VC	<i>Vigiliae christianae</i>

VE	<i>A Valentinian Exposition with Valentinian Liturgical Readings</i>
Vir	<i>De virtutibus</i> (Philo)
VS	Valentinian source
VSS	Valentinian sources
Wis	<i>Wisdom of Solomon</i>
WTJ	<i>Westminster Theological Journal</i>
WW	<i>World & World</i>
WZKM	<i>Weiner Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes</i>
ZAC	<i>Zeitschrift für antikes Christentum</i>
ZÄS	<i>Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache</i>
ZNW	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
ZWT	<i>Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie</i>

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Need for the Study

The late twentieth and early twenty-first century saw a surge of publications regarding the Jesus of the Nag Hammadi Library (NHL). For example, Franzmann (1996) published an in-depth work on Jesus in the NHL. Furthermore, Thomassen's work entitled *The Spiritual Seed* (2006) has deepened the academic community's understanding of the Valentinian Sources (VSS) and the Valentinian community. Moreover, Franzmann and Lattke (1994), Cordero (1998), Pagels (2003b), Skinner (2009), and Bock (2006b) have done significant work comparing the Jesus of the NHL with the Jesus of the Fourth Gospel (FG). Additionally, there are a few short comparisons of the FG and the VSS. Manor (2005) completed a master's level thesis that compared the theology of these bodies of literature in general. Nevertheless, there has not been a thorough, systematic study comparing the nature of Christ in the VSS with the theology of the FG and evaluating the FG's influence upon the VSS. By evaluating their similar backgrounds and theologies, and by comparing specific passages where the VSS demonstrate allusions to or parallels with the FG, this study will show that the nature of Christ in the VSS does indeed indicate an intertextual link with the FG. Finally, the seventh chapter will take the conclusions in chapters three through six and evaluates the evidence in order to assess to what degree one can say the nature of Christ in the FG influenced the VSS.

A number of studies have sought to demonstrate the influence of the NT upon the Gospel of Truth (GT). For example, Williams's published dissertation *Biblical Interpretation in the Gnostic Gospel of Truth from Nag Hammadi* (1988) showed how Valentinus used and modified NT scripture;

Barrett's article "The Theological Vocabulary of the Fourth Gospel and the Gospel of Truth" (1962) demonstrated that the GT is abounding in Johannine vocabulary. While both of these works have been influential, Williams dealt with parallels between the GT and the whole NT and was much too focused on looking for direct citations. Barrett's emphasis on theological vocabulary in the FG and the VSS makes for a nice complement to Williams's approach and provides a good foundation for further study, but he emphasized theological vocabulary in general. Both studies focused on the GT and did not limit themselves to the nature of Christ nor the FG. This study focuses on quotations and allusions that relate directly to the nature of Christ in the FG.

1.2 Problems and Objectives

The primary research question is whether the nature of Christ in the VSS and the nature of Christ in the FG have an intertextual relationship. Irenaeus believed that the Valentinians were making copious use of the FG (*Haer* III:11,7) and believed the key to combatting them was the use of the FG itself. In addition, early on Heracleon and Theodotus wrote Valentinian commentaries on the FG. Nonetheless, the question of whether there is an intertextual relationship between the VSS in the NHL and the FG remains to be seen. While few would disagree that there is indeed an intertextual link, the degree of influence and the direction of influence has been debated. This intertextual relationship will be discussed in chapter 6 and the degree of influence will be evaluated in chapter 7.

If there is a close intertextual relationship between the VSS in the NHL and the FG, a second question naturally follows: Did the VSS in the NHL influence the FG or did the FG influence the VSS? Scholars come down on both sides of this issue. Barrett (1982: pp. 62-63) argues that the theology found in the VSS came first and the author of the FG Christianised Valentinian theology. Puech, Quispel, and Unnik (1983: p. 171) disagree. This will be discussed in chapters 2, 5, and 6.

A secondary question that arises from the previous question is: If the FG influenced the VSS, did the writing of the FG predate the writing of the VSS

in the NHL? While Barrett agrees that the FG may have predated the VSS, he sees the theology of the VSS as predating the FG. While this is an important point that needs to be dealt with, the dating of the sources needs to be dealt with as well. If generations separate the writing of the FG and the VSS, Barrett's theory makes less sense. This will be discussed in chapter 4.

Another secondary question that arises is: If there is an intertextual relationship between these texts, are there also similarities in theology, purpose, language, and their respective communities? If they were both written in Greek, with similar purposes, within similar communities, and contain similarities in theology, the intertextual link between the two texts would be strengthened and the scholarly community would be given greater clarity and reason to analyse this intertextual link.

1.3 Purpose

The purpose of this study is to demonstrate a deep intertextual connection between the nature of Christ in the FG and the VSS from the NHL and to show that the intertextuality began in the FG and exerted influence upon the VSS. While Williams wrote an intertextual comparison of the GT and the NT, no one has attempted an intertextual comparison, linking the nature of Christ in these two bodies of literature. Furthermore, debate exists in regards to whether the FG influenced the VSS or vis-versa. Scholars, such as Barrett (1982: pp. 62-63), believe that nascent Gnostic theology influenced canonical books, which could undermine the veracity and originality of Scripture.

1.4 Hypothesis

As will be argued in chapters 3, 4, and 6, the text and theology of the FG is original to the FG and predated the VSS in the NHL. By demonstrating similarities in language, purpose, community, and theology, this study will build an argument that the nature of Christ in the FG and the NHL are closely related. In chapter six, it will be argued that there exists an intertextual relationship between these two texts. This study will argue that the nature of Christ in the

FG directly influenced the theology of the VSS in the NHL. This intertextual relationship will be demonstrated in chapters 6-7.

1.5 The Methodology of the Study

The aim of this dissertation is to compare the nature of Christ in the VSS with the nature of Christ in the FG, in its original context, and to argue that the VSS were influenced by the nature of Christ in the FG. When doing an intertextual comparison of two bodies of literature, the issue of accessibility becomes very important. This will be analysed in chapters 2-4. Similar backgrounds between the VSS in the NHL and the FG would provide further support for this work's thesis that the nature of Christ in the FG influenced the VSS. Dating the FG prior to the VSS in the NHL will demonstrate that the FG could have influenced the VSS. Having a common language such as Greek will help who intertextuality in chapter 7. If both texts came from similar communities, the possibility of one like community influencing another is heightened. Finally, their similar purposes will aid in showing that their theologies show striking similarities when the Valentinian myth is removed. If the FG was written before the VSS and they both show similarities in language, communities, and purpose, the possibility that the FG influenced the VSS is strengthened (chapter 3).

After the backgrounds of the FG and the VSS have been evaluated, the attention of the dissertation will then turn to a comparison and evaluation of the nature of Christ in the VSS and the FG. Because it is the contention of this dissertation that the FG influenced the VSS, the analysis of the nature of Christ in the FG and the VSS will begin with the FG (chapter 4) followed by the VSS (chapter 5). The nature of Christ in the FG will be ascertained by looking at the FG's two levels of drama, the heavenly Logos and the earthly Christ. The heavenly drama will be analysed by looking at how Jewish Literature, the OT, and the FG itself viewed the Logos, the Son of Man, the Son of God, and Messiah. The earthly drama will be analysed by looking at the incarnation, a word study on flesh in the FG, evidence for Jesus' humanity, and the death and suffering of Christ. The nature of Christ in the VSS will be analysed by looking

at both Jesus' heavenly and an earthly origin, his spiritual and psychic body, and how he experienced the crucifixion, suffering, death, and resurrection of the body. All of this will be analysed in light of Valentinian theology, ascertained through other Valentinian texts as well as the VSS in the NHL. Chapter 5 will contain an evaluation of similarities and differences between portrayals of the nature of Christ in the FG and the VSS in the NHL. This evaluation will argue that they are profoundly similar but show differences because of the Valentinian propensity to modify theology in light of their pleromic myth. The ultimate goal of Valentinian soteriology is to reverse the effects of Sophia's fall through the reunification of the Saviour and the spiritual seeds with the Pleroma. Therefore, every Valentinian idea has been filtered through that lens. The Valentinians were more concerned with their interpretation of reality than the historicity of the FG. Hence the fifth chapter's evaluation must analyse their connections in this light.

The sixth chapter then will set side-by-side texts that illuminate the respective corpuses' view of the nature of Christ and that seem to demonstrate an intertextual link between the VSS and the FG. If there is truly an intertextual link between the two texts, similar contexts, allusions or echoes, direct quotations, and similar vocabulary should be evident. Fishbane (2000) defines intertextuality as:

... the core of the canonical imagination; that is, it is the core of the creative imagination that lives within a self-reflexive culture shaped by an authoritative collection of texts. The main reason for this is that a canon (of whatever sort) presupposes the possibility of correlations among its parts, such that new texts may imbed, reuse, or otherwise allude to precursor materials – both as a strategy for meaning-making, and for establishing the authority of a given innovation. Put in a nutshell, ... intertextuality is a form that literary creativity takes when innovation is grounded in tradition (p. 39).

Fishbane's view on canon includes a canon-before-the-canon stage, which fits with the present study. Fishbane's process of analysing intertextuality includes both *traditum* as well as *tradio*. *Traditum* is the content while *tradio* includes the "the complex result of a long and varied process of transmission" (Fishbane 1986: p. 6). Therefore, the canon should be seen as the result of successive stages in which "each stage in the *tradio*, the *traditum* was adapted, transformed, and reinterpreted" (1986). This is much like Kristeva's theory of

intertextuality, which is explained below. The canon-before-canon stage is characterized by a diversity of tradition, acknowledging the influence of one text upon another. If the Valentinians were influenced by the FG's view of the nature of Christ, this imbedding, reuse, and allusion to precursor materials, as Fishbane explains, should be evident in the language, context, and theology of the VSS in the NHL. This is helpful when considering the intertextual links between the VSS and the FG. Chapter 6 will evaluate texts using the following methodology for comparison: (1) The contexts have been summarized looking for similar elements; (2) The second section has taken a philological approach, showing differences and similarities in the language employed. Because the FG was written in Greek and the VSS were translated from Greek into Coptic, Greek loanwords, when Coptic could have been used, have been highly useful in showing an intertextual link; (3) An evaluation of the intertextuality; and (4) The Valentinian hermeneutic was discussed. Each parallel between the nature of Christ in the FG and the VSS in the NHL was also rated (almost certain, probable, or possible) based on the likelihood that it is a direct quotation or allusion to the FG.

The sixth and seventh chapters will be concerned with Kristeva's vertical axis (1980: p. 69), which deals with what connects one text to other texts. She argues that all texts are a mosaic of quotations influenced by other texts. It follows that when one writes while reading anterior and synchronic or contemporary literary texts, he or she articulates the other texts through his or her appropriation, transformation, or reformulation. All texts read by the writer function as one text (1998, 29). All texts should be seen as a correlation of other texts and is constructed by influence of another. Every text therefore includes a double significance. She explains, "The book refers to other books and ... gives those books a new way of being, elaborating thereby its own signification" (1998, 30). Even though all texts are unique, their significance can only fully be appreciated through their relationship with other texts. Therefore, it follows that influence can be seen through how a text absorbs and transforms previous texts. The principal question in this study is: Did the nature of Christ in the FG influence the VSS, and if so, how closely are they linked?

After showing similar backgrounds (chapter 3) and theology (chapters 4-5) and how the Valentinians used and altered the FG (chapter 6), the intertextual link will be established. The seventh chapter's aim will be to evaluate the degree of intertextuality between the nature of Christ in the FG and the VSS. The following section summarizes the chapters of this work.

1.5.1 Chapter Two

The second chapter will survey modern scholarly research regarding the nature of Christ in the FG and the VSS. This chapter will analyse the Christological views of scholars in order to provide a foundation for analysing the nature of Christ in chapters 4-5.

Much controversy surrounds the modern debate over the nature of Christ in the FG. Much of this debate surrounds the relationship between “the fleshly existence of Jesus and the divine glory” (Kysar 2005: p. 121ff). Scholars such as Bultmann see this relationship as a radical paradox. Bultmann (1978: pp. 10, 39-40) believes that Christ revealed his divine glory in a disguised manner, within a fleshly body. Because of this hiddenness, he sees Gnostic undertones (1978: pp. 41-43) in the FG. Others, such as Schnackenburg (1980: pp. II: 162-166) and Cordero (1998: p. 424), respond to Bultmann by arguing that these Gnostic undertones are evidence that the author of the FG attempted to respond to Gnosticism. While Bultmann sees the *doxa* as hidden in the *sarx*, Käsemann (1968: pp. 10, 75) believes that the FG emphasizes a divine Jesus. He sees the FG as espousing naïve Docetism and describing Jesus as God striding across the earth. Nonetheless, many scholars have argued that the author had good reason to accentuate the deity of Christ (Lindars 1981: pp. 41-42) in order to combat Gnosticism. The manner in which the FG emphasized the nature of Christ is a heavily debated and nuanced issue. Chapter 2 will analyse how scholars view the nature of Christ in the FG as a foundation for this work's analysis of the nature of Christ in the FG in chapter 4.

After analysing the nature of Christ in the FG, chapter 2 will analyse the nature of Christ in the VSS. The chapter will first give an overview of the major facets of Valentinian theology and the principal VSS in order to give the reader a proper understanding of Valentinianism before the discussion will

progress into deeper analysis. The human nature of Christ has been the centre of much debate in scholarly analyses of the nature of Christ in the NHL and more specifically the VSS. Scholars like Perkins seem to oppose others such as Ménard, Bock, and Colpe who believe the nature was merely a garment or a temporary form. Concerning the spiritual form, some see the lack of a narrative form as proof that a divine Jesus is in view in the NHL. The complementary nature of Christ in the VSS requires a nuanced explanation. Thomassen explains that while the Saviour does possess a body, he is clothed by the logos and the church. They are co-incarnated. Chapter 2 will analyse the views of scholars concerning the nature of Christ in the VSS in the NHL.

1.5.2 Chapter Three

The third chapter will seek to demonstrate that the FG and the VSS have similar backgrounds. First, archaeological finds, internal evidence, and the FG's use by later writers will demonstrate that the FG was written before the VSS. Thus, the intertextual link between the FG and the VSS should be seen as beginning with the FG, adapted by Valentinians like Heracleon and Ptolemy, and finally fully digested by the VSS from the NHL. Some have suggested that Valentinian theology predated the FG, and the author of the FG Christianised these ideas. This theory will be dealt with in chapter 6.3. Second, the texts of the FG and the VSS show a connection in language due to the fact that they were both originally written in Greek. Greek words that remain, when Coptic words would have sufficed, will be used in chapter 6 to show a strong connection between parallel passages. Third, the communities from which these documents were born show similarities as well. The community of the FG was most likely Jewish-Christian and the VSS demonstrate an affinity for both the Jewish and Christian communities. Finally, the FG and the VSS seem to share similar purposes. While the author of the FG intended to demonstrate that Jesus was the Christ and through faith in him comes life, the VSS sought to eradicate ignorance in order to restore the spiritual race to the Pleroma. In a way, they both desire their readers to pass from death to life, albeit the Valentinians filtered this through their myth making, which the author of the FG might have implicitly engaged through his use of two levels of drama but in the

end disqualified through his explanation of the nature of Christ. As in FG, the descent, death, and resurrection of the saviour are integral to Valentinian soteriology. Comparing the backgrounds of the FG and the VSS proved essential in showing that the influence began with the FG through the shared language of Greek and Jewish-Christian culture and is expressed in similar purposes.

1.5.3 Chapter Four

After demonstrating that the FG and the VSS share similar backgrounds, the fourth and fifth chapters sought to demonstrate that while the nature of Christ in the FG and the VSS are distinct, they share similarities that demonstrate an intertextual link. The fourth chapter analyses the nature of Christ in the FG by looking at the divine Logos in the cosmic level of drama, tracing the background of the Logos through Jewish Literature and ending with its usage in the FG. The titles son of man, son of God, and Messiah will also be analysed as well as ideas of the resurrected Christ. Next, the chapter will look at the earthly level of drama through the incarnation, a word study on flesh in the FG, evidence for Jesus' humanity, and the death and suffering of Christ. This chapter lays the foundation for comparing the FG and the VSS in chapter 5.

1.5.4 Chapter Five

Valentinian theology contains three distinctives in terms of the nature of Christ: (1) the idea of mutual participation in eastern Valentinianism (frg 3); (2) the flesh of Christ was spiritual (*carnem Christi spiritalem comminisci*, *Carn* 15:1); and (3) Christ's body was the spiritual seed of Sophia/Logos (*Exc* 1:1-2; 26:1). Although the Valentinians seem to have been divided from the very beginning, these elements directly influenced the VSS in the NHL. Because of this influence, Jesus in the VSS had both a heavenly and an earthly origin, a spiritual and a psychic body, and experienced the crucifixion, suffering, death, and resurrection of the body. The passion events include the idea of mutual participation. Thus, the ideas of extension, spreading out, and swallowing must be included in any discussion of the nature of Christ in the VSS in the NHL. The

heresiologists, the early Valentinians, and Middle Platonism will also be consulted in order to shed light on the development of and reaction to Valentinian theology. This chapter will include an evaluation of the similarities and differences between the nature of Christ in the FG and the VSS after each section, focusing on echoes from the FG such as the unmistakable influence of a hypostatized, corporeal Logos, who became flesh in the Saviour, Son, and Jesus.

1.5.5 Chapter Six

Chapter 6 will analyse parallel passages between the FG and the VSS but, unlike Williams's work, it focuses on texts that deal with the nature of Christ and looks at all six VSS. The methodology, which was explained in 1.5, was the means of determining the likelihood that the FG in fact influenced specific passages and shares an intertextual relationship. First, the contexts will be summarized, paying attention to similar elements. Second, the philology of the passages will be analysed. Third, the context and vocabulary of both passages will be evaluated for parallels. Finally, if an allusion, direct quotation, or an echo of the FG had been confidently established, the way in which the Valentinians altered the FG will then be discussed.

1.5.6 Chapter Seven

The seventh chapter will evaluate the findings of chapters 2–6. First, it evaluates the degree of confidence with which one can say that the nature of Christ in the FG and the VSS show signs of intertextuality. Second, it summarizes the entire work. The dissertation concludes by raising further questions for future studies. Although this study involves an in-depth comparison of the nature of Christ in the FG with the Jesus found in the VSS, research inevitably poses further questions.

1.6 The Limitations of the Study

This study will encompass both the FG and the VSS from the NHL. While fifty-two books comprise the NHL, six will be included in the Valentinian corpus due to their theological similarities. Consequently, an exhaustive study

of every nuance of Christology in the VSS, given the size limitations of this study, would not allow for an in-depth analysis. Therefore, the study will limit itself to the nature of Christ.

The texts involve two different languages: Coptic and Koine Greek. The VSS were written in the Subachmimic, Sahidic, and Lycopolitan dialects (the latter being a dialect similar to Subachmimic). *The Coptic Gnostic Library* (2000) and *Novum Testamentum Graece* (2001) will form the basis for the text-critical, theological, and synchronic analysis of the nature of Christ in the FG and the VSS. While redaction and source criticism have led to a more nuanced view of the text of the FG, due to the space limitations this study focuses on the text in its final form.

The authorship of the FG and of the VSS will not be a major focus of this study. The issue has been vigorously debated over the years. Even if the authors of the FG and the VSS could be satisfactorily identified, it would not change the analysis or the outcome of this study. Conversely, by attempting to solve this issue, the focus and depth of this dissertation would be compromised.

1.7 Conclusion

The Valentinians received and devoured the FG early on by writing Valentinian commentaries on the gospel and by making use of it in other VSS. At the same time, Irenaeus, recognizing that the Valentinians were making use of the gospel, defended his anti-gnostic stance by way of the FG. Irenaeus knew that defeating his theological foes meant attacking their use of the FG (*Haer* III:11,7). Comparing the nature of Christ in the VSS and the FG will provide a better understanding of how one trajectory of belief internalized and modified the FG. Thus, the contribution of this study is to demonstrate that the VSS, some of the FG's earliest interpreters, used, were influenced by, and modified the FG's nature of Christ.

CHAPTER 2

CHRISTOLOGICAL RESEARCH REGARDING THE NATURE OF CHRIST IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL AND THE VALENTINIAN SOURCES FROM THE NAG HAMMADI LIBRARY

2.1 Introduction

Almost since the inception of the FG, the trajectories of the FG and the VSS have intertwined. In modern times some, such as Bultmann, have argued that the FG emphasized a human Jesus while others, such as Käsemann, believed that the FG focused more on the divinity of Christ. Both sides have argued that Gnosticism influenced the FG. Even others, such as Barrett, who hold a more balanced view of the human and divine natures of Christ, argue that the FG Christianised Valentinian theology. This chapter will begin by analysing the views of scholars concerning the nature of Christ in the FG. The discussion will include three different views: (1) The view that the FG emphasizes the humanity of Christ; (2) The view that the FG emphasizes the divinity of Christ; and (3) The view that the FG provides a balanced view of the nature of Christ—seeing Christ as both human and divine.

The chapter will then turn to Valentinian theology. After an overview of Valentinian theology and the VSS, the chapter will analyse the views of scholars concerning the nature of Christ in the VSS. Most scholars agree that the nature of Christ in the VSS emphasizes the spiritual nature of Christ; however, most do see human elements interwoven into the authors' descriptions of Jesus. They also point out passages where the two natures seem to work together in a complementary fashion. This chapter will serve as the foundation for later analysis of the nature of Christ in the FG and the VSS in the NHL in subsequent chapters.

2.2 An Analysis of Scholarship Concerning the Nature of Christ in the FG

2.2.1 Introduction

Raymond Brown, in his article “The Kerygma of the Gospel According to John” (1967), demonstrates that even though there has been much debate

over how to interpret the FG, the gospel focuses on the person of Jesus Christ. A great amount of literature exists on how to interpret the nature of Christ in the FG. Nonetheless, divergent views of the nature of Christ in the FG exist. Each interpreter views the nature of Christ through a different lens due to what they believe is the key to understanding the nature of Christ in the FG. Interpreters have tended to emphasize either the flesh (*sarx*) or the glory (*doxa*) of Christ. Both Bultmann and his student Käsemann view the nature of Christ differently due to what they believe is the essential hermeneutical key to understanding the nature of Christ in the FG. Bultmann believed that the key was a Gnostic Redeemer myth in which the glory was hidden in the flesh of Christ. Käsemann on the other hand, believed that the key to understanding the nature of Christ in the FG was the glory of Christ, viewing the FG as naïvely docetic. Modern debate has centred around the relationship between the Jesus of history and faith, the relationship between the person and function of Christ, and the relationship between the flesh (*sarx*) and glory (*doxa*) of Christ (Kysar 1975a: p. 178ff).

Franz Mussner (1967b) best answers the first question. He, through an existentialist perspective influenced by Heidegger as well as others, is interested in examining how the evangelist sees his principal character, Christ. His primary concern is the evangelist's hermeneutical method behind his portrayal of Christ. His analysis focuses on the verbs, which the evangelist uses in order to describe how he wants his readers to understand Christ like "to hear," "to see," "to know," and "to testify." This, as Mussner calls it, is the "johannine vision." The knowledge of Christ comes through the evangelist as well as those who testify about their encounters with Christ. Cullman on the other hand, views the evangelist's historical understanding in terms of three stages of salvation, which Jesus is the center of—the other two being the history of Israel and the church. Jesus is the midpoint in history. The main shortcoming of those who have sought to understand Christ in terms of faith and history is that it results in a dichotomy, even if it is slight. Mussner seems to be least guilty of forming a dichotomy. However, Mussner could still be criticized

for undermining the uniqueness of the evangelist's testimony because his own perspective was informed by the church's tradition.

The second way some have interpreted Jesus in John centers around the function and person of Christ. In other words, what Jesus does in the FG and how that relates to his person, which some view as most important. The active verbs guides their discussion. Some focus more on what Christ does than his person, like Robinson. The evangelist therefore was more concerned with *how* Jesus was rather than *what* He was. For example, in John 10:34-38, Jesus is metaphysically equal to any other human, but He is given a unique function. Robinson is careful to avoid saying that the gospel is only concerned with function alone. Robinson explains that John was attempting to explain the "feel" of one "who is utterly human and yet whose entire life is lived in absolutely intimate dependence... upon God as his Father" (1973: p. 68). Others, such as Riedl, argue that the fuction reveals the person (Riedl 1973).

While all three questions are important to understanding the nature of Christ in the FG and should inform our analysis going forward, the present study will focus more on the third question due to the nature of its analysis of the nature of Christ and intertextuality. The differences and similarities between the nature of Christ in the FG and the VSS can best be seen through the bifurcation and synthesis of the human and divine natures of Christ. The third category best addresses this issue. The following sections provide an overview of what scholars see as the relationship between the *sarx* and the *doxa* of Christ in the FG.

2.2.2 The Emphasis of the Flesh (*Sarx*)

Bultmann views the nature of Christ in the FG as a paradox between the *sarx* and the *doxa* of Christ (1955: p. II:50). He believes that the divinity of Christ was hidden in his humanity. Thus, like the Valentinians, the *sarx* serves almost like a costume, which faith must overcome in order to see the *doxa* of Christ. He wrote, "Mit σάρξ wird bei Joh die Sphäre des Weltlich-Menschlichen im Gegensatz zum Göttlichen, als der Sphäre des πνεῦμα, 3₆ 6₆₃ (vgl. Schon V. 13), bezeichnet und zwar nach ihrer Vergänglichkeit, Hilflosigkeit und Nichtigkeit (3₆ 6₆₃)..." (1978: pp. 39-40). In his view, the flesh of Christ was

illusory and transitory, and man mistakenly took this form for true humanity. In fact, his humanity was merely a “disguise; it must be transparent” (1971: p. 63).

Bultmann based his view of Jesus in the FG on the Gnostic Redeemer Myth:

Als Erlöser hat sich der Logos selbst in Menschengestalt in die niedere Welt begeben Er hat sich, um die dämonischen Mächte der Finsternis zu tauschen und um die zu rettenden Menschen nicht zu erschrecken, in einen menschlichen Leib verkleidet. Natürlich konnte dies spezifisch gnostische Motiv nicht von den philosophischen Systemen übernommen werden. In den christlich gnostischen Systemen ist der menschengewordene Erlöser mit Jesus identifiziert worden. Indessen ist der Gedanke der Menschwerdung des Erlösers nicht etwa aus dem Christentum in die Gnosis gedrungen, sondern ist ursprünglich gnostisch; er ist vielmehr schon sehr früh vom Christentum übernommen und für die Christologie fruchtbar gemacht worden (1978: pp. 10-11).

Much of Bultmann’s discussion could be seen as paralleling the Valentinian view of the flesh. Bultmann describes Jesus as “in einen menschlichen Leib verkleidet.” This is similar to the Valentinians. GT 31:5-6 describes Jesus’ “fleshly appearance,” which served as a disguise. Much like the early Valentinians Heracleon and Ptolemy, Bultmann interpreted the FG through a Gnostic paradigm.

The German existential philosopher Martin Heidegger had a profound impact on Bultmann in regards to his view of existence. Rejecting sin (1984: p. 29), Bultmann believes that the gospel is that God has liberated humanity from the fact of their fallenness and set them free to enjoy their authentic humanity (1984: p. 26). From this influence came Bultmann’s demythologization of the Bible. Thus, anything he felt came from myth or contradicted science, like the supernatural, needed to be purged from the text. Furthermore, the historical Jesus is of limited value, for it might delude one into thinking that “this historical presentation is the knowledge which reveals the object of faith” (Bultmann & Ogden 1984: p. 122). The *doxa* was hidden in the *sarx*. Thus, one must look past the fleshly appearance of Christ.

After Bultmann, the view that the FG emphasizes the *sarx* of Christ became less common. Most hold that the FG emphasizes the *doxa* of Christ or they view the FG as espousing a balanced view. W.H. Cadman (1969) is one of the few to argue for the FG’s emphasis on the *sarx* of Christ. Cadman believes that the FG’s Christological symbolism should be taken as metaphorical rather than literal. He demythologizes much of the FG but in different ways than

Bultmann. He views the son of man as the perfect humanity of Jesus, and argues that the author of the FG presents the ideal example of humanity. The humanity of Christ, according to Cadman, appears to have an independent existence from the Logos but the two are brought into unity in the FG (Cadman & Caird 1969: pp. 40-42, 74).

Bultmann believed that the origin of the FG had its roots in Mandaean Gnosticism. When he laid Mandaean and Manichaean texts side-by-side, he believed that he had solved his first riddle “of where John’s Gospel stands in relation to the development of early Christianity” (1925). He excluded what he saw as the three branches of doctrinal development in the early church: (1) Hellenistic Christianity (Paul), (2) Jewish-Hellenistic Christianity (*1 Clement*, the *Shepherd of Hermes*, Hebrews, the *Letter of Barnabas*), and (3) Palestinian Christianity (the Synoptic Gospels). Bultmann’s second great riddle (“taking the Gospel as it sees itself (für sich), what is its central intuition, its basic idea?”) came from the first. He answers this riddle by noting the FG’s repetition of Jesus as the emissary of God (1925: p. 57). Thus, Bultmann believed that Jesus’ words of authority should be interpreted in terms of the Gnostic myth (1978: p. 250). He finds the argument that the Mandaean texts were written much later than the FG unconvincing because of the relationship between the Mandaean texts and the Marcionite and Valentinian texts, believing that the texts must have been written before these second century texts. Like Barrett’s view concerning the Valentinians, which will be discussed in section 3.2.2 as well as later, Bultmann believes that the myth was older than the FG and influenced the text. Bultmann notes, “It is evident that we must see the ideas and images of this myth as the material out of which John has formed his own picture” (1925: p. 98). Like Barrett’s view concerning the Valentinians, Bultmann posits that the FG takes a non-Christian myth and Christianizes it. Therefore, in order to see the true Jesus, one must demythologize the FG, removing the Gnostic ideas that the author of the FG has borrowed. Although Bultmann offered a well thought out hypothesis, it has several major holes, which have left his view of intertextuality between the FG and the Mandaeans wanting. First, there is no evidence that the Mandaeans had a well-formed theology in terms of an

articulate, coherent redeemer myth by the time of the writing of the FG in the late first century. Second, Bultmann has laid the Mandaean texts along side the FG and found parallels. As Ashton argues, “Jumbled up once more and regarded in context, they would look very different” (1991: p. 61). Third, it is even more likely that the FG, a highly readable document, influenced the Mandaeans, which are much less readable. Because of the problems with Bultmann’s view and his student Käsemann’s attack, the discussion of the nature of Christ turned from an emphasis on the *sarx* to the *doxa*.

2.2.3 The Emphasis of the Glory (*Doxa*)

It would be a mischaracterization of Bultmann if one described his view of the nature of Christ as emphasizing the *sarx* to the exclusion of the *doxa*. He wrote, “If man wishes to see the *doxa*, then it is on the *sarx* that he must concentrate his attention, without allowing himself to fall a victim to appearance. The revelation is present in a peculiar hiddenness” (1971: p. 63). One of Bultmann’s students, Käsemann, furthers Bultmann’s discussion but changes the emphasis from the *sarx* to the *doxa* of Christ. Käsemann’s short 78-page work, *The Testament of Jesus*, has become one of the most important works on Johannine Christology in modern times. He concentrates on John 17. He believed that Bultmann’s demythologization missed the mark and argues that the symbolism in the FG should be taken literally. Käsemann holds that the incarnation of Christ in the FG indicates a change of location (1968: p. 20). Jesus should be seen as an alien in the world (1968: p. 64). He believes that John expresses “Jesus as God walking on the face of the earth” (1968: p. 75). He explains that “... the full work of divinizing Jesus falls to John, who was no mere human being but the Word of God incarnated, striding an inch above the ground” (Goulder 1977: p. 81). Jesus’ characteristics “represent the absolute minimum of the costume designed for the one who dwelt for a little while among men, appearing to be one of them yet without himself being subjected to earthly conditions” (1968: p. 10). Hence, Käsemann notes that John’s gospel is a “form of naïve Docetism” (1968: p. 26). Unlike the humble Christ of Philippians 2, Jesus only endured humiliation as a form of glorification instead of as a result of the humiliation and later reward of exaltation. He believes that the purpose of

the incarnation was to present god on the Earth (1969: p. 158). Käsemann believes that the trial, crucifixion, and death of Jesus are “a mere postscript which had to be included because John could not ignore this tradition nor yet could he fit it organically into his work” (1968: p. 7). He also states, “Incarnation in John does not mean complete, total entry into the earth, into human existence, but rather the encounter between heavenly and the earthly” (1968: p. 65). In other words, the FG is devoid of real history and history becomes the reaction of the world to Christ’s incarnation. He believes that the FG merely used Jesus’ earthly life as a “backdrop for the Son of God proceeding through the world of man and as the scene of the inbreaking of the heavenly glory” (1968: p. 13). This Gnosticism, according to Käsemann, helped nurture Christian Gnosticism (1968: pp. 7-13, 21-26, 34-35). Käsemann was not alone in his view, Schulz, as well as others (Davis 1951: pp. 109, 112), holds a view akin to Käsemann’s: “In Jesus a divine being tarries on earth among men” (1969: p. 209). Nonetheless, Schulz would reject Käsemann’s description of the FG as “naïve, Gnosticizing Docetism” in favour of exalted Christology. Like Bultmann, Schulz sees the flesh of Christ as a disguise or veil of his divinity, which in this respect seems closer to Bultmann than Käsemann. However, both Schulz and Käsemann would see the FG as emphasizing the *doxa* of Christ. Others like Schottroff argue that both Bultmann and Käsemann were wrong in that the FG borrowed the *sarx* from earlier forms of Christianity and then located it within gnostic dualism. Consequently, 1:14 comes from this earlier tradition. The *sarx*, while real, is merely temporary and completely insignificant (1970: pp. 268-279, 289-290).

Many scholars see an imbalance in the way the nature of Christ is portrayed in the FG (R.E. Brown 1967: p. 47; Robinson 1984: pp. 142-144; D.L. Mealand 1978: p. 465). Panackel explains: “...in John’s Gospel the divinity of Christ is dominant, more emphasized and more conspicuous than his manhood” (1988: pp. 26-27). He holds that this comes from the high Christology of the Johannine community. Lindars believes that the FG expresses a “Christology which appears to have more in common with Gnosticism than with Catholic Christianity” (1969: p. 154). Yet, one must qualify this statement by

noting that Lindars argues that although they share similarities, this does not mean that the author of the FG would have approved of them (1981: p. 63). He does maintain that the author of the FG unwittingly “flings the door wide open to a Docetic Christology” (1981: p. 54) and creates a superhuman character where Jesus has insight into man (2:25), omnisciently knows that Judas will betray him (6:17), and knows when he will die (2:4; 7:6, 30; 8:20; 12:27; 17:1; cf. 18:4). Lindars asserts that the author’s love for drama, climax, and irony leads him to create a character that allows for a Gnostic Christology. One fact remains; Lindars does not believe that the author of the FG intended to portray Jesus docetically. He nuances his thoughts about the author by adding, “...John himself would no doubt have repudiated [a Gnostic Jesus] with horror (cf. pp. 61ff. below)” (1981: p. 54). At the same time, Lindars understands how a Gnostic could have misread the gospel and how scholars such as Käsemann could overemphasize the divinity of Christ.

Although one can see how Käsemann and others could arrive at a view that the FG emphasizes the *doxa* of Christ, the view that the FG emphasizes the *doxa* to the exclusion of the *sarx* has several glaring vulnerabilities (Kysar 1975b: pp. 190-192). First, those that hold this view could easily be accused of ignoring evidence that argues against their view. John 1:14a cannot be easily ignored and should not be so easily disregarded. Nonetheless, 1:14a does not speak to the humanity of Christ on its own. As chapter 4 will demonstrate, the FG contains ample evidence of the humanity of Christ and the fact that the FG did not adopt an earlier view of the incarnation. The incarnated Logos is purely Johannine. A second major weakness of this view is that they have ignored the gospel genre. The fact that the FG was written as a gospel demonstrates that the humanity of Christ was important. If the humanity of Christ was unimportant, why did the author select the gospel genre to tell his story (G.W. MacRae 1970: pp. 328-332), which focus on interaction within the human sphere? To Schulz’s credit, he does take the gospel genre seriously. The opposite is true when referring to the Valentinians. Their works do not resemble the NT gospels, most likely due to their diminished emphasis on the humanity of Christ. Finally, Käsemann and Schottroff have

disregarded the relation between faith and history. As Mussner (1967a) has shown, Jesus in the FG is the combination of the Johannine community's experience of faith and historical understandings of Jesus.

Even though Käsemann's view has major weaknesses, some scholars have explained why the FG can so easily be misconstrued. Ashton carefully answers this question by acknowledging that "Perhaps the evangelist was insufficiently on his guard against" the potential for his high Christology to be misconstrued (1991: p. 74). Because of this, one could view the divinity of Christ as docetic; however, the author of the FG would have never denied the humanity of Christ. The fact that John may not have been aware of the danger that the gnostics—those that believed in secret knowledge—posed may explain why there is such a discrepancy. Mealand believes that the author of the FG may have become aware of these dangers after the first draft. He believes that the author then added passages, such as John 1:14, that attest to Christ's humanity to squelch this doctrine. Mealand sees a tension within the FG—on one side the Word became flesh and on the other side, "...the divine epiphany shines through the outward human appearance..." Acknowledging how complex this issue is, Mealand argues that although the gospel contains both the humanity and divinity of Christ, either the author or later redactors may have added the Word becoming flesh and his death, which moved the FG farther away from the possibility of a docetic interpretation albeit not avoiding the possibility entirely (1978: p. 453). Hence, Mealand, as well as Lindars (1981: pp. 61-63), posit that later revisions of the FG helped clarify the antidocetic theology of the FG. However, Lindars is inclined to believe that the evangelist knew that the Gnostics were misusing the FG, so he included antidocetic arguments in his first epistle (1981: p. 63). The anti-docetic features do not appear overwhelming. If an editor wanted to unequivocally eliminate any doubt amongst the FG's readers, it seems that the work would be less imbalanced in its anti-docetic tone. Furthermore, if the author of the FG was trying to combat Valentinianism, he would have directly attacked the Valentinian ideas of mutual participation and the three natures (pneumatic, psychic, and hylic).

Before this chapter turns to an analysis of those who believe that the FG espouses a balanced approach in regards to the *sarx* and *doxa* of Christ, Barrett's view of the Valentinian's influence on the FG needs to be noted. The GT described the nature of Christ in the FG as merely a fleshly appearance (GT 20:3-34; 31:4-9), an exalted Logos (GT 16:34-35; 20:15-23; 26:1-27), and a form, which could not be seen by material flesh (GT 31:1-3). If the GT influenced the FG and the FG Christianized the GT's ideas, Bultmann's demythologization could lead one to believe that the FG, after the GT's Christianized ideas had been extracted, would emphasize the *doxa* of Christ. Although Barrett believes that the FG was written before the GT, he thinks that it is unlikely that between the writing of the FG and the GT a fully formed non-Christian Gnosticism arose, influencing the GT (1982: pp. 62-63). Rather, he believes that the ideas in the GT were around before the extant text of the GT and early enough for the author of the FG to provide a Christianized version of them (1982: p. 63), most likely giving human flesh to Christ. Nonetheless, even Barrett admits that his theory lacks evidence. There are several arguments against this view. First, the GT does not evidence a full-grown non-Christian Gnosticism. As will be argued in chapter 3, the GT was mostly likely written in the middle of the second century and does not evidence a well-developed theological system. Furthermore, what the church fathers attacked does not even appear in the GT, which seems to be an early Valentinian document (Puech, Quispel & Unnik 1983: p. 171). What is more likely is that the GT reflects early Valentinianism before the split between east and west in the mid-second century. Sophia is absent, and there is no mention of a split Jesus and Christ.

2.2.4 A Balanced Approach

Most modern scholars hold to a more balanced approach concerning the relationship between *sarx* and *doxa* than Bultmann and Käsemann. Both Braun (1959: pp. 224, 243-246) and Feuillet (1972: pp. 69-77, 239-240) argue for the indivisibility of Christ's nature. Braun believes that the *doxa* was veiled and constrained, but after the resurrection, the *doxa* was released. Feuillet on the other hand, focuses on the FG's Trinitarian presentation of the nature of

Christ. Although the incarnation is surrounded by mystery, Jesus does in fact truly take on human flesh. However, Jesus only temporarily takes on flesh. More recently, scholars have begun to argue that the FG portrays a balanced view of the nature of Christ. Panackel sees the FG as “setting-together” both the divine and human natures of Christ in the prologue, the signs, which even though he performed miracles, he remained a man, and in Johannine discourse where Jesus “presents himself, in the first place, as the heavenly Son (3,16ff.18.35f.; 5,17.19 *et al.*; 10,36; 11,4)” (1988: p. 24). He views the FG’s presentation of Jesus as well-rounded, including both sides, the humanity and divinity of Christ (1988: p. 25). O’Grady argues that the purpose of the prologue is not to focus on the pre-existence and divinity of Christ but v 14 and the juxtaposition of the Word becoming flesh and the glory of the Son. The focus should not be seen as the “relationship between the Logos and God but in the relationship between the Logos and flesh.” The author’s use of Logos in vv 1 and 14 were used to show the paradox that “the Logos who dwelt with God, possessing divine life, entered into the sphere of the human and earthly” (1984: p. 64). Hence, O’Grady believes that the true importance of the incarnation lies in the fact that humanity and the eternal Logos coincided. In fact, O’Day believes that “When it is abstracted from the flesh-bound, and hence crucifixion-bound, reality of the incarnation, FG’s multilayered language is open to a myriad of interpretations” (2001: p. 31). Hence the language of the FG becomes cryptic when separated from the humanity of Christ. O’Day offers Heracleon’s interpretation of the pericope of the living water in John 4 as an example. When he overlooked the flesh he “saw in them the perfect demonstration of the Gnostic Demiurge and the Pleroma ...” (2001: p. 31). Clement attacked the Valentinians for redefining the body as an immaterial idea (*Exc* 10:1-3). Therefore, O’Day cautions his readers to take care in preserving the emphasis on the humanity of Christ in the prologue.

Some scholars have come to see the failures of Bultmann and Käsemann as a lack of understanding of the *Sitz-im-Leben* of 1:14. Thyen argues that 1:14-18 was added to the original *Grundschrift* or foundational document and 1:14 describes an authentic incarnation. Thus, according to

Thyen, the FG is decidedly anti-docetic (Thyen 1979: p. 110). Richter also believes that Bultmann and Käsemann have gone too far. He believes *sarx* should be seen as synonymous with “human being” and supports the view that Jesus was fully human (Richter 1971: p. 105). Nonetheless, both Richter and Thyen would agree with Bultmann’s assertion that the FG contains an emphasis on the flesh but would explain the humanity in 1:14 as corresponding to controversies in the Johannine community. More recently, in her book *The Incarnate Word*, Marianne Thompson takes on Bultmann and Käsemann, arguing that although Käsemann was correct in one sense, the incarnation of Jesus allowed him to reveal the Father to his creation through the *sarx*, which “connotes what is material or bodily” (Thompson 1988: p. 50).

Building on the redaction criticism of Thyen and Richter as well as others, Schnelle builds a case that argues for an antidocetic Christology in the FG (1992). Schnelle argues that the miracles display these antidocetic features. While Bultmann sees the miracles as “man’s weakness” (1971: p. 233), which the author may have not believed truly happened (1971: pp. 110, n2), Schnelle views them as “demonstrations of the δόξα θεοῦ” (1992: p. 174). He denies Schottroff’s view that there are “two measures of ‘seeing,’ two levels of miracles” (1970: p. 254) instead arguing that the FG does not distinguish between true and false miracles but sees the “this-worldly reality and magnitude of the miracle and the *doxa* of the Revealer that emerges in it are inextricably united” (Schnelle 1992: p. 174).

Bock has taken the issue of the nature of Christ in the Gnostic texts and the NT head on. While he sees a mixture of emphasis in the Gnostic texts, ranging from a focus on the divinity to a emphasis on both the divinity and humanity of Christ, in the FG and Johannine tradition he sees a balanced nature as key to fellowship between Christians and “reflective of a core faith, not an alternative option” (2006a: p. 119). Pagels on the other hand views the FG’s description of the Logos in more Valentinian terms. She writes, “Yet John, who wrote about a decade after Luke, opens his gospel with a poem which suggests that Jesus is not human at all but the divine, eternal Word of God in human *form* (‘in the beginning was the word, and the Word was with God, and

the word was God’)" (2003a: p. 44). Pagels concludes that the author of the FG wrote his gospel with the intention of combatting *The Gospel of Thomas*, which she believes was written in the late first century. She even believes that the author may have invented a doubting Thomas character in order to undermine *The Gospel of Thomas’s* veracity. Ultimately, Pagels concludes, the FG won the battle, through church fathers such as Irenaeus, and the FG was considered orthodox while its gnostic counterpart, *The Gospel of Thomas*, was deemed heterodox. Ultimately, dating *The Gospel of Thomas* earlier than the first century is problematic (Bock & Wallace 2007: p. 105ff) and the fact that the FG has a well-formed, coherent theology as opposed to *The Gospel of Thomas’s* cryptic style, points to the FG’s influence on *The Gospel of Thomas* rather than the reverse. Backing up this point, Bock explains that if the *Gospel of Thomas* influenced the NT, it would have had to be written no later than 40 AD, a view that no one holds. Furthermore, the silence of second-century patristic writers does not help their case.

Finally, the major commentaries agree that the FG describes a Jesus whose humanity and divinity are balanced. Barrett, disagreeing with Käsemann, views Jesus in the FG as “nothing if not human” (1978: p. 74). He believes that the author used the “harshest available terms, harsher than those of v. 6, where John the Baptist is describes as ἄνθρωπος” (1978: pp. 73-74). Additionally, Carson believes that the FG uses shocking, unambiguous language to describe the humanity of Christ (1991: p. 126). Ridderbos (1997: p. 49ff) and Keener (2003: pp. 406-408) agree with his assessment. While Lincoln sympathizes with Käsemann’s view, he believes that it is overstated. For example, in the Lazarus story, Jesus displays “a strange form of love by waiting for Lazarus to die in order to be able to demonstrate his glory (11.5–6)...” Likewise, he sees humanity in Jesus’ anger and tears. Nonetheless, he sympathetically acknowledges that if the FG’s choice of gospel or biography genre was ignored, as well as his dependence on the Synoptic tradition, the FG’s “minimally necessary costume of a heavenly visitor to earth” could allow the FG to be taken in a docetic manner (2005: pp. 59-60).

2.2.5 Conclusion

Much controversy surrounds the nature of Christ. Bultmann believes that "... the divinity of the figure of Jesus in John is completely lacking in visibility" (1955: p. II:42). One must look past the humanity to find the glory. On the other hand, Käsemann believes that "There is no true humanity here [in the FG]" (1951: p. 109). Yet, there are others who believe in a balanced nature. With the foundation that has been laid in section 2.2, chapter 4 will analyse the nature of Christ in the FG.

2.3 An Analysis of Scholarship Concerning the Nature of Christ in the VSS

In order to orient the reader to Valentinian theology, this section begins its discussion by giving an overview of Valentinian theology and the principal VSS. The discussion then analyses current research concerning the nature of Christ in the VSS, focusing on three emphases in the VSS: (1) Jesus as primarily spirit, (2) Jesus as primarily human, and (3) the complementary nature of Jesus in the VSS.

2.3.1 The Valentinian Connection

Prior to 1945 the Valentinians were known through the works of heresiologists like Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Hippolytus and a few fragments of works by the early Valentinians themselves. Because of the limited number of primary sources, the prevailing view of the Valentinians was dominated by reports from those who attacked them—for example, Irenaeus, who devoted much of his *Against Heresies* to attacking the Valentinians. The small early Valentinian fragments that were available included: (1) Ptolemy's *Letter to Flora* (*LetFl*), (2) Theodotus through Clement of Alexandria's *Excerpta ex Theodotus* (*Exc*), (3) Heracleon through Origen's *Commentary on the Gospel of John* (*InJo*), and (4) fragments from Valentinus himself contained in various works. Nonetheless, the heresiologists' attacks on the Valentinian paradigm far outweighed any first-hand account of Valentinian doctrine by Valentinians themselves.

In 1945 the landscape of Valentinian studies irrevocably changed when the small village of Nag Hammadi, approximately six hundred miles south of Cairo along the Nile River, became the site of a ground-breaking find: a jar full of ancient Coptic manuscripts. Situated on the west bank of the Nile River, the village lies on a sliver of fertile land overlooked by cliffs and desert. Sometime around December 1945, Muhammad Ali recounted his story to James Robinson about a group of Egyptian peasants, including Muhammad himself, riding on camel-back along the cliffs near Nag Hammadi. They came upon a boulder and began to dig in the debris along the face of the cliff in order to gather natural fertilizer. To their surprise, Muhammad's youngest brother found a sealed jar. Although conflicted about opening it because of the possible contents, treasure or an evil spirit (Jinni), Muhammad's love of gold compelled him to break it. They were disappointed to find that the jar contained only some old codices. Thinking that the group would want to share the codices, Muhammad began tearing them.

After reaching his home, Muhammad threw the codices into an area reserved for animals. His mother later used some of them to start a fire. Robinson surmises that this event might explain the damaged state of Codex XII. From what remained, Muhammad tried to sell the codices for a few piastes (one-hundredth of an Egyptian pound) each. He even traded some for cigarettes and fruit. Finally, Phokion J. Tano, an antiquities dealer, became involved and brought the codices, save Codex I, to the Coptic Museum. The Jung Institute initially purchased Codex I (hence referred to as the Jung Codex), but it was later brought back to Egypt and put on display in the Coptic Museum.

The books found by Muhammad Ali in Nag Hammadi have been called the Nag Hammadi Library (NHL). The find included forty-five different titles, but because of duplications there are fifty-two tractates. Among these texts, which include Plato's *Republic*, there is a wide range of theological perspectives. The library has been classified by Meyer, Funk, Poirier, Robinson, and Pagels in *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures* into four main groups of thought: (1) Thomas Christianity, (2) the Sethian school, (3) the Valentinian school, and (4) Hermetic religion. The focus of this study is on influence of the doctrine of

the nature of Christ in the Fourth Gospel (FG) on the third group, the Valentinians.

Already before this monumental find in 1945, early Valentinian use of the FG was clear. Within a couple of generations after the FG was written, the Valentinians were making extensive use of the gospel. Heracleon and Ptolemy wrote commentaries demonstrating their belief that the FG and the Valentinian paradigm could be harmonized. One of the most influential heresiologists, Irenaeus, in his *Against Heresies* gives modern readers a glimpse of the ensuing battle and his weapon of choice. He wrote that those who followed Valentinus made “copious use of that [gospel] according to John, to illustrate their conjunctions,” and he undertook to prove them “to be totally in error by means of this very Gospel...” (*Haer* III:11,7). Irenaeus believed that the Valentinians tried to show that their doctrine was consistent with the FG. Thus, by his logic, Irenaeus had to refute their doctrine by way of the FG itself.

Although the early Valentinians made direct use of the FG through commentaries, the use of the FG in the Valentinian Sources (VSS) in the NHL is not as clear. Modern studies such as those of Williams (1988), Barrett (1962), and Keefer (2006) have argued that there is an intertextual relationship between the VSS and the FG and that the relationship can be seen through parallel texts, allusions, and similar vocabulary. The present study is occasioned by the lack of a systematic examination of the nature of Christ in the FG and the VSS in the NHL, of the FG’s influence on the VSS, and of the way in which the VSS reshaped and reused the theology and related themes from the FG.

2.3.2 An Overview of Valentinian Doctrine and Sources

The Valentinian system that dominates the following chapters can be quite complex with its mix of Middle Platonism, Stoicism, Johannine themes, and unique Valentinian doctrine. In addition, the VSS have not received the attention that other gnostic works, such as the *Gospel of Thomas*, have enjoyed. As April DeConick in her work, *The Original Gospel of Thomas in Translation* (2007), has argued, the *Gospel of Thomas* has historically been called a gnostic gospel, but using this adjective can be rather confusing

because there is not one group of Gnostics. She rather argues that the *Gospel of Thomas* was a product of Early Syrian Christianity (pp 5-7). Nonetheless, there is an emphasis on gnosis (*Gos Thom* 1, 3, 17, 18 [origin], 70, and 108). Hence, in order to make what follows as clear as possible, the following section gives an overview of Valentinian doctrine as well as the various VSS that will be included in later discussion.

Whether the VSS in the NHL should be referred to as Valentinian is debated among scholars. This dissertation does acknowledge that “Valentinian” may not be the best name for the Valentinians since Valentinus’s influence is difficult to measure. Bentley Layton (1995: pp. esp. 217-353) and Gilles Quispel (1990) argue for continuity between Valentinus and the Valentinians who came after him. Layton and Quispel believe that Valentinus passed down the Valentinian myth. This is difficult to prove. Most likely Valentinus had an influential part in forming Valentinianism but whose influence became weaker with time. However, the different texts do demonstrate enough similarities to be seen as belonging to the same movement. Thomassen’s (2008) definition of “Valentinianism” is helpful: “a distinctive historical reality, a particular branch of ancient Christianity with its own identity and history” (p. 5). Thomassen groups the early Valentinians and the VSS in the NHL together. Hurtado (2003) questions “how confidently we can use any of the Nag Hammadi texts as direct, primary evidence for Valentinianism in the second century...” (p. 533). Hurtado takes a cautious approach, firstly because he argues that the Valentinian themes may be evidence of Valentinian doctrine that “originated in Valentinian circles without the texts themselves being wholly evidence of Valentinianism” (2003: p. 534). Secondly, he suspects that the Valentinian texts in the NHL may have undergone significant changes between their original composition and the fourth century. However, as will be argued in chapter 3, there is good evidence for earlier Greek originals and any theory of reshaping by later redactors, as Hurtado suggests, is mere conjecture. (Hurtado does rightly challenge those who would call *Prayer of the Apostle Paul* Valentinian. Indeed, there is little evidence for this.) The biggest obstacle to Hurtado’s view is the evidence from the heresiologists and the early Valentinians from the second century. While

demonstrating with certainty that Valentinus was the founder of the Valentinian myth would be difficult, the continuity between the early Valentinians and the VSS from the NHL as well as the evidence from the heresiologists argue for a Valentinian group in the second century that was influenced by the FG and in turn influenced the VSS in the NHL. For example, many of the themes that appear in the early Valentinians and the VSS from the NHL appear in TT but in a more polished manner (i.e. God's actualizing will [revelation of the son], Logos in place of Sophia, a Trinitarian godhead instead of a complex Pleroma, tripartation of humanity was a result of freewill, and hope of final redemption of humanity). This not only shows continuity between the authors' theology but also a developing continuum that began in the second century and continued into the third and possibly even fourth centuries. The essential Valentinian doctrines (tripartite view of man, the Valentinian myth, and mutual participation) can also be traced from the early Valentinians to the VSS in the NHL (see 1.1.1.2–4, 5.2.3–4, 7.2.6).

2.3.2.1 *Basic Valentinian Doctrine*

Valentinian doctrine begins with the Pleroma or spiritual realm of the aeons, continues with the fall of Sophia/Logos and descent of the saviour, and ends with the reunification with the Pleroma. These terms will be explained below. While Valentinians did not hold to a monolithic set of doctrines, there are four unique commonalities that can be seen consistently throughout their works: (1) an emphasis on cosmogony reflecting a soteriological emphasis on origin, as seen in Ptolemy's creation myth (*Haer* I:8,5 and I:12), (2) an anthropology characterized by three types of people: hylic (matter), psychic (animal), and the pneumatic (spiritual), (3) a concurrent emphasis on soteriology, and (4) an allegorical interpretation of biblical texts (Keefer 2006: p. 27).

2.3.2.1.1 *The Valentinian Hermeneutic.* Ptolemy, in his *Letter to Flora* (*LetFl*), offered insight into the Valentinian allegorical method of interpretation. Speaking of the Law of Moses, he divides it into three sub-categories: (1) pure but imperfect (the Decalogue), which contains command and prohibition, (2) that which contains threads of injustice (retributive passages), and (3) those that should be interpreted symbolically (ritual law like Sabbath, fasting,

circumcision, and Passover). Ptolemy gives this explanation for his method for applying scripture,

Finally, there is a part translated and changed from the literal to the spiritual, this symbolic legislation which is an image of transcendent things. For the images and symbols that represent other things are good as long as the truth had not come; but since the truth has come, we must perform the actions of the truth, not those of the image (6.4-5).

Ptolemy expected his Valentinian readers to see past the image or shadow before them and to perceive the truth. He opens his letter in 3.8 and closes it in 7.9 by explaining that they must interpret through secret knowledge: “We shall offer proofs of what we say by drawing from our saviour’s words, by which alone it is possible to reach a certain apprehension of the reality of the matter without stumbling” (3.8). For Ptolemy, with secret knowledge one must draw out the true meaning behind the words of Jesus and translate the literal meaning of scripture, which is merely an image, into the true spiritual meaning. Many might see the literary theory debate between text and reader beginning in the late twentieth century. Yet, for early Valentinians like Ptolemy, the reader, enlightened through special knowledge, was the arbitrator of textual meaning. For this reason, apart from direct quotations in the early Valentinians, uncovering allusions and parallels between the FG and the VSS can be quite difficult.

Valentinian allegorical exegesis includes three different forms of exegesis: (1) Pleroma; (2) Kenoma; and (3) Cosmos. Pagels (1973: pp. 26-35), picking up on Orbe’s (1955: p. 56ff) work, explains these well in her study on Heracleon’s commentary on the FG. The Pleroma includes the spiritual realm of aeons, the Kenoma is the void where the lower Sophia was sent when she was cast out of the Pleroma, and the Cosmos was created by the Demiurge. As will be discussed in chapter 5, Valentinian interpretation explains how one passage can be interpreted in multiple ways. Observing these fine distinctions in Valentinian interpretation of texts is vital to uncovering echoes of the nature of Christ from the FG. These nuances of Valentinian interpretation are discussed more in chapters 5-6.

After her evaluation of the way in which Valentinus used and modified the NT in the Gospel of Truth (GT), Williams (1988: p. 191) offers several

hermeneutical principals gleaned from Valentinus. She observed eight ways in which he used the contents of NT passages to fit his own purposes: (1) denaturing of imagery (i.e. Jesus' name is replaced with "the word" when a Valentinian alludes to or quotes a NT passage); (2) replacing Jesus with the Father; (3) changing God to Father; (4) enhancing the relationship between the Father and the son; (5) deemphasizing eschatology; (6) increased emphasis on predestination; (7) shifting from ethical to intellectual; and (8) redefining salvation in terms of origin. This list is a helpful starting point for evaluation in later chapters, but her study related passages from both the OT and NT to the GT. The scope of this study is much more focused in that it looks only at the nature of Christ and how the VSS in the NHL and the FG intersect. Thus, some of these principals may not appear in the limited scope of this work.

2.3.2.1.2 Pleromatology and the Creation of the Three Substances.

The Pleroma is the home of the thirty aeons, who emanate from Bythos, the deity and first principle. The Pleroma or "fullness," the world of eternal ideas, is contrasted with the Kenoma or "void," the material world. Two separate doctrines of the Pleroma exist in Valentinianism. The first, and more orthodox of the two, is included in the Tripartite Tractate (TT) and GT and does not have a numbered system of aeons. The Logos's decision to fall, which occurred according to the Father's will (TT 76:24–77:1), produced two types of beings outside the Pleroma. Confusion produced hylic beings and when the Logos repented, psychic forces were produced (see section 6.2.3). The saviour was produced when the Logos split into two (TT 85:15–90:13). His better masculine self returned to the Pleroma to intercede for the defective feminine self. Thus, both a higher Logos and a lower Logos exist. The Logos provides a body for the saviour and hence becomes corporeal in the saviour. As is discussed later, a hypostatized, human Logos, who becomes saviour, son, and Jesus, finds no parallel other than in the FG. This key intersection ties the FG and the VSS together. The hylic beings are material and have no hope of reunification with the Pleroma because of their rejection of the saviour. Spiritual beings (Valentinians) immediately recognize the saviour. Psychic beings (ordinary Christians, Jews) are caught in the middle, initially hesitate, but eventually join

the saviour. Since the spiritual substance needed form, the Demiurge was created to help with the creation of the world. The author of TT 100:31-33 wrote, “the Logos uses him [the Demiurge] as a hand, to beautify and work on the things below.” Also, see *Exc* 47:2, 49:1-2; *Haer* 1:5,1-4; 1:17,1; 2:6,3.

The variant of the Valentinian myth, to which Ptolemy, Valentinus, the Valentinian Exposition (VE), and Theodotus subscribe, was reported by Irenaeus (*Haer* 1:2,3; *Exc* 43:2–46:1). In this variation, Sophia, the feminine counterpart to the Logos, violated the pleromic harmony by trying to know the Father. She fell into ignorance and suffered but was stopped by the limit, or boundary, between the Pleroma and the world. Sophia repented and pleaded for help. While Sophia was suffering in isolation, the Father sent Christ, and she attained knowledge of the Father. Her fall, repentance, and redemption explain how the three beings were created: (1) hylc from her suffering, (2) psychic from her repentance, and (3) spiritual from her knowledge (gnosis). Once again, in order for the spiritual to have form, the Demiurge was emitted (*Haer* 1:5,1).

2.3.2.1.3 Mutual Participation and Reunification. Mutual participation is a Valentinian doctrine that explains the spiritual body of the saviour. According to *Exc* 1:1-2, Sophia put forth a receptacle of flesh for the Logos, which is explained as a spiritual seed. The spiritual seeds should be seen as “germs” of the spirit. In other words, they have not come to maturity (DeConick 2008: p. 31). This seed was deposited in the spiritual beings and will be gathered up by the saviour and become his spiritual body. *Exc* 26 explains that the spiritual seeds will reunite with the Pleroma. This occurs through this co-incarnational model. Reunification with the Pleroma is the ultimate end of the saviour after he vanquishes death (Treatise on the Resurrection [TR] 44:30-33).

2.3.2.1.4 Bending, Extending, and Swallowing. All three of these terms picture acts performed by the saviour at the cross or during the spiritual resurrection. The author of the Interpretation of Knowledge (IK) describes the saviour as “bent over the cross” (IK 13:27) and Irenaeus pictures him as extending “himself beyond the cross” (*Haer* I:4.1). These should both be viewed as the emanation process where the son, in the form of Christ, crossed over the boundary, or cross, and entered into the world.

Swallowing describes the spiritual resurrection where the saviour destroys death and provides a way to “immortality” (TR 45:20-23). The spiritual resurrection swallows the psychic and fleshly (45:40–46:2). Because the saviour is both human and divine, he can swallow the visible or eradicate imperfection, substituting his spiritual existence at the resurrection.

2.3.2.2 Sources of Valentinian Theology

The VSS in the NHL include the GT, the TR, the TT, the *Gospel of Philip* (GP), the IK, and VE. Although as many as six additional books could have been included, these have been selected as VSS because they agree closely with Valentinian theology and include reference to the nature of Christ. For example, some might suggest that *The Exegesis of the Soul* is Valentinian because it follows the myth of Sophia. It does also mention the Bridal Chamber (132:2–133:10) but little else worth inclusion. Ultimately, it was not included because its Valentinian character is not as clear as the six that were included and it does not deal with the nature of Christ. *The First Apocalypse of James* includes a Valentinian dying rite but little Valentinian theology. Finally, *The Prayer of the Apostle Paul* includes reference to the “psychic god” (A.31) but little else that would warrant adding it. Because Heracleon and Ptolemy perform crucial rôles in the formation of Valentinian doctrine, especially in relation to their commentaries on the FG, they have been included in this overview as well.

2.3.2.2.1 *Heracleon*. Heracleon wrote the first known commentary on the FG. Unfortunately, only fragments of his commentary remain in Origen’s commentary *In Jo*. What survives is a Valentinian exposition of pieces of John 1, 2, 4, and 8, focusing on Valentinian cosmogony and soteriology. For example, after quoting John 1:29, Heracleon assigns “the lamb of god” to the body and the one “who takes away the sin of the world” to the one who was in that body. The lamb was imperfect and so was the body. Heracleon explains that if the author of the FG meant to ascribe perfection to the body, he would have used a ram. Heracleon set out to demonstrate that the FG is consistent with Valentinian soteriology and cosmogony. Therefore, Heracleon’s commentary, as an example of early Valentinian exegesis of the FG, provides a rare look into how the Valentinians directly interpreted the FG. The authors of

the VSS from the NHL on the other hand used mostly allusions, echoes, and parallels and only on occasion direct quotations of the FG.

2.3.2.2.2 *Ptolemy*. Irenaeus recorded Ptolemy's commentary on the FG's prologue in which he explains the first octet of aeons. The four pairs of emanations include the Father and grace, the only-begotten and truth, the word and life, and the human being and the church. Ptolemy wrote his *LetFl* to his "dear sister Flora" in order to clarify theological questions pertaining to the Mosaic Law. He explains to Flora that within the five books of Moses are three subdivisions by three authors. The saviour came to fulfil the pure law in the form of the ten commandments. The latter two are a mixture of the impure and evil law, written by Moses and the elders. The saviour changed the commands on offerings, circumcision, fasting, and the Passover. This new law transforms these commands and gives them a spiritual dimension. The *LetFl* explains the allegorical method of the Valentinians. Therefore, it is a foundational resource for understanding how Valentinian writers used texts.

2.3.2.2.3 *The Gospel of Truth*. Scholars have dissected the GT far more than any other Valentinian Source (VS) from the NHL. Many have concluded, for good reason, that Valentinus penned the book himself. Consequently, the GT has risen to the top of Valentinian works as supremely important for defining the movement's theology.

Irenaeus referred to a *Gospel of Truth* in *Haer* 3:11,9, which could be the GT in the NHL. Most likely written in the mid-second century, the GT seeks to dispense hope to its readers. The document begins by explaining that knowledge of the Father destroys ignorance (18:10-11; 24:30-32) and at the same time defining the generation of error that came from the Father, which represented quite a predicament for the Pleroma. Error eventually kills Jesus, nailing him to a tree. Yet Jesus is stripped of his perishable rags in 20:30-31 and then puts on imperishability. Very quickly the author qualifies what he means by death and a bodily existence. At first blush, the work seems to be quasi-orthodox, but it explains the body of Jesus in what appears to be a docetic manner. The ultimate goal in the GT is return to the primordial source or Pleroma (30:16–32:30).

The GT picks up on themes that seem to be derived from the FG. For example, the Logos is pictured as the saviour and creator (16:34-35). The book also includes allusions that seem to parallel the FG such as Jesus being associated with way and truth (GT 18:18-21) and the word (πῶς εἶπε) taking on a bodily form (GT 26:4-8). For the Valentinians, understanding theology through their myth of pleromic reality was more important than the historicity of the incarnation, death, and resurrection of the saviour. For this reason, the author has made subtle changes in order to make the echoes of the FG fully Valentinian.

2.3.2.2.4 The Gospel of Philip. The GP could be called a patchwork of sacramental catechesis. The author touches on themes such as baptism, chrism (anointing with oil), the Eucharist, redemption, and the Valentinian bridal chamber. The GP places these sacraments into the context of the human dilemma. In the bridal chamber, the breaking of the pair Adam and Eve has been reversed. Christ's purpose in coming was to reunite Adam and Eve (70:12-17).

The author seems to have an affinity for the FG in that possible allusions and quotations are included, such as "bread from heaven" (55:10-14) and partaking of the bread and cup to receive the "flesh and blood" of Jesus (56:26–57:22). Textual links between the nature of Christ in the FG and the GP will be discussed and evaluated in chapter 6.

2.3.2.2.5 The Treatise on Resurrection. The author of the TR writes to Rheginos to explain the spiritual resurrection. Consequently the letter seems to echo parts of 1 Cor and 2 Cor. Because suffering and death occur in the material world, spiritual resurrection liberates the spirit from the body. In fact, it separates the inward members from the outward members. The letter instructs Rheginos to believe that the spiritual resurrection, a mystical union between Christ and the spirituals, has already occurred (45:15–46:2). Through their return to the Pleroma, the saviour's mission on earth, to restore the fall of Sophia (44:30-33), is complete.

Middle Platonism plays a major role in the TR, as can be seen from:
(1) The distinction between the world of being and the sphere of becoming and

corruption (48:20-27), (2) the distinction between the intelligible world and the sensible world (46:35–47:1), and (3) the pre-existence of souls (46:38-47:1; cf. 47:4-6; 49:30-36) and practicing for dying (49:28-33). While the TR shows influence from Paul and Middle Platonism, the author of the TR did not limit himself to these two sources of influence. Although the TR does not contain direct quotations from specific passages in the FG, it does contain an allusion to John 3:16-17, 36 in TR 46:21-23, which is discussed in chapter 6.

2.3.2.2.6 The Tripartite Tractate. The TT could be seen as a Valentinian work on theodicy, explaining the myth of the Logos leaving the primordial godhead and his later reunification with the spirituals through mutual participation, the Valentinian co-incarnational model. The document contains orthodox features, e.g. the fallen aeon is named Logos instead of Sophia and he is born of a virgin and takes on the humanity, which he came to save (114:31–117:36). Yet, the document contains Valentinian distinctives as well, such as the three classes of beings (hylic, psychic, and pneumatic) and the emanation of the Logos, the son, and the church.

With the fall of the Logos, the two classes of beings in the world, psychic and hylic (material), are produced. When the Logos repents, the saviour, called the son, is created. His better, masculine-self returns to the Pleroma while his defective, feminine side descends into the world. The Logos's body provides the saviour with a body. The three classes of humans either immediately recognize him (pneumatic), hesitate and then gradually come to him (psychic), or immediately reject him (hylic) (118:14–122:12). In the end, the spiritual seeds are gathered up, co-incarnated with the saviour (122:12-15), released from their bodies (117:17-36), and reunited with the Pleroma (123:18-37).

The TT also demonstrates intertextual links with the FG. The mutual indwelling of the Father and the son appears in TT 56:24-25. Also, the book speaks of the only son and the Logos (ἈΠΛΟΓΟC) in association with life and light and “coming into the flesh” (CΑΡΞ). The fact that the author uses ΛΟΓΟC and the word CΑΡΞ may show an intertextual link between the TT and the FG.

2.3.2.2.7 *The Interpretation of Knowledge*. The author of the IK provides a unique glimpse into the Valentinian view of the church. Passages from Matthew are included to explain the saviour's teaching on the passion, and from other NT books to show the church as the body of Christ. Apparently, the Valentinian community had been dealing with disunity over spiritual gifts. Some were envious of the gifts of others in the community, and some refused to exercise their gifts to benefit others. In order to illustrate the unity that the community should have been experiencing, the author used the saviour's teaching on the oneness of the Father (9:28-29) and the saviour's voluntary submission for his "small brothers" (14:28-29). The author then reminds his readers that the church is a body, comprised of many members. Although the IK seems quite orthodox on the surface, Valentinian theology is sprinkled throughout. For example, the flesh of the saviour is described as an aeon emanated from Sophia (12:32-33).

Due to the IK's fragmentary nature as well as its well-developed Valentinian doctrine, echoes from the FG are much more difficult to see. However, the appearance of the saviour in the flesh is linked with glory, dwelling, and grace. These possible allusions are further analysed in chapter 6.

2.3.2.2.8 *A Valentinian Exposition with Liturgical Readings*. In the midst of what appear to be liturgical readings, the VE describes the Valentinian myth of Sophia, origin of creation, and Valentinian soteriology. The book seems to be a secret catechism for Valentinians, including anointing and baptismal and Eucharistic prayers. By arguing for the author's view on the primordial source (monadic versus dyadic), the functions of the "limit" or cross, and the motivation for the passion of Sophia, the VE illustrates Tertullian's contention that the Valentinians disagreed amongst themselves (*Praescr* 42). The author argues for a monadic source as opposed to what Irenaeus reports that Valentinus himself believed. The VE also argues for four powers for the limit rather than the usual two. The limit separated the passion of Sophia and protected the aeons from her transgression by keeping Sophia from being absorbed into the Father. The VE also explains that Sophia wilfully violated the harmony of the Pleroma but later repented. After her repentance she received Christ, who

became her divine partner. This syzygy (a male and female pair) maintains balance in Valentinian theology.

The VE is the only VS that uses the word ΜΟΝΟΓΕΝΗΣ. The other VSS prefer to use the Valentinian phrase ΠΩΡΕ Ν-ΟΥΩΤ. The intertextual links between the FG and the VSS will be demonstrated in chapter 6. Other passages and possible allusions will be analysed as well.

This chapter now turns to an overview of how scholars view the nature of Christ in the VSS.

2.3.3 The Spiritual and Human Components of Christ

Franzmann believes that there are three options concerning the nature of Christ in the NHL: (1) A heavenly form that allows for human contact, (2) A human form that complements his heavenly form (two-natures) (Harnack 1909: pp. 286, n. 1; Rudolph 1977: p. 162), and (3) A Jesus that abandons part of his heavenly form so that he can be more of a human in some sense or pneumatic human being (Franzmann 1996: p. 71). Bock adds a fourth—Jesus appears solely as a human figure. This view states that Jesus may be a great teacher or even a prophet, but human nonetheless (Bock 2006b: pp. 97-98). Franzmann nuances her view by adding that the nature of Christ in the NHL should be seen as a three-dimensional graph. The more the text necessitates an earthly connection, the greater the need to split Jesus' nature into two. Conversely, the less human contact required, the less the author needs to split these natures. She cites two examples. She includes the TT because it does not divide the person of Christ and the TR because the son of God and son of man appear divided. Regardless of whether the person of Christ is divided, due to the lack of narrative text, the VSS seem to accentuate the spiritual nature of Jesus.

Likewise, scholars believe a Christological continuum exists in the NHL. This continuum begins with what is referred to as low Christology—when a particular text expresses a human Jesus. The opposing end of the spectrum is called high Christology—passages that express Jesus' divinity (Bock 2006b: p. 98). Harnack explains, "It is not Docetism (in the strict sense) which is the characteristic of gnostic Christology, but the two-nature doctrine, i.e. the

distinction between Jesus and Christ, or the doctrine that the redeemer as redeemer did not become man” (1909: pp. 286, n. 1). Yet, how is this different in the VSS? Rudolph explains, “In general they [Valentinians] reckon with three Christ figures, the spiritual, the psychic and the bodily, each of whom has his separate significance and function” (1977: p. 166). These designations correspond with pneumatic, psychic, and hylic, which were discussed in the section 2.3.2.1.2.

2.3.3.1 *Christ as Principally Spirit*

Komoszewski, Sawyer, and Wallace believe the lack of narrative within Gnostic gospels stems from their lack of focus on the humanity of Christ. The root of this, they explain, is the Gnostic view that the spirit is good and matter is evil. Hence, the Gnostic writers tended to focus on the words of Jesus rather than narrative passages (2006: p. 158). They conclude that a divine Jesus, without a human nature, is in view (2006: p. 164). Hence, the authors believe that NHL purposefully and implicitly emphasizes the spiritual nature of Christ through its narrative deficiency. Franzmann and Lattke seem to agree with their assessment. Franzmann and Lattke claim that the more earthly contact Jesus makes, the greater the need to split his earthly and divine natures. Likewise, they state, “...the more illusory the earthly context (i. e., the more cosmic his activity within an earthly setting), the less need he has for real flesh, with no necessity for a division of his being into two natures” (1994: p. 146). This is consistent with Franzmann’s own view that one should look at the nature of Christ as if it were on a three-dimensional graph. Franzmann and Latke affirm that the TT bears out the latter. In TT 113:31-37, Jesus is portrayed as one who was begotten and will suffer (33-34) who was previously eternal, unbegotten, and impassable from the Logos. Furthermore, the Logos provided the spiritual aspect to man at creation (TT 105:29–106:12) and is the image (ἘΙΚΩΝ) (Attridge & Pagels 1985: p. 441) of the unitary one (116:28-29). Nevertheless, the incarnation is necessitated by Valentinian theology (TT 114:30–115:23).

Concerning the GT, Ménard writes, “Pour un esprit gnostique, l’incarnation du Christ ne peut arriver en deçà de la sphère du monde

psychique invisible” (1972: pp. 125-126). This is supported by GT 31:5-6 where the author describes the son as having a “fleshly form” (𐀆𐀃𐀇𐀓𐀓𐀓 𐀆𐀃𐀇𐀓). Rudolph explains, “The document [GT] evidently operates with a transformed ‘flesh conception’ intended to give expression to the special nature of Christ which is visible only to the initiate, a ‘spiritual flesh’ so to speak” (1977: p. 160). Theodotus believed that Christ’s body was made up of the church (*Exc* 12), it was spiritual (*Exc* 14), and it was not like the bodies of male and females (*Exc* 10). Consistent with eastern Valentinian theology, the GT states that he “stripped himself of perishable rags” (𐀇𐀓𐀓𐀓𐀓𐀓 𐀆𐀃𐀇𐀓 𐀆𐀃𐀇𐀓𐀓𐀓𐀓 𐀇𐀓𐀓𐀓𐀓𐀓) and “put on imperishability” (𐀓𐀓𐀓𐀓𐀓𐀓 𐀆𐀃𐀇𐀓 𐀆𐀃𐀇𐀓𐀓𐀓𐀓𐀓 𐀓𐀓𐀓𐀓𐀓𐀓, 20:15-39). Rudolph also believes that there is a special kind of flesh in the TR as well. TR 48:38–49:9 describes “imperishability” (𐀓𐀓𐀓𐀓𐀓𐀓𐀓𐀓) descending upon “the perishable” (𐀓𐀓𐀓𐀓𐀓𐀓), echoing 1 Cor 15:53-54. Chapter 5 will explore Christ’s nature in more detail and includes the theology of mutual participation to resolve the seeming contradictions.

2.3.3.2 *Christ as Primarily Human*

Research concerning Jesus’ earthly origin reveals that scholars see evidence of an earthly born Christ in the NHL; however, the literature normally employs pejorative language when referring to the corporeal abode and its surrounding features. Scholars such as Colpe explain, “Wherever one finds the phrase, *ho logos sarks egeneto*, one is certainly not dealing with a Gnostic text!” (1980: p. 663). Yet, Clement’s attack against the Valentinians was aimed at their two-layered use of Logos in the prologue. They did not overlook the enfleshed Logos; they merely differentiated between the Logos of the primary tetrad and the enfleshed Logos. Franzmann and Lattke nuance his quote by explaining that Gnostic texts are not always clear concerning the meaning of flesh (1994: p. 146). Thus, when scholars confront a Gnostic text that appears to support the incarnation, scholars consider the context, influence, and theology surrounding the text. Clement explained that the flesh did not always mean material existence in Valentinian theology but could be understood as an idea or being (*Exc* 10:3), namely his own person or identity separate from the

Father. Similarly, IK 12:32-37 describes Jesus' body as a carcass and an aeon emitted by Sophia.

Perkins notes that in TT the author presents Jesus "... as saviour, the Logos is incarnate, born of a virgin, and takes on the humanity and death of those he came to save ..." (1981: p. 386). Perkins allows for a view of the incarnation that is consistent with the NT. Yet, others disagree. Borchert explains the problem by explaining that the GP does allow for the virgin birth of Jesus and explains that Joseph was the father of Jesus. He explains that in general Philip holds to a docetic view of Christ, weaving Gnostic and Christian ideas into one seamless document. Because of this, "... the Gos Phil gave the heresiologs nightmares" (1974: p. 85). He later questions whether, according to the GP, Jesus actually suffered corporeally (1974: p. 86).

Passages such as GT 31:5-6 describe the son as having a "fleshly form" (ἸΟΥΓΑΡΞ ΝΟΜΑΤ). Ménard as well as others (Attridge & MacRae 1985: p. 88) believe that it should be translated "appearance" rather than "form." Attridge and MacRae believe this passage should be seen through the eyes of "'pneumatic' or early forms of a 'two natures' Christology" (1985: p. 89). They nuance this by stating, "It seems likely, then, that the *Gos. Truth*, although it explores the spiritual and existential significance of the incarnation and passion of the revealer, does not deny the reality of that event" (1985: p. 89). Schenke leaves the translation more vague by translating the phrase "fleshly form" (1959: p. 46). While both translations intimate a two-nature view, the former seems to allow for differentiation in the Logos and the latter seems to deny a physical existence. The translation "fleshly appearance" is consistent with passages such as IK 12:37 where Jesus' body is viewed as a carcass and GP 57:28 where he came with a stealthily appearance. Yet, Thomassen argues from the TT that the incarnation, in some form, is soteriologically necessary (TT 114:30–115:23) (2006: pp. 47-50).

In relation to the flesh of Christ, Bock writes, "He existed in the flesh ([Treat. Res.] 44:14-15) and lived on the Earth where believers are (44:17-19). Flesh is a temporary form or existence (47:4-16)" (2006b: p. 103). Bock nuances his view of the flesh in the VSS by adding that it is merely temporary.

This is consistent with passages that refer to the flesh as a garment (IK 11:26-39; GP 51:20–58:10; 68:26-29). Cordero explains, “Esta figura del *Sotér* o «salvador» es la figura central del sistema *valentiniano*, en el que confluyen ideas iránicas *dualistas* y cristianas” (1998: p. 453). Cordero believes that the VSS were influenced by Iranian dualism, but others believe Middle Platonism seems more likely. Debate exists on whether Iranian dualism was influenced by Greek philosophy and whether it had a direct influence on Gnosticism (Volf 2004). Rudolph disagrees pointing out that Iranian dualism taught good versus evil and not spiritual versus corporeal (1977: p. 59ff). This study will argue that Platonism did influence the VSS below.

Cordero later adds, “Y el «hijo del hombre» revestido de «carne», refleja en la tierra las realidades del *Plerôma*” (1998: p. 453). Thomassen believes that the TT shows that the flesh of the Saviour and the Saviour should be seen as separate entities. Yet, the incarnation must be in some sense real. Thomassen explains that the language of withdrawal and spreading out in *Exc* 58–62 are both: “... used in protological contexts, but refer at the same time to the crucifixion” (2006: p. 66). Withdrawal, or separation of the spirit and matter, intimates a previous joining. Thus, in some sense the spirit and flesh did fuse together. He argues that the TT and TR bear this out (Thomassen 2006: p. 83). At the same time, the incarnation should be seen as a co-incarnation. The idea of mutual participation will be explored in chapter 5 (Thomassen 2006: pp. 49-50).

2.3.3.2.1 Christ Residence Equated to a Shell. The body of Christ is frequently referred to as a garment (IK 11:26-39; GP 51:20–58:10), a carcass (IK 12:37), and a temporary form (TR 47:4-16). Rudolph explains that the Gnostics viewed Jesus as a carcass, a temporary abode of Christ or the Saviour, who descended upon Jesus at his baptism and departed at his crucifixion (1977: p. 162). Consequently, Jesus’ bodily form only served as a shell or temporary home for the spirit-Jesus. This shell was abandoned at the cross, which according to Clement of Alexandria, the Valentinians believed that the cross is the boundary between the world or earthly realm and the Pleroma or the spiritual realm (*Exc* 42). His body is the church or a spiritual body (*Exc* 12

& 14). While Franzmann believes that it is not always clear what Gnostics mean by flesh, she illustrates many clear instances where Jesus' body is a mere shell filled up by his spirit. She uses GP 57:28-32 where Jesus takes them all by "stealth" (ἄκρυπτος), IK 10:33 where Jesus' "shape" (ὄμοιος), not likeness, is how believers know and see him, and other passages as well (1996: p. 72ff). Franzmann does, nonetheless, admit that there are several perplexing passages. Concerning TT 113:38, where Jesus "came into being in flesh," she writes, "Thus the flesh of the Savior is a spiritual flesh, and he does not share in the passions of human flesh (116.26-28)" (1996: p. 78). Both Schenke and Haardt believe that it should be taken as figurative (Schenke 1959: p. 40; Haardt 1962: p. 35). Yet, TT 114:31–118:14 describes the saviour's co-incarnation and mutual participation with the spirituals. The elect share body and essence with the saviour (TT 122:12-15). According to Clement of Alexandria, this co-incarnated flesh is spiritual.

2.3.3.2 The True Likeness of Christ. The NHL consistently views the body and the things of the earthly realm in depreciatory terms. As Franzmann states, the world "is inherently evil ... imperfectly (perishably) created" (1996: p. 57). Therefore, nothing in the world, including flesh, can ever be satisfactory. The concepts of flesh and purity are contrasted in GP 82:6-7 underscoring this view. Wilson writes, "'Saying' 72 [in the Gos. Phil.] presents a kind of inverted Docetism: the flesh we mortals possess is not true flesh (and therefore, as 23 says, cannot inherit the kingdom of God), but only a likeness of the true, which is that of Jesus" (1963: p. 13). Hence, the true likeness, according to Wilson, exists in Jesus alone. Furthermore, Jesus could not have inhabited a fleshly body because the flesh that mortals possess is not true. The two cannot coexist. Jesus exists only in the spirit because the flesh merely exhibits a likeness of the true. The separation between the world of the flesh and the Pleroma is the cross (*Exc 42*).

2.3.3.3 The Complementary Nature of the Human and Spiritual Components of the Nature of Christ

Franzmann differentiates between the earthly and spiritual natures of Jesus and his complementary nature by noting that they have no effect on each

other. The complementary nature of Christ describes the interaction and effects that result from the union of both body and spirit (1996: pp. 85-87). Cordero argued that the Gnostics believed that the historical Christ united the spiritual and the psychic but not the material substance because it was incompatible and could not be seen or touched. The psychic substance came from the Demiurge and the pneumatic from Sophia (1998: p. 454). The pure saviour cannot possess a material body. Thus, he inhabits both a psychic body and a spiritual body, which co-incarnated with the church. TR 48:38–49:9 pictures imperishability descending upon perishability—the spiritual flesh was emitted by Sophia. That stands in contrast to the carcass that it inhabits (IK 12:22-38). These natures do not unite in the same way they do in the FG. Hence the complementary nature in the FG should not be seen as a direct parallel in the VSS.

Franzmann believes that the TR “provides a summary statement concerning the complementarity of his earthly and heavenly natures” (1996: p. 85). She continues by commenting that 44:21-33 demonstrates the son of God living as the son of man. He embraces both manifestations with divinity and humanity. The chiasmic structure in 44:21-35 shows the author’s belief that Jesus possessed a divine and human nature. At the same time, when coupled with TR 44:14-15, Peel believes that the document teaches “an implicit docetism” (1985: p. 151). Likewise, Franzmann cautions the use of the description “earthly” in this context (1996: p. 86). Borsch notes that a more nuanced description might be clearer. Commenting on the TR, Borsch succinctly states, “He (the author) would seem to be suggesting that there was an aspect of the pre-existent, upper world saviour which was human like” (1970: p. 86). Yet, Borsch suggests that referring to a complementary nature may exaggerate the situation. Thomassen explains, “The dual nature of the Saviour—a spiritual being with a material body—is characteristic of the soteriology of mutual participation” (2006: p. 83). The idea of mutual participation, co-incarnation with the spirituals, occurs in the context of the TR. The Saviour swallows up death, makes a way to immortality, the spirituals suffer and rise with him, and finally the spirituals wear him (TR 45:30). Thus, the

nature of Christ must be nuanced. Franzmann's three-dimensional view of Christ is given credence in passages such as TR 44–45.

2.3.3.4 Conclusion

Franzmann believes that the NHL includes all three categories of the nature of Christ: (1) Primarily spirit, (2) Primarily human, and (3) Complementary. Scholars view Christ's nature in the VSS as multi-faceted. While Jesus clearly has a human form, a divine nature, and they both coexist in a complementary fashion at some level, Jesus' nature must be viewed through the lens of the Valentinian theology of mutual participation. In a Valentinian context, scholars prefer to take a nuanced approach, allowing for a human nature that in some way complements his spiritual nature. The nature of Christ in the VSS will be analysed further in chapter 5.

2.4 Summary

Much debate exists concerning the divine and human natures of Christ in the FG. Concerning the humanity of Christ, Bultmann believes that Christ's divinity was hidden. He argues that the FG emphasizes the humanity of Christ and that faith must overcome the obstacle. In contrast, Käsemann believes that the FG demonstrates "naïve Docetism." Davis concludes, "There is no true humanity here [in the FG]" (1951: p. 109). Thus, the FG displays a divine Christ. Nevertheless, scholars do exist that believe in a complementary nature. O'Grady and Kysar maintain that the FG demonstrates a Christ that is human and divine. Chapter 4 will analyse the nature of Christ in the FG, taking into account the cultural milieu in which it was written.

The second section will look at the human and spiritual components of Christ in the VSS. Although the VSS contain passages that seem to indicate that Jesus had a human nature, the body in Valentinian theology is a combination of the Logos and its spiritual offspring. Thus, there was a co-incarnation, and the idea of mutual participation must be taken into account. Also, Clement's attack against the Valentinians was that they distinguished between the Logos of the primary tetrad and the enfleshed logos of 1:14. This

agrees with Irenaeus's understanding (*Haer* III:16,1). Chapter 5 will analyse the VSS in this light.

CHAPTER 3

A COMPARISON OF BACKGROUNDS

3.1 Introduction

Evidence of the early Valentinians' use and harmonization of the FG has been well documented by the heresiologists—while not always reliable—as well as by the extant fragments of the commentaries on the gospel by Heracleon and Ptolemy. But rather than begin by comparing the nature of Christ in the FG and the VSS, this study will start with a comparison of their respective backgrounds. First, their respective dates will be compared in order to demonstrate that the FG was accessible to the authors of the VSS. This is foundational to an intertextual comparison, and essential to show which text influenced the other. Third, the communities of the FG and the VSS will be compared, which will demonstrate a Jewish-Christian connection. Finally, their purposes will be evaluated in order to begin making the argument that the VSS, when the Valentinian myth is extracted, appear strikingly similar to the FG. Both the FG and the VSS seek to impart truth and eradicate ignorance, in order to enable readers to experience a life beyond this world. Previous intertextual comparisons of the FG and various VSS have not shown connections in these four areas. After this had been done, this study will compare their doctrines of the nature of Christ (chapters 4-5) and argue for echoes of the FG in texts from the VSS (chapter 6). While the author acknowledges that affinities in background could point to a common origin, the current chapter serves as a first line of proof that the FG influenced the VSS. Thus, it provides the foundation on which the rest of this study was built.

3.2 A Comparison of Dates

This section compares the dates of composition of the FG and the VSS. The main concern was the *terminus a quo* and *terminus ad quem* for both. It will be argued that the composition of the FG preceded that of the VSS by approximately a half of a century. Hence it was available to the early Valentinian commentators like Heracleon and Ptolemy as well as the authors of the VSS that followed them. In addition, this establishes the possibility that the nature of Christ in the VSS could have been influenced by the FG. The argument will be furthered by comparing their similar languages, communities, and purpose in the following sections.

3.2.1 The Date of the FG

Historically there has been a wide gamut of opinion regarding the dating of the FG. Estimates have ranged from the middle of the first century to late second century. A small minority of scholars such as Robinson (1976: p. 307) and Wallace (1996: p. 531) argue for a pre-70 date but most assign a post-70 date. Barrett argues for a final publication date of approximately AD 100 (1978: p. 128). Some, such as Graetz in 1871, suggested the hypothetical Council of Jamnia to support a late first century date because they believe the FG reflects the conflict between Christians and Jews expressed in the *Birkath ha-minim*, but given the lack of evidence for the Council of Jamnia, it is merely conjecture and should be “relegated to the limbo of unestablished hypotheses” (Lewis 1992: pp. III: 634-37). Earlier scholars such as Keim (1876: pp. 197-98) and Loisy (1962: p. 238) argued for dates in the middle to the late second century. Keim explains that it was not until AD 170-180 that the FG was generally accepted. He also argues that it had a connection with the Easter controversy in AD 190. Loisy argued the FG was composed late in part because he did not believe there were five porches at the pool of Bethesda. He contended that the five porches symbolically represented the Pentateuch. However, archaeological evidence has proved Loisy’s reasoning incorrect. This section will survey the strengths and weaknesses of a first century date, suggesting that the evidence in favour of a pre-70 date could be explained by

an early draft or Johannine tradition, a late second century date is untenable, and the gospel was most likely written between AD 80–110.

3.2.1.1 Evidence for a Pre-70 Tradition

A small minority of scholars have proposed a date before the destruction of the temple. Robinson holds the view that a rough form of the gospel arose in Jerusalem around AD 50 (1976: p. 307) and was in its final form a decade later. The inference in John 21:19 is that at least the ending of the gospel was composed after Peter's death in AD 64-65. Morris (1995: pp. 25-30) and Wallace (1996: p. 531) also believe the FG was in a final form before AD 70. There are several arguments for this view: (1) There is no allusion to the destruction of Jerusalem. As Robinson argues, save the books of Hebrews and Revelation, one would expect an allusion to the fall of Jerusalem in the FG if Jerusalem had already fallen because of its focus on the rejection by "metropolitan Judaism" of Jesus, who came to save his own. He concludes, "This coming and this rejection must inevitably mean the judgment and the suppression of the old religion..." (1976: p. 276). A reference to the destruction of the temple could have strengthened 2:19-22. Yet, if the FG was written in the last decade of the first century, enough time would have passed that the omission of such a reference would not be out of place. (2) The FG does not depend on or refer to the Synoptics. Morris agrees that the later the date for the FG, the more "difficult it is to account for his failure to refer to the other Gospels" (1995: p. 27). However, as will be discussed later, the author of the FG seems to have used Mark. (3) Morris argues that the use of μαθηταί rather than ἀπόστολος and οἱ μαθηταί αὐτοῦ instead of simply οἱ μαθηταί argues for an early date. This argument assumes that the term "apostles" was a late locution and that, during Jesus' ministry, to whom the disciples belonged would need to be specified. This seems highly speculative. (4) Similarities between texts from Qumran, which was destroyed before AD 70, and the FG make a first edition prior to AD 70 plausible (Charlesworth & Brown 1990). (5) The fact that 5:2 is in the present tense argues for a date earlier than the destruction of Jerusalem. While it is possible for the FG to use the present to describe the past, Wallace argues that the historical present is not in view here. He writes, "Since εἰμί

[ἔσται] is nowhere else clearly used as a historical present, the present tense [in 5:2] should be taken as indicating present time from the viewpoint of the speaker” (1996: p. 531). Köstenberger argues that 10:8 and 19:40 are used as historical presents. Yet both of these passages include an adverbial phrase or other indication of time and could be easily explained by the use of the extending-from-past present (Fanning 1990: pp. 217-219). Even with the textual issue in 10:8, namely *πρὸ ἐμοῦ*, the FG still includes a time indicator to signal that the extending-from-past present is in view. Nonetheless, the present tense in 5:2 could merely be a sign of an earlier version. In fact, while Wallace’s view is certainly plausible, all five of the foregoing arguments could be accommodated by the existence of a pre-70 first edition with revision and editing taking place as late as the end of the first century (Goodenough 1945), or by an early Johannine tradition. With a Johannine tradition forming before the destruction of the temple, it seems logical that the FG would have been in final form before AD 100 (Brown 1966: p. I:LXXXII; Brown 2003: p. 209).

3.2.1.2 *Dating the Fourth Gospel*

The most convincing evidence for a date prior to AD 110 are the archaeological finds (Metzger & Ehrman 2005: pp. 40, fn. 1.) of \wp^{52} (ca. AD 125–150 along the Nile), \wp^{66} (ca. AD 125–150) (Hunger 1960: p. 12ff), \wp^{75} (ca. AD 175–225), and Papyrus Egerton 2 (AD 50–150) (Cameron 1982: pp. 72-75). Also, Tatian’s *Diatessaron* and *Oratio* (ca. AD 162–170) (Lierman 2006: pp. 151-53) make use of the FG and give it equal status with the Synoptics. If the gospel had just been composed, this would be unlikely. While some like Harnack (1893: pp. I:495-96) believe that the *Diatessaron* and *Oratio* were originally composed in Greek, more recently Petersen has argued that they were composed in Syriac. This would eliminate a late date because of geographical distance and the logistics of translation and dissemination (Petersen 1986: pp. 325-43). Other factors also indicate an early date. For example, Celsus (ca. AD 178) associates the FG with the “Great Church” (Hill 2004: pp. 309-11), Irenaeus refers to the numbers of Gospels as four and states that Valentinus was using the FG in a pejorative fashion (*Haer* III:11,7-8), evidence suggests

that Justin used the FG (ca. AD 150), and the Muratorian Canon (ca. AD 170) associates John with one of the four gospels. With all of this evidence a final composition date later than AD 110 would be unlikely.

Signs that the FG knew of and used Mark in places, such as John 12:1-8 (Kümmel & Feine 1975: p. 246), point to a date after AD 80. It appears that the author of the FG takes Mark's account, adds details, and then repackages the pericope to fit his purposes (Wenham 2003: p. 36). First, Mark's use of the plural $\tau\iota\upsilon\epsilon\varsigma$ in 14:4 shows that there was more than one person complaining about the cost of the perfume. However, in the FG, Judas alone complains and the author adds his motivation to the account—Judas was a thief and used to steal from the moneybox. The author, knowing about Mark's account, could have repackaged it to fit his purposes in chapters 11–12 and added further explanation. Second, Mark's account in 14:3-9 describes an unnamed woman anointing Jesus' feet at Simon the Leper's house, but the FG names the woman as Mary, again adding further explanation to Mark's account. Third, the FG includes Lazarus at the table in order to show the motivation of the Jews who flocked to Bethany: they wanted to see the one who was raised from the dead (12:9). Thus it seems that the author of the FG has tied chapters 11 and 12 together, foreshadowing the death and resurrection of Jesus. In chapter 12, the author of the FG not only looks back to chapter 11 but forward to chapters 19–20. Additionally, in John 6:15 the FG explains why Jesus sent the disciples across the lake (cf. Matt 12:22; Mark 6:45)—Jesus knew that the crowd was about to make him king by force. These provide further evidence that argues for the FG being written late in the first century. If the FG did indeed adapt material from the Markan narrative, then this would be evidence for placing the FG after Mark. There are grounds to think Mark was written in the period AD 65-70: a setting after Nero's persecution in AD 64 fits Mark well (cf. Mark 8:34-38; 10:30; 13:1-13) (Lane 1974: pp. 12-17), and there is a possibility that Mark was written after the Jewish War.

Defenders of an early date for the FG argue that Jewish opposition to followers of Jesus was well-established by the middle of the first century. As evidence for early Jewish opposition they point to 1 Thess 2:14-15, probably

written in AD 51 (Carson, Moo & Morris 1992: pp. 347-348). Also, Hare and Robinson have both shown that excommunication is attested at Qumran, and is paralleled to some extent in NT books by incidents which have an early historical context (Luke 4:29; Acts 7:58; 13:50) (Hare 1967: pp. 48-56; Robinson 1976: pp. 273-74). However, many think such arguments are weak because the normal excommunication did not include being cut off from religious practices of the Jewish community (Strack & Billerbeck 1965: pp. 293-333). Brown and Barrett propose another context (Barrett 1978: pp. 363-64). They argue for a late first century date because of the usage of the word ἀποσυνάγωγος (9:22; 12:42; 16:2). R. Gamaliel II had Shmuel the Small write and R. Simeon the Less edit the *Birkath ha-minim* (AD 80-95). Barrett believes that this curse probably was a “means of marking out Jewish Christians and excluding them from the synagogue community ...” (1978: pp. 363-64). However, this view is not without difficulty. Alexander believes the origin of the curse is more rightly placed in the first half of the second century (1992: p. 7). The first solid support for its use is in Justin’s *Dia* 16.96 in approximately AD 135. He rightly questions a first century dating because, even if there was a Council of Jamnia/Javneh, the Jewish leadership would not have been in a position to force this curse on the synagogues in Palestine, “let alone the Diaspora,” and its dissemination would have surely taken time (1992: p. 10). He also points out that the curse was not enacted to single out Christians but to “establish Rabbinism as orthodoxy within the synagogue” (1992: p. 9). While the case is doubtful, if this is the background for the Jewish opposition reflected in the FG, a date between AD 80 and AD 125 would be likely.

Perhaps a better argument for the situation of the FG and a case for a post-70, first century date can be made from internal evidence concerning the temple. Westcott placed the date of the FG after the destruction of the temple (1975: pp. xxxvii-xxxviii). He explains, “The Synoptic Gospels are full of warnings of judgment. ... In St. John all is changed” (1975: p. xxxviii). There is no prophecy of the destruction of the temple and the judgment is complete. Westcott believed that while the author’s response was not explicitly stated in the text, it could be inferred. Motyer and Köstenberger have furthered

Westcott's theory and both believe that certain passages are explained through the distress that followed the destruction of the temple (1997: p. 37). The temple's destruction would have created a huge crisis for the Jews (Neusner 1983: p. 122). Since the temple was the centre of Jewish worship in Jerusalem, first century Jews would certainly have been asking: "How and where do we worship now?" With a post-70 mind-set, the FG seems to offer an answer to this question. In the FG, Jesus is the fulfilment of what the tabernacle and the temple stood for (1:14; 2:13-22; 4:19-24), and because "physical locations of worship are inadequate (4:19-24) ... Jesus now is the proper focus of worship (9:38; 20:28)" (Köstenberger 2005: pp. 228-29). The Jews were expecting a Messiah to take up residence with his people (Ezek 34) and dwell among his people in a new temple (Zech 2:10; Ezek 37:27; 43:7, 9). Jesus is the physical embodiment of the temple—God literally *tabernacling with his people* (John 1:14). Furthermore, a post-70 mind-set would have understood certain passages better. For instance, a post-70 audience would have no problem understanding 2:21ff as Jesus' resurrection signifying a rebuilt temple. Jesus' words in John 4:21-23 and 11:47-50 would have also had much fuller meanings after the destruction of the temple. Walker summarizes this issue well. The readers of the FG would have been encouraged by the FG to focus on Jesus rather than mourn the loss of Jerusalem and its spiritual focus. Jesus had replaced the temple. In fact, "Jesus stands in the place of everything that Israel has lost" (1996: p. 198). If this is the setting for the FG, there is strong evidence for assigning a date for the gospel near the last two decades of the first century, a time when Jews would have been searching for answers concerning God's desire for them in a post-temple world.

3.2.1.3 Summary

After surveying the evidence for the date of the FG, although the facts are not conclusive and any judgment must be held loosely, the evidence favours a late first century date with a *terminus a quo* of AD 80 and a *terminus ad quem* of AD 110. The arguments for a pre-70 date have merit but are not conclusive. A date later than AD 110 is also unlikely in view of the archaeological and ecclesiastical evidence. Finally, a date in the last two

decades of the first century is most likely because of the FG's probable use of Mark and an arguably post-70 *Sitz im Leben* for the references to the temple. These arguments agree with the tradition of Irenaeus (*Haer* 2:22.5; 5:3.3-4) as well as others, who indicate a date after the Synoptics and under the reign of Emperor Domitian (AD 81–96) or the Emperor Trajan (AD 98–117).

3.2.2 The Date of the VSS

Scholars believe, on the basis of similar handwriting, that the same scribe produced parts of Codices I, VII, and XI (Turner 1990; Krause 1963: p. 111; Wisse 1996: p. 3). Hence these codices were produced roughly contemporaneously and possibly in the same region of Upper Egypt. The editors of Codex VII state, "From inscribed cartonnage in the cover of Codex VII a *terminus a quo* of around 350 CE and a location in the region of Nag Hammadi in Upper Egypt have been established" (Turner 1990: p. 8). The cartonnage (layers of old papyrus documents used to thicken the leather covers) consisted of receipts for grain dated AD 341, 346, and 348. Allowing time for these receipts to be discarded and reused, Codices I, VI, and XI should probably be dated to approximately the third quarter of the fourth century (Wisse 1996: p. 1). This is based upon Turner's study of forty reused and dated papyrus documents. There was an average lapse of twenty-five years between their use and reuse (1954: pp. 102-106). Furthermore, the handwriting seems to point to a fourth century date. Codices I and XI are bound similarly. Thus, Turner believes that both of the codices had a "shared scriptorium" (1996: pp. 4, n. 3). This wide range in cartonnage materials could very well indicate that they were taken from a town dump (1996: pp. 4, n. 3). Nonetheless, due to a shared scribe and the dated grain receipts that were used to bind Codex VII, the Coptic translations of the VSS should be dated during the mid to late fourth century (Koschorke 1981: pp. 132-133). Dating the Coptic codices is a much easier task than dating the original Greek manuscripts. The former helps us place the Coptic find in a secondary community in the fourth century, but dating the original Greek manuscripts will help this work demonstrate accessibility and the direction of influence in relation to the FG.

3.2.2.1 *The Gospel of Truth*

The date of the GT depends on two passages from Irenaeus. In the first passage (*Haer* III:11,9), Irenaeus states that the Valentinians claimed that they had more gospels than truly existed. This passage as well as *Haer* II:24,6 seems to suggest that Irenaeus was referring to the GT from the NHL. The latter seems to allude to GT 32:9-17, which refers to right and left hands in the context of salvation and lost sheep (Story 1970: pp. xv-xvii). Story points to three things that lead him to believe that the GT in the NHL is the same book that Irenaeus wrote about: (1) Irenaeus said that the Valentinians titled their works, and the GT contains the words “The Gospel of Truth” (ΠΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΝ ΝΤΜΗΘ) in 16:31; (2) Irenaeus states that the GT does not agree with the NT gospels; and (3) Irenaeus stated that the Valentinians claimed to have a gospel of truth, and he believed that it did not contain any truth. Story explains, “Ideas such as ignorance, knowledge, lack, rest, error, forgetfulness, completeness, existence, occupy the writer’s mind from the beginning of *Ev. Ver.* on through its end” (1970: p. xvii). In light of the similarities between the GT in the NHL and the version Irenaeus referred to, it seems that a Greek version most likely existed in the late second century that corresponded closely to the Coptic version (Story 1970: p. xvii). Valentinus himself may have penned the first version as early as AD 130 in Rome, but if Valentinus was in fact the author this early a date depends on his having the ability and refinement to write a well-constructed Valentinian document early in his career. Nonetheless, if AD 130 is the *terminus a quo* for the GT, the FG would have been in circulation and accessible for almost a generation prior to the GT.

3.2.2.2 *The Gospel of Philip*

Isenberg believes that the GP was most likely written in Syria (1988: p. 141). It was most probably penned between the second half of the second century (Wilson 1963: pp. 3-4; Smith 2005: p. xiii) and the second half of the third century (Isenberg 1988: pp. 139-141). Isenberg cites the author’s use of Syriac words (56:7-9; 63:21-23), “its affinities to Eastern sacramental practice and catecheses, and its ascetic ethics” (1988: p. 141) as evidence of a Syrian origin. Turner points out that the author writes in a way that assumes Greek but

not Syriac. It is quite possible that the author or a later redactor added the explanation of Syriac words because of his location in Syria. For whatever reason, he explains the Syriac to his readers (1996: p. 161). This is the case in GP 56:8 where the author says, “While as for ‘Christ,’ in Syriac it is ‘Messiah’ [CΥΡΟCΠΕ ΜΕCΘΙΔC], in Greek it is ‘Christ’” (1996: p. 160). Turner believes that the GP was written in Greek in the second or third century (1996: p. 1). Lapham agrees that it was written early because of the unsophisticated Valentinian doctrine (2003: pp. 94-99). This can be seen in its disjointed, erratic style. Logical coherence is lacking in the GP as well as a deep explanation of much of its content—Valentinian rituals. In short, the GP was most likely written in the second or third century in Greek (Hartenstein, 2009, p. 62).

3.2.2.3 *The Treatise on the Resurrection*

Most scholars believe that the VSS were originally written in Greek. The TR demonstrates a close connection with its Greek original. Peel explains: “The Greek original of the document is otherwise amply reflected in the Coptic text. In a vocabulary of approximately 235 words, excluding particles and connectives, 78 or 33.2% are Greek loanwords” (1985: p. 127). Some believe that Valentinus, around AD 144, wrote this from Italy. Yet, Peel explains, “Most, however, hold that the evidence is too ambiguous to identify the author with any particular Valentinian school” (1985: p. 145). Additionally, the TR seems to be a later form of Valentinianism, for there is an increased emphasis on “faith” rather than “gnosis” and the Christological doceticism is less pronounced. Thus the Greek original was most likely written in the late second century. Furthermore, the church’s controversies over the resurrection (i.e., Valentinus, Marcion, Cerinthus) imply a second century date. Also, Layton believes that it is indicative of Middle Platonism of the late second century, like excerpts from Clement of Alexandria and the Late Stoa (1979: pp. 2-4). The distinction between the world of being and becoming (48:20-27) and intelligible and sensible worlds (46:35–47:1) as well as the idea of the pre-existence of souls (46:38–47:1), all support this conclusion (Peel 1988: p. 53). While these characteristics could be attributed to a redactor, a late second century date seems more likely.

3.2.2.4 *The Tripartite Tractate*

This work's similarities with third century literature and profound revision of Valentinian doctrine suggest a date in the first half of the third century (Attridge & Pagels 1985: p. 178). Edwards views the TT, which follows the TR in the Jung Codex, as an example of a document that has been influenced by orthodoxy. Most of the aeons have disappeared, the Logos instead of Sophia is viewed as the creator, and the Pleroma has become the church. He goes on to suggest that if the Valentinians would have softened their ideas from the beginning, they might not have received such fierce opposition by the early church (1995: p. 78). They may have experienced pressure from the church to soften the Valentinian doctrine, but the work still espouses a nature of Christ contrary to the FG. Thomassen also assigns the TT to a third century date due to its affinities with Origenism, its rejection of the Catholic doctrine of a substance of the Father, and the possibility that the author did not use the LXX text of Gen 3:1 in 107:11-13 (Thomassen 1982: pp. 31-36).

3.2.2.5 *The Interpretation of Knowledge*

Dating the IK is difficult due to a lack of internal as well as external evidence such as authorship or location. Tite concludes, "Indeed, the text could be dated to anytime between ca. 160 and 340 C.E., and it could have been composed almost anywhere in the Roman world" (2004: p. 289). However, he attempts to situate the IK in a specific historical context by using positioning theory (Harré 1999: pp. 14-31). He looks for a specific moral relation that exists between the factions or teachers reflected in IK 9, and believes that the author is aligning his situation with apostasy in the days of Jesus. Tite sees the author as portraying the community "as standing in relation to the earliest days of the Jesus movement (ἀλλὰ ἐρετῆ γενεᾷ ...)..." He argues that the author views the community as Christian, possibly a generation after the apostles. He believes that the IK is early because they were facing the same social conflict as the earliest Christians, including the possibility of apostasy due to the Christological debates going on in the first and early second century (2004: pp. 293-94). If Tite's positioning theory is correct, the original document could have been written as early as late first century to early second century. But the book

was probably not written before AD 136 when Valentinianism began to grow. The *terminus ad quem* should be placed at or soon after AD 313 due to Constantine's *Edictum Mediolanense*.

3.2.2.6 A Valentinian Exposition with Liturgical Readings

Dating the VE presents difficulties as well. On the one hand, certain features seem to reflect early Valentinianism—features Irenaeus attributed to Valentinus in *Haer* I:11,1, namely Sophia being abandoned by her son, the use of “ineffable” as the primary name for the Father, and the idea that the boundary separates the Father from the aeons. Yet, there seems to be material inconsistent with early Valentinianism, such as the absence of the tripartite distinction between material, psychical, and spiritual. Rather, the author takes a dualistic approach and only uses spirit and flesh. The author also does not include Sophia's unification with Jesus. Instead, Sophia unites with her former partner and Jesus unites with Christ. Due to the inclusion of early and late material, it is possible that the original document was composed in Greek during the second century, and a redactor added material at a later date. A date anytime between AD 160 and 350 is possible (Thomassen 2007a: p. 665).

3.2.2.7 Conclusion

When discussing the date of composition of the VSS, the discussion must include a multi-layered explanation. Although the VSS exist in Coptic, their Valentinian character as well as their Greek loanwords suggest that the originals were composed in Greek and then later translated into Coptic during the fourth century AD. Due to the fact that the Greek originals have been lost, much of the dating depends on internal evidence. The most likely date of composition varies from mid-second century to mid-fourth century. The evidence points to a *terminus a quo* for the six VSS in the second quarter of the second century AD and a *terminus ad quem* in the fourth century.

3.2.3 Evaluation

The evidence points to a *terminus ad quem* of AD 110 for the FG and a *terminus a quo* of AD 136–150 for the VSS. Dating these two bodies of literature is foundational to this study for several reasons. First, demonstrating

that the FG was composed before the VSS shows that the FG was accessible to the authors of the VSS. Second, the dating also shows that the FG could have influenced the VSS. In order to draw proper conclusions while comparing the nature of Christ and parallel texts in the FG and the VSS, their respective dates of composition must be established as firmly as possible.

3.3 A Comparison of Texts

The following sections evaluate the state of the text of the FG, arguing for one harmonious document, and the original language of the FG, asserting that it was composed in Greek. Second, section 3.3.2 will analyse the variable state of the VSS and argue that they were originally composed in Greek as well. The state of the texts will be important in chapter 6 when looking at possible parallels. Some of the VSS are well preserved but others are highly fragmented. The original language of composition will also prove important in chapter 6. Although the VSS were translated into Coptic, if they did indeed appear in Greek before their Coptic translation, Greek remnants in the form of loanwords could possibly point to echoes of earlier influence.

3.3.1 The Text of the FG

3.3.1.1 One Harmonious Document

Modern scholarship has devised multiple theories concerning textual transmission based on source-criticism. These theories are born out of perceived inconsistencies within the FG, for example: (1) differences within the Greek employed throughout the FG (e.g. chapters 1 and 21); (2) aporias or interruptions in the narrative flow (e.g. 6:1 and 20:31); and (3) unnecessary repetition (e.g. 5:19-25 and 5:26-30) (Brown 1966: pp. xxiv-xxv). While there are variations, most theories include a combination of the following: (1) an original simpler source, espoused by Fortna (1988: pp. 2-8, 212); (2) Bultmann's multiple source theory (1978: pp. 4, n. 5; 1971: pp. 17 n. 5, 113, and see 737 "sources"), a version of the Grundschrift theory (Wellhausen 1907: pp. 342-347; Schwartz 1907) (the signs of editing, revision, and amplifications); or (3) Bultmann's Displacement theory (the need for editing and revision) (1978: p.

560). As Brown notes, “these solutions are not necessarily mutually exclusive; they may be, and often are, combined” (1966: p. xxvi). Brown believes that there are multiple layers, each indicating a different period within the FG’s composition (1966: pp. I:xxxiv-xxxix). As the previous section argued, the FG most likely used sources. Yet, as Morris argues, the author integrated his sources well (1995: p. 51). Given the degree of difficulty in determining the exact sources and the likelihood that, if they did exist, they would be irrecoverable, attempting to determine the original sources would not further the purpose of this study.

Morton and McLemon (1980: pp. 17-26), dissatisfied with the subjectivity of source criticism, have tried to put forward an objective methodology for determining sources, which they called stylometry. They argue for two sources, J1 and J2, based on stylometry and counts of letter lengths in the codex columns. Unfortunately their two sources include two separate types of discourse, narrative and exposition. It stands to reason that these sections should look different even if they were from the same author. In addition, differing letter lengths could merely suggest different scribes. Unfortunately, therefore, they have not solved the problem. Due to the fact that source-criticism is an inexact science and any conclusions drawn from it cannot be conclusively proven, a synchronic rather than diachronic approach, such as Culpepper advocates (1987: pp. 3-11), proves more helpful in a study such as the present one. While some might object to studying the FG in the present order, as Brown aptly explains, if one sees the final editor of the FG as a loyal disciple of the evangelist, “... there will be very few times when editing has completely changed the original meaning of a passage. We prefer rather to run this risk than—by ingenious rearrangement—run the much greater risk of imposing on passages a meaning they never had” (1966: p. I:xxxiv). Thus, this study will focus on the gospel’s final form, received through various manuscripts, spanning multiple centuries, and critically evaluated by textual critics. In addition, the evidence that follows will argue for one harmonious document, which lends support to Brown’s approach of viewing the FG in its final form.

While the author, like Luke (Lk 1:1-4), most likely used multiple sources, studies such as Poythress's article on discourse analysis argue for one author and a single harmonious document (1984b). Poythress takes four Greek conjunctions and observes how the author of the FG uses them. After defining the Johannine usage of *καί*, *ἀλλά*, *δέ*, and asyndeton, he explains the objective test that he developed for determining Johannine authorship. His research points to Johannine authorship of the FG and consistency when comparing the pattern with the prologue, 5:4, 7:53–8:11, 21:1-23, 21:24-25, and even the Johannine epistles (1984a: pp. 355-66). Yet, Poythress does provide one caveat that relates directly to source criticism: "The Pattern-producer may have used one or more sources, oral or written. But whatever sources he used, he digested them; he conformed them to his own style. No substantial block of material from his sources did he simply take over verbatim" (1984a: p. 355). Although Poythress believes that the degree of conformity in chapter 21 is quite "impressive," there are several clues to warrant this chapter being a later addition with an editor that was faithful to the original author's style and intentions.

There are other arguments for viewing the FG as one cohesive document. First, the FG contains a very distinctive use of vocabulary and style. For example, the FG uses the word *κόσμος* 78 times while it only occurs 13 times in the Synoptics combined. The word is only absent in select chapters of the FG. Additionally, different forms of the word *Ἰουδαῖος* occur 77 times in the FG but just 16 in the Synoptics. Finally, the FG uses the word *ἐκεῖνος* as a singular noun 44 times while the Synoptics only use it 15 times. Many other examples could be cited and have been pointed out by Schweizer (Goguel 1924: p. 244ff). These argue for a distinct Johannine vocabulary that appears consistently throughout the gospel. The style of the FG is also unique (Schweizer 1939: pp. 87-99). The author uses asyndeton more than the Synoptics and of the 39 examples that Schweizer cites, they appear throughout the gospel. Another distinctive feature of the author's style is his use of *οὐν*. While the Synoptics use the particle 95 times, the FG uses *οὐν* 190 times. Almost half of its usage in the NT occurs in the FG. Apart from its frequent use,

the particle is used in a unique way compared to the rest of the NT. Instead of carrying an argumentative force, the author uses the particle as a narrative link. In other words, the author uses οὖν when the Synoptics and Acts would use δέ, as a low-level development marker (Levinsohn 2000: p. 81ff). Likewise, the author uses asyndeton rather than καί as the default for conjoining sentences in places of discontinuity (egs. 1:29a, 35, 43) or when a clause begins with a verb. In 2:12, the author uses the phrase Μετὰ τοῦτο followed by asyndeton and then the verb κατέβη (See Heb 9:27 and Matt 17:25a). The FG does indeed have a unique set of vocabulary as well as style, and the fact that they occur throughout the FG provides further evidence for one harmonious document with well-developed Greek.

3.3.1.2 *The Original Language of the FG*

Was the gospel originally written in Aramaic or Greek? This question is important because, as has already been discussed, the VSS were originally written in Greek and translated into Coptic. In the case of the FG, scholars have argued for two extremes: (1) an original Aramaic gospel has been lost (Torrey 1936; Burney 1922) and (2) no Aramaic influence can be detected (Colwell 1931; Moulton & Howard 1929: pp. 411-85). To truly do justice to this topic, this study would have to devote more space to it than is possible. Instead, a brief survey will be offered, summarizing more in-depth studies (Brown 1964).

There are several justifications for seeing the FG as originating in Aramaic. First, Greek regularly employs connecting particles or subordinating participles, yet the Greek of the FG, like Aramaic, commonly uses parataxis, joining small sentences with καί. Second, asyndeton, which was discussed above, is common in the FG as well as in Aramaic. Third, the author also transliterates Aramaic words such as ῥαββί. Matt and Mark also use the term but it is more common in the FG. The FG also uses words based on the Aramaic, such as θάλασσα rather than the Greek λίμνη. Once again, the Synoptics also use θάλασσα, Matt with the greatest frequency. Luke alone uses λίμνη. The FG's use of ὑψόω should also be noted. The Aramaic equivalent ܗܝܫܝܒܐ holds more nuance than the Greek, namely, it carries the meanings both

“to be lifted up” and “to be crucified.” Nevertheless, this could be a product of the author having a Jewish-Christian audience in mind. Finally, the prologue shows evidence of parallelism. Nonetheless, although the FG retains echoes of Aramaic influence, it is very much a well-crafted Greek gospel with a unique Greek vocabulary and style.

In view of this, notwithstanding arguments for an Aramaic original, it is safer to surmise that the author lived in a bilingual culture. This would blur the boundary between Greek and Aramaic at times. The author was clearly well-educated in Greek but may not have spoken Greek as his first language.

3.3.2 The Text of the VSS

3.3.2.1 The Variable Nature of the VSS

While Codex I is well preserved (Attridge 1985: p. 1), Turner explains that “Codex XI is one of the most poorly preserved among the Nag Hammadi Codices. Except for three leaves (59/60, 61/62, 63/64), which are reconstructed from two to four fragments apiece, no relatively complete leaves survive” (1990: p. 3). Furthermore, the GT in Codex I contains many scribal errors. For example, the text contains dittographies, some letters are written over or erased completely, various letters were apparently accidentally omitted and then added later, and there are mistakes where the scribe in turn deleted the text (Attridge & MacRae 1985: p. 64). The TT also contains many scribal errors (Attridge & Pagels 1985: pp. 174-175). Unlike Codices I and XI, the binding of Codex II is nicely decorated (Layton 1989: p. 22). In fact, the cover includes an *ankh* hieroglyph, which would later become the *crux ansata*, a Christian symbol of the cross, which implies a Christian connection. The preservation of the VSS is therefore highly variable, with errors and omissions being commonplace. Unfortunately, the originals have not survived.

3.3.2.2 The Original Language of the VSS

The three books from Codex I were all written in the Subachmimic dialect with minor discrepancies found in the TT (Attridge & MacRae 1985: p. 59). The GP from Codex II more closely matches the Sahidic dialect with Subachmimicisms. Thus, the translator seems to have spoken Subachmimic

but attempted to translate the document into Sahidic. It could be classified as Crypto-Subachmimic (Layton 1977: pp. 66, n.2; Layton 1989: p. 7). This seems to be the case with the GT as well, which was transmitted in both Subachmimic and Sahidic. The two books from Codex XI were most likely written in a dialect very similar to Subachmimic dubbed Lycopolitan. Turner writes, “The dialect of these two treatises is a highly neutralized Upper Egyptian dialect for which the name ‘Lycopolitan’ has been proposed; it is very close to the dialect of the Subachmimic *Gospel of John* edited by H. Thompson, the Heidelberg *Acts of Paul* edited by C. Schmidt, and the first three tractates of the Jung Codex (NHC I,1-3)” (1990: p. 11). The editors go on to describe examples of the distinctive nature of this dialect. Examples include word initial (ⲉⲓ for ⲉ), word final (ⲐⲮ for Ⲑ), and the doubling of vowels (ⲘⲐⲐⲐⲐⲐ for ⲘⲐⲐⲐⲐ). Funk’s article on the Subachmimic dialect seems to demonstrate that it may be comprised of three dialects (1985: pp. 124-139). In fact, Pearson believes that all five books save the TT were written in the Lycopolitan dialect (2006: pp. 688, n.11).

Most scholars believe that the VSS were originally composed in Greek. Yet a minority of scholars believe the GT was originally written in something other than Greek. Nagel (1966: pp. 5-14) and Fecht (1961; 1962; 1963) argue that the GT was originally composed in Syriac and Coptic respectively. Both of their arguments present problems. After making a convincing argument against Nagel and Fecht, Ménard is convinced their reverse translation of the GT from Coptic to Greek demonstrates that the document was originally written in Greek (1972: p. 15). Ultimately, Ménard states, the problem could be due to “un phénomène de bilinguisme: on aura écrit dans une langue et pensé dans une autre” (1972: p. 16). Furthermore, translating the GT into Greek to prove its Greek origin seems to be a rather subjective test. Apart from these arguments, there is good reason to believe the VSS were originally composed in Greek. Attridge and MacRae have found that 33.2% of the text is comprised of Greek loanwords (1985: p. 127). They conclude, “Hence, there is little reason to maintain that the *Gos. Truth* differs from all the other Nag Hammadi tractates in being a translation from a Greek source” (1985: p. 64). Those that translated the GT from Greek to Coptic most

likely presupposed that their audience would comprehend Greek. Otherwise, the translators would have tried to avoid loanwords altogether.

3.3.3 Evaluation

Comparing the state of the texts and the original languages of composition is important for later parts of this study. There is a good reason to believe that they were both originally composed in Greek. Although the VSS were translated into Coptic in the fourth century, Greek remnants can still be seen in the many Greek loanwords used by the translators. These echoes of the originals will become important when comparing parallels between the FG and the VSS in chapter 6.

3.4 A Comparison of Communities

Thus far a comparison of dating has demonstrated that the FG was written before the VSS and that the FG was historically accessible to the authors of the VSS. In addition, the comparison of the texts argued that both the FG and the VSS were written in Greek with evidence of bilingualism. If both the FG and the VSS were written within half a century of each other in Greek and the FG's view of the nature of Christ influenced that of the VSS, it seems logical to suggest that the communities that received the books might display similarities. The following sections look at the communities of the FG and the VSS, insofar as they can be reconstructed, and their similarities will be evaluated.

3.4.1 The Community of the FG

There are various theories on the community behind the FG. Culpepper proposes a Johannine community whose existence can be inferred from the text of the FG. He believes that the community that received the FG functioned like a school (1975: pp. 258-59, 288-89), similar to a sect but more concerned with studying, learning, reading, and writing (1975: p. 213). He believes that the theory that the FG was composed within a community setting with multiple authors explains the "linguistic and theological similarities and dissimilarities" in the FG, and the patristic writings that "refer to John and his

disciples.” He argues that the school continued the tradition of the Beloved disciple (15:27), an ideal figurehead for the school. The only self-designation of the leader is in 2 John 1 and 3 John 1, namely ὁ πρεσβύτερος. Culpepper argues that this elder is a historical person due to the term ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς (1 John 2:7, 24; 3:11; 2 John 5-6) (1975: p. 288). Brown believes that the Johannine school is a subset of the Johannine community. The school was made up of those that were close to the Beloved Disciple and wanted to pass on his tradition. Brown includes here the evangelist, the redactor of the gospel, the author of the Epistles, and those that were included in the “we” (tradition-bearers) of John 21:24 (1979: p. 102).

Much of Culpepper’s case for the Johannine School comes from analogies with the “school” of Qumran, which is not normally regarded as a school, and the schools of Hillel, and Philo, which are the closest communities in date. Nevertheless, the theory is not without difficulty. He admits that the influence of “the school at Qumran on the Johannine community” is “difficult to assess” (1975: p. 170). Not much is known about the school of Hillel (1975: p. 171). As for the school of Philo, Culpepper explains that not much is known because none of the names of the students have survived. Yet, he believes the popularity of allegorical exegesis in Alexandria demonstrates that his writings continued to be studied. He concludes that the reason for the lack of mention of Philo could stem from the possibility that he had little influence on his community (1975: p. 213). Carson points out the difficulty with Culpepper’s proposal, “Here, then, is speculation on the reason for the silence of the sources regarding a school the existence of which is an inference drawn from the later Christian use of an earlier Jewish writer!” He then criticizes Culpepper’s lack of criteria to distinguish how this school is different from a group of disciples of the evangelist who revere his writings (1991: pp. 80-81). Perhaps conceding that his argument could use more support, Culpepper concludes: “The history of the Johannine community will be more fully understood when the composition-history of the Gospel can be traced with more confidence” (1975: p. 279). Due to the improbability of the composition history being uncovered, and given the gaps in Culpepper’s theory of the history

of schools, proving this theory is unlikely. Bauckham criticizes Redaction Criticism of the FG, and in doing so Culpepper, and claims that it places on top of the gospel itself a fictional reconstruction of a community. While Bauckham's broad-audience view is not without difficulty, he rightly highlights Culpepper's lack of evidence for a school within a community behind the gospel (1998: pp. 9-48).

Martyn believes that the Christological debate within the Jewish Synagogue and the contemporaneous excommunication of the Johannine community clarifies the community behind the FG (2003: pp. 147-67). He believes that the FG it is a two-level drama. The first level involves the historical traditions of Jesus and the second level, in a veiled manner, shows the situation of the author. He believes that there are three distinguishable phases in the history of the Johannine community: (1) a messianic group within the synagogue; (2) excommunication from the synagogue; and (3) the formation of an independent Jewish community (2003: pp. 147-67). Martyn links the excommunication from the synagogue with the *Birkath ha-minim*, as was discussed in section 3.2.1.2 (2003: p. 37ff). He writes, "Thus the Fourth Gospel affords us a picture of a Jewish community which has been (recently?) shaken up by the introduction of a newly formulated means for detecting those Jews who want to hold a dual allegiance to Moses and to Jesus as Messiah" (2003: pp. 40-41). Schnelle rightly questions Martyn's thesis on the grounds that his data from Jewish history have been argued against by scholars in Jewish studies (1992: pp. 26-31). However, Brown and Barrett both hold to the possibility that this could be the *Sitz im Leben* of the FG.

The culture of the Mediterranean world was an amalgamation of cultures, languages, and ideas. Within this world, ideas travelled and developed quickly. Developing gnostic thought, Roman emperor worship, and various cults interacted with older sources of deep-seated belief, namely Greek philosophy and Judaism. While the FG certainly had many influences in the Mediterranean world, suggestions that the FG was heavily influenced by Gnosticism (Bultmann) or Hermetica (Dodd) are untenable due to the first century date of the FG. Kysar reminds his readers that the popularity of Bultmann's theory that

the FG had Gnostic roots should not "... blind us to the continued efforts to show that the gospel is rooted most firmly in the Old Testament (hereafter OT) and rabbinic thought" (1985: p. II:2416). Parallels between the Logos concept in the prologue and Wisdom in Intertestamental materials and the OT can also be seen (Brown 1966: pp. I:520-23). Just as Lady Wisdom existed with God from the beginning, so did Jesus in the FG. Wisdom is also linked with God's glory (Wis 7:25) and light (Sir 1:29); she made her dwelling with mankind (Prov 8:31) or specifically with Israel (Sir 24:8), she instructs humanity about the truth (Prov 8:7; Wis 6:22), leads men to life (Prov 4:13) and immortality (Wis 6:18-19). Wisdom speaks in the first person in a way that anticipates Jesus' "I am" sayings (Prov 8:3-36). She also offers food and drink (bread and water) and invites mankind to partake (Prov 9:2-5; Sir 24:19-21). Brown offers many more parallels in his commentary (1966: p. I:cxxiii). Parallels can also be seen between Torah and the prologue such as Torah as light (Prov 6:33) and the law as life of the world to come (*Pirqe Aboth* II:8) (1966: p. I:225), which lend further support to arguments for a Jewish audience. Parallels between the FG and the Dead Sea Scrolls can also be seen (Charlesworth 1968-69). Both contain dualism expressed in terms of light and darkness. The FG also contains spatial dualism, contrasting what is "from above" and "from below" and "not from this world" and "from this world" (8:23). However, the Qumran texts do not contain a parallel for the Johannine negative usage of "below" and "world." Interestingly, dualism expressed in light and darkness also occurs in other Jewish Literature. Therefore, the dualism shared between Qumran and the FG most likely originated in Jewish circles (Bauckham 2000: pp. 105-115).

The "I am" statements have also been seen as reflecting Jewish roots. Brown (1966: pp. I:535-37) and Harner (1970: pp. 15-36, 56-57) both argue that these statements (e.g. 8:24, 28, 58; 13:19) are derived from the LXX. Brown states, "Jesus is presented as speaking in the same manner in which Yahweh speaks in Deutero-Isaiah" (1966: p. I:537). Thus, the FG's use of ἐγώ εἰμι equates Jesus with the God of the OT, namely Yahweh. As was just discussed, Brown also connects the "I am" statements with the Jewish concept of Wisdom. This would have been most significant to a Jewish community.

There are also approximately eleven direct quotations from the OT (Menken 1996: p. 18). Barrett notes that "... John regularly used the LXX, but ... he was able to use, and on occasion did use, the Hebrew" (1978: p. 29). The FG's use of the LXX should not detract from the credibility of a Jewish background. The fact that the OT was quoted and the Masoretic Text was sometimes used, still points to Jewish roots.

Besides the fact that readers are expected to possess an intimate awareness of the OT, the author of the FG presupposes knowledge of festivals, namely the Passover (chapter 6), Tabernacles (chapter 7), and Dedication (chapter 10). Furthermore, Dodd points to the author's knowledge of geographical and psychological divisions in Palestine before the war with Rome (1963: pp. 243-46), the topography of Jerusalem (1963: p. 180), and metaphors and arguments that would be incomprehensible outside a Jewish context (1963: pp. 332ff., 412ff.). On the other hand, references to Samaritans and Greeks (4:5-42; 12:20-40), most likely corresponding to the FG's reference to "other sheep" (10:11-18), point to a multi-ethnic vision. However, as Hurtado has pointed out, the Johannine emphasis on the messianic claim that Jesus is the king of Israel (1:49; 12:12-13), demonstrates that even though the kingdom is open to all who put their faith in Jesus, "that door led into a form of Christianity that continued to express itself in relation to biblical traditions and the hopes of historic Israel" (2003: p. 360).

3.4.2 The Communities of the VSS

Section 3.3.2.2 argued that the VSS were originally written in Greek. Due to the fact that these documents were not originally composed in Coptic but later translated, the community of the VSS in the NHL cannot be viewed as a monolithic community from one specific date and place. In fact, two communities existed—a primary and a secondary, both shaping these documents through their original composition and later translation. These documents originated from the Valentinian movement—a group with shared doctrine but by no means homogeneous (Tite 2009: p. 312). Thus, the first Valentinian community, which began with Valentinus and continued on various

historical trajectories, and a later community, most likely a monastic community that used and preserved the documents, will be both discussed in this section.

3.4.2.1 *The Valentinians*

In *Dial* 35:17 (ca. AD 155–160) Justin Martyr wrote that a group called the οἱ Οὐάλεντινιανοί (the Valentinians) existed along with the Μαρχιανοί (the Marcions), οἱ Βασιλειδιανοί (the Basilidians), and οἱ Σατορνιλιανοί (the Saturnilians). He also explains that the doctrines of the Valentinians came from Valentinus, the father of the movement. A clear and cogent picture of Valentinus would certainly shed light on the later Valentinian movement. Unfortunately, a clear picture of the founder proves difficult to reconstruct. The difference between the fragments preserved by Clement and the “complex cosmic myth known from the heresiologists’ accounts of the Valentinians” (Stead 1980: p. 95) is great and the VSS in the NHL do not make things any clearer. Nevertheless, this section will clarify the trajectory set in motion by Valentinus.

Valentinus was most likely an orthodox member of the church at first (*Praescr* 30:2; *Carn* 1:3) and expected to become a bishop because of his eloquence and intelligence (*Val* 4:1). Irenaeus (writing ca. AD 180–190, after Justin Martyr), wrote that Valentinus “came to Rome in the time of Hyginus, flourished under Pius, and remained until Anicetus” (*Haer* III:4,3). Therefore, the rise of the Valentinians through Valentinus most likely occurred between AD 136 and 160 (Thornton 1991: pp. 20-39). Tertullian wrote that Valentinus was educated in the School of Plato (*Praescr* 7:3) and began to flourish under Antoninus Pius (*Praescr* 30:2) around AD 138–161. A rumour recorded by Epiphanius locates Valentinus’s education in Alexandria (*Pan* XXXI:2,2-3). Clement of Alexandria states that the Valentinians claimed apostolic succession through a man named Theodas, a disciple of Paul (*Strom* VII:106,4). Epiphanius also wrote that Valentinus preached in Egypt and Rome and that he was shipwrecked in Cyprus, where he developed his heretical doctrines (*Pan* XXXI:7,1-2). Unfortunately, none of these reports can be substantiated. His activity in Rome most likely did produce followers known as Valentinians who composed psalms, homilies, and letters. While little can be said with certainty

about Valentinus's early life and work, the rest of Valentinus's history is even less certain. Irenaeus wrote that Valentinus was excommunicated (*Haer* III:4,3), and Tertullian adds that Valentinus and Marcion both were excommunicated because of their constant curiosity (*Praescr* 30:2). He later said that they were *condiscipulus et condesertor*, which suggests that Valentinus, like Marcion, left the church on his own accord. Tertullian also wrote that Valentinus formulated his heretical doctrines out of revenge against the church because he did not become a bishop (*Val* 4:1). The gnostic belief that salvation comes through secret knowledge could have been used by Valentinus as an effective weapon to exact revenge since there would be no way to prove the existence or non-existence of secret knowledge. Yet, unlike Marcion, there are no reports of a direct confrontation between Valentinus and the church. His followers embraced his doctrines, which Tertullian described as overthrowing the truth (*Val* 4:1).

During the later second century, Valentinianism flourished. Irenaeus and Clement of Alexandria mention more than a dozen Valentinian texts alone between *Haer* and *Exc*. Additionally, there is the possibility that Valentinus wrote a systematic treatise of some sort, in view of Irenaeus's extensive comments on Valentinus's theology (*Haer* I:11,1). This may have been the basis for the Valentinian Exposition.

Eventually, Valentinianism split into two movements, the western Valentinians and the eastern Valentinians. Thomassen explains that the "split was caused when western Valentinians changed the soteriological focus from the spirituals to the psychics, attributing to the Saviour a psychic body and claiming that the spiritual was by nature impassable and not needing redemption" (2006: pp. 492-493). Hippolytus (*Ref* VI 30) speaks of two groups of Valentinians. He states that Heracleon and Ptolemy were from Italy (western) and that they believed the body of Jesus was animal (psychic), but that he was raised from the dead. He says that Axionicus and Bardesianes were Oriental (eastern), believing that Jesus had a spiritual body. The distinction is clarified by Tertullian, who explains that when the Demiurge created the world he separated two substances (*Val* 20): (1) animal or psychic, which lies between spiritual and carnal; and (2) material or hylic, which comes from Adam. The

material substance pertains to carnality and has to do with destruction. The animal nature is psychic and has the opportunity to be redeemed. Although these two branches of Valentinianism are distinguished nominally, western Valentinian documents circulated in the east according to *Exc* and the VE.

In fact Kalvesmaki argues that making a distinction between western and eastern Valentinianism “is hasty, and the sources that attest to the so-called Eastern Teaching are too murky to allow this alleged geographical distinction to be the starting point of any taxonomy of Valentinianism” (2008: p. 79). He points to an uninformed scribal title (2008: pp. 80-84), embellishments and inaccuracies by Hippolytus (2008: pp. 84-87), and a misunderstanding by Tertullian himself as reasons why one should be cautious before making this distinction (2008: pp. 87-88). Hippolytus contradicts himself when differentiating between the two schools. He explains that the eastern Valentinians distinctively believed that the saviour’s body was spiritual but described the body as having shape like non-spiritual matter (*Ref VI:30*). Then he describes western Valentinians as if they were eastern. The schools will be further discussed in section 5.2.3.

The question of whether Valentinianism was a formal philosophical school has been a topic of interest. Tite believes that the author of the IK at least wanted Valentinians to organize themselves into a formal school. He holds that the evidence of a formal school of Valentinus in the IK is inconclusive. However, the author of the IK does argue for the need for the community to move towards a school that promotes unity (2004: p. 302). The author of the VE says that Jesus created a school “for doctrine and for form” (37:20-31). But while the VE mentions this school and the author of the IK may have had a communal vision, there is no other evidence that a Valentinian school ever existed.

An important question remains: did the Valentinian community share a Jewish-Christian background with the FG? That the Valentinians had some kind of Christian background is indicated by their commentaries on the FG and the repeated emphasis in the VSS on Jesus Christ, the church as the body of Christ, and Jesus’ death and resurrection. But did the Valentinians also have a

Jewish or OT background as well? There is some evidence to suggest they did. First, the Valentinian extracts contained in *Excerpts from Theodotus* equate the Pleroma with the Holy of Holies in the Temple and Jesus with the High Priest (*Exc* 38). Just as the Holy of Holies had a boundary or veil, the Pleroma had a boundary as well, the cross. The author makes this reference to Jesus as High Priest in the context of a Valentinian exposition of the three classes of people and the incarnation of Jesus, which is illustrated by the High Priest entering into the Holy of Holies. Hippolytus also described Jesus as the High Priest (*Ref* 6:27), and the VE described Jesus as the High Priest, who could enter into the Holy of Holies, revealing the aeons (VE 25:30-40). Furthermore, passages like GT 36:35ff seem to suggest that the author knew of and used the works of Philo, the Jewish allegorist. Additional support for Jewish influence on the Valentinians can be seen in Ptolemy. As chapter 2 discussed, in his *LetFI*, Ptolemy used the Pentateuch to explain his allegorical method of interpretation. It is very possible that the VSS's platonic influence could have originated from a Jewish-Christian source rather than directly from Plato. Irenaeus reported that many Jews and Christians had been influenced by Plato (See Plato's Aristophanes' Speech from Plato's *Symposium*), seeing the creation of humanity as an androgynous human split into a male and female pair (*Haer* 1:18,2). At the least, the Jewish-Christian influence led to a greater emphasis on the platonic influences in the VSS, which will be further analysed in chapter 5. Finally, the Valentinians' positive view of the Demiurge, in contrast to the overwhelmingly negative view in the rest of the NHL, provides one of the most important arguments for a Jewish-Christian influence of the VSS (Layton 1995: p. 306). Ptolemy wrote that the Christians were in error concerning the creator. In his view, the Demiurge should not be equated with the highest god. The Demiurge had to be created to give form to the spirituals (*Haer* 1:5,1; cf. TT 100:31-33). Valentinians saw the Demiurge as just and one who hated evil (*Ep* III:2-6), a relatively orthodox view in spite of Valentinian cosmogony.

3.4.2.2 *The Community of the Codices*

The Nag Hammadi codices most likely were compiled by Gnostic Christians who were forced out of one of the nine Pachomian monasteries. The

condition that these books were found in, wrapped in a cloth, placed in a jar, and buried, suggests that whoever buried them did not want to destroy them but to ensure their preservation. This is the theory espoused by Robinson (1988: p. 20). Doresse theorizes that there could have been good reason to hide the library. Both the place where the manuscripts were found as well as their age suggest that they were hidden in the beginning of the fifth century, within the context of the Pachomian monasteries, which were well-known for their strict orthodoxy. She points to evidence of a struggle between the leadership of the monasteries and the Gnostics in the monastic writings (1960: p. 135). One argument that scholars have made to demonstrate the intolerance they believe the Pachomian monasteries would have held for the Valentinians comes from Theodoros, who succeeded Pachomius as the head of the monastery of Tabennisi. He wrote vehemently against the Gnostics (Lefort 1966: pp. 370-371). Yet, as this section seeks to demonstrate, the evidence in favour of a Pachomian origin outweighs these objections.

Wisse believes that the personal names and place names contained in the cartonnage used to make the cover of Codex VII imply that it was produced in a Pachomian monastery (1996: p. 1). Because of their shared scribe, the background of Codex VII can be applied to I and XI as well. In the reused receipts in the cartonnage the name Κόμης is mentioned in connection with a loan of wheat. According to Barns, this man was “almost certainly” (1972: p. 12) a monk. Furthermore, the reused documents from Codex VII also refer to two monks named Σανσωνως (Barns, Browne & Shelton 1981: pp. 61, 69) and Πάτος (Barns, Browne & Shelton 1981: p. 69). The way Macarius addressed Σανσωνως (i.e. τῷ ἀγαπητῷ υἱῷ) indicates that he could have been the Macarius that became the successor of Sourous, one of the leaders of the monastery of Pachnoum, one of the nine Pachomian monasteries (Barns 1972: p. 14; Barns, Browne & Shelton 1981: p. 73; Barns 1975: pp. 9-17). Barns explains: “A number of other names prominent in the Pachomian biographical literature are to be found in the documents from VII” (1972: pp. 13-14). Some are too common to be important, but Barnes names two that stand out: Sourous and Zacchaeus. In the *Lives*, Sourous supposedly died during the plague that

decimated the monasteries in the middle of the century. Pachomius died in the plague as well (Athanasakis 1975: pp. 15, 53, 69, 74, 78). In the *Lives*, Zacchaeus is said to be one of Pachomius's most responsible subordinates (Athanasakis 1975: pp. 71, 74, 77, 150). All of these men were most likely monks. On top of this evidence, Barns explains that the Greek words ἀδελφός and πατήρ and the Coptic equivalent μοναχός, all found in the reused documents, were common orthodox Egyptian religious ways to address those in the faith. In addition, the spread of the Pachomian monasteries in the Nag Hammadi region, and the fact that there would probably not have been two competing monastic movements in the same area, give further support to Wisse and Barns's theory. Furthermore, Codex I contains the name Chenoboskion (ancient name of Nag Hammadi), and Codex VII includes the phrase "my prophet and Father Pachomius from Papnutius [Papnoute]" (1997: p. 159), which gives further credibility to a Pachomian origin.

However, Säve-Söderbergh does not agree with Wisse, Barns, and Robinson. He believes that the schism created by Pachomius's vision and the last schism after Pachomius's death, which led to Horsiese being replaced by Theodoros as the leader of the monasteries in AD 346, could be the source of these writings. He explains, "First of all, there is hardly any evidence that Gnostic Christians would ever have been tolerated in the Pachomian monasteries, at least not if we should believe the *Lives* of Pachomius or the authenticity of the details of his writings" (1975: p. 8). There was most likely a negative attitude towards heretics at some point in the history of the monasteries (Lefort 1966: p. iv ff.). Theodoros translated the Paschal letter of Saint Athanasius into Coptic and warned against reading heretical books (Lefort 1966: p. 206). Nonetheless, Säve-Söderbergh does admit that *Lives* and other Pachomian texts could have been compiled after Pachomius's death and thus influenced by the more orthodox attitude which then prevailed (Halkin 1932: p. 90). It is entirely possible that when Athanasius's Paschal letter appeared in AD 367, the monastery took a harsher stance towards the Valentinians. Säve-Söderbergh also hypothesizes that the texts could have been translated into Coptic so that the monks could read their opponents and make a proper

refutation (1975: pp. 12-13). Yet, given the fact that Pachomius did not author *Lives* (it was in fact written by a later community about their founder), their reliability comes into question. After all, the pressures of orthodoxy were more prevalent on those that came after Pachomius, such as Theodoros. Robinson adds, “The care and religious devotion reflected in the manufacture of the Nag Hammadi library hardly suggest that the books were produced of antagonism or even disinterest in their contents, but rather reflect veneration accorded to holy texts” (1988: p. 17). They might have been buried due to hostility towards Valentinian doctrine, but whoever hid them buried them with care.

Hedrick does not believe that Christian Gnostics would have been excluded from Pachomian monasteries, for several reasons: (1) He believes that the monasteries were diverse. (2) The authority structure in Pachomian monasteries seems to have included Pachomius, Scripture, and dreams. (3) There was a gnostic emphasis on wisdom and an opposition towards ignorance. In fact, he cites examples of monks who held a higher position because of their γνῶσις. Furthermore, one story describes Pachomius having mature or perfect knowledge (τελείαν γνῶσιν) and because of his knowledge, he was able to step on snakes and scorpions and be around wild beasts and not be harmed (Athanasakis 1975: pp. 26-29 (ch 21)). (4) Gnostic leanings included a spiritual resurrection interpretation of John 5:28-29 and secret language common in gnostic circles (Athanasakis 1975: pp. 80-91, 140-143 (chap 99)). Hedrick is careful to acknowledge that this does not prove that a gnostic faction existed in the Pachomian monasteries. Yet, the possibility remains. He adds, “... I do think that it does suggest in contrast to Säve-Söderbergh that a faction with clearly gnostic tendencies would not, and perhaps could not, have been arbitrarily excluded from the monasteries at least in the early years of the movement” (1980: p. 91). With Hedrick, the conclusion of this dissertation is that Robinson’s belief should not be rejected on the basis of Säve-Söderbergh’s theory that the monasteries’ orthodoxy would not have allowed those with gnostic beliefs. Hedrick’s third point argues strongly against that position. He proposes two scenarios that would have allowed a gnostic sect into the Pachomian monasteries: (1) the gnostic sect could have been located

at a monastery that was not originally Pachomian but that Pachomius admitted under his care; or (2) the gnostic sect could have been established through the strong influence of visions (1980: pp. 91-92). Hedrick does believe that the reason the NHL was buried was due to the letter of Athanasius in AD 367. Thus, even if the Pachomian monasteries originally allowed the Gnostics to coexist with them, Gnostics would have been ejected by AD 367.

Young believes that he has found a group of parallel writings by Saint Shenoute from a nearby Pachomian monastery. Saint Shenoute died sometime after Chalcedon (AD 451). Young sets the *terminus post quem* for his writings at AD 388 because Saint Shenoute said that he had been writing about the Gospels for more than 43 years by the time he returned from the ecumenical council in Ephesus in AD 431 (Leipoldt 1906: pp. 219, 1-5). Thus, Young places this corpus between AD 388 and AD 466. Young uses several arguments to show that the Apa Shenoute, or abbot of the White Monastery, made use of the NHL: (1) a possible parallel between the GP and a passage from Shenoute; (2) passages exist in Shenoute's writings that demonstrate that he most likely had knowledge of the *Gos Thom*, and other passages show that he opposed sayings from *Gos Thom* (Young 1970: pp. 130-137). Objecting to critics of Young and Wisse, Orlandi argues that the most convincing argument against Young and Wisse is that "during the fourth century the doctrines which later were to prevail as orthodox were not unchallenged within the Pachomian monasteries..." Also, the books of the NHL could have been collected by Pachomian monks who sincerely believed that they were orthodox (1982: p. 93). He goes on to explain that a hitherto convincing argument against Young and Wisse's thesis is the fact that before the discovery of the NHL not one scholar proposed that there were gnostic elements present at the Pachomian monasteries, an *argumentum ex silentio* (Guillaumont Antoine 1962: pp. 51-61). Yet, scholars may not have been searching for these elements.

From accounts by Epiphanius (ca. AD 347–77) (Koschorke 1981: p. 127), Valentinians still resided in a number of locations in Egypt during the third quarter of the fourth century AD. Furthermore, emperor Julian wrote that the Arians attacked the Valentinians in Edessa in AD 362 (Koschorke 1981: pp.

132-133), and Ambrose of Milan wrote that a hastily built Valentinian *fanum*, or pagan temple, had been burned down in August 1, 388 after monks were angered because the Valentinians were blocking the road while celebrating the festival of Maccabees. Admittedly these references do not connect the Valentinians with Pachomian monasteries: due to the fact that Athanasius's letter would have certainly made its way throughout the area by AD 388, they would have relocated away from the monasteries within 21 years. Nevertheless they attest to the community's resilience—a community remained in existence until AD 388, which indicates its strength prior to their expulsion.

3.4.3 Evaluation

The FG and the VSS most likely came out of Jewish-Christian communities. The fact that the Demiurge, which most gnostic sects believed to be a nefarious creator, is seen as a good creator points in this direction. In addition, the Valentinian equation of the Pleroma with the Holy of Holies and of Jesus with the High Priest demonstrates a Jewish connection. Second, the Valentinian community used the FG so extensively that they wrote commentaries on the gospel. The FG also picks up on many Jewish themes: Wisdom, OT quotations, the "I am" statements, and Jewish festivals. When dates and language are taken into account, the communities of the FG and the VSS appear quite similar.

3.5 A Comparison of Purpose

The purpose of a given text demonstrates the author's intended message for the community addressed by the text. Both the FG and the VSS show concern for the eradication of error, expressed through faith in the case of the FG and gnosis in the VSS, and a future destination, expressed as the Father's house in the FG (John 14:1-4) and reunification with the Pleroma in the VSS. Foundational to this comparison is an acknowledgement of the Valentinian myth and how Valentinians restructure and repackage their message in terms of Valentinian cosmogony and soteriology. With that foundation, this section can compare the purposes of the FG and the VSS and

demonstrate their similarities. When seen in the light of Valentinianism, the similarities and differences should reveal echoes of the FG and repackaging by the Valentinians.

3.5.1 The Purpose of the FG

The community of the gospel was certainly familiar with the OT, and it was most likely a Jewish-Christian community. While the OT influence on the FG is helpful for understanding the gospel, the message of its final form might be misunderstood if its purpose is not acknowledged. While some have regarded the purpose statement in 20:31 as valid for the Signs source but not the overall book (Kysar 2007: p. 25), Brown's caution concerning rearranging and dividing the text should be noted. Whatever editing the FG underwent, the risk of misjudging the original authorial intent is greater in trying to reconstruct the various sources and redactions than in trusting the editors' faithfulness to the original authorial intent (1966: p. l:xxxiv).

If 20:31 serves as the purpose statement for the Gospel, is the purpose of the FG evangelistic? Many have disregarded an evangelistic purpose due to a sharp distinction drawn between 1:19–12:50 (The Book of Signs) and 13:1–20:31 (The Book of Glory) (Brown 1997: p. 334). Yet, not all commentators agree. Bauckham writes, "John 20:30-31 speaks of the written narrative of chapters 2–20, which it concludes: the narrative of Jesus' signs, which the author has written so that his readers/hearers may believe. The seventh of these signs, the climactic and pre-eminently important one (cf. 2:18-19), which alone enables believing perception of Jesus' full significance, seems to be his death and resurrection" (2007: p. 88). Furthermore, Hodges makes the claim that commentators have failed to see the significance of chapters 13–19. He believes that the Last Discourse (13–17) and the Trial and Crucifixion (18–19) serve two purposes: (1) to demonstrate that Jesus is who he said he was—proven in the way in which he handled himself; and (2) to serve as a preamble to the final sign, the resurrection (cf. 2:18-19). He explains, "The superlative self-assurance that Jesus manifests in chapters 13–19, His selfless love for His own, His courage while on trial, His compassion on the cross, and everything else, are preparatory. These chapters *prepare* the reader for the astounding

fact that Jesus rose from the dead” (2008: p. 26). According to Hodges, chapters 13–19 should not be viewed as discontinuity between the signs and 20:31. Conversely, after reading chapters 13–19, the death of Christ, the son of God, should prove even more significant due to the fact that he demonstrated his love for his own.

Brown does not believe that 20:31 demonstrates an evangelistic purpose, because of the present tense of the verb πιστεύητε. He writes, “Since here the present would mean ‘keep believing,’ it would imply that the readers of the Gospel are already Christian believers” (1966: p. II:1056). Wallace agrees with the grammatical argument: “The present was the tense of choice most likely because the NT writers by and large saw *continual* belief as a necessary condition of salvation. Along these lines, it seems significant that the *promise* of salvation is almost always given to ὁ πιστεύων [present] ...” (1996: pp. 621, n. 22.). Some think this is a moot point due to the textual variant between πιστεύητε and πιστεύσητε. While Barrett believes that πιστεύητε is probably the correct reading, he adds, “This variant raises acutely the question of the purpose of the gospel; was it written to confirm the faithful, or as a missionary tract, to convert the Hellenistic world? The question is raised but cannot be determined by the tenses, even if we could determine the tenses ...” (1978: p. 575).

It is worth pausing to consider the lexical meaning of the verb *to believe*. It should be classified as a stative verb—a verb without dynamics, or change. Believing is a state, rather than an action (Vendler 1967: pp. 99-108). When one believes, one enters into the state of linear belief—the end is unspecified. Fanning classifies believing as a state in which “there is no exertion to maintain knowledge/attitude or to act in keeping with it” (1990: p. 136). Because of the nature of the verb *to believe*, it should be assumed that, unless otherwise noted, the state will continue unhindered. Fanning notes that “the aorist aspect with STATES denotes most frequently the *entrance* of the subject into the condition denoted by the verb” (1990: p. 137). The present tense should then be understood as the linear continuation of the state with an assumption of perpetuation. Thus, the purpose statement would be translated:

“But these are written so that you may enter into the state of belief [or *be in the state of belief* in the present] that Jesus is the Christ, the son of God, and that being in the state of believing you may have life in His name.” One translation would emphasize the entrance into the state of believing and the other would emphasize being in the state of believing. Thus, the variant is irrelevant.

The precise meaning of the purpose statement does not seem to be easily solved through a grammatical approach. The author seems to have left the purpose vague enough to confuse future scribes. Furthermore, the author chose not to qualify “life” with the adjective “eternal” but instead left it unclear. Although eternal life occurs many times in the gospel (3:15, 16, 36; 5:24, 39; 6:27, 40, 47, 54, 68; 10:28; 12:25, 50; 17:2, 3), the author leaves the meaning vague in places as well (1:4; 5:21, 26, 29; 5:40; 6:33, 35, 48, 51, 53, 63; 8:12; 10:10; 11:25; 14:6; 20:31). The clearest example of the latter is 10:10, referring to an abundant experience of life.

In spite of the textual and interpretative problems, it seems clear that the gospel has a soteriological purpose. Soteriological should be viewed as more than merely justification. The need for the spirit (7:39; 14:17, 26; 15:26; 16:13; 20:22) and the emphasis on abiding point to this as well (6:56; 14:17; 15:4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10). The author of the FG not only wanted his readers to have life that was eternal but also an abundant experience of life. While the experience of abundant life may not be promised for this life, he gives hope for eternity.

The Jewish view of life may also shed light on this passage. While Torah and Wisdom provided life, observing Torah, or OT law, brought the promise of life (Lev 18:5; Deut 30:6, 19) in the land (Deut 4:1, 40; 5:33; 8:1; 30:16, 19-20). Keener qualifies the meaning of life in the OT: “Ultimately, God was Israel’s life (Deut 32:20), meaning in context, the one who would bless the people to live long in the land if they obeyed the commandments” (2003: p. 1:386). Life is also social well-being and fellowship with God (Isa 38:10-20; Ezek 37:1-14). Here in 20:31, life is part of an *inclusio* that begins with 1:4. Life is probably meant to parallel Gen 2:7 when God breathed life into man, and ultimately, as Nolland has recently argued, to speak to the Logos’s part in the

creation of animate life. In turn, the animate life points back to the creator who brings light to the world (2011: pp. 295-311). Thus, life should be seen as more than eternal life but as every aspect that God gives from the very breath that one takes to a blessed temporal and eternal experience (John 10:10) (Lindars 1981: p. 85). Furthermore, Jesus metaphorically embodies the life giving elements of drink (water, 4:7-15) and food (bread, 6:27-51) in the FG. Interestingly, GP 55:6-14 also includes bread coming from heaven. As chapter 6 will discuss, the author of the GP's discussion is in the context of food, drink, and redemption. In other words, the GP reinterprets Christ bringing bread from heaven into their Valentinian myth and maintains the FG's soteriological emphasis.

3.5.2 The Purpose of the VSS

The VSS's purpose was to reveal the truth of Christ and through the acceptance of that truth (GT 18:18-21), their recipients would experience unification with Christ into a spiritual body, which ultimately would lead to an eschatological return and reunification with the primordial source (Attridge & MacRae 1985: p. 76). The FG was written so that its readers would believe that Jesus was the Christ, the son of God and through their faith would have life (John 20:30-31). Jesus taught his disciples in John 14:1-7 that he was going ahead of them to prepare a place. In fact, he was "the way, the truth, and the life" (cf. GT 18:18-21; 31:28-29) and the only way to the Father (v 6). While these purposes might seem quite different at first, after extracting the Valentinian myth, the purposes of the FG and the VSS are quite similar. The following section examines each of the six VSS and offers a purpose for each individual work.

3.5.2.1 *The Gospel of Truth*

The GT begins by contrasting the joy of the gospel of truth, knowing the truth of the saviour and his redemption, with the ignorance, fear, and terror that error brings. From the very first paragraph of the GT, the author wraps his message in the Valentinian myth with the descent of the Logos from the Pleroma, knowing the Father through a mystical gnosis (Barnstone & Meyer

2003: p. 239), and the return of the spirituals to be reunified with the Pleroma. According to GT 22:13-15, truth is defined in terms of origin and destiny: “He who is to have knowledge in this manner knows where he comes from and where he is going.” Valentinian soteriology is commonly viewed in terms of the fall of Adam and Eve, the saviour’s reversal of the fall, and reunification with the Pleroma (GT 36:39–41:14). The GT fits the overall purpose of the VSS, encouraging its recipients with the fact that gnosis leads to reunification with the Pleroma in the end.

3.5.2.2 *The Gospel of Philip*

The GP seems to have been influenced by many earlier sources and makes best sense when viewed as an anthology put together by a redactor, seeking to enlighten those who wish to be set free through images (86:4-18) (Isenberg 1968: pp. 31-33). Passages like GP 67:9-11: “The truth did not come into the world naked, but came in types and images” and 67:27-30: “The Lord did everything in a mystery: a baptism and a chrism and a Eucharist and a redemption and a holy bridal chamber,” reveal how the book should be interpreted—the sacramental acts on earth illustrate what occurs in the spiritual realm. For instance, one of the author’s main concerns is to explain the fallen condition of humanity that occurred when Eve separated from Adam, which broke the androgynous unity (68:22-26). The purpose of Christ’s coming was to reunite the pair (70:12-17). This is consistent with Valentinian myth. The GP explains that when husbands and wives reunite in a sacramental act in the bridal chamber, the union mirrors Christ’s reversal of Adam and Eve’s separation. In this union within the bridal chamber ritual, the pair is given a glimpse of the union that will occur in the future. The author ends with an admonition to receive the anointing or chrism in order for slaves to become free. The GP’s purpose is soteriological, encouraging its recipients to receive the chrism and enter into the bridal chamber in order for the truth to set them free so they can be reunited in the Pleroma. Once again, like the FG, soteriological should not be seen in merely a justification sense but being freed from sin (77:15-18), ignorance (83:18-29; 85:24), and receiving an inheritance (52:2-15).

3.5.2.3 *The Treatise on the Resurrection*

Scholars disagree whether the TR should be viewed as a diatribe or a didactic letter. Van Unnik believes that there are many passages that “remind us of the ‘diatribe’” (1964: p. 146). Martin points out several characteristics that point to a “Cynic-Stoic diatribe style” (Bultmann 1910: p. 66): (1) a teacher-pupil relationship between the author and the addressee, namely, Rheginos; (2) every reference to the reader is in the second person singular, proving mutual ground; (3) the fact that it opens with a question about the resurrection and continues with rhetorical questions assuming a negative response (Bultmann 1910: pp. 46, 48); (4) the ornamental citation of well-known men; (5) Greek sports metaphors (43:24; 49:28ff); and (6) phrases characteristic of diatribe such as *parallelismus membororum* (43:35–44:2) (Martin Jr. 1973: p. 278ff.). It is very possible that Rheginos could actually have been a fictitious questioner. Thus, Rheginos could have been a creation by the author for the purpose of arguing for his point, namely that the resurrection is a present, spiritual reality. Conversely, Peel writes, “...we attach little significance to the theory that a Stoic-Cynic diatribe style has molded some of the Letter’s structure” (1969: p. 48). Since the work lacks a *praescriptio* including the name of the author, scholars doubt that it should be classified as a diatribe. However, whether the author intended for the TR to be a didactic letter or a diatribe, the author still meant to instruct his readers on the resurrection. The author states that Christ had given him special knowledge (49:41–50:2) that allowed him to answer questions about the resurrection. The resurrection separates the inward “living members,” such as the “mind and thought” from the external perishable body (47:38–48:2; 45:39–46:2; 45:19-21) (Peel 1988: p. 52). Furthermore, the resurrection has already occurred, and believers should consider themselves dead and resurrected (49:16-30) (Barnstone & Meyer 2003: p. 326). The TR’s present view of the resurrection can be compared with the FG’s present view of eternal life. Just as the author of the TR encouraged his readers to view themselves as dead and resurrected, the author of the FG explained that those that believe in Christ presently possess eternal life (3:16; 5:24-26) (Dodd 1936: pp. 138-42).

3.5.2.4 *The Tripartite Tractate*

One of the main ideas expressed in the TT is theodicy. Consequently, one of the main purposes of the TT is to demonstrate that the Father "... who is good and loving, nevertheless wills that the creatures which come into existence should experience the evil of ignorance. No one can know the Father through their own wisdom or power" (126:13-15) but by his grace. It is the author's desire that all come to know him (126:15-28). The purpose of exposing all to the pain of ignorance is so that their joy will last for all eternity (126:32-38). The work begins by explaining the Valentinian myth and cosmogony but without the inclusion of Sophia. This may have been an attempt to reconcile Valentinian doctrine with orthodox Christianity (Attridge & Pagels 1985: p. 190). The TT then turns to an exposition on Gen 1–3, explaining the creation of three classes of beings. They are then labelled as pneumatic (Valentinians), psychic (Christians), and hylic (non-Christians). Ultimately, those that will be reunified with the Pleroma (117:17-36) experience release from their physical bodies (124:3-5) along with the saviour (124:32-34). The author includes other more orthodox doctrine as well. The saviour was born, lived, and died. Attridge and Pagels explain, "Here again, our author approximates later orthodox Christology more closely than the followers of Ptolemy as described by Irenaeus" (1985: p. 186). This suggests that the Christological debates of the fourth century were widespread and on the mind of the author. Like the FG, the TT includes the descent of the saviour in order to redeem the world so that they can have a future experience with the Father.

3.5.2.5 *The Interpretation of Knowledge*

The author reminds the community that they are a body made of many members (13:20–21:35), and they each share the same grace (16:18-24). Using the analogy of a plant, the author exhorts them to be undivided (19:31-33) and encourages them to seek reward like the head of the church (21:30-34). The setting seems to be a Valentinian community divided over spiritual gifts (Pagels 1988a: p. 472). Thus, the author's purpose is to reunite the community and end the disagreement. Thomassen adds, "Exhorting his audience to be humble and to remain steadfast in faith is the author's overriding concern"

(2007b: p. 651). The social situation of the community seems to be marked by division and possible persecution. The author places his concern for the community into the context of the Valentinian myth. Christ bent over the cross, extending himself into the world (13:25-29) and humiliating himself for his “small brother” (14:28-29). He came in order to release the spirituals from the disgrace of the carcass of flesh and blood (12:37-38).

3.5.2.6 A Valentinian Exposition with Liturgical Readings

Due to the poor state of the VE, finding a clear purpose is difficult. The VE begins with the source, which the author believes is the monad, most likely disagreeing with Valentinus and Ptolemy (*Haer* I:11,1). Sophia’s transgression caused her to suffer but she later repented and accepted Christ. Thus, there is a divine union. Finally, Jesus, Christ, Sophia, and the seeds of Sophia all reunite with the Pleroma (39:28-39). Some have suggested that the VE was a secret catechism for Valentinians to be initiated into the community and gnosis. It includes Valentinian ritual language including anointing, baptism, and the Eucharist (Pagels 1988b: p. 481). It seems that both the instructional piece as well as the liturgical readings were used by the same group in their worship service.

3.5.3 Evaluation

The purpose of the FG and the VSS are both soteriological in focus. On one hand, the FG focuses on the present and future experience of life obtained by faith in Jesus. He is the way, the truth, and the life. The prologue begins by stating that the world did not know him (1:10), but those that received him would become the children of God. In other words, ignorance is contrasted with receiving in the FG. The VSS emphasize the present resurrection and a future experience of reunification. The VSS invite the reader to eradicate ignorance through Jesus, a guide to the way and truth. The Valentinian myth demands the son’s descent and future union with Sophia, but the VSS paint him as a heavenly sage, guiding the spirituals on the path to reunification. Both in the VSS and John 10, Jesus functions as the door to the heavenly region.

Although the FG and the VSS appear quite different when juxtaposed, if one were to extract the Valentinian myth from the VSS, they would look very similar.

3.6 Conclusion

Differences exist between the FG and the VSS concerning their background; however, when Valentinian cosmogony and soteriology are extracted, they appear strikingly similar. Both the FG and the VSS were written in Greek within a half of a century of each other. Additionally, the FG and the VSS both seem to have originated in Jewish-Christian contexts. The VSS allowed for a positive idea of the creator and many of the early Valentinians made extensive use of the OT. The FG, with its many Jewish themes, was most likely written in a Jewish-Christian community as well. Likewise, their purposes are similar. They both have a soteriological focus. The author of the FG wanted his readers to believe that Jesus provided life through faith and a way to be united with the Father. The authors of the VSS taught that restoration to the Pleroma comes through the eradication of ignorance and co-incarnation with Christ. The FG focuses on faith in Christ and the VSS emphasize gnosis or understanding secret knowledge and one's origin. While the authors of the FG and the VSS mean different things by faith and gnosis, the author of the FG seems to equate πιστεύω and γινώσκω (cf. John 6:69), which could point to another connection between the two. In the FG faith leads to an eternal and an abundant experience of life with the Father; In the VSS mystical knowledge leads to restoration to the Pleroma. Likewise, the TR's present view of the resurrection can be compared with the FG's present view of eternal life. Just as the author of the TR encouraged his readers to view themselves as dead and resurrected, the author of the FG explained that those that believe in Christ presently possess eternal life (3:16; 5:24-26). When the Valentinian myth is extracted from the VSS, their purposes appear quite similar.

CHAPTER 4

AN ANALYSIS OF THE NATURE OF CHRIST IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL

4.1 Introduction

Almost since its inception, the FG has been regarded as a “spiritual gospel” (*EH* 6:14,7). The FG begins with a cosmic story—ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν— and ends with the resurrected Christ instructing Peter, in metaphorical language, on how he is to lead after Jesus’ departure. Nonetheless, within the gospel, the author tells of a human Jesus who, early in the narrative, attends a wedding with his mother. Thus, on the surface, the FG paints a picture of a man interacting normally with his world, but when Jesus turns water into wine the author quickly reminds the reader that this Jesus has come from the Father. Likewise, in a later section where Jesus displays real emotion over the loss of Lazarus, a friend he loves, he raises Lazarus to life, both recalling his connection with life in the prologue (1:4) and foreshadowing his own resurrection at the end of the gospel. The earthly and cosmic stories continually intertwine, connecting the human Jesus in history, who has become flesh, with the heavenly Jesus.

In Dunn’s work, *Christology in the Making* (1996), he argues that the FG is the only NT writing that presents Christ as a pre-existent heavenly being. In other words, the FG clarified NT theology and brought the church one step closer to the Council of Nicaea (AD 325). He believes that this process began in the Wisdom passages in the Pauline Epistles but the pre-existence and incarnation of Christ was not clearly articulated until the FG (1996: p. 259). Dunn has received a strong rebuttal from Hurtado (2003: pp. 118-26, 364-65). Hurtado argues convincingly that Christ’s pre-existence is plainly seen in the Pauline corpus. Thus, the author of the FG did not develop an embryonic idea, but shared a view that was already fully developed from an early date. In fact,

the Pauline evidence demonstrates that belief in Jesus' pre-existence was circulating prior to John 1:1-18 being penned. The following Pauline passages provide evidence of this: (1) Col 1:16-17: "For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist"; (2) Col 1:19, which seems to employ some of the same language as the FG: "For it pleased *the Father that* in Him all the fullness should dwell." (3) 1 Cor 8:6 also speaks of Jesus participating in creation. Thus, if the idea of Jesus pre-existence was already circulating among Christians decades before the FG was penned, there is no need to attribute the cosmic level of drama solely to the FG but instead one should see Jesus' pre-existence and the cosmic level of drama expressed in the FG as characteristic of the Christian community prior to the date of the FG. Hence, Jesus' pre-existence would have been part of the community's pre-understanding.

The following analysis of the nature of Christ in the FG will illustrate the two-level drama of the FG, the earthly set in context by the heavenly. First, this chapter will look at the divine Logos. This will include the background of Sophia and Logos in Wisdom Literature, the OT, Philo (whose works Bultmann believes contain parallels with the prologue's picture of the Logos), and the usage of the Logos in the FG. Then the terms son of God, son of man, and Messiah will be analysed in order to further clarify the heavenly context. Finally, the resurrection in the FG will be taken in to account. The following sections seek to demonstrate that while Jewish and Hellenistic Literature provide the backdrop to the Logos in the prologue, the author of the FG did not mirror the presuppositions of his day but surpassed them in speaking of the incarnation. The one point that finds no parallel or allusion in previous literature is the Logos taking on flesh. Second, this study will look at the enfleshed Logos, analysing the incarnation, how *σάρξ* is used in the FG, evidences for the humanity of Christ in the FG, and how the passion events contribute to one's understanding of the incarnation. Above all, this chapter seeks to put the FG in its historical and cultural context, with its Hellenistic, Stoic, Platonic, and Jewish influences,

in order to avoid an anachronistic analysis, while acknowledging the two-level drama that the author has woven together. This chapter will look at the nature of Christ in the FG, as Dunn has encouraged all who seek to understand the gospel to do, by letting “John be John” (1983). In order to do this, one must first appreciate the community of the FG’s preunderstandings, rooted in the cultural milieu that led to their conception of the nature of Christ in the FG. This also will allow chapters 5-7 to demonstrate that the nature of Christ in the VSS has been influenced by the FG and not simply by Plato, Stoicism, and Judaism.

4.2 The Heavenly Drama

The first level of drama encountered in the FG is the cosmic. The prologue begins by describing the Logos with God and his involvement in creation and ends with his incarnation, intertwining the cosmic and earthly. In order to properly understand the cosmic level, one must first understand the FG’s picture of the Logos.

4.2.1 The Logos’s Jewish Background and Use in the FG

In Jewish Literature, Sophia is pictured as an intermediary between God and his creation in order to explain how the transcendent God could interact with his creation. It guards God’s transcendence by explaining his work on earth through Sophia. In addition, she is involved in the ordering of creation and is associated with the tabernacle. Jewish Literature explains the creative, revelatory, and redemptive works of Yahweh by way of the acts of the Logos. The Logos is not a personification nor an approach to personalization but rather a way of describing the works of Yahweh. In Philo, the Logos seems very close to the Logos in the FG. It is no wonder Bultmann (1923: pp. II:3-26) saw parallels between the two. Nonetheless, even though the author portrays the Logos as a man and associates him with humanity, the Logos in Philo is God himself and Yahweh’s approach to mankind. Furthermore, Philo, as a monotheistic Jew, could not have allowed the Logos to be distinct from God. Finally, the FG begins with the Logos, who was God, and was with God in the beginning. Like Sophia and the Logos in Jewish Literature and Philo, he was

involved in creation. The incarnation in John 1:14 would have shocked a first century Jew, but, as this section demonstrates, the cosmic level of drama in the beginning of the prologue would not have been seen as inconsistent with Sophia and the Logos in Jewish Literature.

4.2.1.1 *Sophia in Jewish Literature*

Parallels between the FG's view of the Logos and the Jewish view of Sophia have long been recognized (Brown 1966: pp. 521-523; Harris 1917: p. esp 43). Wisdom of Solomon (Wis) combined Stoicism and Middle Platonism. Wis begins in chapter 1 with Sophia under several names and then brings her into focus in chapter 6. Oesterly and Box describe her as: "a quasi-personification of certain attributes proper to God, occupying an intermediate position between personalities and abstract beings" (1911: p. 169). Wis pictures Sophia as the breath and emanation of God. She is a reflection, a spotless mirror, and an image of his goodness (Wis 7:25-26). God is presented as the teacher and Sophia as the student (Wis 7:15). In Wis 9, Solomon requests help from God, so he sends Sophia. In vv 9-12, she is anthropomorphized:

With you is Sophia, she who knows your works and was present when you made the world; she understands what is pleasing in your sight and what is right according to your commandments. Send her forth from the holy heavens, and from the throne of your glory send her, that she may labor at my side, and that I may learn what is pleasing to you. For she knows and understands all things, and she will guide me wisely in my actions and guard me with her glory.

Even though Wis 9 speaks of Sophia as present, understanding, sent, labouring, revealing, and guiding, these would have been seen as anthropomorphisms in a monotheistic context. Other passages speak to Sophia's role in creation as well. In Wis 8:4-6, the author describes Sophia as the "active cause of all things" and the "fashioner of all that is." Both God and Sophia are referred to as creators. God is the creator of all in 9:1. Winston explains that although the author wrote that "God made all things by his word" (*logos*) and "wisdom (*sophia*) formed man" (9:1-2), it is not clear if "word" and "wisdom" refer to Logos-Sophia. He believes that the description of Wisdom as "chooser of God's works" (8:4) demonstrates that Wisdom is equal to the Divine Mind through which the Deity acts. Taking into account 9:9, where Wisdom was present in creation, he argues that Wisdom "serves as the instrument of

creation” (1979: p. 38). Sophia in Wis functions much the same, as this study argues below, as Philo’s Logos. Both of these are similar to Middle Platonism’s view of how a supreme, transcendent principle could interact with the material world. This framework was inherited from Plato. Middle Platonism added intermediary beings to explain how the supreme principle related to the world. This supreme principle could be described as a single entity (νοῦς or λόγος) or multiple ideas (ἰδέα) or forms (εἶδος) (Cox 2005: p. 34). The Valentinians inherited Plato’s view of the supreme principle and argued over whether it should be viewed as a monad or a dyad.

Sophia in Wisdom Literature has many parallels with the FG. Sophia and Logos are both agents in creation (John 1:3/Wis 7:22), give life (John 1:3-4/Wis 8:13), and are associated with light (John 1:4/Wis 7:26-30). While Wis speaks of the feminine Sophia, the FG uses the masculine Logos because of his identification with Jesus. John 1:1 and Wis 9:9 are commonly juxtaposed due to their similarities:

In the beginning was the word (ὁ λόγος), and the word (ὁ λόγος) was with God, and the word was God (John 1:1).

And wisdom (ἡ σοφία) was with thee: which knoweth thy works, and was present when thou madest (ἐποίησες) the world (Wis 9:9).

Both passages show the Logos and Sophia in close proximity to God and present at creation although the FG goes further in equating the Logos with God. Furthermore, in the context, the author of Wis uses two references to “tabernacle” (κατασκηνώσεως in v 8 and τὸ γεῶδες σκῆνος “earthly tabernacle” in v 15), speaks of “your word” (λόγῳ σου, v 2) involved in creation, refers to the beginning (ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς, v 8), and ends the chapter with salvation through the Sophia (τῆ σοφίᾳ ἐσώθησαν, v 19). A first-century Jewish-Christian reader would have seen these connections with John 1:14 (ἐσκήνωσεν). The author of the FG knew this would be part of their preunderstanding and would have had Wis 9 in mind when penning the prologue.

Another parallel frequently drawn between the Logos and Sophia occurs in Eusebius’s preservation of Aristobulus, a Jewish philosopher who sought to show that Greek philosophy came from the OT. Schürer writes,

“Like Philo, Aristobulus already seems to have given a connected representation of the contents of the Pentateuch, for the purpose of showing to the cultured heathen world, that the Mosaic law, if only correctly understood, already contained all that the best Greek philosophers subsequently taught” (1896: p. 239).

Eusebius believed that Aristobulus wrote in order to show that Peripatetic (Aristotelian) philosophy was dependent upon the law and Moses (*Strom* V:14.97). Aristobulus seems to have believed that Plato, Aristotle, and even Homer borrowed from the LXX translation of the Pentateuch (Walter 1964: pp. 124-49).

In him was life, and life was the light (τὸ φῶς) of man (John 1:4).

All light (φῶς) is from her [Sophia] (*Arb* 5:2).

The association of light with Logos and Sophia would have certainly been on the minds of the readers of the FG’s prologue. Aristobulus connected σοφία with a metaphorical interpretation of the seventh day of creation. Just as all things are contemplated in the light of the seventh day in Gen 2:2, everything is contemplated in the light of wisdom. Aristobulus proceeds to connect the sevenfold Logos, the principal order in the world, with the seventh day of creation. In his paradigm, the Logos and Sophia both share a cosmological ordering function (Collins 1985: pp. II:834-35) and as symbolized by the number seven, provide Sabbath rest to those that follow them (Winston 1979: p. 37).

There are other passages that demonstrate echoes of Jewish Literature’s view of Sophia in the FG’s understanding of the Logos. Sophia is personified in passages like Prov 8 and Wis 7:22, 8:1, and 9:4.

For wisdom, the fashioner of all things, taught me. There is in her a spirit that is intelligent, holy, unique (μονογενής), manifold, subtle, mobile, clear, unpolluted, distinct, invulnerable, loving the good, keen, irresistible, beneficent, humane, steadfast, sure, free from anxiety, all-powerful, overseeing all, and penetrating through all spirits that are intelligent, pure, and altogether subtle (Wis 7:22-23).

She [Wisdom] reaches mightily from one end of the earth to the other, and she orders all things well (Wis 8:1).

Give me the [Wisdom] that sits (πάρεδρον) by your throne (Wis 9:4).

In Wis 9, Sophia is associated with creation, understanding God’s will, and God sends her to inspire kings and help in saving creation. She is seen as a divine witness of the activities of humanity in Wis 1:6-10, 6:8-11, and 21-22. In 1 Enoch 84:3, the author speaks to God’s creative activity and omnipotence in the

context of Sophia's presence before God at his throne. The emphasis is on God's omniscience with the aid of Sophia's presence (Nickelsburg 2001: pp. 352-53).

Another parallel between the FG's view of the Logos and Jewish Literature's understanding of Sophia seems probable between John 1:11 and 1 Enoch 42:2:

He came to his own, and his own did not receive him (John 1:11).

Wisdom went forth to make her dwelling among the children of men, and found no dwelling-place (1 Enoch 42:2).

Sophia's hiddenness in 1 Enoch 42 parallels 2 Esdras 5:9b-10a and probably was derived from Job 28:1-27 (Crenshaw 2010: p. 196). John 1:14ab and Sir 24:8 also provide another possible parallel:

The Logos became flesh and tabernacled (ἐσκήνωσεν) among us (John 1:14).

So the Creator of all things gave me a commandment, and he that made me caused my tabernacle (σκηνήν) to rest, and said, Let thy dwelling (κατασκήνωσον) be in Jacob, and thine inheritance in Israel (Sir 24:8) (Di Lella & Skehan 1987: p. 333).

Sophia is said to minister before the creator in the holy tent in v 10. Jewish readers would have immediately thought of the tent that Yahweh commanded Moses to build in Ex 25:8-9; 26:1-37. Likewise, in v 10b, the author refers to Sophia ministering in Jerusalem, an allusion to the temple. This is another passage from Jewish Literature that parallels the FG's description of the Logos. The readers of John 1:14 would have seen the divine Logos involved in creation, like Sophia, and in the tabernacle of God. But unlike Sophia in Sir 24:8-10, the divine Logos tabernacled on earth by assuming flesh.

Philo usually sees Sophia as "the word of God" or the "divine word" (*Fug* 137; *Sac* 86). Philo also seems to implicitly equate Sophia and Logos (*Leg* 1.65; *Her* 191; *Som* 2.242-45). Of Sophia, he writes in *Leg* 1:41: "the lofty and heavenly wisdom is many-named; for he calls it 'beginning' and 'image' and 'vision of God.'" He describes the Logos in much the same way in *Conf* 146-147: "Many names are [the Logos], for he is called, 'the Beginning,' and the Name of God, and His Word, and the Man after His Image, and 'he that Sees,' that is Israel..." But he also distinguishes them. Sophia is the mother of the Logos (*Fug* 109) and the Logos dispenses Sophia in *Fug* 137-138. The terms

were probably not constant and may have been in transition at this point. (Cox 2005: p. 99) Jewish writers incorporate their view of Sophia into monotheism with little difficulty. The portrayal of Sophia by Philo and Wis offer many parallels: (Winston 1979: p. 60ff) (1) emanation and agent in creation (Wis 7:25; 8:4; 9:1-2/*Som* 2.221 [emanation]; *Her* 199; *Det* 54 [creation]), (2) Sophia is associated with brightness (Wis 6:12/*Leg* 3.35, 171; *Opif* 30; *Plant* 40. She is brighter than the sun [Wis 7:29/*Migr* 40]), (3) she is the bride or spouse (Wis 8:2/*Congr* 74; *Qge* 3.21; *Post* 79), (4) without her man is nothing (Wis 9:6/*Post* 136; *Leg* 1.82), and (5) she reveals (Wis 9:17; *Opif* 3; *Mos* 2.52; *Migr* 3-6, 34, 275-276; *Prob* 62; *Vir* 194). Nonetheless, unlike Wis, Philo emphasizes Plato's concept of "ideas," speaks of a mystical union with Sophia, and uses allegorical interpretation. Arguably the VSS would be more at home with Philo's understanding of Sophia than the FG.

Sophia is pictured in Wis as a kindly spirit (1:6), like a woman (6:12-16), the most sincere desire for instruction (6:17), like gems or radiant like the light (7:8-10, 29), the mother of all good things (7:11ff), the cosmic order (7:17-21), spirit pervading all created things (7:22ff), a bride (8:2), intimate with God (8:3ff), and teacher of profound mysteries (8:8). Yet, God is the guide of Sophia (7:15) and she comes from God (8:12-9:6). The author speaks of Sophia in Stoic terms but remains consistent with monotheism. There is no inclination toward pantheism in his explanation. Philo too describes Sophia as a fountain (*Leg* 2:86ff), tree of life (*Leg* 3:46, 52), and a mother (*Leg* 2:82). Yet, for a Jew, to describe her with these terms was to describe God. There is no hint that there was any distinction being made between Sophia and Yahweh. Sophia, as Dunn has aptly put it, "provided expressions of God's immanence, his active concern in creation, revelation and redemption, while at the same time protecting his holy transcendence and wholly otherness" (1996: p. 176). Sophia in Jewish Literature provides a parallel for almost every characteristic of the Logos in the FG (Brown 1966: pp. 1:521-23). Those well acquainted with Jewish Literature would have been at home with the FG's description until 1:14. The FG takes its personification further in the incarnation and in its direct identification with God in John 1:1.

4.2.1.2 *The Logos in Jewish Literature*

Isaiah described the word of God's descent as rain and snow falling from heaven, bringing life to all that it falls upon (Isa 55:10, cf. Ps 107:30; 147:15, 18; Isa 9:8; Wis 18:1-16). None of these passages seem to be a clear example of hypostatization. Wis 18 (most likely written in the first or second century BC) interpreting Ex 11–12, speaks of the Logos as an armed man bringing judgment on Egypt (v 15). But this also falls short of a hypostatized Logos concept. The Logos in this passage should be seen as Yahweh acting, not as a person distinct from Yahweh himself. Thus, Moore's analysis holds up: "It is an error to see in such personifications an approach to personalization. Nowhere either in the Bible or in the extra-canonical literature of the Jews is the word of God a personal agent or on the way to become such" (1997: p. 1:415). The description of the Logos as "all-powerful" and leaping from God's throne in Wis 18:15 parallels the description of Wisdom earlier in the book as all-powerful (7:23), descending from the throne (9:4, 10, 17), and carrying out God's commands (7:21; 8:4). The Logos leaping from the heavens is echoed in Simon Magus (*exsiliensem*, *Haer* 1:23,2) and in the Valentinian system—Sophia looking for a partner extended down and made a leap (*Haer* 1:2,2; 1:29,1-4). Wisdom 18:16 continues to describe how the Logos, bearing a sword, "touched the heavens, yet stood poised upon the earth." As Winston has rightly pointed out, this is a well-known Homeric image. In the Iliad 4.443, Discord plants her head in the heavens while her feet touch the earth (1979: p. 319). Likewise, 1 Chron 21:16 speaks of David seeing an angel standing between heaven and earth with a sword in his hand over Jerusalem, destroying the city in judgment because of David's sin. Finally, Wis 18:15ff makes the Logos the messenger of God's wrath against disobedient Israel. Again this need not be seen as a hypostatization but merely explains how God poured out his wrath upon the wilderness generation (cf. Num 17:6-13). Rather than employing a personalization, Jewish Literature consistently sees the Logos as God acting.

Sophia and Logos, as well as Spirit, are ways the OT explains the creative, revelatory, and redemptive works of Yahweh. The OT speaks of God's word and wisdom in similar terms in Ps 33:6 and Prov 3:19. Wis 9:1-2 speaks of

God's word and wisdom in parallel phrases, and 9:17 (Dunn 1996: pp. 129-250) parallels wisdom and God's holy spirit, all in the context of Yahweh's creative and revelatory acts.

4.2.1.3 *The Logos in Philo*

Philo was a prolific Jewish author who combined Jewish monotheism with Stoicism and Platonism, and his writings are the best example of Jewish-Hellenism available. He combined Jewish monotheism with the idea that this world is filled with shadows and copies of the Platonic ideal. He also believed that the soul would rise to the level of thinking that it attains, and this is quite similar to the Valentinian view of the tripartite distinction within the human race. Philo also held a tripartite distinction. Those that attain to a higher level of understanding abandon the irrational and are filled with the divine, a co-habitation model similar to mutual participation in the VSS (*Sobr* 64) (Cox 2005: p. 133ff).

From Stoicism he explains that divine reason permeates all things, even man. He differs from the Stoics in that they believed that the Logos was material while Philo's was immaterial and immanent. Whereas Stoicism viewed divine reason as God with nothing beyond it (Diogenes, *Lives*, 7.134), Philo portrayed the Logos as distinct from God. Logos is seen as the "image" (εἰκῶν) and an "instrument" (ὄργανον) in *Leg* 3.96 and the "divider" (τομεύς) in *Her* 130ff. In *Leg* 3.96, the Logos is described as an instrument that God uses in creation. When Philo wants to describe the relationship between the heavenly and earthly spheres, he turns to ἀρχέτυπος and μίμημα, the model and its copy. Philo's intermediary in *Her* 231 is the image, model, or representation of God to man. In fact, he is called λόγος θεοῦ in *Cher* 127, an intermediary in creation. Therefore Winston concludes: "For Philo, it is through the Logos and the Logos alone that man is capable of participating in the Divine" (1985: p. 25). The FG's audience would most likely have been aware of Philo's use of the Logos due to the fact that Philo was a well known Jewish author.

The Stoics distinguished two types of the Logos: (1) the thought within the mind, and (2) the thought expressed in speech (*Migr* 70-85). Philo uses a Stoic allegorical interpretation of Ex 4:16 and 7:1 with Moses being the

mind and Aaron representing the speech (*Det* 39ff, 126-32; *Migr* 76-84; *Mut* 208). In *Mos* II:127-9 the two types demonstrate that they both point to one Logos. They are distinct manifestations of the same Logos. In *Opif* 16-44, Philo explains that the Logos is the intermediary between God and the world of ideas and God's creation. He writes,

And if any one were to desire to use more undisguised terms, he would not call the world, which is perceptible only to the intellect, anything else but the reason of God, already occupied in the creation of the world; for neither is a city, while only perceptible to the intellect, anything else but the reason of the architect, who is already designing to build one perceptible to the external senses, on the model of that which is so only to the intellect (*Opif* 24).

The divine Logos then is the mind of God, expressing itself in creative acts (*Opif* 24). Runia points out: "The effect of the formula [*Opif* 24] is to bring God as creator, the intelligible cosmos as plan for creation and the Logos (i.e. Reason) as conceiver and executor of the plan into a tight unity" (Runia 2001: p. 148). In *Opif* 20 and 24, it is the divine Logos (τὸν θεῖον λόγον) that orders creation and serves as the model of God's image (Leonhardt-Baltzer 2004: p. 339). He is the "idea of ideas" (*Opif* 25). He encompasses all ideas (Runia 2001: p. 151). Philo associates the "reasoning (λογισμός) of the architect" with creating the intelligible cosmos as an architect would design a city. Philo saw a model/copy relationship much like Plato (cf. *Tim* 48e4-49a). But while Plato saw the Demiurge as the creator, much like the VSS, Philo viewed God as the creator.

Looking at Philo's Logos in terms of the material world and the immaterial world helps clarify his understanding of the Logos. In the material world, one can know through the senses or the mind. The invisible, real world is only available to the mind (cf. *Opif* 31; *Migr* 52). Beyond the Logos is God himself, as the Valentinians also believed, unknowable (*Leg* I:36ff; *Mut* 9; *Qex* II:67). Philo believed that although God was unknowable, the Logos is the knowable part of God (*Som* I:65ff, 68ff). He is what can be seen (*Som* I: 239). The Logos is that which "draws the perfect man from things earthly to himself" (*Sac* 8). Dunn sums up Philo's view of the Logos: "But in the end of the day the Logos seems to be nothing more for Philo than God himself in his approach to man, God himself insofar as he may be known by man" (1996: p. 228).

There are many similarities between Philo's use of Logos and the FG's: (1) in both Philo and the FG, the Logos existed before creation (John 1:1-2/*Opif* 17, 24), (2) both speak of the Logos using the anarthrous θεός (John 1:1/*Somn* 1.228-30), (3) both place the Logos in the context of the ἀρχὴ (John 1:1/*Conf* 146), (4) both associate the Logos with light (John 1:4/*Somn* 1.75; *Opif* 33; *Conf* 60-63), (5) in both the Logos is connected with becoming sons or children of God (John 1:12/*Conf* 145-46). However, unlike the FG, Philo believed that once the human soul had turned to God (*Praem* 163), it could then be released from the body and leave the material world and contemplate God (*Mig* 170-75). But a sixth similarity can be seen in that the Logos is the guide on this ascent (*Som* 1.68-69, 86), and so associated with man (John 1:14/*Conf* 40-41). Philo calls the Logos God's man (ἄνθρωπος θεοῦ).

Bultmann believed that Philo, as a representative of Hellenistic Judaism, in which the Logos and Sophia are paralleled, demonstrates that parallels should be seen between the prologue and Wisdom Literature (1923: pp. II:3-26). After surveying parallels between the prologue and Jewish Wisdom Literature, he concludes, "The Logos speculation of the Prologue of John derives from wisdom speculation present in Jewish sources" (1986: p. 27). However, Bultmann could not adequately explain the switch from Sophia to the Logos. Hence he turned to the Mandaean myth of the Primal man, which scholars have deemed artificially constructed and at times inaccurate (Dodd 1968: p. 128; Casey 1956: pp. 52-80, esp 54; Colpe 1961: pp. 10-57). Bultmann saw Hellenistic Judaism as the background for the Logos of the prologue. However as the analysis of 1:14 below shows, the incarnation in the FG finds no parallel in Hellenism or Judaism. Although Philo associated the Logos with man and even portrayed him as a man, the Logos in Philo is nothing more than the transcendent God's approach to man. While Philo and the prologue of the FG contain many similarities, the overlap seems more to do with a common understanding of Sophia and Logos from Jewish Literature. To make any firm connections would be to overstate the case (Hurtado 2004: pp. 77-78). Philo is most helpful in understanding the Jewish setting of early Christianity but does not include any hint of a divine hypostasis. Painter says it well: "What it means

is that the Wisdom/Torah/Logos tradition found in Philo provides the pre-suppositions for the hermeneutic John uses in his interpretation of Genesis in the Prologue” (2003: p. 185). To take the connections any further is to read the FG in light of Philo instead of allowing the FG’s own message and understanding of the Logos to shine through. The author of the FG would have been well aware of Philo’s Logos/Sophia concept at the time of writing. If the author had agreed with Philo, who wrote before the FG, the FG’s Logos concept would be more like Philo’s than it is and would not have redefined the Logos as God in human flesh.

4.2.1.4 *The Logos in the FG*

Jewish Literature finds many commonalities in the FG in terms of a Logos/Sophia concept, but Philo provides by far the closest parallels to the FG. Temple sums up Jewish and Hellenistic presuppositions about the Logos and Sophia in the first century. He explains that the Logos represents “the ruling fact of the universe, and represents that fact as the self-expression of God” to both Gentiles and Jews. However, the Jew would recall that “by the Word of the Lord the heavens were made,” and the Greek would think of “the rational principle of which all natural laws are particular expressions.” Nonetheless, Temple believes that both the Jew and the Gentile, albeit coming from distinct perspectives, would view the Logos as “the starting-point of all things” (Temple 1945: p. 4). The readers of the FG certainly would have recalled the Jewish views of the Logos and Sophia; however, the FG did not view the Logos as a principle but ultimately as a human being through the incarnation, who brought life, and not as a personification but a person, who took on flesh.

The prologue begins with the pre-existent Logos (1:1), declaring that Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος, καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν. οὗτος ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν θεόν. These two pregnant verses announce that the word resided with God before creation. They also declare the pre-existence and deity of the Logos. Both of these attributes imply that his origin is not of this world. John’s allusion to creation in vv 1-2 and the statement that πάντα δι’ αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο (v 3) parallel both Philo and Jewish Literature’s description of the Logos’s part in creation and would have pleased first century Jews except that v 3 may have been seen

as too much of a personalization. Several views exist concerning the sense of *πρός* in this passage. One could take the preposition in a sense of accompaniment and translate it “with” (Blass, Debrunner & Funk 1961: p. §239 (1)). Lincoln translates the phrase “was at God’s side” (2005: pp. 201-202). Yet most believe that it has a relational aspect (Carson 1991: pp. 117-18). Morris writes, “Probably we should understand from the preposition the two ideas of accompaniment and relationship” (1995: p. 67). The fact that the son was sent from the Father with a mission demonstrates not only derivational but also relational unity. The unity between the son and the Father and the son’s heavenly position prior to creation both demonstrate that the Logos’s origin is from heaven.

The author most likely left the phrase ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν vague in order to communicate the fact that Jesus existed in the Father’s presence at creation and was with the Father. This seems to be the connotative meaning. The Logos existed in the beginning (v 2). Nothing came into existence apart from him (v 3). In him existed ζωή (v 4), and this λόγος, who was the μονογενής of the Father (v 14), brought φῶς into the darkness (v 9). The sense of φῶς carries the idea of transcendence—bringing the heavenly realm, characterized by light, into the earthly realm, characterized by darkness (Danker & Bauer 2000: pp. 1072-1073). This may very well have been intended to foreshadow the incarnation in 1:14. Conzelmann elaborates on the use of light by explaining: “Light is the brightness of the world, salvation, and transferred wisdom, or the possibility of man’s enlightenment by this” (1964: p. 9:323). The Logos came to reveal the glory and message of the Father. The LXX states that Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἐποίησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν (Gen 1:1), φῶς pierced the σκότος (Gen 1:3-4), and ζωή came into existence (Gen 1:11-12, 20-27), paralleling the way in which the prologue of the FG describes the Logos. This demonstrates the unity of the Father and the Logos and the fact that the Logos, up to this point, is consistent with Jewish expectations, associated with the beginning, life, light, and creation.

As discussed above, there are several parallels with the prologue in Jewish Literature. Until the reader reached 1:14, even a Jew reading the FG for the first time would have been comfortable for the most part, though they may

have taken exception to John 1:1c and 1:3. These two verses suggest more than mere abstraction or extension but a personalization and function of God. But the statement ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο finds no pre-Christian parallel. The author of the FG takes the background of the Logos and adds σὰρξ. As is discussed below, the term is rather impersonal, carrying the connotation of meat or flesh. Nevertheless, Christians would have proleptically identified the incarnate Logos as Jesus (1:17). What the author has done is to unite the understandings of the Logos in Jewish Literature into one concept and added the incarnation.

Dunn concludes his work *Christology in the Making* by stating: “It could be said that the Fourth Evangelist was as much a prisoner of his language as its creator” (1996: p. 264). In other words, the author of the FG was limited by human language and in danger of oversimplifying God and Christ. For Dunn, the author was “wrestling with the problem of how to think of God and how to think of Christ in relation to God in light of the clarification of the nature and character of God which the Christ-event afforded” (1996: p. 265). Dunn believes that John was influenced by the Gnostics and got swept up in the cultural evolution of the late first century. This dissertation agrees with Robinson’s rebuttal of Dunn. Robinson concludes, “I agree that this happened, but I believe it [the Gnostic influence] happened to John rather than in John, and that he was ‘taken over’ by the gnosticizers” (1985: p. 381). Robinson cites the Johannine epistles as proof that the Gnostics took his language and transformed it to fit their myth, which the Johannine community rejected. Additionally, early NT evidence of language consistent with the son’s pre-existence and incarnation also argue against Dunn’s contention. When one speaks of Christ, it is common to speak of him proleptically or using a “retrojective” process (Lampe 1977: p. 39ff);—in other words, to read the enfleshed Logos onto the pre-existent Logos. While Dunn believes the FG was alone amongst the NT writers to include the pre-existence and incarnation of Christ, plain readings of Col 1:16-17 (“For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and

for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist”), Col 1:19 (“in Him all the fullness should dwell”), Gal 4:4 (“God sent forth His Son, born of a woman”), and 1 Cor 15:47 (“the second Man *is* the Lord from heaven”) argue against his contention. All three passages juxtapose Christ’s humanity and his pre-existence in heaven with the Father. Furthermore, 1 Cor 8:4-6 (“from whom are all things...through whom are all things”) speaks to the Logos’s participation in creation. This leads to another nuance that needs to be highlighted as well; the Logos participated in creation as this being, not merely as an abstraction or personification. Robinson is therefore right to question Dunn (Robinson 1985: p. 383).

Dunn notes that the FG seems to make a distinction between ὁ θεός and θεός in John 1:1 (2010: pp. 134-36). His argument is that, like Philo in *Somn* 1:227-30, the FG intends the articular ὁ θεός (God) to be distinguished from the anarthrous θεός (god). Dunn is correct in noting that Philo sees the Logos as “God’s outreach to humankind in and through and as the Logos, not of God in himself” (2010: p. 135). He translates 1:1 as “In the beginning was the *logos* and the *logos* was with God (literally the God, *ton theon*), and the *logos* was god/God (*theos*, without the definite article).” He does qualify this by stating in a footnote that the author may simply be making a distinction between the subject and the predicate (2010: pp. 135, n91). It is noteworthy that the FG and the NT overwhelmingly include the article after the preposition πρός while some earlier sources, including Philo and the LXX, tend to do the opposite. To take Philo’s use of the article with θεός and use it to prove the FG’s intention behind the prologue’s use is therefore precarious. Unlike Philo, the FG hypostatizes the Logos. It is clear that the author of the FG is not applying Philo’s definition but taking presuppositions common in the cultural milieu (i.e. Logos as creator and God’s outreach to mankind) and redefining them in terms of Christian doctrine (Logos as flesh and as more than merely God’s outreach but God himself).

4.2.1.5 Conclusion

This section traces through Jewish Literature and the FG, demonstrating that until John 1:14, the average first century reader of the

prologue would not have encountered anything peculiar in relation to the Logos. The Logos was involved in creation, associated with life, light, and the beginning, and explains the transcendent God's approach to man. Set in the context of creation, first century readers would have assumed John 1:1-5 was a commentary on Genesis; however, after reading the entirety of the gospel and seeing how Jesus Christ is the enfleshed Logos of 1:14, they would have seen how the prologue gives context to the earthly level of drama in the rest of the gospel.

4.2.2 Son of God

The connotation of the phrase "son of God" in the FG emphasizes the descent from the Father (3:34; 5:36-38; 6:29, 57; 7:29; 8:42; 10:36; 11:47; 17:3, 8, 18, 21, 23, 25; 20:21) and return to the Father (14:12-13, 28; 20:17). The FG uses the phrase over 20 times and when referring to Jesus, it does not carry the extended Pauline sense of "children of God." As with the Logos, when the first century reader encountered this phrase, its Hellenistic, Jewish, and pagan uses would have come to mind. Therefore, the Greco-Roman and Jewish background should not be overlooked (Keener 2003: pp. 291-96). The former used the title for heroes who were born from gods in Homer's *Iliad* (2.407; 7.47). It was also used in reference to the sons of divinized emperors like Augustus, Nero, and Hadrian (Keener 2003: p. 292). Yet it had more to do with a connection to the gods than with actual deity. The following section looks at the Hellenistic, Jewish, and pagan influences on the FG's understanding of the phrase "son of God," which will further this chapter's analysis of the cosmic level of the drama's picture of the heavenly Logos. This also will serve as background for the analysis of a possible parallel between the FG and the TR in chapter 6.

4.2.2.1 Hellenistic Use

It was common in Hellenism to apotheosize figures including gifted men, miracle workers, healers, and wise men. They belonged to a class called the "*theíōs anér* (divine man)" (Martitz 1985: pp. VIII:334-40). Much of Bultmann's Christology is based on the Hellenistic divine man (1955: p. I:130ff),

a category challenged by many today (Blackburn 1991; Holladay 1977). In Hellenism, the possibility existed that man could rise to divine status or at least be equated with god out of honour in an honor-shame culture (Betz 1968: p. 116). In *Adelphi* of Terence, one of the characters states, “I make you a god in his eyes: I tell of your virtues/miracles (*virtutes*)” (Beare 1996: pp. 884-885). Miracles evidently could elevate one’s status. In addition, kings could be equated with god. In a papyrus called *Catechism*, the author writes, “What is a god? That which is strong. What is a king? He who is equal to the Divine” (Bilabel 1925: p. 339). Greeks also believed that Zeus was the father of all men. Paul quoted Aratus in Acts 17:28: “For we are indeed his offspring.” Seneca also speaks of men being the sons of god, bound by the fundamental principle (*Luc* 95:51-52). The ideas of miracle worker, healer, and wise man from *theíos anér* clearly are employed in the FG (G. MacRae 1970: pp. 86-101).

4.2.2.2 Men as Divine

Homer used the phrase “son of god” as a title for heroes that were born from gods (*Iliad* 2.407; 7.47) (Martitz 1985: p. VIII: 338). In addition to heroes, emperors like Augustus, Nero, and Hadrian were deified as sons of the divine (Keener 2003: p. 292; Deissmann 1927: p. 347ff). Alexander the Great was also pronounced son of Zeus Amon by the chief priest of the oracle of Amon (Plutarch 1986: p. 27). Furthermore, Edson argues that the Greeks sought to give honor to individuals who through achievement, position, or power had an elevated status. He writes, “This tendency lies deeply rooted in the Greek mind and is not to be derived from similar practices in the ancient East” (1996: p. 782). Under Octavian, the hero cult thrived. On January 1, 42 BC, two years after Julius Caesar was assassinated, the Roman Senate recognized him as *divi filius*. The reigning emperor began to be known by this title (Syme 2002: p. 202).

Josephus also writes of men to whom divine status was attributed (*Jwar* IV.625; *Ant* II.232, III.180; VIII.34, 187, 234, 243; X 35, 241, XVIII.64) (Holladay 1977: p. 90). Antiochus Epiphanes was called God made manifest (βασιλεῖ Ἀντιόχῳ θεῷ, *Ant* XII:258). The word “divine” or “god” was often used of important people (Talbert 1977: p. 31ff). For example, in one of the fragments

on purifications, Empedocles referred to himself as an immortal god (B 112:4-5) (Trépanier 2004: p. 80). Philo also comments that Moses had been appointed by God “as god” (*Sac* 9; *Prob* 43). However, this may be best understood against an OT background. Kings and judges in the OT could be referred to as gods (Ps 45:6, 82:6). Psalms 45:6 is used of Jesus in Heb 1:8 and 82:6 is used by Jesus in John 10:34. Nevertheless, these references to men as gods had more to do with a connection to the gods than actual deity. The psalmist surely meant the reference to deity in the sense of representation (Chisholm Jr. 1991: p. 266 n17). When the Jewish and Hellenistic instances of divine men are juxtaposed with the prologue, the FG’s description of Jesus as the Logos appears fundamentally different. The former views men as rising to divine status or appearing as a god’s representative. Conversely, the FG begins with a deity, who assumes flesh in the incarnation.

4.2.2.3 Usage of Son of God in the LXX

In the OT, in the Greek LXX and in the Hebrew, “son of God” is used of angels or heavenly beings (Gen 6:2, 4; Deut 32:8; Job 1:6-12; 2:1-6; Ps 29:1; 89:6; Dan 3:25), Israel (or Ephraim, Ex 4:22; Jer 31:9; Hos 11:1), and kings (II Sam 7:14; Ps 2:7, 89:6ff). The first category, angels or heavenly beings, includes Genesis 6:2, 4 and Daniel 3:25. The former uses the phrase “sons of God” (οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ θεοῦ). Although modern scholars interpret the sons of God in Genesis 6:2, 4 as angels, human judges, rulers, or descendants of Seth (Mathews 1996: p. 323ff), the author of 1 Enoch understands them to be “angels, the sons of heaven” (οἱ ἄγγελοι υἱοὶ οὐρανοῦ, 6:2). In Daniel 3:25 King Nebuchadnezzar describes a heavenly visitor in the fiery furnace, “one like the son of God” (ὁμοία υἱῷ θεοῦ). Nebuchadnezzar later qualifies his words by adding “[God] who sent his angel” (ὁ θεός... ἀπέστειλε τὸν ἄγγελον αὐτοῦ), a heavenly messenger. In Ex 4:22 the nation of Israel is also referred to as the son of the Lord: “Israel is my son, my firstborn” (υἱὸς πρωτότοκός μου Ἰσραηλ). Likewise, Ephraim is referred to as “my firstborn” (πρωτότοκός μου) in Jer 38:9. In Hos 11:1, where the Hebrew refers to Israel as “my son” (בְּנִי), the LXX

phrases it differently: “I called his children” (μετεκάλεσα τὰ τέκνα αὐτοῦ). The OT also refers to rulers as sons of God. In 2 Sam 7:14 God says concerning David’s successor: “I will be his Father, and he will be to me a son” (υἱόν), a verse later applied to Jesus in Hebrews 1:5. The phrase also carries the idea of created or born from. The references to angels (Ps 148:1-5, cf. Col 1:16), Israel (Ex 4:22-23; Hos 11:1), and Kings (2 Sam 7:8, 14) all carry this sense. Finally, Ps 2:7 includes a reference (υἱός μου) to the Lord’s anointed king (χριστός, v 2), who will be given the nations (v 8) and will “dash them to pieces like a potter’s vessel” (v 9). What is clear in the LXX and the Hebrew OT is that the phrase is used to identify a representative of God whether heavenly or earthly.

4.2.2.4 Intertestamental Judaism

Due to the convergence of Hellenistic philosophy and Roman legal practice, the concept of “son of God” in Philo is much more complicated than in the OT. While interpreting Gen 17:16, Philo lists six categories for “child” (τέκνον). He places Abraham in the category of an adopted son in *Sobr* 56 (Sandmel 1971):

And therefore He says plainly of Abraham, “shall I hide anything from Abraham My friend?” (Gen 18:17). But he who has this portion has passed beyond the bounds of human happiness. He alone is nobly born, for he has registered God as his Father and become by adoption (εἰσποιητός) His only son (αὐτῷ μόνος υἱός).

The passage continues to refer to Abraham as the “only king” (μόνος βασιλεύς). Along with individuals, Philo also names the Logos as God’s firstborn (τὸν πρωτόγονον αὐτοῦ λόγον, *Conf* 146), implying divine paternity and calls him an ἀρχάγγελον (Cf. *Som* I:215). Furthermore, Philo associates the Logos with the name of God (ὄνομα θεοῦ) and God’s image (εἰκόνα). In addition to people and the Logos, the cosmos is also God’s son, described as a “younger son of God” (νεώτερος υἱὸς θεοῦ, *Imm* 31ff). The younger is perceivable by outward senses (*Imm* 32). The older son is only perceivable through the senses and is an idea (νοητός). This seems to be influenced by Plato’s concept of shadows of the ideal. In *Agr* 51, commenting on Ex 23:20, the first-born son or Logos guides the cosmos as a shepherd of the entire universe.

Jewish Literature also saw Israelites as God's sons. *Ps Sol* 17 recalls the sin of Israel and looks eschatologically forward (cf. v 44) for a redeemer who will not allow unrighteousness to remain. Israelites will then be known as "sons of their God" (υἱοὶ θεοῦ...αὐτῶν, 17:27). Second Macc 7:34 also refers to the Israelites as "children of heaven" (τοὺς οὐρανίους παῖδας). Finally, the God of heaven protects the Jews, his "sons" (υἱῶν) in 3 Mac 7:6. These references, like those from the OT, carry the idea of God's representatives on earth.

Discovered in 1947, the Dead Sea Scrolls shed light on how at least one group within Second Temple Judaism viewed the Messiah in terms of God's son. The author of IQSa 2:11ff, believing he lived in the end of days (cf. 1QSa 1:1), described the Council of the Community and God begetting the Messiah among them. Using 2 Sam 7:11-14, the author of 4 QFlor speaks of the hope for the Davidic Messiah in divine sonship terms (4 QFlor 1:10ff). Likewise 4Q246, a famous "son of God" passage from Qumran, speaks of one called "son of God" in messianic terms:

He will be called son of God, and they will call him son of the Most High. ... His kingdom will be an eternal kingdom, and all his paths in truth and uprightness. The earth (will be) in truth and all will make peace (4Q246 ii 1–6).

It is well accepted that the connotation of king in the phrase "son of God" was infused into the future Messiah figure at Qumran. Snodgrass takes it one step further by arguing that 4 QFlor 1:10ff and 4Q246 ii 1–6 illustrate the fact that the phrase "the son of God" carried a messianic connotation in Intertestamental Judaism (1983: p. 85ff).

4.2.2.5 *Son of God in the FG*

We have seen that in the ancient world divinity could be attributed to righteous men, philosophers, heroes, and kings. It was not unusual to apply the title "god" to a human being. In the OT it was applied to Israel and its rulers. Jewish Literature employed the phrase in association with a divine representative and divine paternity. Stoicism embraced the idea of a divine fragment imparted at birth. The legend of Baucis and Philemon from Ovid (*Metamorphoses*, VIII:626-721) includes gods appearing as men, but this appearance was merely a disguise in "mortal men." The nuance in the FG that

does not appear in any of these bodies of literature is that of a divine figure who descends from heaven and takes on flesh in order to save humanity as the sent one. This idea also features, albeit in a distinctive form, in the VSS. While it is possible to argue that both the FG and the VSS borrowed Logos ideas from their contemporary culture, the idea of an enfleshed Logos does not appear outside these two bodies of literature before the first century AD.

From the outset, the FG evokes echoes of the OT. The prologue begins with the words “in the beginning,” recalling Gen 1, and then continues with the Logos’s part in creation. In 1:41 Andrew finds his brother Simon and declares Εὐρήκαμεν τὸν Μεσσίαν, a Hebrew or Aramaic word, rather than its Greek equivalent, Christ. Philip’s words in 1:45 provide the OT context for Jesus, the one of whom Moses and the Prophets wrote. In this OT context, it would not be surprising to a first-century reader of the FG to encounter places where the author has intentionally made allusions to the OT or intended to draw on the OT meaning of a term. John 1:49 seems to do just that with Nathanael’s declaration, “Rabbi, you are the son of God!” The author of the FG often employs an envelope structure and in 1:19–4:42 the author parallels “we have found the Messiah” in 1:45 and the Samaritans’ recognition of Jesus’ identity in 4:28-42. Furthermore, the author seems to parallel 1:42-51 and John 3:31-36, with echoes of Ps 2 in each. First, the FG uses the verb ἀπειθέω rather than πιστεύω in 3:36 to alert the first-century reader to his intention. The author of the FG uses ἀπειθέω once and πιστεύω almost 70 times. Therefore ἀπειθέω could have been a signal to the reader that something unique should be noted. After all, the author could have used πιστεύω with a negative particle (cf. 3:12, 18 [x2]). Ps 2:5 and John 3:36 both speak of the wrath of God. While disbelief (ἀπειθέω) brings God’s wrath in John 3:36, trust (πίθω) is the means for avoiding God’s wrath and finding blessing in Ps 2:12. (Nash 2009: p. II:94) Second, John 1:49 and Ps 2:7 in the LXX appear very similar.

σὺ εἶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, σὺ βασιλεὺς εἶ τοῦ Ἰσραήλ (John 1:49)

Υἱὸς μου εἶσαι σύ (Ps 2:7).

While the words of Ps 2:7 are God’s, the words in John 1:49 are from Nathanael’s perspective. Even though the similarity is not exact, the allusion

seems clear. In fact, the author of the FG uses two parallel messianic titles, son of God and king of Israel. King of Israel would have recalled 2 Sam 7:12-16, in the context of Father and son language, and Davidic messianic traditions. Also, son of God would have been understood in light of both 2 Sam 7:14 and Ps 2:7 (Moloney 2005: p. 56). The first-century reader would not have missed the fact that Nathan in 2 Sam and Nathanael in the FG referred to both David and Jesus as son of God and king of Israel. The author of the FG combined these two titles because they resonated with Jewish messianic expectation, rooted in these OT passages (C. Koester 1990: pp. 23-34). As Nash has concluded, “John is concerned with making a case for the messianic identity of Jesus (Jn 20.30-31), and his understanding of ‘Messiah’ is founded squarely on the Old Testament” (2009: p. 99). Although there are similar elements to be found in secular sources, the FG draws on the OT and its messianic expectation for its definition of the son of God.

The FG’s son of God language can also be seen in its many references to the Father sending the son. The FG emphasizes the son of God as one who was sent by the Father into the world in order to save it. John 3:17 is a prime example: οὐ γὰρ ἀπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν υἱὸν εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἵνα κρίνη τὸν κόσμον, ἀλλ’ ἵνα σωθῆ ὁ κόσμος δι’ αὐτοῦ. This theme is repeated throughout the gospel (3:34; 5:36-38; 6:29, 57; 7:29; 8:42; 10:36; 11:42; 17:3, 8, 18, 21, 23, 25; 20:21). The first reference focuses on the Father sending the son and the final reference (20:21) continues the sending motif through the future ministry of Jesus’ disciples. Rensberger sees both Jesus’ coming and being sent by the Father can be found in the FG’s titles, Messiah and son of God. His point is that Jesus’ origin is not of this world but came from the divine realm to the earthly realm (2001: p. 17). The son of God therefore includes a sending motif. This is consistent with the son of God as God’s representative on earth in Jewish Literature. However, the FG goes beyond this by emphasizing the son’s origins from outside “the world” and by narratively framing the son of God references with the Logos preamble.

4.2.2.6 Conclusion

In Hellenism, the phrase “the son of God” carried the sense of men becoming divine. In the OT, the phrase came to be associated with God’s representatives: angels, Israel, and especially Israelite kings and judges. By the Intertestamental period, the phrase was used of spiritual people and at Qumran of the Messiah. The explicit purpose of the FG is to reveal that Jesus is the Christ, the son of God. The FG includes language of agency (in line with the messianic hope), and descent (the son being sent into the world, 3:17; 10:36; 17:18), or ascent (6:33, 38, 62) in order to describe the heavenly origin of Jesus. Hurtado explains, “... in GJohn asserting Jesus’ messiahship and divine sonship means much more than the claim that he is Israel’s rightful king. The Johannine assertions that Jesus is ‘Christ’ and ‘Son (of God)’ connote the belief that Jesus is in some intrinsic way also divine and of heavenly origin” (2003: p. 362). While the Synoptics all describe the divine sonship of Jesus as transcendent, the FG emphasizes the language of agency, ascent, and descent unlike any other gospel.

4.2.3 Son of Man

Another phrase that contributes to the FG’s cosmic level of drama is the “son of man.” The Jewish background of the son of man pictures him as a pre-existent, heavenly being, ruling in an eternal kingdom. The son of man designation in the FG is linked with his descent and ascent, which implies pre-existence, revelation, and exaltation, serving as the link between heaven and earth (Nicholson 1983: pp. 60-62, 75-104; Sidebottom 1957: pp. 115-122; Meeks 1972: p. 52). Accordingly, it looks forward to him being lifted up on the cross and his glorification.

4.2.3.1 Jewish Background

Dan 7:13ff is one of the most commonly referred-to passages in the OT concerning the son of man. Verse 13 describes him as “coming with the clouds of heaven.” From the outset, Dan pictures him as a heavenly being. Riding on the clouds was commonly associated with Yahweh in the OT (Ps

68:4, 104:1-3; Isa 19:1). Also similar to Yahweh, the son of man will have an eternal rule (Dan 7:14/7:27). Just as Yahweh will rule over creation (Zech 14:9), the son of man, or humanity itself, will rule as well (Ps 8:3-8), with Jesus ultimately fulfilling this role (Heb 2:5-9).

Unlike the four beasts in Dan 7:17, the author never gives an explanation for who the son of man is. Regardless of the author's intent behind Dan 7:13-14, Mark describes the scene after the tribulation in language clearly reminiscent of this passage: "Then they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory" (13:26). He again refers to the τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ in reference to the son of man's coming in Mark 14:62. Between Mark and Matt 26:64, it is clear that Jesus interprets the son of man in Dan 7 as a reference to himself. Jesus' response in Matt is answering their demand: "Tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God!"

Some scholars have tried to argue that the preposition *ḵ* in Dan 7:13 demands that the "one like a son of man" was not in fact a human being. For example, Hartman writes, "That the human figure is a mere symbol and no reality is clear from the use of *k* before *bar 'ēnāš* (*k^ebar 'ēnāš*, literally, 'in the likeness of a son of mankind'), just as *k* is used before *'aryēh* (*k^e'aryēh*, 'in the likeness of a lion') in vs. 4..." (1978: p. 219). Just as the lion is symbolic, so the man is symbolic. Furthermore, the man is given dominion, glory, kingship (v 14) but in the interpretation that follows, the holy ones are given the kingdom (v 18), which could indicate that the man symbolizes the holy ones.

However, the earliest interpretations of this passage did not treat the man as a symbol. In 1 Enoch 46:1, the "head of days" is accompanied by one "whose face had the appearance of a man, and his face [was] full of grace, like one of the holy angels." He is called the Messiah in 1 Enoch 48:10 and 52:4. In 4 Ezra 13, the man who rises from the sea and flies with the clouds of heaven is a messianic figure. Rabbinic literature also contains this interpretation (Casey 1979: p. 80). Even Montgomery, who interprets Dan 7:13 in a collective sense, concedes, "It must be admitted that the earliest interpretation of 'the Son of

Man' is Messianic" (1927: p. 320). Nelis responds to those that believe the son of man in Dan 7:13 is more than human: "De uitdrukking, mensenzoon' (*bar 'e'nās*) is een arameïsme, identiek met het *bar ādām* van Ez. 3, 1 enz., er beduidt dat het aldus genoemde wezen tot de categorie mens behoort, vgl. Dn. 3, 25 *bar 'e'lahin*, godenzoon" (1954: p. 88). In other words, he is a man, whom the author distinguishes from the beasts. Also, as Volz has pointed out, the apocalyptists often used such particles as *כְּ* for comparison because they created a mysterious tone. He translates the phrase, "Ich sah eine visionale Gestalt, die der Gattung Mensch angehört" (1934: p. 12). Therefore, the particle *כְּ* is used in visionary language to show that the son of man was similar to a man but different. Rev 1:13 and 14:14 both demonstrate that "one like the son of man" should be seen as like a man but greater than just a man.

1 Enoch contains an important passage on the son of man and interestingly refers to Dan 7 (1 Enoch 46:1-2). Dunn argues that the son of man concept in the Similitudes of Enoch demonstrates a pre-existent son of man figure. In 1 Enoch 48:2-6, the son of man was named even before creation. In 62:6-7, he existed in the beginning, being hidden from kings. John 5:27 could very well have been influenced by 1 Enoch 69:27. Judgment is given to the son of man in both passages.

Notably, the kingdom that the son of man receives is universal and eternal (v 14) in contrast to the temporal kingdoms of the four beasts. In Dan 7:27 the verb *פָּלַח* is significant. When it is used elsewhere in Dan it occurs in passages that relate to service associated with God rather than political service. In fact, it carries the idea of submission in honor and worship to God. However, Dan 7:27 is different in that the worship is directed not toward the Ancient of Days but the son of man. At the least, this reference should be seen as directed to God through his representative. However, the author may have viewed the son of man as deity himself.

4.2.3.2 *Son of Man in the FG*

The title "son of man" occurs in the first half of the gospel: 1:51; 3:13, 14; 5:27; 6:27, 53, 62; 8:28; 9:35; 12:23, 34 (twice); 13:31. It never occurs in the

passion narrative, most likely because it is used in the context of descent and ascent. John 1:51 describes the angels ascending and descending on the son of man, an allusion to Jacob's ladder: "resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it" (Gen 28:12). The Hebrew could be translated "on it" or "on him," which would then point to Jacob (cf. Gen Rab 68:18; 69:7). The latter would emphasize the revelation given to Jacob. The revelation of God then follows, beginning in v 13. "On him" should be preferred in the light of the climax of this passage when God changes Jacob's name to Israel and the author states: "Then God went up from him in the place where He talked with him" (Gen 35:13). Just as the angels descend and ascend on Jacob, so they descend and ascend on Jesus in John 1:51. Heaven is opened, which signifies the revelation of divine matters (cf. Acts 10:11; Rev 4:1; 19:11). Therefore, the promise to the disciples is that Jesus has been appointed by God and given full authority as the new Israel. No longer does God reveal in Bethel (Gen 35:15) but in Jesus.

John 3:13 includes the descent and ascent language associated with the son of man. Some would point to the gnostic redeemer myth to explain this passage (Bultmann 1971: pp. 146-53; Schulz 1975: pp. 58-59), but pre-Christian Judaism included a heavenly redeemer descending from heaven as well (Talbert 1976: p. 430). In Sir 24 pre-existent wisdom descends from heaven (v 3), appears to humankind (vv 6-7), and tabernacles in Jacob as the law (v 8). Likewise, in the Wis, Sophia is sent forth (9:10) as a saviour figure sent to the world (7:27). Given the Jewish-Christian audience, it is much more plausible that Judaism influenced the FG's concept of a heavenly redeemer than the Gnostics. The author explains that the one who was lifted up (v 14) and ascended is the one that descended from heaven. The descent of Christ gives further context to the fact that he will be lifted up on the cross and ascend into heaven. In other words, Jesus came from the Father with revelation of who he was (v 11) in order to save all who believe in him (3:16, 17, 31-36).

Jesus' ascent in 6:62 reiterates the son of man's pre-existence and the author of the FG's portrayal of him as the link between heaven and earth (3:16) (Lindars 1973: p. 54). John 6:25-65 contains three instances of "son of

man” (vv 27, 53, 62) and seven instances of καταβαίνω (vv 33, 38, 41, 42, 50, 52, 58). “Sent” and “Father” are also used quite frequently. The son of man comes to give eternal life (v 27) to those that eat his flesh and drink his blood (v 53) and will ascend to where he was (v 62). In v 27, he is the giver of revelation, which will culminate on the cross (Moloney 1976: p. 113). Verse 53 also looks forward to the cross, and v 62 shows his ascent and return to the Father. The final verse is associated with the spirit. Accordingly, Pryor points to the future tense in v 27 (δώσει), which he argues shows that the son of man’s death will bring “...life through the Spirit as a result of his death and ascension to glory” (1991: p. 344). Hence, the feeding of the five thousand in vv 1-14 was a prelude to Jesus’ contrast between man’s bread and the bread from heaven (vv 32-33) as well as his self-designation as the bread of life in v 35. The blood in this passage points forward to his death (Moloney 1976: p. 116) and the author’s reference of σὰρξ looks back to the incarnation. Pryor points out that in light of 6:63-64, the FG’s reference to eating the flesh of the son of Man in 6:53 is not merely a belief in the earthly ministry of Jesus nor is it focused on the Eucharist but should be seen as faith in the incarnate son, the Logos, who was crucified and then exalted to heaven (1991: p. 344). Dunn rightly acknowledges that flesh and blood here points to receiving the spirit of the exalted Christ (1970-71: p. 331).

4.2.3.3 Conclusion

The FG’s concept of the son of man is quite similar to that found in Jewish Literature. They both view the son of man as a pre-existent, heavenly figure that comes from heaven in order to bring revelation as God’s representative and to bring restoration to his people. Dan 7 pictures him coming on a cloud to restore and rule over his people forever. The FG emphasizes the revelation that Jesus brings and the restoration of those that believe in him so that they can be rescued from perishing (3:15) and possess eternal life.

4.2.4 Messiah

The title Messiah is a title rich in usage and meaning. It was common in both Jewish Literature and the Intertestamental period. Jewish Literature

pictures the Messiah as a human figure, connected with the son of man from Dan 7. During the Intertestamental period, it began to be associated with the designation “son of God” as well. The ideas of saviour, judge, and ruler are all associated with Messiah during this period. The importance of Messiah, or Christ, in the FG is without question. The gospel was written so that its readers would believe that Jesus was the Christ, the son of God (20:31). Unlike the Synoptic gospels, the FG transliterates the Hebrew and Aramaic word מָשִׁיחַ as μεσσίας (in 1:41 and 4:25). Therefore, in order to understand the nature of Christ in the FG, the definition of the Christ is of utmost importance. The FG takes Jewish expectation of the Messiah and reinterprets it to express all that is unique about Jesus.

4.2.4.1 The Use of Messiah in the Jewish Literature

In the OT, the term referred to the anointed king (2 Sam 1:14), the high priest (Lev 4:3), and the patriarchal families (Ps 105:15). Second Esdras saw the Messiah as a human figure that would be the offspring of David (12:31-34), and a judge (12:31-34; 13:36-37), and would eventually die (7:26-30). OT themes which fed into the messianic expectations of the Second Temple period included the prophet like Moses (Deut 18:15-19), the unending priesthood of Melchizedek (Ps 110:4), and the seed of David holding an eternal throne (2 Sam 7:12-16). Yet, due to the political climate, God’s promised one, who would rule in justice and peace (Isa 9:7; Jer 23:5-6), bring about spiritual restoration (Mal 4:5-6; cf. Ezek 36:25-27), and destroy Israel’s enemies (Ps 2:2-6, 7-9; 89:3-4, 20-29) came to overshadow the other messianic expectations.

It was in the Intertestamental Period that “Messiah” became a title, a designation for the “son of God,” interpreting 2 Sam 7:14 and Ps 2:7, and a “son of man” figure after Dan 7:13 in 1 Enoch and 4 Ezra. In *Ps Sol* 17, the author calls for God to raise up a king to rule over Israel (v 21) who will be called “Lord Messiah” (v 32) ruling without sin (v 35). The idea of ruling continues with the author of the Sibylline Oracles (Sib):

And then God will send a king (πέμψει βασιλῆα) from the sun who will stop the entire earth from evil war, killing some imposing oaths of loyalty on others; and he will not do all these things by his private plans but in obedience to the noble teachings of the great God (*Sib* 3.652-56).

Sib also includes the idea of descent from the heavens in its messianic expectation (Edersheim 1903: p. 174). The titles “son of God” and “son of man” are added in the pseudepigraphical books of 1 Enoch and 4 Esdras as well as works from Qumran. In 4 Esdras 7:27, the Messiah is referred to as son. In 4Q246, the author explains that the “son of God” will have an eternal kingdom, will judge the earth in righteousness, and the nations will bow down to him, thus attaching messianic concepts to this figure. In 4Q521, the author tells of how God’s “anointed one” will release the captives, make the blind see, raise up the downtrodden, heal the sick, and resurrect the dead.

The Messiah is equated with the son of man in 1 Enoch (Edersheim 1903: p. 173). Here, as often during the Intertestamental Period, Dan 7 is referenced (cf. 1 Enoch 69:26–71:17; 90:9–13a, 20–27; Sibylline Oracles 3:388–400; Testament of Joseph 19:6–12; 1QM 17:6–8). Echoing Dan 7:14, 1 Enoch 62:7–9 includes the idea of the world falling before him. In 1 Enoch, the Messiah is called the elect one, righteous one, and the son of man (48:2). He will judge Azazel (a rebellious leader) and the angels under his authority (55), the nations will unsuccessfully attack Israel (56), and the Messiah will then dwell on earth forever with the elect (45). Given the allusions to Is 11:1–6 in 49:3–4 and 62:2–3, he should be seen as the Davidic king. Eisenman and Wise state, “a key phrase in the text of course, [is] the reference to calling the coming kingly Messianic figure ‘whose rule will be an eternal rule’ the ‘Son of God,’ or ‘Son of the Most High’ ...” (1994: p. 68). While OT Messianic expectations included the ideas of restoration, rule, and judgment, the literature of the Intertestamental Period equates the Messiah with son of God and son of man figures. Therefore, it would not be out of place in the FG to see the Messiah as the culmination of all three categories (Ridderbos 1997: p. 653).

4.2.4.2 The Use of Messiah in the FG

The term *χριστός* occurs eighteen times in the FG. The first chapter juxtaposes the terms *χριστός* and *μεσσίας* in order to remind the reader of the Jewish messianic expectation and also to expand on this intrinsic definition. In the first chapter, the term is the culmination of John the Baptist’s pronouncement that Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the

world (v 29) and the descent of the Spirit upon Jesus (v 33). This descent is most likely an allusion to Isa 11:2-5 where the Messiah is pictured as a righteous judge who will enjoy the spirit of Yahweh resting upon him (cf. 1 Enoch 55). This Christ was understood by his followers as a ῥαββί, yet implicit in Jesus' words ἔρχεσθε καὶ ὄψεσθε in v 39 is the fact that he is the revealer as well. Lincoln notes, "Jesus' invitation in response—come and see—continues to evoke another level of meaning, because later in this Gospel's discourse both 'to come' to Jesus and 'to see' him are synonyms for 'to believe' in him (cf. e.g. 5.40; 6.35-7, 40, 44-5, 62, 65; 9.37-8; 12.45; 14.6-7, 9)" (2005: p. 117). The Christ in the FG brings the message of life from the Father to mankind.

The woman at the well believed that the Messiah would ἀναγγελεῖ ἡμῖν ἅπαντα (4:25). Whether she was thinking of the Taheb (Restorer), the eschatological prophet figure the Samaritans were expecting (*Memar Marqah* 4:7, 12), or the Messiah, she most likely would have had the prophet of Deut 18:18 in mind due to the Samaritans' high esteem for the Pentateuch. Jesus claims to be the Messiah in 4:26 in the context of the self-designation ὕδωρ ζῶν (4:10-13), a term in the OT for the divine activity of quickening to life (Jer 2:13; Ezek 47:9). Moreover, Jesus acts like a prophet when he reveals his knowledge of the woman's five husbands (4:18-19). This may have been to show her that Jesus was the true Taheb (Munoa III 2002: p. 310). In *Memar Marqah* 6:3, the living water is seen as the word of God, which the prophets receive with signs from heaven. Therefore, she most likely had a restorer or prophet in mind.

The FG portrays the Christ as one who will reveal (4:25), speak boldly (7:26), come from an unknown place (v 26), perform signs (v 31), be the seed of David and from the town of Bethlehem (v 42), provide grounds for excommunication and be a miracle worker (9:22, 25); his signs testify that he is the Christ (10:24-25), he embodies the resurrection and the life (11:25), and is both the son of God (11:27) and the son of man (12:34). The FG takes the Jewish expectation of the offspring of David, judge, and liberator and adds the connotation of both son of man (ascent/descent and glorification, cf. 11:4, 26-27) and son of God (God's representative, cf. 10:24-33). Jesus is the Messiah but more than just the Messiah of Jewish expectation. He is a composite of the

son of God, son of man, Messiah, and heavenly Logos (Ridderbos 1997: p. 653). However, the FG surpasses all four of these categories by applying them to Jesus.

4.2.4.3 Conclusion

The OT use of “Messiah” included kings, priests, and other anointed ones. The subsequent Jewish expectation of the future Messiah was that a human king would come to restore Israel, destroy her enemies, and rule forever. In the Intertestamental period, they began to equate the Messiah with both son of God and son of man. It is no wonder that the author of the FG chose to subsume these three into the person of Jesus. As Hurtado explains, “In light of the constellation of honorific terms for Jesus in John 1, we can take it that reference to Jesus under any one of these terms thereafter is intended to invoke for the readers the connotations of them all” (2003: p. 359). Furthermore, the FG’s use of the transliterated Hebrew word *μεσσίας* seems to point to Jesus being the culmination of the OT expectation. Like the OT and the Intertestamental literature, the FG sees the Messiah as the seed of David, a restorer, a king (19:36), and equated with the son of man and son of God. But unlike the OT and the Intertestamental literature, the FG affirms that the Messiah was also the divine Logos (John 1:14-18).

4.2.5 The Resurrected Christ

The FG records encounters with the post-resurrection Christ in chapters 20–21. When Mary Magdalene tells Simon Peter and the beloved disciple that Jesus’ body is not in the tomb, they rush to the site. The beloved disciple sees and believes (20:8b); however, Peter and Mary Magdalene do not believe (20:9). It is not until Jesus appears to her and calls her name that she believes that he has risen (20:14-17). The disciples, save Thomas, believe that he has risen when he appears to them in the locked room (20:19-25). Thomas wants even more proof of the resurrected Christ. Not only does Jesus appear to Thomas, Jesus tells him to touch his hands and side as proof of his crucifixion wounds. Thomas replies *ὁ κύριός μου καὶ ὁ θεός μου* (20:28). Hurtado explains that Jesus claims “to exercise the powers and prerogatives of God. To cite one

transparent example, the statement in John 11:25, 'I am the resurrection and the life,' corresponds to statements in 5:21-29 that the Father who has power to raise the dead has granted the Son resurrection power as well (vv. 22, 27)" (2003: p. 373). Jesus also promises a future resurrection to all who believe (6:39-40). Jesus appears to the disciples a third time in chapter 21 and eats breakfast with them. John includes this pericope to emphasize his physical bodily resurrection, intertwining the heavenly with the earthly. The FG shows proof of Jesus' resurrection in order to demonstrate that Jesus himself can guarantee resurrection (11:25-57).

The resurrection should also be seen in light of creation. The author, through creation language, portrays the resurrection as the first day of a new creation (Wright 2003: pp. 440-448). In this view, the phrase Ἴδὸν ὁ ἄνθρωπος (19:5) symbolizes the sixth day when mankind was created, the cross equates to the completion of creation in 17:4 and 19:30, and the day of rest then follows (19:31). The first day of a new week (20:1, 19), when Mary Magdalene makes her journey to the tomb, begins the new creation. The darkness in Gen 1:2 is paralleled by Mary's journey in the dark (20:1) and recalls the light shining in the darkness in 1:4-5. Furthermore, when Jesus breathes the Holy Spirit into the disciples (20:22), the author of the FG most likely intended his readers to think of Gen 2:7 and the breath God breathed into man at creation. It is no coincidence that Christ again appears to his disciples in a resurrected body on the first day of the following week (20:26), emphasizing that the resurrected Jesus is the beginning of a new creation. For Valentinians who taught that resurrection comes through the knowledge of one's origin, the idea that one's view of the resurrection should be linked to Genesis would have been seen as consistent with Valentinian belief although the point they would have drawn from it would have been different.

The Valentinians believed in a present resurrection. In some sense, Jesus experienced the resurrection before his death (GP 56:15-20). In the FG, the resurrection should be seen not as realized eschatology but anticipated eschatology. John 5:24 seems to be an example of the former but as v 25 makes clear, "It is an anticipated eschatology, corresponding with the fact that

the future judge is already present in the person of Jesus” (Lindars 1981: p. 224). Jesus’ words in John 11:25 seem at first sight to serve as an example of realized eschatology as well: “I am the resurrection and the life.” In fact, Jesus raises Lazarus to life after he has been dead for four days (v 39). However, as in John 5, Jesus’ words in 11:25-26 explain that earthly death is still a reality. Jesus is the one who can give life and resurrect the body, so standing before them his promise anticipates the future resurrection. Käsemann at one point (1968: p. 75) suggested that 11:25 was consistent with the heresy of Hymenaeus and Philetus (2 Tim 2:17-18). They believed that the resurrection had already occurred. Even though the FG includes the present experience of life through faith in Jesus, the author does not include it at the expense of a future resurrection. Bultmann (1971: p. 402) and Dodd (1968: p. 148ff) emphasize the Greek view of the resurrection as spiritual deliverance, the former emphasizing the radical dualism of Gnosticism. However, Bultmann and Dodd must relegate various passages to a later hand (6:39, 44, 54; cf. 5:28, 29; 12:48). Jesus’ words “whoever believes in me, though he dies, yet will live” clearly demonstrate that the life Jesus gives contains an eschatological future (Ridderbos 1997: pp. 397-99).

4.2.6 Conclusion

The FG includes two levels of drama: the cosmic and the earthly. This section has dealt with the first level of drama, the cosmic, and will demonstrate that the FG has much in common with its Jewish and Hellenistic culture. They both viewed the Logos as intimately involved in creation and the works of Yahweh, but unlike the FG, Hellenism and Judaism never hypostatized the Logos nor viewed it as more than an extension of God. The Logos was understood as the transcendent God’s approach to humanity. Both Hellenism and the FG saw deity within the phrase “son of God,” unlike Jewish Literature. However, the former elevated men while the latter saw the divine taking on human flesh. Likewise, the son of God in the FG was not merely a representative of God as he was in Jewish Literature, but in some sense God himself. The son of man in the FG finds many parallels in Judaism. They both view him as a pre-existent, heavenly figure, who descends from heaven to

restore God's people. While the FG emphasizes the ascent and glorification of the son of man and the salvation he brings, similarities remain. Finally, the Messiah in the FG is very similar to the Messiah in Jewish Literature. In Intertestamental writings, the Messiah began to be associated with the son of man and son of God, and the FG combines all three in Jesus. Essentially, the author of the FG has drawn from the cultural milieu that he found himself in. However, by applying these commonly known honorific terms to Jesus, the author of the FG makes a shocking claim in the prologue. The Logos is intrinsically God (1:1c), he took on flesh (1:14), and is Jesus Christ (1:17). The incarnation and humanity of Christ, the earthly level of drama, will be analysed in the next section.

4.3 The Earthly Drama

Until this point, the FG's portrayal of the divine Logos, the son of man, son of God, and Messiah have for the most part been consistent with what would have been assumed of these concepts in the cultural milieu that the FG found itself in. After the FG explains the cosmic setting, John 1:14 begins the earthly level of drama to which the cosmic gives context. The incarnation takes what would have been highly compatible with Jewish Literature, and later with the VSS, and deposits the divine Logos into an earthly body. While the VSS in their own way maintained that the saviour inhabited a body, the incarnation in the FG finds no equal parallel in the literature that has been surveyed so far, or in the VSS, which will be analysed in chapter 5. The form taken by the Logos in the FG is not merely a carcass or a Platonic shell but true flesh. The following sections analyse the incarnation, John 1:14, the flesh, and the humanity of Christ in order to demonstrate that, according to the FG, in the incarnation, Jesus truly became flesh.

4.3.1 The Incarnation

Dunn does an excellent job tracing Christology from its background to the FG. However, he consistently downplays the NT witness to the incarnation, save for the FG. He argues that "only in the Fourth Gospel can we speak of a

doctrine of the incarnation” (1996: p. 259). In other words, Paul, the Synoptics, and Hebrews lack a clear formulation of the incarnation. Passages like Luke 1:26-35 (Dunn 1996: pp. 50-51) and Phil 2:6-7 might have been proleptically understood in this manner, but John 1:14 gives the first clear example of the pre-existent son taking on human flesh. While Dunn too easily rules out a developed understanding of the incarnation in these passages, he is correct in arguing for a clear incarnation and pre-existence of the Logos in John 1:14.

Knox, however, believes that the true humanity of Christ and his pre-existence are incompatible (1967: pp. 12, 24, 53, 106). Lampe concurs with this: “When Jesus is identified with the pre-existent Son, belief in a true incarnation of God in Jesus is weakened” (1977: pp. 11, 12ff, 23, 142). Does the FG present a weak incarnation as Käsemann might suggest or does the author describe a heavenly Logos truly taking on flesh in the incarnation? It is true that if the FG does present the intersection of the heavenly and earthly in the person of Jesus, the FG’s presentation is unparalleled in Jewish and Hellenistic Literature (Dunn 1996: p. 253).

The following sections look at the incarnation in John 1:14. They seek to demonstrate that the incarnation of the divine Logos in the FG’s prologue was not a reapplication of prior beliefs but an explanation of Christian doctrine, originating in the first century.

4.3.1.1 The Understanding of the Body in the First Century Milieu

Before this chapter turns to the view of the incarnation in the FG, the following section briefly surveys first century beliefs about the body and soul. Many Jewish-Christians in the first century Mediterranean world would have interacted with Hellenism (Platonism and Stoicism), the Jewish-Hellenism of Philo, and possibly Nascent Gnosticism. A brief survey of the beliefs encountered in these possible interactions will give a fuller background for the analysis of John 1:14 in section 4.3.1.2.

4.3.1.1.1 The Understanding of Body in the First Century World. Plato wrote extensively about the difference between matter and soul in *Phaedo* and *Apology*. In Platonic thought, the soul and the body are two distinct entities. The soul, being rational, is immortal, while the body is not. In fact, a soul might

inhabit several bodies (*Phaedo* 80e). Platonic thought includes the immortality of the soul and an interaction between divinity and mortal beings. In *Phaedo*, Socrates recounts his last day and his execution by the Athenian court for not believing in their gods and corrupting the youth. Because he is immortal, his execution is but a temporary inconvenience. Socrates explains how opposites are related through the pain of his chains and the joy of his release. So too, death should not scare a philosopher because it gives one the opportunity to live as a soul without a body (*Phaedo* 64). Like Stoic philosophy, Plato talks about the body and soul being clumped together. According to Plato, Socrates held that death was the separation of the body from the soul (*Phaedo* 64c), a belief echoed later by the Valentinians. They both also believed in the pre-existence of the soul (77d-e) based on forms or ideas of material bodies on earth. If the soul exists, it must have a form. The soul is the life of the body and the total opposite of death (105d). Although the body and soul do interact in Platonic thought, the Christian concept of the incarnation does not find a parallel.

Philo was born into a wealthy Alexandrian family. As Segal has pointed out, he was “typical of the new Jewish intellectual class, well attuned to Greek philosophical traditions, and explaining the Bible and Judaism by means of philosophical notions” (2004: p. 125). He was also an allegorist. His combination of Judaism, Platonism, and allegory would have made his writings a resource for Valentinians to draw from. Rather than speak of resurrection, Philo preferred to speak of immortality (ἀθανασία). For Philo, death meant immortality (*Leg* 117.2; 369.2). In *Sacr* 5, Philo explains that when Abraham left his mortal body (τὰ θνητά), the soul became his perfected body (ἀφθαρσίαν) and equal to the angels. That perfect body was made of the same material as the stars, whereas the material body was made of dust and only animated by the spirit or soul. Philo, like Plato and Gnosticism, sees death as being freed from the shackles of the body. He uses biblical passages, coupled with Platonic thought, to argue many of his points. Philo seemingly ascribed deity to Moses through his contact with the λόγος (*Qge* I.29, 40), but as θεός (god), most likely as a term of honor, rather than ὁ θεός (God, *Som* 1.229-230). Once again, Philo

does not offer any parallel to the FG's view of the incarnation. Rather, he sees the soul trapped in the body, much like Plato.

Stoicism also sees a distinction between the body (σῶμα) and the soul (ψυχή) (Long 2001: pp. esp 224-49). In Stoicism, nothing exists apart from a body, the σῶμα and in another sense the ψυχή (*Luc* 106.5). In fact, some spoke of a body as an animal (οὐσία ἔμψυχος αἰσθητική), much like the VSS (see Diogenes Laërt, SVF: II:633). The body is part of the material (ἕλη) of the universe and a part of god (θεός). In fact, everything in the Stoic universe is part matter and part god, which they described as πνεῦμα. A living body was described as grown together (συμφύας) (SVF II.366, 368). Bodies are held together by πνεῦμα. Stoics believed that all living things were compounds of a flesh-and-bones-body and a soul-body. As in Platonism and Valentinianism, death is the separation of the body from the soul (SVF II.790). However, the body suffers with the soul. Cleanthes, a Stoic philosopher from the third century BC, states, "...soul suffers with the body when the body is sick and being cut, and the body suffers with the soul; the body turns red when the soul is ashamed and pale when the soul is afraid. Therefore the soul is a body" (SVF I.518). This demonstrates that there is contact and interaction between the body and the soul in Stoicism, in some ways similar to the VSS's spiritual body of the saviour and their co-incarnational model. The creation of the soul begins with the heart, growing and in turn generating the other organs (SVF II:761). Then the soul is given life. Finally, rationality is supremely important to the Stoics' concept of human life, as opposed to animal life. In fact, what sets humanity apart from animals is the presence of logos. Iamblichus lists four qualities of humanity: (1) *phanatasia* (impression), (2) *synkatathesis* (assent), (3) *horme* (impulse), and (4) *logos* (SVF II.826). The first three describe animal or human qualities. The *logos* is the way all the other three operate (SVF II.61, III.169, III.71).

The Intertestamental literature also contains the theme of angelic manifestations in human form. The OT contains many places where the angel of Yahweh appears to people, sometimes in human form (Gen 16:7-14 appeared to Hagar, Gen 22:11-15 (Abraham), Ex 3:2-4 to Moses in a flame, Num 22:22-38, Judg 2:1-3, 6:11-23, 13:3-22). Although there is little scholarly

consensus on the identity of the angel of Yahweh, there is good reason to not take references to the angel of the Yahweh as Christophanie (López 2010: pp. 1-18). First, as in Ex 3:4 and the incident of the burning bush, it was common in other myths for a messenger to speak in the first person. A messenger of Yammu, in the Ugaritic Baal myth, is one such example. The messengers appear like fires, reminiscent of Ex 3, speak in the first person, and 'Ilu "responds as though Yammu is personally present when he is obviously not, which suggests that to see the *messenger* is *like* but not equal to seeing the *deity*..." (López 2010: p. 5). In Gen 44:9-10, Joseph's messenger switches from third person to first person demonstrating the fact that the messenger speaks as though he was Joseph. In Gen 19:15-26, the story of Lot, the heavenly envoys speak as if they are God. One of the more interesting angelic manifestations in the OT occurs in Judges 6:11ff. The angel actually appears as a man under a tree (v 11). In v 14 Gideon addresses him as "my lord" (אֲדֹנָי), a typical address for another man, but then as "my lord" (אֲדֹנָי), a typical address for God (*HALOT* 1:13; *BDB* 10-11). Yet, the author gives no indication that Gideon is not addressing the same person. Block believes that in Judges, "Yahweh/God and *mal'ak Yhwh* are freely interchanged" (1999: pp. 110-11). Seeing angels as divine would have presented a problem for a monotheistic culture, but the above explanation makes good sense of the OT references. Nonetheless, this could be an example of granting honor to a supernatural being.

Origen quotes *The Prayer of Joseph* (probably a first-century composition), in which Jacob calls himself "Israel, an angel of God and a ruling spirit," firstborn of every living creature, and the first minister before the presence of God. It is then revealed that this Israel descended to earth and "tabernacled among men" as the patriarch Jacob. In short, this text maintains that the patriarch Jacob was the earthly incarnation of the angel Israel, and it does so in terms reminiscent of Wisdom in Sir 24:8 and the Logos in the prologue to the FG. However, this is a unique text and there is no evidence that angelic incarnation of this kind was a widespread idea (Smith 1985: p. 699ff).

The concept also falls far short of God himself becoming incarnate, even as Logos.

The most common manifestation of angels in the Intertestamental Period was in human form but without becoming truly human. Philo describes three messengers who came to Abraham at Mamre (Gen 18) as angels “transformed from their spiritual and soul-like nature into human shape” (*Abr* 113). He adds that “though they neither ate nor drank they gave the appearance (φαντασίαν) of both eating and drinking” (*Abr* 118). Josephus takes a similar view when he writes that the three angels who came to Abraham “gave him to believe that they did eat” (*Ant* 1.197). In other words, heavenly beings only appear to have taken on flesh in these passages.

The NHL contains three main groups of books which can be characterized as: Valentinian, Sethian, and Thomasian. The Valentinian myth included a tripartite view of humanity. The hylics are material beings without hope. The spirituals have been predestined for reunification with the Pleroma. Finally, the psychics are caught in the middle and eventually join the saviour (see Table 3). Accordingly, the VSS describe the body of Jesus as both spiritual and psychic. The seeds Sophia scattered into the church, the spirituals, eventually become the spiritual body of Christ. Although the VSS seem to include a material body when describing Jesus, they often qualify the body as a garment or a carcass, influenced by Middle Platonism and Stoicism.

In Sethian Gnosticism, there is a hierarchy of feminine principles most likely rooted in Jewish Wisdom Literature: the ultimate saviour and exalted divine mother Barbelo and a lower figure, Sophia, who gave rise to Yaldabaoth, the creator of the material world. The creator wanted to confine Adam, so he created a physical body to contain him and placed parts of his mother’s essence in humanity. Finally, Epinoia, spiritual Eve, appears to enlighten Adam (mankind) with the knowledge of his association with Barbelo, the divine Protennoia (first thought). Ultimate salvation means reintegration and reunification of Barbelo’s essence with Barbelo. Barbelo appears to those of earth, unrecognized by the hostile world, as Logos, Seth, or Jesus. One of the most enlightening passages on the nature of Jesus in Sethian works comes

from the Second Treatise of Great Seth 51:20-24 where Christ evicts someone from their body and inhabits a “bodily dwelling” (ΝΟΥΗΕΙ ΝΩΜΑΤΙΚΟΝ). Sethian Gnosticism sees the nature of Christ through the lens of its myth, which demands a docetic Christ.

In Thomasian Gnosticism, Judas Thomas as twin mirrors the relationship between Jesus and Judas and a person and his spiritual counterpart. The Gospel of Thomas 47:20-24 presents Jesus as a divine sage, imparting secret knowledge to his disciples. The “body” (ΩΜΑ) is wretched, on which the “soul” (ΥΥΧΗ) should not depend (48:4-7). The author reiterates his point but replaces “body” with “flesh” (ΩΡΞ). Drinking from Jesus’ mouth, being enlightened by his teaching, makes one like him (50:28-30). Thomasian Gnosticism is primarily docetic: “I [Jesus] appeared (ΟΥΩΝΩ) to them in flesh” (38:21). Jesus is then amazed at how great wealth (himself) has made its home in such “poverty” (<ΜΝΤ>ΩΗΚΕ, referring to the flesh), a pejorative view of the flesh. Other places seem polytheistic, “Where there are three gods, they are gods. Where there are two or one, I am with him” (39:2-5). Other places appear almost pantheistic. In 46:23-28, Jesus explains that if one splits a piece of wood or lifts up a stone, he will uncover Jesus (46:23-28) (Grant 1960: p. 178). Most likely, the author was trying to communicate Jesus’ omnipresence. It very well could have been influenced by Col 3:11: “Christ is all and in all” (Doresse, Johnston & Mairé 1960: p. 376). The FG’s concept of the incarnation does not find any parallel in this type of Gnosticism.

4.3.1.1.2 ΣΑΡΧ in the FG. Irenaeus believed that the church’s foundational truth was Ὁ θεὸς οὐκ ἄνθρωπος ἐγένετο (*Haer* III:21,1). It is interesting that Irenaeus did not use σὰρξ, which the Valentinian Theodotus explained was not equivalent to a material essence but could be a nonmaterial form or idea (*Exc* 10). Barrett in his commentary on 1:14, acknowledging that the Gnostics made use of the gospel, asks whether the gospel keeps the humanity and divinity of Christ in balance. He concludes that it does not and explains that the author finished the final form of the gospel with the assumption that the humanity of Christ was understood (1978: p. 167). Yet the gospel does not ignore nor minimize the humanity of Christ. As will be discussed further in

chapter 5, the Valentinians were forced to redefine σάρξ in order to make the FG consistent with their myth. Irenaeus's use of ἄνθρωπος appears to offer proof that he understood σάρξ was being misinterpreted by the Valentinians. How was the term understood in the FG?

The prologue of the FG climaxes with the words ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο καὶ ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν (1:14). Cordero believes that the FG presents the humanity of Christ in such a way as to combat Gnostic teachers like Cerinthus. Cordero acknowledges that the author of the FG presents his interpretation of gnosis in opposition to the gnosis of Cerinthus, which denied the incarnation. The author of the FG presents Jesus as revelation of the Father, who made all things, took on flesh, and dwelt among us. He truly became human flesh. Cerinthus on the other hand, viewed Christ as appearing in the flesh (1998: p. 424). Combating nascent Gnosticism may have been a secondary or tertiary purpose for the prologue. From what little is known of Cerinthus from Irenaeus (*Haer* I:26,1), the author of the FG might have felt pressure to combat Gnostics like Cerinthus and his disciples. The fact remains that the FG does not avoid the humanity of Jesus. The Valentinians were still able to make use of the FG by distinguishing between Jesus and Christ, differentiating between the Logos of 1:1-4 and that of 1:14, and defining the σάρξ as non-material. The FG's author and his readers would have been well aware of Hellenistic and incipient Gnosticism's view on the nature of the body. If he truly wished to combat Gnostics, he could have easily explained what they believed and countered each point as later Johannine writings did (1 John 2:18-23; 4:1-6). At the same time, the FG provides overwhelming evidence that Jesus was not merely "God walking on the face of the earth" (Käsemann 1968: p. 75) nor "appearing to be one of them yet without himself being subjected to earthly conditions," (Käsemann 1968: p. 10) as Käsemann advocates. Rather, the author uses σάρξ as humanity in contrast to God. This would have recalled the OT idea of living flesh (בָּשָׂר, cf. Gen 6:17) for a first century Jewish Christian.

In 3:6, the FG contrasts the σάρξ with the πνεῦμα. The former signifies humanity and the latter the divine realm. This is clear from the whole pericope, contrasting the earthly and the heavenly (v 12). Overall, the FG uses the word

σάρξ twelve times (1:13, 14; 3:6 [X2]; 6:51-56 [X5], 63; 8:15; 17:2). While other NT occurrences generally carry a pejorative sense that at times embodies the sinfulness of humanity, σάρξ in the FG carries a neutral sense in regards to morality. The author prefers to use the common understanding of σάρξ as human flesh. Furthermore, the morally negative sense often given to the word by Paul could hardly be the sense in the FG, given the fact that ζωή comes through eating Jesus' flesh (6:51-56). The true sense of the word seems to be captured in its contrast with the spiritual realm. Therefore, the author intended to use σάρξ in its normal, unqualified, and unspiritualized sense, consistent with the LXX (eg., Gen 40:19; 1 Sam 17:44).

There exists a striking parallel between 1:14-18 and Ex 33. (Morris 1995: p. 92) Nicholls points out, "By the play on *skene*, *eskenosen*, St. John implies that Christ as the Word made flesh was the true *Shekinah*, the true presence of God with men" (1958: p. 19). The fact that God ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν would not have been difficult for a Jewish or God-fearing audience to believe in light of Ex 33; however, the claim that God σάρξ ἐγένετο would have been incomprehensible. While Bultmann refers to πνεῦμα as characterized by Vergänglichkeit and "in einen menschlichen Leib verkleidet" (1978: p. 10), the Logos became σάρξ. The sense of σάρξ in 1:14 does not allow for mere appearance, given the fact that it is further explained by ἐσκήνωσεν and the Exodus parallel. The FG also parallels the idea of σάρξ and birth in 3:6-7. Furthermore, in chapter 17, the Father gives the son authority over all σάρξ (v 2), and John explains what has been trusted to the son in v 6, namely ἄνθρωποις—a term commonly used to form a contrast between humans and divinity, most likely the reason Irenaeus preferred it over σάρξ (Danker & Bauer 2000: p. 80). This authority was not over those who seemed to be alive but were non-material ideas, but over humanity, namely σάρξ.

Perhaps the most important section for defining what the author meant by flesh comes in chapter 6. The Jews, who gathered at the synagogue in Capernaum to hear Jesus, rejected Jesus' assertion that they needed to eat his flesh (v 52). Yet Jesus uses this dialogue to illustrate that he is the perfection of Moses's gift of bread. In v 53 the title "son of man" is used, which

conveys Jesus' humanity. Along with eating his flesh, they also had to drink his blood, which points to the Eucharist. The switch between the verb "to eat" (ἐσθίω) and "to audibly chew" (τρώγω) emphasizes the experience of eating the flesh of Christ. Schnelle argues that the force of the language was intended to combat docetic teaching. This is possible. It is at least meant to convey the reality of Jesus' flesh. Within this passage, there are two levels of meaning. On the surface, the author points to the true bread of heaven, perfecting the former gift. On another level, he wishes to convey a future gift that the son of man will provide through his physical death (v 27) as the Passover lamb (cf. 6:4).

4.3.1.2 Exegesis of John 1:14

After analysing the heavenly Logos in the cultural milieu of the FG, it is clear that the prologue emerges from a context of Judaism influenced by Hellenistic and Jewish concepts of the Logos, the son of God, son of man, and Messiah (Painter 2003: p. 196ff). The above survey has demonstrated that the incarnation in John 1:14 was unique in its first century context (Dodd 1968: pp. 294-96). The incarnation in 1:14 does not find a parallel in Hellenism, which viewed men becoming divine and gods disguised as men, or in Judaism which did not include the idea of a hypostatized Logos or equality with the Godhead in the concepts of the son of God, son of man, or Messiah (Ladd 1974: pp. 237-42; Morris 1969: p. 119ff; Beasley-Murray 1989: pp. 9-10; Ridderbos 1997: pp. 28-30, 35). The following sections will analyse John 1:14 in order to demonstrate further that the incarnation there is without parallel outside of Christian Literature.

4.3.1.2.1 *Καὶ ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο (John 1:14a)*. The prologue makes a dramatic shift in 1:14. Until this point, the author has remained in the heavenly level of drama, but this verse marks the turning point for the rest of the gospel. The divine Logos became flesh. The Logos is not named as Jesus Christ until v 17. Thus, any discussion of Jesus' pre-existence would be to speak in proleptic terms.

The first (vv 1-2) and last (vv 14-16) strophes form an inclusio (Brown 1966: p. 1:30).

John 1:1	John 1:14
Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος	ὁ λόγος ... ἐγένετο
ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν	ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν
θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος	ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο

Table 1: A Comparison of John 1:1 and John 1:14

The FG sets the two levels of drama in parallel the heavenly and the earthly. The author begins with the Logos in the eternal state, with God, and God in nature. The author juxtaposes the pre-existent, divine Logos, who was with God in the beginning, with the temporal Logos, who became flesh and dwelt among his readers, or in a broader sense the world. This is consistent with the OT usage of σὰρξ, which commonly made a distinction between humanity and God (see Gen 6:12, 7:21; Deut 5:26; Ps 55:5). As Brown has pointed out, σὰρξ seems to have been associated with the incarnation for several decades. Rom 1:3 seems to make this association: τοῦ γενομένου ἐκ σπέρματος Δαυὶδ κατὰ σάρκα (1966: p. 1:31). Jesus was a human descendent of David, consistent with the Jewish expectation of the Messiah (2 Sam 7:12-16).

Käsemann disagrees with those that take the thrust of John 1:14 as God becoming flesh. Rather, he believes that the scandal should rather be seen as God dwelling with man (1968: p. 93). He believes that the FG espouses “naïve Docetism” (1968: p. 26) and holds that the incarnation of Christ in the FG indicates a change of location (1968: p. 20). In other words, Jesus should be seen as an alien in the world (1968: p. 64). He believes that John expresses “Jesus as God walking on the face of the earth” (1968: p. 75) and explains that “... the full work of divinizing Jesus falls to John, who has no mere human being but the Word of God incarnated, striding an inch above the ground” (Goulder 1977: p. 81). Jesus’ characteristics “represent the absolute minimum of the costume designed for the one who dwelt for a little while among men, appearing to be one of them yet without himself being subjected to earthly conditions” (1968: p. 10). He maintains that the purpose of the incarnation was to present God on the earth (1969: p. 158). The parallel between 10a and 14a lends

credence to his argument. Käsemann argues that v 14a says no more than 10a, “Ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἦν.” However, the author says much more than that the Logos’s presence was in the world. The verb γίνομαι and the designation σὰρξ both communicate that. The use of the verb does not mean that the Logos put flesh on like a garment or a carcass, as the VSS would advocate. Nor does γίνομαι mean that he merely descended from the heavenly realm to the earthly. The Logos was united with Jesus such that his mode of existence “can no more be abstracted from his humanity than the reverse” (Ridderbos 1997: p. 50). Translating γίνομαι as “became” does not fit the context due to the fact that the Logos remains the subject of the following sentences. As Barrett notes, it should also probably not be translated “was born” because ἐγεννήθησαν has just been used in this sense in v 13 and changing the meaning of the verb “would be harsh” (1978: p. 165). It could carry the same sense as v 6 where “John came being sent from God” (Ἐγένετο ἄνθρωπος, ἀπεσταλμένος παρὰ θεοῦ); however, given the same form of the verb is used in v 3, it very well might echo the creation language. In other words, just as all things were made through him, he also fashioned a body to incarnate into. Yet v 14 also connotes the earthly ministry of Jesus amongst the Johannine community. Therefore, the author may have intended the sense of v 6, where John came onto the earthly scene. Jesus came onto the scene in flesh as a man. This would certainly have shocked the author’s first century readers (Barth 1986: p. 85ff).

Bultmann understands the descent of the saviour as paralleling the gnostic Redeemer-myth (1971: p. 61). He is correct in seeing a connection between the FG and later gnostic sources and for seeing offense in the incarnation; however, there is good reason for seeing the FG influencing the Gnostics rather than the gnostic myth being adopted (übernommen) by the FG. First, the date of the FG precedes the NHL as well as the Mandaeans. Second, the Gnostics would have repudiated the Logos becoming flesh and the unqualified use of σὰρξ in John 1:14. As chapter 5 will demonstrate, the Valentinian myth included the incarnation of the saviour, but, understood within the Valentinian paradigm as well as exegetically in the VSS, it is always couched in terms such as taking on a “garment” or “carcass.” Bultmann states,

“Mit σάρξ wird bei Joh die Sphäre des Weltlich-Menschlichen im Gegensatz zum Göttlichen, als der Sphäre des πνεύμα, 3₆ 6₆₃ (vgl. Schon V. 13), bezeichnet und zwar nach ihrer Vergänglichkeit, Hilflosigkeit und Nichtigkeit (3₆ 6₆₃)...” (1978: pp. 39-40). The σάρξ of Jesus is transitory and illusory (1971: p. 62). Man mistakenly takes this form for life. Accordingly, the mistake of the Jews was that they debated Jesus’ flesh rather than listening to his words. In fact, his humanity is merely a “disguise; it must be transparent” (1971: p. 63). He believes that the FG describes John the Baptist as ἄνθρωπος in v 6 but intentionally used forms of σάρξ in vv 13-14 to show a contrast between God and human existence, consistent with the OT usage, which would have been clear to its Jewish-Christian audience.

Unlike Plato and the Stoics, for whom the body and the soul are clumped together, or the Valentinians and Philo who likened the body to a prison, the FG presents the divine Logos as becoming flesh and living a human life. The VSS include the former in a qualified sense but exclude the latter. As Keener has rightly observed, a docetic interpretation of the FG was inevitable as the FG began circulating in the Hellenistic world (2003: p. 1:407). The Stoics Diogenes and Epictetus believed that god was not of human shape (Diogenes, *Laertius*, 7.1.147) and not flesh but pure reason or intellect (Epictetus, *Discourses* 2.8.2). The Iliad contains numerous passages where a deity appears disguised as a human being (Homer, *Iliad*, 4.86-87, 124-124; 13.43-45, 69, 215-216, 356-357; 14.136; 16.715-720; 17.71-73; 20.79-81; 21.284-286; 22:7-11; 24.354-458). Juxtaposing the Hellenistic view with the FG’s view of the incarnation demonstrates the stark contrast between the two paradigms.

After the author explains the Logos’s proximity and relationship with the Father in the beginning and his role in creation, John 1:14 again uses the title Logos, moving from the cosmological level to the earthly level to which the Johannine community can relate. Rather than using εἰμί, the author uses γίνομαι. This signals for the reader that the Logos is taking on a new form and the context has dramatically shifted. The meaning of σάρξ has had a myriad of interpretations in this verse. As noted above, Bultmann saw it as illusory, and Käsemann held that v 14a says no more than 10a, “Ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἦν.” Instead,

the emphasis, as was stated earlier, seems to be on the juxtaposition of 1:1b and 1:14a. The author began his description of the Logos in his heavenly context and has now turned to his earthly context, and he continually intertwines the two throughout the body of the gospel. It is in the signs that the glory shines through the man, Jesus. The former (heavenly) gives a fuller context for the latter (earthly) for the Johannine community. Both statements are true, θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος and ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο (O'Day 2001: p. 522).

4.3.1.2.2 *καὶ ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν (John 1:14b)*. The use of the verb σκηνώω, would have brought to mind several OT images. Foremost on their minds would have been the Exodus story. The author's mention of the Feast of Tabernacles (σκηνοπηγία) in 7:2 is associated with the wilderness generation when Yahweh dwelt with his people. The theme of God tabernacling with his people continues in the Prophets (Joel 3:17, Zech 2:10, Ezek 37:27, 43:7) and finds association with Yahweh's covenant with Israel (O'Day 2001: p. 522; Brown 1966: p. I:14). The readers of the FG would have been well acquainted with Sir 24:8 as well: "The one who created wisdom caused her tabernacle (σκηνή) to rest; thus she was to dwell (κατασκήνωσον) in Jacob." Within the same chapter, Wisdom is associated with Torah (Sir 24:23) (Keener 2003: p. I:409). The law was given in Ex 33–34 and would have been associated with the wilderness generation. The reader would have also thought of the OT and Second Temple Judaism's expectation of a new temple for the messianic age (cf. Ezek 40–44; 1 Enoch 90:28–36; Pss Sol 17:30; 4QFlor 1:1–13) (Köstenberger 2004: p. 102). In Tobit 14:5, the author, most likely writing in the second century BC, expects two successive temples to be built after the exile, the first when Israel returns to the land and the second "when the times of fulfilment shall come." The *Sibylline Oracles* also includes a reference to a new temple built by the Messiah (3.294) and the Temple Scroll from Qumran (11QTemple) looks forward to a future everlasting temple (column 19.9–10, cf. 4Q171 3.11; 1QM 2.1–6; 7:4–10). Later in John 2:17–22, the author of the FG presents Jesus as the true temple (Hanson 1991: p. 43; Coloe 2001: p. 3). Here in 1:14b as well, Jesus is presented as the new temple (Schlatter 1948: p. 23). Whether the aorist tense of the verb carries an ingressive force ("began to

dwel”) or complexive (“dwelt” in his totality) is uncertain, and the author may have left it vague in order to convey both meanings (Köstenberger 2004: p. 41). Many parallels exist between the prologue and Ex 33 (see below) (Evans 1993: p. 79ff). The incarnation resulted in the divine Logos dwelling with his people. The verb ἐσκήνωσεν is closely associated with the noun σκηνή. It could be translated “he pitched his tent among us.” This implies a permanent or lasting residence. The Hebrew word אֶשְׂכְּנֶה (Ex 25:9) was translated as σκηνή in the LXX. The tabernacle was the place of God’s presence during the wilderness generation. MacLeod also rightly points out that the sound of the Greek word would certainly have recalled the Hebrew word אֶשְׂכְּנֶה, which was used in Ex 25:8 of God dwelling with his people. After Moses entered the cloud on Mount Sinai, he received instructions on how to build the tabernacle. Instead of the glory of God covering the mountain, it would now fill the tabernacle, which became the portable house of God (Childs 1974: p. 540ff).

Ex 33	John 1
<p>v7 How Moses used to take the tent and pitch it outside the camp.</p> <p>v9 ...the pillar of cloud would descend.</p> <p>When all the people saw the pillar of cloud...[they] would arise and worship.</p> <p>Thus Yahweh spoke to Moses face to face...</p> <p>“You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live.”</p> <p>“You shall see My back, but My face shall not be seen.”</p>	<p>ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν...</p> <p>καὶ ἐθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ</p> <p>ὁ νόμος διὰ Μωϋσέως ἐδόθη...</p> <p>Θεὸν οὐδεὶς ἑώρακεν πώποτε...</p> <p>ἐκεῖνος ἐξηγήσατο...</p>

Table 2: A Comparison of Ex 33 and John 1

The purpose of the tabernacle was so that God could dwell in the midst of his people (25:8). When the LXX includes the word σκηνή in conjunction with God and his glory, it speaks of the holy place of the cult or the temple in Jerusalem.

Although the LXX never uses λόγος with σκηνή, the FG's prologue clearly equates the Logos with God. Likewise, Paul instructs believers that their bodies are God's temple (1 Cor 3:16; 6:19) and that they are to participate together in "one holy temple" (Eph 2:21). John 1:14b takes that concept, applies it to the Logos, and adds the OT tabernacle and Shekinah in order to communicate that God's presence would once again dwell with his people and greater than that, he would dwell with his people in bodily form.

4.3.1.2.3 καὶ ἐθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ (*John 1:14c*). The final three pieces of 1:14 have more to do with the heavenly drama than the earthly but are included here to demonstrate that the earthly and cosmic dramas intertwine. Not only did the Word become flesh and tabernacle among humanity as a human being, the glory of the Father was revealed. While, the word σκηνόω carries the connotation of God's physical communion with Israel in Ex, it also ties in the previous phrase ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο. The δόξης κυρίου filled the σκηνή in Ex 40:34b, and the Logos became σὰρξ and dwelt (ἐσκήνωσεν) among us in John 1:14. The three uses of καί link the phrases σὰρξ ἐγένετο, ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν, and ἐθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ together (Wallace 1996: p. 673).

Therefore, all three of these actions are tied together with two correlative conjunctions, juxtaposing the human and divine natures of Christ as well as the cosmic and earthly levels of drama. When Christ became flesh, God took up residence on earth, not like Yahweh in Ex 25:8 but corporeally. Unlike the OT God who could not be seen, Jesus became human to bring the intimacy of his relationship with the Father to earth. The Valentinians use the prologue to show two distinct forms of the Logos, but the FG never splits the Logos into two. Carson notes that until this point in the FG, one might mistakenly think that the glory of Christ was clearly visible "...with a kind of luminescence that marked him out as no ordinary mortal, as nothing less than the Son of God" (1991: p. 130). Yet, as one reads further into the gospel, it becomes more obvious that this glory was not perceived by all. In fact, in 2:11 Jesus revealed his glory but only his disciples believed. The δόξα of Christ appears somewhat hidden in the

FG; however, he reveals the full character of God through his message and through the signs.

Out of the 185 uses of δόξα in the NT, the FG uses the word 35 times. With the prologue's emphasis on creation and 1:14b's on Ex 33 and God's tabernacle, the Jewish-Christian audience would have naturally connected δόξα with the OT concept of כבוד, a visible manifestation of God. Brown sees in this term God's ruling divinity made visible through the use of his power (1966: p. 1:503). This could be given to kings (Ps 8:5), men like Job (Job 19:9; 29:20), and things like a throne (Isa 22:23), a kingdom (Esther 1:4), chariots (Isa 22:18), and a temple (Hag 2:3, 9). It was often used of God (Ex 33:18, 22), often in contexts of the Exodus (See *BDB*, 458ff. Ex 16:7, 16:10, 24:16, 24:17, 40:34, 40:35; Lev 9:6, 23; Num 14:10, 16:19, 17:7, 20:6; cf. 2 Ch 5:14; 1 K 8:11; 2 Ch 7:1, 2, 3). The FG draws from the OT concept of כבוד, the visible manifestation of God's power. In 2:11, Jesus performs the miracle of turning water into wine in order to show his glory. In 11:4, the resurrection of Lazarus (11:4) revealed the glory of God. Both of these events intertwine the cosmic (glory) and earthly (flesh) levels of drama. Käsemann is missing half of the story. The divine Logos became flesh, the embodiment of God's temple, and revealed his glory as only the divine Logos incarnated as Jesus Christ could.

4.3.1.2.4 δόξαν ὡς μονογενοῦς παρὰ πατρός (*John 1:14d*). Käsemann would make 1:14c a reference to the Logos's divinity and power. However, this δόξαν is described as that which the μονογενῆς possesses. Kügler sees the prologue as establishing a father-son relationship and demonstrating that Jesus truly incarnated (1999: p. 46). This relationship attests to their unity, but Kügler, like Haenchen (1984: p. 392), distinguishes between the Father and the son and sees personal differences. Kügler argues that Jesus is the quintessential ambassador of the Father. He turns to Plato and Aristotle's views of unity and dualism as possible backdrops to John 10:30. Hurtado contends that the neuter form of one (ἓν ἔσμεν) "points away from taking 'the Father' and 'the Son' to be interchangeable labels for the same figure" (2003: p. 374). Thus, the author intended to distinguish between the Father and the son but included the concept of mutual indwelling (10:38). Paralleling 10:30 and 17:21-23, Hurtado

sees the concept of unity in the former as clarifying the unity of the disciples in chapter 17. Nereparampil writes, "... the Father and the Son have such a deep unity that they may be said to be one (Jn 10:30). Everything that the Father has is the Son's and everything that the Son has is the Father's (Jn 17.10; 16.15)" (1978: p. 20). As a familial unit, they are unified in purpose and authority, but they are discernibly distinct. This unified purpose and divine familial relationship demonstrate the heavenly origin of Christ, intertwining the earthly with the cosmic. This familial relationship is argued for by Grudem (1994: p. 1233ff) and Brown (1966: p. I:13). Grudem argues that the word *μονογενής* should be translated as "unique" not "only-begotten," contending that the word is made up of *μόνος* and *γένος* not *μόνος* and *γεννάω*. The author of Hebrews lends strength to this argument by describing Isaac as Abraham's *μονογενής* (Heb 11:17) even though Abraham also had Ishmael. As the Father's unique son, Jesus reveals the Father to the world. The author of the FG parallels these two concepts in 1:1-18 and 3:10-21. Both the FG and the VSS include the missional idea within the relationship between the Father and Christ. John 1:18 harkens back to the OT. No one has ever seen the Father except the son, who came to dwell (*σκηνώω*, v 14) and reveal the Father. Yahweh spoke to Moses and revealed something of his glory (Ex 33:21-23); Isaiah had a vision of God enthroned in the temple (Isa 6). Yet God sent the *μονογενής* θεός, and the intimacy that he had with the Father, to earth to reveal God the Father in a way only the son could do.

The word is used in the LXX for "only child" (Judg 11:34; Tob 3:15; 8:17). The idea of an only child in the first century and in prior centuries would have conveyed the idea of "irreplaceable" (Köstenberger 2004: p. 43). As noted above, in Heb 11:17, Abraham's son is called *μονογενῆ* even though he was not his only son. Therefore, it seems to carry more the sense of "one-of-a-kind." David and Israel are also referred to as God's firstborn or only son (cf. Ps 89:27; 2 Esdr 6:58; Ps Sol 18:4; Jub 18:2, 11, 15). Yet, the FG surpasses all of these by naming the divine Logos, who is God, *μονογενοῦς*. Jesus is one-of-a-kind and irreplaceable.

4.3.1.2.5 πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας (1:14e). The final part of 1:14, "full

of grace and truth,” echoes the Hebrew words *ḥesed* (loyal love/favour) and *emeta* (faithfulness/true). These terms are used in Ex 34:6 as well as in the OT in covenant contexts (cf. also Ps 86:15, 103:8, 145:8; Joel 2:13). When Moses came down from the mountain with the ten commandments (laws), his face “radiated” (*qan*) with light (34:35). Jesus is the true light (1:9), full of grace and truth. A Jewish-Christian audience would have surely seen these parallels.

Some translate the phrase as “fullness of the gift which is truth” (Moloney 2005: pp. 33, 45), taking *plēρης* as indeclinable and thus as a masculine nominative singular, modifying *ὁ λόγος*. This would be a distant reference (Ridderbos 1997: pp. 54, n117). Usually it is used followed by a genitive when indeclinable (BDAG, 826-27). Then it could be construed as modifying *αὐτοῦ* or *δόξαν*. Finally, as a feminine, it could modify *σάρξ*. The latter should be preferred because the flesh of Christ reveals grace and truth (Glancy 2005: pp. 107-36). The flesh of Christ tells a story (1:14, 18), which is essential for life (Moloney 2005: p. 231). In chapter 6, Jesus makes the point that his flesh is required for eternal life (6:53) but follows it with the phrase: “It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless.” Some believe that flesh in 6:53 should be distinguished from how flesh is interpreted in the rest of the book (Brown 1966: p. I:300). Others would rather take flesh as “a site of paradox throughout the Fourth Gospel” (Moore 2003: p. I:92). In other words, the flesh of Christ brings eternal life while the flesh of human beings is confined to the world (1:13; 3:6) and brings judgment (8:15) (Gleason 1999: p. 305).

4.3.1.3 Conclusion

The flesh of Jesus and the incarnation in the FG find no parallel in Hellenism, Judaism, or Gnosticism. The next chapter will analyse the flesh of Christ in the VSS. Although passages do exist in the VSS that speak of his birth and his body, an understanding of the Valentinian paradigm and its continual qualification of the body of Christ as a carcass or a temporary garment make a convincing argument against Bultmann’s view that the backdrop of the FG should be seen as the gnostic redeemer myth. As chapter 3 demonstrated, the

influence should be seen as beginning with the FG rather than with the belief system contained in the VSS. In John 1:14, Jesus became flesh. Paralleling the OT idea of the presence of God in the tabernacle, the author takes the OT understanding and localizes the tabernacle, the presence of God, and the Shekinah in the person of Jesus. While the Synoptics used the transfiguration to demonstrate that Jesus was the Messiah and the son of God (France 2007: pp. 642-43), radiating his own glory (Matt 17:2) (Bernardin 1933: p. 185) unlike Moses (Ex 34:29-30), the FG uses 1:14 (Brown 1966: p. I:34) and continually shows the glory of God through the signs, which are manifest within the human life of Jesus.

4.3.2 The Humanity of Jesus

The humanity of Christ has been quite controversial among scholars. Käsemann's view that the FG includes "naïve Docetism" (1968: p. 26) is rooted in the fact that the purpose of the incarnation was to present God on the earth (1969: p. 158) and his view that v 14a says no more than 10a, "Ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἦν." Bultmann bases much of his view of the nature of Christ in the FG on the Hellenistic divine man (*sēmeia* source) (1955: p. I:130ff) and is derived from the gnostic redeemer myth (*Offenbarungsreden* source). However, for both of these men to arrive at their conclusions, they must import their theology into 1:14 and explain away the incarnation (ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο). Even after explaining 1:14 in terms of their paradigm, they are still left with the gospel's portrayal of the humanity of Christ that follows. As 4.2.1 demonstrated, the FG does not paint the picture of a docetic or naïvely docetic Christ, but rather within the cultural milieu of its day, takes the current presuppositions concerning the heavenly Logos and shocks its audience with the incarnation: God truly became flesh. This section will analyse evidence for the humanity of Christ within the gospel in order to demonstrate that unlike the VSS, which portray Jesus' body as a shell in order to fit the nature of Christ in the FG into their myth, the FG presents a human Jesus, who is intertwined with the cosmic level of drama throughout the gospel.

4.3.2.1 Jesus' Earthly Origin

Like the gospel of Mark, the FG does not begin with a birth narrative. Nevertheless, John does not avoid Jesus' humanity. Jesus' birth is inferred in 18:37 when he stands before Pilate. Furthermore, he has a μήτηρ (2:1, 12; 6:42; 19:26) and ἀδελφοί (2:12). Likewise, in 6:42, the author makes a point to call attention to the fact that even the Jews knew that Jesus had a mother and father. They did not question his earthly origin. The author of the FG clearly intended Jesus' earthly origin to be assumed.

Additional proof of Jesus' corporeal nature occurs in several other passages. In 1:45, Philip explains to Nathanael that Jesus was the υἱὸν τοῦ Ἰωσήφ, which states Joseph's legal status as Jesus' father (Morris 1995: p. 144), and from τὸν Ναζωραῖον (cf. 18:5; 19:19). John implies that Jesus is from Γαλιλαία in 4:43-44 and explicitly states in 7:41 that those at the feast knew this to be true. On the other hand, the FG uses irony in 7:42 to communicate to its audience that the crowd did not recognize that Jesus was in fact the Messiah, τοῦ σπέρματος Δαυίδ, an allusion to Ps 89:4, and ἀπὸ Βηθλέεμ τῆς κώμης ὅπου ἦν Δαυίδ, an allusion to Micah 5:2. Readers of Micah would have expected a human ruler to come out of Bethlehem. Likewise, readers of Ps 89 would have also expected an earthly ruler descended from David. Jesus is also referred to as a Ἰουδαίος (4:9; 18:33-35), which demonstrates a culturally bound, and thus human, origin.

The FG repeatedly describes Jesus' origin as from Galilee (1:45-46; 2:1; 4:43-45; 7:1-9, 41-44; 18:5-7; 19:19). Yet the Jews in 7:40-44 question whether the earthly Messiah would come from Galilee. Many expected him to be born in Bethlehem. This is the case for Nathanael in 1:45 where he asked ἐκ Ναζαρέτ δύναται τι ἀγαθὸν εἶναι (Barrett 1978: p. 184; Haenchen, Funk & Busse 1984: pp. I:166-67; Lindars 1981: p. 118). These instances provide perfect examples of Johannine irony, but they also assume the humanity of Christ (Thompson 1988: p. 16). Through the criterion of embarrassment, the claims of origination from Galilee create a stumbling block to acceptance of Jesus as Messiah (Meier 1991: p. 168). Thus, their inclusion by the FG, even though they are objectionable, lend credence to Jesus' humanity.

It is also important to note that many of the passages that refer to Jesus' earthly origin occur in pericopes that demonstrate his heavenly origin. In chapter 4, the Samaritan woman refers to Jesus as a Ἰουδαῖος and John refers to Jesus as τὸ ὕδωρ τὸ ζῶν (v 11). Only the eternal God himself can promise everlasting life. Even in John 18:5, when the crowd with Judas says they are looking for Jesus of Nazareth and Jesus replies ἐγώ εἰμι, it seems that the author purposely phrased Jesus' response in such a manner as to recall the context of John 8:58. The author of the FG often uses misunderstandings and irony as rhetorical devices. In 7:42, the crowd gathered before Jesus expects a human Messiah from David's lineage, yet Micah 5:2 implies the Messiah's pre-existence. John uses the earthly origins of Jesus to bring those who are confronted with it to faith in his heavenly origin. While the references to Jesus' earthly origins occur less often than references to his divine origin, the purpose of the FG is to demonstrate that the Father sent the Logos from heaven in order to bring his message of eternal life, intertwining the cosmic drama with the earthly. The heavenly Logos became man in Jesus Christ.

4.3.2.2 The Human Nature of Christ

The fact that Jesus was truly human is also reflected in his emotions, actions, physicality, and suffering. The account of the death of Jesus' friend Lazarus demonstrates several levels of human emotion. Jesus was deeply moved (ἐνεβριμήσατο, 11:33, 38), which most likely shows his anger towards the improper reactions of those in the crowd (Morris 1995: p. 494), and troubled (ἐτάραξεν) over his friend's death. The verb ταραύσσω carries the sense of being disturbed or unsettled (Danker & Bauer 2000: p. 990). Jesus' emotions are also demonstrated by physical response, namely he wept. Jesus was also moved deeply in 12:27 and troubled in spirit (ἐταράχθη τῷ πνεύματι) after predicting his betrayal in 13:21. These moments of intense emotion point to his humanity.

The humanity of Christ is also demonstrated through his physical activities and interaction with the world. He wore sandals (1:26-27), attended a wedding (2:1-2), became tired and sat down (4:6), travelled (7:1), drank (19:30), and after death was wrapped with spices and laid in a tomb (19:38-42), which

implies that his body was corporeal and those that buried him believed that he was human. Jesus also interacted with the physical world. He created a whip, drove animals out of the temple, and turned over tables (2:15-17). Additionally, he was anointed with perfume (11:2-3; 12:2-3), washed the disciples' feet (13:3-6), and asked Thomas to touch his hands and side (20:27). Most of these could be said of a transcendent being or a shell, but the fact that he was tired (4:6) and thirsted (19:30) demonstrate that he took part in the human condition. His body was more than just a shell.

Schnelle believes that the miracles play an antidocetic role in the FG, demonstrating that he entered time and space. It follows that because faith comes after a physical miracle, the FG demands that Jesus appear in the flesh and opposes any docetic explanation (1992: p. 175). Therefore, Jesus' miracles should be seen as antidocetic. Schnackenburg concurs on the grounds that the signs are tangible (1980: p. I:525). The miracles manifest the character of God and also demonstrate a physical effect upon the world. Thompson believes that the: "Signs are *theological* as much as they are *christological*" (1991: p. 94). They not only confirm that God liberates and loves his children, but they also show that Christ contemporaneously holds divine and human natures. The author's two levels of drama intersect in the signs.

4.3.2.3 *The Suffering and Death of Christ*

4.3.2.3.1 *The Suffering of Jesus*. The FG describes the suffering of Christ at the close of his ministry in chapter 19. He was flogged (ἐμαστίγωσεν, v 1) at Pilate's orders. This was most likely the flogging recorded in Luke 23:13-16, which was Pilate's attempt at appeasing the Jews (Carson 1991: pp. 596-97; Sherwin-White 1963: pp. 27-28). This fits with the chronology of the Synoptics and as Carson states, "...it is hard to imagine any Roman prefect administering the *verberatio* before sentencing" (1991: p. 597). The flogging, according to Jewish law, was limited to forty times (Deut 25:3), but this was an extremely effective and painful means of torture nonetheless. They then placed a στέφανον ἐξ ἄκανθῶν upon his head and ἱμάτιον πορφυροῦν on his back, clearly mocking him (v 2). The emotional anguish cannot be discounted. Furthermore, they struck him on the face (ἐδίδοσαν αὐτῷ ῥαπίσματα, v 3). This could have

been a blow inflicted either by an object such as a rod or by a hand (Mark 14:65) (Danker & Bauer 2000: p. 904). Neither option befitted a king. Although the FG's account of Christ's crucifixion does not include any details of his sufferings, the author does include the fact that he bore his own σταυρόν (v 17) and said Διψῶ (v 28). Also, while some were tied to their crosses, Jesus was nailed (20:25), which certainly implies an enormous amount of pain.

One reason the FG may have left out the bloody and agonizing details could have been the audience's familiarity with those details. They had already been included by the Synoptics. It is also possible that the FG did not include the details in order not to distract from Jesus and the FG's emphasis on the Father's mission and the son's humble obedience (Carson 1991: p. 609). Just as the author explained in 3:14 and 12:32, for all who believed and will believe, Jesus allowed himself to be physically crucified. The FG's juxtaposition of Jesus speaking (19:26-30) and suffering demonstrate that he was still present in the body. Josephus describes the horrific nature of a crucifixion at this time in Roman history; he describes those that looked upon the cross from the fortress as being "seized with deeper dismay and with piercing shrieks exclaimed that the tragedy was intolerable ... the most pitiable of deaths" (Josephus 1981: pp. 7.6.4 §202-203). Although the FG glosses over much of Jesus' suffering, the clear implication is that he endured severe mental, emotional, and physical agony.

Christ's suffering also provided his disciples with a model of discipleship. Stagg explains: "The heavy demand was that would-be disciples accept Jesus for who he was, a Saviour but not a national deliverer (v 15), one who would suffer and who offered no discipleship safe from suffering" (1981: p. 198). Jesus explains this to his disciples in 15:20-21. The pruning of the branch may entail persecution, but the pruning leads to greater fruit (15:2).

4.3.2.3.2 The Death of Jesus. Jesus predicted his death early on in his ministry when he predicted the destruction of the temple (2:19), an example of the FG's use of *double entendre*. Again, in chapter 12, Jesus alluded to his death when he said καγὼ ἐὰν ὑψωθῶ ἐκ τῆς γῆς (12:32). The clearest proof of the physical death of Christ in the FG comes in 19:34 when his side was pierced

and blood and water (αἷμα καὶ ὕδωρ) flowed. There are several views concerning the blood and water pouring from Christ's side in this verse. Some believe this demonstrates the corporeal death of Christ (Morris 1995: pp. 724, fn. 92) and counteracts docetic teaching. Morris believes that this is a reference to the true life that the FG attaches to the blood of Jesus (1995: p. 724), and Carson points out that strands of Hellenism and Judaism at the time believed that the body consisted of two elements, blood and water (1991: p. 624). Others see a medically accurate explanation of Jesus' death here (Edwards, Gabel & Hosmer 1986: p. 1463). The FG very well could have picked up on earlier themes: life comes from the blood of Christ (6:53-56) (Dodd 1968: p. 428; Schnackenburg 1980: p. 3.294) and Jesus is personified as ὕδωρ ζῶν in 4:10, 11, and 14. Which view best captures the authorial intent is not obvious, yet the fact that the author intended to convey that Jesus truly lived and died is clear (Carson 1991: p. 623).

The FG's metaphorical picture of Christ's atoning death in John 6:51-58 may be the most important verse for understanding the humanity of Christ (Hurtado 2003: p. 395). Käsemann views the trial, death, and crucifixion of Jesus as merely a postscript that had to be included, so the FG included these events to force the victory of God into the passion of Christ (1968: p. 7). Yet this is merely speculative, denies the FG's description of the true incarnation and death of Christ, and ignores the redemptive significance of Jesus' death. The bread that Jesus gives is his σάρξ. This discourse not only looks forward to Jesus' death but backwards to his incarnation (Brown 1966: p. I:291). Jesus was identified with the Passover lamb in 1:29, 36 and gave his flesh for the sins of the world. Richter believes that 1:14 and 6:51 are the only verses that explicitly relate Jesus with σάρξ and demonstrate an anti-docetic tendency. He reasons that they must come from a later redactor (1977: pp. 88-119). Bultmann also attributes 6:51 to a later redactor (1971: pp. 218-22, 234-37) and does not believe that σάρξ is inherently Johannine (Lindars 1981: p. 266). However, v 4 places this chapter in a Passover context that harks back to 1:29; the participle ὑπέρ foreshadows the death of Christ on behalf of the people, a term which the FG will use repeatedly (10:11, 15; 11:50-52; 15:13; 17:19;

18:14); and σάρξ recalls 1:14 and the incarnation (Beasley-Murray 1989: p. 94). Furthermore, Carson comments: “It is hard not to think of the Suffering Servant (Is. 52:13–53:12), the more so since Isaiah 54 has just been quoted (Jn. 6:45) and becomes quite central to the thought of John 12” (1991: p. 295). In addition, the ideas in v 51 are included in v 27 and v 33 (Thompson 1988: p. 46). How the food gives life is explained in v 51—through the atoning sacrifice of the lamb of God. Solid evidence exists for the humanity of Christ and Jesus’ death in these verses.

4.3.2.4 *The Crucifixion of Christ*

The FG records the crucifixion of Christ in 19:16-37. First, Jesus carried his own cross (v 17a), emphasizing “the all-sufficiency of Jesus; he needed not help in effecting the redemption of the world” (Barrett 1978: p. 548). Only Luke and the FG make mention of this, but the author of the FG seems to have emphasized that Jesus himself carried his cross in order to highlight Jesus’ focus on his mission. The author continues the theme from 19:11 that Jesus laid down his life willingly. Between two men he was crucified, and a sign was hung that read Ἰησοῦς ὁ Ναζωραῖος ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων (v 19b). The term embodied in this title is most likely why Jesus was condemned and it serves as an important theological theme in the passion narrative (Barrett 1978: p. 549). The soldiers then divided his garments and threw dice to see who would receive his clothes. The author notes that this took place to fulfil scripture (v 24). This is a quotation from Ps 22:18, a human cry for deliverance by the psalmist. The author also states that Jesus’ words διψῶ were included in order to fulfil scripture. This is most likely a quotation from Ps 69:21, which is also a human cry for deliverance (Carson 1991: p. 619). As well as being a wordplay, this is another instance of Johannine irony. Jesus was thirsty and they offered him wine (vv 19-20), yet he was the ὕδωρ ζῶν. The author’s use of irony in key places such as this emphasizes and ties together important theological themes such as the fact that his crucifixion was consistent with his mission and message. One might argue that the author included διψῶ simply as an anti-

docetic feature. Yet the author consistently uses irony in order to drive home his intended message and to tie themes together into one cogent narrative.

The author records the end of Jesus' physical life in v 30b: παρέδωκεν τὸ πνεῦμα. On the day of preparation, the soldiers broke the legs of the two that were crucified with Jesus to quicken their deaths, but when they saw that Jesus was already dead, they did not break his legs (v 33). Instead they pierced his side (v 34). The referent for v 33 is not clear. Most likely John was either referring to Ex 12:46, Num 9:12, or Ps 34:20. The first two rely on the Passover lamb typology, while the third passage refers to Yahweh's protection of the righteous man. The former finds support in John the Baptist's words in 1:29 and the fact that John specifically states that the Passover was about to begin at the time of his crucifixion (19:31). Additionally, Barrett sees the hyssop (v 29), unbroken bones (vv 33, 36), and the blood and water (v 34) as the FG's way of demonstrating that this Jew was the Passover lamb (Barrett 1978: p. 557).

The Passover motif seems to have influenced the FG's description of the death of Christ. The Passover lamb was to be sacrificed without breaking any bones (Ex 12:46), bread and flesh were both to be eaten (v 8), it was associated with hyssop (v 22), and those that did not appropriate this sacrifice would be judged (vv 23-27). Likewise, Jesus' bones were not broken (19:33), the disciples were instructed to eat his flesh (the bread) in chapter 6, and chapter 3 singles out those that have already been condemned because they did not appropriate Jesus' work through faith in him (Kline 1975: p. 10). Lincoln understands vv 33 and 36b as combining the Passover motif as well as appropriating Ps 34:19-22 and the righteous man who redeems his servants so that they will not be condemned (2005: p. 481). The Passover motif implies that a righteous man will redeem his people by paralleling Jesus with the spotless lamb (Ex 12:5) that will serve as a sign of deliverance for the Lord's people (Ex 12:13, 21-23). In addition, Guilding notes that Ex 12:46 would have been recited during Passover through the use of the synagogue lectionaries, during the second year of a three-year cycle, by Christians of Jewish backgrounds. John 19:31 could be taken as a secondary reference to the Passover requirement to not let anything remain until morning (Ex 12:10) (Brown 1966: p. II:953). It could

also be a reference to Deut 21:22-23, but Jesus did not commit a sin deserving death. Concerning the date, Smith (1991) argues that during the first century, the Passover could mean the actual sacrifice or meal, Nisan 14/15, the festival offerings, Nisan 15-21, or Nisan 14-21. Thus, the author of the FG may have used this fluidity in order to link the Passover lamb with Jesus' crucifixion while still remaining faithful to the chronology of the Synoptics.

4.3.3 Conclusion

Jesus in the FG has a mother, brothers, and comes from Nazareth. While the VSS also include a reference to Jesus' family, these details are included within the Valentinian myth and thus should be interpreted allegorically. Jesus also demonstrates his humanity through his emotions and activities on earth. Finally, his suffering and death both argue for the humanity of Christ. As the Passover lamb, it would have been assumed that the sacrifice had to die and true blood had to be shed. Unlike the VSS, the FG includes the story of a real human being, who through his flesh proved that the incarnation was real.

4.4 Conclusion

Since the introduction of the gnostic commentaries on the FG by Heracleon and Ptolemy of Alexandria in the second century, the Christology of the FG has been surrounded by controversy. Much of this debate has involved the nature of Christ and the question of whether the FG presents a docetic Christ. This has made its way into modern scholarship with Käsemann's view that the FG is naïvely docetic (1968: p. 26) in that it expresses "Jesus as God walking on the face of the earth" (1968: p. 75). Others have swung to the opposite extreme. Bultmann opines that "the divinity of the figure of Jesus in John is completely lacking in visibility" (1955: p. II:42). He argues that events like the raising of Lazarus and Jesus' miraculous knowledge of Judas's betrayal (6:64, 70; 13:8) should be relegated to tradition or were included for apologetic reasons. According to Bultmann, the author of the FG has picked up on Mark's messianic secret (1955: p. II:47). While Käsemann believes that Christ's

humanity receives little emphasis, Bultmann concludes that the Father has hidden the divine nature of Jesus. Lindars interestingly points to the author's propensity towards drama to explain why Jesus at times appears superhuman, opening the door to docetic Christology, which Lindars insists the author would have "repudiated with horror" (1981: p. 54). Bock offers another, more balanced, perspective. He acknowledges that both Clement of Alexandria and Eusebius viewed the FG as unique. Yet the FG should not be viewed as merely a spiritual gospel (*EH* VI:14,7), nor can it be claimed that the humanity of Christ was left out of the FG because Matthew and Luke had already included the doctrine (*EH* III:24,13). Conversely, the FG should be viewed through *ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο*. He adds, "John is both a supplement to and capstone on the biblical presentation of Jesus' life" (2002: p. 407). The FG makes fuller the presentation of Jesus by giving "rest of the story." At times the disciples did not comprehend Jesus' words until after his death (John 2:22; 12:16; 20:9). He concludes, "They, like us, had to discover who God had revealed him to be." Although scholars commonly regard the FG as having a high Christology compared with the Synoptics, John's purpose was to supplement not supersede the other gospels. While Käsemann emphasizes the cosmic level of drama and Bultmann focuses on the earthly, the FG intertwines the two seamlessly from start to finish. Bock is correct in seeing 1:14a as the key to understanding the nature of Christ in the FG, for it is there that the author begins to weave his two-level drama together.

The FG begins at the cosmic level, describing the divine Logos, who was God, with God, and the creator. The first century reader would have viewed this as consistent with Jewish Literature's picture of Sophia and the Logos. This level of drama continues throughout the gospel through the son of God, son of man, and Messiah, each described quite similarly to how they would have been understood in their first century milieu where Platonism, Hellenism, and Judaism would have all contributed to first-century readers' presuppositions. The author's inclusion of 1:14a begins the earthly level of drama. The rest of the gospel contains the story of a man named Jesus, who ministered on earth and ultimately suffered and died. The FG gives no indication that Jesus was not

human. Nonetheless, if the author had never intersected these two levels of drama, the reader would be left with two stories: a cosmic story of the Logos and an earthly biography of a man named Jesus. The incarnation in John 1:14 as well as the evidences for Jesus' humanity sprinkled throughout the gospel gives context to the cosmic drama just as the heavenly level gives historical context to the earthly level. Without the flesh of 1:14 and the humanity of Christ throughout the gospel, the FG would be thoroughly Valentinian.

The fifth chapter will analyse the nature of Christ in the VSS, evaluating echoes of the FG. One of the clear attractions that the Valentinians found in the FG was this two-level drama (Reinhartz 2002: p. 99ff). The Valentinians believed in a cosmic myth of Sophia, which included the son descending to earth, taking on a bodily form in order to reunite the seeds of Sophia, the church, with herself in order to once again restore the harmony of the Pleroma. The cosmic level is much more pronounced in the VSS because the historical level was merely to show how harmony was restored in the cosmic level. The Valentinians were concerned with showing how the FG harmonized with their myth rather than trying to demonstrate how their myth corresponded with history.

The next chapter will analyse the nature of Christ in the VSS, which focus on the cosmic level of drama, the Valentinian myth, and explain the earthly in terms of Stoicism and Middle Platonism.

CHAPTER 5

AN ANALYSIS OF THE NATURE OF CHRIST IN THE VALENTINIAN SOURCES FROM THE NAG HAMMADI LIBRARY AND THE INFLUENCE OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL

5.1 Introduction

Irenaeus described the Valentinians' use of the FG as copious and believed the key to the FG's defense was the gospel itself (*Haer* III:11,7). Heracleon went as far as to write a commentary on the FG in order to reveal the Valentinian ideas supposedly contained in it. Combining this evidence with the arguments for similarities of language, which will be further explored in chapter 6, communities, and purposes, and the relative dating of the two bodies of literature, the possibility that the FG's teaching influenced the VSS seems extremely likely. Following chapter 4's analysis of the nature of Christ in the FG, this chapter seeks to analyse the nature of Christ in the VSS from the NHL, identifying similar concepts and assessing the possibility that they were influenced by the FG.

5.2 The Nature of Christ in the Heresiological Sources and the Early VSS

This section first focuses look at the movement's founder, Valentinus, in order to plot the trajectory that evolved into Valentinianism (cf. *Dial* 35:17). After analysing his writings, this section examines the Valentinians of the western and eastern schools in order to get a fuller picture of Valentinianism. This section then looks at the concept of mutual participation to lay a better foundation for the discussion of the nature of Christ in the VSS.

5.2.1 Valentinus

Valentinus was probably born ca. AD 100. As noted in 3.4.2.1, he was said to have been educated in Alexandria. While studying there, he was most

likely influenced by Basilides and the works of Plato (*Ref* VI:16). Thomassen summarizes the teaching of Valentinus by explaining that he taught Christianity “based on the idea of a ‘spiritual seed’ of transcendent origins” (2006: p. 491). First appearing in frg 1, the idea of a spiritual seed would permeate the VSS in the NHL. Irenaeus and Clement describe Sophia/Achamoth depositing the seed (*Haer* I:5,6 and *Exc* 53:2-5), and TT 105:10-35 depicts the Logos as the one depositing the seed. In addition, Theodotus explains that Jesus’ spiritual being makes up the “church of the spiritual seed” (*Exc* 17:1). Drawing on Paul’s metaphor that the church is the body of Christ, Valentinus taught that Jesus was incarnated to liberate his followers from their material bodies by mutual participation (see section 5.2.4).

Piecing together what Valentinus believed is a difficult task due to the lack of sources. The sources that remain include: (1) fragments preserved by Clement of Alexandria (frgs 1-6); (2) a short passage and a psalm preserved by Hippolytus (frgs 7-8); (3) books in the NHL that could have been written by Valentinus himself, namely the GT and TR; and (4) reports by Irenaeus (*Haer* I:11,1), Tertullian (*Val* 4:2; *Carn* 15:1), and others. In addition, Marksches believes that Hippolytus’s remark in *Ref* X:13,4 should also be attributed to Valentinus. Hippolytus said that Valentinus described the body as “a leathery garment” and “the corrupt human being.” Marksches refers to this as frg 11 (1992: pp. 270-275). However, Thomassen believes that it is just as likely that Hippolytus was referring to all Valentinians rather than just Valentinus most likely through the use synecdoche (2006: p. 424). On the other hand, Hippolytus seems to differentiate between the two (*Ref* VI:29:1), strengthening the possibility that this fragment was written by Valentinus himself. Furthermore, the GT almost certainly comes from Valentinus due to the quality and authority of the text. GT 31:5-6 affirms the ideas in frg 11, so if Valentinus did in fact write the GT, this makes it more likely that Valentinus was indeed the author of frg 11, or at least that his followers remained faithful to his doctrine. Furthermore, if Valentinus wrote the GT, he was certainly influenced by the FG, like Heracleon and the other VSS, as chapter 6 will demonstrate.

Layton believes that several things can be observed from the remains of Valentinus' writings: (1) biblically and gnostically influenced mythmaking; (2) Platonizing (Lampe & Johnson 2003: p. 295; Stead 1980: pp. 75-102, 112, 115); and (3) they are personal and visionary works (Layton 1995: pp. 221-222). Irenaeus wrote that Valentinus believed that Sophia gave birth to Christ, left him, and returned to the Pleroma (Thomassen 2006: p. 25; Marksches 1992: p. 375 n281). Marksches, however, does not believe that "Irenäus' Darstellung gebe eine einheitliche Quelle wieder, die Valentins Lehre beschrieb" (1992: p. 376). According to Tertullian, Valentinus believed that the aeons represented thoughts, sentiments, and emotions (*Val* 4:2; cf. *Haer* 1:11,1). While Valentinus most likely believed that the aeons were attributes of the supreme deity, Ptolemy believed that they were distinct beings. The GT seems to agree more with Ptolemy. The aeons seem to take on their own existence. For example, in GT 22:38–23:5, they receive revelation. Thomassen explains, "In the monistic vision of those texts, however, this difference can be said simply to represent different aspects of the same reality; the aeons *are* the attributes of the Father, at the same time as they are his children who need to be educated" (2006: p. 265). This dual existence is a common Valentinian theme.

In frg 3, preserved by Clement of Alexandria (*Strom* III:59,3), Valentinus explains that Jesus was "continent" or "disciplined" (ἐγκρατής) enduring all things, namely "he did not discharge the food-stuffs" (οὐκ ἀποδιδούς τὰ βρωμάτα), and the food was not "corrupted" (φθαρῆναι). If taken literally, this fragment would merely be a commentary on Jesus' digestive system (Layton 1995: p. 238). Yet an allegorical interpretation would be more likely within a Valentinian paradigm. The fragment should be understood in light of the Valentinian doctrine of mutual participation. The eastern Valentinians embraced this idea. Thomassen writes, "The 'food' metonymically represents the condition of material incarnation, death and corruption that the Saviour took upon himself descending into the world" (2006: p. 458). This represents a kenomic interpretation, consistent with other Valentinians: the saviour cannot be corrupted, but he can absorb the corruption of this world. Similarly, the author of

the TR states that the saviour “swallowed the visible” (ⲱⲙⲏⲕ ⲙⲓⲡⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲛⲉ̅ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ), a passage that could be interpreted in this light. Jesus’ “endurance” (ὑπομείνας) in frg 3 could also be seen as referring to the cross. This is consistent with IK 1:29, 5:35-37, and 12:17-18, where the same Greek loanword is used in the Coptic manuscripts, implying a direct connection. IK 1:28-29 asks the question, “Where [is the] patience ([Υ]ΠΟΜΟΝΗ) to measure faith?” This occurs in the context of the crucifixion (ⲁⲩⲮⲞⲧⲁⲩⲮⲞⲩ, 1:21).

Another phrase of interest, “Jesus effected divinity” (θεότητα Ἰησοῦς εἰργάζετο), which also comes from frg 3. This does not refer to Jesus’ own divinity, but “his role in the economy of salvation” (Thomassen 2006: p. 459). In other words, Valentinus’s words “Jesus effected divinity” describe the Valentinian doctrine of mutual participation. Jesus takes the corruption of humanity upon himself in order to liberate humanity, the purpose of mutual participation. Likewise, TR 44:21-33 explains that Jesus embraced both humanity and divinity in order to conquer death and restore the Pleroma.

Fragment 7 very well could be the closest parallel to the FG. He writes, “I saw a new born child, and questioned it to find out who it was. And the child answered me saying, ‘I am the Logos.’” As was mentioned earlier, Valentinus looked to visions and dreams to deepen his understanding. This vision describes such an experience.

As noted above, Marksches believes that Hippolytus’s comments in frg 11 came from Valentinus. Hippolytus begins by explaining that Valentinus taught that Jesus came from within the Pleroma to save the spirit within the inner man who had sinned. The flesh is not saved because it is a “leathery garment” and “the corrupt human being” (frg 11) (1992: pp. 270-275). Hence, the body of Christ had a dual existence: physical and spiritual (1992: pp. 83-117). In other words, like Theodotus, he believed in a spiritual body (*Exc* 15, 17, 26) and another form, but unlike Theodotus, who believed that Jesus also had a psychic body (*Exc* 59, 62), Valentinus believed Jesus had a material body. The concept of a psychic form was a later development.

A secondary mode of investigating what Valentinus believed is through the heresiologists. First, Irenaeus believed that Valentinus modified

existing Gnostic doctrine (*Haer* I:11,1). Some have suggested that this could have come from Irenaeus taking older heterodox sources that did not have Valentinus's name on them and ascribing them to Valentinus (Thomassen 2006: p. 24). There are several reasons why this could be a possibility. First, Irenaeus's purpose was to show that the Valentinians had disagreements amongst themselves (*Haer* I:11,1). Second, Irenaeus seems to argue for both unity (*Haer* I:1-9) when he talks about what the Valentinians believe, and diversity (*Haer* I:11,1) when he describes their many contradictions. Finally, Irenaeus is not clear whether, when he refers to the Valentinians, he means Ptolemaean Valentinians (*Haer* I:12,1) or Valentinians in general. It therefore seems better to follow Tertullian's report at this point.

Second, Tertullian believed that Valentinus's doctrine came from ancient ideas (*Val* 4:2). Tertullian reported that Valentinus invented a spiritual flesh (*Carn* 15:1). Thus, the doctrine that the body of Jesus was spiritual seems older than that of the western Valentinians, who believed there were two psychic components as well: the psychic Christ who was born from the Demiurge and the psychic body born through a special dispensation (*oikonomia*), which belongs to the cosmic realm (*Haer* I:6,1). The Valentinians held a soteriology of substitution where the saviour shared a body with the *salvandi* (the spirituals). Due to the fact that it is interwoven into Valentinian theology, it could very well have originated with Valentinus himself.

Ascertaining what Valentinus believed is difficult through direct textual evidence. Much of what is known about Valentinus comes through the heresiologists and the Valentinian tradition. Thus, determining the FG's influence on Valentinus presents challenges. The possibility that Valentinus wrote the GT and frg 7 are the only direct evidence of the FG's influence on Valentinus.

5.2.2 The Valentinians

Reports of Valentinians began in Rome with Irenaeus and Justin Martyr in the middle of the second century and ended with Epiphanius (ca. AD 347–77) (Koschorke 1981: p. 127), Emperor Julian in AD 362 (Koschorke 1981: pp. 132-133), and Ambrose of Milan on August 1, 388. Irenaeus refers to twelve

different Valentinian works, and Clement of Alexandria used several sources as well. Additionally, portions of Heracleon's commentaries and Ptolemy's *Ep* still remain.

Irenaeus said, "Certainly they confess with their tongues the one Jesus Christ, but in their mind they divide him" (*Haer* III:16,1). Hippolytus recognized three distinct Christs—the spiritual, the psychic, and the physical (*Ref* VI:31). For Theodotus, the body of Christ was the spiritual seed of Sophia. Christ put on this seed, which is the church or elect, when he descended (*Exc* 1:1). In *Exc* 21:1 as well as the TT, when the son, which had the Pleroma residing within him, revealed himself to the ΛΟΓΟΣ, the ΛΟΓΟΣ was liberated (TT 90:23–91:1). Yet the Valentinians refused to admit that the spiritual and human substances of Christ were brought together (*Carn* 15:1).

Theodotus in both *Exc* 1:1-2 and 26:1 backs up the Valentinian view that the saviour put on his body, the spiritual seed of Sophia and the "church of the superior seed," when he descended. Tertullian describes a Valentinian named Alexander who believed that Christ did not possess corporeal flesh (*Carn* 15–17:1). Alexander argued against other Gnostics (Mahé 1975: pp. 65-67), and he could very well have been arguing against eastern Valentinians and their mutual participation soteriology. Mahé notes, "Tout d'abord, elle peut contribuer à prouver que les adversaires de Tertullien sont des orientaux, et nous verrons ci-dessous que cette précision géographique a une certaine importance théologique" (1975: p. 31). Thus, Alexander would fit into the western Valentinian camp. Tertullian provides a rare glimpse of the debate that existed between the eastern and western schools. Mahé explains the Valentinian view of Jesus and Christ: "Nous commençons donc à comprendre en quoi Jésus et Christ désignent deux êtres différents: pour simplifier, en langage valentinien, ce qui est pneumatique s'appelle Jésus, et ce qui est psychique s'appelle Christ" (1975: p. 51). The pneumatic essence is Jesus, and the psychic substance is Christ. Thus, Mahé agrees with Irenaeus that the Valentinians divided Jesus and Christ, namely into the pneumatic and psychic natures.

Tertullian wrote in *Carn* 20 that Valentinus was highly influenced by Plato. Lampe and Johnson show several parallels between Platonic thought and the Valentinians. Concerning Valentinus, they explain, “It [*Strom* 4.89.6–90.2] contrasts the spiritual world of Ideas, the eternal immutable Being, with the changeable empirical world, subject to time and variability, the imperfect reflection of the spiritual world (cf., e.g., Plato, *Tim.* 37Cff)” (2003: p. 295). The western Valentinians, such as Heracleon and Ptolemy, certainly made use of Plato. Quispel writes, “L’origine platonicienne de cette théorie est évidente” (1966: pp. 76, 102-103). Ptolemy’s *Ep* echoes Plato in his use of εἰκῶν (image) in 7.7 and πατέρα κτλ. (Father etc.) in 3.2 from *Tim* 28E (Norden 1974: pp. 920-922, 547n2). Heracleon used the Platonic idea of φύσις (Langerbeck 1967: pp. 64, 71-75), or essence, which includes the idea of origin and development (Naddaf 2005: p. 1ff). While Heracleon and Ptolemy were from the western school, Valentinus himself was also certainly influenced by Platonic thought.

5.2.3 Two Schools

Irenaeus in his preface to *Haer* noted that Ptolemy himself was “an offshoot of the school of Valentinus” (*I Pref* 2) implying that the Valentinians were not completely unified in doctrine and practice. Irenaeus wrote, “Let us now consider the inconsistent teaching of these people. For as soon as there are two or three of them they do not say the same things on the same matters and the words that they use” (*Haer* I:11,1). Nevertheless, it is possible that when Irenaeus refers to the Valentinians, he is actually referring to their predecessors as well. Thomassen explains, “Irenaeus speaks about the Valentinians in an exclusive sense as being distinct from their Valentinian predecessors, and in another sense as including these predecessors, and he never makes a precise distinction between the two ways of speaking about them” (2006: pp. 15-16). Irenaeus may have known that nuances existed between different camps, but he used a “polemical shortcut” (Thomassen 2006: p. 16) and described them as inconsistent. It is possible that Irenaeus did not fully comprehend the varied nuances contained in Valentinian theology. He did describe the Valentinians as both unified (*Haer* I:1-9) and diverse (*Haer* I:11,1). However, Irenaeus also used the metaphor of a many-headed wild beast to

describe the school of the Valentinians (*Haer* I:30,15) (Logan 1996; 2004: p. 7). Perhaps he acknowledged their unity on some issues and their diversity on others.

Hippolytus recognized two schools, split into east and west (*Ref* VI:30) (Quasten 1983: p. I:261). Thomassen explains that the “split was caused when western Valentinians changed the soteriological focus from the spirituals to the psychics, attributing to the Saviour a psychic body and claiming that the spiritual was by nature impassable and not needing redemption” (see distinctions below, Table 3) (Thomassen 2006: pp. 492-493). Hippolytus states that Heracleon and Ptolemy were from Italy (western school), and they believed the body of Jesus was animal (psychic), but that he was raised from the dead. Ptolemy also represents the western Valentinians because he believed that Christ had a psychic body and that the spirit, or the Logos of Sophia, entered into him at his baptism (*Ref* 6:35,5). Marcus represents the eastern Valentinians as believing that Jesus had a spiritual body at birth (Rudolph 1977: p. 323). According to Tertullian’s account of Valentinian views, when the Demiurge created the world he separated two substances: animal and material (*Val* 20). Tertullian explained that the Valentinians believed that the flesh of Christ was psychic (*animalem*, *Carn* 10:1) but later wrote that Valentinus held to a spiritual (*spiritalem*) flesh (*Carn* 15:1). The lower Sophia, or Achamoth, created three natures (see Table 3): material (hylic) from her passion, animal (psychic) from her conversion, and spiritual from her imagination (*Val* 17). All beings in the lower Aeon are animals. The hylics are descendants of Adam and are animals (*GP* 71:22-29). The material nature has to do with the left, destruction, and carnality. The hylics or material-nature beings have no hope. The animal nature has to do with the right and will fall to either the material or spiritual sides at some point. In other words, the animal nature has two possibilities: salvation or destruction. The spiritual enters the animal nature when it enters into the world. Thus, Jesus received his spiritual form from Achamoth, the spiritual seed, and his animal (psychic) nature from the Demiurge. The latter was soteriologically necessary in order to save those that he came to redeem (*Val* 27-28).

Valentinian Tripartite Paradigm			
	Hylic	Psychic	Pneumatic
Descendants of...	Cain (<i>Haer</i> I:7,5)	Abel	Seth (<i>Exc</i> 54)
Nature	Inanimate (dead, GP 52:15-17), Irrational (governed by impulse, carnal, <i>Haer</i> I:7,5) Soul	Animate (alive), Rational (higher intellect able to control impulses, <i>Exc</i> 56) Soul	Spiritual (<i>Haer</i> I:5,6; <i>Exc</i> 53:2, 56; TT 105:29-35)
Form	Matter (<i>Haer</i> I:5,2; I:6,1), dust (<i>Haer</i> I:5,5)	Animal, breath of life (Gen 2:7)	Spirit
Produced by ...	Passion of Sophia/arrogance of Logos (<i>Haer</i> I:2,3; TT 78:29–80:11)	Repentance of Sophia/Logos (<i>Haer</i> I:4,1-2; TT 81:22–83:33)	Joy of Logos (TT 90:14–91:6)/Sophia's ecstasy in beholding Jesus and his angels (<i>Haer</i> I:4,5)
State	Darkness, Materialistic ignorance (TT 89:33; GT 22:17-18), slaves (GP 83:22-28)	Halfway between (<i>Haer</i> 119:20-21), needs education (<i>Haer</i> I:6,1)	Spiritual seed, has <i>gnosis</i>
Governed by ...	Predestination (TT 119:18-19; <i>Haer</i> I:7,5)	Free-will (<i>Exc</i> 55–56)	Predestination (TT 119:16-18; <i>Haer</i> I:6,2; <i>Exc</i> 56)
Destiny	Destruction (TT 88:23-25), illusory material will vanish (GT 2:35-36; TT 98:36)	Two classes: (1) Those that abandon lust, rewarded (good), (2) Affected by lust (evil, TT 120:20-29)	Reunification, cannot be corrupted
Class	Gentiles (GP 52:15-17)	Hebrews, Christians (TT 104:4–108:12)	Valentinians
Seeds in Matt 13 (<i>Exc</i> 53)	Fell along path (vv 4, 19)	Hesitate, fell among thorns (vv 7, 22)	Sown in good earth (vv 8, 23)

Table 3: The Valentinian Tripartite Paradigm

Irenaeus explains that the western school believed that the saviour was composed of three parts, preserving the pattern of the primary tetrad: spiritual from Achamoth, the psychic Christ from the creator or Demiurge, and a body endowed with a psychic nature through a special dispensation (*Haer* I:6,1). He was not able to suffer because he was invisible and inconceivable. Hence, when Jesus was brought before Pilate, his spirit was taken from him. The seed of Sophia was not capable of suffering because it was spiritual and

invisible. Those that witnessed the passion of Christ only thought that Christ suffered (*Exc* 62). As Hippolytus states, “the body of the saviour was spiritual” (*Ref* VI:35,7). Jesus appeared, according to the western Valentinians, as a phantom. The difference between the western and eastern school is that the eastern school believed in a spiritual body only and the western school believed in a spiritual and psychic body (Thomassen 2006: pp. 43-45).

Heracleon in his commentary on the FG sees Jesus’ descent to Capernaum (John 2:12) as an allusion to the saviour’s descent (κατάβασις) and incarnation. Heracleon interprets John 1:27 allegorically (*In Jo* VI:39,198); John the Baptist’s reaction is actually the bewilderment of the Demiurge at the advent of the saviour, and the sandal symbolizes the flesh. The οἰκονομία most likely refers to the incarnation of the saviour. Heracleon also makes the distinction in John 1:29 between the lamb, which is the body, and the one who takes away the sins of the world, which is the one who resides within the body. This distinction between the body, or Jesus, and Christ, the spiritual essence, is common in the VSS. Wucherpfennig writes: “Im Unterschied zu doketischen Modellen hat Christus nach Herakleon einen Leib, und dieser wird auch getötet” (2002: p. 218). The incarnation into a psychic body is consistent with eastern Valentinianism. Nonetheless, Wucherpfennig asserts, “Vermutlich unter Einwirkung der platonischen Metapher lassen sich aber wohl schon im Mittelplatonismus Ansätze einer Anthropologie nachweisen, die sich den Menschen nach einem Modell vorstellt, bei dem ein Kern von mehreren Schalen umgeben ist” (2002: p. 218). He also finds parallels in Paul where he speaks of an inner being (cf. Rom 7:22; 2 Cor 4:16) and thus believes Paul and Heracleon both to be vaguely connected with Middle Platonism (2002: pp. 219-220). Thus, Heracleon draws from not only the biblical accounts but also Middle Platonism’s belief that man is surrounded by a shell. He also interprets John 2:19-22 and the destruction of the temple as building the church and purifying the spiritual seed. He applies the resurrection to the building of the church. These interpretations are consistent with western Valentinian doctrine.

5.2.4 The Eastern Valentinian Concept of Mutual Participation and the Nature of Christ

The Pleroma and the aeons are important foundational concepts. Theodotus describes the pleromic world as consisting of the Father and seven pairs of aeons that exist to show the face of the Father (*Exc* 10:6). Yet he differentiates between the first (the son) and the other six. The first has his own form or nature (*Exc* 10:3). This first aeon not only has “form” (μορφή) but “shape” (σχῆμα) and a “body” (σῶμα) as well. He also functions as the mediator between the Father and the aeons. Furthermore, he is the perfect copy and model of what the elect should look like in the end (*Exc* 11:1) so that they can see God (*Exc* 11:2), a thought prooftexted by Matt 5:8. Theodotus sets up a parallel world where Jesus puts on flesh to be visible to those he came to save thus mediating for the church as he does for the aeons. He thus becomes the door to the pleromic world and reunification (*Exc* 26:1–27:6). After the psychic bodies are removed, Jesus brings them to the Pleroma (*Exc* 38:3). Thus, they become God’s body (*Exc* 27:6). This sets the backdrop for the idea of mutual participation.

In order to save the church, the saviour had to take on a body (TT 114:30–115:23). The incarnation is essential to eastern Valentinian soteriology. However, the body that the saviour received from the Logos is not the same as the body and soul (ΟΡΓΑΝΟΝ) in 114:9-22. Those that make up that body, or the church, are incarnated together with Christ. For this reason, the body of the saviour has a double meaning in eastern Valentinian theology (Thomassen 2006: p. 50). A perfect body exists at the incarnation. As Theodotus explained, the body was spun out of invisible psychic material in such a way that Jesus could be seen (*Exc* 59). Also, the Logos and his offspring have a body as well, which is spiritual and shared with the spiritual church. The spiritual body was an amalgamation of bodies: Jesus, the church, and Sophia (*Exc* 17), which is a Stoic idea (Sagnard 1948: p. 216). Jesus became flesh and suffered in order to be redeemed and co-incarnated with the spirituals (116:5–117:8). While the spiritual church is imperfect (TT 106:6-9; 123:3-22), the saviour is perfect (123:3-4). Salvation occurs through the saviour sharing the condition of those he came to save. For this reason, the saviour too needs to be redeemed so that

the spirituals can also be redeemed (125:8-11) and their true selves can be realized. TT 124:25–125:24 states:

Not only do humans need redemption, but also the angels, too, need redemption along with the image and the rest of the Pleromas of the aeons and the wondrous powers of illumination. So that we might not be in doubt in regard to the others, even the Son himself, who has the position of redeemer of the Totality, [needed] redemption as well, — he who had become man, — since he gave himself for each thing which we need, we in the flesh, who are his Church. Now, when he first received redemption from the word which had descended upon him, all the rest received redemption from him, namely those who had taken him to themselves. For those who received the one who had received (redemption) also received what was in him. Among the men who are in the flesh redemption began to be given, his first-born, and his love, the Son who was incarnate, while the angels who are in heaven asked to associate, so that they might form an association with him upon the earth. Therefore, he is called “the Redemption of the angels of the Father,” he who comforted those who were laboring under the Totality for his knowledge, because he was given the grace before anyone else.

The heavenly counterparts unite with their earthly humans, and thus the Pleroma is reunited with the spiritual church. The incarnation had to occur for redemption to be possible.

While the idea of mutual participation is a Valentinian concept, one can still find NT passages that could have easily been interpreted in a Valentinian manner. In 1 Cor 15:44, 50, Paul uses the phrase “spiritual body” (σῶμα πνευματικόν) and makes a contrast with the “natural body” (σῶμα ψυχικόν). Furthermore, he explains that the “flesh” (σὰρξ) cannot inherit the kingdom and the “perishable” (ἡ φθορά) cannot inherit the “imperishable” (τὴν ἀφθαρσίαν). The FG’s own words in John 17:20-21 could very well be taken to represent a Johannine version of mutual participation: “that they all may be one, as you, Father, are in me, and I in you; that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that you sent me.” Out of 25 occurrences of ἐν ἡμῖν in the NT, ten of them are Johannine. The phrase occurs twice in the FG, seven times in 1 John, and once in 2 John. However, the phrase is used most often in the context of obedience to God through loving his people and abiding in him. Likewise, in John 17, Jesus prays for unity so that the world will know that the Father did indeed send the son. Bultmann correctly points to v 20 as evidence that the unity is rooted in faith (1971: p. 512). Surely the vine metaphor from chapter 15 was in the mind of the author as well. The last verse of chapter 15 parallels the purpose of the unity in John 17:21: ἵνα ὁ κόσμος πιστεύῃ ὅτι σὺ με

ἀπέστειλας. In other words, this unity in John 17 is not a spiritual mixing of bodies like the Valentinian concept of mutual participation. The unity in John 17 is one of purpose and mission; the unity and love of God is to be visibly manifested so that Jesus' mission may be furthered through his disciples.

5.2.5 Conclusion

The doctrines of Valentinus and Valentinianism should be understood through the ideas of the spiritual seed and mutual participation. In Valentinian theology, the saviour descended from the cosmic realm, incarnated in some sense, died, and ultimately returned to the Father. It is not surprising that the Valentinians sought to fit their myth with the FG by emphasizing its cosmic level of drama and explaining the earthly in a Valentinian manner. As has already been discussed, there is no other parallel for the concept of the Logos descending to earth from the cosmic regions, becoming Jesus in bodily form, dying on a cross, and returning to the Father. The structure mirrors the FG so well, Irenaeus must indeed have been correct to say that the Valentinians made copious use of the FG (*Haer* III:11,7).

5.3 The Nature of Christ in the VSS from the NHL

There are four options for understanding Jesus' nature: (1) Jesus was a heavenly being in a form that allowed human contact; (2) Jesus took on a human form that complemented his heavenly form; (3) Jesus' divinity was limited at the incarnation (Franzmann 1996: pp. 25-55, 71-111); and (4) Jesus was simply a human figure (Bock 2006b: p. 97). The Valentinians would have found the first option the most congenial, but would have needed to qualify the statement. The Valentinians believed that Christ had a spiritual body but the psychic Jesus was a point of contention. The eastern concept of mutual participation may have been at the heart of the debate. This eastern doctrine demands a human body so that Christ could release the spirituals. Hence, Jesus took "shape" (διαπλασθῆ) in Mary's womb and left that body at the cross.

The nature of Christ in the VSS contains echoes of the FG and one concept directly links the VSS and the FG—the incarnation of the Logos. While

the Logos is sometimes differentiated from the saviour, the son, and Jesus, at other times they are one and the same. It is this key link, building on the foundation already laid above, which demonstrates that the nature of Christ in the FG influenced the VSS. While Platonism, Stoicism, and other books of the NT also influenced the VSS's view of the nature of Christ, there is no better parallel for a hypostatized, pre-existent, and enfleshed Logos than the FG.

5.3.1 The Origin of Christ

The VSS characterize Jesus as a spiritual being that descended from the Father and took on spiritual flesh. Yet passages exist that seem to indicate that Jesus had an earthly origin as well. The Valentinians employed allegorical interpretation in light of their views on the Pleroma, Kenoma, and Cosmos, which leads to the question: Should the earthly origin of Christ be understood allegorically or did the Jesus of the VSS from the NHL truly originate on earth? The following section will look at the heavenly and earthly origins of Jesus in those sources.

5.3.1.1 The Heavenly Origin of Christ

The GT describes Jesus, the ΛΟΓΟΣ, and the son coming forth from the Father (GT 16:34-35, 20:15-23, and 26:1-27). Ménard explains, “ἘΙ ΛΒΔΛ ΖΝ: ἔρχομαι ἀπό correspond au κατέρχομαι, le terme technique dans le valentinisme (cf. *SAdv. Haer.*, I, 14, 5; I, 138, 8-9 [Harvey]) pour designer la descente du Logos. Le Logos du Valentinien Ptolémée ne descend ni du Plérôme ni de l'Ogdoade, et il n'est pas le Sauveur, cf. K. Grobel, *The Gospel of Truth*, p. 35” (1972: p. 74). Yet, the ΛΟΓΟΣ came forth from the ΠΛΗΡΩΜΑ, and he is addressed as ΟΩΤΗΡ in GT 16:34-38. The missional purpose of the saviour's descent seems to parallel the FG (Attridge & MacRae 1985: p. 40). The purpose of the saviour's descent was “to become the fruit of knowledge” (ΔΑΦΩΠΕ ΝΝΟΥΤΑΖ ΜΠΙΟΔΥΝΕ) in a soteriological sense through his crucifixion (18:21-31) (Ménard 1972: pp. 50-51), to reveal (20:15-23), and to “instruct” (ΕΙΤΑΜΟ) them (psychics/spirituals) about the “Father” (ΠΙΩΤ, 30:30-37). Fecht and Ménard both suggest that the author begins describing the crucifixion in orthodox terms but will later turn to more of a gnostic interpretation (Fecht 1961;

1962; 1963: pp. (31) 103, (32) 319; Ménard 1970: p. 130). The saviour was the “mouth of the Father” (ΡΩϞ ΜΠΩΤ, 26:34-35) involved in the reception of the Holy Spirit, the revelation of the Father, and the aeons (see GT 16:34-35; 18:21-31; 19:19–20:23; 23:30–24:2; 26:1-27; 26:28; 30:30-37; 37:8-18; 40:28). Like the FG, the descent of the saviour in the GT emphasizes the saviour’s missional and soteriological purpose. Through his redemption, those that are ignorant of the Father will come to the knowledge of the truth—the purpose of the work (16:31–17:4). The GT makes it clear that Jesus, the ΛΟΓΟΣ, and the ΩΤΗΡ came forth from the Father. This revelatory purpose is not unique to the GT. The VE describes the descent with the purpose of revealing the Father (24:25-29) and anointing the spirituals (40:11-14).

The other VSS in the NHL also attest to the descent of Jesus. The GP describes Christ as bringing bread in order to bring life, which implies the incarnation (55:6-14; 73:23-25). It also serves as an allusion to the FG where Christ metaphorically became ὁ ἄρτος τῆς ζωῆς (see section 6.3.6). Jesus is also described as coming (εἰ) into the world at a certain time (GP 52:19) to unite Adam and Eve (GP 70:9-22) and to redeem and lay down his life (GP 52:35–53:14). TR 44:21-35 states that the son of God was “originally ... from above” (ΝΨΑΡΠ...ΠϞΑ ΝΤΠΕ). The word ΝΨΑΡΠ comes from ἀρχή, explaining that the saviour and the elect were originally from the perfect pleromic state (Attridge & MacRae 1985: p. 154). The GT 20:33 also applies this to Jesus’ descent from the Pleroma. The saviour’s mission was to restore the elect to the Pleroma, where they both originally (ΝΨΑΡΠ) resided (see TR 46:27; 46:35ff). Also, the phrase “imperishable [descends]” (ΤΜΝΤΑΤΤΕΚΟ [ϞϞε†ε λϞPHI], TR 48:38–49:9) seems to echo 1 Cor 15:53-54 and Heracleon’s explanation of John 4:47. Heracleon understood Judea as from above or signifying a higher level of spiritual insight. TT 116:1-5 also talks about the descent of Christ to unite with the church (Thomassen 2006: pp. 323-324). The church that unites with the saviour is the spiritual seed of Sophia. As in the FG, the descent of the saviour is purposeful. He descends from the Father with the purpose of returning from where he originated but only after his co-incarnation with the church. The ultimate purpose of the saviour demonstrates his heavenly origin.

The heavenly origin of Jesus can also be seen in his pre-existence; his spiritual form existed prior to his psychic form. The GT 16:36-37 describes the ΛΟΓΟΣ as in the mind and thought of the Father. The ΛΟΓΟΣ is an emanation from the Father (Grobel 1960: p. 35; Attridge & MacRae 1985: pp. 40-41; Ménard 1972: p. 43). The creation of the son in VE 22:31-39 also comes from the mind (ΝΟΥΣ) and thought of the Father. The will, mind, and thought of the Father are all related to the son (Thomassen 2006: pp. 237-238). He is the “firstborn” (ΟΥΨΡΠ̄ Μ̄ΜΙϞΕ, TT 57:18), and he “existed from the beginning” (ΨΟΟΠ̄ ΞΙΝ̄ Ν̄ΨΟΡΠ̄, 33-34). In TT 58:15-16, the son was “without beginning” ([ΔΤ]ΔΡΧΗ) and “without end” (<ΔΤ>ΖΔΗ). The Valentinians use both “first born” (ΟΥΨΡΠ̄ Μ̄ΜΙϞΕ) and “only son” (ΟΥΨΗΡΕ· ΝΟΥΩΤ). The former most likely translates the Greek πρωτότοκος (Attridge & Pagels 1985: p. 238). Irenaeus’ account of Valentinian views describes the firstborn, or λόγος, who created humanity (*Haer* I:12,3). Theodotus uses λόγος as a name for Christ, offspring of the aeons (*Exc* 33:1). The latter is most likely the same as μονογενής. Ptolemy uses it to describe the aeon νοûς. Jesus is also equated with the ΜΟΝΟΓΕΝΗΣ in VE 40:33-34. Furthermore, VE 24:25-29 refers to Jesus as the ΜΟΝΟΓΕΝΗΣ, which seems to be a Johannine idea that connotes the relationship between the Father and the son. As will be discussed in chapter 6, the Sahidic NT uses “the only son” for μονογενής in John 1:18. The pre-existent relationship of Jesus and the Father and the revelatory nature of the μονογενής can also be seen in the context of VE 24.

Jesus’ close relationship with the Father also implies his divine origin. The relationship between the Father and the son in the GT is characterized by oneness. In fact, the author notes that they are one—“the name of the Father is the Son” (ΠΡΕΝΔΕ Μ̄ΠΩΤ· ΠΕ ΠΩΗΡΕ, GT 38:7). Theodotus also referred to the invisible part of Jesus as the name or the only begotten son (*Exc* 26). By wearing his name in GP 53:8-10, the son actually became the Father. Jesus was the hidden name, and Christ was the revealed name (GP 56:3-4). Because the son shares the name and being of the Father and at the same time is in some sense distinct, he can be sent to reveal the Father. The son’s pleromic origin shows his close relationship with the Father. Another proof of their close

relationship is the use of the Trinitarian formula in VE 23:35-37: the son, the Father of all, and the mind of the spirit. The chiastic structure in TR 44:21-23 pairs son of God with divinity and vanquishing death (Attridge & MacRae 1985: p. 150; Layton 1981: p. 198n36). The relationship between the Father and the son signifies divine status. Death could not have been vanquished by anyone less than God. The heavenly origin of Jesus is demonstrated by his close relationship with the Father and the fact that they both share the same name. This shows that they both originated from the heavenly abode.

Until this point, the VSS have much in common with how the Logos and Sophia would have been viewed in Jewish and Hellenistic literature. However, neither would have seen the Logos as a separate entity from the godhead. Rather, the Logos was the transcendent God's approach to man. Furthermore, the fact that the Logos is equated with the saviour and Jesus demonstrates the possibility that the FG influenced the VSS's view of the nature of the Logos. The Logos as Jesus, with the parallels that will be analysed in chapter 7, was a strong argument for seeing an intertextual connection between the FG and the VSS.

5.3.1.2 *The Earthly Origin of Christ*

The VSS do include descriptions of Jesus' earthly origin. Yet, the references must be viewed through a Valentinian lens. While the VSS do describe Jesus as having an earthly father and mother and inhabiting a body, Valentinian theology and its allegorical hermeneutic should not be overlooked.

In order to understand the theology of the incarnation in the TT, the wider Valentinian theology must be taken into account. The Logos produced the saviour and its spiritual flesh (114:7-10). This flesh came from a seed (114:9-22). The spiritual flesh is shared with the church (122:12-18), but this is not the same flesh as the incarnation. For this reason, he can be described as "begotten" (ΝΑΧΠΑϞ, 113:31-34) and "unbegotten" (ΝΑΤΧΠΟϞ, 113:36-38) in the same context. In TT 115:9-11, Jesus was "conceived and born as an infant in body and soul" (ΜΜ[Δ]Ϟ ΔΥΘ ΔϞΤΡΟΥΜΕϞΤϞ̄ ΝΝΟΥΛΙΛΟΥ Ν-ϞΩΜΔ ΨΥΧΗ). He was conceived without "sin" (ΝΟΒΕ), "stain" (ΜΝΤΑΤΤΩΛΜ), and "defilement"

(ΑΤΧΩΖΜ, 115:15-17). Yet, in the same section, the saviour and the spirituals are said to have “mingled” with him (ΜΟΥΧΔ, TT 116:5). In other words, even in this passage, the idea of mutual participation and co-incarnation can be clearly seen. The TT was most likely written in the third or fourth centuries and evidences some softening in Valentinian doctrine (Edwards 1995: p. 78). Thus, the inclusion of a human body of sin in TT 115:9-11, 15-17 could have been included to make Valentinian doctrine more acceptable to Catholic Christians. Just as those that he came to save had a body and soul, Jesus did as well. Yet, the saviour is still the image of the unitary one and “the Totality in bodily form” (ΠΤΗΡĪ· ΚΑΤΑ ΠΙΩΜΑ, TT 116:28-30). Jesus and the spirituals have co-incarnated (116:5), yet he is indivisible and impassable (116:31-33). As Theodotus explained, the body of Jesus is the same substance as the church (*Exc 42*). Jesus put on the psychic Christ but was still invisible, so a visible body was spun out of invisible psychic material (*Exc 59*). Furthermore, the soul of Christ ascended to the Father while the body suffered on the cross (*Exc 62*). In some sense, Jesus had earthly origins, but as 5.3.2.2 demonstrated, the psychic substance that made up his flesh was worn like a garment—a temporary form.

GT 20:3-34 and 31:4-9 seem to describe a physical body in that it describes Jesus suffering (20:11), appearing (20:23), being nailed to a tree (20:25), dying (20:29), and appearing in fleshly form (31:5-6) but without being seen by “the material ones” (31:1). Thomassen and Segelberg both suggest that the latter passage might contain an allusion to baptism (Thomassen 2006: pp. 154-155; Segelberg 1959: p. 7). Thomassen believes that there is a connection with 1 Cor 15:53-54. Ménard, as well as others (Attridge & MacRae 1985: p. 88), believes that the phrase $\bar{\nu}\bar{o}\gamma\bar{c}\alpha\bar{p}\bar{\zeta}\bar{\nu}\text{-}\bar{c}\bar{m}\bar{\lambda}\bar{\tau}$ should be translated “fleshly appearance.” Yet, it would be a mistake to label this passage merely docetic. In some sense, Jesus had to have a physical body. As noted above, Theodotus describes the body as suffering apart from Christ (*Exc 62*) and fashioned out of invisible psychic substance (*Exc 59*). Jesus received the spiritual form from Achamoth, the psychic Christ from the Demiurge, and through a special dispensation (*oikonomia*) he received a psychic body that was

visible, tangible, and capable of suffering (*Haer* I:6,1). Hippolytus complicates it further. He explains that the western view was that Jesus was born with a psychic body and then joined with a spiritual component at his baptism. In the eastern view, he explains, Jesus was given shape (*διαπλασθη*) in Mary's womb. In other words, Hippolytus was attributing a psychic element to both eastern and western views. Thus, Hippolytus, assuming there was a clear-cut distinction between western (psychic and spiritual) and eastern theory (spiritual only), would only be describing the western school (*Haer* I:6,1) (Thomassen 2006: pp. 43-45). GT 31:4-9 ("For he [Jesus] came by means of fleshly form...") should be viewed through the lens of the eastern idea of mutual participation. This translation is consistent with *Ref* VI:35,7, where Hippolytus asserts that Axionicus and Ardesianes both belong to the east and "say that the body (*σῶμα*) of the Saviour was spiritual (*πνευματικόν*). For the Holy Spirit, that is Sophia and the power of the Most High—the art of creation—came upon Mary in order that shape (*διαπλασθη*) might be given to Mary by the Spirit (*πνεύματος*)." The VSS repeatedly refer to the body as a garment (IK 11:26-39; GP 51:20–58:10; 68:26-29). Yet, in some sense, Jesus was born into a physical form.

The GP states that Jesus had two fathers. The Father in heaven appears in GP 55:23-36, and Jesus' earthly father appears in 73:8-19:

Philip the apostle said, "Joseph the carpenter planted a garden because he needed wood for his trade. It was he who made the cross from the trees which he planted. His own offspring hung on that which he planted. His offspring was Jesus and the planting was the cross." But the tree of life is in the middle of the garden. However, it is from the olive tree that we get the chrism, and from the chrism, the resurrection.

The author of the GP most likely intended a deeper understanding than Joseph planting the tree that would ultimately be used to kill his son. Joseph in 73:8-19 most likely stands for the Demiurge and the wood then becomes Jesus' physical body (Thomassen 1997: pp. 268-269). Just as Adam had two mothers in GP 71:16, Jesus seems to have two mothers as well. GP 55:23-36 states: "Some have said that Mary conceived by the Holy Spirit. They are mistaken." This verse alludes to Luke 1:35, which was explained by Theodotus in *Exc* 60 as referring to the formation of Jesus' body. From GP 55:23-36, it can be presupposed that Mary was Jesus' earthly mother. In GP 70:34–71:21, the

“virgin who came down” would most likely correspond to Sophia in Valentinian thought. Mary provided the virgin, uncorrupted womb for his psychic body, and Sophia provided his spiritual body (GP 71:8). Thus, Jesus has two sets of parents—spiritual and physical. The Father and Sophia are his spiritual parents, and Joseph (Demiurge) and Mary are his physical parents. The purpose of his birth was to “rectify” (ἐκτινάξ[ε] τὴν πτώσιν) the fall (71:18-22) through bringing the spiritual seed and sharing it with the spirituals. Thus, the saviour did have both a spiritual and physical (psychic) body.

One important point to consider before this analysis moves forward is whether the Logos is equated with Jesus in the VSS. Theodotus explained that the spiritual flesh of the Logos is the saviour’s flesh (*Exc* 1:1). He gave flesh to the Logos (Thomassen 2006: p. 167). Ptolemy also saw unity between the Logos and the son (*Haer* I:8,5). If they are clearly connected through the incarnation, the nature of Christ in the FG evidently influenced the VSS. Are the Logos and the saviour seen as separate beings in the VSS? Thomassen argues that the VSS do not distinguish between Christ, or the son of Sophia, and Jesus, the saviour (1989: p. 233). Franzmann too does not see any differentiation between the Logos and the saviour in IK 3:26-28 nor in the GT (1996: p. 29). In GT 30:27-32 and 31:4-8, Jesus is linked with the Logos/son that came in fleshly form. Furthermore, they both have many similar activities. For example, they both reveal the Father (18:24-29; 24:14-16). They also both are connected with truth and have imperishable existence. Rewolinski believes that the issue is complex and imprecise. He writes: “While the stance of the GPh with regard to God and God as Father is relatively clear, the posture of the Son, the Logos, Jesus (and) Christ is as complex as the several designations used to describe the nature and function of the Son” (1978: p. 76). Theodotus may hold the key to this issue. He explained that there were two forms of the Logos. The Logos of John 1:14 was the lower form (*Exc* 19:1), and the Logos in John 1:1-4 would correspond to the higher, spiritual form. The GT clearly equates the Logos with the saviour in GT 16:31-38 and explains that he “became a body” (GT 26:4-8). Since the Valentinians viewed the saviour’s body as a shell, they were forced to distinguish between these two forms of the logos

in order to harmonize their myth with the FG. Thus, the differences can be explained through the Valentinians' desire to fit the FG into their myth, but the fact that the Logos, who became a body, is associated with a fleshly Jesus can only be explained through the prior influence of the FG on the VSS.

5.3.2 The Human and Spiritual Components of Christ

The understanding of Jesus' body should be seen as bifurcated: (1) Jesus' body was spiritual and originated outside this world; and (2) Jesus' body was in some sense psychic and originated both within the earthly realm and the heavenly realm. Much of the evidence for a bodily incarnation seems to contain language consistent with mutual participation. The nature of that dual reality will be explained in the next section.

5.3.2.1 Christ as Principally Spirit

Mutual participation is a key Valentinian doctrine that sheds light on the spiritual nature of Christ. Therefore, any discussion of Christ as principally spirit must include this concept. The co-mingling of bodies is found in *Exc* 17. Jesus and the church co-incarnated with Sophia. Jesus' body is made up of spiritual seeds, planted by Sophia (*Exc* 26) and carried on Jesus' shoulders back to the Pleroma (*Exc* 42). Thus, Jesus' spiritual body is made up of the church (*Exc* 12, cf. TT 116:5–117:8). The spiritual body of the saviour consists of the saviour and the elect.

In TT 113:31-37, Jesus is portrayed as one who was begotten and will suffer (33-34) and who was previously eternal, unbegotten, and impassable from the Logos. He "came into the flesh" (ἐν<ἐν>τὰρ ψωπε ἑνὶ σαρκί). Attridge and Pagels clarify this apparent contradiction by explaining that the author is distinguishing between the psychic Christ who suffered and the spiritual Christ who did not (1985: p. 433). Yet, they explain, "The *Tri. Tac.* approaches closer to orthodoxy than did Ptolemy by maintaining the unity of the Saviour and by insisting on the reality of his suffering" (1985: p. 433). As was discussed in chapter 3, the TT was most likely written late and evidences some softening of doctrine. The author of TT established the order between the psychics and hylics (98:12-23). They are associated with right and left respectively (see GT

a garment. He is also the image, a spiritual copy (ΣΤΙΚΩΝ) (Attridge & Pagels 1985: p. 441), of the unitary one (116:28-29) and the Totalities in bodily form (116:30). He forms a garment (91:35) wrapped around the Totalities (87:34). Jesus' spiritual reality, juxtaposed with his physical reality remains quite clear in the VSS.

Jesus did have a spiritual nature in the VSS, but it would be a mistake to differentiate between the spiritual and human components of Jesus in the VSS as simply spiritual versus corporeal. Jesus had two bodies, one spiritual and one psychic. Theodotus believed that the saviour had a spiritual body, the church (*Exc* 26). He was a mixture of spiritual bodies, namely the church, Jesus, and Sophia (*Exc* 17). The western view attributed a psychic body to Christ as well (*Exc* 59 and 61). Thus, Irenaeus's assessment that there were two forms to the saviour proves accurate (*Haer* 1:6,1). The spiritual came from Sophia/Achamoth, like Theodotus's spiritual seed, and the psychic consisted of the psychic Christ, born of the Demiurge, and the psychic body that came through a special dispensation (*oikonomia*), which was visible, tangible, and capable of suffering.

5.3.2.2 Christ as Primarily Human

GP 57:20-22 and 82:6-7 speak pejoratively of the nature of the flesh. The former describes the worthlessness of the body apart from representing Christ (Smith 2005: p. 26). The latter contrasts the "fleshly" (ΣΑΡΚΙΚΟΝ) with being "pure" (ΤΕΒΒΗΥ). This clearly has implications for their view of the nature of Christ. This following section will analyse the humanity of Christ in the VSS from the NHL. One important distinction should be made between various descriptions of the body of Christ. As was discussed earlier, Jesus' body is described as human and at the same time as the church, the spiritual seed of Sophia, and a group of angels (Thomassen 2007c: p. 793). However, the incarnation was essential in order to release the spirituals from their bodies.

TR 45:13-19 explains that Jesus "swallowed up death" (ΩΜΝΙΚ Μ-ΠΜΟΥ). The verb ΩΜΝΙΚ may translate the Greek word καταπίνω—the same verb that Paul uses in 1 Cor 15:54 and 2 Cor 5:4. Peel explains that the author of the

TR uses this phrase four times in order to “denote divine conquest over/destruction of death, corruptibility, ignorance. In this passage it especially underscores His role in transforming death into nothing more than a transition stage to the spiritual resurrection (cf. 44.27-29; 46.7-8)” (Peel 1985: p. 159). Nonetheless, one should not understand this passage as describing a literal, bodily death. The passage goes on to explain that the saviour transformed himself into an imperishable aeon, raised himself, and swallowed the visible. This passage contains clear indications that mutual participation is in view. The swallowing of the visible or the spirituals leads to being drawn to heaven. It is a spiritual resurrection (TR 45:40). This doctrine is also contained in Valentinus’s writings (*Strom* IV:13.89,1-3) (Haardt 1970: p. 254).

The TT states that he “came into being in the flesh” (ΤΑΞΨΩΠΕ ΖΝ̄ CΑΡΞ, TT 113:38), “became a man” (ΠΡΕCΨΩΠΕ Ν̄-ΡΩΜΕ, 125:1-2), was “incarnated in flesh” (ΕΝΤΑΞΨΩΠΕ ΖΝ̄ CΑΡΞ, 125:15), and “appeared in the flesh” (ΝΕΤΑΞΟΥΩΝΖ ΖΝ̄ CΑΡΞ, 133:16-18). Nonetheless, the flesh in TT 114:4-10 comes from the Logos and his spiritual children: “They say that it is a production from all of them, but that before all things it is from the spiritual Logos who is the cause of the things which have come into being, from whom the Saviour received his flesh.” Theodotus’s account in *Exc* 1 and 26 agrees with the author of the TT. The flesh, or spiritual seed, is distinct from the Saviour in TT 114:9-22. Furthermore, TT 114:30–115:23 seems to indicate a psychic incarnation—the saviour accepted their death and the smallness that they received when they were born in body and soul. Thomassen believes the Valentinians saw the saviour as superhuman but as in some sense experiencing a real incarnation (2006: p. 49). Accepting the smallness of those he came to save was soteriologically necessary. The VSS seem to at least nominally include the idea of a human body.

GT 23:30–24:2 describes the Logos as having a body. Both Schenke and Haardt believe that this should be taken as figurative (Schenke 1959: p. 40; Haardt 1962: p. 35). While the previous passages use the word CΑΡΞ, GT 26:8 uses the word CΩΜΑ. It states that “he became a body” (ΑCΠ̄ ΟΥCΩΜΑ). It is possible that the author had John 1:14 in his mind. Nonetheless, the translators

very well could have used $\text{C}\lambda\text{P}\xi$ instead of $\text{C}\omega\text{M}\lambda$ (Attridge & MacRae 1985: p. 77). $\text{C}\lambda\text{P}\xi$ is used 43 times in VSS (GT 31:5; TR 44:15; 47:5 [x2], 7, 9; 49:12; TT 114:1, 4, 10, 36; 115:37; 125:4, 12, 15; 133:16; GP 56:29, 30, 33; 57:12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18; 66:4, 19; 68:34, 35; 76:17; 82:28, 29; IK 3:37; 6:29; 10:27; 12:18, 31, 32, 38; 20:31; VE 32:35; 38:20, 36.). $\text{C}\omega\text{M}\lambda$ is used 35 times (GT 23:31; 26:8; TR 47:17, 35; TT 54:18; 66:14 [x2], 38; 74:14 104:17; 115:8, 11, 23, 30; 116:2, 26, 30; 118:34; 122:13, 31; 123:17, 21; 135:13; GP 56:26; 71:8; 75:21; 77:3, 7; 81:4; IK 6:30; 17:15; 18:34; 19:5; VE 33:33; 38:19). Three passages exist where the usages are juxtaposed: (1) TR 47; (2) GP 56–57; and (3) IK 6. In TR 47, $\text{C}\omega\text{M}\lambda$ is used in the context of corruption (47:19) and what has been left behind (47:34-35) while $\text{C}\lambda\text{P}\xi$ is used to explain that the spirituals received flesh when they entered the world, and they will receive flesh when they ascend to the aeons as well. In GP 56, the author describes the shell that holds the soul as the contemptible $\text{C}\omega\text{M}\lambda$. The author then contrasts that with the $\text{C}\lambda\text{P}\xi$, which Jesus instructed his disciples to eat, which brings life, and will rise in the end (57:10, 18). In IK 6, $\text{C}\lambda\text{P}\xi$ is described as “bound” ($\text{M}\text{OY}\text{P}$) in a “net” ($\lambda\text{B}\text{H}$) and the $\text{C}\omega\text{M}\lambda$ is described as “a temporary dwelling” ($\text{M}[\lambda]\bar{\eta}\Psi\omega\text{P}[\epsilon]$). Concerning the GT’s use of $\text{C}\omega\text{M}\lambda$, Williams suggests that the difference could lie in the fact that “Valentinus focuses on the body as the centre of human life and emotion” (1988: p. 95). Attridge and MacRae, as well as Ménard (1972: p. 126), believe that the use of $\text{C}\omega\text{M}\lambda$ could have been influenced by Plato (*Tim* 32D) (Attridge & MacRae 1985: p. 77). TR 47:18 juxtaposes $\text{C}\omega\text{M}\lambda$ with old age. Also, in GP 56, the soul is hidden in the $\text{C}\omega\text{M}\lambda$. The $\text{C}\omega\text{M}\lambda$ in IK is described as the place where the rulers live. Thus, the $\text{C}\omega\text{M}\lambda$ does seem to connote the concept of life (TT 135:10-17) and corruption, whereas $\text{C}\lambda\text{P}\xi$ is more of the inner being that will eventually rise. Likewise, GP 75:22-24 also seems to equate the living man with the $\text{C}\omega\text{M}\lambda$. Ménard sees the reference to $\sigma\acute{\alpha}\rho\chi$ in John 1:14 and pneumatic Christology of other writings were too primitive for the author of the FG. Because of this, he preferred to use the Platonic term $\sigma\hat{\omega}\mu\alpha$, which includes the idea of unity (1972: pp. 125-126).

Thus, $\text{C}\omega\text{M}\lambda$ denotes unity and the totality of the living, material man. $\text{C}\lambda\text{P}\xi$ seems to have more of a pneumatic or psychic connotation. If the $\text{C}\omega\text{M}\lambda$ has more to do with material man, GT 26:8 may indicate that the Logos truly inhabited a body. There is no parallel in Hellenism or Judaism. A hypostatized Logos is absent from both. Thus, the influence of the FG can clearly be seen in the Logos concept in the GT. Although the Valentinian myth calls for the Logos to repent and return to the Pleroma, creating the flesh of the saviour, Heracleon in *In Jo* 6:108, Theodotus in *Exc* 1:1, and GT 16:31-38 all equate the Logos with the saviour, clearly influenced by the FG. In fact, the Logos is incarnated in GT 26:4-8: “When the Word ($\psi\epsilon\chi\epsilon$) appeared, the one that is within the heart of those who utter it—it is not a sound alone, but it became a body ($\text{C}\omega\text{M}\lambda$).” This passage is further analysed in chapter 6.

GT 31:5-6 states that the son had fleshly form. Yet, consistent with eastern Valentinian theology, the GT states that he “stripped himself of perishable rags” ($\epsilon\lambda\text{q}\beta\omega\psi \bar{\eta}\text{M}\lambda\text{C} \bar{\eta}\eta\eta\text{I}\bar{\eta}\lambda\delta\epsilon \epsilon\tau\tau\epsilon\kappa\lambda\iota\tau$) and “put on imperishability” ($\lambda\text{C}\dagger \text{z}\bar{\eta}\omega\omega\text{C} \bar{\eta}\tau\text{M}\bar{\eta}\tau\lambda\tau \tau\epsilon\kappa\omega$, 20:15-39). Segelberg understands this as a reference to baptism (1959: p. 7). Ménard sees allusions to 2 Cor 5:4 (1972: p. 101). In this passage, Paul describes the release from this “tent” ($\sigma\kappa\eta\nu\epsilon\iota$), a temporary dwelling, as being “clothed” ($\acute{\epsilon}\pi\epsilon\nu\delta\acute{\upsilon}\sigma\alpha\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$). In fact, the “mortal” ($\theta\nu\eta\tau\acute{\omicron}\nu$) will be “swallowed” ($\kappa\alpha\tau\epsilon\pi\acute{\omicron}\theta\eta$) by life. The concept of swallowing the mortal finds an echo in TR 45:14-33, a passage that describes the saviour’s mutual participation. IK 5:30–6:34 describes the saviour as inhabiting a temporal or fabricated body, being crucified, suffering, and dying. Nonetheless, IK 12:22-38 (Bock 2006b: pp. 180-181) reads: “the flesh is an Aeon that Sophia has emitted” ($[\tau\text{C}]\lambda\text{P}\xi \text{OY}\lambda\text{I}\omega\eta \text{P}\epsilon \bar{\eta}\tau\lambda\text{z}\lambda\text{TCO}\phi\lambda$, IK 12:32-33). This corresponds to the spiritual body and finds a parallel in TR 45:13-19 where the context of swallowing death includes the idea of mutual participation. However, Jesus also has to be disguised by a “carcass” ($\psi\epsilon\lambda$, 12:37). Because of the doctrine of mutual participation, the saviour has a spiritual body but also must be a model to those that will be saved. Thus, he must take on a carcass, an animal nature (psychic) like those he has come for (*Val* 27). GP 57:2-7 states that Jesus was flesh and blood. Yet, he came in “stealth” ($\bar{\eta}\chi\text{I}\text{OY}\epsilon$,

(1985: p. 242). The spirituals “receive conception from the grace” (ἐν χάριτι ἡπιῶ ἐβολὰς ἑνὶ τῷ χάρῳ) through the kiss (Smith 2005: p. 34). In addition, in the Gospel of Thomas 108, when someone drinks from the mouth of Jesus they will become like him and what is in Jesus will be revealed. Thus, the kiss between Jesus and Mary “Magdalene” (Μαγδαλινη) in the GP most likely is a reference to the fact that she was elect or a spiritual and received teaching from the mouth of Jesus. Additionally, using “kiss” as a metonym for “teach” makes sense within an oral culture and between a disciple and her teacher in the first century.

As this section demonstrates, the human component of Christ in the VSS involves many complexities. This may be due to the debates between eastern and western schools as well as the apparent debate within the western school (*Ref VI*). Thus, the VSS in the NHL seem to side with the eastern school while at times displaying western tendencies. Due to the soteriological necessity of the incarnation, the authors of the VSS had to include the incarnation in some sense. One thing is certain; the body of Christ in the FG and the body of Christ in the VSS are two completely different concepts.

However, echoes of the nature of Christ in the FG can be seen in the VSS in the fact that the Logos became flesh (TT 113:38) and the saviour/son was Jesus (TT 87:1-17). No better parallel to the VSS exists than the FG. Although the Valentinians allowed for the incarnation, influenced by John 1:14, they continually qualified the humanity of Christ as a carcass or garment, a notion originating with Middle Platonism and Stoicism, and viewed the primary Logos as that of John 1:1 and his lesser form as the one who became a body in John 1:14 (*Exc 19:1*).

5.3.2.3 The Complementary Nature of the Human and Spiritual Components of Christ

The VSS portray Jesus as divine and at the same time taking on a human form. These two natures are often seen in isolation. Differentiating between the human and spiritual natures of Christ can also be difficult. At times both natures are seen working contemporaneously. This section explores the dual nature of Jesus in the VSS.

In GT 31:1-6, the mortals could not see Jesus in “his likeness” (ΠΕΦΕΙΝΕ, 31:2), so he came in “fleshly form” (ΝΟΥΓΑΡΞ ΝΟΜΑΤ, 5-6). The word ΠΕΦΕΙΝΕ refers to the psychic reality in the TT (Attridge & MacRae 1985: p. 88). Thus, this passage does not clearly deny a physical reality. Attridge and MacRae explain, “It seems likely, then, that the *Gos. Truth*, although it explores the spiritual and existential significance of the incarnation and passion of the revealer, does not deny the reality of that event” (1985: p. 89). While the translation of the phrase ΝΟΥΓΑΡΞ ΝΟΜΑΤ is debatable, the context still shows Jesus’ human and spiritual nature. The eastern idea of mutual participation and the necessity for the incarnation also bears this out. Yet the concept of mutual participation necessitates the material body being viewed as a temporary dwelling.

In TR 44:21-35, Jesus possesses the nature both of “humanity and divinity” (ΜΗΤΡΩΜΕ ΜΗ ΤΜΗΤΝΟΥΤΕ). The chiasmic structure demonstrates that Jesus was considered to have a human form as well as a divine essence. Peel believes that Matt 16:13-16 and “John 2:25, 27” might have influenced this passage. It seems more appropriate that Peel meant John 5:25, 27 since 2:27 does not exist whereas chapter 5 includes both “son of God” and “son of man.” When TR 44:21-35 is coupled with TR 44:14-15, Peel believes that the document teaches “an implicit docetism” (1985: p. 151). The phrase “he existed in the flesh” (ΕΦΨΟΟΠ ΖΗ ΓΑΡΞ) and the fact that he was “originally from above” (ΝΨΑΡΠ...ΠΟΑ ΝΤΠΕ, 44:34) implies the flesh was a temporary dwelling. The Middle Platonic idea of the pre-existence of the soul (46:38-47) and the world as an illusion (48:4-30) both contribute to this understanding. Furthermore, TR 45:13-31 includes the idea of swallowing and wearing Christ. The idea of mutual participation includes being reunited to the Pleroma (44:30-33). Thomassen explains, “The dual nature of the Saviour—a spiritual being with a material body—is characteristic of the soteriology of mutual participation” (2006: p. 83). Likewise, the GP describes Jesus on the cross and Christ’s departure (68:26-29), which is consistent with Valentinian theology (*Ref VI:35,7*). The spiritual had left the physical body. Similarly Plotinus, a third century Platonic philosopher, told Eustochius on his deathbed: “I am striving to give back the

Divine in myself to the Divine in the All” (Plotinus 2006: p. I:2). The release from the body was the saviour’s mission. The VSS in the NHL contain passages that couple Jesus’ divinity and his humanity. Nonetheless, the passages must be viewed in the context of the VSS as well as the broader context of Valentinian theology.

5.3.2.4 Conclusion

The influence of the FG on the human and spiritual components of Christ comes down to the incarnation of the Logos and the VSS equating the Logos with the saviour, Jesus. Apart from this key concept, the influence of the VSS could only be deemed Platonic, Stoic, and Christian. As chapter 4 has demonstrated, a pre-existent, hypostatized, and en fleshed Logos concept clearly occurs in the FG. Thus, the nature of Christ in the FG should be seen as directly influencing the VSS. Any deviation comes from other influences and Valentinian doctrine.

5.3.3 The Passion of Christ

The VSS clearly demonstrate that the Valentinian authors do not avoid the crucifixion, suffering, death, and resurrection of Christ. While these events happen to the saviour/Jesus, who is equated with the Logos, they take on a very different meaning from that found in the FG. The Valentinian myth has much to do with this difference.

5.3.3.1 The Crucifixion of Christ

There are several passages in the VSS that refer to the crucifixion of Christ. The GT states that he was “nailed to a tree” (ⲁⲮⲁⲘⲧⲧⲁ̅ ⲁⲮⲱⲉ, 18:24; 20:25). Ménard believes that this reference should be taken spiritually. In other words, Christ was enslaved to humanity, which would be consistent with the death of Christ in the VSS (1972: p. 88). Theodotus equated the cross with the boundary between the unfaithful and faithful and the world and the Pleroma. He pictured Christ as the head and Jesus as the shoulders carrying the seed to the Pleroma (*Exc 42*).

IK 5:30-32 and 13:25-37 both refer to the “cross” (CΤ&ΥΡΟC). The latter may be a Valentinian interpretation of John 19:26-27 (Pagels & Turner 1988a: p. 83). Both picture Jesus looking down from the cross. Just as the author of the IK describes the saviour as being “bent over the cross” (N̄T&ΥΡΕΚ<ΤC> ρΙΧN̄ ΠΕCΤ&ΥΡΟC, IK 13:27), Irenaeus uses the phrase “extended himself beyond the cross” (διὰ τοῦ Σταυροῦ ἐπέκταθέντα, *Haer* I:4.1). Irenaeus uses this to describe the impartation of Sophia’s form. Thomassen argues that these passages do not demonstrate that the saviour truly suffered or was incarnated. Rather, it should be viewed as an “emanation process” (2006: p. 187). This is compatible with the terminology of extension in IK (2:28ff; 8:34; 11:26–13:20I; 14:28ff). GP 63 explains the emanation process in the context of the crucifixion.

GP 63:21-24 describes Jesus as the Eucharist, and calls him “the one who is spread out” (ΠΕΤΠΟΡΨ’ ΕΒΟΛ). The Valentinian idea of mutual participation is in view. Through death, Christ divides himself and extends to those he will redeem (*Exc* 36:1-2) (Magnusson 2006: pp. 144-147). Thomassen writes, “The chief expression of this meaning of the incarnation of the Saviour is the crucifixion: at the cross the Saviour ‘extends’ himself into matter, symbolized by his spreading out the limbs of his body and letting them be fixed to a piece of wood” (2009: p. 182). The purpose of the extension is for the aeons to move from a spiritual potential to intelligent beings and for deity to manifest himself as a “oneness-in-plurality” (2006: p. 277). When the incarnation ended, the spirit was released from the body and returned to the spirit realm. Thus, the cross, like the boundary for the Sophia, separates the spiritual realm from the material realm. Theodotus’s writings bear this out as well (*Exc* 42). Moreover, one of Pleroma’s boundaries is called σταυρός (*Haer* I:2,4; 3:1,5; *Ref* VI:31,5; 34,7; *Exc* 22:4; 42:1). Thus, the Valentinian language of extension and spreading out should be viewed in the context of emanation and mutual participation.

VE 33:16-38 refers to Christ, the “cross” (ΨΕ), and the “nail wound” (ΨΩ<CΙΤ>). It also refers to his descent (33:34), which was necessary to rectify the situation with the aeons of the Pleroma, the exiled Sophia, and human

corruption (Pagels & Turner 1988b: p. 163). The perfect form ascends to the Pleroma. The body was detained by the limit, which is part of the suffering of Christ. Christ had a spiritual body before his incarnation (33:34). Jesus receives Christ in VE 39:29-30. This is consistent with the Valentinian division of Jesus and Christ. The crucifixion should be viewed as the division between the spiritual and physical. The cross is not the place where the saviour physically died and was then buried; he was released taking the spirituals with him to reunite with the Pleroma. Thus, the crucifixion should be seen as a marker between the world and the Pleroma (*Exc 42*).

The crucifixion in the VSS takes on the connotation of revelation, and the cross serves as the boundary between the spiritual and physical, but the Valentinians still retained the idea of redemption. The saviour had to be crucified in order to extend to those he came to redeem (*Exc 36:1-2*). The FG also sees the crucifixion as a redemptive act, but the Valentinians have redefined the cross in terms of a boundary to integrate it with their myth of reunification and final harmony within the Pleroma.

5.3.3.2 *The Suffering of Christ*

In the IK, Jesus “had [borne] the suffering” ([†]ΜΙΝΕ ἈΠΩΙΟΕ, 5:36), but the author refers to the body as a “temporary dwelling” (ΠΑΝΔΟΚΕΙΟ[Ν], 6:31). This may indicate that the temporary dwelling, or Jesus, may have suffered, but the spiritual body did not experience any pain. The son was sent after the spirituals and spread over the cross and proclaimed the edict of the Father. This language is consistent with the eastern idea of mutual participation and implies a spiritual body and a spiritual understanding of the suffering of Christ.

The GT states that he suffered (19:19–20:15). The context seems to demonstrate that Jesus truly suffered and the passion was revelatory not soteriological (Attridge & MacRae 1985: p. 58). GT 20:31 states that he clothed himself in perishable rags. Ménard does not agree with those who think this passage demonstrates the reality of Christ’s suffering. He explains, “Il dépasse aussitôt l’histoire et la figure du christ est à nouveau sublimée entre le réel et le symbolique. Le Christ-Jésus n’est que le mythe de l’Ursprung, de cette origine

céleste dont chacun doit reprendre conscience (p. 21)” (1972: pp. 96-97). Passages such as GT 20:31 and 31:1-6, where the material ones did not see the son, support Ménard’s theory. Theodotus also confirms this by stating that while the body suffered, Christ had already left (*Exc* 62).

TT 113:31-34, 114:35, and 121:11-14 also describe the Logos suffering. The latter states that the material ones persecuted Jesus (Attridge & Pagels 1985: p. 455). TT 65:4-17 describes the Valentinian idea of extension and spreading out. Thus, the suffering should be understood in this light since the ΛΟΓΟΣ is an emanation of the aeons (76:2-30). The “flesh” (Cαρξ) of Christ in TT 114:1-11 comes from the ΛΟΓΟΣ not the archons of the world. Irenaeus explains that the Valentinians believed that Christ had an “animal” or “fleshly” nature (ψυχικός) but was not “material” (ύλικόν, *Haer* I:5,6). Harvey argues that Apollinarian first believed that the body of Christ was heavenly and not truly earthly (Harvey 1857: pp. 52-53). He explains, “The doctrine of Valentinus, therefore, as regards the human nature of Christ was essentially Docetic. His body was *animal* but not *material*, and only visible and tangible...” (1857: pp. 52-53). Yet, as has already been demonstrated, this docetism has to be qualified. The incarnation did occur in some sense. The VSS do not affirm classic docetism, for in their system Jesus did truly inhabit a bodily form. The tripartite distinction in the VSS may have come from Paul’s language concerning the body in 1 Cor 15:44, 50. Paul contrasts the “spiritual body” (σώμα πνευματικόν) and the “natural body” (σώμα ψυχικόν). The “flesh” (σάρξ) cannot inherit the kingdom and the “perishable” (ή φθορά) cannot inherit the “imperishable” (τήν άφθαρσίαν). The Valentinian idea that the body is a shell is a familiar Platonic idea (*Gorgias* 493a; *Cratylus* 400c) (Plato 1963: pp. 275, 437). As this dissertation has already argued, the suffering of the Logos finds no parallel in Hellenistic or Jewish Literature. This concept must have been influenced by the suffering of Jesus, who was the Logos, in the FG. The fact that the FG did not elaborate on this aspect of the passion as much as the Synoptics provides opportunity for the Valentinians to make extensive use of the FG.

The suffering of Christ in the VSS either takes on the meaning of being detained in the earthly realm or is explained by dividing Jesus, the one in the body, and Christ (*Exc* 62). The fact that the Logos suffered provides a glimpse of the FG's influence in the VSS. Nowhere other than the FG is suffering associated, through Jesus, with the Logos.

5.3.3.3 *The Death of Christ*

The TR does imply the son of man's death (46:14-17). Yet, the use of the title son of man suggests a distinctively Valentinian understanding of his death, namely that the son of man would lead to the restoration of the Pleroma (Peel 1985: pp. 152-153). The son of man restored the spirituals to the Pleroma (TR 44:30-33) and unified the spiritual component of Christ with the Pleroma (Bock 2006b: p. 104). Bock argues that Christ's death was only spiritual in the VSS, but there seems to be a psychic component as well. Death is the separation of the inward members from the outward members so that one can take on new flesh (47:4-8) and a garment of light (45:30-31). This separation is consistent with Theodotus in *Exc* 62—the body of Jesus suffered while Christ was deposited in the Father's hand. A quotation from Paul is included in TR 45:25-28 (Thomassen 2006: p. 83n1). In fact this mixes two Pauline passages: Rom 8:17 and Eph 2:5-6. In the context of the TR, the spirituals are also "wearing" (φορεῖ) him. Some have seen this as a reference to the "kosmos" (κόσμος) rather than the saviour (Layton 1979: pp. 17, 56, 61; Layton 1981: p. 202n53), but Peel believes that it should be translated "him" rather than "it" (1985: p. 163). In TR 45, life comes from death (cf. *Phaedo* 71c-d). Death is necessary so that life can come out of it. This is consistent with the Middle Platonic dualistic ideas of the world of being and the sphere of becoming and corruption, as well as the idea of the intelligible and sensible worlds. Pagels explains this dual nature by stating that "the divine spirit within him could not die; in that sense he transcended suffering and death" (1979: p. 90). Through the act of "swallowing up death" (ὠμῆν ἄπμοϋ), the saviour provided a way to "immortality" (ἄτῆν ἄτμοϋ, TR 45:20-23). As 5.3.2.2 explains, this passage contains clear references to mutual participation and returning to the Pleroma.

Thus, this should be seen as a relocation from earth to the Pleroma and a release from the physical body.

GP 52:35–53:14 implies the death of Christ in the phrase “laid down his life.” GP 68:27-29 quotes Mark 15:34. The author’s interpretation of the Markan text includes the phrase “he had departed” (ἔβωλ ἑμ̄). Ehrman translates it “he was divided” (2003: p. 224) and explains that the author interpreted these words as if Christ had abandoned Jesus at the cross. Hence he was divided. This is consistent with Irenaeus’s assessment of Valentinian theology (*Haer* III:16,1). It also recalls Theodotus’s statement that while the body suffered, the soul of Christ was deposited in the Father’s hand (*Exc* 62).

TT 115:3-8 also speaks of the death of Christ: “Not only did he take upon [himself] the death of those whom he thought to save, but he also accepted their smallness.” It does not make a docetic qualification, but the term “smallness” (ψημ) in 115:6 was used of psychic beings in 89:9-10. The psychic Christ redeems the psychic beings, namely Christians (Thomassen 2006: p. 65). The psychic Christ was born from the Demiurge according to Irenaeus (*Haer* I:7,2), who also states that the psychic Christ suffered as a “mystery” or a “symbolic representation” (μυστηριωδῶς) (Thomassen 2006: p. 73). This implies that he did not truly suffer or die. IK 5:30-38 also speaks of the death of Christ. When combined with the statement that the body is a “temporary dwelling” (ΠΑΝΔΟΡΕΙΟ[N]) in 6:31, a Valentinian view of this event seems clear. Pagels sums up the data well: “None of these sources [VSS] denies that Jesus actually suffered and died; all assume it. Yet all are concerned to show how, in his incarnation, Christ transcended human nature so that he could prevail over death by divine power” (1979: p. 115). Yet the death of Christ is often couched in the language of mutual participation. Thus, one should not equate the death of Christ in the VSS with that of the FG. Death in the Valentinian paradigm includes division, swallowing, and departure. Pagels attributes this to the fact that the Valentinians were the first theologians and were working out the theological issues (1979: pp. 114-116). The Valentinians certainly existed in the first centuries of Christianity, but their views were not exclusively based on biblical accounts. There is no evidence that there was an early GT tradition that

influenced the FG as Barrett suggests (1982: pp. 62-63). On the contrary, the GT demonstrates that the author, most likely Valentinus himself, did not have a well-formed Valentinian theology at this stage (i.e. lack of Sophia and no split between Jesus and Christ). Rather, their theology competed with orthodox understandings of the death of Christ. On the other hand their constant use of the FG and other canonical books makes it clear that they attempted to explain their beliefs about Christ's death within a Christian framework.

The death of Christ in the FG is viewed as an event in time, which occurs for the sins of the world (1:29). The death of Christ in the VSS, while necessary, separates the inward and outward members so that a new form of flesh (TR 47:4-8) can be assumed. The difference lies in the Valentinians' desire to explain their chief myth, the ultimate harmonization and restoration of the Pleroma.

5.3.3.4 *The Resurrection of Christ*

The resurrection should be seen as restoration in Valentinian theology (*Exc* 7:5; 61:5-8; 80:1-2; *Heracleon* frg 15; TR 44). As has already been discussed, the other elements of the passion are consistent with this view. The Valentinian theology of the resurrection is described in the TR. It treats the resurrection of Jesus and the spirituals as if it has already happened (45:25–46:2; 49:16-30). The author of the TR writes:

“We suffered with him, and we arose with him, and we went to heaven with him.”
Now if we are manifest in this world wearing him, we are that one's beams, and we are embraced by him until our setting, that is to say, our death in this life. We are drawn to heaven by him, like beams by the sun, not being restrained by anything. This is the spiritual resurrection which swallows up the psychic in the same way as the fleshly (45:25–46:2).

The use of the title son of man in 46:14-17 suggests a Valentinian understanding of the death and resurrection. The son of man restores the spirituals to the Pleroma (44:30-32) (Peel 1985: pp. 152-153). Just as the son of man ascends in the FG, the same can be said of the son of man in the VSS. However, the FG describes Jesus ascending to heaven while the VSS describe him reuniting with the Pleroma. The resurrection is the separation of the inward members from the outward members (47:36–48:3). The mind and thought are separated from the body at death (Plato, *Timaeus* 28a). In Plato's *Republic* (IV),

the allegory of the cave demonstrates this connection. The cave represents the world of becoming and those outside the cave represent the world of being. In the TR, the resurrection is revelation of what is (48:34-35) and the filling of deficiency on the part of the Pleroma (49:4-5). The resurrection is spiritual (45:40–46:2) and came into being through Jesus (46:16-19). It swallows up the psychic and fleshly (45:40–46:2) and restores those that will be saved to the Pleroma (44:30-32). Peel believes that Pauline mystical language has influenced the author of the TR. The author’s “realized eschatology” has been influenced by passages like Rom 6:5-8, Eph 2:5ff, and Col 2:12ff. Paul speaks of this audience’s crucifixion and death as a figurative, past event. The Valentinians may have understood the death of sin and the new life in a corporate sense and thus applied it to their restoration with the Pleroma.

In the VSS, Sophia plants her spiritual seeds into human bodies; they are educated, baptized, and return to reunite with the Pleroma. (Thomassen 2006: p. 186) VE 33:16-38 implies the resurrection of the saviour in that the perfect form ascends to the Pleroma. The ascension also includes the idea of clothing himself again. GT 20:32 describes the saviour as “putting on imperishability” (ⲁϣⲓ ϩⲓⲱⲱϥ ⲛⲧⲙⲓⲛⲧⲁⲧ ⲧⲉⲖⲠⲐ), referring to the spiritual substance (Ménard 1972: p. 101). With this pneumatic state comes “knowledge and perfection” (ⲛⲓⲛⲟϥϥⲁϥⲛⲉⲙⲓⲛⲟϥϥⲱⲕ, 20:38-39) and the perfection ascends to the Father (21:8-11). Thus, the resurrection in Valentinian theology should be seen as release and reunification with the Pleroma.

The author of the GP also explains that in some sense Jesus was resurrected before he died (56:15-20). Thus, the resurrection in the GP and TR is present. Just as Jesus has already risen, so the spirituals must also rise. Layton explains that it “involves the ... laying aside of flesh, first by anticipation, then literally” (1979: p. 96). This resurrection is achieved through gnosis (1979: pp. 58-59). The author of the TR ignores sin, the crucifixion, and the future bodily resurrection. Layton finds that the concept of resurrection in the TR is “preeminently a category of the here and now...” Because of this, a future judgment is absent and the concept of a resurrected body does not exist, apart from becoming the body or the church. He concludes by admitting, “The author

has therefore dressed a quite non-Pauline theology in a thin and tattered Pauline garb” (1979: p. 211). The garb may seem less thin and tattered if it is recognized to be woven from both Pauline and Johannine ideas. The FG views eternal life as a present reality predicated on belief in Jesus. The Valentinian resurrection comes through knowledge of one’s origin and destiny. The Valentinians may have clothed their theology with both Pauline and Johannine concepts.

5.4 Summary

The Valentinian movement began in Alexandria and spread to Rome during the second century. Valentinus believed in “Christianity based on a ‘spiritual seed’ of transcendent origins” (Thomassen 2006: p. 491). Piecing together a complete portrait of Valentinus, or his followers the Valentinians, is impossible due to a scarcity of sources. Yet several ideas seem to be certain: (1) the eastern Valentinians believed in the idea of mutual participation (frg3); (2) the flesh of Christ was spiritual (*carnem Christi spiritalem comminisci*, *Carn* 15:1); and (3) Christ’s body was the spiritual seed of Sophia (*Exc* 1:1-2; 26:1). Although the Valentinians seem to have been divided from the very beginning, these elements directly influenced the VSS in the NHL. The western Valentinians added a psychic substance to the body of Christ. Because the Valentinians believed that their soteriology necessitated the incarnation in some sense, the Valentinian system had to include it. For this reason, Jesus had both a heavenly and an earthly origin, a spiritual and a corporeal body, and experienced the crucifixion, suffering, death, and resurrection of the body. The crucifixion, suffering, death, and resurrection include the distinctive idea of mutual participation.

The influence of the FG can be seen in the Logos taking on flesh and being called saviour, son, and Jesus Christ. At times this association is not as clear as it is in the FG, but the echoes of the incarnation of the Logos in the FG remain. Nonetheless, the Valentinians were not concerned with the earthly drama, so their focus remained on the cosmic. Even when the focus shifts to the earthly it is only because the cosmic demands it. Therefore, Jesus had to

take on flesh and die in some sense but only to be released from his bodily shell, co-incarnated with the church, and reunified with the Pleroma.

Chapter 6 looks at parallel passages from the FG and the VSS. If they have similar backgrounds and the Johannine incarnation of the Logos has influenced the VSS, echoes of the FG should be evident in the VSS when similar passages are compared.

CHAPTER 6

ECHOES OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL IN THE VALENTINIAN SOURCES IN THE NAG HAMMADI LIBRARY

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapters have laid a foundation for comparing the nature of Christ in the FG and the VSS in the NHL. Chapter three demonstrated that the FG and the VSS share a similar time-frame, language, purpose, and community. Chapters four and five looked at the nature of Christ in both the FG and the VSS with the latter pointing out their commonalities—where the Valentinians were influenced by the FG—as well as differences influenced by the Valentinian myth. If the VSS’s view of the nature of Christ was indeed influenced by the FG, one might expect to find echoes of the FG within the text of the VSS in the form of allusions and quotations. This chapter seeks to show that the VSS do contain echoes of the FG. This will be done by looking for similar content that surrounds the passages in view (context), and similar language within the passages, and then evaluating the parallels in light of Valentinian doctrine and hermeneutics, building upon Williams’s view of Valentinian Hermeneutics in the GT.

Bultmann believed that the FG depended upon Oriental (eastern) Gnosticism (1978: pp. 14-15). Dodd showed the flaws in Bultmann’s theory and wrote: “Alleged parallels drawn from the medieval body of literature have no value for the study of the Fourth Gospel unless they can be supported by earlier evidence” (1968: p. 130). The present author also disagrees with Bultmann and instead asserts that if one takes a first century date for the FG, it is more likely that the FG influenced the VSS. Furthermore, as will be argued below (section 7.3), the Valentinians did not show a well-developed system even by the time

the GT was penned. Thus, the author of the FG may have been aware of nascent Valentinianism but probably not of a well-developed system.

Williams (1988: p. 191) has shown how the FG influenced the GT. Did the FG have a direct impact on the other VSS as well? This chapter argues that the FG played a key role in the formation of the Valentinian authors' theology. However, ascertaining direct parallels between the FG and the VSS can be difficult due to the ambiguity of both the VSS and the FG. Furthermore, although the VSS and the FG share many of the same concepts, the reworking and reinterpretation of NT texts by the authors of the VSS make parallels even more obscure. In order to find allusions within Valentinian texts and show that they could have been influenced by the FG, similar contexts as well as language must be apparent. Even then, apart from several direct quotations, any final conclusions must be made in the realm of possibility rather than certainty.

In order to get a well-formed view of the FG's impact, this chapter begins by looking at the FG's use by Valentinus and the early VSS not contained in the NHL. This chapter then looks at the hermeneutics of the Valentinians so that parallels can be properly assessed. Finally, this dissertation analyses the FG's influence upon individual texts from the VSS in the NHL. Chapter 7 will evaluate these echoes, through a series of questions, to determine how confidently one can say that the FG's nature of Christ influenced the VSS.

6.2 Early Valentinian Sources

6.2.1 The Valentinians' Use of the FG

Although those that followed Valentinus certainly made use of the FG, whether the FG influenced Valentinus is debated. Concerning Valentinus's (ca. AD 100–165) use of the FG, Pagels writes, "Whether Valentinus himself knew and used the [fourth] gospel is uncertain" (1973: p. 24). However, Layton believes that Valentinus's "exaggerated statement about Jesus' digestion may be based on a New Testament story of Jesus' command to the people of Tiberias in John 6:27, playing upon the double meaning of the Greek verb 'to

labor for,' which can also mean 'to digest'..." (1995: p. 238). This is found in the Epistle to Agathopoda, which is preserved by Clement (*Strom* III:59,3).

Valentinus states: "He was continent, enduring all things. Jesus digested (ἐργάζετο) divinity" (1995: p. 238). The GP uses the bread of life theme from John 6, so Valentinus could have made use of it as well. This supposed allusion seems unlikely. The reference in the GP comes in the context of the eucharist while the context in Valentinus merely speaks of his digestion and corruption. The language of Valentinus seems to focus more on his lack of humanity than the eucharistic language of the GP.

Grant also believes that there is an allusion to the FG in Layton's Fragment A, which was preserved by Hippolytus (*Ref* VI:42,2): "For Valentinus says he saw a new-born babe, and questioned it to find out who it was. And the babe answered him saying that it was the Word (λόγος). Thereupon, he adds to this a certain pompous tale, intending to derive from this his attempt at a sect" (1995: p. 231). Grant believes that this is a reference to John 1:1. He writes that "it can be imagined that the Logos is the Logos of Jewish speculation and the Fourth Gospel" (1961: p. 141). Marksches disagrees with Grant's assessment (1992: p. 212). Nevertheless, the text does show evidence of belief in a hypostatized, corporeal form of the Logos. This was probably a mixture of influence from the FG's prologue and the Synoptic accounts of Jesus' birth due to the reference to "a new-born babe."

Irenaeus (*Haer* I:1,1-3) believed that a gnostic myth, other than the GT, was written by Valentinus, and it is striking that five of the six names in the primary Ogdoad occur in the vocabulary of the FG's prologue (Pater, Aletheia, Logos, Zoe, and Anthropos). The FG most likely influenced the names of some of the other aeons as well (Paracletos, Pistis, and Agape). These aeons emanate from the Pleroma in order to fulfil the will of the Father. For example, the truth in GT 26:28ff becomes the mouth of the Father, bringing revelation. This revelation includes the idea of light (GT 36:11-12). It is no wonder Irenaeus said that Valentinus and his followers used the FG extensively. Major themes in the FG became emanations of the Father in Valentinus's theology. Since these are all part of the mission of the Father in the FG, they fit perfectly as

emanations in Valentinian theology. Evidence of the FG's influence on Valentinus is thin outside of the GT, which was most likely written by Valentinus himself, and the tradition that he began.

Concerning the western Valentinians, Hillmer writes: "The Commentaries of Ptolemaeus and Heracleon from the second generation of Valentinianism, give the earliest clear indication of the acceptance of the Gospel of John as canonical and worthy of verse by verse comment" (Apr. 1966: p. 172). Although it is difficult to measure the scope of influence the western Valentinians had upon the orthodox, Irenaeus's reaction was clearly one of indignation. He wrote that the Valentinian use of the FG was full of "perverse interpretations and deceitful expositions" and that they "lead away captive from the truth those who do not retain steadfast faith in one God, the Father Almighty, and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (*Haer* 1:4,5). It is surprising that Irenaeus never alludes to Heracleon's comments on the FG, even though his commentary is the earliest exposition of the FG that remains today and was a Valentinian exposition. Ptolemy uses the FG's prologue in his *Ep*, with a direct quotation from 1:3. Concerning the eastern Valentinians, Poffet notes that Theodotus cited from the FG *ad litteram* (1990: p. 315). The fragments contained in Clement of Alexandria (writing ca. AD 160-170) (Hillmer Apr. 1966: p. 97) contain interpretations of John 3:8; 4:24; 10:9-12, 10:30; 11:25; 14:6; and 19:36-37 (Culpepper 1993: p. 117). There is therefore no question that the Valentinians made extensive use of the FG prior to the VSS in the NHL. It is not known if this began with Valentinus or one of his followers, but the Valentinians clearly revered the FG. Before looking at parallel passages it would be useful to see what can be gleaned from other sources about how the Valentinians modified and made use of the FG.

6.2.2 The Hermeneutics of the Valentinians

As noted already, many believe that Valentinus wrote the GT. If that is true, Valentinus certainly knew and used the FG. In Williams's work on the GT, she points out many probable parallels between the FG and the GT. Yet, as was stated above, due to the way the author used sources, parallels are difficult to assess. Assuming that Valentinus wrote the GT, Williams observes

eight ways that Valentinus changed NT sources to fit his own purposes: (1) denaturing of imagery (i.e. Jesus becomes the Word); (2) replacing Jesus with the Father; (3) changing God to Father; (4) enhancing the relationship between the Father and the son; (5) deemphasizing eschatology; (6) increased emphasis on predestination; (7) shifting from ethical to intellectual; and (8) redefining salvation in terms of origin (1988: p. 191). Several of these will be seen in section 7.3. In addition to the features noted in Williams's work, Valentinians share six distinctives: (1) an emphasis of cosmogony; (2) an anthropology characterized by three types of people: hylic (matter), psychic (animal), and pneumatic; (3) a concurrent emphasis on soteriology; (4) an allegorical method of interpretation (Keefer 2006: p. 27); (5) the idea of mutual participation; and (6) Jesus' spiritual body and the seed of Sophia. The Valentinians sought to show that the FG was compatible with their myth. Hence, they used texts from it in order to support their own doctrines. When combined with the way in which Valentinus, and his followers, reinterpreted texts, this makes finding parallels between the VSS and the FG a difficult task.

Valentinian hermeneutics employed three levels of interpretation: pleromic, kenomic and cosmic. All three can be illustrated from Ptolemy's exegesis of the prologue. Ptolemy's pleromic exegesis (the Pleroma includes the spiritual realm of aeons) concerns the members of the first Ogdoad: Theos, Archē, and Logos (*Haer* I:8,5). According to Ptolemy, the aeons Logos and Zoe were responsible for creation. In *Exc* 45:3 Ptolemy provides a kenomic interpretation of John 1:3 (the Kenoma being the void where the lower Sophia was sent when she was cast out of the Pleroma), in which this passage describes Jesus being sent from the Pleroma to the Kenoma in order to deliver the lower Sophia from alienation and ignorance. Ptolemy also provides a cosmic interpretation of the same passage, according to which the saviour created the world (Cosmos) by means of the Demiurge (*Ep* 3:26).

Thus the seeming discrepancies in Ptolemy's exegesis stem from different paradigms (Pagels 1973: p. 31). In other words, the apparent inconsistencies should be viewed through Valentinian interpretive methodology. Likewise, varied interpretation amongst Valentinians does not necessarily

involve contradiction when viewed through their nuanced hermeneutic. GP 67:9-12 may shed light on Valentinian interpretation: “Truth did not come into the world naked, but it came in types and images. The world will not receive truth in any other way.” The Valentinians valued gnosis and images. Those that could not understand the pleromic and kenomic interpretations were not spirituals and as such were not meant to understand these deeper truths.

6.3 Parallel Passages in the FG and the VSS

Williams compared individual passages from the GT with many texts from the FG (1988), arguing for many probable parallels. Barnstone and Meyer describe the GT as: “a deeply Gnostic tractate, seminally influenced by Johannine literature...” (2003: p. 239). Nonetheless, some are not convinced (H. Koester 1990: pp. 245-246 n6). This may be due to the way the VSS tend to take familiar concepts and make them unfamiliar (Attridge 2005: p. 248). Much of this is due to the Valentinian hermeneutic as well as their desire to filter everything through their myth. The argument against the FG’s influence on the GT has been strengthened by Barrett’s article, which looks at similarities in language between the FG and the GT. His work demonstrates that the terms love, salvation, life, light, and darkness all show similarities in density but differences in usage. Barrett believes that this is due to gnostic vocabulary being Christianized in the FG (1982: pp. 62-63). He agrees that the FG was written before the GT but hypothesizes that there could have been a pre-Johannine Gnosticism, which influenced the FG. He believes that the author of the FG uses the language of this source (1982: pp. 62-63). Thus, he believes that the ideas in the GT were around before the extant text of the GT and early enough for the author of the FG to provide a Christianized version of them (1982: p. 63). Yet, as Barrett admits himself, there is a lack of direct evidence for this theory. Even more compelling as a counter-argument is the fact that the GT does not evidence a full-grown non-Christian Gnosticism. As was argued in chapter 3, the GT was mostly likely written by Valentinus in the middle of the second century and does not evidence a well-developed Valentinian doctrine. Puech, Quispel, and Unnik explain that “what the ecclesiastical writers make

the principal point of their description and attack is here entirely wanting” (1983: p. 171). The GT seems to reflect early Valentinianism before the split between east and west. Sophia is absent, and there is no mention of a split Jesus and Christ. It has been argued above that the early Valentinians had a strong affinity for the FG. The next section argues that the similarities in date, language, community, purpose, and theology should not be written off as mere coincidence but as the FG’s influence on the VSS. In order to demonstrate this, the following section analyses sixteen passages from the VSS that share similar contexts and language with passages from the FG. This analysis will provide further evidence that the FG did play a substantial role in the formation of the Valentinian view of the nature of Christ.

6.3.1 GT 18:18-21 and John 14:6

GT 18:18-21	John 14:6
[Jesus Christ] He <u>enlightened</u> them; <u>he gave them a way</u> <u>and the way is the truth</u> about which he taught them.	<u>ἐγώ</u> εἰμι (cf. ἡ ζωή) ἡ ὁδὸς <u>καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια</u> <u>καὶ ἡ ζωή</u>
GT 18 :18-21 : ἀϰ̅ϰ̅ οὐδ̅-εἰν ἀραγ ἀϰ̅ϰ̅ ἡογμ̅αιτ̅· πι-μ̅αιτ̅· ἡ̅δε πε̅ ἡ̅μ̅ι̅τ̅μ̅η̅ε̅ εἰν-τ̅α̅ϰ̅τ̅α̅μ̅α̅γ̅ ἀρα̅ϰ̅·	

Table 4: GT 18:18-21 and John 14:6

6.3.1.1 Context

The GT begins by describing the Logos coming forth from the Pleroma (16:34-35), in the thoughts of the Father, carrying the title “saviour.” Ignorance brought about terror: error, the opposite of truth, became powerful. Because of the way that Jesus Christ enlightened those that are perfect through the gospel (18:11-22) (Till 1958: p. 272), error became angry, persecuted him,

and nailed him to a tree. In his death, he became the fruit of knowledge of the Father (18:25). John 14:6 is part of the beginning of Jesus' farewell discourse. After the author of the FG reveals the future betrayal by Judas and the denial of Peter, in chapter 14 Jesus comforts his disciples by describing where he is going (vv 1-4). Thomas responds by asking Jesus, "How can we know the way?" Jesus answers, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." Both passages allude to the death of Jesus and the negative events that will lead to it. Also, the FG and the GT focus on the Father as the end goal (cf. GT 17:1 and John 14:6-7, 10).

6.3.1.2 Language

Both contexts speak of Jesus Christ (Grobel 1960: p. 51) in association with the "way" and "truth." While these two elements seem to be direct parallels, ζωή is missing from GT 18:18-21. In its place is the enlightenment and teaching that Jesus gives. "Life" is not a common word in the GT. The word ωνζ occurs six times (20:14, 29, 25:19, 31:16, 32:20, 43:11). However, in each context, life is the product of the teachings of Jesus. In fact, in a similar parallel passage where Jesus becomes a way, light (ογλειν) is spoken through his mouth, which gives birth to life (31:14-35). The phrase used in GT 18:18 "he enlightened" (λϑῑ ογλειν) contains the word light. With an understanding of the author's connection between life and enlightenment, the parallel becomes that much more evident.

6.3.1.3 Evaluation

Malinine, Puech, and Quispel (1956) first pointed out the connection in 1956. These authors explain that Jesus is associated with a path and truth, which are both linked with escaping the negative consequences of earth. Do other parallels exist? An early Hellenistic passage recorded by Xenophon (*Mem* 2.1.21ff) describes two ways Heracles could pursue, but the context describes two women, each one being the path of either happiness or vice. Another possible parallel occurs in *Didache* 1:2 where two ways are set before the reader to choose from, and one is linked with life. Finally, *Odes* 1:3 contains the phrase ὁδὸν ἀληθείας. All three of these passages fail to show the strong

contextual similarities that GT 18 and John 14:6 share. Furthermore, the language of these two texts shares a close connection. Both passages contain “way” (ΟΥΜΔΕΙΤ/ή ὁδός) and “truth” (†ΜῆΤ/ή ἀλήθεια) in connection with Jesus’ crucifixion and the readers’ escape from this world. Additionally, the way “life” (ΩΝΩ) is used in revelatory contexts in the GT points to the GT’s concept of “life” being present in GT 18 even though the actual word is absent. Another connection ties these passages together. The Valentinian Theodotus used John 14:6 in the context of Jesus’ crucifixion (*Exc* 61-62). He described the saviour’s spiritual and psychic nature in connection with the blood and water that flowed from his side in John 19:34 and recalls John 19:36 and the fact that no bone would be broken. The author of the GT also associated John 14:6 with Jesus’ crucifixion and set it in the context of the spirituals.

6.3.1.4 Valentinian Hermeneutic

This passage demonstrates the Valentinian penchant for interpreting passages in a pleromic manner. The Logos in the GT came from the Pleroma with the truth from the Father. In the FG, Jesus is the way, and the way is the truth. In the GT, Jesus is not the way, but the way is still equated with the truth. Thus, there is evidence of denaturing. This demonstrates the gnostic focus on the attainment of knowledge rather than a focus on Jesus as the solitary object of deliverance. In addition, the truth is personified as the Father’s mouth in 26:34. This shows their penchant for replacing Jesus with the Father and denaturing of imagery. Jesus seeks independence for those who seek him in other VSS as well, namely GP 67:26-27. With Valentinian hermeneutics in mind, the differences can more easily be explained.

6.3.2 GT 22:2-4, 14-15 and John 3:8, 31

GT 22:2-4, 14-15	John 3:8, 31 (Malinine, Puech & Quispel 1956: p. 54; Williams 1988: p. 67ff; Ménard 1972: p. 105; Attridge & MacRae 1985: p. 63)
Therefore, if one has knowledge he is <u>from above</u> .	Ὁ ἄνωθεν ἐρχόμενος ἐπάνω πάντων ἐστίν (v 31).
... <u>knows</u> <u>where he comes from</u> <u>and where he is going</u> .	ἀλλ' οὐκ οἶδας <u>πόθεν ἔρχεται</u> <u>καὶ ποῦ ὑπάγει</u> (v 8).
GT 22:2-4, 14-15: ρωστε ογεει εφψακαγηε· ογαβαλ πε ρη̄ πκαηρηε· ... ψακῑμε· χε̄ η̄τακῑ η̄-τον· αγω χε̄ εκῑη̄α δτον.	

Table 5: GT 22:2-4, 14-15 and John 3:8, 31

6.3.2.1 Context

The context of GT 22 juxtaposes those who have knowledge and whose name the Father has spoken with those that are ignorant and whose names have not been uttered. Those that have knowledge can hear, answer, and return to the Father, who is from above, which is where the individual originally came from. Returning is dependent on recognizing their origin. John 3:22-36 describes a dispute about purification amongst John's disciples and the Jews. John tells them that he is not the Christ but was sent beforehand. The passage includes hearing and rejoicing because of the voice of the bridegroom (v 29). This pericope also contains a contrast between what is above and what is earthly. The one that comes from above testifies about what he sees and hears (ὁ ἑώρακεν καὶ ἤκουσεν τοῦτο μαρτυρεῖ).

6.3.2.2 Language

The phrase ὁ ἐρχόμενος clearly refers to Jesus in John 3:31. Williams takes the participle here, in 6:14, and 11:27 as a “christological epithet” (1988: p. 68), surmising that the GT’s Greek original may not have contained the participle. Since ἔρχεσθαι could carry the attenuated translation of “is,” the verb could have been simply translated as “is” (πῆ). Therefore, the difference in language could be explained as the product of interpretation. In addition, the word ἄνωθεν does not necessarily need a preposition to carry the meaning of “from above” (cf. Jas 1:17; 3:17).

Another important aspect of John 3 is the fact that in v 22 Jesus and his disciples go to Judea. According to Heracleon in his commentary on the gospel, Judea signifies that which is from above (frag 40). The Valentinians used allegorical interpretation and deeper meanings would have been assumed. Thus “above” may echo “Judea” and show John 3’s influence on the GT. The contrast in John 3:31 between heavenly and earthly and the superiority of what comes from heaven would have fitted nicely into the Valentinian myth.

GT 22:14-15 describes those that have knowledge as understanding where they come from and where they are going. In John 3:8 it is used in a passage about the wind, which is associated with the spirit. The rhetorical structure is different, which accounts for the differences in verbal conjugation. The author employed a common Valentinian formula in GT 22:14-15 concerning the knowledge of one’s origin and destiny. Irenaeus included the concept in a quotation from a Valentinian death ceremony (*Haer* 1:27,5), and Theodotus described knowledge as the product that comes from baptism (*Exc* 78). In another passage by Theodotus, the idea appears in the context of the descent of the saviour (*Exc* XVI-XVII).

6.3.2.3 Evaluation

One of the dominant themes in the FG is Jesus’ descent and origin from above. GT 22:2-4 parallels John 3:31. Ménard writes, “L’<être d’en haut> nous remet en mémoire des textes comme *Jn*, 3,31; 8,23” (1972: p. 105). Both GT 22 and John 3 include the language “from above.” Although John 3:31 uses this with regard to Jesus, the GT applies it to those that have knowledge. This is

easily explained through the Valentinian myth. The contexts are similar, those that believe in the one from above in John 3 will have eternal life rather than wrath (v 36) and those that know their origin and destiny in GT 22 will return to the Pleroma rather than vanish (GT 21:37). Because GT 22 employs what Valentinians used as a common ceremonial formula, included in baptism, it is not surprising that the referents and verbal conjugations have been altered. However, the language of GT 22:14-15 and John 3:8 are strikingly similar. Since John 3 is quite possibly the earliest attestation of this phrasing, it is very likely that the Valentinians were influenced by it. While Williams deems 3:31 as a possible allusion and 3:8 as probable, the combination of the two in the same context strengthens the case for seeing both as allusions (1988: pp. 67-71). Some have also pointed to 8:13 as a possible parallel, but chapter 3 seems to be slightly stronger.

6.3.2.4 Valentinian Hermeneutic

The GT states that if one has “knowledge” (ΕΓΨΑΜΟΥΤΕ), “he is from above” (ΠΕ Ζ᾿ ΠΟΔΗΡΕ). The FG states that “Ὁ ἄνωθεν ἐρχόμενος ἐπάνω πάντων ἐστίν.” Though the one from above is not explicitly identified, the reference is clearly to Jesus, whereas the GT applies its similar terminology to those who have knowledge and have been predestined to return to the Father. Thus, there is a greater emphasis on predestination and the reference to Jesus is transferred to humanity. This is consistent with the way in which the VSS modify NT passages to fit their needs. However, John 3:31-36 does teach that those who accept (v 33) and believe (v 36) the truth that comes from above have eternal life, a heavenly gift. Life comes from Jesus’ revelation in GT 20:14 as well. Williams explains: “He [Valentinus] may have intended the reader to recognize that the original context referred to Jesus and so to understand those with knowledge share a common origin with Jesus” (1988: p. 69). Salvation in terms of origin is a dominant idea in Valentinianism.

6.3.3 GT 26:4-8 and John 1:14a

GT 26:4-8	John 1:14a
<u>The Word</u> <u>became a body</u> (CΩMΔ).	ὁ λόγος <u>σὰρξ ἐγένετο</u> καὶ ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν.
GT 26:4-8: πῶς ἐξε ... ἀϋρ̄ οὐκ ωμα.	

Table 6: GT 26:4-8 and John 1:14a

6.3.3.1 Context

The Word brings judgment in GT 25–26. He bears a two-edged sword. The Word is a message of truth from the mouth of the Father (GT 26:28-35) but also provides the flesh for Jesus. Just as error became angry because of Jesus' appearing in GT 18:21-24, error became angry in GT 26:19-20 at the Logos's appearing. In the FG's prologue, the cosmic Logos, who is God and took part in creation, took on flesh, becoming the presence of God in human form, but was rejected by his own. This would lead to persecution, anger (John 7:23), and ultimately his death. Those that believe in him become children of God. Like the prologue, GT 27 includes the ideas of the aeons being children of God (John 1:13-14, cf. John 1:12), given form or birth by God (John 1:16-18, cf. John 1:10, 13), and not knowing the Father (John 1:22-23, cf. John 1:10).

6.3.3.2 Language

ΛΟΓΟΣ occurs four times (34:35; 37:8, 11; 60:19) in the GT, but ΠΩΣ appears twenty-nine times. The difference in words very well could be merely the translator's preference. The translator also uses the term in 16:34-35 to describe the "word (ΠΩΣ) that came forth from the Pleroma," who was addressed as the "saviour" (CΩTHP). This same word, later known as Jesus Christ (18:16) comes from the Father to redeem those in the world who are ignorant of the Father. Attridge and MacRae conclude, "The author may be alluding to such incarnational texts as John 1:14 although, as Grobel (*Gospel*, 105) and Ménard (*L'Évangile*, 125-26) note, the author avoids the term CΔPΞ

which is used in John” (1985: p. 77). The one obvious difference is that the FG uses σάρξ and the GT uses $\text{C}\omega\text{M}\lambda$. The author of the GT might have been influenced by Platonic language about the $\sigma\tilde{\omega}\mu\alpha$ τοῦ κόσμου (*Tim.* 32D) (Ménard 1972: p. 126), emphasizing that the centre of life and emotion for humans is the body. In the GT, the Word brings judgment, an idea absent from the prologue of the FG but present in the book overall. The GT sees the Word as having a dual role, namely a body and a sound spoken by individuals. The purpose of his incarnation also parallels the FG. He came from the Father with the purpose of making the Father known (GT 20:15–21:2).

6.3.3.3 *Evaluation*

GT 26:4-8 was most likely influenced by John 1:14. The contexts are similar, containing parallel concepts, and the difference in language can be clearly attributed to translation and Valentinian theology. As chapter 4 has already demonstrated, the Logos and Sophia in Jewish and Hellenistic Literature were not hypostatized from the Father and did not take on flesh. Thus, there is no other parallel from earlier literature. Although the early Valentinians did not directly quote John 1:14, the Valentinian Heracleon did allude to it in frg 8 of his commentary. He explained John the Baptist’s words “whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose” in John 1:26-27 to mean, when allegorized, that John was inferior to Christ and not worthy of coming down from heaven in order to “assume flesh” (σάρκα λάβη). This probable allusion to John 1:14 gives further evidence that the Valentinians did not avoid the passage but qualified the incarnation by differentiating between the body and the one that was in the body (Heracleon, frg 10).

6.3.3.4 *Valentinian Hermeneutic*

Apart from the author of the GT using $\psi\epsilon\chi\epsilon$ instead of $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\varsigma$, which could merely be a sign of translation, the significance of the author’s use of “a body” rather than the FG’s use of σάρξ, should not be underestimated. Denaturing of imagery (Williams 1988: p. 191) was commonly used by Valentinians when adapting ideas or texts. Rather than the Logos becoming human flesh and the presence of God on earth, he became a body. The

Valentinian author of the GT was clearly influenced by John 1:14 but chose to adapt it to fit the Valentinian myth, which required that the saviour's body be seen as a carcass or garment and not human flesh.

6.3.4 GT 30:34 and John 20:22

GT 30:34	John 20:22
He [the beloved son] breathed into them.	[Ἰησοῦς] ἐνεφύσησεν ... αὐτοῖς.
GT 30:34: εἰσακτικῆς ἰζητοῦ.	

Table 7: GT 30:34 and John 20:22

6.3.4.1 Context

GT 28:32–30:16 describes the former ignorance of those that have been enlightened. They are filled with doubt and division (29:4). Although they were once blind, their eyes have been opened (30:15-16). The Holy Spirit ran after them, extended his hand, and allowed them to know the Father and the son. Eventually, upon seeing and hearing the son, they were able to taste, smell, and touch him. Jesus appeared to them, instructed them, breathed into them; they received the light, but they did not know him. He was in a fleshly form and nothing could block his course because of his incorruptibility.

John 20:22 records Jesus breathing on the disciples and their subsequent reception of the Holy Spirit. The disciples were hiding out of fear of the Jews when Jesus appeared to them behind locked doors. As in the GT, Jesus appeared in a form that could not be blocked and in v 17 was in a form that he did not want touched. Both passages occur in post-resurrection contexts (cf. GT 30:23) (Attridge & MacRae 1985: p. 86). In the FG, Jesus shows them his hands and side to demonstrate that he truly was crucified. After wishing them peace and verbally sending them out into the world, paralleling the Father sending the son, he breathed on them, giving them the Holy Spirit. This pericope continues with the Thomas narrative. The senses are an extremely important element in the disciples' faith, as in the passage from the GT.

6.3.4.2 *Language*

The author of the GT tends to use “beloved son” or “son” in the last half of the GT (Standaert 1976: pp. 269-274) rather than the name Jesus, which he reserves for the first half. The son is clearly Jesus in the GT. The GT also includes the same phrase “breathed into” with slight syntactical difference. Ménard believes the spirit should be the referent (1972: p. 143). However, the author goes on to speak of the son being in “fleshly form” in GT 31:5-6. What the son breathed into them, “what is in the thought,” refers to light in GT 30:37. Light gives birth to life and is associated with spirit and salvation in GT 31:18. The author of the GT interprets John 20:22 as Jesus breathing the Holy Spirit into them even though Jesus breathes on them and then tells them to receive the Holy Spirit. The author arrived at this interpretation by ignoring both λέγει and λάβετε (Williams 1988: p. 113).

6.3.4.3 *Evaluation*

The contexts of GT 30:34 and John 20:22 are both similar. “Jesus” and “the son” are the main subjects in both passages and both occur in post-resurrection contexts. John 20:22 is also a much more likely parallel than Gen 2:7 for contextual reasons, and because the author refers to the FG often. But with the FG’s probable allusion to Gen 2:7, the GT could have been alluding to both.

6.3.4.4 *Valentinian Hermeneutic*

The author of the GT has been influenced by a well-known passage about Jesus and replaced Jesus with the title “son,” evidencing denaturing. The relationship between the Father and son also shows an enhancing of their relationship with the inclusion of “beloved.” Finally, the texts focus on the intellectual, juxtaposing ignorance and enlightenment.

6.3.5 GT 31:28-29 and John 14:6

GT 31:28-29	John 14:6
He [beloved son] became for them a way.	[Ἰησοῦς] ἐγώ εἰμι ἡ ὁδὸς καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια καὶ ἡ ζωή.
GT 31:28-29: ἀρψωπε εφοει ἡογμαειτ· ἡησει εηεγσαρμ.	

Table 8: GT 31:28-29 and John 14:6

6.3.5.1 Context

GT 31:13-35 associates light with Jesus' mouth and voice. Revelation gives birth to life. Punishment and torture had led those that were ignorant away from the Father. Jesus through his words led those that lacked knowledge to the Father. In fact, he became a way and knowledge for the ignorant.

John 14 begins with Jesus describing his return to the Father in preparation for the coming of his disciples. Thomas is unsure about where he is going and how to get there, so Jesus answers, "I am the way, the truth, the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." Both the context of GT 31:13-35 and John 14 are concerned with their readers being led to the Father. Jesus is the key to finding the Father in both passages.

6.3.5.2 Language

The present tense pronouncement of Jesus, "I am the way," has been turned into a past narrative form in the GT, "He became a way." In GT 18, Jesus gave them a way but now has become the way. Apart from the rhetorical differences that have led to a change in person as well as tense, the language is very close. In both GT passages, Jesus (the son) is metaphorically the way to knowledge and reunification with the Father. In the FG, Jesus is "the way" par excellence. The GT leaves the article out. While Mark emphasizes being "on the way" (e.g., 8:3), and Acts uses "the way" to describe believers, both the FG and the GT use "a/the way" to describe Jesus. It is possible that the author of

the FG and the GT both developed this motif independently, the contexts and language of both appear quite similarly.

6.3.5.3 Evaluation

The contexts as well as the language of both passages are very similar. In the GT, Jesus actually “became a way for them” (ἀφωπτε εἰσοεῑ νουμαειτ). In 18:18-21 he gave them a way. This same transformation can be seen in the GT in the imagery of the book as well. The revealer takes the book (20:12), those who receive the teaching are inscribed in the book (21:3-4), and finally the recipients become the truth (22:38–23:18). In the FG, Jesus embodies the only true way to life and the Father. In the GT, Jesus is seen as the way of those that were ignorant. As Williams states, “He is closely identified with knowledge (31:30), however, and probably to be regarded as a model for others to follow in their search for the Father (31:31-32)” (1988: p. 119). In the FG, Jesus is the only way. Without him, no one could see the Father. In the GT, Jesus is a guide and a divine sage for those that lack knowledge.

6.3.5.4 Valentinian Hermeneutic

Once again the author of the GT changes John 14:6’s identification of Jesus as the way to the beloved son. This shows possible denaturing of imagery as well as an enhanced relationship between the son and the Father. Whether this should be seen as denaturing or simply a difference in theology lies in whether the FG influenced the VSS’s view of the nature of Christ. If the FG’s nature of Christ did influence the VSS, the possibility of denaturing is heightened. This passage also emphasizes the intellectual knowledge in contrast to the FG’s emphasis on eschatology. The VSS commonly deemphasize eschatology in favour of a realized eschatology in line with their myth.

6.3.6 GP 55:6, 12-13 and John 6:41b

GP 55:6, 12-13	John 6:41b
Before <u>Christ</u> came there was no bread ... he brought <u>bread</u> <u>from heaven</u> ...	(cf. [Ἰησοῦς] ὁ καταβάς) ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ἄρτος ὁ καταβάς ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ,
GP 55:6, 12-13: ῥα τεῖρη ἐμ'πατε πε<XC> εἰ νε μῆ οεἰκ'... ἀψωπε εφοεἰ ἡογμαεἰτ· ἡηεἰ εηεγσαρμ.	

Table 9: GP 55:6, 12-13 and John 6:41b

6.3.6.1 Context

GP 55:6-22 describes the situation before Christ came from heaven. Adam had trees to nourish the animals but no wheat to sustain man. Consequently, man had to eat like animals until the perfect man, Christ, brought bread from heaven. This seems to be an allusion to the incarnation of Christ (Thomassen 2006: p. 99). The rulers of this world are being manipulated by the Holy Spirit, probably an allusion to Jesus' death on the cross. Truth is being sown but only the few who see it are being reaped.

In John 6, Jesus asks Philip where he can buy bread for Passover. Jesus then feeds the five thousand. In v 27 Jesus contrasts food that perishes (τὴν βρώσιν τὴν ἀπολλυμένην) and food that endures unto eternal life (τὴν βρώσιν τὴν μένουσαν εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον), much like the contrast in GP 55 between food that does not nourish (ΤΡΟΦΗ) and that which nourishes. The FG author also juxtaposes the bread from heaven and the bread that Moses gave the Israelites. Those who eat the bread from heaven will never hunger (will be sustained). As in the GP, Jesus' coming from heaven should be metaphorically understood as Jesus' incarnation into flesh. Truth also comes into play through a quotation from Is 54:13 in v 45, and Jesus also alludes to his death in v 51.

6.3.6.2 Language

GP 55:6 and John 6:41b share many commonalities in terms of language. They both contain Jesus or Christ (Ἰησοῦς/XC) and bread

(ἄρτος/ΘΕΙΚ') coming from heaven (οὐρανοῦ/ΤΠΕ). The language seems to be a direct parallel. The differences can be attributed to the author incorporating John 6 into his Valentinian myth, which includes Adam and the fall in the garden (ΠΑΔΙCOC). Salvation in terms of origin is a common Valentinian focus. The author of the GP, with the context of this pericope being set in the OT, very well could have been thinking of the Hebrew word עֵ֫מֶץ which can mean wheat, bread, or even nourishment in the OT (TWOT, 175; BDB 536-37). The ideas of wheat (COCYOC) (Crum 1939: p. 369) and nourishment (ΤΡΟΦΗ), a Greek loanword that survived translation, both occur in this passage, which suggests that the author may have been looking at John 6 as well as the OT.

6.3.6.3 Evaluation

Both the context and language of GP 55:6, 12-13 and John 6:41b are very similar. They both include the idea of Christ coming from heaven and bringing bread into the world that lacked true bread. Bread in both contexts not only refers to the Eucharist (cf. John 6:51-58) but the incarnation. One of the striking connections is the contrast between bread that did not nourish in the OT and the bread that Christ brings which nourishes. Although allegorized to fit the Valentinian myth, which includes Adam and Christ, who brings restoration as the second Adam, the author of the GP seems to have picked up on the ideas contained in the Hebrew word עֵ֫מֶץ. The author includes the ideas of wheat and nourishment not only using John 6 as his backdrop but alluding to the background of John 6 as well.

6.3.6.4 Valentinian Hermeneutic

As chapter 5 already discussed, the Valentinians commonly differentiated between Christ and Jesus (Franzmann 1996: p. 150). This is also an instance of kenomic interpretation where the author splits Jesus Christ into spiritual and physical. In John 6:31, Jesus is the “ἄρτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ.” Thus, there is evidence of denaturing once again. Instead of the bread being personified as Jesus, the truth replaces him. The FG emphasizes eschatology in this passage while the allusion to the FG in the GP does not contain an eschatological component. This is consistent with the way in which the VSS

deemphasize eschatology. Finally, the inclusion of Adam illustrates the Valentinian focus on salvation in terms of origin.

6.3.7 GP 57:4-5 and John 6:53

GP 57:4-5	John 6:53
<p>He who <u>does not eat</u> <u>my flesh</u> <u>and drink my blood</u> <u>does not have life...</u></p>	<p>ἐὰν μὴ φάγητε τὴν σάρκα τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου καὶ πίνητε αὐτοῦ τὸ αἷμα, οὐκ ἔχετε ζωὴν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς.</p>
<p>GP 57:4-5: ΠΕΤΔΟΥΩΜ ΔΗ ΠΤΑΟΑΡΞ ΔΥΩ ΠΩΩ Μ-ΠΑΟΝΟΑ' ΜΠΤΑΑ ΩΝΗΖ.</p>	

Table 10: GP 57:4-5 and John 6:53

6.3.7.1 Context

GP 56:27–57:22 focuses on the resurrection. The author knew some were concerned about being resurrected without a body. The author contrasts those in the flesh (naked) with those that have removed the flesh (clothed). After quoting 1 Cor 15:50, the author asks, “What is this which will not inherit?” The answer comes in a quotation from John 6:53. Receiving his flesh (word) and the Holy Spirit (blood) provides food, drink, and clothing. The author concludes by stating that it is necessary to rise in the flesh because everything exists in the flesh. While the spirituals are better than their flesh on earth, the opposite is true in the kingdom of heaven where their garments will be better than those that put them on (57:21-22).

In the FG, after feeding the five thousand, walking on water, and describing himself as the bread from heaven, Jesus equates the bread from heaven with his flesh. In addition, his death will result in life for the world (v 51). Without eating his flesh and drinking his blood, no one will be resurrected on the last day (vv 40, 44, 54). Both passages occur in the context of resurrection, and like the GP, the context also ties the word of God (v 45) and the Holy Spirit to the reception of life (v 63).

6.3.7.2 Language

The word ⲭⲉ (Crum 1939: p. 746) in Coptic often comes before a direct statement or a quotation. This comes after the phrase ΔΙΑ ΤΟΥΤΟ ΠΕΧΔϪ. The phrase διὰ τοῦτο appears in John 6:65 in the same pericope. It is clear that the author was comfortable with showing that this was a quotation and the translators decided to leave echoes of the original Greek. Although the syntax has changed, this is not out of the ordinary for quotations (cf. GP 68:9-12; 72:34–73:1). Both passages contain the ideas of not eating (ΟΥΩΜ ΔΝ/μὴ φάγητε), of not drinking blood (ΠϪϪΩ Μ-ΠΔϪΝΟϪ/πίητε αὐτοῦ τὸ αἷμα), of not having life (ΜΝΤΔϪ ΩΝϪ/οὐκ ἔχετε ζωήν), and flesh comes from the same Greek word (ϪΔΡΞ/σάρκα). Although John 6:53 in the Sahidic NT is syntactically different, the words ΟΥΩΜ (eat), ϪΔΡΞ (flesh), ΔΥΩ (and), ϪΩ (drink), and ϪΝΟϪ (blood) still appear.

6.3.7.3 Evaluation

Both contexts focus on the resurrection and link the Holy Spirit with receiving life. With similar contexts, similar language, and a Coptic quotation indicator (ⲭⲉ), the author certainly made use of John 6:53 and was not concerned about his readers knowing that he was applying a key passage from the FG to the Valentinian system. This is clearly a quotation from John 6:53.

6.3.7.4 Valentinian Hermeneutic

The author of the GP used the word ⲭⲉ to signal a quotation, though as in other quotations in the book, he did not use the same syntax as the original. The Valentinians commonly used the NT and, as they employed passages, they would alter the syntax as necessary. For example, the IK uses passages from Matt in sections (9:21–14:15) to interpret the Savior’s teaching and passion narrative and (14:15–21:34) from various Pauline texts in order to describe the church as “the body of Christ.” GP 57:4-5 also views the flesh as a garment, showing the influence of Middle Platonism and Stoicism. This is applied to the readers as well as to Jesus, who came in stealth and “did not appear as he was” (GP 57:28-30).

6.3.8 GP 69:4-6 and John 3:3, 6

GP 69:4-6	John 3:3, 6
Through the Holy Spirit, we are indeed <u>born</u> <u>again</u> ...	(cf. ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος) ἐὰν μή τις γεννηθῆ ἄνωθεν ... καὶ τὸ γεγεννημένον ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος
GP 69:4-6: ΕΒΟΛ ΖΙΤῪ <ΠΗΔ> ΕΤΟΥΔΔΒ ΣΕΧΠΟ ΜΕΝ ἸΜΟΝ ἸΚΕΣΟΠ.	

Table 11: GP 69:4-6 and John 3:3, 6

6.3.8.1 Context

In a passage about the bridal chamber, a Valentinian ritual, the author describes being born again through Christ and the Holy Spirit. Christ is unseen in water or a mirror without light. For this reason, one must be baptized in water and in the light, which is the chrism (anointing with oil). Through baptism, one symbolically participates in the death and resurrection of Christ (67:9-19, 69:25-26, 73:1-7), stripping off the old self and replacing it with a new spiritual body. Theodotus described baptism as: "...an end of the old life ... but it is also life according to Christ" (*Exc 77:1*).

In John 3, Nicodemus went to Jesus by night, recognizing that Jesus was from God because of the signs that Jesus performed. Jesus responds by stating that in order to see the kingdom of God, one must be born from above, or of water and spirit. Jesus then contrasts the flesh and the spirit, which is unseen yet heard like the wind. Unseen and night are both similar to the ideas in the GP (none can see and without light). The spirit and water are also key images in both passages. Likewise, spiritual rebirth in v 3 is also contained within the idea of Valentinian baptism.

6.3.8.2 Language

Both John 3:6 and GP 69:4 contain the phrase "through the ... spirit." The Coptic phrase "through" (ΕΒΟΛ ΖΙΤῪ) can also carry the causal sense just as ἐκ can in Greek (see BDAG, 296). The phrase "born again"

(ⲐⲉⲗⲠⲟ...ⲛⲓⲕⲉⲥⲟⲡ/γεννηθῆ ἄνωθεν) also occurs in both texts. The Coptic phrase “another time” (ⲛⲓⲕⲉⲥⲟⲡ) seems to be an interpretation of the Greek ἄνωθεν as “born again” rather than “born from above” (see BDAG, 92). The “Holy Spirit” (<ⲡⲛⲁ> ⲉⲧⲟϥⲁⲗⲁⲃ / τοῦ πνεύματος) is included as well. In John 3, Jesus is speaking. The syntax changes slightly in the GP because of the rhetorical differences. However, the author of the GP focuses on Christ as well, for his readers must be born again “through the Christ” (ⲉⲓⲧⲛ̅ ⲡⲉ-ⲕⲥ̅) as well the spirit.

6.3.8.3 *Evaluation*

The contexts both refer to being born again through Christ and the spirit. They also juxtapose unseen/none can see and night/without light. While the GP directly refers to baptism (GP 69:12), John 3 includes baptismal language and was connected with baptism even before the GP by Justin (*1 Apol* 61) and Tertullian (*Bapt* 12 & 13). Because of these connections, there is a very high probability that the author of the GP was influenced by John 3.

6.3.8.4 *Valentinian Hermeneutic*

In GP 69, the eschatological component has been deemphasized. The spiritual rebirth ends in being joined or united (ⲉⲟⲧⲣⲏ) in GP 69:8, a reference to mutual participation, while this spiritual rebirth in the FG saves one from perishing and gives one eternal life (John 3:16).

6.3.9 GP 77:15-18, 84:7-9 and John 8:32

GP 77:15-18, 84:7-9	John 8:32
He who <u>knows</u> <u>the truth</u> is <u>free</u> ...	(cf. γνώσεσθε) (cf. τὴν ἀλήθειαν) (cf. ἐλευθερώσει)
<u>You shall know</u> <u>the truth</u> <u>and the truth</u> <u>will set you free</u> ...	γνώσεσθε τὴν ἀλήθειαν, καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια ἐλευθερώσει ὑμᾶς.
GP 77:15-18, 84:7-9: πετεγῆταρ' ἡ-μαγ ἡτηνωσις ἡτηε ογελεγθερος πε. ... ετετηψαν' κογωνη ταληθεια ταληθεια ηαρ τηνε ηελεγεθερος.	

Table 12: GP 77:15-18, 84:7-9 and John 8:32

6.3.9.1 Context

Avoiding the middle requires one to put on the perfect light (GP 76:25-29), putting on the perfect man as a new garment (GP 75:21-25). The author explains in GP 77:15-18 that truth sets one free. The Valentinians would have taken this as a reference to freedom from the flesh. By inference, GP 77:7-9 associates being set free through baptism with Jesus's death, which removed the component of the initiate's death from baptism. GP 84 contrasts ignorance (slave) and knowledge (freedom). Ignorance produces death (83:32) and knowledge perfection (84:1).

In John 8:12-59, Jesus contrasts light and darkness. He knows his origin and destiny. He is from above, and the Jews are from this world (v 23). He then predicts his death (v 28) as the time when they will know that what he speaks are the Father's words. Finally, he teaches that his disciples will be marked as those that abide in his word and are set free through the truth (v 32), which comes from the Father (v 40).

6.3.9.2 Language

The author of GP 84:7-9 introduces the quotation by stating, “The Logos says” (πεχδσϑ’ ἰδι πλογοσ) followed by a $\times\epsilon$ (Plumley 1948: p. 53). Thus, the author wanted his audience to know that what followed was being quoted from another source. The language in these two passages is quite similar to the Greek of the FG. In GP 77, the author uses the Greek loanwords $\Gamma\text{N}\text{O}\text{C}\text{I}\text{C}$ and $\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\gamma\theta\epsilon\rho\omicron\varsigma$ and in GP 84 the words $\Gamma\text{N}\text{O}\text{C}\text{I}\text{C}$, $\delta\lambda\eta\theta\epsilon\iota\delta$, and $\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\gamma\theta\epsilon\rho\omicron\varsigma$. The latter parallels John 8 more closely in syntax. Both texts use the future tense. GP 77 and 84 use $\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\gamma\theta\epsilon\rho\omicron\varsigma$ as an adjective, but GP 84 uses the verb $\epsilon\text{I}\rho\epsilon$ in the future tense, paralleling the FG’s use of $\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\theta\epsilon\rho\acute{\omega}\sigma\epsilon\text{I}$. The repetition (see section 7.2.1) strengthens the likelihood of this quotation.

6.3.9.3 Evaluation

Both Valentinian contexts as well as John 8 focus on escaping ignorance by being set free by the truth. Whereas freedom for the Valentinians was freedom from the flesh, freedom in John 8 is associated with freedom from sin. Ultimately those who know the truth in John will be rescued from death (8:51), implying an escape from the results of mortal flesh. The differences can be attributed to the Valentinian myth, which focuses on the corruption of and need for escape from the flesh rather than sin. The language also attests to the author of the GP’s intentional usage of John 8. The author intentionally left key words in GP 77 and 84 and also used the word $\times\epsilon$ to signal to his readers that he was quoting another source.

6.3.9.4 Valentinian Hermeneutic

The concept of truth in the GP also seems to be influenced by Plato’s forms, for truth came to earth and can only be received in types and images (67:9-19; 84:20-25). The truth is within humanity, but one needs to be joined to it to find fulfilment (84:10-14). The truth is hidden and needs to be revealed in GP 85:21-27 but comes from Jesus in John 8:40. Thus, denaturing has occurred. According to the GP, truth is no longer a possession of Jesus but instead rests with humanity.

6.3.10 TR 46:21-23 and John 3:16-17, 36

TR 46:3-5, 21-23	John 3:16-17, 36
<p><u>But</u> if there is one <u>who does not believe</u>, <u>he is not persuaded</u>.</p> <p><Great> are <u>those who believe</u>.</p> <p>The thought of those who are <u>saved</u> <u>shall not perish</u>...</p>	<p>(cf. <u>ὁ</u>)</p> <p>(cf. <u>ὁ πιστεύων</u>)</p> <p>(cf. <u>ὁ δὲ ἀπειθῶν</u>)</p> <p>πᾶς</p> <p><u>ὁ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτόν</u></p> <p>(cf. <u>σωθῆ</u>)</p> <p><u>μὴ ἀπόληται</u></p> <p>ἀλλ' ἔχη ζωὴν αἰώνιον...</p> <p>...ἀλλ' ἵνα <u>σωθῆ</u> ὁ κόσμος δι' αὐτοῦ.</p> <p>36 - <u>ὁ πιστεύων... ὁ δὲ</u> <u>ἀπειθῶν</u>.</p>
<p>TR 46:3-5, 21-23: ἄλλ' ἐὰν μὴ πιστεύῃς ἐν υἱῷ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, οὐ δύνασαι πεῖθεισθαι... ὁ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτόν, οὐκ ἀπολείπεται, ἀλλ' ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον... ...ἀλλ' ἵνα σωθῆ ὁ κόσμος δι' αὐτοῦ. 36 - ὁ πιστεύων... ὁ δὲ ἀπειθῶν.</p>	

Table 13: TR 46:21-23 and John 3:16-17, 36

6.3.10.1 Context

The TR emphasizes predestination. Those who do not believe, cannot be persuaded (TR 46:3-5). The author explains that they are to believe in the son of man, who arose from the dead. The mind and thoughts of the elect will not perish because they have been predestined from the beginning to not fall into ignorance or lack knowledge. Rather the spirituals will be drawn up to heaven like beams of the sun in the spiritual resurrection (TR 45:36-40).

John 3:16 sits right in the middle of Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus. Verse 16 contains a γάρ (Makidon 2003: pp. esp 31-32), which signals that the author or speaker is showing evidence for his point, linking what

precedes with v 16 and following. The passage refers to the son of man coming down from heaven, juxtaposing it with Jesus being lifted up like the serpent in the wilderness (v 14). All who believe in him have eternal life, will not perish, and will be saved rather than condemned. The passage ends by explaining that men loved darkness, the realm of ignorance and evil, rather than light, a place of truth and holiness. The TR also contains the ideas of the son of man returning to heaven (TR 46:10-13), being raised up (TR 46:14-17), faith and salvation contrasted with perishing and ignorance (46:22-34), and the ones who will be saved are associated with light (TR 45:36-40).

6.3.10.2 Language

These two passages contain many similar elements. First, the Greek conjunction ΔΕ is used in the context of “belief” (ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕ) and “not being persuaded” (ΜΗ ΠΕΙΘΕ). Second, John 3:36 includes “the one who believes” and “the one who is not persuaded” while the author of the TR used “not believe” and “not persuaded.” Also, the latter contains a negative particle while John 3:36 includes the negative prefix “ἀ.” The negative form of ΠΕΙΘΕ (ΑΠΕΙΘΕ) never occurs in the NHL and only appears twice in the SNT (Matt 28:14; 1 John 3:19). John 3:36 in the SNT uses ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕ for both verbs. The author and translators left clues as to the influence on this passage. John 3:16-17 and TR 46:21-23 both contain several similar elements as well. Both passages link “believe” (ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕ/ὁ πιστεύων), “not perish” (ἢ ἄποληται), and “saved” (τοῦ ἀζ/σωθῆ). Both σωθῆναι and ἀπολλυμένοις appear in 2 Thess 2:10, but John 3 has more intertextual links. TR 46 also includes ΚΟΣΜΟΣ (John 3:17), ΠΙΣΤΙΣ, ΓΑΡ (John 3:16-17), ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕ (6 times), and ΠΕΙΘΕ (2 times). Much of the language in TR 46 is very similar to John 3.

6.3.10.3 Evaluation

Both passages associate belief and persuasion with those that are saved and will not perish. The end result for those that believe in both John 3 and TR 46 is the resurrection. The language of both passages is also strikingly similar. In fact, the TR uses many Greek loanwords that occur in John 3. Heracleon in his commentary on the FG used a similar contrast between

unbelief and persuasion (*In Jo* 13:60), linking it with John 4:48. Theodotus also contrasts the psychics, who have faith, and the hylics, who are associated with unbelief and corruption (*Exc* 56:3). He clearly borrows from Rom 11 but also uses similar language to John 3: saved, faith, unbelief, and perish. The Valentinians had previously made the contrast between faith and non-persuasion (Peel 1985: p. 168), but similar language and contexts suggest TR 46 has been influenced by the FG as well.

6.3.10.4 Valentinian Hermeneutic

Valentinian works tend to emphasize predestination (Williams 1988: p. 191). TR 46 is consistent with other VSS in this respect. While in the FG those that believe in Jesus are saved, the TR focuses on the intellectual aspects of the mind and thoughts. They are also predestined from the beginning (46:27). Both of these concepts are consistent with the way in which the VSS change NT sources to emphasize predestination and explain salvation in terms of origin and gnosis.

6.3.11 TT 57:8-32 and John 1:18

TT 57:8-32	John 1:18
21 - ... <u>only son</u> ...	Θεὸν οὐδεὶς ἑώρακεν πώποτε· <u>μονογενῆς θεὸς</u>
30 - and <u>he revealed</u> the unexplainable power...	ὁ ὢν εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρὸς ἐκεῖνος <u>ἐξηγήσατο</u> .
TT 57:8-32: ἀγω οὐψηρε· νογῶτ ... ἀγω τῶαμ π̄ατ·τογζαμμεϛ αϛογανῆζϛ αββαλ.	

Table 14: TT 57:8-32 and John 1:18

6.3.11.1 Context

TT 57:8-35 describes the relationship between the Father and the son. Just as the Father existed before all creation, the son is before and after all. He is the firstborn and only son, who desired to be made known, so he

revealed his fruit and the unexplainable power of Father. Fruit probably refers to the fruit of the Father (cf. *Ref* 6:37,7-8) or like GT 18:25 “fruit of the knowledge of the Father.” The one who desired for the fruit to be made known would normally be the Father in Valentinian thought (Attridge & Pagels 1985: p. 239) (*Exc* 7:1; Heracleon, *In Jo* 13:38 or frg 31; and GT 19:13). The son, like the church, existed from the beginning.

John 1:18 ends the prologue, which describes the Logos as with God before creation. As in the TT, he is described as existing “in the beginning.” Likewise, just as the TT describes the son as before and after everyone, the Logos is described as before and after John the Baptist (v 15). Verse 18 explains that no one has seen the Father except the only-begotten son, who was with the Father and reveals the Father. Both the TT and John 1 explain that the son reveals the Father.

6.3.11.2 Language

The Coptic words ΟΥΩΗΡΕ· ΝΟΥΩΤ most likely translate μονογενής (Attridge & Pagels 1985: p. 238). There is not one occurrence of this Greek word in the TT or the Sahidic NT. This is not a common loanword. In fact, the Sahidic NT contains the exact same phrase in John 1:18 (ΠΩΗΡΕ ΝΟΥΩΤ). The son is also referred to as “firstborn” (ΠΩΡΠ̄ Μ̄ΜΙΣΕ). Irenaeus explained that Ptolemy believed that the “firstborn” was associated with the Logos and had been produced by humanity and the church (*Haer* I:12,3). Theodotus also used both “only begotten” and “firstborn” in *Exc* 7:3. The former is the transcendent aeon and the latter was associated with Jesus. Both passages also refer to the son as “revealing” (ΛΟΥΓΑΝΩC/ἐξηγήσατο) the Father, who was “inexplicable” (ΝΑΤ ΤΟΥΓΔΑΜΜΕC) or “unseen” (Θεὸν οὐδεὶς ἑώρακεν πώποτε).

6.3.11.3 Evaluation

TT 57 and John 1 speak of the Father and son’s pre-existence, the fact that the son alone held the title of “son,” and that the son revealed the Father. Although TT 57:8-35 does not include any Greek loanwords from John 1, the language of both passages still remains quite similar. The common Valentinian association of “firstborn,” “only son,” and his pre-existence with

Jesus and the Logos gives further evidence that John 1 most likely influenced TT 57.

6.3.11.4 Valentinian Hermeneutic

John 1, unlike TT 57, includes an eschatological component. Life resides in Jesus and the idea of becoming a child of God, who is not born of the flesh (1:13), echoes passages like John 3:7-8 and 11:25-27. Rather than emphasizing eschatology, TT 57 focuses on the Valentinian myth and the emanation of aeons.

6.3.12 TT 80:11-13, 114:7-22 and John 1:3

TT 80:11-13, 114:7-22	John 1:3
<p><u>The Logos</u>, <u>the cause</u> of these things coming into <u>being</u>...</p> <p><u>The spiritual Logos</u> who is <u>the cause</u> of the things which have <u>come into being</u>...</p>	<p>[ὁ λόγος] πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο,</p> <p>[cf. ὁ λόγος] [cf. δι'] [cf. ἐγένετο] καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἓν.</p>
<p>TT 80:11-13, 114:7-22: χε πλογοc δε λ[α]ψωπε ἡλλαιδε· ... χε ... πλογοc ἡπνεγματικοc τε ετε ἡταα πε· τλαιδε ἡνηεν· ταρψωπε·</p>	

Table 15: TT 80:11-13, 114:7-22 and John 1:3

6.3.12.1 Context

TT 80:11-37 begins a section on the conversion of the Logos. His fall causes two beings to be created (80:11–85:15). The hylic forces come from this disorder and confusion. Upon his repenting, psychic forces come into being. These two produce the first human. Within this framework, the immediate context speaks of the Logos's role in creation and the disorder, defect, division,

6.3.12.3 Evaluation

The contexts and language of all three passages are strikingly similar, both dealing with the Logos and creation. The language includes the Logos as the cause of creation. While the product of their creation is different, this can be easily explained by the Valentinian penchant to take the FG and alter it in order to make it consistent with their myth. TT 80:11 and 114:6 also contain the Coptic particle $\underline{\chi\epsilon}$, which is a clear sign left by the translator that the author was influenced by another source.

6.3.12.4 Valentinian Hermeneutic

The fall in TT 80 and 114 was caused by ignorance. The Valentinians have taken a Johannine concept of the Logos's involvement in creation and added an intellectual emphasis.

6.3.13 TT 113:38 and John 1:14a

TT 113:38	John 1:14a
...from <u>the Logos</u> , [the saviour] who <u>came into being</u> in <u>flesh</u> ...	Καὶ ὁ λόγος <u>σὰρξ</u> <u>ἐγένετο</u> (cf. <u>σὰρξ</u>)
TT 113:38: $\bar{\eta}\tau\epsilon\ \bar{\pi}\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\varsigma\ \epsilon\bar{\eta}[\epsilon\bar{\eta}]\tau\alpha\lambda\omega\omega\pi\epsilon\cdot\ \bar{\eta}\bar{\eta}\ \sigma\alpha\rho\bar{\xi}$.	

Table 16: TT 113:38 and John 1:14a

6.3.13.1 Context

TT 113:2–114:30 occurs in a larger section on soteriological issues. The prophets' prediction of the saviour's coming came from the saviour himself. He would be begotten and suffer but was previously unbegotten and impassable, coming from the Logos. The lesser, fallen Logos (TT 77:11-22) and the spiritual Logos should be distinguished. The latter caused creation and gave the saviour his flesh so that he could be seen (TT 114:7-9). In Valentinian theology, the Logos, saviour, and seed all are in "a situation of consubstantiality" (Thomassen 2006: p. 443) (cf. *Exc* 1:1).

Like this passage in the TT, the prologue focuses on the Logos's part in creation, the Logos's association with the saviour/son's flesh, and the revealing of the Father through Jesus Christ. As the one who created life, the Logos is the one who brings salvation. Those who believe in him become children of God and are born of God (John 1:12-13), which means that they have been transferred from the realm of death to life (John 5:24).

6.3.13.2 Language

The language is slightly different in the TT in that the saviour (ϸΩΤΗΡ, 114:9) in TT 113:38 received his flesh from the ΛΟΓΟΣ. This is the product of the Valentinian myth in which the Logos's flesh becomes the saviour's flesh (Exc 1:1). This is clearly influenced by John 1:14-18 although it departs sharply from it. Irenaeus explains in *Haer* 1:8,5 that Ptolemy believed that the saviour received flesh from "the word made flesh." Thus, the flesh of the Logos is the flesh of the saviour. Theodotus also believed that the saviour's flesh was the same as the flesh of the Logos (Exc 1:1). Heracleon wrote, "the Logos is the saviour," who comes out of the aeon (*In Jo* 2:14) (Pagels 1973: pp. 36-50). Therefore, for all passages dealing with John 1:14 and the concept of ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο in Valentinianism, the Logos and saviour should be seen as synonymous. Remarkably both Logos and flesh (ϸΑΡΞ) retain Greek loanwords. The Coptic word "became" (ϠΩΠϸ) is the equivalent of γίνομαι (Crum 1939: p. 577). Although the Sahidic NT does not translate John 1:14 using ϠΩΠϸ, the translators did use it in Matt 13:22 and several places in the OT in the later Bohairic dialect to translate γίνομαι.

6.3.13.3 Evaluation

Both texts contextually refer to the Logos in association with the flesh of the son/saviour. As has been discussed earlier, this is a very complicated situation in Valentinian theology. The Logos split into two and the primary Logos gave flesh to the saviour in the form of his own flesh. In addition, they both explain the Logos's role in creation and revelation. The differences lie in the Valentinian desire to fit the FG's view of the Logos and flesh into their myth. However, given their contextual similarities, the author of the TT was most likely

influenced by the prologue. The language of both passages also shows close parallels. Both use ΛΟΓΟΣ, ΣΑΡΞ, and a form of “become” (ὑποπτε/γίνομαι), the difference easily explained by translation.

6.3.13.4 Valentinian Hermeneutic

TT 113:38 contains classic denaturing of imagery consistent with other VSS. Rather than the Logos becoming flesh, the saviour receives flesh from the Logos after the Logos splits into two. The Logos returned to the Pleroma (TT 86:6-7) and the saviour descended to earth. The differences can be explained through the Valentinian myth.

6.3.14 IK 12:18 and John 1:14a

IK 12:18	John 1:14a
[The saviour] appeared in the <u>flesh</u> ...	Καὶ ὁ λόγος (cf. ἐγένετο) σὰρξ ἐγένετο
IK 12:18: [δ̄ν]δ̄ ᾱϑοϣω[<η̄> ᾱβδ]λ̄ η̄ϑᾱρξ̄.	

Table 17: IK 12:18 and John 1:14a

6.3.14.1 Context

IK 12 occurs in a larger section that explains the saviour’s teaching on soteriology. Through the son/saviour, the Father was supplied with aeons. In the IK, the saviour took on flesh, which is taking on the garment of condemnation (IK 10:26), because Sophia had no other garment for her seed (IK 10:28-29). Like IK 12, the prologue of the FG explains that the Logos came from the Father, took on flesh, and revealed God. In a way that recalls the FG, the author of the IK teaches that through this incarnation, the psychics and spirituals will receive forgiveness of sins (12:26), grace (12:29).

6.3.14.2 Language

The IK, like the FG, links flesh (CαPξ, 12:18), glory (EαY, 12:23), dwell (ΨΩΠE, 12:24), and grace (XαPIC, 12:29). IK 12:18 uses the verb “appear” or “reveal” OYΩNΩ as opposed to John 1:14’s use of “become” (γίνομαι). However, the idea of revelation, which OYΩNΩ carries, is contained in the prologue (cf. John 1:7-8, 14, 18). Although the passage in the IK has been altered to fit the Valentinian myth, the language of both texts remains strikingly similar.

6.3.14.3 Evaluation

Both passages explain the saviour/son coming in the flesh through the descent of the Logos from the Father. Taking on flesh in both passages is associated with revealing the Father. The contexts are very similar. Echoes of the prologue can also be seen in language parallels. Flesh (CαPξ/σάρξ), glory (EαY/δόξαν), dwell (ΨΩΠE/ἐσκήνωσεν), and grace (XαPIC/χάριτος) occur in both passages. Given the contextual and language similarities, there is a good chance that the author of the IK was influenced by John 1. Irenaeus in *Haer* 1:9,2 links John 1:14 with the Valentinian view that the saviour took on flesh but the spiritual Logos did not. Thus, there is heresiologist evidence that the early Valentinians had used John 1:14 in this same manner.

6.3.14.4 Valentinian Hermeneutic

The context includes salvation in terms of origin. The readers are instructed to “enter through the rib whence you came” (IK 10:34-35). Also, the saviour’s body is viewed as a garment of condemnation, which holds the seeds of Sophia. Both of these concepts are consistent with Valentinian soteriology.

6.3.15 VE 32:34-39 and John 1:14a

VE 32:34-39	John 1:14a
...through the <u>Logos</u> his <u>flesh</u> ...	Καὶ ὁ <u>λόγος</u> <u>σὰρξ</u> ἐγένετο
VE 32:34-39: ΜΑ ΖΙ<ΤΜ> Π[Λ]ΟΓΟ[Ο]C] ἦΤΘC. CΑΡΞ.	

Table 18: VE 32:34-39 and John 1:14a

6.3.15.1 Context

VE 30:29–34:34 explains that 100 aeons (Dodecad) came from the aeons Logos and Life. From Man and Church came the Triacontad, making 360 aeons corresponding to “the year of the Lord.” From there, the text becomes extremely fragmented, continuing to talk about Christ, the seeds of Sophia, the cross, nail wounds, and his ultimate ascension and reunification with the Pleroma. The son descended past the limit (cross) in order to bring harmony back to the Pleroma after Sophia’s fall. In other words, VE 32:34-39 explains the flesh of the Logos within the Valentinian myth.

The prologue also begins with the Logos on the cosmic level, finally descending to take on flesh. The Logos descended to bring revelation, light, grace, and truth to the world. But they did not receive him, and this corresponds to the suffering that Christ endured in VE 32–33. In both John 1 and VE 31–34, the narrative begins on the cosmic level with the Logos and ends in the earthly level with Christ.

6.3.15.2 Language

Due to its fragmentary nature, the text could be referring to the flesh of the saviour or the Logos. Nonetheless, in Valentinian theology, they are one in the same. The ΛΟΓΟΣ and CΑΡΞ are juxtaposed, recalling the language of John 1:14a.

6.3.15.3 Evaluation

The context of VE 32 and the prologue both begin in the cosmic level with the descent into flesh by the Logos/saviour/son. The language is also similar. Both contain the Logos and flesh. Because of the fragmentary nature of the text, the relationship is not as clear as some of the parallels above. Nonetheless, there is evidence from other sources that the context was commonly linked to John 1:14 in Valentinian writings. Both VE 29:25ff and *Haer* I:8,5 link the Logos and life in a tetrad. The latter specifically quotes John 1:14 and links it with Ptolemy's explanation of his Pleromatology.

6.3.15.4 Valentinian Hermeneutic

While VE describes the son as the mind of the Father, the prologue of the FG describes Jesus as a distinct person. This shows denaturing and an enhancing of the relationship with the Father, which is consistent with the way in which the VSS use NT sources.

6.3.16 VE 40:30-34 and John 1:18

VE 40:30-34	John 1:16-18
This is <u>the fullness of the summary of knowledge</u> which was <u>revealed to us</u> <u>by our Lord Jesus Christ</u> , the <u>Monogenes</u>ἐκ τοῦ πληρώματος... ὅτι ὁ νόμος διὰ Μωϋσέως ἐδόθη... (cf. ἐξηγήσατο) διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ... μονογενῆς... ἐκεῖνος ἐξηγήσατο
VE 40:30-34: π[ρει] πε πληρωμα ἡπεφλαλλον ἡτηνωσις πεει ἡτ[α]ρογαν<ρ> πεη δβαλ ρι <τη> <πν>χαεις <ιης> πεχρηστος πιμονογενης.	

Table 19: VE 40:30-34 and John 1:18

6.3.16.1 Context

VE 40:30-38 occurs in one of the liturgical fragments on baptism, *On Baptism A*. In this fragment, Jesus Christ, the Monogenes, revealed the fullness of knowledge and the author encourages his readers to walk in this revelation. Valentinian documents rarely speak of sin, but this passage talks about the forgiveness of sins through the first baptism. Within this baptism at the Jordan, one finds reunification with the Pleroma. Valentinian baptism is closely tied to the resurrection (GP 67:9-19; 69:25-26; 73:1-7), putting on the perfect human being (GP 75:21-24), and being restored to the realm of perfection (GP 67:9-12; VE 41:29-38, and *Haer* 1:21,3). As Theodotus put it, baptism is death and the end of life, but it is also life according to Christ (*Exc* 77:1).

Before and after John 1:16-18, the FG speaks of John the Baptist (1:6-8, 19-42), baptizing in the Jordan. It was a baptism of repentance. Verse 29 describes Jesus as the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. While John baptized with water, Jesus baptized with the spirit (1:33). Baptism for the Valentinians was only for the spirituals. The Valentinians deemphasized the work of the spirit and focused on the transformation of human beings into spiritual beings, finally co-incarnating with Christ and ascending to reunite with the Pleroma.

6.3.16.2 Language

VE 40:30-34 and the prologue have many similar ideas: “fullness” (ΠΛΗΡΩΜΑ/πληρώματος), “summary of knowledge or law of Moses” (ΜΠΚΕΦΛΛΑΔΙΟΝ ΠΤΓΝΩΣΙΣ/ὁ νόμος διὰ Μωϋσέως), “revealed” (ΟΥΔΑΝΩ/ἐξηγήσατο), “Jesus Christ” (<ΙΗΣ> ΠΕΧΡΗΣΤΟΣ/Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ), and “only begotten” (ΜΟΝΟΓΕΝΗΣ/μονογενής). In addition, the reception of revelation in both texts is “to us” (ΝΕΝ/ἐλάβομεν). The author of the VE uses two Greek loanwords ΚΕΦΛΛΑΔΙΟΝ and ΓΝΩΣΙΣ. The phrase ΜΠΚΕΦΛΛΑΔΙΟΝ ΠΤΓΝΩΣΙΣ very well might be equivalent to the FG’s use of the phrase ὁ νόμος διὰ Μωϋσέως. The Coptic word ΚΕΦΛΛΑΔΙΟΝ is associated with the teachers of the law and the prophets in TT 113:12. Also, Philo uses the phrase in *Che* 1:17 to speak of keeping ordinances, Moses’s desire for instruction in *Pos* 1:131, Heraclitus’s “main

principle” (κεφάλαιον) in *Her* 1:214, which actually came from Moses, and in *Dec* 1:156 as the second commandment or summary of all laws.

6.3.16.3 Evaluation

The context of both passages links John the Baptist with the Jordan River, baptism, and the forgiveness of sins, demonstrating a clear connection. They both refer to Jesus Christ as a revealer as well. The major differences lie in the author of the VE’s focus on Valentinian baptism and myth. Jesus essentially has two baptisms, one at the Jordan with John, who serves as a type of the Demiurge, and a second when he ascends into the Aeon (*VE* 41:36-37). The second is referred to as the redemption of Christ (*Haer* I:21,2). The first is a psychic baptism, and the second is spiritual. Given the differences in narrative, the contexts and language show many similarities.

6.3.16.4 Valentinian Hermeneutic

This passage is much more orthodox than the rest of the VSS. The ethical (sins) is not replaced by the intellectual and Jesus Christ is not replaced with “son,” “Word,” or “saviour.” However, the author remains consistent with the Valentinian myth and includes an increased emphasis on predestination, which is demonstrated by the author reminding his readers that they have been sent out into the world in order to be eventually reunified with the Pleroma.

6.4 Summary

The Valentinians revered the FG from very early on and altered the FG’s teaching in order to fit it into their Valentinian myth. Consequently, the heresiologists felt threatened and retaliated with the same weapon that was being used against them, the FG. Irenaeus knew that the nature of Christ was at stake (*Haer* III:16,1). Heracleon and Theodotus certainly made use of the FG and altered its teaching on the nature of Christ. The question this chapter has sought to answer is: Did the VSS from the NHL continue the tradition of using the nature of Christ in the FG to explain their myth? This chapter has looked at sixteen examples (see below) that demonstrate a strong contextual and linguistic connection with passages from the FG. While there are many others

that have been identified by scholars in the past (Malinine, Puech & Quispel 1956), these sixteen demonstrate a clear intertextual link and illustrate how the VSS altered the nature of Christ as found in the FG. Chapter 7 will evaluate the degree of intertextuality between the nature of Christ in the FG and the VSS.

Summary of Chapter 6

In the following summary of results, the influence of the FG on each passage from the VSS was assessed as either: possible: probable, or almost certain.

[Jesus Christ] He enlightened them; he gave them a way and the way is the truth about which he taught them (GT 18:18-21).

ἐγώ εἰμι ἡ ὁδὸς καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια καὶ ἡ ζωὴ (John 14:6).

Assessment: *Probable*

Therefore, if one has knowledge he is from above...knows where he comes from and where he is going (GT 22:2-4, 14-15).

ἀλλ' οὐκ οἶδας πόθεν ἔρχεται (John 3:8)... Ὁ ἄνωθεν ἐρχόμενος ἐπάνω πάντων ἐστίν (v 31).

Assessment: *Probable*

The Word became a body (CΩΜΑ, GT 26:4-8).

ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο καὶ ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν (John 1:14a).

Assessment: *Probable*

He [the beloved son] breathed into them (GT 30:34).

[Ἰησοῦς] ἐνεφύσησεν ... αὐτοῖς· (John 20:22).

Assessment: *Probable*

He [beloved son] became for them a way (GT 31:28-29).

[Ἰησοῦς] ἐγώ εἰμι ἡ ὁδὸς καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια καὶ ἡ ζωὴ (John 14:6).

Assessment: *Probable*

Before Christ came there was no bread ... he brought bread from heaven... (GP 55:6, 12-13).

(cf. [Ἰησοῦς] ὁ καταβάς) ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ἄρτος ὁ καταβάς ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ (John 6:41b).

Assessment: *Probable*

He who does not eat my flesh and drink my blood does not have life... (GP 57:4-5).

ἐὰν μὴ φάγητε τὴν σάρκα τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου καὶ πίνητε αὐτοῦ τὸ αἷμα, οὐκ ἔχετε ζωὴν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς (John 6:53).

Assessment: *Almost Certain*

Through the Holy Spirit, we are indeed born again... (GP 69:4-6).

ἐὰν μή τις γεννηθῆ ἄνωθεν ... καὶ τὸ γεγεννημένον ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος (John 3:3, 6).

Assessment: *Probable*

He who knows the truth is free... You shall know the truth and the truth will make you free... (GP 77:15-18, 84:7-9).

γνώσεσθε τὴν ἀλήθειαν, καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια ἐλευθερώσει ὑμᾶς (John 8:32).

Assessment: *Almost Certain*

But if there is one who does not believe, he is not persuaded. <Great> are those who believe. The thought of those who are saved shall not perish... (TR 46:3-5, 21-23).

πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτὸν μὴ ἀπόληται ἀλλ' ἔχη ζωὴν αἰώνιον... ἀλλ' ἵνα σωθῆ ὁ κόσμος δι' αὐτοῦ... ὁ πιστεύων... ὁ δὲ ἀπειθῶν (John 3:16-17, 36).

Assessment: *Probable*

...only son...and he revealed the unexplainable power... (TT 57:8-32).

Θεὸν οὐδεὶς ἑώρακεν πώποτε· μονογενὴς θεὸς ὁ ὢν εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρὸς ἐκεῖνος ἐξηγήσατο (John 1:18).

Assessment: *Possible*

The Logos, the cause of these things coming into being...The spiritual Logos who is the cause of the things which have come into being... (TT 80:11-13, 114:7-22).

[ὁ λόγος] πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο, καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἓν (John 1:3).

Assessment: *Probable*

...from the Logos, [the saviour] who came into being in flesh... (TT 113:38).

Καὶ ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο (John 1:14a).

Assessment: *Probable*

[The saviour] appeared in the flesh... (IK 12:18).

Καὶ ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο (John 1:14a).

Assessment: *Probable*

...through the Logos his flesh... (VE 32:34-39).

Καὶ ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο (John 1:14a).

Assessment: *Probable*

This is the fullness of the summary of knowledge which was revealed to us by our Lord Jesus Christ, the Monogenes... (VE 40:30-34).

...ἐκ τοῦ πληρώματος...ὅτι ὁ νόμος διὰ Μωϋσέως ἐδόθη...διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ...μονογενῆς... ἐκεῖνος ἐξηγήσατο (John 1:16-18).

Assessment: *Probable*

Table 20: Summary of Chapter 6

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

7.1 Introduction

The purpose of this work has been to compare the nature of Christ in the FG and the VSS from the NHL and to demonstrate intertextuality. While Thomassen's work *The Spiritual Seed* discusses the nature of Christ in the VSS, this is the first work to specifically focus on the nature of Christ in the VSS and how it compares with and has been influenced by the nature of Christ in the FG. The following section contains seven questions that seek to determine the degree to which one can confidently conclude that the nature of Christ in the FG and the nature of Christ in the VSS do indeed evidence intertextuality. In addition, sections 7.3 and 7.4 provide a short summary of the work and suggestions for further research.

7.2 Towards a View of Intertextuality Between the FG and the VSS from the NHL

Intertextuality is the study of how the meaning of texts has been influenced by other texts. Kristeva has been instrumental in defining and shaping the study of intertextuality and has furthered previous research by scholars such as Bakhtin. Kristeva interprets Bakhtin by explaining that he "considers writing as a reading of the anterior literary corpus and the text as an absorption of and a reply to another text" (1980: p. 69). In other words, texts are "a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another" (1980: p. 66). She places these interactions on two axes. The horizontal axis is the line from the author to the reader, and the vertical axis is the line between the text and exterior texts and contexts. The previous chapters have attempted to look at both the horizontal axis, by analysing the date,

language, purpose and communities of both texts, and the vertical axis, by looking at the texts themselves in order to show similarities. The similarities were examined in chapter 6 in order to demonstrate evidence of intertextuality. Some theorists have gone too far by stating that any given text is nothing but quotation and that, “the writer can only imitate a gesture that is always anterior, never original. His only power is to mix writings, to counter the ones with the others, in such a way as never to rest on any of them” (Barthes 1977: p. 146). This makes the author nothing more than a conductor and denies his or her creativity. The previous chapters have argued that the authors of both the FG and the VSS have been more than mere redactors and compilers of previous texts. They have both been influenced by previous texts but have also produced unique material. There are degrees of intertextuality, ranging from an exact copy to a loose connection. The following sections employ seven questions that seek to assess the degree of intertextuality between the FG and the VSS and the extent to which their views of the nature of Christ reflect this intertextuality.

7.2.1 Were the Readers of the VSS Expected to Recognize the Intertextuality?

In Mark Powell’s work *Chasing the Eastern Star: Adventures in Biblical Reader-Response Criticism*, he gives three criteria for judging whether the implied readers of Matthew’s Gospel were expected to recognize “a proposed intertextual connection” (2001: p. 102). All three of his criteria are worthy of consideration here. They are (1) availability – was knowledge of the “alleged precursor text” available to readers of the “successor text”?, (2) degree of repetition – ranking parallels from verbatim quotation on one end of the scale to vague allusion on the other end, and (3) thematic coherence – is the meaning or the effect of the parallel consistent with the larger context of the narrative? Thematic coherence was dealt with in chapter 6 within each of the individual “context” sections, so it will not be argued again here.

Turning to the question of availability, it was argued in chapter 3 that the FG was composed a generation before the earliest of the VSS in the NHL. Furthermore, as noted above, the commentaries of Ptolemy and Heracleon, as well as Theodotus’s writings give us the clearest examples of Valentinians’ use

of the FG in the second century. In addition, Irenaeus describes the battle between Orthodox Christianity and the Valentinians as focused on the FG. He argued that their founder Valentinus made copious use of the FG and that the FG therefore could be used to defend itself (*Haer* III:11,7). Apart from Valentinian tradition, the direct quotations within the VSS in the NHL also attest to the FG's availability to the individual authors.

Concerning degree of repetition, Johannine parallels in the VSS range from allusions (GT 18:18-21; 26:4-8; 31:28-29; GP 55:6, 12-13) to direct quotations (GT 22:14-15; GP 57:4-5; GP 77:15-18; GP 84:7-9; TT 80:11-13; TT 114:7-22). On one end of the spectrum would be passages like GT 18:18-21 where the author clearly alludes to the FG and the degree of intertextuality is strengthened by the idea being repeated later in the book but with evidences of reworking by the author: "He [Jesus Christ] enlightened them; he gave them a way and the way is the truth about which he taught them." Because of similar contexts and language between this passage and the FG, this passage clearly alludes to John 14:6 but has been modified in order to fit the Valentinian paradigm. This concept also occurs in GT 31:28-29, which strengthens the repetition. Other passages fall at the opposite end of the spectrum, such as GP 84:7-9: "You shall know the truth and the truth will make you free." Because of the inclusion of the particle $\times\epsilon$, which signals a quotation, similar contexts, and a second passage that includes the same idea (GP 77:15-18), the degree of repetition can be deemed as almost exact. Passages occur on both ends of the spectrum (from allusion to almost direct quotation), but the VSS clearly repeat concepts and passages from the FG.

7.2.2 How Aware Were the Valentinians of the FG's Influence?

Apart from Irenaeus's attack on the Valentinians for using the FG (*Haer* III:11,7) and explicit use by Heracleon, Ptolemy, and Theodotus, which demonstrates an early connection to the FG as foundational to the Valentinian system, the VSS in the NHL themselves contain clear allusions to and quotations from the FG. The clearest, most direct quotations occur in the GP. Furthermore, the Coptic word $\times\epsilon$, which signals a direct or indirect quotation in Coptic, occurs in contexts that have allusions or direct quotations from the FG.

This signal appears in the GT, GP, and TT. Additionally, the Logos becoming flesh through the saviour was foundational to their system and could have only been influenced by the FG.

7.2.3 How Much Did they Alter the FG?

The authors of the VSS incorporated parts of the FG but altered the text in order to fit their myth. In order to accomplish this, they internalized concepts like the Logos becoming flesh and used allusions and direct quotations in Valentinian contexts, like their predecessors. Even concepts like a corporeal Logos were altered extensively in order to fit their myth. For example, their Pleromatology includes the splitting of the Logos into the primary and lesser forms. The primary Logos gave flesh to the saviour, which became his flesh, but the split between perfection and deficiency within the Logos was necessary to maintain the transcendent nature of the Pleroma (TT 77:37–78:20). This is explained by Irenaeus using the feminine counterpart of the primary Logos, Sophia (*Haer* I:11,1). In Irenaeus's understanding, Christ is equivalent to the primary Logos, who returns to the Pleroma. The Valentinian system, no matter whether it involves Sophia or the Logos, includes a fall, split, and ultimate reunification through mutual participation. Therefore, the VSS have included the FG's concept of a hypostatized and corporeal Logos but have fully integrated it into their system, altering it to fit their needs. Additionally, chapter 6 demonstrated that the VSS altered various quotations and allusions to suit their requirements. This evidence further supports the conclusion that they were aware of the FG's influence upon their writings.

7.2.4 How Explicit Were their Allusions to and Quotations from the FG?

There are very few direct quotations of the FG in the VSS. GT 22:14-15, GP 57:4-5, GP 77:15-18, GP 84:7-9, TT 80:11-13, and TT 114:7-22 are most likely quotations from the FG and all include the Coptic word ⲭϮ, which may have been inserted to signal to the reader that these passages were influenced by other texts. GP 57:4-5/John 6:53 and GP 84:7-9/John 8:32 serve as clear examples:

“(ⲭⲉ) He who doesn’t eat my flesh (Ⲑⲁⲣⲥ) and drink my blood doesn’t have life” (GP 57:4-5).

“Unless you eat the flesh (σάρκα) of the son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in yourselves” (John 6:53).

“The Logos says (ⲭⲉ) ‘You shall know the truth (ἀλήθειαν) and the truth (ἀλήθεια) will set you free (ελευθεροῦσιν)’” (GP 84:7-9).

“Jesus said... ‘...you will know the truth (ἀληθειᾶ), and the truth (ἀληθειᾶ) will set you free (ἐλευθερώσει)’” (John 8:32).

While these are clearly influenced by the FG, other passages are not as clear. The words “The word became a body” (GT 26:4-8), for instance, only finds parallel in John 1:14, but the term “Word” (ⲱⲉⲭⲉ) has replaced ΛΟΓΟΣ and “body” (ⲐⲞⲘⲁ) has been used instead of σάρξ. This linguistic alteration was made to fit John 1:14’s human Logos into the Valentinian system. Likewise, the Logos in John 1:14 became a body in Jesus Christ, but the Logos in the GT provided a body for the saviour, a Valentinian idea known from Theodotus (*Exc* 1:1), Heracleon (*In Jo* 2:14), and Ptolemy (*Haer* 1:8,5). Hence, the allusions are clear but repackaged into the Valentinian myth. This shows that what began as explicit citation in the early Valentinian texts such as Heracleon’s and Ptolemy’s commentaries, became doctrine that was thoroughly digested by the VSS in the NHL and altered linguistically and contextually to better align with their myth. One might say that the Valentinians, as well as the author of the FG, took their own paradigm and contextualized it for their audience through the use of known concepts.

7.2.5 How Critical Was it that the Reader Understood the Intertextuality with the FG?

The authors and translators left evidence of their concern for the reader’s understanding of the FG’s influence: (1) similar points of theology and (2) direct quotations, signalled by the Coptic word ⲭⲉ. The first point is illustrated by the fact that the Valentinians spoke of either Sophia or Logos as giving flesh to the saviour (*Exc* 1:1, 26:1/TT 124:25–125:24). The GT does not focus on the Pleroma or mention Sophia, but the Logos does provide the flesh for the saviour (TT 114:1-10). The second point has been illustrated above. Note however, that of the sixteen passages that chapter 6 analysed, only 6 of them contain the Coptic word ⲭⲉ to signal a quotation (GT 22:14-15; GP 57:4-

5; GP 77:15-18; GP 84:7-9; TT 80:11-13; TT 114:7-22) and of those, only 4 are clear, direct quotations. While the Valentinian authors in the NHL did not attempt to hide the intertextuality, most of the influence had been thoroughly integrated into the VSS. This should not be taken as an attempt by the author to hide every allusion to the FG, but rather it points to a system that was well developed and assumed that the FG had been integrated into it. Finally, the Valentinians' desire for their readers to understand the intertextuality between the VSS and the FG shows in the tradition and writings that came before them and influenced their theology. Early on, Heracleon and Theodotus sought to demonstrate that the FG and Valentinian myth were compatible. They would not have written commentaries explaining how the FG reflected their own theology if this was not important. The use of the FG's view of the enfleshed Logos as well as using quotations from the FG demonstrate this desire to show that the teachings contained in the VSS were compatible with the FG.

7.2.6 What Was the Intertextuality with the FG Intended to Indicate to Readers of the VSS?

The point of intentional intertextuality is so that readers will ultimately read a text in light of another. Direct quotations are the most obvious way in which the VSS signalled to the reader that they should read the VSS in light of the FG. The Valentinians never explain these quotations in such a way as to invalidate them but rather assume that the FG supported the authors' thoughts. For example, both TT 80:11-13 and 114:7-22 contain the Coptic particle $\times\epsilon$, which signals a quotation. Yet, as 6.3.12.1 demonstrated, the author of the TT does not seek to contradict the FG or explain how the VSS oppose the FG but uses a similar context, showing a deep intertextuality, which the author of the TT did not merely use as a springboard but allowed to permeate his context. In addition, the early Valentinians actually enlisted the FG as a Valentinian text even though only those enlightened through knowledge were expected to understand the deeper truths it contained. The Valentinians most likely chose to use the FG because it supported their two-level drama, an enfleshed Logos concept, and a positive view of the creator, all of which supported Valentinian theology.

7.2.7 How Is this Intertextuality Bound to the Larger Valentinian Paradigm?

The Logos providing flesh for the saviour and in turn becoming flesh in the saviour is fundamental to the Valentinian system. In order for the spirituals to be co-incarnated with the saviour, he had to become like them and enter into the world. The incarnation was soteriologically necessary in order to save those that he came to redeem (TT 124:25–125:24; *Val* 27-28). By becoming visible, he becomes a door to the pleromic world and reunification (*Exc* 26:1–27:6), the culmination of the whole Valentinian system. Thus, the Logos becoming flesh, which finds parallel only in the FG, is bound to the larger Valentinian system.

7.2.8 Conclusion

The Valentinians were clearly aware of their use of and influence by the FG. This began early on with Heracleon, Theodotus, and Ptolemy and continued with the VSS in the NHL through quotations, allusions, and the integration of theology. The argument that they were aware of the FG's influence is strengthened by their alteration of texts and theology. For example, John 1:14 is the only parallel for a corporeal Logos but the Valentinians, having so thoroughly incorporated the nature of Christ into their theology, altered the Logos's nature by explaining how he came from the Pleroma, split into two, and provided flesh for the saviour, satisfying the Valentinian view of a transcendent God while allowing for a saviour that came in a fleshly form. Another argument for the influence of the FG on the VSS is the explicit references to the FG and the authors' use of the Coptic word $\chi\epsilon$. The influence was important for the reader to comprehend, and the early VSS aimed to show how the theology of the FG fitted into the Valentinian myth. Likewise, the heresiologists assumed that most Valentinians knew that they made use of it and that they altered the FG's theology to suit their needs. The scale of adoption also strengthens the argument that the FG influenced the VSS. The early VSS as well as the VSS in the NHL thoroughly digested the FG and its theology. The FG's hypostatized, corporeal Logos was essential to the Valentinian myth. The fact that the nature of Christ in the FG was fully integrated into the VSS demonstrates that the

influence was bound to the larger system. Finally, Powell's criteria for judging intertextuality have been helpful. The FG was available, repeated through allusion and almost exact quotation, and when the FG influenced a passage, the Valentinian author made it consistent with the larger context. These answers to the seven questions above demonstrate that the influence was not isolated or tangential but evident, fully digested, and bound to the larger system. The FG's influence upon the VSS was not only well known by the heresiologists and the early Valentinians but by the authors of the VSS from the NHL as well.

7.3 Summary

A cursory examination of the nature of Christ in the VSS and the FG can be quite demoralizing and downright confusing. On the one hand, one might read Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian only to find a vast disparity between the FG and the VSS. After all, Irenaeus paints the Valentinians as either liars (*Haer* III:16,1) or horrible exegetes (*Haer* Preface 3). On reading the documents themselves, one might also come to the conclusion that the FG and the VSS are quite different. The latter take Christian concepts and colour them with Platonic and Stoic brushes, creating a portrait of a Valentinian myth of the Pleroma, pairs of aeons, co-incarnation of Jesus and the spiritual seeds, and reunification with the Pleroma. Nonetheless, amongst these foreign concepts, the VSS in the NHL contain a hypostatized, corporeal Logos, who descended from above and came to reconcile the fall, returning to the cosmic region with those he came to save. The cosmic Logos becoming flesh finds direct parallel only in the FG. Thus, the VSS and the FG are more similar than they appear from a cursory reading.

Similarities also exist in terms of background. The FG and the VSS were both originally penned in Greek. The Valentinians began writing shortly after the FG was composed, and some of the VSS in the NHL very well could have been written quite soon after its composition. Both the FG and the VSS originated in Jewish-Christian contexts, and, unlike most Gnostic works, the VSS hold the creator in a positive light. Finally, the FG and the VSS both share

soteriological purposes. However, while the author of the FG wanted his readers to know that their faith in Jesus guaranteed their eternal life and reunification with the Father, the authors of the VSS teach that reunification with the Pleroma occurs through knowledge. Whereas the former emphasized faith in Jesus, the latter focused on the eradication of ignorance. When the Valentinian myth and emphasis on gnosis are extracted, the FG and the VSS share quite similar backgrounds. Kristeva's horizontal axis—the line drawn between the author and the readers—sheds light on the intertextual clues left by the authors of the FG and the VSS.

The final piece of the puzzle, the vertical axis—the line between one text and another—has been analysed by showing that the FG and the VSS contain similar theologies of the nature of Christ (chapters 5 and 6) and linguistic signs of intertextuality (chapter 6). The former can be seen in the Valentinians' extensive use of the FG and their adoption and alteration of the nature of Christ in the FG. The most conclusive sign that the nature of Christ in the VSS was influenced by the FG is the fact that it contains a hypostatized, human Logos. When all of this is combined with chapter 6's analysis of sixteen parallel passages between the FG and the VSS and the linguistic signs of intertextuality, one can confidently conclude that the nature of Christ in the VSS was indeed influenced by the FG.

7.4 Suggestions for Further Research

This work has compared the nature of Christ in the FG and the VSS and has sought to demonstrate that the nature of Christ in the FG influenced the VSS. Yet, the Valentinians were influenced heavily by other texts as well. The works of Williams' (1988: p. 191), Laine (2005), Thomassen (2006), and others have shown the influence of Paul upon the VSS. A dozen or more studies could be produced by comparing the VSS with Paul's letters. Research on the Old Testament influence on the Valentinian understanding of the nature of Christ would also be profitable.

While this study limited itself to the nature of Christ in the FG and the VSS, another worthwhile study would be to compare the resurrection of Christ

in the VSS and 1 Cor 15. Journal articles have been written (Laine 2005), but a thorough examination of this topic remains to be done. Comparing the soteriology, redemption, protology, and cosmology of the VSS to the FG or another NT book would also be beneficial.

The Demiurge appears as an evil creator in much of the NHL. Yet the Valentinians viewed the creator as good. Why did they have a different view of the creator? A comparison of the biblical creator with the Demiurge in the VSS would make for an excellent study.

Another set of comparisons could be made between the VSS and Syrian sources. Many believe that the VSS exhibit a Syrian influence. Some even believe some of the books such as the GP (Laine 2005; Isenberg 1988: p. 131; Marjanen 1996: pp. 147-148) and the GT (Nagel 1966: pp. 5-14) were composed in Syria. If they were composed in Syria, they may well relate in some way to known Syrian documents.

Also, another beneficial line of research could be to look into whether there are developmental lines to be traced from the VSS in the NHL, with their good creator and not fully docetic Christ, to full-blown Gnosticism and Docetism and whether the FG stands at the start of such developments.

Finally, how does the nature of Christ in the FG relate to the Sethian works in the NHL? The soteriology of the FG and the signs could also be compared to other documents in the NHL. Due to the scope and number of documents in the NHL, the range of topics that could be fruitfully explored is enormous.

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