makes use of language of subordination when he admonishes the Philippians to practice ὑπακοή themselves. As Paul claims, he only demands of the Philippians what his own ministry per definitionem is about. In consequence, Paul fosters the Philippians’ communion with himself while being absent: When practicing obedience and the image of submission, the Philippians will also come to imitate Paul (Phil 3:17).

**2.6. A waiver of material prosperity**

The practice of humility can soon be transformed to rather concrete issues of daily life. In Phil 4:10-20 – according to Hans Dieter Betz the “Beilage einer Quittung” (πιττάκιον, χειρόγραφον)\(^{22}\) – Paul expresses his thanks for the financial support that he had received from the Philippians (cf. also similar remarks: 1:5-7; 2:25-30).\(^{23}\) As Klaus Wengst has pointed out, Paul’s expression of thanks (Phil 4:10-20) reflects the apostle’s freely chosen way of life: “Die Lebensweise als ταπεινός ist ... für Paulus ... nicht ihm von vornherein vorgegebener Zwang, sondern bewusste Wahl” (cf. also 2 Cor 11:7).\(^{24}\)

At the same time, Paul’s reaction to the Philippians’ gift and care reflects a deeper and a more nuanced understanding of the nature of humility: Since Paul in general insists on rejecting any kind of wages that are paid by the communities to reward the apostle for his apostleship – here we meet one of the crucial principles of Paul’s self-understanding as apostle, which is even contrary to early Christian missionary practices (1 Cor 9:14) – he has to show humbleness when receiving a gift since he has to give up his understanding of his apostolic ministry. The attitude of humility, implying a waiver of rights, forces Paul to accept wages from the community. In this case, humility does not consist in refraining from wages and possibly comfortable living-conditions, but rather in receiving financial support and donations.

**2.7. Genus humile and genus medium**

In general, Paul’s letter-writing is stylistically performed as genus humile.\(^{25}\) This applies also to his epistolary style of writing to the Philippians. Only Phil 2:6-11 might be an exception: this passage functions as a narrative exemplum.

\(^{22}\) H. D. Betz, Der Apostel Paulus, 16.

\(^{23}\) Cf. J. Reumann, Philippians, 676.


\(^{25}\) Cf., e.g.: Cicero, inv 1.15.20; Rhet Her 4.8.11. Cf. H. Lausberg, Elemente, 154: The genus humile “hat wenig ornatus, da es nur lehren (docere) und beweisen (probare) will. Seine virtutes sind so puritas und perspicuitas.”