

# Jesus – Gestalt und Gestaltungen

Rezeptionen des Galiläers in Wissenschaft,  
Kirche und Gesellschaft

Festschrift für Gerd Theißen  
zum 70. Geburtstag

herausgegeben von  
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UNIVERSITÉ DE FRIBOURG / UNIVERSITÄT FREIBURG

Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht

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## How Radical is Itinerant Radicalism? The Case of Luke 14:26

### Introduction

Among the numerous original contributions of Gerd Theißen to New Testament studies, “itinerant radicalism” (*Wanderradikalismus*) is one of his most influential theses related to the study of the historical Jesus.<sup>1</sup> He coined this term in the early part of his long and fruitful scholarly career. His essay entitled “Wanderradikalismus. Literatursoziologische Aspekte der Überlieferung von Worten Jesu im Urchristentum” was published already in 1973 in the journal *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*.<sup>2</sup> Theißen substantiated his thesis in another article in 1977,<sup>3</sup> and in the same year in a book entitled *Soziologie der Jesusbewegung: Ein Beitrag zur Entstehungsgeschichte des Urchristentums*.<sup>4</sup> This work (only 111 pages, but full of excellent ideas and clear arguments) has become very influential in New Testament scholarship. Theißen has re-worked and enlarged it almost 30 years later, in a monograph entitled *Die Jesusbewegung: Sozialgeschichte einer Revolution der Werte*.<sup>5</sup> In the thesis concerning itinerant radicalism, Theißen argues convincingly that in the life of the earliest followers of Jesus it was a necessary consequence of their itinerant, “wandering” life-style that they had to make radical decisions concerning leaving behind their families and properties. Theißen has convincingly shown that this radical life-style was not the only option in

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1 I am pleased that among his many honours, Gerd Theißen received an honorary doctorate from my own university, the Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary. I am also grateful for this opportunity to express my thanks for his support of my own work.

2 G. Theißen, “Wanderradikalismus. Literatursoziologische Aspekte der Überlieferung von Worten Jesu im Urchristentum”, *ZTK* 70 (1973) 245–71. Repr. in G. Theißen, *Studien zur Soziologie des Urchristentums* (WUNT 19; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, <sup>3</sup>1989), 79–105.

3 G. Theißen, “‘Wir haben alles verlassen’ (Mc. X 28): Nachfolge und soziale Entwurzelung in der jüdisch-palästinischen Gesellschaft des I. Jahrhunderts n. Ch.,” *NovT* 19 (1977) 161–96. Repr. in Theißen, *Studien zur Soziologie*, 106–41.

4 G. Theißen, *Soziologie der Jesusbewegung: Ein Beitrag zur Entstehungsgeschichte des Urchristentums* (KT 35; Gütersloh: Chr. Kaiser/Gütersloher Verlagshaus, <sup>7</sup>1997 [1977]).

5 G. Theißen, *Die Jesusbewegung: Sozialgeschichte einer Revolution der Werte* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2004).

early Christianity: not every follower of Jesus could take up a “wandering” life-style – the majority had to live out their Christian faith in “settled communities”. The itinerant life-style was earlier, but the settled life-style presented a certain limit to it. These two main streams of early Christianity are behind most of our Jesus traditions, on occasion the latter contributing to re-interpretations of texts originating in the former circles.

In this paper I should like to point to another limit that has to be taken into consideration when dealing with texts originating in the itinerant, radical stream of early Christianity. This “limit” is present in texts in which Jesus claims priority to himself even over against family members. I have discussed a number of such texts in a monograph that was prepared during my year in Heidelberg when Professor Gerd Theißen was my *Gastgeberprofessor* for a research project supported by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation.<sup>6</sup> In the following, I examine only one New Testament text in detail – perhaps (arguably) the most radical saying of Jesus in relation to itinerant radicalism. This verse is Luke 14:26: “If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even their own life—such a person cannot be my disciple.”<sup>7</sup> In this verse, the verb “hate” is such a strong term that on a first reading one can only think of a real enmity within the family, if a son or a daughter “hates” his or her parents when following Jesus.

Gerd Theißen has taken this verse in this radical sense, as can be seen in several of his writings. Theißen writes in his 1973 essay on “Wander-radikalismus”: “Die Logien vertreten ferner ein afamiliäres Ethos. Die Aufgabe der *stabilitas loci* schließt den Abbruch familiärer Beziehungen ein. Bedingung der Nachfolge ist der Haß von Vater und Mutter, Frau und Kindern, Bruder und Schwester (Lk 14,26).”<sup>8</sup> In his *Soziologie der Jesusbewegung*, Theißen quotes Luke 14:26 under the heading “*Familienlosigkeit*” (“being without a family”).<sup>9</sup> In his essay, “Wir haben alles verlassen”, he writes after a reference to a passage in Josephus as follows: “Das erinnert an den Haß von Familienangehörigen, der in der Jesusbewegung zur Bedingung

6 P. Balla, *The Child-Parent Relationship in the New Testament and its Environment* (WUNT 155; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003; repr. Peabody: Hendrickson, 2005). This paper is based on this work, with some more detailed argumentation concerning Luke 14:26. (I discuss Luke 14:26 in the monograph at pp. 142–8; in this paper I use material from those pages, and I extend the discussion.) I thank the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation for a renewed scholarship, with the help of which I completed the present paper at the University of Heidelberg between 7 July and 5 August, 2012.

7 In this paper I quote the text of the Bible from the new edition of NIV: The Holy Bible, New International Version (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2011, copyright: Biblica, Inc.).

8 Theißen, “Wanderradikalismus”, 249; *Studien zur Soziologie*, 83.

9 Theißen, *Soziologie der Jesusbewegung*, 17.

der Nachfolge erhoben wurde (Lc. xiv 26)."<sup>10</sup> From these examples we can see that Theißen takes the word “hate” in its strictest, first meaning, referring to a real emotional hatred. This hating involves a breach with the family; it is, indeed, seen as a condition of following Jesus.

In *Die Jesusbewegung*, Theißen has re-stated his thesis concerning itinerant radicalism in such a way that he not only substantiates his thesis with more arguments, but does so in conversation with literature that has emerged in the decades after he had first formulated this thesis. Concerning the “afamilial” character of the itinerant charismatics of the early church, Theißen keeps the heading “*Familienlosigkeit*” under which he quotes Luke 14:26. He refers to some who have challenged this thesis, but he reaffirms it: “Dennoch möchte ich an dieser These mit Nachdruck festhalten.”<sup>11</sup> Concerning the quotation of Luke 14:26 he writes: “Ja, der Hass gegenüber allen Angehörigen konnte zur Pflicht gemacht werden.”<sup>12</sup> In this context, he rightly mentions that Matt 10:37 and Luke 14:26 are “variants of this tradition” (“Varianten dieser Überlieferung”), but calls Matt 10:37 only “a somewhat less shocking” (“etwas weniger anstößigen”) version of it.<sup>13</sup>

In this paper, I should like to show that Matt 10:37 is not only “somewhat less shocking”, but is a real paraphrase of the same idea that is expressed in Luke 14:26. To this end, I shall refer to some occurrences of the verb “to hate” in the New Testament, and show that the Greek verb *μισέω* not only means “I hate”, but in the Bible can be used to express preferences. Depending on the context, it may have the following meaning: if someone “hates A”, this may be the same as to say that he or she “loves A less” than he or she loves B; he or she “places A in second place” after B.

### The main meanings of *μισέω*

The Greek verb *μισέω* occurs forty times in the New Testament. The Bauer-Aland *Griechisch-deutsches Wörterbuch* (sixth edn, 1988) gives the following main meanings to this verb: “hassen, m. Haß verfolgen, verabscheuen” (col. 1058). In this dictionary it is noted that if the verb is used with a person as its object, then the meaning is the opposite of “I love”, *ἀγαπάω* (col. 1058). It is to be acknowledged that in many cases a real enmity is involved, because the context demands this meaning. Such a context is, for example, persecution. This meaning is clear in passages like, for example, Matt 10:22:

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- 10 Theißen, “Wir haben alles verlassen”, 185; *Studien zur Soziologie*, 130.
  - 11 Theißen, *Die Jesusbewegung*, 67 n. 108.
  - 12 Theißen, *Die Jesusbewegung*, 68.
  - 13 Theißen, *Die Jesusbewegung*, 68.

“You will be hated by everyone because of me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved.” Most occurrences of the verb in Luke refer to real “hating”, too. This has to be acknowledged; indeed, this is the primary, main meaning of the Greek verb. My question is, however: may we find texts where the context does not demand this meaning? Let us briefly survey the occurrences of the verb *μισέω* in Luke, keeping this question in mind.

### The occurrences of *μισέω* in Luke

In Luke 1:71 we read: “...salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us”. In this quotation from Zechariah’s Song there is a clear reference to enemies; and the expression “the hand of all who hate us” may be even understood as an exposition of the word “enemies”.<sup>14</sup>

In two sayings of Jesus, near each other, the context is again that of enmity. In Luke 6:22 we read: “Blessed are you when people hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man.”<sup>15</sup> Luke 6:27–28 reads as follows: “But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.”<sup>16</sup> In these examples “hatred” is the opposite of love; hatred is an expression of enmity. As Bock rightly affirms: “For a disciple to align with Jesus was to take a public and potentially offensive stand that would produce reaction, even hatred.”<sup>17</sup>

In Luke 16:13 we read as a saying of Jesus: “No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.” Here, in the first part of the saying one might argue that “hate” refers to “placing second” one of the masters, and “love” refers to “preferring” the other, but the second part of the saying indicates that a real “either/or” is at stake here: just as one has to choose between “God” and “money”, so one

14 Bovon notes that in v. 71 the reference to salvation belongs to Lucan vocabulary, but “enemies” and “those who hate us” are expressions belonging to the conventional language of the Psalms; F. Bovon, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas* (EKK; 4 vol.; Zürich: Benziger Verlag, Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1989–2009) I.105.

15 Bovon discusses Luke 6:22–23 and Luke 6:26 together in his commentary, under the heading: *Die Verfolgung* (“Persecution”). Concerning these verses he writes: “*Μισέω* ist nicht nur das Gefühl des Hasses, sondern auch seine Ausdruckskraft und die Art, wie die Verfolgten ihn erleben” (Bovon, *Lukas*, I.303).

16 Bovon discusses Luke 6:27–28 under the heading: *Die Feindesliebe* (“Love toward the enemy”; Bovon, *Lukas*, I.312).

17 D.L. Bock, *Luke* (BECNT; 2 vol.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994, 1996) I.578. Bock argues convincingly for the authenticity of this “beatitude” as a saying of Jesus (Bock, *Luke*, I.577–8).

has to choose between the two “masters”. Theißen – being consistent in his argument – interprets the term “hate” in this verse in the same way as he interprets it in Luke 14:26. In a context where he writes about the latter, he refers to Luke 16:13 (and its Matthaean parallel) when he affirms: “Whatever one understands by ‘hate’, it is the opposite of ‘love’ (cf. Matt. 6.24; Luke 16.13).”<sup>18</sup> However, we have to keep in mind that if the saying were only about two masters in real life, it would be possible to take the expression of “hating” as a reference to “loving less” one master when compared to the love toward the other master.

In Luke 19:14, in the Parable of the Ten Minas we read concerning the attitude of the “subjects” toward their lord: “But his subjects hated him and sent a delegation after him to say, ‘We don’t want this man to be our king.’”<sup>19</sup> Here again we may see a strong “enmity” expressed by this term, but the position of the subjects (“slaves” in verse 13) does not allow them to show their hatred in other ways than to send a deputation with a message that they do not want their lord to become a king. Perhaps they were afraid of more power being held in the hands of their lord: he can exploit them, he can rule over them as a tyrant even more than before. I agree with Green, who affirms concerning this passage: “In this co-text, ‘to hate’ is not a description of personal affect, but a rejection of his claim to the throne; their ‘hate’ is realized in their petition that he not be allowed to have authority over them.”<sup>20</sup> The story is brief, it does not give much detail; thus we cannot know with certainty what else “hatred” might have included in this case. Fitzmyer rightly translates the Greek text here as follows: “His fellow-citizens, however, who disliked him, sent a delegation after him...”<sup>21</sup>

In Luke 21:12–19, Jesus warns his disciples concerning persecution. In verse 12 even “prison” is mentioned. In verse 16 we read: “You will be betrayed even by parents, brothers and sisters, relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death.” Thus we can say with certainty that in verse 17 the reference to hating is a strong term involving persecution: “Everyone will hate you because of me.” As Eckey has affirmed: “Die Jünger sollen sich darauf einstellen, daß ihre Bindung an Jesus sie zu Außenseitern der Ge-

18 G. Theißen, *A Theory of Primitive Christian Religion* (London: SCM, 1999), 67.

19 Nolland affirms: “There is little doubt that we have here an allusion to the delegation that sought to oppose the confirmation by Augustus of Archelaus as ruler of Judea (Josephus, *Ant.* 17.299–314). But we cannot be sure that Luke is aware of this”; J. Nolland, *Luke* (WBC; 3 vol.; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1989, 1993) 3.914.

20 J.B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke* (NICNT; Grand Rapids/Cambridge: Eerdmans, 1997), 678–9.

21 J.A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke: Introduction, Translation, and Notes* (AB; 2 vol.; New York/London: Doubleday, 1981, 1985) 2.1227.

sellschaft und zu Feinden des Menschengeschlechts stempelt (17; vgl. 6,22a).”<sup>22</sup>

We note that out of the six occurrences of the term *μισέω* in Luke so far, only the first one (1:71, in Zechariah’s Song) does not appear in a saying of Jesus. The Greek verb *μισέω* occurs seven times in Luke; the seventh occurrence is the focus of our present essay: Luke 14:26. We look now at this verse in its context.

### Luke 14:26 in its context

In Luke 14:25–27 we read: “Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: ‘If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even their own life—such a person cannot be my disciple. And whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.’” The two sayings in verses 26 and 27 are about discipleship.<sup>23</sup> In the first saying the contrast is between one’s relationship with his or her family members and one’s relationship with Jesus. In determining the meaning of *μισεῖ* in v. 26a, the context of the rest of the verse is of crucial significance. At the end of the list of those one has to “hate”, Jesus adds: “even their own life” (in the Greek in the singular form: “even his own life”, literally: “even his own soul”, τὴν ψυχὴν ἑαυτοῦ). In the Jesus tradition, Jesus is shown as reaffirming the validity of the love commandments, including that of Lev 19:18b: “love your neighbor as yourself” (see e.g. Matt 22:39; par. Mark 12:31, Luke 10:27). Thus in Luke 14:26b the reference to one’s own life requires a meaning of the verb *μισεῖ* something like: “places second”; because the person whom one has to follow has to have preference even to one’s own life. I agree with Bock who argues: “The call to ‘hate’ is not literal but rhetorical... Otherwise, Jesus’ command to love one’s

22 W. Eckey, *Das Lukasevangelium: Unter Berücksichtigung seiner Parallelen* (2 vol.; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2004) 2.860.

23 Although there are some scholars who doubt the authenticity of these sayings, I accept them as authentic sayings of Jesus. For a discussion of the authenticity of these sayings, see, e.g., Bock, *Luke*, 2.1281–2; Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 2.1060–1. For my purposes, the authenticity of the saying in v. 26 is more relevant. The authenticity (of at least parts) of this saying is widely agreed among scholars, see e.g. Eckey: “Die provozierende Formulierung von Lk 14,26 vom *Haß der Familie* macht es wahrscheinlich, daß dieser Ausspruch im Kern auf ihn [Jesus] selbst zurückgeht” (*Lukasevangelium*, 2.667, italics original); Green, *Luke*, 565; C.F. Evans, *Saint Luke* (London/ Philadelphia: SCM/ Trinity Press International, 1990), 576–8. The variants in the codices do not substantially change the meaning of these verses; I discuss them in my monograph, see Balla, *Child-Parent Relationship*, 142–3, and the more detailed commentaries, e.g., I.H. Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Exeter: Paternoster, 1978), 592–3.



neighbor as oneself as a summation of what God desires makes no sense (Luke 10:25–37).<sup>24</sup> As the verb is only expressed once in verse 26, if it does not refer to real hatred in the case of “one’s own life”, then it is not likely that it refers to real hatred in the case of the family members that are listed before the reference to one’s own life.

### The verb μισέω as a translation of Hebrew אָיַץ

Luke was familiar with the style and content of the Old Testament, as can be seen from his wide use of allusions to the Old Testament especially in the case of the infancy narratives.<sup>25</sup> Thus we can expect that he knew the idiomatic use of the Hebrew verb אָיַץ. This verb does not only mean “to hate”, but in the case of family relationships it can refer to someone “less favoured” when compared to someone who is “loved”. This usage can be seen, for example, in Deut 21:15–17. In this passage we read:

If a man has two wives, and he loves one but not the other, and both bear him sons but the firstborn is the son of the wife he does not love, when he wills his property to his sons, he must not give the rights of the firstborn to the son of the wife he loves in preference to his actual firstborn, the son of the wife he does not love. He must acknowledge the son of his unloved wife as the firstborn by giving him a double share of all he has. That son is the first sign of his father’s strength. The right of the firstborn belongs to him.

In the Hebrew text, the term translated above in the 2011 NIV text as the wife “he does not love” is a form of אָיַץ (*qal* feminine passive participle, literally: “who is not loved”, אָיַץ). Meinhold notes that “in the realm of the family” (“im familiären Bereich”) the opposite terms “love” and “hate” may mean “prefer” (“bevorzugen”) and “place behind” (“hintansetzen”). In this context, Meinhold refers to the following passages: Gen 25:28; 29:30–31; Deut 21:15–17.<sup>26</sup> I agree with those scholars who hold that the usage of these terms in Deut 21:15–17 serves as a background to understand the term “hate” in Luke 14:26.

Malachi 1:2b–3 may be another text that has a similar usage. In the book of Malachi, according to the immediate context of these verses, the reference is to two nations, and in this case “hatred” does involve enmity.<sup>27</sup> However, the story of the patriarchs that lies in the background of the passage in Malachi is about election, and in the context of election the terms may be understood as a reference to “preferring” and to “placing second” (or:

24 Bock, *Luke*, 2.1284.

25 See, e.g., Bock, *Luke*, 1.68.

26 A. Meinhold, *Maleachi* (BKAT; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2006), 43.

27 See, e.g., Meinhold, *Maleachi*, 43.

“placing behind”). The passage in Malachi reads: “‘Was not Esau Jacob’s brother?’ declares the Lord. ‘Yet I have loved Jacob, but Esau I have hated, and I have turned his hill country into a wasteland and left his inheritance to the desert jackals.’”

This text was understood by the apostle Paul as referring to election, as can be seen in Rom 9:10–13: “Not only that, but Rebekah’s children were conceived at the same time by our father Isaac. Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad—in order that God’s purpose in election might stand: not by works but by him who calls—she was told, ‘The older will serve the younger.’ Just as it is written: ‘Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.’” I agree with Evans, who draws the following conclusion from the above mentioned examples for the meaning of *μισέω* in Luke 14:26: “*If anyone... does not hate...* This may be an example of the Semitic expression of preference by means of antithesis – ‘I love A and hate B’ meaning ‘I prefer A to B’ (cf. Gen. 29:30ff; Deut. 21:15; Rom. 9:13) – which has been altered, but correctly interpreted, in the Matthaean form (Matt. 10:37).”<sup>28</sup>

### Conclusion: Luke 14:26 is about the priority of Jesus

As we have seen earlier, Gerd Theißen has pointed to the parallel passage of Luke 14:26, Matt 10:37, by referring to the latter as “a somewhat less shocking” version of the former.<sup>29</sup> On the basis of the “Semitic expression” discussed above by Evans, I too argue that Matt 10:37 is not simply “a somewhat less shocking” version of Luke 14:26, but a version that does represent well the content of the idiom concerning “hating” in the latter. Matthew 10:37–38 reads: “Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me.” For our purposes, it is of little significance whether the Lucan and Matthaean passages are taken from Q<sup>30</sup> or are independent sayings.<sup>31</sup> It is important to see that the expression “loves more” in Matt 10:37 refers to priority: someone is placed before Jesus in the disciple’s life. Jesus warns

28 Evans, *Saint Luke*, 577.

29 Theißen, *Die Jesusbewegung*, 68.

30 For a detailed argument of this thesis, including an attempt at reconstructing the original form of these sayings in Q, see H.T. Fleddermann, *Q: A Reconstruction and Commentary* (Biblical Tools and Studies 1; Leuven: Peeters, 2005), 745–55.

31 See e.g. Bock, *Luke*, 2.1281, who argues concerning the “double statement of discipleship involving the family and the cross in Luke 14:26–27” and Matt 10:37–38 that “it seems better to see two variations on a similar teaching than to see one teaching from one tradition.”

against such a priority: the disciple must not love anyone more than he or she loves Jesus. Luke 14:26 has the same message. Thus, I agree with scholars who argue that the term “hates” in Luke 14:26 is about “a disavowal of primary allegiance to one’s kin”,<sup>32</sup> a certain “ranking behind” (“Nachordnung”),<sup>33</sup> “a willingness to put parents, family, relatives, even one’s own life, in subordination to discipleship”.<sup>34</sup> In the disciple’s life, Jesus has to be given the first place; he has to be given priority before anybody else.

In his 1977 article, Gerd Theißen concedes that from a religious point of view existence as a disciple (“Nachfolgeexistenz”) is a consequence of meeting the Holy One (“Begegnung mit dem Heiligen”), but his own main task is to show from a sociological perspective that this existence is a variant of social uprootedness (“eine Variante sozialer Entwurzelung”).<sup>35</sup> We have to add that Theißen acknowledges that “orders are always more radical than actual behaviour” (“Gebote immer radikaler sind als wirkliches Verhalten”).<sup>36</sup> In this context, he mentions that according to 1 Cor 9:4–5 some of the disciples of Jesus took their wives with them on their journeys.<sup>37</sup> I agree with the overall thesis of Theißen concerning the itinerant radicalism of the early followers of Jesus. However, this “radicalism” was not as radical as Theißen has argued: it did not involve an “afamilial ethos”. It could lead to tensions in the family – when a disciple followed Jesus, and the disciple’s family regarded this with a certain enmity. However, the disciples of Jesus did not break the commandment concerning honouring one’s father and mother; they did not “hate” their parents.

In this paper, I have argued on the basis of only one radical saying of Jesus that the priority of Jesus is a key to understanding the radical sayings concerning family relationships in the early Christian movement.<sup>38</sup> This example may point to a “limit” in the radicalism of that movement. This “limit” is the priority of Jesus whom the disciples had to follow with all the

32 Green, *Luke*, 565.

33 G. Schneider, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas* (ÖTK; 2 vol.; Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus Gerd Mohn, Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1977) 2.321.

34 Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 2.1062.

35 Theißen, “Wir haben alles verlassen”, 161; *Studien zur Soziologie*, 106. Theißen repeats the expression “eine Variante sozialer Entwurzelung” in a recent work in which he summarizes his own major theses of his whole scientific career, in “dialogue” with many colleagues: G. Theißen, *Von Jesus zur urchristlichen Zeichenwelt: “Neutestamentliche Grenzgänge” im Dialog* (NTOA; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011), 24.

36 Theißen, G., “Die soziologische Auswertung religiöser Überlieferungen: Ihre methodologischen Probleme am Beispiel des Urchristentums”, *Kairos* 17 (1975) 284–99, on p. 290; repr. in Theißen, *Studien zur Soziologie*, 35–54, on p. 43.

37 Theißen, “Die soziologische Auswertung”, 290; Theißen, *Studien zur Soziologie*, 43.

38 I have discussed other sayings in the fourth chapter of my monograph: Balla, *Child-Parent Relationship*, 113–56.

consequences of that following. Luke 14:26 speaks about this priority. As Bock has rightly affirmed in his exposition of this verse: “Discipleship is fundamentally a call to allegiance. Jesus is to have first place over all, including family.”<sup>39</sup>

It would be exciting to ask the question: Who can claim such a priority? It may be argued that such a claim is a pointer to the self-understanding of Jesus: he expects this priority for his own person, because such a priority was due in one’s relationship to God in the environment of Jesus, and he regarded himself to be the Son of God.<sup>40</sup> Jesus’ self-understanding is strongly connected to the itinerant radicalism of early Christianity, but it is a vast field worthy to be studied separately as well.

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<sup>39</sup> Bock, *Luke*, 2.1284.

<sup>40</sup> On the views concerning the child-parent relationship in the “environment” of Jesus, especially on the priority of the “gods” or “God”, see the relevant sections of my monograph (chs 2 and 3): Balla, *Child-Parent Relationship*, 41–111.

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