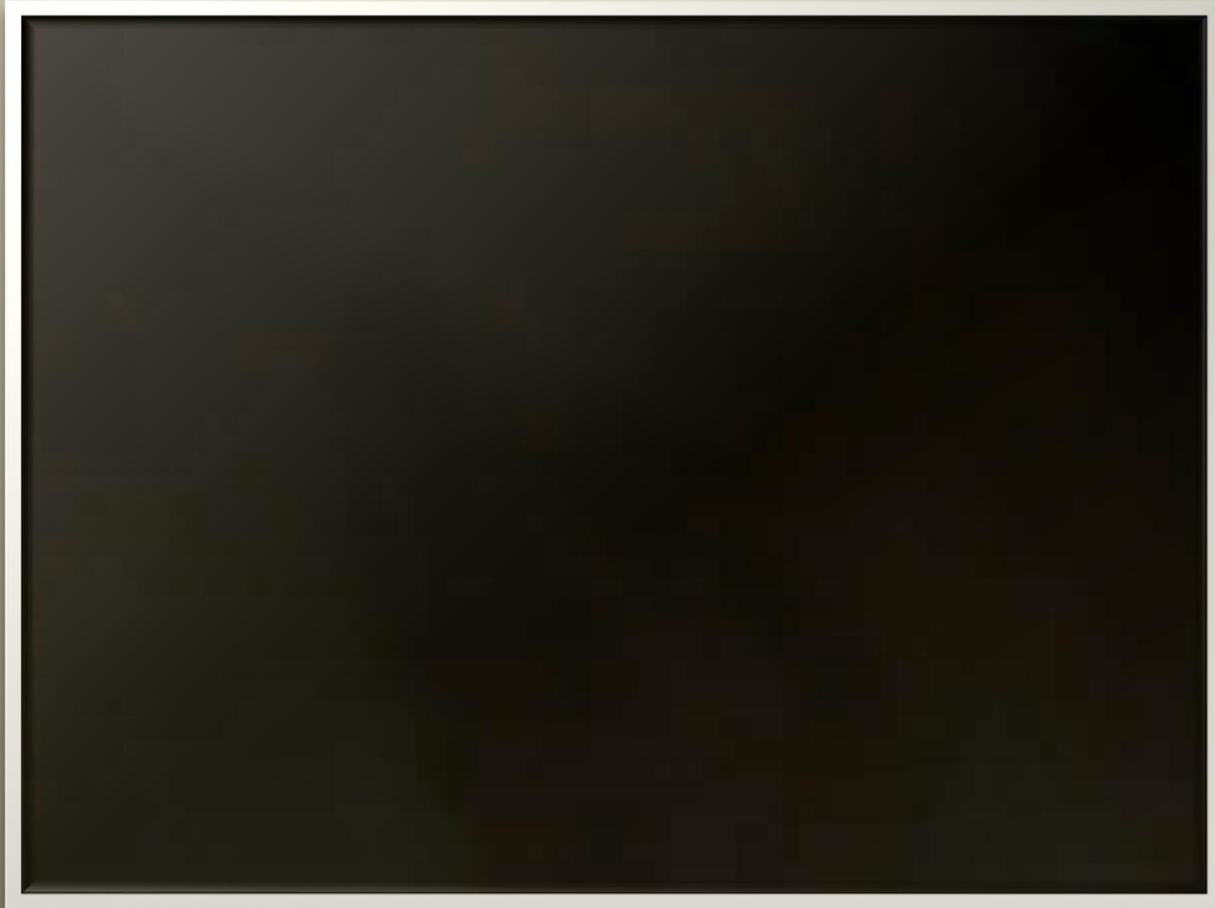


A Brief Recap

6:22-14:37



The Historical St. Paul

OLLI: F603 – Summer 2014



Sources for the Historical Paul

We have two sources for the Historical Paul: the 13 letters he is said to have written and the Book of Acts; the second part of the Gospel of Luke.

However, “available sources about Paul’s life are **riddled with historical inaccuracies**. Scholars believe that only 7 of the 13 letters in the New Testament were actually by Paul, and that the accounts of his life in the Acts of the Apostles are not completely reliable.” — Dale Martin, Yale Religious Studies

The Letters of Paul

- ❖ Paul is credited with writing 13 letters. They account for nearly half of the New Testament's 27 books.
- ❖ Undisputed: Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians, Philemon
- ❖ Deutero-Pauline Epistles: Ephesians, Colossians, 2 Thessalonians
- ❖ Pastoral Epistles: 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus

Why Did Paul Write Letters? – Pt. 1

We must remember that Paul's converts were Gentiles (**pagans**) who had little or no understanding about Judaism or Jesus. Because Paul could only spend a short time in each town, he would move on before newly converted church members had a complete grasp of this new theology.

Inevitably, problems would arise from doctrinal misunderstandings or ethical questions. The churches would write Paul with questions and his letters were his attempt to address those specific issues.

Why Did Paul Write Letters? – Pt. 2

Another reason for Paul's letter writing was perhaps the most frustrating for him: the arrival of **other Christian missionaries** whose preaching contradicted Paul's.

For example, a group of such missionaries apparently informed Paul's Galatian church that in addition to believing in the resurrection of Jesus, male converts had to be circumcised in order to be right with God.

Are Paul's Letters Forgeries?

Three of Paul's 13 letters, 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus are considered by most historians to be **pseudonymous**, which means someone used Paul's name to lend credibility to their work.

The letters feature writing styles, vocabulary and theological points of view that do not match up with Paul's genuine letters.

Outside the New Testament, we have many other forgeries in the name of Paul, such as 3 Corinthians and Laodiceans.

The Acts Of The Apostles

- Our other source for St. Paul.
- Written by the anonymous other of Luke.
- Acts picks up the story of Jesus after his ascension.
- It deals with the spread of Christianity throughout the Mediterranean world, and the evolution of the religion from all Jewish to the inclusion of Gentiles.
- Paul is the hero of Acts.

Who Was Luke?

In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. He presented himself alive to them after his suffering **by many proofs**, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.

Modern vs. Ancient History

- The ancients had no way to record a given moment at the point it occurred.
- Ancient historians favored oral over written sources. They were deemed more trustworthy.
- A “fact” in ancient times did not always mean the literal truth. Instead, it was often used to represent a more general truth.
- There was no expectation to record speeches verbatim. Rather, the author needed to convey what would probably have been said in a given situation.
- Ancient historians had limited ability to check the reliability of their sources.

Historical Problems With Acts

- As E. P. Sanders notes, the biggest historical concern with Acts is that its author and Paul are in fundamental disagreement as to Paul's mission.
- Acts see's Paul first as the apostle to the Jews of the Greek-speaking Diaspora. **Unfortunately, they rejected him.**
- Paul, however, sees himself exclusively as the apostle to the Gentiles. Paul tells us that Peter was the Apostle to the "circumcised."
- "Acts describes Paul differently from how he describes himself, both factually and theologically. Acts seems to differ with Paul's letters on important issues, such as the Law, Paul's own apostleship, and his relation to the Jerusalem Church. **Scholars generally prefer Paul's account over that in Acts.**" – Wikipedia, 6/13/13

Did Other Gospel Writers Know Paul?

The author of Luke clearly knows of Paul, but never mentions his letters. The other gospels are silent on the topic.

“Some like Joel Marcus have argued for Mark’s familiarity with Paul. Michael Goulder argued that Luke knew at least 1 Corinthians. Others believe Luke knew of Galatians, as well.”

— 2/16/13 email from Mark Goodacre, Duke University

Paul's Biography: His Letters

- He calls himself a Hebrew and a zealous Pharisee. He is highly educated. He persecuted the Jesus movement.
- Around 32-35 CE, Paul has a vision of the risen Jesus. He receives his gospel directly from “a revelation of Jesus Christ,” and is called to serve the non-Jewish world.
- He first goes to Arabia, then Damascus. Three years after his apostolic call, he makes the first of three trips to Jerusalem. He meets Peter and James, but none of the other apostles.
- The second trip is 14 years after his call when he appears before the Jerusalem leadership to explain his gospel and mission to the Gentiles.
- He writes to the Church in Rome about a third trip to Jerusalem and his hope to visit Rome afterwards.

Paul's Biography: His Letters

- Paul claimed many revelations from Jesus including direct voice communications and an ascent to the highest level of heaven.
- He had a physical disability sent by Satan.
- He claimed to have worked signs and mighty works that confirmed his apostleship.
- He was unmarried during his missionary days.
- He experienced numerous occasions of persecution including beatings, stoning's and a shipwreck.
- He worked as a manual laborer to support himself.

Paul's Biography: The Book of Acts

- Paul's Hebrew name was Saul. He was born in Tarsus a city in modern day Turkey.
- He came from a family of Pharisees and had a sister and nephew that lived in Jerusalem.
- He was born a Roman citizen.
- He had some role in the death of Stephen, the first member of the Jesus group to be executed.
- He was sent to Damascus to further persecute the Jesus movement when he has his vision of the risen Jesus.
- He worked as a tentmaker or leather worker.

Paul Persecutes Christians

For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how **I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it**. And I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, **so extremely zealous was I** for the traditions of my fathers. But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and who called me by his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order **that I might preach him among the Gentiles**, I did not immediately consult with anyone; **nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me**. - Gal. 1:13-17

The Conversion Of St. Paul



Paul's Conversion: His Letters 1

For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: **that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures**, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, **and last of all he appeared to me also**, as to one abnormally born.

– 1 Corinthians 15:3-8

Paul's Conversion: His Letters 2

I want you to know, brothers and sisters, **that the gospel I preached is not of human origin. I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ.** For you have heard of my previous way of life in Judaism, how intensely I persecuted the church of God and tried to destroy it. I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people and was extremely zealous for the traditions of my fathers. But when God, who set me apart from my mother's womb and called me by his grace, was pleased **to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles,** my immediate response was not to consult any human being.

- Galatians 1:11-16

Paul's Conversion: Acts of the Apostles

As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and **heard** a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied. "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do." The men traveling with Saul stood there speechless; **they heard the sound but did not see anyone**. Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing. So they led him by the hand into Damascus. For three days he was blind, and did not eat or drink anything. – Acts 9:3-9

What Is a Mystic?

A person who claims insight into mysteries transcending ordinary human knowledge as **by direct communication with the divine** or immediate intuition in a state of spiritual ecstasy. — [Definitions.com](https://www.definitions.com)

What Did Paul Believe?

For Paul, salvation did not come from following the Jewish Law, salvation had come – completely — from the death of the messiah and his resurrection from the dead. If following the law could bring about salvation, Christ would not have had to die. And so the Law is not part of what is required for salvation. **Only faith in the death and resurrection of God's messiah is what matters.**

More than that, Paul thought that this way of salvation through the death of God's messiah was what God had planned all along, as predicted by the prophet Isaiah, who indicated that all nations would come to belong to the people of God at the end of history. He was the one to whom God had revealed this truth. **So here, at the end of history as he knew it**, Paul had been called by God to proclaim this good news to the nations. In other words, **Paul himself was the fulfillment of the prophecies** of Scripture that predicted what would happen at the end of time. It was through his mission that the Gentiles would be brought into the fold, made the people of God. Bart Ehrman Blog 5/14

Being “In Christ”

Paul uses this phrase 50 times in his genuine letters. It is used nowhere else in the New Testament.

For Paul, Christ was a cosmic figure, no longer the historical Jesus who was “born of a woman.” He speaks of having “faith in Jesus” a few times, but never being “in Jesus,” only of being “in Christ.” Paul says, “From now on, therefore, we regard no one (of our group) according to the flesh, even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him such no longer.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.

The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.” —

2 Corinthians 5:16-17

Righteoused By Faith

We do not have the English words to accurately translate many of the key Greek phrases in Paul's writings.

Often **mistranslated as "justification by faith,"** being righteoused by faith is Paul's way of describing Gentile's relationship with God.

Paul argues that God required of Gentiles only acceptance of the God of Israel and of Jesus as savior. Gentiles would then be "righteoused by faith."

Martin Luther famously coined the phrase, "justification by faith alone." This required believers to acknowledge their sinful lives and to admit that under sin, it was impossible to do good work. Church sacraments were of no use. Only a belief in the Gospel of Christ could save.

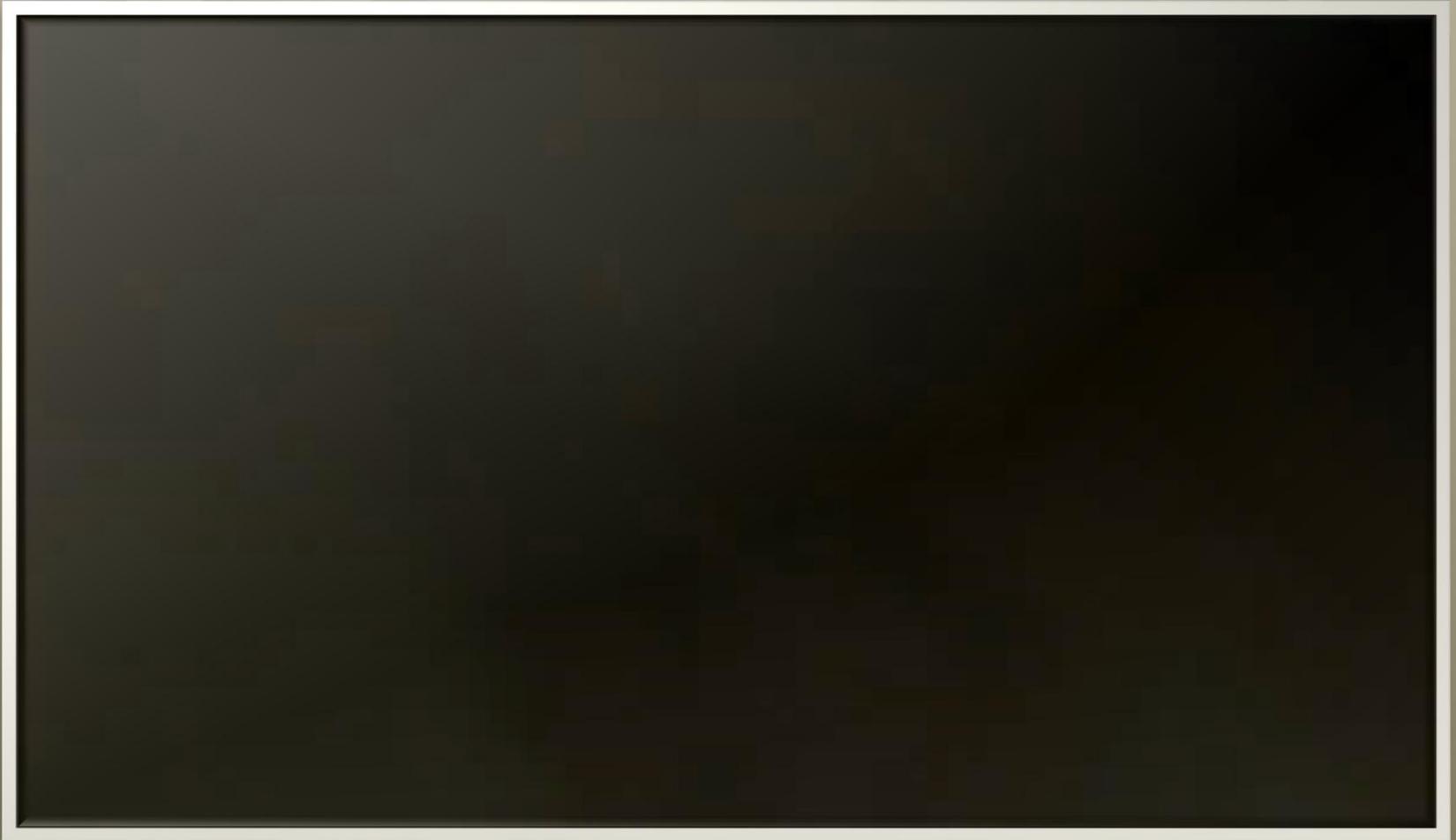
What Is Apocalypticism?

A worldview held by many ancient Jews and Christians that maintained that the present age is controlled by forces of evil (sin and death), but that these will be destroyed at the end of time, **when God intervenes in history** to bring in his Kingdom, an event thought to be imminent.

John the Baptist, Jesus, the Apostles and Paul were apocalyptic.

Paul's Apocalyptic Message

4:30-5:30



The End Times Begin

Paul was an apocalyptic Jew who believed that the Kingdom of God was already breaking in to reshape the cosmos. For Paul, though, it was Jesus' resurrection that signaled that the end times had begun. Christ was the "first fruits" of the end time. Now, it was simply a matter of waiting for those in Christ to be taken up to meet their Lord.

The Second Coming

- “We who are alive, who are left until the appearance of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a command, with the voice of an archangel, and with a trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ will rise first, **then we who are alive...will be snatched up with them in the clouds to greet the Lord in the air.**” - Thess. 4.15-17

The Pagan World

1:00 – 4:00



How Did Paul Win Converts?

Acts offers two descriptions: 1) public debating with philosophers (Acts 17:17-18) and attempting to convince Jews by speaking at synagogues (Acts 9:20).

However, Paul never mentions this in any of his authentic letters. Instead, Paul sees himself first and foremost as **the apostle to the Gentiles** and that his convert are former pagans. (1 Thess. 1:9)

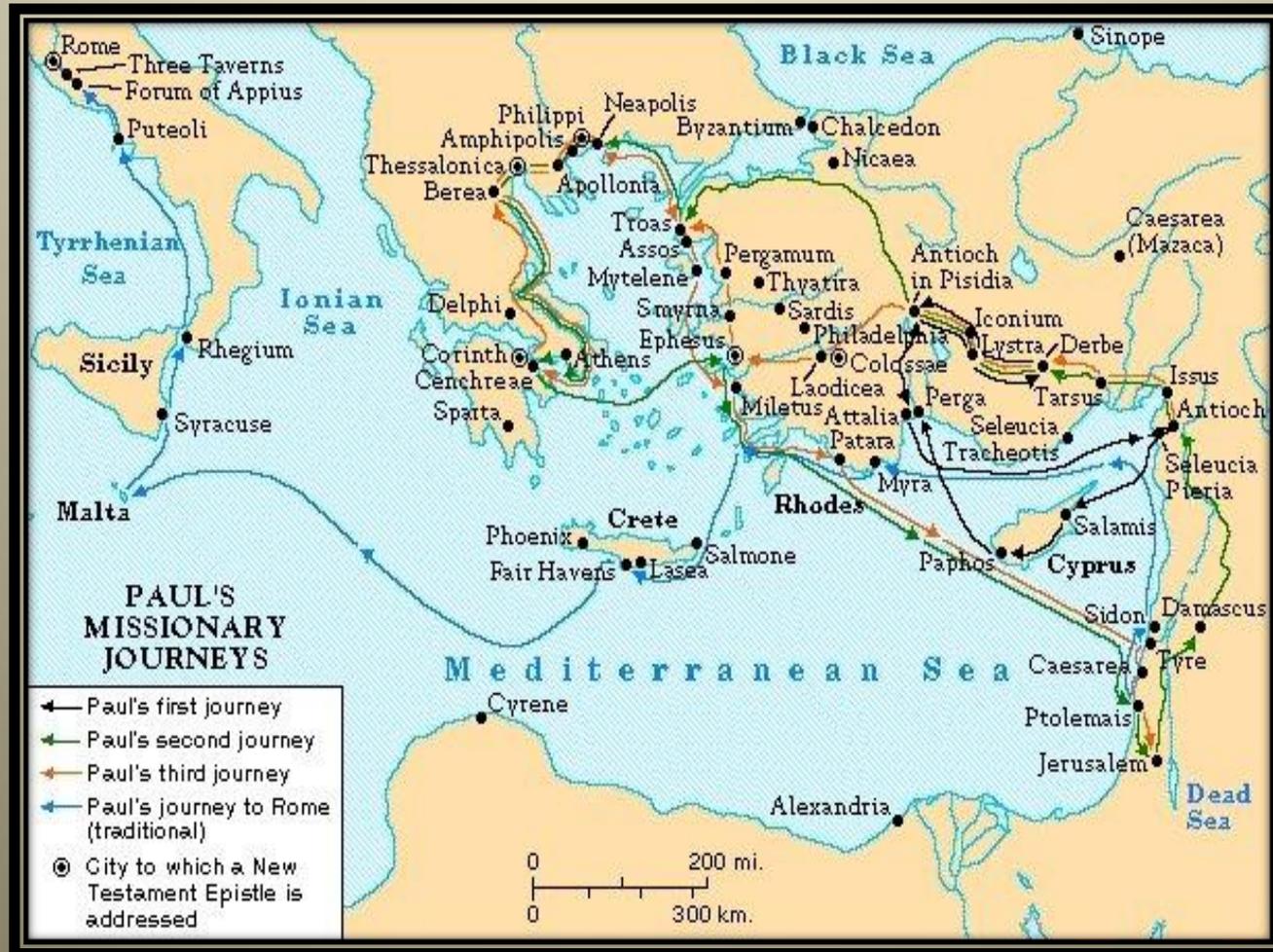
How Did Paul Start A Church?

It appears that Paul would move into a town and set up a small business. The Book of Acts says Paul worked in leather goods.

As customers would come in, Paul would ask about their religious beliefs, then seek to convert them until he had enough members for a weekly gathering.

When the church was of a sufficient size, Paul would move to a new town and begin again.

Paul's Journeys



The Letters: 1 Thessalonians

(ca: 51)

- Thessalonica is located in Greece.
- The recipients were all Gentiles.
- The Thessalonian church was grieving the loss of fellow believers and were being harassed by pagan family members and neighbors.
- Paul tells us he evangelized while working a craft to support himself, rather than through powerful speeches.
- Paul asks his converts to live quietly, depending on no one.

The Letters: Galatians

(ca: 54)

- Galatia is located in modern day Turkey.
- Paul was in conflict with Jerusalem based missionaries and “certain people...from James.” Paul is accused of being a religious fraud and a demonic messenger.
- Paul confronts Peter.
- The situation appears dire as Paul states, “I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you...”

The Letters: 1 Corinthians

(ca: 53/54)

- Corinth is located in Greece.
- An earlier, unknown Pauline letter is referenced.
- The all gentile church seems to be near collapse.
- Conflict has erupted over matters of hierarchy.
- Paul's main goal was to urge his congregation to reconcile their internal discord.

The Letters: 2 Corinthians

(ca: 54-56)

- Believed to contain fragments from as many as five different Pauline letters.
- Paul is offended by a Corinthian church member. He is accused of being “crafty” and “deceitful.”
- Paul once again attacks rival missionaries who apparently come from Jerusalem and mock his weakness of body and speech.
- Paul calls them servants of Satan and “super apostles.”
- These are different missionaries than the ones mentioned in Galatians.

The Letters: Philippians

(ca: 56)

- Philippi is located in northern Greece.
- Paul apparently wrote the letter while imprisoned for missionary activities.
- Paul is thanking his church for sending him financial assistance.
- Once again, Paul warns his congregation against the preaching of rival missionaries. “Beware of the dogs...beware of those who mutilate the flesh.”
- May be composed of three letters.

The Letters: Philemon

(ca: 56)

- Philemon was an associate of Paul's.
- Letter written from prison.
- Paul writes that he is sending the slave Onesimus back to his master, Philemon.
- Uncertain whether Paul wants the slave freed.
- The letter points to the evidence of slavery in early Christianity.

The Letters: Romans

(ca: 57)

- Written to a church Paul did not found.
- It is an introduction (and a defense) in advance of Paul's visit to Rome on his way to Spain.
- Paul believed he had accomplished his mission in the eastern Mediterranean, he was now turning towards the west.
- Revisits the theme of the relationship between Jews and Gentiles.
- It represents the clearest view of Paul's beliefs.

Paul's Greetings In Romans

I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church at Cenchreae, that you may **welcome her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints**, and help her in whatever she may need from you, for she has been a patron of many and of myself as well. Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, **who risked their necks for my life**, to whom not only I give thanks but all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks as well. **Greet also the church in their house**. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, **who was the first convert to Christ in Asia**. Greet Mary, who has worked hard for you. Greet Andronicus and Junia, **my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners. They are well known to the apostles**, and they were in Christ before me...Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord; also his mother, who has been a mother to me as well. Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers who are with them. Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them...Timothy, my fellow worker, greets you; so do Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen. **Tertius, who wrote this letter**, greet you in the Lord. Gaius, who is host to me and to the whole church, greets you. Erastus, **the city treasurer**, and our brother Quartus, greet you.

How Paul Saw Jesus

The difference between the Jesus of the Gospels and the Jesus of Paul is that the former is understood to be a teacher divinely appointed to deliver a message, whereas Paul's Christ is the very object of the message.

Paul is not concerned with the concrete details of the life and activities of the historical Jesus. He had nothing to say about Nazareth, the parents of Jesus, the high priests of Pontius Pilate. — Geza Vermes, *Christian Beginnings*

Jesus & Paul: Similarities

- Both Jesus and Paul were born and raised Jewish, and neither one of them saw himself as departing from the truth of Judaism and the Jewish God. They both understood that **they were proclaiming the “true” form of Judaism**. Neither thought they were starting a “new religion.”
- Both Jesus and Paul proclaimed a Jewish, **apocalyptic message**, believing that the current age was ruled by the forces of evil, but a new age was coming in which God would destroy the forces of evil and bring in a utopian kingdom here on earth.
- Both Jesus and Paul thought that this climactic moment of all human history was soon to come, it was right around the corner, it would be here within their own generation.
- Both Jesus and Paul dismissed what they saw as the Pharisaic concern for the scrupulous observance of the Jewish Law as a way to obtain a right standing before God.
- Both Jesus and Paul taught the ultimate need of faith and saw the love one’s neighbor as the summing up and fulfilling of the law, as the most important thing the followers of God could do.

Jesus & Paul: Differences

- Jesus taught that the coming cosmic judge of the earth, **the Son of Man**, someone other than himself, would arrive on the clouds of heaven and would destroy the forces of evil and bring in God's good kingdom. Paul taught that **Jesus himself** was the coming cosmic judge who would destroy the forces of evil and bring in God's kingdom, arriving on the clouds of heaven in a mighty act of judgment.
- Jesus taught that to escape judgment, a person must **keep the central teachings of the Law** as he himself interpreted them. Paul taught that reliance on the observance of the Law in no sense would bring salvation; to escape the coming judgment a person must, instead, **believe in the death and resurrection of Jesus**.
- Jesus taught that **"faith" involves trusting God**, as a good parent, to bring his future kingdom to his people. Paul taught that **"faith" involves trusting in the past death and resurrection of Jesus**. It wasn't only faith in God but faith in the death and resurrection of Christ.
- For Jesus, his own importance lay in his proclamation of the coming of the end and his correct interpretation of the Law. For Paul, Jesus' importance had nothing to do with Jesus' own teachings (which Paul hardly ever quotes) but strictly in his death and resurrection.
- For Jesus, people could begin to experience what life would be like in the future kingdom if they would accept his teachings and begin to implement his understanding of the Jewish law in their lives. For Paul, people could begin to experience life in the kingdom when they **"died with Christ"** by being baptized and thus overcame the power of sin.

What Paul Knows About Jesus 1

- First, Paul indicates unequivocally that Jesus really was born, as a human, and that in his human existence he was a Jew. This he states in Galatians 4:4: “But when the fullness of time came, God sent his son, **born from a woman**, born under the law, that he might redeem those who were under the law...” This statement also indicates that Jesus’ mission was to Jews.
- Paul insisted that Jesus was a physical descendant of David. It was widely thought that the “**son of David**” would be the future ruler of the Jews. In Romans 1:3-4, Paul refers to “the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh.”

What Paul Knows About Jesus 2

- Paul also mentions the brothers of Jesus, who after Jesus' death had become missionaries along with their wives. In 1 Corinthians 9:5, Paul notes that he too should have the right to take along a spouse on his missionary journeys, but chooses not to do so: “Do we not have the right to take along a believing wife as do the other apostles **and the brothers of the Lord** and Cephas?” In one place Paul names one of the brothers of Jesus, and it is none other than **James**, also mentioned by Mark: “Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to consult with Cephas. And I remained with him for fifteen days. I did not see any of the other apostles except James, the brother of the Lord.”
- Paul also appears to know that **Jesus had twelve disciples.** - Bart Ehrman

Paul Quotes Jesus 1

The first occurs in Paul's instructions about the legitimacy of divorce, where he paraphrases a saying of Jesus in urging believers to remain married; that this is a saying tradition that goes back to Jesus is shown by the fact that at this point of his injunction Paul stresses that it is not he who is giving this instruction, but that it was already given by the Lord himself: "But to those who are married I give this charge – **not I, but the Lord** – a woman is not to be separated from her husband (but if she is separated, let her remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband) and a man should not divorce his wife."

There is a close parallel to this command in the Gospel of Mark: And [Jesus] said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her; and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery. (Mark 10:11-12) – Bart Ehrman Blog, 5/14

Paul Quotes Jesus 2

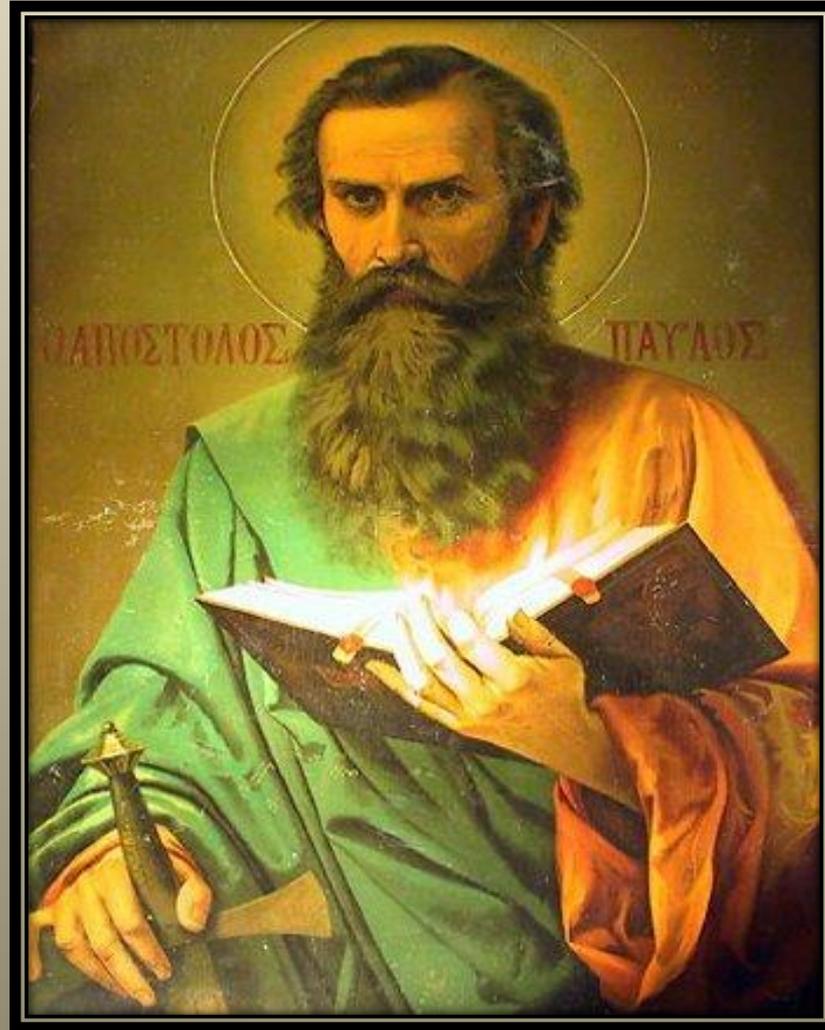
Something similar can be said of yet another instance in 1 Corinthians where Paul appears to refer to a teaching of Jesus, where Paul is dealing with the question of **whether apostles have the right to be financially supported by others during their missionary efforts**. He thinks they have that right, even though he himself does not regularly take advantage of it, and he supports his view by appealing to a teaching of Jesus: “For thus the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the Gospel should get their living from the gospel” (1 Corinthians 9:14).

It has long been recognized that a similar command from the Lord is also found in Matthew and Luke (that is, it comes from Q). Luke’s version is the most apt. Here Jesus is instructing his disciples what to do as they go about spreading the gospel: “”Stay in the same house (that you first come to) and eat and drink whatever they provide. For the worker is worthy of his wages” (Luke 10:7).

The Lord's Supper - Paul

- For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body which is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way, he also took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” — 1 Corinthians 14:22-24

Paul vs. Everyone



Paul's First Trip To Jerusalem

Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles except **James the Lord's brother**. (In what I am writing to you, before God, I do not lie!) — Gal 1:18-20

Paul's Second Trip To Jerusalem

Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along with me. I went up because of a revelation and set before them...the gospel that I proclaim among the Gentiles, in order to make sure I was not running or had not run in vain. But even Titus, who was with me, was not forced to be circumcised, though he was a Greek. **Yet because of false brothers secretly brought in—who slipped in to spy out our freedom that we have in Christ Jesus, so that they might bring us into slavery—to them we did not yield in submission even for a moment...** And from those who seemed to be influential (what they were makes no difference to me; God shows no partiality)—those, I say,...added nothing to me. On the contrary, when they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been entrusted with the gospel to the circumcised..., and when James and Cephas and John, **the so-called pillars**, perceived the grace that was given to me, they gave the right hand of fellowship to Barnabas and me, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. – Gal. 2:1-9

Paul's Third Trip To Jerusalem

I hope to see you in passing as I go to Spain, and to be helped on my journey there by you, once I have enjoyed your company for a while. At present, however, **I am going to Jerusalem** bringing aid to the saints. For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make some contribution for the poor among the saints at Jerusalem. - Romans 15:25

Were There Other Missionaries?

In addition to the Apostles of Jesus, there were other missionaries in Asia Minor and Greece working independently of, and sometimes in conjunction with, Paul. We learn of them in Paul's letters.

- Apollos
- Andronicus and Junia (a couple)
- Prisca and Aquila (a couple)
- Others are referred to but unnamed

Paul's Battles Other Missionaries

As historian E. P. Sanders notes, Paul's ongoing concern was that some Christian missionaries and some of the Jerusalem leadership did not agree with his message.

Paul said there were those who preach a contrary or "different gospel" than his own. Paul hurled a curse against those urging circumcision, saying, "let them cut the whole thing off." Galatians 5:12. He warned his followers that if they strayed, they would be severed from Christ.

His opponents were "false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ and were servants of Satan." – 2 Cor. 11:13-15

Charismatic Churches

As with Jesus, Paul and his Gentile converts practiced a charismatic religion. Paul speaks of 9 spiritual gifts intended for the common good.

“To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge...to another faith...to another gifts of healing...to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, **to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.**” — 1 Cor. 12:8-10

Paul's Troubled Churches

I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment. **For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there is quarreling among you,** my brothers. What I mean is that each one of you says, "I follow Paul," or "I follow Apollos," or "I follow Cephas," or "I follow Christ." Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?

– 1Cor. 1:10-13

Paul's Troubled Churches

It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, **for a man has his father's wife**. And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn? Let him who has done this be removed from among you.

– 1 Cor. 5:1-2

Paul's Troubled Churches

I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—not that there is another one, **but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ.** But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, **let him be accursed...** For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ. - Gal. 1:6-10

Paul Opposes Peter

But when Cephas came to Antioch, **I opposed him to his face**, because he stood condemned. For before certain men came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles; but when they came he drew back and separated himself, **fearing the circumcision party**. And the rest of the Jews acted hypocritically along with him, so that **even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy**. But when I saw that their conduct was not in step with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, “If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews?” – Gal. 2:11-14

Who Led The Christian Church?

Despite Church tradition, it is James, the brother of Jesus, not Peter, who was the leader of the Jerusalem church.

“The Acts of the Apostles provides evidence that James was an important figure in the Christian community of Jerusalem. When Peter...must flee Jerusalem, he asks that James be informed.

When the Christians of Antioch are concerned over whether Gentile Christians need be circumcised to be saved, it is James who plays a prominent role in the formulation of the Church council's decision. Indeed, after Peter and Paul have made their case, it is James who finally delivers what he calls his "judgment," and afterwards, all accept it. **James, in other words, is shown in charge of the Jerusalem group, which conflicts with later claims of Peter's primacy there.**” – Wikipedia,

Paul vs. Paul

We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners, **yet we know that a person is justified not by works of the law** but through faith in Jesus Christ...because no one will be justified by the works of the law. – Gal. 2:15-16

OR

It is not the hearers of the law who are righteous in God's sight, **but the doers of the law who will be justified.** — Rom. 2:13

Paul vs. Paul

All who rely on the works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who does not observe and obey all the things written in the book of the law.” — Gal. 3:10

OR

The law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good. — Rom. 7:12

Paul vs. Paul

The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband. For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does; **likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.** — 1 Cor. 7:3-4

OR

For a man ought not to have his head veiled, since he is the image and reflection of God; **but the woman is the reflection of man.** —1 Cor. 11:7

Paul On Original Sin

“Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned.” – Romans 5:12

Adam was seduced by the devil-serpent with the help of Eve. **This act went on to infect the whole human race with an evil inclination.** St. Augustine referred to it as “original sin.” Thanks to these “wages of sin,” every human deserves punishment.

“God, however, sent the sinless Christ to “be made in sin.” His death and resurrection atoned for the transgressions of mankind by punishing “sin in the flesh.” So when Christians believe in the redeeming virtue of Christ, they mystically die to sin and are reborn in a new life.” – Geza Vermez, Christian Beginnings

Paul Visits Heaven

I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago **was caught up to the third heaven** – whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows. And I know that this man was caught up into paradise – whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows – and he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter. — 2 Corinthians 12:2-4

Paul's Take On Marriage

Paul tells us that he is unmarried. As to his followers marital status, he says, “**I think that in view of the pending crisis, it is well for you to remain as you are.** Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be free. Are you free from a wife? Do not seek a wife...The appointed time has grown short: from now on let those who have wives be as though they had none...**For the present form of this world is passing away.** —

1 Cor.7:26-31

Paul's Take On Homosexuality 1

Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the **sexually immoral**, nor **idolaters**, nor **adulterers**, nor men who practice **homosexuality**, nor **thieves**, nor the **greedy**, nor **drunkards**, nor **revilers**, nor **swindlers** will inherit the kingdom of God. — 1 Cor. 6:9-10

Paul's Take On Homosexuality 2

“For this cause, God gave them [the Gentiles] up to dishonorable passions: **for not only did the women exchange natural intercourse for that which is against nature**, and likewise males, forsaking natural intercourse with women burned with lust for one another: **males with males working shame**, and receiving the punishment in themselves that their error deserved.” — Romans 1:26-27

Paul's Affliction

And to keep me from being too elated by the abundance of revelations, **a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan**, to harass me, to keep me from being too elated. Three times I besought the Lord about this, that it should leave me; but he said to me, **“My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.”** — 2 Corinthians 12:8-9

Paul The Wonder Worker

Paul tells us that he performed miracles which established his authority as true prophet of God.

Although vague, Paul refers to the “signs” and “signs and wonders” and “powerful acts” he’s performed. — 2 Cor. 12:12; Rom. 15:18

He also mentions his ability to speak in tongues and perform unspecified healings.

In addition, Acts has Paul performing exorcisms and even the raising of the dead.

Paul Raises The Dead

And a young man named Eutychus, sitting at the window, **sank into a deep sleep as Paul talked still longer. And being overcome by sleep, he fell down from the third story and was taken up dead.** But Paul went down and bent over him, and taking him in his arms, said, “Do not be alarmed, for his life is in him.” And when Paul had gone up and had broken bread and eaten, he conversed with them a long while, until daybreak, and so departed. And they took the youth away alive, and were not a little comforted. – Acts 20:7-12

Paul Suffers for His Faith

“Are they servants of Christ? I am a better one—I am talking like a madman—with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless beatings, and often near death. Five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one. Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea; on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers; in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure.” — 2 Cor. 11:23-7

Paul On Judaism

“For we maintain that a person is justified (righteoused) by faithfulness, without works of Torah. Or does God belong to Jews alone? Does God not also belong to Gentiles? Indeed, to Gentiles also. **Since God is one, it is he who justifies the circumcised out of (his) faithfulness (to the covenant) and the uncircumcised through faithfulness.** Do we render Torah void through faithfulness? God forbid! **On the contrary, we uphold the Torah.**”

– Romans 3:21-30

Paul's Take On Sex

Now concerning the matters about which you wrote: **“It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman.”** But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband. The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband. **For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.** Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. — 1 Cor. 7:1-6

Paul's Take On Women

- “For a man ought not to cover his head since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man...Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man.” - 1 Corinthians 11:7-8
- “If a woman has long hair, it is her pride. For her hair is given to her for covering.” – 1 Corinthians 11:15
- “But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is the man, and the head of Christ is God.” – 1 Corinthians 11:3
- As in all the churches of the saints, the women should keep silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be in submission, as the Law also says. If there is anything they desire to learn, let them learn it from their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church.” – 1 Corinthians 14:34-35

Paul's Take On Divorce

To the married I give this charge (not I, but the Lord): the wife should not separate from her husband (but if she does, she should remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband), and the husband should not divorce his wife. To the rest I say (I, not the Lord) that if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever...he should not divorce her. If any woman has a husband who is an unbeliever... she should not divorce him. For the unbelieving husband is made holy because of his wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy because of her husband. – 1 Cor.7:10-14

Paul's Take On Slavery

Were you a bondservant when called? Do not be concerned about it. (But if you can gain your freedom, avail yourself of the opportunity.) For he who was called in the Lord as a bondservant is a freedman of the Lord. Likewise he who was free when called is a bondservant of Christ. You were bought with a price; do not become bondservants of men. So, brothers, in whatever condition each was called, there let him remain with God. — 1 Cor. 7:21-24

Did Paul Think Jesus Was God?

To be sure, as others have noted earlier there is a remarkably close linkage of Jesus and God in Paul's letters. But, at the same time, there is an almost equally emphatic affirmation that there are *two*— God and Jesus— and Jesus is consistently described with reference to God, not replacing God but serving as **the one sent forth by God and acting as God's unique agent of redemption**. That is, we have two figures posited and a clear relationship between them. — Professor Larry Hurtado Blog, 6/14

Did Paul Think Jesus Was Devine?

In Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father. — Phil 2:5-11

E. P. Sanders states that anyone reading this hymn would understand Jesus Christ to be preexistent and in some sense divine.

When Did Paul Die?

According to Acts, Paul was arrested in Caesarea for taking a Gentile into a temple. He was held there for a few years before being sent to Rome for trial. He was said to be in prison in Rome for at least two years.

The author of Acts ends the story there. Some think that Paul was eventually freed and continued his mission work to Spain. Church tradition holds that Paul was martyred in Rome, perhaps around the year 62 CE. Others say that he was martyred with Peter in Rome in 64 CE when the emperor Nero scapegoated Christians for starting a major fire in Rome.

Was Paul A Christian?

Though his reasoning could be tortured, the short answer is **no...but...**

Paul was a devout, Pharisaic Jew who came to believe that the risen Christ was the fulfillment, not the abrogation, of the Torah. However, there can be little doubt that Paul's taught his Gentile converts that they did not need to follow the Torah to be saved.

The first real Christians were those Gentiles who converted from paganism to a belief in Christ. They were the first to break with the Jewish law even though they were taught to worship the Jewish God.

Paul's Impact During His Life

Here is something to consider. In the majority of Paul's letters (Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, and Philippians – five of the seven) **Paul attacks those who disagree with him**. Those others are in every case Christians. And they are Christians with different views not only from Paul but from one another. Paul's opponents in Galatia, for example, believe that a Gentile believer in Jesus needs to be circumcised and to follow the Jewish Law to be a full-fledged member of the people of God/the covenantal community. Paul attacks them with scathing wit and in white-hot anger. His opponents in Corinth believe something completely different, that they have already attained the full measure of salvation in the here and now and are already ruling with Christ. Paul attacks them harshly and with brilliant sarcasm.

My point is that everywhere one turns, **Paul is opposed by other Christians**. The writings of those other Christians do not survive. If they did, we would have a much better picture of the full diversity of the early Christian movement. Moreover, in some instances (Galatia and Corinth among them) it appears that Paul has to do some serious work to regain the majority of the church to his perspective. And these are churches that he himself founded!

My sense is that despite the centrality that Paul has to the NT today, he did not have that kind of centrality in his day. **He was one voice among many**. The other voices, in places, drowned his out. And in yet other places, probably his voice was not heard at all (for example, in Matthew's community).

Paul's Legacy

- Paul's letters were first published as a collection around 90 CE.
- Paul's letters were used to support both orthodox and heretical claims. "Dualists" who believed the world was evil and that Jesus was not a real man drew support from Paul's letters.
- The writer of the Second Epistle of Peter warns readers to avoid the "ignorant and unstable" who twist Paul's word "to their own destruction."

Paul's Legacy

- Others began to modify Paul's message. Some added letters that brought Paul's theology into the mainstream.
- The author of Acts portrays Paul and Peter as always being in agreement, thus masking the fierce debate among the apostles.
- Ironically, the fierce debate continued as theologians such as Augustine, Martin Luther and Karl Barth used Paul's letters to attack other forms of Christianity.
- Even today, Paul's letters are appealed to on topics ranging from homosexuality to women's rights.

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