

The Historical St. Paul

OLLI: F603 – Summer 2014



The Life Of Jesus

- Jesus was born c. 6-4 BCE, near the time of the death of Herod the Great.
- He spent his childhood and early adult years in Nazareth, a Galilean village.
- He was baptized by John the Baptist.
- He called disciples.
- He taught in towns, villages and the countryside of Galilee (apparently not in cities).
- He was known to be a healer and exorcist.
- He preached the coming “Kingdom of God.”
- About the year 30 he went to Jerusalem for Passover.

The Life Of Jesus

- He created a disturbance in the Temple area.
- He had a final meal with the disciples.
- He was arrested and interrogated by Jewish authorities, specifically the high priest.
- He was executed on the orders of the Roman prefect, Pontius Pilate, for claiming to be the “King of the Jews.”
- His disciples abandoned him but were not arrested or executed.
- His disciples saw him (in some sense) after his death.
- As a consequence, they believed that he would return to found the Kingdom of God.
- They formed a community to await his return and sought converts to their faith in Jesus as God's Messiah.

E. P. Sanders, *The Historical Figure of Jesus*
Paula Fredriksen, *From Jesus to Christ*

The Teachings Of Jesus

- Jesus taught about the imminent arrival of the Kingdom of God.
- The Kingdom's arrival would be heralded by a cosmic figure called The Son of Man.
- To prepare for God's judgment, all Jews needed to follow the Torah and repent of their sins.
- Jesus offered an immediate and direct route to God's love and mercy.
- God's judgment would bring about a total reversal of the social order. Those in power (the forces of evil) would be removed, and the oppressed would be exalted. "The first shall be last and the last first." – Mark 10:30
- For Jesus, these were not long term ethical commandments. The end was very close and this was how all Jews were to prepare.

When Does Christianity Begin?

“Christianity is born, **not as a direct result of Jesus’ teachings**, but as a result of what God is claimed to have done through his death and resurrection.”

- 1)The Jesus movement during his life was disorganized.
- 2)Jesus died without the presence of his disciples.
- 3)Jesus’ teachings are paradoxical, not systematic.
- 4)Christianity begins with the resurrection experience.

Luke Timothy Johnson – Early Christianity

Early Exaltation Of Jesus

“With regard to the development of all the early Church’s Christology...more happened **in the first 20 years** than in the entire later, centuries long development of dogma.”

- Martin Hengel, New Testament Scholar

“The earliest Christians understood Jesus to have become the Son of God at his **resurrection**. They held that God had exalted Jesus to divine status (**Adoptionist Christology**). By the time of the Gospel of Mark, Jesus became the Son of God at his **baptism** by John. Still later, in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, Jesus became the Son of God at his **birth**. Finally, with the Gospel of John, we have Jesus presented as the Son of God **before creation**.”

- Bart Ehrman, How Jesus Became God

A Brief Recap



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

How We Remember

Remembering is not like reading a book but rather like writing a book. If there are blanks, we fill them in.

Because human memory “leaks and dissociates,” all of us are to one degree or another, fabulists, even when we try not to be. **As modern research abundantly documents, memory often leads us astray.** Among its many sins are the following, all of which matter for sober, honest study of Jesus.

- Dale Allison, Constructing Jesus

The Problems With Memory

1. Long-term memory is reconstructive as well as reproductive and so involves imagination.
2. Post event information often becomes incorporated into memory, supplementing and altering a person's recollection.
3. We are apt to project present circumstances and biases onto our past experiences.
4. Memories are not evergreen. They become less and less distinct as the past recedes.
5. Memories are subject to sequential displacement. We often move remembered events forward and backward in time.
6. Memories are a function of self-interest. We revise them in order to help maintain a meaningful sense of self-identity.
7. Groups do not rehearse competing memories that fail to shore up what they hold dear.
8. No infallible inner voice or sense can consistently adjudicate the accuracy of our recall.

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, at best, a passing familiarity with Judaism and 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.

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.

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.

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.

Modern Scholars & Paul



Modern Scholars & Paul

The Nangeroni Seminar on “Paul as a Second-Temple Jew” took place in June, 2014 in Rome. “This encouraging and demanding event brought together about 35 scholars from various countries who are specialists on second-temple Judaism and/or the Apostle Paul. **The broad conclusion to which all assented is that Paul was and remained in his ministry as apostle to gentiles a Jew.** He did not renounce his identity as a member of the Jewish people. He did not demonize his ancestral religion. He did not reject the Torah (“Law”) as false. He did not regard his Jewish past as one of frustration, failure, inability to observe Torah, or as something to escape.

Instead, Paul claims to have practiced Torah successfully and happily. He does not refer to himself as “converted” from Jewishness to being a “Christian.” Instead, he claims to have had a powerful experience that he describes as a “revelation” of Jesus as God’s “Son,” and a special calling to proclaim God’s welcome to non-Jewish peoples (“Gentiles”) without their having to convert to Judaism.” - Larry Hurtado Blog, 7/2/14

The Conversion Of St. Paul



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

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

Problems With Acts

There are two major problems with Paul's conversion story as it is related in Acts.

1) Luke claims Paul's revelation occurred **as he travelled from Jerusalem to Damascus** with high priestly authority to bring back dissident Jewish Christians for punishment. That is impossible since Jerusalem high priests lacked authority outside their immediate jurisdictions. In addition, in his letter to the Galatians (1:11-17), Paul states that after his encounter with Jesus, he went away "at once into Arabia, **and afterwards I returned to Damascus.**" Paul presumes his audience knows the story started in Damascus where he was living. Paul never refers to high priestly authority. – Borg, Crossan –

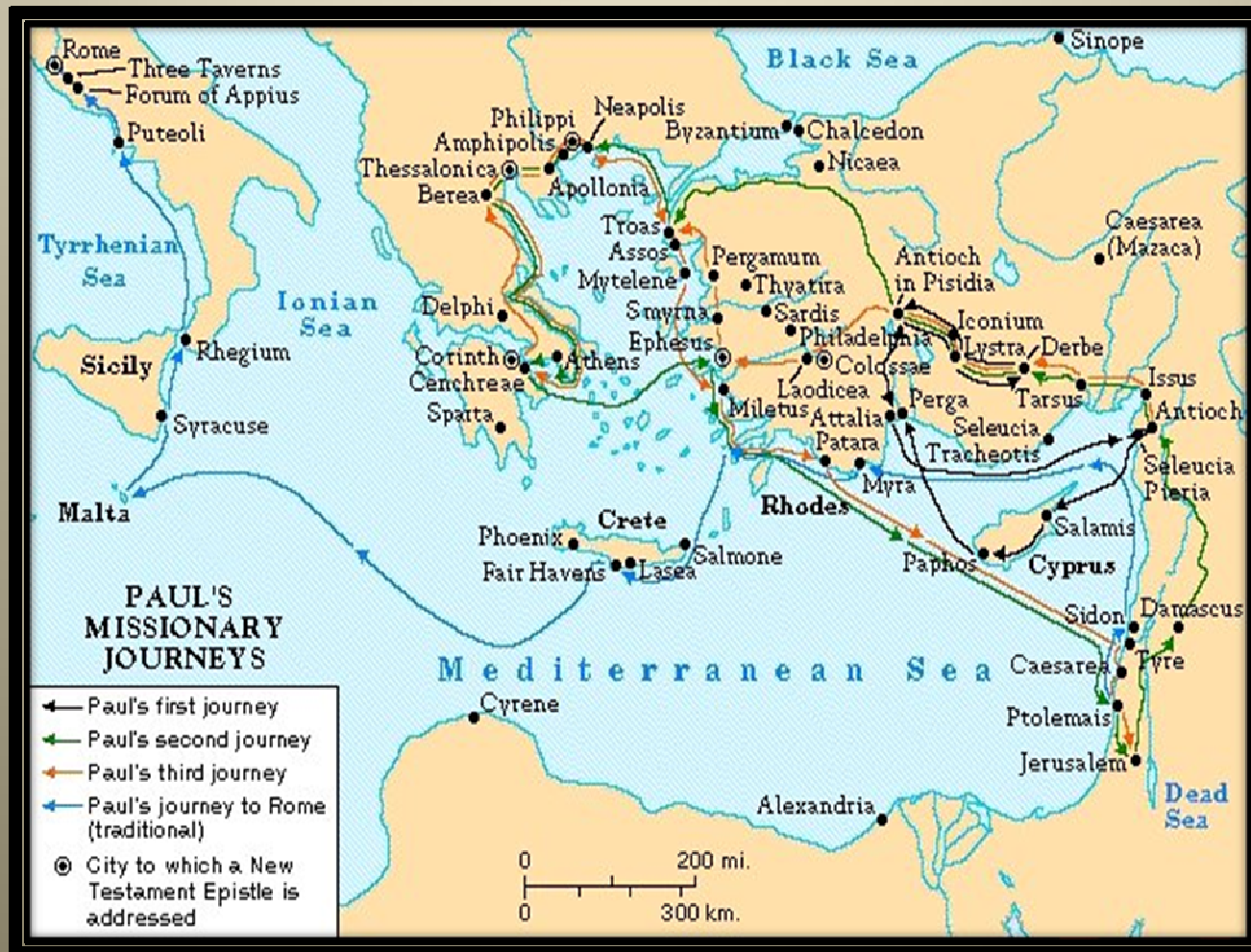
The First Paul

Problems With Acts

2) On three different occasions, Luke/Acts emphasizes that on the road to Damascus, Paul **saw a light and heard the voice of Christ**. However, he never sees the face of Jesus.

In his letter to the Corinthians (9:1), however, Paul is emphatic that he saw Christ. “Am I not an apostle? **Have I not seen Jesus our Lord?**” For Luke, Paul is an apostle sent by God, but only indirectly. The language of Acts holds the “Twelve” in higher regard because they not only saw Jesus, but because they travelled with Jesus. – Borg, Crossan – The First Paul

Paul's Journeys



The Pagan World



Why Convert Gentiles?

Paul believed he had received a “calling” in the same sense that Hebrew prophets received “callings” as a messenger of the Lord. Paul’s Gospel for the Foreskin participated in **a specific apocalyptic hope of his day** (found in the Book of Isaiah, among others) that the eschatological pilgrimage of uncircumcised Gentiles, who turn from idols to worship the God of Israel, **would portend the Final Judgment.**” – J. Albert Harrill, Paul The Apostle

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 converts 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.

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

FJ2C Vol. 2 – 38:25-40:00



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 proceed 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

What Is The Parousia?

- Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? **This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.**" —Acts 1:9-11
- **The coming of Christ will be instantaneous and worldwide.** "For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be." —Matthew 24:27
- **The coming of Christ will be visible to all.** "Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." —Matthew 24:30
- **The coming of Christ will be audible.** "And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." —Matthew 24:31

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 Epaphroditus, **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.

Pre-Literary Traditions

We have no Christian writings before Paul's first letter around the year 50. Many biblical scholars believe that remnants of older Christian oral traditions can be found in Paul's genuine letters.

Pre-Literary: 1 Cor. 15:3-8

“For I handed over to you among the most important things **what I also had received**, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, and that he was buried; and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures; and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the Twelve; then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, many of whom survive until now, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles; and last of all he appeared even to me, as to one untimely born.”

Pre-Literary: Phil. 2:5-11

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.

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

Paul and the Spirit World

Like many Jews, Paul believed that both angels and demons were active in the world, helping and hindering humanity.

“The things the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God. **And I would rather you not have communion with demons.** You cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord, and the table of demons.”

- 1 Cor. 10:20-21

Who Is A Messiah?

A messiah is a savior or liberator of a the Jewish people. In the Hebrew Bible **a messiah is a king or High Priest** traditionally anointed with holy anointing oil. In later Jewish messianic tradition and eschatology, a messiah is a leader anointed by God, and in some cases, a future King of Israel, physically descended from the Davidic line, **who will rule the united tribes of Israel and herald the Messianic Age.**

The Greek translation for 'Messiah' is khristos , **Anglicized as Christ.**

Messiah As Son Of God

“The promise to David, recorded in 2 Samuel 7 contained the assurance that the Davidic king would be **regarded by God as a son**. Later, this brought a resurgence of hope for a messiah from the line of David to be a heavenly deliverer. **The line between human king and transcendent savior became blurred**. The Christian belief in the divinity of Jesus must be seen to have emerged from the fluid Jewish conceptions of the messiah.” – Adela Collins, John Collins – King and Messiah as Son of God.

Jesus As Christ

The honorific term most frequently applied by Paul to Jesus is **Christos** (270 times in his seven undisputed letters).

Most frequently, Paul uses Christos on its own to refer to Jesus. Other combinations are “Christ Jesus,” “Jesus Christ,” “Jesus Christ our Lord” and “Our/the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Jesus' Divine Sonship

Paul refers to Jesus as God's “Son” fifteen times in his seven undisputed letters.

Based modern studies of pre-Christian Judaism, it seems as if “divine sonship” originally referred to the messianic role of Davidic kings.

In this usage, Jesus' divine sonship does not denote divinity, but his special status and relationship to God.

Jesus As Lord

Paul refers to Jesus as **Kyrios** (Lord) 180 times in his undisputed letters. The title serves three primary functions:

- 1) Designating Jesus as Lord/Master whose teaching is authoritative.
- 2) In eschatological expectations as the one who will come again as God's agent.
- 3) Designating Jesus' unequaled status given by God.

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

Paul Says Jesus Is Not Preexistent

“Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God, which he announced in advance through his prophets in the holy scriptures, concerning his Son, who was **descended from the seed of David according to the flesh**, who was appointed Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness **by his resurrection** from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord.” – Romans 1:3-4

Paul Says Jesus is Preexistent

“Who, although **he was in the form of God**

Did not regard being equal with God

Something to be grasped after.

But he emptied himself

Taking on the form of a slave,

And **coming in the likeness of humans.**

And being found in appearance as a human

He humbled himself

Becoming obedient unto death – even death
on a cross...” - Philippians 2:6-11

So, Which Is It?

“One sees that it is impossible to derive from Paul’s letters anything approaching one single doctrine of the person of Jesus Christ. It is possible that both the passages just quoted are **pre-Pauline in origin**, in which case they show that he drew on, rather than composed, quite diverse statements, one offering a “**low**” Christology, the other a “**high**” Christology.”

– E.P. Sanders, Paul: A Brief Insight

The Final Duty of Christ

“The comes the end, when (Christ) delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last to be destroyed is death.” – 1 Cor. 15:24-26

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.

Bart Ehrman Blog, 5/14

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 Elman
Blog, 5/14

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

“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

Why Do We Need Salvation?

“Paul’s logic seems to run like this:

in Christ, God has acted to save the world;
therefore the world is in need of salvation; but
God also gave the law; is the law then against the
purpose of God which has been revealed in
Christ? No, it has the function of consigning
everyone to sin so that everyone could be saved
by God’s grace in Christ.” – E.P. Sanders, Paul and Palestinian

Judaism

Atonement for Our Sins

“For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, **that Christ died for our sins** in accordance with the scriptures...”

– 1 Cor. 15:3

“It is well known that Paul inherited the view that Christ died for our trespasses. The general Christian view was that presumably by his death he achieved atonement for the trespasses of others”...going back to the sin of Adam. – E. P. Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism

Baptism

- In Judaism, immersion into water was intended to wash away **ritual impurity**.
- John the Baptist administered a more spiritual baptism. John's baptism symbolized the removal of pollution by **sinful conduct**.
- Paul's baptism had a more **mystical meaning**. "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life." – Rom. 6:3-4

Shared Meal

But in giving this instruction, I do not praise you, because you come together not for the better but for the worse. For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that divisions exist among you; and in part I believe it. For there must also be factions among you, so that those who are approved may become evident among you. Therefore when you meet together, it is not to eat **the Lord's Supper**, for in your eating each one takes his own supper first; and one is hungry and another is drunk. What! Do you not have houses in which to eat and drink? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you? In this I will not praise you. – 1 Cor. 11:17-22

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

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

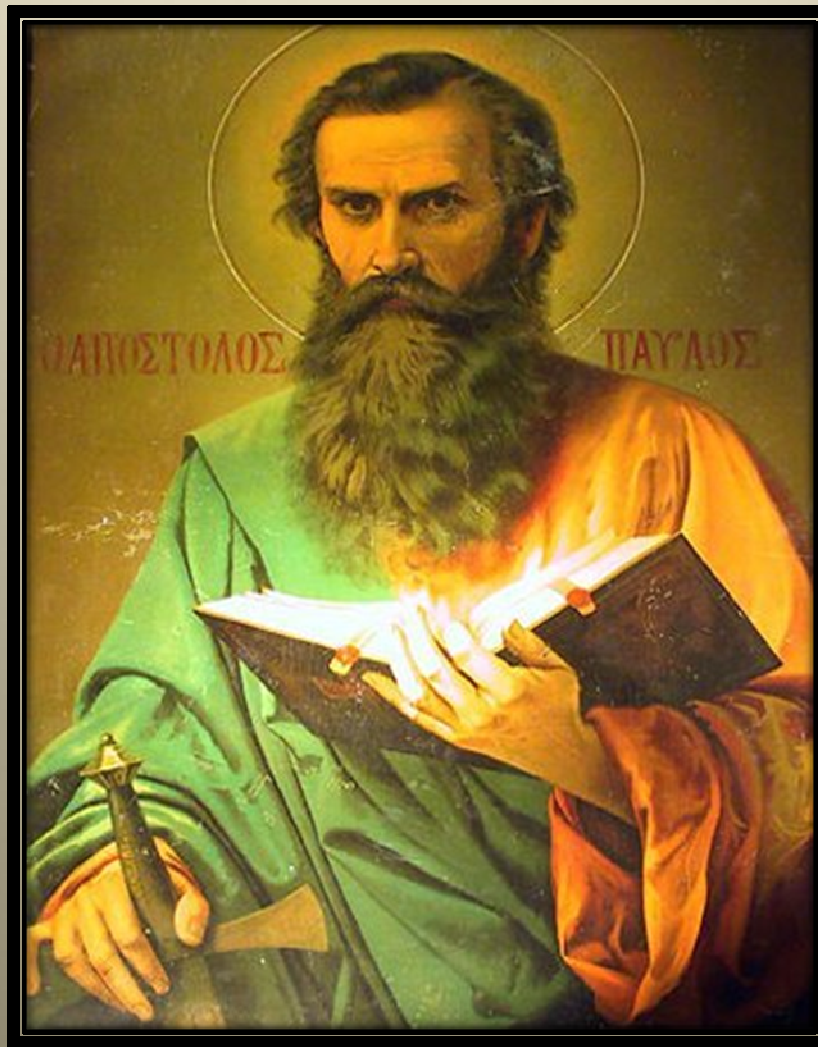
We do not have the English words to accurately translate many of the key Greek phrases in Paul's writings.

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.

Paul vs. Everyone



Was Paul An Apostle?

Luke/Acts mostly reserves the term “apostle” for the twelve, believing that Paul was sent indirectly by God. Paul disagrees...

“Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, **called to be an apostle**, set apart for the Gospel of God.” – Rom. 1:1

“Paul, **called to be an apostle** of Jesus Christ by the will of God.” – 1 Cor. 1:1

“Paul, **an apostle of Jesus Christ** by the will of God. – 2 Cor. 1:1

“**Paul an apostle** – sent neither by human commission nor from human authorities, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead.” – Gal. 1:1

The Church Of Jerusalem

In conformity with Jesus' command not to approach Gentiles, **all potential candidates were Jewish.** They were to continue following the Law of Moses, but must also accept the proclamation that Jesus was the promised messiah who's death, resurrection and return would inaugurate the arrival of God's everlasting Kingdom.

“Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, **and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common...**the proceeds of what was sold (was) laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.— Acts 4:32-37

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,

6/14/13

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

The Council Of Jerusalem

The Council of Jerusalem is a name applied by historians and theologians to a Christian Apostolic Age council that was held in Jerusalem and dated to around the year 50. **The council decided that Gentile converts to Christianity were not obligated to keep most of the Law of Moses**, including the circumcision of males. The Council did, however, retain the prohibitions on eating blood, meat containing blood, and meat of animals not properly slain, and on fornication and idolatry.

Paul's letter to the Galatians, however, says the only condition was that "**we remember the poor...**" (Gal. 2:10)

Descriptions of the council are found in Acts of the Apostles chapter 15 and also possibly in Paul's letter to the Galatians. Some scholars dispute that Galatians 2 is about the Council of Jerusalem (notably because Galatians 2 describes a private meeting).– Wikipedia, 9/3/13

What Did Paul Agree To?

The conservative wing of the Jerusalem church, led by James the Just, practiced community life with regards to their possessions; they had “all things in common” (Acts 2:44-45). They were known as the “Poor Ones.”

For agreeing to allow Gentiles into the Christian church, the Apostles asked that Paul continue his work **away from Jerusalem** and that his churches provide specific **financial support** for the utopian eschatological community led by James. —

Borg/Crossan, The First Paul

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

Paul Opposed By The Apostles

“I appeal to you brothers and sisters, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the spirit, to join me in earnest prayer to God on my behalf, **that I may be rescued from the unbelievers in Judea**, and that my ministry to Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints, so that by God’s will I may come to you with Joy and be refreshed in your company.” – Rom. 15:30-32

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

Paul Battles 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

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's Advice For His Opponents

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 any who disagreed with him and wished that they would physically mutilate themselves.** 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

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 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 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 View On Authority

“Let every person be subject to all governing authorities; for there is no authority except from God, and **those authorities that exist have been instituted by God**. Therefore, whoever resists authority resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. – Rom.13:1-14

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

Equality In Christ Jesus

“As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ...” – Gal. 3:27-29

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.

Were Paul's Views Normative

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).

Christian Claim On The Torah

“In this way, everything that was said of ancient Israel, and all the promises made to it, were transferred to the Christians, who claimed that they, and not the Jews, were the ancient people of God.

This transference...was probably almost as important for the future history of Christianity as the change which made Jesus the center of a cult offering private salvation, instead of the prophetic herald of the Kingdom of Heaven at the End of the Age. It meant that Christianity shared with Judaism the advantage, which no other religion in the Empire had, of being a religion with a book.” – Kirsopp Lake, Landmarks in the History of Early Christianity

Evolving Away From Jewish Roots



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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