

NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

FACULTY OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES

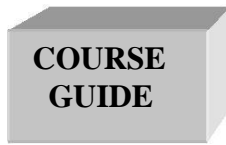
COURSE CODE: CTH 813

**COURSE TITLE: PAULINE THEOLOGY AND
EPISTLES**

CRS813

CTH813
GUIDE

COURSE



CTH813
PAULINE THEOLOGY AND EPISTLES

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Introduction

Pauline Theology and Epistles CTH813 is a three-credit Masters course. This course is offered in the first semester of the first year to students who are offering Christian Theology. There are no prerequisite courses for this course. Pauline Theology and Epistles, however, is a course that should be taken as a branch of the New Testament studies. Some of the things you would study in this course are things, which you might undertake at the doctoral level. This course consists of four Modules with units that have been developed using various scholarships.

This Study Guide contains the required information about the entire course. It guides you through the course content and the number of required assignments that you would do. There is also an assignment file. This file prescribes the course requirements as well as the grading system. This Study Guide is intended to help you as a distance learner to aid you in your study of this course at National Open University of Nigeria. The aims and objectives of this course are stated in this Course Guide. This Course Guide will help you to know at the beginning of the course what you should expect from the study of the course, and what you are expected to learn from the course. The Study Guide is not the only resource for you. Its goal is to help you pass the course.

There are other resources that can also help you to pass your course such as textbooks, the course material itself and facilitation class sessions, which are optional. Another very important use of the Study Guide is the plan and use of time. It states on a weekly basis how you should proceed with your studies. If you pay attention to this plan guide, you will surely complete your study of the course successfully on time before the examination date. Take advantage of the time guide in this Study Guide.

This Course Guide tells all that is obtainable in this course and the relevant materials that would help you expand the understanding of the course. This would provide you a guide on how to proceed with your study of the materials and the time frame for a successful completion of the course. This guide will also help to direct you in your tutor-marked assignments and materials for further readings.

It is important to go through this Study Guide very carefully before beginning your study of the course material. The temptation to jump to course materials without going through the Study Guide for the sake of saving time is high but also a wrong decision. Students who go straight and study course materials without first going through the Study Guide

usually end up not doing well at the end of the course. Going through the Study Guide is part of studying the course material. Complete the feedback form at the end and submit it with your first assignment to your tutorial facilitator.

You may ask the student counselor at your Study Centre about your tutorial facilitator and where to find him/her. I believe this would be helpful if you heed to this useful advice.

Course Aims

The general aim of this course is to introduce you to major issues and developments in Pauline studies. This will also orientate you towards understanding its connection with theological issues in other courses in Christian Theology such as the Old Testament and Systematic Theology.

The aims of this course would be achieved by:

- Introducing the students to Pauline Theology and Epistles as a discipline that shapes their thinking on past and current developments.
- Ability to contribute to the Pauline theological debate for the growth of the church.
- Educating and also creating opportunities for students' participation in Pauline studies from an African perspective that is biblically sound.
- Helping students apply their faith to the gospel proclamation.

Course Objectives

When you have successfully finished the course, you should be able to:

- Define Pauline Theology and Epistles;
- Account for the historical development of Pauline Theology from the early church to the present time;
- Describe ways of engaging in more effectively in developing Pauline Theology; and
- Explain how Pauline Theology can answer to needs of global Christianity.

Working through This Course

You are required to walk through the course content, unit by unit in order to complete the course. It is also a requirement for you to do all the self-assessment exercises for each section of the unit and tutor-marked assignments at the end of each unit. The tutor-marked assignments will form 30% of your final grade while there is a final examination, which you will take electronically. This constitutes 70% of your final grade.

Course Materials

The major components of the course are:

1. Course Guide
2. Study Units
3. Textbooks
4. Assignment File

Study Units

There are four Modules in this course. The first three Modules has seven units while Module 4 has five units totaling twenty-six units for all the Modules. The modules are designed to cover three major aims of the course.

Module 1 Paul as Pastor-Theologian

Unit 1 The Life and Ministry of Paul the Apostle

Unit 2 Paul as Pastor-Theologian

Unit 3 The Center of Paul's Theology

Unit 4 The Authenticity of Paul's Gospel

Unit 5 The Kingdom of God

Unit 6 God's Redemptive Plan

Unit 7 Created anew in Christ

Module 2 Selected Themes in Pauline Theology

Unit 1 Pauline Doctrine of Eschatology

Unit 2 Eschatological basis for Reconciliation

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Unit 3 Justification by Faith in Christ

Unit 4 Pauline Theology on Slavery and Freedom

Unit 5 Pauline Theology on the Role of Women in the Church

Unit 6 The Ministry of Reconciliation

Unit 7 Paul's Concept of Sanctification

Module 3 The Resurrection and the Christian Life

Unit 1 The Resurrection of Christ and the Resurrection of Believers 1

Unit 2 The Resurrection of Christ and the Resurrection of Believers 2

Unit 3 The Place of the Holy Spirit in Eschatology

Unit 4 The Collection for the Saints: 2 Corinthians 8-9

Unit 5 The Concept of the Christian Community and Giving to the Gospel

Unit 6 The Christian Life Part 1

Unit 7 The Christian Life Part 2

Module 4 Pauline Epistles of the New Testament

Unit 1 Preamble to Pauline Epistles

Unit 2 Early Epistles

Unit 3 Major Epistles

Unit 4 Prison or Captivity Epistles

Unit 5 Pastoral Epistles

Textbooks and References

Assignment File

The Directorate of Examinations and Assessments of the National Open University of Nigeria will mail an assignment file to you through your Study Centre Manager. This assignment file is part of the course. This file contains the assignments that you have to submit to your tutor. These assignments will be marked and recorded and they will count towards your final grade. The assignments must be submitted to your tutor at the stipulated time that he or she decides. The assignments account for 30% of the total course work. At the end of the course you are required to sit for a final semester examination of 2 to 3 hours, which accounts for 70% of the total marks for the course.

Assessments

There are two kinds of assessment for this course. One is tutor-marked assignment and the other is a written examination. There are twenty-one units of tutor-marked assignments in all the three modules. You are expected to submit all assignments but only the best three will be counted. Each of these is worth 10% marks and together constitutes 30% of your total course marks. These assignments require application of the information, knowledge and experience acquired in the study.

Unit	Title of the Study	Weeks Activity	Assignment
	Course Guide	1	Course Guide Form
	Module 1	Paul as Pastor-Theologian	
1	The Life and Ministry of Paul the Apostle	1	Assignment
2	Paul as Pastor-Theologian	2	Assignment
3	The Centre of Paul's Theology	3	Assignment
4	The Authenticity of Paul's Gospel	4	Assignment
5	The Kingdom of God	5	
6	God's Redemptive Plan	6	
7	Created anew in Christ	7	
	Module 2	Selected Themes in Pauline Theology	
1	Pauline Doctrine of Eschatology	8	Assignment
2	Eschatological basis for Reconciliation	9	Assignment
3	Justification by Faith in Christ	10	TMA to be submitted
4	Pauline Theology on Slavery and Freedom	11	
5	Pauline Theology on the Role of Women in the Church	11	Assignment
6	Pauline Concept of Reconciliation	12	
7	Pauline Concept of Sanctification	13	
	Module 3	The Resurrection and the Christian Life	
1	The Resurrection of Christ and the Resurrection of Believers 1	14	
2	The Resurrection of Christ and the Resurrection of Believers 2	14	TMA to be submitted
3	The Place of the Holy Spirit in Eschatology	15	
4	The Collection for the Saints: 2 Corinthians 8-9	16	
5	The Concept of the Christian Community and Giving to the Gospel	16	Assignment
6	The Christian Life Part 1	17	
7	The Christian Life Part 2	17	
	Module 4	Pauline Epistles	

1	Preamble to Pauline Epistles	17	
2	Early Epistles	17	
3	Major Epistles	17	
4	Prison or captivity Epistles	17	
5	Pastoral Epistles	17	
	Revision/Examination		
	Total		

Summary

This course is designed to help you gain some insights into the Pauline Theology. This course explores into the scholarly development of Pauline eschatology within different cultural and philosophical contexts. More so, it provides a study on selected themes in Pauline theology as well Pauline epistles.

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MODULE ONE

UNIT 1: The Life and Ministry of Paul the Apostle

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 The Life and Ministry of Paul the Apostle
 - 3.2 Imprisonments and martyrdom
 - 3.3 Subsequent ministry and death
- 4.0 Summary
- 5.0 Conclusion
- 6.0 References/Further Readings

1.0 Introduction

Paul the Apostle is one of the most significant people in the New Testament. He wrote more books in the New Testament than any other writer. Paul lived a life that was life changing, as well as world changing, to those he came into contact with. Paul was a very hard and rugged man and would not have made it through everything he encountered if it had not been for; the way he was raised as Saul, his translation to Christianity, and his capability to place the mission of God before his own.

2.0 Objectives

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

- Narrate the biography of Paul the Apostle
- Describe Paul's call into the ministry of the Gospel of Christ
- Give an appraisal of Paul's comprehensive work in the early church

3.0 Main Content

3.1 The Life and Ministry of Paul the Apostle

Paul, the Apostle (Παῦλος, Roman name meaning *little*; also called Saul, שָׁאוּל, Hebrew name meaning *asked for*) was a leading figure in the Early Church whose ministry was principally to the Gentiles. A Jew of the tribe of Benjamin (Phil 3.5), Saul, “who is also called Paul” (Acts 13.9), was given the name of that tribe's most renowned member, Israel's first king. Paul was born in Tarsus in the region of Cilicia (Acts 9.11; 21.39; 22.3). Little is known about his family directly. Jerome records a tradition which suggests that his parents originally came from a town in Galilee called Gischala, and that they fled to Tarsus during the Roman devastations of Palestine in the 1st Cent. BC. (Commentary on Philemon, 23). Probably the home was fairly well-to-do, for if he were born a Roman citizen (Acts 16.37, 38; 22.25-29), his family must have possessed some wealth and standing. And from his rather self-conscious reference to “working with our own hands” in 1 Cor 4.12 and his somewhat awkwardly expressed word of thanks for a gift of money in Phil 4.14-19, it may be surmised that he speaks as one whose natural place in society was quite the reverse of any proletarian status.

To understand Paul aright, reference must be made to his life in Judaism; that is, first of all to his place and standing, and then to his activity and religious experience in the religion of his fathers. Paul overtly confirms to be a Hebraic Jew trained in the most earnest traditions of his fathers, whose Pharisaic qualifications could barely be surpassed (Acts 22.3; 2 Cor 11.22; Phil 3.5). Paul first appears in the NT in the role of an oppressor of the Church: presiding at the martyrdom of Stephen, imprisoning Christians in Jerusalem, and bringing believers back who had fled for security to areas outside of Palestine (Acts 7.58-8.3; 9.1,2; 1 Cor 15.9; Phil 3.6). Some have argued that such action would scarcely have been worthy a student of so lenient a teacher as Gamaliel I, whose words in (Acts 5.34-39) are undoubtedly an example of moderation in the midst of turmoil.

Paul was born as Saul in the city of Tarsus, a commercial city in Asia Minor, situated not too far from the Mediterranean coast. He more than likely was named after the first king of Israel, King Saul. His mother and father were Jewish, his father being a Pharisee from the family line of Benjamin, the son of Jacob. Being born and raised in a place like Tarsus made him aware of many other types of people from all walks of life. He encountered sailors, soldiers, merchants, wealthy and poverty-stricken people. He also learned the trade of tent making while growing up in order to earn a decent living. In the tradition of the family during that time, whatever the father did as a trade the sons did also. The textile industry of that day, which comprised tent making and outer garments, did a fairly lucrative profession back then due to the presence of the sailors and soldiers ordinarily needing housing from the elements. Not only was Saul born a Jew but he was also a Roman citizen. No one knows for sure; nevertheless, it was Roman law that if a person was born free anywhere in the Roman Empire then they were Roman citizens. When males were born to Jewish parents they were dedicated to the service of God and brought up in very stringent Jewish religious custom. Saul's mother read the Torah to him

until around age four or five and then his father became his teacher for a year. By the time he was about six years old he was taken to school to learn the teachings of Moses in Hebrew and Greek, memorizing them as the teacher recited them. This took a lot of hard work and attentiveness on a young child's part but this is how thoughtful his parents were about their tradition and religious belief. At fourteen or fifteen years old it was off to rabbinical school to study under Gamaliel, who was considered the master Rabbi. After studying under Gamaliel, he became a Pharisee, for he said of himself in the bible; "Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee" (Acts 23:6). In the transition of studying in Tarsus and then studying in Jerusalem, Saul revealed that to be a Pharisee meant something entirely different. He had learned that in Tarsus, it meant to observe the teachings of Moses and its interpretations by the Rabbi. In Jerusalem it meant to be a separatist and legalistic in your views regarding the Law. This is a major turning point in the life of Saul. These men sought to hurt or even kill anyone who opposed them or called them out on their wrongdoing. This is the advanced education Saul now gotten and had a fire in his heart to carry out this new standard of belief and teaching, this belief system that exchanged the spirit of the law for the letter of the law. Contrasting the person, he was a few years earlier he now becomes a crazed, heartless, religious fanatic that desires to terminate anyone that believes openly what is opposing to what he believes. He gets to the point where he not only kills Christians but because of his deep hatred for them, he also rounds them up to bring them into the city for torture, entertainment and sport. He goes all out persecuting Christians for what he believes is right; things like getting written permission to drag people from their homes to bring them to Jerusalem; until one day he had an experience on the Damascus road.

At thirteen a Jewish boy became a *bar mitzvah* ("son of the commandment") at which time he took upon himself the full obligation of the law and the more promising lads were directed into rabbinic schools under abler teachers. It was probably at this age or shortly thereafter that Paul came to Jerusalem to further his training, perhaps living with the married sister spoken of in Acts 23.16.

Jewish law agreed that a boy began the study of the Scriptures at five years of age and the study of the legal traditions at ten (Pirke Aboth 5:21). Josephus relates that both the Scriptures and the traditions were taught in every city to Jewish boys "from our first consciousness" (Contra Apion II. 18), and Philo speaks of such instruction "from earliest youth" (Leg. ad Gaium 210). Undoubtedly Paul was immersed as a boy in such a curriculum as well, being taught in the synagogue school and at home. Jewish sentiment also asserted the nobility of manual labor, and advised that intellectual prowess and physical activity go hand in hand. Gamaliel II is credited with saying: "Excellent is Torah study together with worldly business, for all Torah without work must fail at length, and occasion iniquity" (Pirke Aboth 2:2). An early Jewish tractate insists: "Whosoever doth not teach his son work, teaches him to rob" (BT Kiddushin 99a). Thus, Paul was also initiated into the skills of a tentmaker, which, while a rather menial occupation to the modern mind, was then prob. considered a "clean and not laborious trade" (BT Berakoth 63a). Jewish education sought to produce a man who could both think and act: one who was neither an egghead nor a clod. And Paul's later life indicates that he profited greatly from such schooling.

As to his bodily appearance, there is only indirect information from the NT. The fact that the populaces of Lystra in their misdirected passion acknowledged Barnabas as Zeus, the chief of the Olympian gods, and Paul with Hermes, the winged messenger of the gods, possibly designates the relative figure of the two missionaries (Acts 14.12). Barnabas was probably the more majestic and

striking figure, with Paul being lesser in physique, though more active of temperament. This suggestion of an unattractive appearance is borne out by the scornful remark of his antagonists at Corinth: “his letters are weighty and strong, but his bodily presence is weak” (2 Cor 10.10). Paul himself mentions two issues which must have disfigured his appearance slightly, at least in later life: (1) a “bodily ailment,” which he acknowledged as a trial to his converts and for which he prayed constantly for relief (Gal 4.13-15; 2 Cor. 12 7-10); and (2) the “marks of Jesus” borne in his body, which possibly entails the marks of physical abuse suffered as a minister of the Gospel and which he regarded as revered brands suggesting his relation to his Lord (Gal 6.17). Moreover, the Corinthian letters present evidence that Paul had known his eloquent skills to be less than those of others (1 Cor 2.1-5; 2 10.10; 11.6). Thus, his letters also disclose a man of deep intelligence, subtle nature, infectious spirit, huge vitality, strong willpower, and a huge capacity for friendship. A presbyter in the province of Asia during the 2nd Cent labelled him as “a man small of stature, with a bald head and crooked legs, in a good state of body, with eyebrows meeting and nose somewhat hooked, full of friendliness; for now, he appeared like a man, and now he had the face of an angel” (Acts of Paul and Thecla 3). Though this account can be inferred from the New Testament facts itself, this account may well rest upon sincere memoirs from an earlier day.

It perhaps will not ever be decisively established whether Paul was ever married or not, though it appears most possible that he continued single during his life. The argument that as an affiliate of the Sanhedrin (cf. Acts 26.10) he was mandated to be married and the father of children (BT Sanhedrin 36b) is not solid. This ruling, established in the benefits of moderation in the aspect of intensifying zealot action, dates from the time of Rabbi Akiba in the late 1st and early 2nd centuries A.D. The need for its inauguration designates that before this time such was not the circumstance. Likewise, the opinion of Clement of Alexandria that Paul was really married, but left his wife at Philippi so that she would not restrict with his travels, and that he addresses her in the words “true yokefellow” of Phil 4.3 (Stromata III. 6), may be carefully set aside. It would be unbelievable for Paul to encourage the single and the widows of Corinth to “remain single as I do” (1 Cor 7.8), if he had all the while been married. And that the Corinthian ascetics could refer to him in validation of their assessments on continence submits that he was unmarried rather than a widower.

Paul was definitely a man of the city, with character and skills, which equipped him to reason broadly and minister extensively. He had been trained in the flourishing commercial and intellectual center of Tarsus and schooled in the Israelite capital of Jerusalem; he focused his missionary activities on the great centers of Roman impact; and he beheld frontward to preaching in Rome, the capital of the empire. His urbanized stance is seen in his metaphors, most of which are drawn from city life: the stadium (1 Cor 9.24-27; Phil 3.14), the law courts (Rom 7.1-4; Gal 3.15; 4.1, 2), the processions (2 Cor 2.14; Col 2.15), and the market (2 Cor 1.22; 5.5). As one exceedingly skilled in the traditions of his fathers, who had also rubbed shoulders with Grecian culture and had inherited Roman citizenship, Paul was talented to speak easily within every segment of the Roman world.

When he was on a trip from Jerusalem to Damascus on an assignment to capture Christians, Saul had an experience he would not ever fail to recall. As he rode down the Damascus way, suddenly, he fell off the horse he was riding and a bright light shined all around him (Acts 9:3-4; 22, 26). Paul was confronted by the risen and glorified Christ in a manner which he considered comparable to the resurrection appearances to Peter, the other apostles and James (1 Cor 15.3-8). Then a voice from heaven was heard to say, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?” Paul asked regarding the identity of the speaker, and was told, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.” He was then instructed to rise and enter the city, and he would be told what to do. Stricken so bright actually, it made him blind. He

perceived a speech he supposed to be a man but later known that it was not a man but the very Christ he persecuted by persecuting the Christians. This was additional major turning point in the life of Saul. He stops at the moment from persecuting, killing, beating, and torturing Christians to becoming one. His blindness continued for three days and then he was cured of his impaired vision by the laying on of hands as it had been beforehand revealed to him. Paul was residing at the home of a man named Judas who lived on “the street called Straight,” when a Christian disciple by the name of Ananias was sent by God to minister to him. It was through Ananias that Paul’s sight was restored, he was baptized as a Christian, and further instructions were given him concerning God’s purpose for his life. He was transformed from Saul to Paul and he left Damascus and travelled to Arabia so as to get to recognize the God of his salvation personally. He recognized who God is by the letter of the written law but then required to know Him by the spirit, so he went away for about three years to devote time with God. After Paul returned to Damascus, he demonstrated hands down that Jesus is the Messiah, just like Jesus said He was, and the Jews there taxed to kill him because he now preached the reality of the law they knew and recited. Paul’s absconding with his life from this death challenge became the catalyst to him going from place to place and city-to-city propagating the Gospel. He was nevertheless, made an Apostle, and specially made to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, the Grecians and all the non-Jewish people, and change them to Christianity and not the Jews.

Paul started by touring on what is called his missionary journeys all over Asia Minor meeting various crises and life-threats experiences. He forged very strong affairs with men and women of like craving for God and His work also founding many churches and installing pastors to manage them as he toured. He visited the churches he planted and wrote letters to them when he could not really be there. These letters are called the Pauline epistles in the New Testament. These same letters help today as direction and guidance for holy living. Paul the Apostle was shipwrecked numerous times, attacked, arrested, beaten with rods, and left for dead; yet endured until he had achieved his mission. Undeniably nothing but death would restrain Paul from fulfilling missionary goals and he did not experience death until he finished. Though, when the time had come for him to die, he was executed. Normally, they would have crucified him but it was illegal to crucify a Roman citizen, so he was guillotined. Paul was a great man in history and his life lives on through the pages of Bible.

3.2 Imprisonments and Martyrdom

The significance of the period of the Pauline imprisonments in Palestine and Rome is slightly signaled by the fact that Luke gives one-fourth of his account of the Early Church to it, Acts 21 through 28. This does not entail, undeniably, that the defenses, imprisonments and martyrdom of Paul are more imperative than any other affair in the history of the Early Church. Luke’s scopes in writing are reliant on his determinations; and while several kerygmatic, catechetical and even conciliatory motifs are knotted in his work, he also has an apologetic purpose, which lays substantial emphasis upon the Pauline trials and defenses. Nonetheless, Luke’s proportions recommend that this period in the apostle’s life and ministry must be measured more than just the finale to an efficacious career, and has significance of itself. The period covers a wide span of time, possibly as long as a decade: starting with the apostle’s arrest in Jerusalem about A.D. 58; as well as a two-year incarceration at Caesarea from A.D. 58 through 60, a tour of some months by sea to Rome from late A.D. 60 to the spring of 61, a two-year imprisonment at Rome from A.D. 61 through 63; and possibly including a period of release and subsequent ministry from A.D. 63 through 66, with a second Roman imprisonment and final martyrdom under Nero in A.D. 67.

3.3 Subsequent Ministry and Death

What happened to Paul at the close of the two-year imprisonment in Rome is not stated. Luke may have planned to write an outcome to his accounts of the life and work of Jesus and the progress of the Gospel in the East, which would have told of the development of the Gospel into the western portion of the empire. But whatsoever his anticipations may have been, there is clearly no such record existing. The closest approach to such an account is in the letter of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians, written about A.D.96, in which the subsequent epitaph appears: "By reason of jealousy and strife, Paul by his example pointed out the prize of patient endurance. After that he had been seven times in bonds, had been driven into exile, had been stoned, had preached in the East and in the West, he won the noble renown which was the reward of his faith, having taught righteousness unto the whole world and having reached the farthest bounds of the West; and when he had borne his testimony before the rulers, so he departed from the world and went unto the holy place, having been found a notable pattern of patient endurance" (I Clement 3:13-15). Since the Pastoral Epistles refer to experiences of Paul which cannot be tailored into the narrative of Acts and mention a number of individuals not appearing in the accounts of the missionary journeys, it frequently has been assumed that after his release from prison the apostle carried on his evangelism in the eastern portion of the empire (in any case in lands nearby the Aegean Sea) and maybe even satisfied his long valued desire to visit Spain. And since 2 Timothy speaks of him as in prison, it is further proposed that he was rearrested about A.D.67, and, according to tradition decapitated at Rome by order of Nero.

4.0 Summary

The birth name of Paul is actually Saul. He was born into a Jewish family in the city of Tarsus. His birth in Roman "free city" affords him Roman citizenship, a privilege he enjoyed in life. Paul attended the best Rabbinical school in Jerusalem. The renowned and esteemed Pharisee, Gamaliel, led the school. Paul was thirty years old when he witnessed the stoning of Stephen. His Pharisaic zeal for God's law and devotion to bring to an end the early spread of Christianity knew no bounds. He led the first great wave of persecution against the early church. It is during his trip to Damascus that the crucial event in the life of Paul happens (Acts 9:4). After his conversion, the same zeal and single-minded dedication Paul had against Christianity transforms into a hyperactive-like quest to spread the gospel global wide. His incredible ministry lasts 35 years until his death at the age of 66. His achievements are amazing given the rudimentary (by today's standard) level of transport and other hitches that exist in the 1st century.

Paul include was personally taught by Jesus, for three years, while living in Arabia. During his ministry he resurrects at least one person from the dead and resurrected himself after being stoned to death. Paul carries out at least five evangelistic journeys, visits more than 50 cities in his travels and preaches the gospel to Emperor Caesar and his entire family. He also writes no less than fourteen books (epistles) of the Bible, trains other evangelists and gospel preachers like John Mark and Timothy, Titus and many others. He endures a total of more than five years in prison. The apostle Paul suffered martyrdom by Romans in 66 A.D.

5.0 Conclusion

The following are the major points you have learnt in this unit:

- Apostle Paul has left a lasting impact on church's tradition.

- His writings have been used to justify agendas that the apostle himself would have stood against.
- His biography gives a framework for engaging the Paul of history so that we can unearth what he actually taught and experienced.
- Paul proclaims the gospel of Christ Jesus, absolutely more radical than what he previously did in Judaism.

Self-Assessment Exercises

1. Describe briefly Paul's citizenship
2. How did Paul convert from Jewish religion to Christianity?
3. Who was that Jewish famous teacher that taught him Judaism in Jerusalem?

6.0 References/Further Readings

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UNIT 2: Paul as Pastor-Theologian

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Paul as Pastor-Theologian
 - 3.2 Eschatological Structure
- 4.0 Summary
- 5.0 Conclusion
- 6.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 Introduction

This piece is explored to divulge to students the comprehensive theology of Paul as it is contained in his epistles and the Bible. It appears that the Centre of Paul's theology is "to preach Christ crucified." We are called upon to emulate Christ who is the author and finisher of our faith. In his constructive Christology he looked at Jesus as the second and the last Adam who never sinned and cannot sin. The appraisal to Pauline doctrine of epistemology, eschatology, trinity, sin and so on has portrayed how Paul is seen as the genius of the greatest constructive mind ever at work on the data of Christianity.

2.0 Objectives

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

- Realize that the constructive theology of Paul is overwhelmingly rooted in Christ.
- Appreciate Pauline theology as regards sensitive doctrinal tenets
- Explain the centre of the gospel theology as shown in Pauline epistles.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Paul as Pastor-Theologian

The theological entry consideration for Paul's writings was prompted by 2 Pet 3:16--Peter's statement about Paul, the things difficult to understand. That is what prompted us to survey the history of the wrestling with Paul. The more one studies the teaching of Paul, the more you are bound to become impressed that you are dealing with a systematic thinker, an orderly thinker. The more you deal with the writings of Paul, the more you (ought to) know yourself to be dealing with teaching that reflects deep penetration, and is carefully structured. We encounter a structure of thought characterized by careful reflection, penetrating analysis, and even a certain amount of conceptual rigor. As Vos puts it, in Paul what we have to deal with is "*the genius of the greatest constructive mind ever at work on the data of Christianity*" (p 149). It is the fruitfulness of Vos' approach that has enabled him to recognize this in Paul, and to deal with him along these lines. Though Paul's writings provide us with a tome for doing systematic or doctrinal theology, they are pastoral in the sense that they are letters, and as letters, they are directed to concrete life problems and condition, and specific church situations.

The letter to the Galatians is truly to the Galatians. A pastoral or hortatory concern is always present in Paul. And that is true even in sections of the book of Romans, where the theoretical reflection, and the penetrating analysis is the most apparent. We are highlighting the occasional character of Paul's writings. In a word, the letters of Paul are occasional, as that word is sometimes used in the discourse, in a specific, technical sense, that is, addressed to a particular situation. Although, at the same time, as we emphasize the occasional nature, we don't want to suggest that Paul wrote them simply to be read and discarded. So, we can go on to let the other shoe drop again; Paul's writings are not a tangled mass of ad hoc formulations. They are not an amalgam of unrelated conceptions. They are not in that sense "doxological" in the sense of being non-theological. Mostly, everyone has learned by this time, you simply can't get away with doing what the 19th century liberal interpretation tried to do, to separate Paul's religion from his theology; it just doesn't work to try to free up a core of religious conviction or doxology from a disposable shell made up of all sorts of confused and contradictory theological viewpoints. Rather, there is present reflected in the letters of Paul, in all of their occasional character, and, yes, in all of their pervasively doxological tone, there is a unified structure of thought, the coherence of theological thinking. As we could illustrate here to give a couple of examples: Eph 1:3-14, Rom 8--are they doxology or theology?

Albert Schweitzer here again proves quotable, "Paul is the patron saint of thought in Christianity." Of course, you can run with that statement in the wrong way; it is not to suggest that everyone else was mindless. Schweitzer and we would have decidedly different opinions on Paul's thought. These observations bring into the mix the relatively substantial quantity of material we have from Paul; all this provides warrant for viewing Paul as the first Christian thinker, the first Christian theologian.

From the perspective that we have just been bringing into view, we can identify the real problem of Pauline interpretation, or the proper problem, in distinction of all problems we the interpreters bring to the text, and that mar our interpretation of Paul, we can speak of the real or proper problem. And that, we can say, is bound up with the occasional factor we have noted. The real difficulty is that in his writings we encounter a thinker of constructive genius, a thinker with a decidedly doctrinal disposition. Also, we encounter him only as he directs himself to specific situations and problems, only as he addresses himself in an occasional or pastoral fashion. We can note this in 2 Cor 9, where Paul is interested in the collection from the church. [And this brings up a correlated factor: we find the apostle, at least in many instances, expressing himself against the background of previous contact, and extensive personal instruction, and that is no longer known to us in detail.] He talks about a collection for the Jerusalem church, but questions come to mind to which answers are elusive, because Paul is building on this previous contact. A perennial issue is his teaching on the man of sin, mentioned in 2 Thess. 2:5-6--"now you know." Don't you remember what I said when I was with you, and now you know what it is that restrains. And it is just what Paul banks on his immediate readers to know that subsequent readers wish they knew.

3.2 Eschatological Structure

That prompts the wry comment of Vos, after one of the longest chapters in the *Pauline Eschatology*, that the best interpretation is going to be its fulfillment. So, the true problem in Paul is that we have a theologian only accessible through his letters and sermon records--only through a largely non-theological idiom, or in informal idiom: a theologian expressing himself in a non-systematic, non-topical format. So an analogy that has suggested itself, which is helpful in representing the overall situation here we are addressing, is that we can compare the epistles of Paul to the visible portion of an iceberg; in other words, what projects above the surface is a small fraction of what remains submerged, and also the shapes and contours which we might take in upon first glance, may upon further examination prove to be deceptive. In other words, there is a mass of which a small proportion is above the surface. Or to put things in a less pictorial fashion, a concept that has little textual support may in the end, upon examination, prove to be basic or fundamental or of constitutive significance. An example is Paul's referring to Christ (only twice) as the second or last Adam, but which proves to be one of his most basic Christological expressions.

4.0 Summary

Inevitably, concern with the letters of Paul, as a whole and as we bring in Acts, that overall concern with Paul gives rise to the question of structure, to the underlying framework of thought. Or in the categories of linguistic, structural analysis, what are the *deep structures* that give rise to the surface manifestation? What is the *competence level* of which the letters are a performance? What is the generative matrix out of which the letters emerge? Or in more traditional categories what is good and necessary consequence in the case of the explicit statements of Paul?

5.0 Conclusion

We are going to make sense of Paul only if we are ready to wrestle with such questions. It is not a matter of trying to make some kind of end-run around the text. We are solely and totally dependent upon the text. But it is what the text brings us to recognize and propose. It is this state of affairs, wrestling with these questions, that makes extensive interpretation of Paul arduous; I don't want to

ignore the difficulty. Peter says some things are difficult to understand in Paul (but not that all things are difficult to understand in Paul.)

Self-Assessment Exercises

- i. What qualifies Paul as a theologian, according to Vos?
- ii. Explain how Paul's writings are both pastoral letters and theological.
- iii. What is the basic eschatological structure in Paul's theology?

6.0 References/Further Reading

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Unit 3: The Center of Paul's Theology

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 The Center of Paul's Theology
 - 3.2 Initial Probe: 1 Cor 2:2
- 4.0 Summary
- 5.0 Conclusion
- 6.0 References for further Reading

1.0 Introduction

The significant question in the study of Paul is “How we ought to begin?” in the study and interpretation of Paul? Is it in the doctrine of justification by faith? Or is it the doctrine of the Holy Spirit in Paul? We ought not to minimize the seemingly inevitable tendency to constrict, to limit the impact of the apostle's teaching. And how do avoid--given our prior understanding each of us has of Paul--so that our study together will broaden our understanding? And our understanding particularly what it means to be a Christian, and what goes with it, how will our experience of Christian religion go deeper?

2.0 Objectives

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Discover the center of Paul's theology in his epistles
- Explain the eschatological position of Christ in relation to Old Testament prophecies.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 The Center of Paul's Theology

Following the cue of Ridderbos, he compares Paul's teaching to a vast building. It has a number of ways through which one can enter and even force entry. So Ridderbos asks: What is the main entry, or the main set of entries? How do we enter in such a way as to discover the floor plan, to get a sense for the whole, so that we can proceed to move about with a minimal amount of stumbling? Undoubtedly there are a variety of angles with which to valuably approach Paul. But what we are getting at is the question: Does Paul's theology has a center? That does seem a profitable question to pose--a question we can answer. And we should note that this is a question that a number of Pauline scholars find problematic (which then makes this perhaps even more of an important question to ask).

Despite the reservations of some, it seems difficult to deny that his teaching does have a center--particularly if that notion of center is not maintained too rigidly. We are not saying center as if there is one central key concept from which everything else should be deduced. We wouldn't want to do that, say, with election, his notion of salvation, or even his concept of God. So we wouldn't want this center to be unduly restricted. At the same time, however, we ought not to allow the ad hoc nature of Paul's letters, their occasional nature, to then provide us a wax nose, so that we can make out of them whatever we want, based on our experience today. In his teaching as a whole, there is an overall set of concerns that we can identify, and in that set, some matters are plainly more important than others. Many concerns, but each one is not equally important and of concern. To extend the metaphor, that points to a circle of interest in Paul, a circle in which each concern is more or less central--relative centrality. Assuming this, what is it? What is his locus and centering concern, and how do we go about identifying it properly? While there is probably more than one way to approach answering this question, we do so most safely, it seems, by identifying certain passages that have a summarizing purpose, a kind of synoptic outlook. We can see that Paul does that in places, using either his own words or, as we'll find, where he may be using some already existing formulation, certain creedal fragments, e.g. We want to find passages that express more or less clearly what are Paul's core concerns. Without trying to provide a complete survey here of such material, let me draw attention to several of these, and maybe we can see how these function along the lines we are trying to get across.

3.2 Initial Probe: 1 Cor 2:2

"For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified."

And we can just remind ourselves that this statement is in the broader context of 1:18-3:22. And that's useful to point up because this is a passage in which Paul highlights factors that are basic to his apostolic ministry as a whole. He is giving an account of what he is all about as an apostle. And what that includes is what we may fairly term his theological epistemology. How he knows in his teaching, his theology as contained in the context, which he affirms that he determined to acknowledge

absolutely the crucified Christ (1 Cor 2:2). Paul is here affirming his exclusive and comprehensive epistemic commitment that in a word is Christ. That is to say, the crucified Christ! In a similar vein, we can note Gal 6:14: "may I never boast about anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" (NLT). And then Gal 3:1: "O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified." This reinforces as it captures the central element of his preaching. Or we could bring into consideration here 2 Tim 2:8: "Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, the offspring of David, as preached in my gospel." Perhaps here we can see some creedal formulation here; I don't know that we can. But notice here how the resurrection comes into consideration, inevitably connected with the death. As the NIV translates, "This is my gospel."

1 Cor 15:3-4:

Those passages having provided us with an initial probe, we can look with somewhat more detail at a passage we are bound, it seems to give attention to in this line of thinking: 1 Cor 15:3-4. The statements we have just been looking at we have been looking at with an eye toward clarifying the center of Paul's theology. And what would seem to be particularly useful would be a statement that would be sufficiently "nuclear"--bringing the center into view--and yet doing that with enough detail that would allow us to identify what is the circumference of Paul's interests (in an adequate way). And in that regard, it does seem to me that what is most helpful and most forthcoming is 1 Cor 15:3-4.

1 Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, 2 and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word, I preached to you- unless you believed in vain. 3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.

We are going to focus on verses 3-4. Commentaries debate about whether this is a pre-Pauline fragment. Again, I don't know how you can be decisive about that, but what is the critical issue here is that we have Paul here being decisive about it and affirming it his own. In the overall context of Paul's teaching and we know that this is always the case in doing exegesis or making interpretive observations, you always have to be focused on the center that that passage represents but you are doing that in a broader context, and there is inevitably a back and forth.

1. The prepositional phrase "en hotois"--"among first things." But almost all commentators agree that this has to have a qualitative meaning (not a temporal sense). These are things of first importance. So, Paul is telling us here explicitly that his paramount concerns have their focus, their center in what is Christ's death and resurrection. And we can deepen this consideration by going on to note this. Look back at verses 1-2. He is going to remind the brothers of the gospel that he preached to them. So, are we not then surely on sound ground in saying that our verses 3-4 centered on cross and resurrection--is plainly in view as the center of Paul's gospel? And that promotes a broader observation: Paul is here fairly and best read as reflecting on his ministry as a whole to the Corinthians. So, in view here of these vv 3-4 and the context as a whole, Paul is not just concerned with a part of his teaching but his message, his teaching in its entirety. So that we could say that Paul's teaching as a whole is gospel. His theology, we could say, is a gospel-theology. Or if that runs the risk of being reductionistic, viewing things in terms of co-centric

circles, we could say that the center of Paul's theology is the gospel and at the center of that gospel is Christ's death and resurrection.

2. We must be sure not to miss that the death and resurrection here not in view as bare, isolated, uninterpreted facts. This is unmistakable. We can note two things. For one thing, death and resurrection are "according to the Scriptures." It describes both death and resurrection. What does that mean to say? Probably we could open up a very profitable line of explanation here. As an aside, one could profitably write an entire Pauline theology as Paul's use of the OT. That would run the risk of a bit of overstatement; but you could write a substantial amount of Paul's theology as Paul's use of the OT. Thus, cross and resurrection have their meaning as they involve fulfillment of the OT Scriptures. That fulfillment is nothing less than *eschatological* fulfillment. Accordingly, Paul is telling us here that the meaning of the OT is this fulfillment. Then notice also as to indication of significance here, the death of Christ is here said to be "for our sins." And in passing here, keep in mind the redemptive-historical focus that we have here, an *ordo salutis* (order of salvation) dimension comes in unmistakably and inseparably. A death for our sins. We could say that at the center of gospel theology, Christ's death has its significance, together with the resurrection, with relation to *our* sins, to our sins, and we can surely anticipate, human sins in all its consequences. In other words, the soteriological focus is unmistakable here. So, this brings us to the following baseline conclusion. Following from 1 Cor 15:3-4 and reinforced by the preceding passages we looked at, at the center of Paul's theology, constituting that center as much as anything are Christ's death and resurrection, or more broadly, messianic suffering and glory, the humiliation and exaltation of Christ. And we may accent again, **messianic suffering and glory, death and resurrection in their Scripture-fulfilling and saving significance.** These are the observations in discussion of the center of Paul's theology.

4.0 Summary

According to the theology of the cross, a proper insight of God comes only "in the cross and suffering". Perceiving God purely as the omnipotent creator is only a partial understanding of God and cannot avert man from lapsing into foolishness (Rom 1.20-22). For a sinner to stand before a righteous and almighty God necessarily means damnation, unless he knows of the cross of Jesus Christ. The knowledge comes not through human reason or any other human sense, but only through the "folly" of what we preach "to save those who believe" (1 Cor. 1.21). The perception of God understood in this way is perception of salvation. A theology based upon the cross of Christ perceives salvation as a gift from God, not something achieved by human efforts. We could say that the center of Paul's theology is the gospel and at the center of that gospel is Christ's death and resurrection. Or we could bring into consideration here 2 Tim 2:8: "Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, the offspring of David, as preached in my gospel." Perhaps here we can see some creedal formulation here; I don't know that we can. But notice here how the resurrection comes into consideration, inescapably linked with the death. As the NIV translates, "This is my gospel."

5.0 Conclusion

In Paul's epistles the crucifixion story reveals a God who is free and in no way bound by human categories or anticipations. However, God in Christ chooses to be engaged in the very depths of the human predicament. The message of the crucifixion is that God's power is manifested in weakness, not in strength. Consequently, this weakness as strength should be the focal point of the church's

identity. In Pauline soteriology the death and resurrection of Christ signifies that believers in Christ at the close of this age shall rise from their sleep to eternal glory, which is being at home with Christ.

Self-Assessment Exercises

- i. Discuss the Centre of Pauline theology
- ii. What is the significance of the death and resurrection of Christ as found in Pauline epistles?
- iii. Explain the main focus of Paul in his teaching on eschatology

6.0 References/Further Reading

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UNIT 4: The Authenticity of Paul's Gospel

Contents

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 The Nature of the authenticity of Paul's Gospel
- 4.0 Summary
- 5.0 Conclusion
- 6.0 References for further Reading

1.0 Introduction

This unit is one of the most outstanding sections of the New Testament. R. P. C. Hanson refers to it as "one of the charters of the Christian ministry in the New Testament." C. K. Barrett calls it "one of the most pregnant, difficult, and important in the whole of the Pauline literature." Calvin's remark on 2 Cor. 5:18 is also stunning: "Here, if anywhere in Paul's writings, we have a quite remarkably important passage and we must carefully examine the words one by one." As the present author is in consideration with Calvin's remarks about the necessity of cautiously studying this notable passage, this study does not look at its words one by one. Relatively the goal is to build up Paul's teaching on

reconciliation in the literary context of 2 Corinthians. This necessitates cautious thought to the syntax of 5:11- 6:2 and to the argument of the entire letter. There is also a brief review of reconciliation elsewhere in Paul, along with a concluding theological synthesis of Paul's doctrine of reconciliation. The doctrine of reconciliation incorporates individual, corporate, cosmic, and eschatological dimensions which make it really challenging theologically. Still, the actual verification of our understanding of it is our fitness as agents of reconciliation in this hostile world.

2.0 Objectives

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

- Explain the nature and origin of the authority of Paul's gospel.
- Analyze the background that prompted Paul's epistle to Corinthians

3.0 Main Content

3.1 The Nature of the Authenticity of Paul's Gospel

Background Considerations

The argument of 2 Corinthians is a fiercely debated issue, mostly due to main questions about the unity of the letter. Hasty changes in tone and subject matter in 6:14-7:1 and particularly 10:1-13:10 have caused many to believe that the letter contains interpolations, perhaps relating the letters alluded to somewhere else in the Corinthian correspondence (1 Cor 5:9; 2 Cor 2:4). While these and other related questions are not determinative of the exegesis of 2 Cor 5:11-6:2, the positions adopted in answering them indirectly sway that exegesis. This study will continue on the assumption that 2 Corinthians is a literary unity from the hand of Paul and that the hasty changes evident in the letter may be adequately explained by the apostle's emotional state and personal distress over the Corinthians' spiritual problems.

One more complicated question is the occasion of the letter in view of Paul's earlier contact and correspondence with the Corinthians (Acts 18:1-18; 1 Cor 5:9; 2 Cor 2:4). This is related to the identity and views of the party that was promoting the crevice between Paul and the Corinthians. One may propose answers to this question by attempting a "mirror reading" of the epistle (cf. 2 Cor 2:11; 3:1; 4:2-4; 5:12; 6:14; 10:1-2, 10-12; 11:3-4, 12-15, 18-23), but there is no agreement as to whether this party emphasized gnosis, law, or a syncretistic blending of many false ideas. It is obvious that Paul saw his opponents as false apostles, agents of Satan whose stress on fleshly show, rhetorical flourish, and self-commendation was opposing to the message and ministry of the true gospel.

In spite of these difficulties the epistle's argument is apparent. In chapters 1-7 Paul is appealing to the Corinthians to know that his message is a true gospel ministry. Chapters 8-9 encompass his instructions and encouragement concerning the offering for the saints in Judea. Feelings that had obviously been held in check up to this point blow up in chapters 10-13, where Paul feels compelled to boast about the authority and power of his ministry. This polemic is written sarcastically (cf. mainly 10:1; 11:4, 19-21; 12:13, 16; 13:3) in order to get the interest of the Corinthians and to stimulate them that he loves them and that he seeks only their spiritual well-being (10:14-15; 11:2, 12; 12:14-15, 19).

In 2 Corinthians 5, Paul is in the core of his appeal to the Corinthians to identify his personal integrity and apostolic authority. This appeal and defense are developed in between references to time spent in Macedonia pending the advent of Titus (2 Cor 2:14; 7:4). Martin is correct in saying that this section is not a parenthesis or a rehearsal of the past. Rather it is an annex of the same spirit he [Paul] had shown them in calling them to repentance (2:2; 7:8-11) and obedience (2:9), and it is an enthusiastic yet reasoned appeal to any who were still unbending to the pressure of his earlier appeal and whose sociable attitude toward himself, he still has reason to hesitation. The plea is a renewed call to them to leave their hostile dispositions and suspicions of both his message and his ministry and embrace his proffered reconciliation, before now given to the leader of the pack (2:5-11; 7:12).

4.0 Summary

Paul's chief concern was to educate the Corinthians on the authority that he had received from the Lord to preach the great mysteries of salvation. Paul wrote to confront the Gnostic teachers who were bringing confusion and another gospel that did not relate to Christ's life, teachings and work. They were to also know the nature of the gospel to which they were called and as such opportunities for divisions among believers should not be allowed. The Christian body remains one despite the various parts in terms of racial, social, ethnic and all kinds of diversities that human beings are created with. Such diversities should always be overcome by reconciliations just as God has done towards his church in Christ Jesus.

5.0 Conclusion

The piece is deeply theological and remarkably personal, for Paul's theology and his manner of ministry will stand or fall together. Paul presupposes that it is unfeasible to disconnect the gospel message from the messenger of the gospel. *Exegesis of 2 Cor 5:11-6:2*. This begins with the note that Paul's attempts to influence people are motivated by awe of Christ's judgment seat (5:11). Paul admits that his life and ministry is an "open book" before God (cf. 1 Cor 4:4) even though it is essential for him to convince people of his sincerity. He will not get involved in self-commendation (5:12; cf. 3:1-2; 10:12, 18; 12:19; but on the other hand, cf. 4:2; 6:4; 12:11); he is not interested in outer appearance but in internal integrity. Whether he is in an ecstatic state of mind before God or in a grave state of mind before the Corinthians, they have no reason to distrust his uprightness (5:13).

Self-Assessment Exercises

- i. Why did Paul boast of his ministry?
- ii. Describe the activity of the Gnostic philosophers who Paul confronted.

6.0 References for further Reading

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Unit 5: The Kingdom of God

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Paul and Jesus: The Kingdom of God
 - 3.2 Paul's Use of the Two-Age (Aeon) Construct (or Schema)
- 4.0 Summary
- 5.0 Conclusion
- 6.0 References for further Reading

1.0 Introduction

If we keep tethered of the issue of centre into Paul, another angle that would suggest itself, a ground-level consideration, if you will, that would be of such an order that it would guard us from unduly foreclosing or being too limited in our consideration, would be to raise the more formal question of Paul's place in the history of revelation--his *apostolic function* w/in that larger history, and more particularly, his function as an apostle as he is an instrument of revelation. And on that line, the most immediate q to address is the relationship between the teaching of Paul and the teaching of Jesus, in

the unfolding organism of the history of revelation. (Recall what we said previously as the central axis of NT revelation, Jesus-Paul. Don't use that to fail to give due attention to other parts of the NT.)

2.0 Objectives

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

- Describe the concept of the kingdom of God as taught by Jesus and Paul.
- Differentiate the dualistic nature of the kingdom of God.
- Explain in details the Pauline usage of two aeons as rooted in Judaism and its implications on man.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Paul and Jesus: The Kingdom of God

Paul's Letters: Rom 14:17

Particularly using Jesus' teaching as a point of reference, that calls us to give specific attention to the teaching of the *basileia*, the kingdom, in Paul. The central conception in Jesus' is the integrating category, which is that of the kingdom of God. Remember the ambivalence that attaches to that Greek term, meaning either the rule of God or the realm of God. The dynamic or static aspect. Power or turf, if you like. And as we can remind ourselves again, particularly as historical critical developments as well as a larger outlook has been widespread throughout the history of the church--the *basileia* is not simply a matter of the providence of God, God's rule over creation as it has been from the beginning. Surely that is the case. But it is not the concern of the kingdom as Jesus proclaims it. Nor is it a matter of timeless morality or an ideal moral order. Which again is not to deny the abiding validity of this teaching. But rather, the abiding concern of Jesus is the eschatological rule of God. The rule of God that has finally arrived in his creation in the person of Jesus. So it is, as Jesus looks at it, the final order inaugurated in the coming of Christ. That which has happened and will be consummated in his return. Eschatology as the controlling viewpoint in the teaching of Jesus is one that involves both realized and unrealized, both present and future.

Now as we come to the letters of Paul, kingdom language is *received*, and it is not as central as it is in Jesus. Now this lexical state of affairs has been taken and I think particularly of the Paul-Jesus controversy that we have talked about as the basic difference or even a conflict, a fundamental divergence between the teaching of Jesus and Paul. But now as we look into Paul, while it is the case that basileia language is much reduced in its currency, nonetheless the language is there and, more importantly, the concept is there and there with the same present-future pattern that we see in Jesus' teaching. Most distinctive is the *basileia* concept where it is connected with the language of inheritance (*pleronomia*), where the *basileia* is in view as a future inheritance of believers. And the statements I have in mind are in 1 Cor 6:9-10, Gal 5:21 and Eph 5:5. And if you were to look into these passages, you would see that these have a negative statement in view, "those who will not inherit". So, these have a plainly eschatological, future reference. But also in Paul you have statements that affirm that the *basileia* is present: though, not many, these statements are unmistakable in their force.

Addressing the church, Paul says in *Colossians 1:13* “*He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son.*” Also, in *Rom 14:17* he says, “For the kingdom of God is not a matter of what we eat or drink, but of living a life of goodness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. “And here we could also cite *1 Cor 4:20*, where Paul says that the kingdom is “not in word but in power.” That is an affirmation that, it is true in the present. No matter how minimal the use of the language, we have the same state of affairs in Paul that we have in Jesus. *Basileia* is a comprehensive category. As such, it is an eschatological reality that is both present and future. Specifically, it is the realm of redemption. The realm where God's redeemed people are gathered. *Rom 14:17* is especially instructive for the lines of connection that there are between Paul and Jesus' teaching; *for the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.*

It seems we are being instructed here as we read the context Paul is zeroing in on questions of dissention, decisions that need to be made with regard to the strong and the weak, addressing certain issues of Christian conduct, it seems the way he is getting at that is that he is going way up above the particular problems of the church and giving an overall picture of what is instructive, pointing to a significant factor toward getting. And he is saying that the *basileia* will be amplified by what he has to teach about righteousness, about peace, joy and the Holy Spirit. And that is further in the context of the *ecclesia*, the church. So, seeing the affinity between righteousness as well as joy and the Holy Spirit, it is particularly the categories of righteousness and the work of the Holy Spirit that are basic to Paul. These magnify his understanding of the rule and realm of God. If you have any question that these are basic categories for Paul, you can take a concordance and see their abundance in Paul. And note here how the work of the Holy Spirit is set in a kingdom context. The work of the Holy Spirit is spoken of in eschatological terms.

For background in the language of Jesus, we can reference: *Matt 6:33*, the kingdom and his righteousness will be added to you; *12:28*, by the Spirit of God I cast out demons, then the Kingdom of God has come upon you. So, here we can reference what is a very helpful statement by Ridderbos (from the assigned essay, p48-49), that “Paul does nothing but expound eschatological reality that in the proclamation of Jesus is called the kingdom of God.” So, we have seen at least in a preliminary way the appropriateness of that generalization.

Summary: Paul explicates Jesus' kingdom proclamation in its already/not yet eschatological structure by centering his attention on the death and resurrection of Christ in *their* eschatological significance. And he will do that primarily by amplifying the themes of righteousness and the work of the Holy Spirit in the context of the church. Consequently, with that we have mapped out a terrain for working within the teaching of Paul as a whole.

Acts 20:25: In swift, broad strokes I want to address Paul's words in *Acts 20*; *And now, behold, I know that none of you among whom I have gone about proclaiming the kingdom will see my face again.*

As often termed, this is his farewell speech to the Ephesian elders. He is looking back and reflecting on his ministry as a whole. What is instructive here is the object of what are co-relative expressions used to describe Paul's speaking or communicating. The verbs of discourse: “I did not hesitate to declare to you; testifying; and preaching.” Then let us go back and look at the objects of these

discourse verbs: everything profitable; repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; to the gospel of the grace of God; and then it is not holding back in any respect the whole counsel of God. Paul, we have seen, can sum up his whole teaching ministry in the kingdom of God, and it entails these things; this is what it means to declare the whole counsel of God. The whole counsel of God has sometimes functioned as a Shibboleth, and rightly so. In its sole occurrence in Scripture, it is given this redemptive-historical, kingdom focus. Paul understands himself, in his own words here, to be preaching the kingdom as a whole.

3.2 Paul's Use of the Two-Age (Aeon) Construct (or Schema)

Background.

We are looking at Paul's two-aeon construct. We should note that, that notion of aeon has its origin in the Judaism of the 1st Century BC. Thus, we have an instance of how the historical background of the NT does serve to amplify and clarify. We want to look at how this construction came to be formulated and utilized. Basic to this thinking is a basic distinction between *this age* and *the age to come*. A distinction that encompasses the whole of history from creation up to and including consummation. Therefore, this is quite a comprehensive construction. Now, what needs to be accented here is the antithetical juxtaposition or the contrast between the two aeons. On the one side, "this age" is the pre-eschatological era. It is, all expressed, provisional. And given the fall, it is now the age of the world order of sin and characterized by imperfection and death. In contrast, the coming age is the final world order; it is the eschatological age, which is marked just in contrast to the present age by righteousness, perfection and life that is nothing less than eschatological life. So alternatively, this age to come functions interchangeably in the literature to the malkuth, the basileia and the new heavens and new earth. So, to sum up, the two ages in 1st Century Judaism are comprehensive, consecutive and antithetical. The division point is related to the coming of the Messiah (with some differences of view of exactly when). With that sketch of things, let me just note that this is a construct that emerges in Judaism just before the time of the NT. As this is taken over by Jesus and Paul, and the writer of Hebrews, though to a lesser extent, where it is a fundamental, controlling element--in that sense, it can be said that the NT incorporates a 2nd Temple Jewish theological development. And we should not hesitate to say that. But at the same time, as Jesus and Paul take over this concept, what is at stake here is whether this development is consistent with the OT. That is the issue. And, as we go on here, we can say that it is. Faithful exegesis of the OT can show that. And, I would say, that Jesus and Paul by their incorporating it ensure us presupposing the fully revelatory character of their teaching that this construct *is* true to the OT. And as Vos affirms, they do that by revelation. I refer here to Vos in Chapter 1 in the *Pauline Eschatology*, the long footnote--note 36 on pp27-28, which is very balanced and thorough handling of this.

Olam

Certain things need to be spelt out a little more thoroughly with regard to the use of "olam." Vos, again, is helpful here in Ch 1. Subsequent materials, I think, don't really modify his observations. As you are aware, "olam" is one of the fundamental Hebrew words for time, especially as it brings into view long duration, long periods, so that it is used in certain locations to indicate eternity. You can see that in the OT. What we can go on to observe is that Hebrew and then Aramaic did not have a single word to refer to the created order as a totality, the universe. When reference needed to be made to this,

certain phrases and more roundabout were used. So, "God created the heavens and the earth" (Gen 1:1); and Jesus reflecting that sort of language in Mt 24:35--"Heaven and earth may pass away, but not my word." So, it seems we should hypothesize that when Heb and Aram come into contact with other languages in the 2nd Temple period, it would be desirable to have a word for the whole of creation, and the word that was pressed into service was "olam." So what was a comprehensive time designation became a comprehensive space designation. Accordingly, in this respect, "olam" became somewhat an ambivalent, or multifaceted, may be a better word. Temporal and spatial senses can be closely associated and blended. Therefore, in many instances it can be difficult to decide if the time-age sense or the spatial-world sense is intended. The *olam* made definite--*ha olam*--means this present world, that has a fixed duration to it. And it appears that this development particularly provides the basis for the full development of the Semitism of the two *olamim*. The distinction between this world-age and the coming world-age; between this present order (in terms here of Judaism) and the restored creation.

The implications of this on the NT and particularly Paul are that, in Hellenistic literature the time-word *aion* is used regularly to express the two-*olamim* conception in the Greek. Thus, in NT usage, *aion* comes to show the same ambivalence--duality--that attaches to the word "olam." And what is semantically significant, this happened even though the writers had at their disposal separate terms. I am thinking of "cosmos" or "ktisis"--world or creation. *Aion* does the same double-duty as *olam*, with the result that *aion* can be a comprehensive space term or a comprehensive time term *or it can give suggestion both* and have the sense of "world-age." The only question here may be with regard to *aion* having a spatial sense. I think what puts it beyond dispute is usages in Heb 1:2 and 11:3--"through whom he made the world" (or universe).

We were pointing up the way in which in the process of linguistic development, the Hebrew "olam" takes on a spatial as well as a temporal sense, and that duality carries on into the Greek of Hellenistic Judaism, in the Greek "aion," and then into the Latin "saeculum." Now more specifically, the two-*aeon* construct is something at hand for Jesus and Paul and taken up and employed by them in a way that clearly structures their teaching. Let me just give you a couple of examples; these are the clearest, most explicit examples in the NT of the two-*aeon* construct stated fully. Matt 12:32: "And whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come." There you have an explicit use of the full distinction. Or in Mk 10:30 talking about the blessing that comes to the disciples for following Christ; "in the coming *aeon*"; you find *kairos* rather than *aeon*; a distinction between the present and the future. And in Paul: Eph. 1:21. "...far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in *this age (this present aeon)* but also in the one to come (*the one coming*)." Paul is speaking about the exalted Christ. I have said however that this structure not only occurs, but is a fundamental structure. Now we are going to see that in many other places the structure is clearly present, even though only *one* member is mentioned or explicit. And we should also point out that "sunteleia"--"the end of this *aeon*"--that noun occurs only in this sense, as part of the two-*aeon* construct; cf. Matt 24:3, Matt 28:20, Hebrews 9:26. This NT usage points up the eschatological state of affairs that it is concerned to maintain. The end of the age is present but it is also future. [We see the already-not-yet structure attaching to the two NT uses outside of Paul. On the one hand, the end of the age is still future for the church; on the other hand, the church looks back on the end of the age, at Christ's death. The end of the age is associated with both the first and the second coming; it is already the end of the age, and not yet.]

Key Passages: Gal. 1:4; Eph. 2:2; Rom. 12:2; 1 Cor. 1:18ff; 2 Cor. 5:17; Rom. 1:2; 16:25-26; Col. 1:26-27; Eph. 1:10; Gal. 4:4; 1 Cor. 10:11; 2 Cor. 6:2; Gal. 3:23, 25.

We want to see in detail how this eschatological structure functions in Paul. Gal. 1:4; [1] Paul, an apostle not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead [2] and all the brothers who are with me, To the churches of Galatia: [3] Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, [4] *who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father*, [5] to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

We can see in the closing doxology here what is undoubtedly a Semitizing effect of the OT *olam*. Verses 1-5 are part of a stereotyped letterform of this period, sometimes termed the exordium that has 3 elements to it. The sender in the nominative, the addressees in the dative, and a greeting, which in its most elemental form is “*chairein*,” define the exordium. You find this simple greeting in James 1:1. Paul follows the basic form, but not in any formalistic pattern, but in a highly distinctive, and quite specifically Christian way, he elaborates in an apostolic fashion on the form to highlight certain themes that are important to him. Verses 3-5 provide an elaborate greeting, that is Christianized. Very often in his opening of each letter Paul highlights and anticipates things he will speak of later in the letter. His apostleship is on the line; it is not of human source; it is direct, like on the road to Damascus. And Christ, the source, is mentioned. And also, what is notable by way of contrast with his other letters, in which he commonly has something positive to say, is his terseness. “So quickly turning away.” What we have then, looking at the expression that draws our attention here, is the expansion in his salutation in vv 3-5, where Paul is certainly intending to provide a summary description of salvation, to capture in one expression what is at the heart of the salvation that is revealed in Christ that is activated by His death, but also the resurrection is in purview, in v. 1. And what is especially important to point up is the dimensions of this salvation.

Salvation is described as deliverance from this present evil aeon. That could raise the question, is Paul not talking here of something that will take place in the future. It is something that is present. Which raises the question that if they are delivered “from,” what are they delivered “to.” That’s not covered here, but is anticipated for his readers, and he will address it. What we want to point up is the broad, aeonic dimensions of the salvation that has been activated in the death of Jesus Christ for sin. It is within this cosmic dimension that Paul wants us to understand the forgiveness of sin, a *transition* in being forgiven, a deliverance that has been experienced that is nothing less in dimension than cosmic, in the death and resurrection of Christ.

Gal 1:4 cf. Gal 1:13-14, where Paul has once been advancing with respect to his Jewish contemporaries.

Eph. 2:2

[1] And you were dead in the trespasses and sins [2] in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience [3] among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. [4] But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, [5] even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ by grace you have been saved [6] and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, [7] so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ

Jesus. [8] For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, [9] not a result of works, so that no one may boast. [10] For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

"And when you were dead...following the course of this aeon." Paul is looking at believers in terms of their past. That language occurs again in verse 5. Those dead in their trespasses, what they have experienced is nothing less than *resurrection*, being made alive again (5-6); but that resurrection from the deadness of sin, he tells us, is nothing less than a deliverance from their former walk--way of life--which Paul says is characterized as "kata ton aiona tou kosmou toutou", according to the aeon of this cosmos. What believers are released from is the life of this age. The redundancy here brings out the spatial dimension. Salvation in Christ has a cosmic dimension to it. And, if you will, salvation has aeonic proportions. Now here we have a clear suggestion, clearer than in Gal. 1:4, what Paul has in view describing this salvation with its aeonic proportions, is a life in which believers have already been raised, into which they have already been introduced by resurrection. A *new* aeon, a new world age, a new creation. [It is the new creation, or as Paul says it, we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. The new walk of the new age, the new-creation existence of believers in Christ. This is what Paul puts in other terms in Col. 1:13-14, that believers have been delivered from the kingdom of darkness, into the kingdom of the Son of His love. Kingdom and age language can be used more or less interchangeably.] But this passage is fairly pointing to total inability--being dead in our sins. We have a life from the dead that is not resident in us in any way before being raised.]

4.0 Summary

The kingdom of God reveals the rule of God in creation in this age and the age to come. In Pauline thought and Jesus dualism, this present age of evil, the kingdom of God is partially fulfilled but in the future age to come, the eschatological kingdom of God would reach the peak of its fullest fulfillment where the kingdom of darkness and Satan shall be defeated in totality. In the final consummation of God's kingdom righteousness and peace will reign and death to be annihilated.

5.0 Conclusion

While it is the case that two-age construct originates in contemporary Judaism, ultimately rooted in OT revelation, and it is taken over then by revelation--by Paul from that Judaism as we compare those two--the Jewish outlook and that of Paul--they are plainly not identical. This is so in a number of ways; but here I want to focus on the formal difference, that is not difficult to recognize. You see for Judaism--including that of the present, particularly in Orthodox Judaism--the sunteleia, the turning point of the aeon, that is, in other terms, the coming of the messiah, is still something in the future; but for Paul, that is something crucial, the coming of Christ that has already taken place; it is in fact an event in the past that he can look back on, and it is something future. So that for Paul, as he disputes repeatedly with the Jews from Scripture that this messiah is Jesus of Nazareth, crucified and resurrected, that involves then a correspondingly fundamental pattern of modification for Paul's use of the two-aeon construction, a modification we will spell out in part "Eschatological."

Self-Assessment Exercises

- i. Explain vividly the theological concept of the kingdom of God in Jesus and Pauline teaching.

- ii. Describe the dividends obtainable in the final consummation of the kingdom of God.
- iii. What is the Jewish background of the concept of basileia

6.0 References/Further Reading

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Unit 6: God's Redemptive Plan

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1.0 Introduction

Paul's first imperative is an urging to present our bodies as a living sacrifice to God, wholly and acceptable. This is to entail that our sacrifice, however is a response to God's mercy. We do not sacrifice ourselves to obtain God's mercy, but because we have received it. Sacrifice therefore is a response to our justification. Christ sacrifice satisfies God's wrath on our behalf. We are no longer under the punishment of death. That is why it is a living sacrifice. Those who do this no longer conform to the world's standard but are rather sanctified in Christ.

2.0 Objectives

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

- Give an account of Paul's teaching on 'presenting a body as a living sacrifice'.
- Clarify the distinction between the wisdom of God and that of the world.
- Explain Paul's distinction between Spirit and flesh
- Correlate Paul's distinction between this age and the age to come

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Redemption and the Present Christian Life

Rom 12:2

Here we have vv. 1 and 2, and we are at the transition point of the overall flow of the discussion in Romans, where Paul having developed things to the climactic point at the end of Ch. 11, with the doxology closing off God's saving purposes with respect to both Gentile and Jew; against that background, he turns to address the church, and says:

[1] I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. [2] Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

With respect to being living sacrifices, Paul says, "Do not be conformed to this aeon." Paul is looking in a comprehensive way at the sanctification of the believer. Looking at the Christian life, sanctification, seen on its negative side, Paul is saying that believers are *not* to be conformed to this aeon. We have been delivered from that aeon; we are not to continue in it. I can go on to say that this carries the suggestion when Paul puts it that way and goes on to juxtapose the renewal of the mind, that this transformation of the mind is a transformation that will be of similar aeonic proportions. What Paul brings into view is that what is involved here is a renewal that is of the age to come. This renewal of the mind is eschatological in nature, in character, so it is for good reason that many commentators see here enunciated the "New Creation ethic" of Paul.

1 Cor 1:18ff (until 3:23)

In the section that begins here, Paul takes his point of departure in the division that is created by the gospel, particularly the preaching of the cross, mentioned in v. 18, but also in v. 23, the division that is created by Christ crucified. In doing that, he expands on the *true* nature of gospel-creating division, to contrast it with the false division that has entered into the Corinthian congregation through the divisive party spirit mentioned in 10-17. This division, among other things, the gospel creates division, that division arises because of the conflict that exists between the wisdom or the sophia of unbelief, and the wisdom of God. With the result that the gospel is heard as foolishness by unbelievers. So, the dimensions of the argument, to the end of Ch. 3, is in terms of the polarity of God - believers - unbelievers. What defines that is a polarity between wisdom and foolishness, or as Paul will also use correlative terms, power, dunamis, and weakness, asthenia. What one perceives to be power and wisdom, the other perceives to be foolishness and weakness. We want to point out the way Paul characterizes the wisdom of unbelief over against the wisdom of God. The gospel, then which is

wisdom of God is perceived to be foolishness in the eyes of the world; and what is wisdom in the eyes of the world is perceived to be foolishness in the eyes of God.

1 Cor. 1:20: Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this aeon? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?

What is correlative with the wisdom of the world, the personal subject embodying the wisdom of the world is the disputant of this aeon. Or looking ahead to 2:6, Paul makes reference to the wisdom associated with the gospel, and there, the gospel is described as wisdom, which is not of this aeon nor of the rulers of this aeon--the movers and shakers of this aeon. Similarly, as you get to 3:18, with culmination of this whole section of argumentation, Paul says, "let no one deceive himself; if someone thinks himself to be wise among you in this aeon, let him become foolish, in order that he might become wise, for the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God." This is what it means to become a believer, we could say--becoming foolish in order that you may become wise. Now you can see how these statements that bracket the passage and everything it says about wisdom, say that to be wise in this aeon is a matter of the wisdom of this world. So the terms "world" and "aeon" are closely correlative. What is of interest here in terms of the language used for this construction is the explicit indication of what we might describe as the *temporalizing* or historicizing of the notion of the world (kosmou). The world is glossed with touto, this world, in contrast to "that" world. The two-aeon construction shapes Paul, disposes him to write here with the explicit touto. The simple ho kosmos, the world, is more pointedly, houtos ho kosmos; this world. The scheme of this world, the structure of this world, is passing away. The other coming, that world, is certainly implied.

Surely there is here then the plain suggestion: the wisdom of God which believers have received, the wisdom and the power that Christ *is* (1:24)--not just wisdom about Christ--that wisdom differs from the wisdom of the unbeliever, not merely in an experiential or individual sense, but the difference exists in that what is opposed is the wisdom that is nothing less than a differing aeon; an opposed world order, that is the difference between the wisdom and knowledge of the believer and the unbeliever; the difference is on the order of two opposed aeons. What we are saying here is that the determination of the believer's knowledge, the determination of the believer's very existence, has aeonic dimensions, so that it is the case that in contrast to the unbeliever, the believer's knowledge is of a different aeon, in terms of eschatological structure. In a very real sense, believers and unbelievers are living in two different worlds; in the truest sense, believers and unbelievers operate in two different universes of discourse. The believer's knowledge is eschatological, knowledge of the final aeon, new creation knowledge. To bring in an important qualification immediately, in our present possession, we see but, in a mirror, dimly, 1 Cor. 13:12. We see but a poor reflection. That qualification needs to be kept before us. At the same time, what underlies that poor perception is the present eschatological possession, so that Paul can say as he does that the believer judges and discerns all things (2:15), and in fact has the mind ("nous") of the exalted Christ (2 Cor. 2:16). We have the mind of Christ. Read the closing statement of the section that begins at 1:18: 3:21-22: So, let no one boast in men.

For all things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future--all are yours, [23] and you are Christ's, and Christ is of God." In this passage we have a very clear iteration of the radical difference in the knowledge of believers and the knowledge of unbelievers. We have a cleavage between two ages. We have particularly strong exegetical support here for what was such an important characteristic emphasis in Dr. Van Til's work: the difference between belief and unbelief involves a difference, a cleavage, between two ages. Insofar as point of

contact is concerned, which does exist, in terms of the common situation of sinners ever in need of a Savior--in terms of point of contact, there is no epistemological common ground. Whether in the speculative wisdom of the Greeks, or the empirical signs the Jews seek, there is no epistemological common ground. It is true categorically that we walk by faith and not by sight (2 Cor 5), and clearly that has to do with the sight that we receive by virtue of the resurrection. As for new aeon mind, considering our body, we need to be careful not to go Platonic direction; Paul has in mind re: resurrection that that resurrection has touched the core of our whole being. It does not mean a dualism in any sort. We have been raised in the core of our being, but we are only relating in terms of our outer person.

2 Cor 5:17-19

[15] and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised. [16] From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. [17] Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. [18] All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; [19] that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.

This has key interests regarding soteriology and eschatology. Is the "kata sarka" to be understood adverbially (how we understand) or adjectivally (to describe Christ as a fleshly being, as Bultmann)? The point is an epistemological one. He's concerned about a way of knowing--"according to the flesh." We'll highlight later in the course Paul's distinction between the spirit and the flesh. But as an advance point, Paul's distinction between Spirit and flesh is correlative to his distinction between this age and the age to come. (ESV gets 19a better than NIV--God reconciling in Christ.) Verse 15, Paul makes the assertion. It leads to conclusions, Paul drawing them out in 16 and 17. Reconciliation is a key theme here. What focuses our attention here is the expression *kaine ktisis*, and our concern is about how this should be translated. Both Ridderbos and Vos have discussed this in the reading I have had you do. Vos, 46ff. in the immediate context, Paul is involved in describing the turn of events that has taken place for believers in the death and resurrection of Christ. We see that death and resurrection at the end of v. 15, therefore, Paul says, with a further hope (therefore) in v. 17. The point we want to bring into view here is that the *kaine ktisis* mentioned in v. 17 is almost certainly not to be understood only in an individual sense; that is, the *kaine ktisis* is not merely a description of a change that has occurred in the believer; it is not simply a category of personal renewal. Or, to put it pointedly, in contrast to the way in which some translations take it, and particularly the KJV, the idea is not that of a "new creature." It is not to be understood in a strictly individual sense although, certainly, dimensions of personal and individual change are in view here. It is involved, but not the point. This is not simply a proof text for regeneration.

Rather, in contrast to that new creature understanding, *ktisis* here is to be translated "creation." And more importantly, the reference is to *the* "new creation." The reference is to the new eschatological world order, to which the one in Christ already belongs, in which the believer already exists. We can propose then that the *grounds* for this "new creation" translation, and this comprehensive understanding, can be seen in several dimensions: lexical, syntactical, and, most importantly, contextual. From a lexical angle, we can point out that Paul uses *ktisis*, and not *ktisma*, creature. That

observation by itself is not conclusive, because in Rom. 8:39 Paul uses *ktisis* in the sense of an individual creature, so there is some semantic overlap between the terms. But surely, we need to keep in mind that *ktisis* is largely the word used to describe the totality of created reality, of creation in the broad, comprehensive sense. We see that in Rom. 1:20, Col. 1:15, and Rev. 3:14. The word choice is not decisive, but provides for a comprehensive creation and not just creature reference.

4.0 Summary

Paul urged believers that by the mercies of God, to present their bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is their spiritual worship. They had been admonished not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of their mind. With respect to being living sacrifices, Paul is looking in a complete way at the sanctification of the believer. The Westminster Shorter Catechism (Q.35) says sanctification is “the work of God’s free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness.” The concept is not of sin being totally eradicated (that is to claim too much) or merely counteracted (that is to say too little), but of a divinely wrought character change freeing us from sinful habits and forming in us Christ like affections, dispositions, and virtues.

Sanctification is a continuing transformation within a maintained consecration, and it engenders real righteousness within the frame of relational holiness. Relational sanctification, the state of being enduringly set apart for God, flows from the cross, where God through Christ purchased and claimed us for himself (Acts 20:28; 26:18; Heb. 10:10). Moral renovation, whereby we are ever more changed from what we once were, flows from the agency of the indwelling Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:13; 12:1-2; 1 Cor. 6:11, 19-20; 2 Cor. 3:18; Eph. 4:22-24; 1 Thess. 5:23; 2 Thess. 2:13; Heb. 13:20-21).

5.0 Conclusion

Believers in Christ offer their bodies as a living sacrifice. Paul gave a command to committed believers not to be conformed to this aeon. This is the sanctification of the believer for they had been saved from it. In Pauline work he linked this with the renewal of the mind, which is transformation of the mind. The significance of this renewal is eschatological in nature and character i.e. "New Creation ethic" of Paul. Paul in his teaching emphasized the division that is created by the gospel, chiefly the preaching of the cross, but also, the division that is created by Christ crucified. This division arises because of the conflict that exists between the wisdom or the *sophia* of unbelief, and the wisdom of God. But to believers it is wisdom and power. Paul characterizes the wisdom of non-belief over against the wisdom of God. The gospel, then which is wisdom of God is professed to be foolishness in the eyes of the world; and what is wisdom in the sight of men is seen to be foolishness in the sight of God.

In this section we have an apparent repetition of the radical difference in the knowledge of believers and the knowledge of unbelievers. We have a cleavage between two ages. Paul teaches that, resurrection has touched the core of our whole being. It does not mean a dualism in any kind. We have been raised in the core of our being, but we are only relating in terms of our outer person. (Cf. 1 Cor 15). Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new

has come. God, through Christ reconciled us to himself that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them. Thus, the lust of the flesh lost in Christ.

Self-Assessment Exercises

1. What is the theological implication of an expression “offering your bodies as a living sacrifice”?
2. Describe the qualities of a man who is in Christ as a new creation
3. Explain briefly the doctrine of sanctification

6.0 References/Further reading

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Unit 7: Created Anew in Christ

Contents

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 God’s New Creation in Christ
- 4.0 Summary
- 5.0 Conclusion
- 6.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 Introduction

The Pauline theology of the new creation in Christ implies that all such who are secretly in Christ from everlasting, though as yet some of them may not be new creatures, yet they shall be sooner or later; and those who are openly in him, or are converted persons, are essentially so; they are a new "creation." As the words may be rendered: , "a new creation", is a phrase often used by the Jewish

doctors, and is applied by the apostle to converted persons; and designs not an outward reformation of life and manners, but an inward principle of grace, which is a creature, a creation work, and so not man's, but God's; and in which man is solely passive, as he was in his first creation; and this is a new creature, or a new man, in opposition to, and distinction from the old man, the corruption of nature; and because it is something anew implanted in the soul, which never was there before. It is not a working upon, and an improvement of the old principles of nature, but an inauguration of new principles of grace and holiness; here is a new heart, and a new spirit,: old things are passed away: the old course of living, the old way of serving God, whether among Jews or Gentiles; the old legal righteousness, old companions and relationship are dropped; and all external things, as riches, honours, learning, knowledge, former sentiments of religion, are renounced: behold, all things are become new; there is a new course of life, both of faith and holiness; a new way of serving God through Christ by the Spirit, and from principles of grace; a new, another, and better righteousness is established and accepted.

2.0 Objectives

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

- Comprehend the theology of being in Christ is “a new creation”.
- Describe the characteristics of the man who has become a new creation in Christ in contrast to the old life.
- Grasp with Paul's theology of “unity in Christ” as regards salvation

3.0 Main Content

3.1 God's New Creation in Christ

Syntactical: there is no explicit verb in the apodosis. This makes the connection loose between the protasis and the apodosis; there is no verb that has clearly been elided here. There is a less circumscribed association between the two, a more sweeping association in thought or scope, which has to be determined by the context. We might render it: "if anyone is in Christ, there is new creation." This is what some translations, such as the NAS, have in the margin. Or, "it is a matter of new creation." The most decisive considerations, though, are contextual. The context surely runs against restricting the reference in v. 17 to subjective renovation as the individual believer experiences that. Consider first of all the latter part of v. 17: what we have here are neuter plurals used substantively--old things, and then the "new things." Those expressions, those neuter plural subjects, in the contrast between old and new, point to a broader scope, an environmental scope of things. The latter part of 17 is surely intended as an expansion of 17a. We need further to consider the main theme of the passage, the emphasis we find in the immediate context, on reconciliation and on the comprehensive scope of the reconciliation that has been brought in Christ. All things are of God, who reconciles us, all things are brought into the scope of the reconciliation. What God was in Christ reconciling was *the world*. We could also point to Col. 1:19-20, where the cosmic scope of the reconciliation is accented by Paul: "all things, whether in heaven or on earth." Then there is, in v. 16, there is the *kata sarka*.

Paul makes reference to the knowledge of Christ as *kata sarka*. The *kata sarka* here is not adjectival, but is adverbial, it qualifies the knowing, knowing according to the flesh; it is not as if Paul is no longer interested in the historical Jesus. It is describing the mode of knowing. The reference here is to knowing according to the flesh, the knowledge of believers is no longer according to the flesh. You compare 1 Cor. 1:20 with v. 26, and the long and short of that is to point up that this wisdom, or the wise person according to the flesh, is identical to the disputant of this aeon. *Kata sarka* and *tou aionos toutou* are interchangeable; to speak of no longer knowing according to the flesh is to speak of no longer knowing according to the standards of this aeon. The expression *kata sarka* brings into view the broader two-aeon perspective, that of the person of this aeon and that of the believer as a new creation in Christ. As we look at the only other instance of *kaine ktisis* ("new creation") we have in Paul, Galatians 6, this will confirm what we have been saying about 2 Cor. 5.

Galatians 6:14-15: [14] But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. [15] For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.

Note the similarity in syntax; again you have a clause that consists of 3 words, no verb, as in 2 Cor 5. It is this situation described in v. 14, where neither circumcision nor uncircumcision matter, which Paul juxtaposes with the *kaine ktisis*. *Kaine ktisis* is in contrast with the world (in 14), the world to which the believer has been crucified through the cross of Christ. Here you have an echo of Gal 1:4, so that he might deliver us from this present evil age. The believer has been crucified to the world. Further, the new creation is not only contrasted with the world, but also with circumcision and uncircumcision at the beginning of v. 15, which do not matter, and no longer matter though they once did. In other words, the new creation is contrasted with the old order, under the old covenant, in which these things did matter very much. Which points up about circumcision that like baptism, it is not a merely personal sign, but has national, corporate, covenantal, historical, redemptive-historical significance; it is not merely an emblem of personal faith, but makes a redemptive-historical statement. As Paul draws a contrast between old and new here, the scope of that contrast is cosmic and historical, rather than only experiential or individual. Let us come back to 2 Cor 5 then with these observations: The contrast between old and new at the end of 17 is not to be taken only in an individual or experiential sense; it is not simply a statement that has its sense as part of an *ordo salutis*, although it will surely bear on that, but as we have been trying to show, the contrast between old and new is historical in scope, eschatological in nature.

The contrast between old and new in 2 Cor. 5:17 is a contrast between two worlds, two creation orders. When Paul says *ta archaia*, the old things, what he has in view is the old fallen creation, those things that belong to the unredeemed world, of sin and misery. The old things are the things of this *aeon*. Correlatively, *kaina*, which we are here to see as definite, are the new things of the new creation, the eschatological order inaugurated at Christ's death and resurrection the new things of the age to come. The old things that have passed away, they have passed away for *me*, the one in Christ, but it is more than just my individual past that has passed away. So that if you want to use this verse to give your testimony, don't only talk about the way your life individually used to be; there is much more that has passed away. So v. 17 means more: the one united to Christ is *of* the new creation; that one is already participant in some sense in the final eschatological order for the creation. The *kaina* are the things of the *aeon* to come.

"For anyone united to Christ, there is a new creation; the old order has gone, the new order has already begun." The English Standard Version says "*he* is a new creation," so there is an individualistic sense. I might just want to modify that, to maintain the clause, "for if anyone is united to Christ, there is the new creation, the old order has gone; the new order has already begun." If I might juxtapose with that how NOT to translate, let me un-commend the New Living Translation: "What this means is that those who become Christians are new persons; they are not the same anymore, a new life has begun." The issue is the way that this constricts the perspective here. That is American Evangelicalism's individualism come to a very definite expression. Even if for some reason we should decide that *ktisis* should be taken in an individual creature translation, we would still have to take into consideration what we have seen in the immediate context, the corporate, cosmic dimension. We would still have to stress the broader, *aeonic* connotations/implications of the statement.

4.0 Summary

In Pauline theology, the renewed man acts upon new principles, by new rules, with new ends, and in new companionship. The believer is created anew; his heart is not purely set right, but a new heart is given him. He is the handwork of God, created in Christ Jesus for good works. Though the same as a man, he is transformed in his character and ways. These words must and do mean beyond an outward reformation. The heart of the unregenerate is filled with hostility against God, and God is fairly offended with him. Nevertheless, there may be reconciliation. Our snubbed God has reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ. By the inspiration of God, the Scriptures were written, which are the word of reconciliation; depicting that peace has been made by the cross. Though God beseeches sinners to put aside their enmity, and acknowledge the salvation he offers. Christ knew no sin. He was made Sin; not a sinner, but Sin, a Sin-offering, a Sacrifice for sin. The end and design of all this was, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, might be justified unreservedly by the grace of God through the redemption, which is in Christ Jesus.

5.0 Conclusion

The expression in Christ denotes the fact that a Christian is regenerated through the perfect life attains to mystic union with Christ. A new creature emanated as remarked a new creation (Gal. 6.15). It is learnt that the phrase is borrowed from the rabbis who used it to express the condition of a proselyte. However, the meaning is not mere Jewish arrogance and exclusiveness, but the unfathomable truth of spiritual regeneration and the new birth (Jn. 3.3; Eph. 2.10, 4.23, 24; Col. 3.3 etc). The old things entail literally the ancient things all that belong to the old Adam. The word expresses the writer's vivid recognition of the truth he is uttering. The clause implies the old order has gone; the new order has already begun.

Self-Assessment Exercises

- i. Explain Paul's idea of being created anew in Christ.
- ii. Explain your understanding of union with Christ.
- iii. Explain the contrast between the old man and the new man.

6.0 References/Further Reading

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MODULE 2 SELECTED THEMES IN PAULINE THEOLOGY

Unit 1: Pauline Doctrine of Eschatology

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Pauline Doctrine of Eschatology
- 4.0 Summary
- 5.0 Conclusion
- 6.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 Introduction

This unit introduces the student into Paul's view of eschatology. Paul's eschatological message centers on Christ. The age of Christ ushers in the end of time where all things are being consummated in him.

2.0 Objectives

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

- i. Trace the concept of eschatology in Paul's thought.
- ii. Connect the eschatological teachings between the Old and the New Testaments.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Eschatological Content of Paul's Preaching

This makes clear his own being grasped by the eschatological character of his time and place in history for his ministry as an instrument of revelation. Again, we could emphasize the "nun" of Col 1--the "now" of redemptive history. That is in contrast to the ages long silence. Now, at last, after ages of expectations, after being so long hidden for ages and generations, redemption in Christ has been revealed (Eph 1:10, Gal 4:4, and 1 Cor 10:11): The eschatological dimension of Paul comes out in still other ways, particular in certain Pauline expressions. We see this in Eph 1:10, Gal 4:4, and 1 Cor 10:11.

Galatians 4:4 But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law,
Ephesians 1:10 as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

We look at these together because of the expression "fullness of time." In the Galatians passage, God sent his son born of a woman in the fullness of time. In Ephesians passage, the fullness is connected with v 9, "the mystery" of the administration, which is involved with the execution of plan of God of his will, in the fullness of time. It does *not* mean as it is oft taken to mean an especially auspicious time in history--a particularly strategic time in the course of history. About that, it is certainly true on other grounds. But it is not what Paul is saying here. He means what he says--the fulfillment of the time or the times. With the coming and work of Christ, the time of the world, history, if you will, has been filled up. The present era has been brought to its end, its telos. That present era ultimately considered has been brought to its consummation. Now the fulfillment spoken of here is *initial*; that is, there is a future aspect, and we must account for that future. But while there is a future aspect, we must appreciate the full force of what Paul has to say here; and that is, the end of history has begun, really and truly. And that eschatological thrust is reinforced by the correlative clause we have in Eph 1:10, where Paul speaks of "the heading up of all things in Christ." Or we may put it, the bringing together of all things under Christ as head. We can take note here of what Paul says a little bit later in v 22, that Christ as the fullness and related to the church in its fullness is head over all things for the church. And that is clearly a present affirmation. And it could not be put more emphatically; when we ask what are the "all things," Paul says "all things that are on heaven and on earth." NIV puts a future force, but nothing in the text asks for that future rendering; the ESV here does not push, iterating what is in fact the case (which is what Paul is iterating). And in that connection, we can bring in our discussion 1 Cor 10:11. Making the analogy there is between the church as the new covenant people and Israel as God's old covenant people, particularly in relation to their wilderness experience.

1 Corinthians 10:11

Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come.

The eschatological language here is very forceful. It is the case that the church is in this eschatological situation that has already arrived.

So those expressions have their input for our concern. Here again 2 Cor. 6:2 would lead us to look at another indication which is the use of Isa. 49:8 in 2 Cor 6:2. In the larger context--remember we gave some attention to it yesterday, looking at 5:17, as part of the unit that runs from 5:11-6:3, this is something of a culminating expression of Paul considering his ministry particularly as one of reconciliation. He is God's co-worker in the ministry of reconciliation.

For he says, "In a favorable time I listened to you, and in a day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

Note the *nun* again. The emphatic double use here connects with what we have seen in Rom 16:26 and Col 1:26, and here, too, we will see, in its own way in this passage, the eschatological use of this. This question: What is the reference of the acceptable time? And what is the parallelism of the day of salvation, as this day is predicated of the "nun"? Despite many, many sermons preached on this text, the reference of the now here is not to a particular occasion that may come into the life of an individual--not a set of circumstances that fall in my life that I may take advantage today (i.e., to repent and to believe in Christ). That opposite for me in God's inscrutable plan may be here today and gone tomorrow. Now that, again, is a point that may be made on other grounds. But here, reference the new creation language used in 5:17. It is not in the first place to be understood with reference to the order of salvation as applied to the individual. It is also not meant to be applied to one generation. These expressions are simply to be understood in light of the OT here, especially Isa 49:8. And we will see the context that comes into view with that citation. (The Septuagint and Masoretic Text are virtually identical here). Isa 49 is one of the so-called "Servant Songs," which we have come to appreciate is a prophetic forecast in the 1st person singular of the work of Christ. The "you" of the servant is firstly with reference to Christ.

Isa 49:8

Thus, says the LORD: "In a time of favor I have answered you; in a day of salvation I have helped you; I will keep you and give you as a covenant to the people, to establish the land, to apportion the desolate heritages.

4.0 Summary

Now in context of Isaiah 49, what the Lord says to the servant can only be understood in light of v 4, the lament of the servant. He expresses that he has spent his strength for nothing. But I-servant Israel, "have labored in vain; I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity; yet surely my right is with the LORD, and my recompense with my God." So, we can rightly characterize this as a lament...*in hope*. Thus, v 8 is part of the response of YHWH to the servant. The servant can be assured that the LORD has heard his lament; he has answered his servant, and he has come to his aid. Or, we can fairly transpose, he has answered his servant by *coming* to his aid. Now with those considerations in mind, back in Paul, we can be sure that the apostle intends us to understand this in the context of fulfillment. And we can say the acceptable time is that has been inaugurated in the death and resurrection of Christ. That is pointedly back in 5:15. It is a time in which the LORD answers his servant eschatologically. The servant of the LORD, Israel, focused now in the person of Christ. Putting it more pointedly, the resurrection *is* the answer--the answer that vindicates the servant. The resurrection, as we will have the opposite to see in other passages, the resurrection as an event is an event that speaks; it has a certain declarative force as life from the dead.

5.0 Conclusion

Correlatively, the day of salvation is the reconciliation of believers, 5:18; the reconciliation of the world, 5:9 and we can just reference here that the "acceptable time" is the same in its scope of reference as the "acceptable year of the LORD" in Isa 62. The year which Jesus applies to himself; in Lk 4:19, Jesus uses the Isa 62 at the time of the inauguration of his ministry. So, these references to acceptable time and day of salvation are not to be taken in an individualizing sense. But they have a broad sense; a sweeping redemptive-historical sense. The reference is to the end-time of fulfillment, which has come with Christ. And we may also point up further, in another link to the Isaiah passage, its reference is to the day of salvation, which is to be taken to the nations. Cf. 5:19. And in that regard, listen to what intervenes between v 4 and v 8 in the Isaiah passage:

It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel; I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.

In a hermeneutical line, we have seen how the citation of a verse from the OT often brings into view a larger context as well.

Self-Assessment Exercises

- i. Explain Paul's understanding of the goal of eschatology.
- ii. How does the Old been brought to an end?

7.0 References/Further Reading

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UNIT 2: Eschatological Basis for Reconciliation

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Reconciliation in the Eschatological Frame
- 4.0 Summary
- 5.0 Conclusion
- 6.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 Introduction

Besides the Corinthian background Paul has a lot of theology to offer as regards the doctrine of reconciliation.

2.0 Objectives

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

- Explore the concept of reconciliation in other Pauline epistles

- Explain Pauline teaching on reconciliation
- Survey the impact of reconciliation in Christ and in relation to believers

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Reconciliation in the Eschatological Frame

There are several scholarly works, which present meticulous studies of the Pauline material on reconciliation. Certainly, systematic theologians and ethicists repeatedly treat the theme. Here only a concise survey of the major passages is potential. Besides 2 Corinthians 5, four other Pauline passages articulate directly of reconciliation. Rom 5:6-11 speaks of reconciliation as God's loving act toward undeserving sinners in which Christ died for the vulnerable enemies of God. Since this reconciliation has been received, the believer may celebrate in his salvation from God's eschatological wrath. Paul's words here take the form of two arguments, the first "lesser to greater," and the second "greater to lesser." If dying for a righteous or good man is commendable, how much more is Christ's death for feeble sinners (5:6-8)? This magnifies God's mercy in providing reconciliation through Christ's death. Second, if Christ went so far as to reconcile his enemies, will he not in the end save his friends (5:9-11)? This provides guarantee that God will finally complete what he has begun in Christ. It is interesting to note the close correlation between justification and reconciliation in the protases of vv 10 and 11 respectively. Eschatological salvation is the consummation of redemption already begun. The "already" (justification and reconciliation) gives surety believers of the "not yet" ("we shall be saved").

In Rom 11:15 Paul turns again to the language of reconciliation in his justification of the wisdom of God's plan for the Jews and Gentiles. If the present national unbelief of Israel has ended up in the reconciliation of the Gentiles, the stunning upshot of Israel's national repentance can only be described as life from the dead! Paul has been speaking of his ministry to the Gentiles as a means of provoking Israel to jealousy (11:11-14). He goes on to demonstrate the redemptive historical process with the olive tree (11:16b-24). The phrase in 11:16 is plainly an objective genitive describing the universal prospect for Gentiles to receive salvation through faith in the Messiah of Israel. While reconciliation in Rom 5:6-11 was something received individually (5:11), here in Romans 11 it has more of a mutual reference to Gentiles having the opportunity to receive salvation. This opportunity results in "the fullness of the Gentiles," receiving salvation which in turn spells the consummation of national Israel's salvation (11:25-26). Corporate reconciliation is also the theme of reconciliation language in Ephesians 2. Here Paul emphasizes the grace (2:5, 7-8), mercy (2:4), and kindness (2:7) of God who reconciles (2:16) those who deserve wrath (2:3). Here the state of alienation from God (2:1) is also portrayed as a state of satanic influence (2:2) and alienation from God's Messiah, covenant promises, and covenant nation (2:12-13). The enmity or hostility removed by Christ's redemption is not simply *vertical* but is also *horizontal*. The stipulations of the Mosaic Covenant fashioned a barrier between Jews and Gentiles, which Christ abolished (2:14-15) when he created the church (1:22) as "one new man" (2:15), and "one body" (2:16) in which the same access to God is opened up to all who believe, Jew and Gentile alike (2:18). It is significant that Christ, not the Father as normally acknowledged somewhere else in Paul, is the subject of the act of reconciliation in 2:16. This is not a point of nervousness or contradiction since the Father is acting to reconcile through, his chosen Messiah. The reconciliation through Christ fundamentally redefines vertical and horizontal human relationships. Vertically, as there is now peace between mankind and God and horizontally, as there is also peace between Jews and Gentiles (2:14, 17). Both Jews and Gentiles are built into one dynamic place of abode of God through the Spirit (2:19-22).

In the write up in Colossians there is less of the accent upon Jew-Gentile equality, which has just been noticed in Ephesians (cf. 1:27; 3:11). To a certain extent, the stress can only be called cosmic. Paul is not interested so much in individual reconciliation, or in redemptive history, or even in the corporate unity of Jew and Gentile in the body of Christ. He is more concerned to point out that the reconciliation shaped by Christ leaves nothing outside its impact. The whole world, including both visible and invisible beings, has in some way been reconciled by the blood of the cross (1:20). Paul's chief goal in Colossians 1 seems to be the intensification of Christ as the all-sufficient Lord of the universe. This truth is then applied more directly in Colossians 2 to the false teaching which has put the church in danger. As a result, Paul speaks of Christ as creator and sustainer of the universe (1:16-17) and as the head of the church (1:18). The Father was pleased for divine fullness (cf. 2:9) to dwell in Christ and to reconcile the universe to himself through Christ (1:19-20). Here the familiar terminology of alienation (1:21) crops up again as the presupposition of reconciliation, as Paul moves from the universe in general to the Colossians in particular (1:22). It is remarkable that the stress is primarily upon the reconciliation of the universe; particularly the supernatural powers (1:16, 20). This is obviously due to the false teaching about the powers, which has been troubling the Colossians (2:8, 10, 15, 18, 20). They required knowing that not only did Christ in the beginning create the powers but also that consequently his cross whitewashed them when they rebelled against their Creator. The term reconciliation describes both the defeat of the evil powers (1:20) and the redemption of the Colossians, who are now exhorted to stand firm in their freedom from the defeated powers (1:23; 2:8, 16, 18, 20).

While there are some who wind up that the reconciliation of things involves the annihilation of evil powers and unbelieving human beings, this seems to go beyond Paul's statements and to inconsistency with other biblical truths. The doctrine of eternal punishment does not conflict with the reconciliation of the powers and even of those who reject Christ's redemption. Rather their conquer in the cross of Christ leads to the appeasement of the universe. Their eternal punishment is the means by which eternal peace is attained on the renewed earth for the people of God (cf. Rev 21:7-8,27; 22:14-15).

In essence the survey, a few lines of continuity between 2 Corinthians 5 and the other Pauline passages may be drawn. It is apparent that Paul's concept of reconciliation was related to his concept of justification (2 Cor 5:19, 21; cf. Rom 4:8; 5:9-11). Barrett and Davies disclose that these two terms do not describe separate acts but are simply diverse ways of explaining freedom from sin. Nevertheless, despite some overlap it does seem that distinct truths are expressed by reconciliation and justification. For one thing, Buchsel and Cranfield have rightly recommended that reconciliation is the more personal term of the two. Not purely a right legal standing but a harmonious relationship of mutual personal love is the result of reconciliation. In addition, Ridderbos notes that the eschatological, cosmic scope of reconciliation is lacking from justification, which seems to be concerned only with individual mankind.

Another line of continuity is the inevitability of reconciliation being received independently by faith (2 Cor 5:20; cf. Rom 5:11). People are not passive in the realization of reconciliation on earth. There is a ministry to be fulfilled, a message to be proclaimed, a Lord to be received. The message is that people must be reconciled to God, not that they are so already. It is important to note other matters that call our attention. Paul's strained relations threatened the horizontal aspect of reconciliation so emphasized in Ephesians 2 with the Corinthians (2 Cor 5:20; cf. Eph 2:16). The cosmic aspect of reconciliation

found in Colossians 1 is connected in 2 Corinthians 5 with the renewal of all things (2 Cor 5:17; cf. Col 1:20). And finally, it is repetitively evident that reconciliation is a state, which must be maintained by the believer's perseverance (2 Cor 5:20; 6:1; cf. Rom 11:22; Col 1:23).

4.0 Summary

God the Father is the originator of reconciliation: (2 Cor 5:18). This emphasis on the Father as the ultimate source of reconciliation is also seen in 2 Cor 5:19, Col 1:20, and in Rom 5:10. Though the Father did not lack the means to destroy all those who snubbed his rule, his grace initiated a plan to get rid of the hostility between himself and his unalterable children.

Second, God the Son in his death on the cross is the mediator of reconciliation: (Rom 5:10) Christ's salvation as the mediating dynamic of reconciliation may also be noted in Rom 5:11, 2 Cor 5:18, Col 1:20 and 2 Cor 5:19 (*EV*). The two passages, which speak of Christ as the subject of the verb "to reconcile" also speak of him as mediator of reconciliation (Eph 2:16; Col 1:22). The Father gave the Son who knew no sin as a substitute for sinners so that they might become righteous before God. Christ branded with sinners so that there would be a redemptive basis for sinners to be acknowledged with God through him. The cross did not simply offer an example by which sinners were morally influenced to turn to God. Rather it provided a sinless substitute for sinners by which they could draw near a holy and just God.

Third, the declaration of reconciliation is carried out by Paul (2 Cor 5:20). Paul had been divinely appointed to a ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor 5:19). His perception of this apostolic charge stood the test of the Corinthians' insubordination only because he understood that as an ambassador of the reconciling God, his message was the functional correspondent of the very voice of God (2 Cor 5:20). Paul also recognized that the assertion of this message confirmed the wisdom of God in redemptive history. In Rom 11:13ff. He shows how Israel's present denunciation of the message of reconciliation in Christ has resulted in the Gentiles experiencing reconciliation. He goes on to explain that the Gentiles' reconciliation will in the end bring Israel to a point of national response of their Messiah, which will in turn bring unique blessing to the whole world.

Fourth, the *realization* of reconciliation comes only when individuals listen to the proclaimed message and receive it by faith: (Rom 5:11) Individuals cannot experience reconciliation with God apart from faith in the proclamation of the messianic mediation of the Father's gracious initiative. As individuals respond to the message of reconciliation, they gain assurance that they are now at last in agreement with the Creator of the universe who has begun a new creation in them (2 Cor 5:17). Their destiny is no longer strange which causes fear. Relatively they achieve assurance in the good will of their reconciler and are assured (Rom 5:2ff.) that they will finally be saved by his life (Rom 5:10). The actualization of reconciliation has even greater effects as reconciled individuals begin to live at peace with one another in the community of the people of God.

Believers today live "between the times" of the first and second advents of Christ. The first advent mediated the foundation of reconciliation; the second will mediate its universal expansion. In the interim, those who have experienced through the gospel the end of hostilities and the inauguration of peace with God will make every attempt in their family, church, and societal duties to expand the message of reconciliation by word and deed. Paul modeled this reconciling lifestyle as he tolerantly

served the Corinthians in obedience to Christ who said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God" (Matt 5:9; cf. Jas 3:17-18).

5.0 Conclusion

A brief synthesis now concludes this study. The reality is some hopelessness of the idea of a NT doctrine of reconciliation, that pessimism is unwarranted. The doctrine can be elucidated by numerous contrasts and by four perspectives. First by way of contrast, the literature on the biblical theology of reconciliation indicates that Paul's teaching may be explained as follows: Reconciliation is both objective and subjective, accomplished and applied, indicative and imperative, vertical and horizontal, already and not yet, personal and cosmic, God's act and a person's state.

This arrangement for conceptualizing reconciliation attempts to show that it is a duality. The sovereign work of God in Christ accomplished reconciliation objectively, but God also sovereignly designed to apply this reconciliation to individuals through the work of the Spirit in the proclamation of the message. Individual reception of the message changes both vertical (God ward) and horizontal (human ward) relationships as peace permeates the whole of one's life. Those who receive reconciliation have already received a flavor, symbol, or guarantee of God's future work in their lives and in the universe as a whole. They also individually begin to model the kind of peaceful relationships in every area of life, which God has ordained for the eschaton. Paul's strained relationship with the Corinthians is a serious aberration from this ideal, and he desperately desires to resolve the hostility. A second way of conceiving Paul's doctrine of reconciliation is from the four perspectives of initiation, mediation, proclamation, and actualization.

Self-Assessment Exercises

1. Explain the term reconciliation in Paul's perspective
2. Who is the ultimate source of reconciliation?

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Unit 3: Justification by Faith in Christ

Contents

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Justification by Faith in Christ
 - 3.2 Faith and Justification
- 4.0 Summary
- 5.0 Conclusion
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1.0 Introduction

The life meaning of the church is woven around Christ. The faith of the church stands on nothing else but on Christ alone. We can say that the church in its life period is to be construed as part of God's

answer to Christ. The answer, in other terms, is of the Father to the Son because a resurrected Christ without a resurrected body of Christ is an abstraction. The New Testament knows of no such state of affairs.

2.0 Objectives

By the end of this unit, you are should be able to:

- i. Explain the nature of the eschatological faith of the church in Christ.
- ii. Critically appreciate Paul's idea on faith in Christ.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Justification by Faith in Christ

The church in its being constituted, its life period, is the day of salvation, as the acceptable time is to be seen as part of God's answer to his servant in raising him from the dead. And here we can connect with the way that the resurrected Jesus himself puts it in Lk 24:46-47 to his disciples: "It is necessary that the messiah suffer, rise, and in his name repentance and the remission of sins be preached to all the nations." So, the present-day generation--2 Cor 6:2--is the church, the church as it is being constituted in the time between the resurrection and the return of the Christ.

We can refer to some other passages that are often not appreciated with the light that could be shed upon them. Col 4:5 says: "Conduct yourselves wisely toward outsiders, making the best use of the time." "Redeeming *ton kairon*." I think that the definiteness there indicates redeeming the time until Jesus returns. Similarly, "redeeming the time because the days are evil." Again, the period between the resurrection and the return of Christ. Thus, when the NIV renders "making the most of every opportunity" I think that blurs the force of what Paul is saying.

Rom 13:11: "Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed." Or 1 Cor 7:22: "the *kairos* has been shortened"--the time has been shortened. We would explicate that, in view of what has taken place in Christ, in view of his return. And Gal 6:10, where Paul says, "Do good to all especially of the household of faith" That may have the more general force "as you have opposite," but it may have the redemptive-history force as well.

Gal. 3:23-25:

23 Now before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed. 24 So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith. 25 But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian

We were in custody under the law. Now or since faith has come, we are no longer under custodial regimen of the Law. As we process the language of faith, there are basically two ways that "faith" can function in Scripture and in theological parlance. There is the "fides quae creditor"—faith, which is believed, that is, faith as a body of doctrine. Jude 4 is a good example of this: contend for the faith. The other is "fides qua creditor"--the faith *by which* is believed that is, faith as the act of believing.

Consequently, we have two senses: faith as the body of belief and faith as the act of believing. The first sense does not fit well here. That leaves us with the alternative. But that raises the issue of how Paul can say that, there was no faith before Christ. We see earlier in Gal 3, the classic example of justification by faith in Abraham, therefore, we are forced here to consider what faith means in light of him as an example. Accordingly, what we are to see here is how for Paul faith is redemptive-historically qualified. Faith is ever faith in Christ. In particular, he is concerned here to express how much faith is bound to its object. So, it is kind of a metonymic expression here. When he says, "until faith came" he means until Christ as the object of faith had come. You see, faith on its own is nothing. It has its value only in terms of its object, as it is trusting in Jesus Christ. Therefore, the *eis Christon* is to be taken temporally here. The Law was pedagogue until Christ. And similarly, v 23 almost certainly ought *not* to be read in an individualistic sense as it is sometimes. He is not talking about the coming of faith in an individualistic sense. He does not say here that the Law came to lead us *to Christ*. Again, that is something that can be soundly supported biblically, that the Law does its sin-convicting work to convince us and to bring us a need to cast our faith *on Christ*. That is certainly the case. But that is not the point that is being made here. But it is red-historical--how essential for faith is the object of faith, in a red-historical sense, that is Christ, come in the fullness of time, as Paul will say presently in Ch. 4, verse 4, so that without that object, focused in Christ and his accomplishment in the fullness of time, it is as if there is no faith. Or, more simply, elementally, Christ is the object. When faith came, v. 25, he is connoting when salvation came, when it came in Christ, or was revealed. So, the statement of v. 25, in the immediate context the thought of vv. 23 and 25, the use of faith, is in effect correlate to the sense of v. 19, where Paul says, until the seed came, or again in the sense of until Christ came. Or again, thinking of the statement in 4:4, when the fullness of time came, that is what is in view when Paul speaks here saying "When faith came."] Faith is the object of faith in a redemptive-historical sense.

3.2 Faith and Justification

The implications: This way of speaking on Paul's part shows how important to him is the historical qualification of the exercise of faith. The historical orientation is inseparable from the exercise of saving faith. Remembering what the controlling theme through this section of the letter of Galatians, and that is justification by faith. Justification by faith, salvation by faith, is not a timeless arrangement by God, while it is intensely personal, is not experienced by the individual sinner on the basis of some pre-creational decree, or some existential state of affairs looking in another direction. Faith is never an end in itself, neither its own justification. Justification by faith is not a transaction between God and the individual sinner without any other considerations coming into view. In its fully trinitarian character, in its covenantal character, it is pointedly Christological, it is specifically messianic.

Justification is dependent upon, given its validity, by the coming of the Son in the fullness of time. The God who justifies the sinner is the God who justifies *en Christo*, in Christ. Justification by faith, and this includes now, the justifying faith of Abraham that is appealed to by Paul in the larger context, justifying faith is valid, only in terms of the distinction of promise and fulfillment. It has its validity in terms of the fulfillment of the promise, given to Abraham that comes to its focused fulfillment in Christ. More specifically to the language in 3:23-25, so thoroughly is justifying faith dependent upon its object, inseparable from its object, in a redemptive-historical sense, that Paul can speak of that faith as not being present until the object, the seed, Christ, is present. This way of speaking is to highlight how everything in justification by faith stands and falls around the work of Christ in the fullness of

time. Ordo salutis questions, how am I justified, how does the individual appropriate salvation, or how is it applied, those questions are controlled by historia salutis questions and considerations, which Paul spells out here.

4.0 Summary

Salvation and redemption are now events that have been accomplished in history. To bring a model in here that has been introduced in the last half of the 20th C, by Oscar Cullmann, Paul is very much aware that believers are those for whom the battle of the evil one, the great D-day battle has passed, the war has been decisively resolved. The redemption of God's people is an already-accomplished reality. Paul knows himself to be among those believers for whom the period of shadow, probation, the era of unresolved conflict--all that is past. What was provisional has given way to fulfillment, what was anticipatory has given way to what is final, in the eschatological order of things. Thus, this situation, where he is focused, and is able to look back on this decisive change of events, these aeon-turning events, that is the content and focus of his ministry. Its setting and focus, context and content. Apart from this, Paul would have had his readers understand that the salvation experience of the individual believer is largely unintelligible, or is certainly deeply impoverished. Paul is a minister of "the mystery which has been hidden from ages and generations, and has now been manifested, to the saints" (Col. 1:26). Cf. Rom. 16:25-26.

5.0 Conclusion

Our objective in this section (D) has been to consider those passages in which Paul orients his message and ministry, content and context--does that in terms of a two-aeon construct, and so gives us an indication of the basic character of his apostolic ministry, as he is a writer of scripture, correlative with his ministry to the Gentiles. What we have discovered is the controlling of basic historical, eschatological perspective which Paul places on his labors. The redemptive-historical context is that in which Paul locates his ministry, and which qualifies his entire ministry, in which Paul locates himself as a Christian, which Paul sees as fundamentally qualifying himself in Christ, along with other believers. In all that he is and does, Paul is one upon whom the ends of the ages have arrived. (1 Cor. 10:11). Paul again is deeply conscious of living in what he calls the pleroma of time, the fullness, the fulfillment of time. The time when God has sent His Son, has finally sent His Son (Gal. 4:4); or again, 2 Cor. 5:17, he is conscious of being in that situation when the new creation has already dawned. From his place or vantage point in history, Paul knows himself to be characterized by this, to have the privilege that he is able to look back now, on the climactic events of the history of redemption, specifically, the death and resurrection of Christ.

Self-Assessment Exercises

- i. How does Paul relate the faith of Abraham as faith in Christ?
- ii. Explain the basis on which justification stands.
- iii. Explain how the end of the age terminates in Christ, according to Paul.

6.0 References/Further Readings

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Unit 4: Pauline Theology on Slavery and Freedom

Contents

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 - 3.2 Pauline Theology on Slavery and Freedom
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- 1.0 Introduction**

The writing of Paul is a founding cornerstone for Christian theology, and, in his letters, he addresses the social and theological concerns of the fledgling Christian communities he founded across the Roman Empire. It is in the vision of this detailed direction that Paul's vibrant, universal vision for slaves in the Christian community lies. He uses a metaphor of the devoted slave in his writing, unswervingly addresses slaves themselves, and goes thus far to call himself a slave in Rom. 1:1, Gal. 1:10, and 2 Tim. 2:24. He uses slavery as a metaphor extensively in Rom. 6, Rom. 7 and 1 Cor. He presented slavery in the context of the Roman society. Paul's presentation of slavery took slaves from a non-recognized social status to a fully recognized role in his Christian communities. Paul identified himself and good Christians as slaves of God, protected Christian slaves from their Christian masters, gave slaves control over their own salvation, and created a task for slaves to complete in the Christian community, which resulted in social recognition. Paul's advocacy for slaves is particularly remarkable when one considers that he wrote in a time when almost all other extant sources are either silent on, or exceedingly negative towards, slaves. Paul's gospel of freedom is embedded especially in his letters to Christians in Galatia, Rome, and Corinth.

2.0 Objectives

By the end of the study you should be able to:

- Enunciate the teaching of Pauline theology on slavery and freedom
- Unearth the background of Roman and Hellenistic slavery in Paul's time
- Differentiate between physical and spiritual slavery

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Background to Slavery and Freedom in Roman and Hellenistic Culture

Slavery was ubiquitous in the Roman Empire. The first-century Roman culture did not have the morals and philosophical influences, which exist in the twenty first century, and slavery cannot be easily compared across cultures or history. Roman ideas of "freedom" and "liberty" were very different than today, and they were more accepting of abuse of slaves. During Paul's time period, Slave labor was "one of the foundations of the economic system of the world in which Paul worked." This was especially true in urban areas where "as many as a third of the inhabitants of most large urban centers would have been slaves." There was a dependence on the work that slaves did and, had there been a mass release of slaves, it could have collapsed the entire economy. Lyall writes, "the social structure and whole economy of the Roman Empire were dependent upon the pool of slave labor" and slaves fulfilled so many functions they "were the machines of their day." This was especially true in more "dangerous or noxious trades and for large-scale manufacture" where "slave labor was absolutely essential." In Roman society, slavery was physical bondage and torture. To become a slave was to be physically put into bondage and sold. It is suspected that when a person was kidnapped and stolen away to another part of the Empire they could be easily sold as a slave and would then have trouble clearing their freedom. Slavery in first-century Rome was harsh and often deadly. Varro, on writing about farm life and slaves, writes that slaves were the articulate instruments of the farm and Roman slave owners should view slaves as equal to animals. Once a free person crossed the boundary to

slavery their place in the social world degraded, and society no longer saw them as human with rights or liberty, but instead nothing more than an animal. This is especially true under Roman law where a person was treated as two separate entities in slavery: one the slave and one the freemen.

The treatment of slaves in Roman society often paralleled the treatment of domestic animals. When slaves were bought from the market, they were evaluated with the same methods as evaluating livestock. Giving advice about buying a slave, Seneca writes, "When you buy a horse, you order its blanket removed; so, too, you pull the garments off a slave." It is this market, which Paul refers to when he writes that Jesus has bought a believer. Paul uses this metaphor to say that the entirety of the believer has been exposed to Christ and that Christ has bought them from the auction block. Paul's writing was not pushing for the removal of Romans or the culture of Roman society, but instead focuses on believers and their behavior within the confines of their communities.

The other side of the coin portrays that, the Hellenistic institution offered the slave real hope of obtaining his freedom, after a limited time of service, by its in-built system of manumission. Moreover, it should be remembered that by Paul's day the vast majority of slaves had been born in slavery, not enslaved by war or piracy. And since the slave was a valuable asset to his master, it was in the master's interest to treat him well, to promote his education as his talents might suggest, to hold out to him the prospect of his eventual liberation. There is documentary evidence to show that slaves were not exploited to the same degree as free workmen; and they enjoyed far greater security. In Greek law the distinction between slave and freedman tended towards the vanishing point - in part, because of the lengthy, sometimes, onerous conditions of the indenturing of the freedman to his former master. In pagan religious confraternities slaves were frequently admitted to the same status as members who were free. To recognize all this, however, is not to claim that slavery was not an evil. Yet it does assist us to understand why the institution was accepted as part of the social, economic fabric of first-century Hellenistic society.

3.2 Pauline Theology on Slavery and Freedom

Paul employs the vocabulary connected with slavery much more frequently than that related to freedom. This would appear to indicate that Paul found 'slavery' and its cognates more apt for the expression of certain Christian values than the terminology connoting freedom. That Paul was acquainted not only with a good number of slaves who had become Christians, but also with the situation of slaves in Hellenistic society as well as with Roman and Greek law governing their status, as fairly well substantiated from his letters. At Corinth he had baptized 'the household of Stephanus' as well as Crispus and 'his household', and such 'households' would include slaves in addition to the family; Erastus, 'the city-treasurer' at Corinth is judged, from his office, to have been a slave; and there was Onesimus, Philemon's slave. Paul is aware of the legal distinction between 'freedman' (*apeleutheros*) and freeman (*eleutheros*). He knows that in Roman law the father's rights over his son who was a minor were the same as those over the slaves in his household. He appears to know of the contemporary practice by which men sold themselves into slavery to escape debts, or to seek security, or even to better their social status by later becoming freedmen: 'Do not become the slaves of men'.

From his admonitions to slaves to purify their motives in serving their masters, it is not unlikely that Paul was well aware that the slave's hopes for manumission were chiefly based upon his diligence and usefulness. Thus, Paul warns the Christian slave against the mere 'outward show of service, to curry favour with men'. He seems familiar also with the fact that slaves commonly might expect to inherit from their masters 'as a reward of service'. One celebrated crux interpretum deserves attention, since, when correctly understood, it discloses something of Paul's attitude to slavery.

Paul undoubtedly did not denounce slavery as an institution. In that, he was a man of his time. There are certain indications, however, that he did not approve of it. He did not despise the slave as such, nor exclude him from Christian fellowship when called to the faith. He appears not to have approved of the practice of selling oneself into slavery; and he cannot be accused (through a misinterpretation of i Cor 7, 21) of trying to persuade slaves to remain voluntarily in slavery.

Ribberbos argues that Paul was not supporting the Roman view of slaves and was instead trying to change the cultural ideas of slavery. James Dunn supports the idea that Paul's writing pushed for Christian freedom from slavery. Dunn argues that Paul saw belief in Christ as freedom from slavery to the Law, which was very significant to the Greek idea of freedom. Dunn argues because Paul amenably calls for a change in status by a change in faith; this was something, which was accessible by slaves. Not only was this liberating to slaves, Paul's message of believers removing themselves from slavery to the Jewish law moved the believer toward a better life. Dunn continues that by relating slavery to the Jewish law Paul is depicting a negative view on slavery and this negative view of slavery was positive for the slaves.

Paul's metaphor of slavery portrays two different types of slavery. One is the physical slavery, which is the relationship between a human slave and their master. A clear presentation of this type of slavery is presented in passages where Paul is making recommendations for the actions of Christians who are slaves such as 1 Corinthians 7:21 where Paul wrote, "Were you a slave when called? Do not be concerned about it." The second is devotional slavery, which is the idea that a Christian should be a slave to Christ. This is the metaphor which Paul uses when he wants to present the appropriate behavior of Christian devotion, and a modest presentation of this is when Paul calls himself a slave such as in Romans 1:1. Paul claims the title 'slave of Christ Jesus', which he shares with Timothy. He appears to consider the description particularly appropriate for unfolding his role as a preacher of 'the Gospel of Christ', his principal function as an apostle. And he labels Timothy's assistance in the same manner. Paul thinks of conversion to the gospel chiefly as a pagan, 'a turning to God from idols to become a slave to God'. His more characteristic view of Christian life is 'being a slave to the Lord' as 'the household slave of another'; this essential orientation of the Christian 'to another' is the effect of Jesus's death and resurrection. He has 'become a slave to the Lord Christ', which for Paul means renunciation of self-regard. As a result, Christians must 'become slaves to one another through love'.

Paul's vision for the Christian communities is abridged in Paul's modest presentations of the Christian community. Paul's blueprint for the social relationships in the Christian communities is expressed in 1 Corinthians 12:13 when he wrote, "for in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, Jews or Greeks, slaves or free and we were all made to drink of one Spirit," and in Galatians 3:28 when he wrote, "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 lastly, in Colossians 3:11 Paul wrote, "in that

renewal there is no longer Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and free; but Christ is all and in all.” Under Christ and within the Christian church, there was freedom from the restrictions outside society placed upon social groups. Galatians 4-5 demonstrates how Paul saw the institution of slavery as a natural institution only God could reverse it and how the mobility of people across social groups was not something which was decided by their own actions. It also proves how freedom from bondage to another man was seen as positive in Paul’s eyes. In Galatians Paul uses the same language to designate human slavery and spiritual slavery. In 4:22 Paul writes of two children, one born to a “slave woman” and one to a “free woman.” He continues this expression in 4:23 where he wrote of “the child of the slave” and “the child of the promise.” Paul is using the same language to describe these slaves as he would any other human slave, but he discloses in 4:24 that these references are “an allegory.” This is an instance of how Paul uses slavery as a metaphor for his message to Christians. This metaphor of spiritual slavery applied the same language as illustrating human slavery. Two passages, which explain how Paul uses the similar language to designate physical slavery and the spiritual slavery of his metaphor are 5:1, “for freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not succumb again to a yoke of slavery,” and 5:13, “You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free.” While both of these passages read as though Paul is writing of physical slavery, he is essentially referencing spiritual freedom. In subsequent letters, specifically in 1 Corinthians, Paul presents this dualistic view of slavery in his metaphor that Christians should imitate slaves in their commitment to God.

Paul's writing forced the human master “to treat their slaves ‘with justice and equality’” and this in turn forces “a higher degree of equality than was normal.” The mainstream view of the treatment of slaves was “slaves were like pets: good treatment of them was about the masters’ enlightenment, never about the slaves’ inherent equality.” Philemon gives insight into Paul’s personal reaction to a slave and master relationship.

Galatians 5:1 and 5:13 also show Paul’s belief that a change in freedom, in this case is a change of spiritual freedom away from Jewish law, which is initiated by God. Both of these factors portray that there is a spiritual freedom separate from a physical freedom and it is God who calls for a change in either. These two, form a doctrine in Paul’s writing which shape his interpretation of Christian devotion and the institution of slavery.

The Apostle of Freedom, taking into account that phrases like “For freedom Christ has set us free” (Gal 5:1), “the freedom we have in Christ Jesus” (Gal 2:4), or “the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God” (Rom 8:21), all come from his undisputed and by all means authentic letters. Paul’s conception of freedom has for generations been discussed within framework of, and for some in opposition to, the Jewish Law; consequently, freedom is normally conceived of in relation to sin and death: in other words, freedom is almost exclusively understood as freedom from slavery, freedom from the law, freedom from sin, and freedom from death. The analysis of the subject in the well-known Theological Dictionary of the New Testament is largely responsible for this tendency, at least in recent biblical scholarship. Based on a very surfaced and not a thorough examination of some NT it was suggested that in the early Christian tradition a holistic understanding of freedom (i.e. including liberation) was not decisive for salvation.

A scrutiny of the eighth chapter of Romans, Paul's definitive conception of Christian life in this world, will reveal a disarmingly simple view of what it means for the Christian to be free. Freedom is found and preserved in its vitality only through openness to the leading of the Holy Spirit, a gracious gift from God. Unfreedom is the inevitable result of man's subjection of himself to the earth-bound concerns of 'the flesh', from which only the Spirit, gift of the risen Christ, can liberate him.

4.0 Summary

In Roman society, slavery was physical bondage and torture or to be physically put into bondage and sold. Consequently, Paul refers to believers as being bought by Jesus. Paul uses this metaphor to say that the entirety of the believer has been exposed to Christ and that Christ has bought them from the auction block. Roman society was not prepared for the removal of slaves, and the system shock would have unbalanced the Roman economy and its largest source of labor. So, Paul could not call for the complete freedom of all slaves but instead focuses on believers and their behavior within the confines of their communities. Paul claims the title 'slave of Christ Jesus', He seems to consider the designation especially appropriate for describing his role as a preacher of 'the gospel of Christ', his chief function as an apostle. Paul's gospel also asserts his relationship to the churches he founded by means of the same figure. 'We do not proclaim ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves on account of Jesus'. Paul's presentation of slavery took slaves from a non-recognized social status to a fully recognized role in his Christian communities. Thus, for Paul, freedom from the bondage of the law of Moses comes to mean freedom from sin and death, from the self and the flight towards inwardness, and ultimately freedom from all regime of law.

5.0 Conclusion

The δοῦλος, the Greek term for slavery used in the Pauline corpus, is a common image throughout the New Testament, but its variety of uses allows for ambiguity. δοῦλος appears 61 times in several of Paul's letters, normally in either its noun form, a contraction, or its verbal form. Thus, slavery imagery is used to convey spiritual messages about how one can belong to God's people in the new covenant. Speaking about "two covenants" entails a view concerning the history of God's relationship with his people, the "fullness" of that history being the time when God has sent his Son (Gal. 4:4). Slavery imagery describes what one should avoid, and it serves as a contrast to a relationship with God based on trust in his promises.

Self-Assessment Exercises

1. Why did Paul give himself a title, "a slave of Christ"?
2. Explain briefly Pauline concept of "slavery and freedom"
3. Summarize the Paul's impetus that prompted him to pen a missive to Philemon

6.0 References for further Reading

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Unit 5: Pauline Theology on the Role of Women in The Church

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1.0 Introduction

The question of the role of women in the church is one of the most significant issues facing the church today. The storm center in New Testament interpretation is the Apostle Paul. He is claimed by many but also maligned by many. The debate about the meaning of his words raises large questions for the church, especially questions of biblical authority and interpretation, and also questions of church and family order.

2.0 Objectives

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Articulate the role of women in the church as described in Pauline writings
- Analyze the controversy of a command for women to put on veil while in public worship
- Ascertain the reason why women were commanded to be silent in the proceedings of worship

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Pauline Teaching on the Role of Women in Ministry (Fellow Workers)

The preliminary point for construing the Pauline texts regarding the role of women in the church is Paul's over-arching theology of the church. The purpose of God's saving activity in Jesus is, for Paul, the creation of a transformed community of God's people, the eschatological people of God. Within this eschatological community all differences of race, sex and religious history are detached and transcended. The barricades, which dispersed people in the old age, are eliminated. All disciples are equal before God and each other. The desires of the new community are met on the account of the discernment of the gifts within the community. Similarly, the theological context for understanding Paul's teachings about the role of women in the church is his persuasion that the new age has begun: "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come" (2 Cor. 5:17); "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set us free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:2). Absolutely, Paul upholds that the future world has already broken into the present and manifests itself amidst the decay of the old age. The source of this new reality is, of course, Jesus Christ. In the new age every person in the eschatological community stands free and equal before the gracious God: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28). Paul knows that there will continue to be distinctions among people, since people are different and have different gifts (1 Cor. 12). But he steadily discards any value judgments made on the basis of distinctions.

Paul does not only hypothesize. He implements his theology of equality in the life of his churches. The indication is found in his greetings to women fellow workers in the church. The passages are cited for confirmation. As stated by Philippians 4:2f, women are fellow workers and have labored and struggled with Paul in his work. Among the peoples cited in Romans 16, six are women, and they are all said to have contributed in the building up of the Christian communities. Phoebe, whom Paul extols to the recipients of the letter, is both a *diakonos*, a minister, and a *prostatis*, a helper. The word *diakonos* here

is in the masculine; it is the same word Paul uses to describe himself and Apollos in 1 Corinthians 3:5, Tychicus in Ephesians 6:21 and Colossians 4:7, and Timothy in 1 Timothy 4:6. It seems clear that Phoebe is a minister in the church in Cenchreae, the port city of Corinth. Because her designation is in the masculine there appear no linguistic or theological grounds to distinguish between her and other male “ministers.” She is to be honored and assisted by the Romans. Ostensibly, she has a ministry recognized for its fruit; “she has been a helper of many.” This is sign of God’s call and blessing on her. Besides, it is hesitant that Paul would designate Phoebe as his “leader” or “president”, especially since he is unwilling to grant that kind of authority even to the “pillar” apostles (Gal 2:1-10). It is probable that Phoebe is applauded here as a “patron”; that is, she rendered important financial support to the Church in Cenchrea. Paul calls on the Roman churches to render support (parastete) to Phoebe since she herself has been the helper (prostatis) of many, as well as Paul.

Several commentators have referred women as deacons in different manuscripts and interpretations but not all the commentators or translations recognize it as a reference to women deacons in this passage but on the other hand the early Christian commentators as well as Clement of Alexandria and St John Chrysostom saw them as deaconesses.

Two further references in Romans 16 are worthy of note. The first is the greeting to Prisca and Aquila in vv. 3-5. This couple performed a key task in Paul’s ministry (1 Cor. 16:19; Acts 18:2; 18:18). It is important that Paul names Prisca first and labels both her and Aquila as “fellow workers.” The word “co-workers” is a term of equality used in another place by Paul of himself and Apollos (1 Cor. 3:9), and Euodia, Syntyche and Clement (Phil. 4:2-3). The other exciting text is the greeting to Andronicus and Junias as apostles (v. 7). It is uncertain in Greek whether Junias is masculine or feminine; the spelling is the same in Greek. The translation, “they are men of note,” already denotes a translation bias because the Greek literally reads “they are of note”; the word “men” is not in the text. The debate centres on whether the person Paul compliments with Andronicus is male, and then the name is contracted from Junianus. Most scholars however, now agree that the person in question was female. The contracted form of this name appears nowhere in Greek literature, so it is difficult to believe that in Romans we have the only example of such a contraction. Moreover, the name Junia for a woman was quite common. Finally, until the thirteenth century virtually all writers understood this person to be a woman. The evidence for the person in question being a woman is, therefore, rather impressive. Many scholars believe that Andronicus and Junia were husband and wife, and this is indeed probable.⁶ What is striking here is that Paul says Andronicus and Junia are “distinguished among the apostles”. The Greek phrase could also be translated “outstanding in the eyes of the apostles,” but most agree that this is an unlikely way of rendering the phrase. The Term apostle (apostolos) is not always a technical term (2 Cor 8:23; Phil 2:25) and Andronicus and Junia were likely itinerant missionaries if they are called apostles here. The word apostolo~ is used of such travelling missionaries in the apostolic fathers (DBid. 11:3-6; herm. Vis.13:1; Herm. Sim 92:4; 93:5; 102.2).

From the early decades of Christianity, women were co-workers, missionaries and leaders of house churches. They relished quite a lot of positions of leadership in the church as a deaconess, widows, virgins, saints, prophetess etc. Within the authorized ordering of the early church, there were two primary orders of women: widows and deaconesses. Paul calls three women “coworkers” (synergoi): Prisca (Rom 16:3) and Euodia and Syntyche (Phil 4:3). One of the most striking texts is Philipians

4:2-3, where Euodia and Syntyche are exhorted to harmony in the Lord. The ministry of women is also described in the verb labor (kopiao). Four women are designated as “labourers”: Mary (Romans 16:6) and Tryphaena, Tryphosa and Persis (Rom 16:12). Little is known about these women apart from these all-too-brief accounts. The word kopiaio depicts both Paul’s ministry (I Cor 15:10; Gal 4:11; Phil 2:16; Col 1:29; I Tim 4:10) and the ministry of others (I Cor 16:16; I Thess 5:12; I Tim 5:17). Many scholars uphold that the term denotes missionary service, and this is as good a conjecture as any, though inevitability eludes us. The term itself does not mean that one served as a leader. Women here served meaningfully in the ministries and labored with passion.

Paul’s epistles similarly reference twelve women by the name of who were coworkers with him in the gospel ministry. Three women are known as leaders of house churches; Chloe (1 Corinthians 1:11), Nympha (Colossians 4:15) and Aphia (Philemon 2). Some fifteen women are cited in several of the passages of Paul’s letters in which ten are stated in Romans 16: 1–16. Romans 16: 1-16 comprise a list of persons who were vigorously involved in the ministry of the church. These women are: Phoebe, Priscilla, Junia, Julia, Mary, Tryphoena, Tryphosa, Persis, Rufus’ mother and Nereus’ sister. In these passages Paul recognizes their ministry and greets them by their name. In the Rabbinic culture man never greets a woman. A woman was labeled as the wife of a certain man and it is prohibited for other man to call her by name. Thus, it is obvious that Paul’s thinking was different from them.

3.2 Women’s head under veil in Public Worship - 1 Corinthians 11:2-16

This is a text with many textual and explanatory difficulties, however the main line of thought is conspicuous. Women are free to partake in public worship under the proper conditions, explicitly, with the proper dress. In Paul’s argument, the head of every man is Christ, and the head of a woman is her husband, just as the head of Christ is God. Headship in the Greek depicts either lordship or origin. That origin is meant here appears obvious from vv. 8ff. Paul does not say that man is lord of the woman; he says that he is the origin of her being. Man made in God’s image is intended to honor his Creator, and this he honors in public worship by letting his bare head to be the symbol of Christ, his Head. Woman, however also made in God’s image (Gen. 1) is derived from man (Gen. 2) and her role is to honor her husband. If she were to appear in worship with head exposed, the beauty of her presence would be an honor to her husband when she ought to be concerned with glorifying God alone.

It must be recollected that the “head covering” in that culture meant the covering of the top half of the body. To come in public lacking that dress was an act of indecency, to say the least. Such a presence would interrupt a worship service, and such inappropriate “honor” would accrue to the disgrace of the woman’s husband. Only by putting on a veil on head could a woman be allowed to pray or prophesy to the glory of God alone. Similarly, important, the veil designated the claims of husband and home. Corinth was a chief midpoint for the cult of Dionysus. This cult heartened women to throw away their veils for religious rituals. Other rudiments of the ritual comprised drunkenness, pagan feasting, madness and promiscuity. All of these practices, can be seen, are addressed by Paul in 1 Corinthians, and most of them in his dialogue of proper church order in chapters 11-14. Paul asserts that the veil and suitably combed hair indicate the decency of husband and home in disparity to these pagan practices. Christian worship does not offer provisional release from the marriage oath. Relatively, it is surely in worship that the Christian holds his or her sexual identity and commits himself or herself

overtly to the spouse. It is imperative for Paul to make the case to new converts out of paganism that in the Christian church, where the integration of both sexes into the same worship service on identical terms was something of a novelty; neither man nor woman was self-regulating of the other. Both worship God alike as sexual beings, but both must be suitably attired and groomed.

The passage, consequently, does not advocate the subordination of women to men. Paul visibly trusts in a variance of role between the sexes. She is as free as the man to partake in church worship, praying or prophesying, as long as she wears a head covering. In the new eschatological community, men and women in mutual dependence stand as equals before God.

3.3 Women are commanded to be silent in Public Assembly - 1 Corinthians 14:33b-36

This passage shows an ostensible contradiction similar to 1 Corinthians 11. In chapter 11 Paul articulates that women may speak in public assembly if properly attired, but in chapter 14 women are ordered to be silent not to speak in church. There are quite a lot of approaches to the problem. One approach argues that 14:33b-36 is a non-Pauline interpolation. But since the manuscript sign only concerns placement and not omission these verses are treated as Pauline. The second approach pursues to harmonize the two chapters as thus. Both texts speak to married women, not single, and both focus on order in public worship services. Chapter 11 legitimizes speaking in worship with appropriate dress. Chapter 14, in disparity, forbids married women from asking questions in the worship service: “if there is anything they desire to know, let them ask their husbands at home” (v. 35a). The motive behind this ban echoes modern educational practice. Excluding girls from rich families, who could afford personal tutors to teach their daughters, girls were not educated in Jewish or Roman society. They schooled by asking their parents and brothers. Paul’s claim in chapter 14 then is that women not experienced in Christian truth should not disrupt the worship service to ask questions, which their husbands could teach them. Similarly, women may pray and prophesy as equals in church worship, but they should not use their equality as an instance for repudiating others the prospect for worship by intruding the service with questions.

Another approach argues that the ban concerns the discernment of or discussion about the prophet word. In like manner, vv. 33b-36 fit to the dialogue about prophetic speech and testing in vv. 26ff. The context makes it apparent that the silence stands in contrast to asking questions, not to prophesying. Women were permitted to prophesy, but were constrained from the deliberations which shadowed. Women were left out from the “testing” meetings since this would put them in the role of judging men, probably their own husbands. Verse 34 showed a situation involving arguments between husband and wife.

For the reason that textual problems related with this text, it is advisable to be very cautious in using it to shape a theology of the woman’s role in the church. It cannot be made the emphasis of our interpretation. As a frank Pauline declaration, it can be read only as an encouragement to appropriate order in public worship for married women. Preferably, this approach reads these verses in their textual and theological context. This explanation is reinforced by two other bits of evidence from the text. Most commentators are approved that the verb “subordinate” in v. 34 is a middle form which signifies the willingly submission of women to their husbands. Paul, having made the case for the equality and interdependence of men and women in chapter 11, here encourages the voluntary

submission of wives to their husbands. Verse 35 emphasizes this reading by the precise identity given the husband, “their own husbands.” Women are not heartened to submit to any or all men, but definitely to their “own husbands.”

Paul’s call for the silence of women in the church, then, is a restricted one. The context refers to married women whose husbands were present in the church, and only to the “testing” process of the prophetic word. Paul achieves two things by this word. First, he lessens the disorder which threatens to overwhelm the public meetings of the church of Corinth. And, second, he once more reinforces the family unit in the framework of concern for the public life of the church. He gives the family something practical to deliberate at home. Such an encouragement itself is ground-breaking since ancient men were often demanded to deliberate only matters of family life with their wives. In disparity, Paul advises husbands and wives together should “discern” the prophetic word at home.

1 Timothy 2:8-15

If 1 Corinthians 11 and 14 are acquiescent, what about the problem of 1 Timothy 2 where the author orders women to be silent and not to teach in the church? That certainly indicates a contradiction within Paul. So many scholars are persuaded of such a paradox to reject Pauline authorship of 1 Timothy along with 2 Timothy and Titus (the Pastoral Letters). Nonetheless, that argument resolves nothing because the Pastoral Letters are part of the Christian canon.

It is observed that, the embargo against teaching in this passage concerns only married women, not all women, because the writer bases his argument on the order of the creation of husband and wife in Genesis 2 and the relationship of husband and wife in the story of the fall in Genesis 3. Then, the reference to “salvation through child-bearing” (v. 15) can only point to married women; and the author uses the plural (v. 15) when he says “if they (husband and wife) continue in faith and love and holiness and modesty.” More so, the writer’s use of Genesis 2 and 3 concerning the categorization of creation is parallel to Paul’s usage in 1 Corinthians 11. In both passages the order of creation is used to rule out any partaking in the life of the church which disrupts the honor and meaning of the marriage affiliation. Now, the question is, does Paul prohibit woman from teaching to maintain the marriage relationship? Two rudimentary methods have been projected over the years. Both approaches recognize Paul’s words as a restricted constraint caused by the rise of particular problems in the churches of Ephesus. The first explanation proposes the church and marriage problems at Ephesus are the effects of freedom. The first phases into liberty in most liberation movements are unwarranted; they betray the insecurity of the new position by self-confidence. Paul’s words are planned to regulate liberation or equality gone amiss. What is obtainable in Paul’s line of thought is a conflict. Liberation and equality for oppressed contexts (Galatians and Corinthians), submission and silence for deranged freedom contexts (Pastoral Letters). Paul is the man of self-control; he gives a word for the overindulgences. This view makes for good theory, but there is little in the text to support it.

The other approach suggests that the church and marriage problems at Ephesus are a function of false teaching. The urging that married women not teach is associated by instructions to keep silent and linked to the Greek words *oude authentein andros*, “nor dominate a man” or “not sexually seduce a man.” The word *authentein* arises only here in the New Testament, and, thus, is to some extent vague in meaning. It is typically translated as “domineer” or “have authority over,” and then proposes one

kind of false teaching, which emerged in the early church. This teaching gave women fame in the church at the price of upsetting their marriages. Women taught in the church, but abandon their husbands, cosseted in costly outfit and practiced immorality. All of these practices are matters with which the Pastoral Letters handle, signifying that the context to the appeal in 1 Timothy 2 is prompted by this kind of false teaching. By some means, in the course of teaching, women were lording it over their husbands in the church. Paul pens to assert that this does not belong in the church.

An alternative connotation of *authentēin* denotes “to thrust oneself onward sexually.” Actually, the verb form is usually used by the classical writers, the Septuagint (e.g., Wisdom of Solomon 12:6) and many Church Fathers to designate women who make sexual advances to men. To this etymological detail the awareness must be added that most women teachers in the Greco-Roman world were similarly courtesans. They made it apparent in the process of their teaching that they were accessible for sexual links following the homily. Against this framework Paul’s words forbid immoral teachings and practices. This explanation likewise relates to the immediate context in 1 Timothy and the general context of the Pastoral Letters. Women are coached to dress modestly and with politeness, assuredly a requirement in a city, which bragged thousands of prostitutes. Civil law in Ephesus legalized only prostitutes the kind of garb Paul here bans. We also know from 2 Timothy 3:6ff., 2 Peter 2:1ff., and Revelation 2:20 that false teachings relating to immoral conduct were a real problem for the church in the last third of the century. Women converts, who had cultured to relate teaching and prostitution or worship and prostitution as in the shrine of Diana were now taught to keep silent. Married women are not to teach in the church because the church works consistent with the ethics of a different kingdom. Not immaterially, John Chrysostom in 4th century understood this text as barring the connection of teaching and prostitution. “Imitate not the courtesans,” he declares in his commentary on this passage.

The two explanations, which read this text against the circumstance of false teaching, read Paul’s teaching as a restricted restraint on women. He forbids only teaching, not the exercise of other gifts like prophecy, because of its link with an officious attitude or sexual promiscuity. Also, he limits the woman’s role in the church only at the point where it threatens to disturb the marriage relationship. If that is an accurate explanation of this passage, it can barely be made to forbid women in general from partaking in leadership of the church.

3.4 Widows in Pauline Ministry

The role of the widows in the early church was to do charity work and they were also chosen for prayer. As stated by Tertullian (c.162- 228), the widows were an order and they were allocated a place of honor within the church. By the 3rd century, these widows were elevated in the functions that were allotted to them. They performed charity to the women and teach. The state of widowhood was of poorer quality as they had to face social rejection and poverty because there were organized structures for widows and orphans. In the core of these perilous circumstances that triumphed during the early church, the church took the obligation to protect and offer charity for them. Inasmuch as they played a key role in ancient Christian community nonetheless, they also accepted the donations from others and participated in the charity and welfare. They were seen as the altar of God. These widows were called

the intercessor of the church because they gave advice to Christian women, they prayed for them, fasted for them and participated in the sacramental life of the church (I Timothy 5:5).

Widowhood is obviously stated in the pastoral epistles of Paul. 1 Timothy 5:3–6 depicts the actions about the character, manner and also the duty of women who were registered as widows. If one was to be registered among the widows, she should be at least 60 years old, married only once and well proven for her manners, as one who brought up children, shown hospitality, washed the feet of the saints, relieved the affected and devoted herself to do good in every way (5:10). The added role of the widows was in the communities' financial provision, they were to endure celibacy and required to be involved in the ministry of prayer. 'The real widow, left alone, has set her hope in God and continues its application day and night' (5:5). The apostolic constitution proscribed women from teaching and baptizing. They were to be submissive to the bishops, presbyters, deacons and also to the deaconess.

4.0 Summary

Paul teaches that in the new eschatological community of God's people all believers have been reconciled with God and each other. All stand equal before God without difference of race or sex. Paul upholds the equality of men and women of faith before God both in terms of privilege and gifts of the Spirit. All disciples of Christ and thus all members of the new eschatological community are empowered by the Spirit and given gifts of the Spirit. In Paul and the New Testament, the exercise of the gifts of the Spirit was not restricted on the basis of sex. The Pauline injunctions regarding the role of women in the church deal either with the issue of a relationship of ministry and dignity which disrupts worship and the marriage. Also, in each case the emphasis of concern is the married woman, not women in general. To apply Pauline teachings to our context, Women should be encouraged and feel free to exercise the gifts God has given them to build the church.

5.0 Conclusion

In conclusion, the church should acknowledge that God has given gifts to all, and discern the gifts in its midst irrespective of sex. Women should function in the church in the joyful knowledge that they are fully reconciled and equal as believers in Christ and as members of his body. The church should prophetically oppose as unbiblical any espousal of women's liberation within the church which disrupts the marriage.

Self-Assessment Exercises

- i. Describe the role of women in the early church as contained in Pauline epistles
- ii. What is the meaning of the term, "deacon"?
- iii. Why did Paul command women to put on veil while in public worship?
- iv. Mention four women who participated in the ministry of Paul and the functions they performed

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Unit 6: Pauline Concept of Reconciliation

Contents

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1.0 Introduction

This unit examines Paul's theology of reconciliation. Reconciliation between people cannot happen without reconciliation with God, who in the cross has destroyed the things that cause enmity both with God and between people. Reconciliation, more than any other term, meets these criteria for being the center of Paul's theology. For Paul, the age of eschatological, messianic peace has dawned in the death and resurrection of Christ, an age characterized especially by reconciliation and nonviolence.

2.0 Objectives

By the end of the unit you should be able to:

- Give an appraisal of Pauline theology of Reconciliation
- Explain how the new Adam has reconciled humanity with God through his death on the cross

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Pauline Ministry of Reconciliation: 1Cor. 5:11-6:2

The view of appearing before Christ's judgment seat is a strong drive, but it is not Paul's sole motive for ministry. In 5:14 he explains that he is also controlled by the retrospect of Christ's love verified by his death. This restraint of the cross is due to Paul's conviction that the death of Christ stands for the death of all. More so (5:15), the death of Christ entails that those who live should live not for themselves but for the one who died for them. The theological framework behind this is that the Adamic order, portrayed since the fall by selfishness and death, and has been superseded by the order of the second Adam, typified by selfless living for Christ. Paul's ministry is demonstrated not by living for himself but by living for the one who died for him and rose again. Paul sees believers dying with Christ in the past and standing before him at the future judgment. Thus, life in between these two epochal events can never be the same again. Self-commendation and pride in outward show cannot exemplify those who are controlled by love of their redeemer and future moderator.

It is shown that 2 Cor. 5:14-15 has stressed Christ's death as a representative act and as an act of renewal. Due to Christ's representative death, Christ-centered rather than self-centered living is obligatory of those who would identify with the gospel. Paul next in 5:16-17 describes two consequences of Christ's death. First, Christ's death means that from now on a radically different way of viewing reality is present. No one is to be viewed according to the old order with its "fleshly" priorities and values; Even if Paul has known Christ in this manner, those days are gone forever. Further, a typically Christian worldview has substituted the past fleshly one.

Christ's epochal death and resurrection is the crucial motivation for Paul's ministry. The universality of Paul's commission and message would appear to demand that the whole human race has been impacted by the cross, and yet that every human being must come to terms with it individually in order to experience its benefits. Those who come to be "in Christ" by faith in the gospel are part of a new

order for the world. The former Adamic order is vanished and a new order has come to exist. The cross has once for all totally changed Paul's view of reality by its power to begin the renewal of the universe by renewing individuals within it (5:16-17).

This individual and cosmic renewal, which has ever more changed Paul's view of life, is not attained without human instrumentality. In 5:17 Paul alludes to the divine origin of the new order and its mediation through Christ, but he also plainly speaks of his own part in the ministry of reconciliation. The mention of ministry returns to the main theme of 2 Corinthians 2-7, the appeal to the Corinthians to identify Paul's ministry as authentic (cf. 3:7-9; 4:1; 6:3). Verse 17 describes the origin of reconciliation in the Father, the mediation of reconciliation through the Son, and the actual accomplishment of reconciliation through the ministry of Paul. At this instant it will be useful to center on the vocabulary and conceptualization of reconciliation. When Paul describes his ministry of the gospel as a ministry of reconciliation, he uses a known image from human interpersonal relations. Anyone who undertakes a study of soteriological reconciliation in the NT shortly discovers that it is a Pauline concept. Certainly, Paul is the principal NT author to use the word group, which is normally linked with the concept of reconciliation. Obviously, the concept of reconciliation is broader than anyone word group. Louw and Nida state that "meanings involving reconciliation have a presuppositional component of opposition and hostility, and it is the process of reconciliation which reverses this presuppositional factor." Therefore, any NT teaching, which deals with God's gracious redemption as overcoming the hostility of sinners and establishing peace, is implicitly dealing with reconciliation.

The use of this word group in extra-biblical Jewish literature is noticeably dissimilar than its NT usage. Josephus argues that David was asked to reconcile to Absalom. Also, in 2 Maccabees God is beseeched to be reconciled to his erring people Israel in thought of the merit of their suffering and the effectiveness of their prayers. This contrasts with Paul's usage here and elsewhere in that God is always the subject and never the object of reconciliation. Human beings need to be reconciled to God, not vice versa. God is the initiator and people are the receptors of reconciliation. Though L. Morris tends to minimize this distinction, its validity will be supported in later discussion.

Morris is concerned to illustrate that God is not passive in relation to sin but rather is vigorously wrathful against it. His wrath against sin must be satisfied. This of course is true, but the fact remains that Paul uses the term "propitiation" (Rom 3:25), not the term "reconciliation" to describe the satisfaction of God's wrath against sin.

Paul's explanation of the ministry of reconciliation is lengthened in 5:19. This verse begins with the complex double connective word variously translated "namely" (*NASB*), "that" (*NIV*), "that is" (*RSV*), "to wit" (*KJV*), "for indeed" (*DV*), and "what I mean is" (*NEB*). All of these are exegetical translations meaning that 5:19 over-explains the thought of 5:18. Two other questions deal with the exegete of this verse. First, should the prepositional phrase in Christ? Be understood adverbially ("God was reconciling in Christ," *NIV*) or adjectivally ("God-in-Christ was reconciling," *KJV*, *NASB*)? The first alternative is preferable due to the common usage of prepositional phrases as adverbs, not adjectives. Again, Paul's highlight is not upon incarnation but upon reconciliation, and it is his habit to mention Christ as the means of reconciliation (2 Cor 5:18; Rom 5:10; Col 1:20). The second question concerns the periphrastic verbal construction (imperfect plus present participle). The issue is why the simple finite verb was not used, and also why the progressive rather than the aorist (as in v 18) appears.

Maybe the best reply is that Paul wished to emphasize here the element of unforeseen event in the ongoing process of reconciliation through the ministry of the gospel. It is striking that the middle clause of v 19, "not counting their sins against them," also uses a progressive tense (present participle) to depict God's reconciling action. Though there is an historic, objective sense in which reconciliation was finished at the cross, there is also the subjective accomplishment of that objective truth as the gospel is preached and people believe.

Paul's statement in v 19 is that in Christ God was reconciling "the world" (cf. Rom 11:15) to himself, not "us" as in v 18. While some take the world as tantamount to "all" (people) in 5:14-15, it is more probable that a cosmic meaning is projected. Though people are primarily in mind (note the middle clause of the verse, "not counting their trespasses against them,") Paul's thought cannot be restricted purely to human beings. Paul has been speaking of the new creation in Christ as superseding the old creation ruined by Adam's fall (5:17). Thus, it is expected that he does not mean simply all people (believers?), or even the Gentiles as opposed to merely Israel (as in Rom 11:15), but rather the universe as a whole. "All things" are in the process of being reconciled through the cross of Christ. The effects of the second Adam's obedience can be no less than the effects of the first Adam's insubordination. As Adam's disobedience wreaked havoc throughout the entire created order, so Christ's obedience will eventually harmonize the universe in the new heavens and new earth. The entire cosmos will ultimately be at peace with God due to Christ's redemptive mediacy (cf. Rom 8:18-21; Eph 1:10; Phil 2:9-11; Col 1:20). This is not to be confused with soteric universalism, since many will only bow the knee reluctantly. Nevertheless, recognition of a sort of cosmic universalism is essential if we are to grasp the glorious fullness of Christ's work of redemption. Paul seems to portray this process of reconciliation elsewhere through a military motif (2 Cor 2:14; 10:3-5; Col.1:3; 2:15). It is as if the critical battle of the war has already been fought, and it is only a matter of time until the defeated foes lay down their arms. In God's wisdom the ministry of reconciliation already is calling his enemies to surrender. Finally, this will result in the total victory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In v 20 meditation of the glorious truth of God's agenda to reconcile the world to himself through the gospel of Christ brings Paul to a conclusion. In vv 20-21 Paul takes the general truths which he has been explaining and applies them in a straight line and exclusively to the condition in Corinth. As Christ's diplomat, and as the very spokesperson of God, Paul pleads with the Corinthians on Christ's behalf to be reconciled to God. Though some take this to be a sample of Paul's missionary preaching directed to no one in particular, it is better to realize it as Paul's appeal to the Corinthians to renew their peaceful relationship to God and his messenger. In addition, the presence of noun at the beginning of 5:20 implies that Paul is now drawing a new inference from his prior general statements about reconciliation. Similarly, the urgent, emotive, personal tone of 5:20 makes more sense if it is directed to the Corinthians than if it is simply an example of what Paul would preach if he had an audience for evangelism. Most significantly, the context must be given its due. Since 2:14 Paul has been making an appeal and defense to the Corinthians regarding his message and ministry. Their gap with him carried with its threatening implications of defection from the gospel. The messenger and the message cannot be alienated, as is underlined in Paul's warning in 6:1-2. Paul is God's diplomat, speaking in Christ's stead. Refutation of the diplomat is tantamount to rejection of the King of kings and calls into question the reception of the King's message (cf. 2:9; 6:1; 1:1; 8:8, 24; 9:3; 11:3-4; 12:20; 13:5).

The necessity of Paul's appeal for the Corinthians to renew their relationship with God is emphasized by the striking asyndetic addition of v 21. Here Paul explains how reconciliation can be attained: the sinless Messiah became sin so that sinners might become righteous in him (cf. Rom 3:21-22; 1 Cor 1:30; Phil 3:9). The language is once more (cf. 5:19b) suggestive of justification. Barrett's suggestion of a chiasmic structure for this verse is unpersuasive, but he is correct that the verse "is set out in a carefully balanced pair of parallel lines." Through the years this striking statement has been the basis of a great deal of theological debate as the relationship of Christ to sin was pondered. Harris properly comments that these words "defy final exegetical explanation, dealing as they do with the heart of the atonement." This passage reaffirms and defines the central truth Paul has just alluded to in 5:14-15: the representative, substitutionary character of Christ's death.

Paul affirms in stability with many NT passages that Christ "knew no sin" (cf. John 8:46; Heb 4:15; 7:26; 1 Pet 2:22, citing Isa 53:9; 1 John 3:5). However, Christ branded himself with sinners in order to redeem them (Matt 3:13-17; Luke 23:40-41; Rom 8:3; Gal 3:13). Paul does not say that God made Christ a sinner, but that he made (appointed?) him to be sin. While some have argued that sin means "sin offering," it seems better to view this as compressed, almost hyperbolic language intended to say that Christ completely identified with sinners. Harris expressively explains that it was Paul's intent to say more than that Christ was made a sin offering and yet less than that Christ became a sinner. So complete was the identification of the sinless Christ with the sin of the sinner, including its dire guilt and its dread consequence of separation from God, that Paul could say profoundly, "God made him. . . to be sin for us."

The condensed statement of 5:21 concerning the substitutionary basis of reconciliation now gives way to an express appeal to the Corinthians in 6:1-2. The chapter division is ill-fated, since the flow of thought runs continuous from the intensity of Christ's identification with sinners to the appeal for the Corinthians not to receive God's grace in vain. Most scholars agree that in 6:1 speaks of Paul as God's co-worker. This striking thought fits the context, chiefly the thought of 5:20 (cf. 1 Cor 3:9; 1 Thess 3:2). Paul does not mean to lord this over the Corinthians since he uses the same word to illustrate his relationship with them (2 Cor 1:24). Even so, in his apostolic vocation he is exclusively endowed for ministry (2 Cor 2:14; 3:4-6; 10:14; 12:11-12), and this heightens the obligation of the Corinthians to respond submissively. Coming as it does after 5:11-21, this appeal is perhaps the most direct and urgent of the entire epistle. Paul urges (5:20) the Corinthians not to receive the grace of God in vain (cf. Gal 2:2; Phil 2:16; 1 Thess 3:5). This phrase has been taken in two different ways. Some think that Paul warns the Corinthians so that their authentic reception of the gospel will not be without beneficial purpose.

4.0 Summary

Reconciliation in Christ is the basis of the gospel that reinvigorates believers into a new life and it is a continuous process. The hostility that created the gap between the church at Corinth and Paul has finally been resolved. Christ is seen as the mediator between man and God. The death of Christ requires that those who live should live not for themselves but for the one who died for them, which is the second Adam.

5.0 Conclusion

It is correct that "acceptance of the gospel is an action or state which continues. If this is established, Paul must be warning the Corinthians to think whether their acceptance of the gospel has been shallow and counterfeit. In other words, the offer and acceptance of God's grace is an ongoing process. The old order is past; the new order has dawned; and the opportunity for salvation must be grasped now, at the "acceptable time," during the "day of salvation." Paul thus applies Isaiah's oracle about the Servant and postexilic salvation to the gospel era of messianic salvation (cf. Isa 61:1-2 in Luke 4:19). Consequently, the Corinthians are participants in the age of opportunity, and this heightens their accountability to Paul's appeal. They must renew their original faith in the message and messenger of God's reconciliation. Their hostility to the messenger is tantamount to hostility to the message. Paul models God's reconciling activity by opening his heart to them, and they must respond (6:11-13).

Self-Assessment Exercises

1. What does mean by the metaphor of "Second Adam"?
2. How can God's wrath against sin be reconciled?

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UNIT 7: Pauline Concept of Sanctification

Contents

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- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Pauline theology of Sanctification
 - 3.2 The Agent of Sanctification
 - 3.3 Is Perfection Possible?

- 4.0 Summary
- 5.0 Conclusion
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1.0 Introduction

The doctrine of justification states that we can acquire Christ's righteousness. While this righteousness, which we possess, is a true righteousness, it is an alien righteousness. God has willed for us to be given this judicial standing of righteousness, but He has also willed for us to be made righteous in our nature. Millard Erickson said "sanctification is a process by which one's moral condition is brought into conformity with one's legal status before God." Sanctification is becoming in authenticity what we have already been declared to be in justification. Such an explanation is befitting of the Biblical data.

2.0 Objectives

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

- Describe the theology of sanctification as explained in Paul
- Enumerate the qualities of a believer who is sanctified
- Explain the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Pauline Doctrine of Sanctification

It asserted that sanctification and holiness are near equivalents theologically. Both words in their different forms are translated from the same Hebrew root meaning to "cut" or "separate," and the Greek word *hagiasmos*, denoting "consecration." The core notion of holiness, then, is taking apart and consecration to God (Leviticus 11:44). The Biblical concept of holiness is not primarily morality as evident. The use of the Hebrew word *qadash* in II Kings 23:7 depicts the accurate nature of the Hebrew root. It is said that Josiah "broke down the houses of the sodomites that were by the house of the Lord..." The word translated "sodomites" is *qadash*. The sodomites that lived beside the temple were for the purpose of sexual intercourse with those who came to worship. They are said to be holy because they were set aside to the service of temple prostitution.

Sanctification has both a negative and positive phase. Negatively it is separation from evil, and positively it is consecration to God and His holy character. It might be said that sanctification is the "growing emancipation from all evil, growing enrichment in all good." Time and again, in holiness movements the negative aspect of holiness is stressed over the positive aspect, or to its near elimination. The holiness and wrath of God are emphasized, along with the need for personal holiness and piety through prayer, Bible reading, witnessing, obedience to God's commands and shunning the socially intolerable behaviors on the master-sin-list of the local church. When sanctification is seen from this perspective holiness is distorted from the pursuit of the character of God, to mere averting behavior. Sanctification goes from being a responsible joy of the believer to a required preventative measure to keep away from the wrath of God and the denunciation of the church. Such a viewpoint of sanctification turns redemption into control and legalism.

The word of God undoubtedly indicates that believers are to practice holiness, which involves moral uprightness. Peter advised the church to practice holiness, quoting God's own command, "Be holy, for I am holy" (I Peter 1:15-16; cf. Leviticus 20:7). Paul advised the Corinthians to cleanse themselves from all dirtiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God (II Corinthians 7:1). We were chosen to be holy (Ephesians 1:4). The author of Hebrews strictly warned his Jewish addressees that holiness is an indispensable prerequisite for those who wish to see God (Hebrews 12:14). We are not to love the world: the lusts of the flesh, lusts of the eyes, and the pride of life (I John 2:15-16). Holiness not only concerns our external actions, but in addition affects our spirit (II Corinthians 7:1), mind (Romans 12:1-2), and thoughts (Philippians 4:8-9). The aspiration of the Christian life is to be transformed into the image of Christ (II Corinthians 3:18), into His likeness (Romans 8:29), to the measure of the stature of Christ's fullness (Ephesians 4:13), to put on the new man created in righteousness and holiness (Ephesians 4:24), and be partakers of God's holiness (Hebrews 12:10). Sanctification is the process of restoring of the image of God in man (Colossians 3:10).

Sanctification is both a finished action and a continuing process; positional and progressive. The Bible speaks of us as having been sanctified in the past (I Corinthians 1:2; 6:11; Hebrews 10:10, 29; I Peter 1:1-2), and even calls us saints (holy ones). Christ is said to have become our sanctification (I Corinthians 1:30). When we placed our faith in Him we were sanctified, or set apart to Him and from those who do not believe (Acts 26:18). Sanctification, like justification, is not a work of human value, but comes by faith in God. Sanctification is more so, seen as progressive and it is apparent from several passages. We are at present being sanctified by the Lord (Hebrews 2:11; 10:14). Believers are to go after holiness (Hebrews 12:14), and constantly cleanse themselves of the dirtiness of the flesh and spirit (II Corinthians 7:1). Believers are being made perfect in every good work by the Lord (Hebrews 13:21). Paul prayed that the Thessalonians would be sanctified entirely and preserved spotless at the coming of the Lord (I Thessalonians 5:23), and guaranteed the Philippian church that God would finish the work that He had begun in them (Philippians 1:6). Thus, sanctification is an eschatological work as it is justification concerning our past, present, and future.

3.2 The Agent of Sanctification

The word of God is obvious that sanctification is something we receive from God. Jesus Christ is sanctifying the church so that He can present it to Himself a glorious church without spot or wrinkle (Ephesians 5:26-27). It is the God of peace that sanctifies us (I Thessalonians 5:23), and by His grace teaches us to refute ungodliness and worldly lusts, living godly and sober lives (Titus 2:14). It is Christ, which works in us that which pleases Him (Hebrews 13:20-21; cf. II Corinthians 3:18; Philippians 2:13; II Thessalonians 2:13; Colossians 1:21). Paul told the Romans that they were to be transformed by the renewing of their mind. "Transformed" is a present passive, indicating that this was an action they were to passively accept, not one in which they were to actively hunt. However, in the preceding verse they were beseeched to offer their bodies to God as a living sacrifice in holiness (Romans 12:1), and a few verses afterward were enjoined to hate evil and cling to that which is good (Romans 12:9). Believers are instructed to degrade the deeds of the body (Romans 8:13), and to surrender ourselves to God in righteousness (Romans 6:13). These two Biblical perspectives are not opposing, but to a certain extent approving. God puts the desire to live right within man, and gives Him the capability to do so, but man must act upon God's inner working to make it effectual.

Several Christians have endeavored to make themselves holy solely in terms of human effort, abstinence, or the exercising of the human will. Whereas these human elements are part of the process of sanctification, those who practice such have mistaken principles for true holiness, divorcing the work of the Spirit from the works of man. Such is the core of legalism. Holiness is not attained simply by the exercising of the human will, abstinence, or self-control, for even unregenerate people can do so; but holiness is realized as the Spirit of God works His character and holiness into our lives, giving us the right desires and abilities so that we may be conformed to His image.

Many at times, sanctification fails to be a supportive endeavor between God and men, and the believer begins to work for his sanctification. Consequently, many Christians' holiness is not holiness in the proper sense of the word, but simple dead works, for the reason that they do not have God's holy Spirit working in them to achieve the end goal. This kind of "holiness" is little more than a dead, religious goodness, which has an ethical, moral, and social respectability provoked by the flesh, and not by the Spirit. It is often manifested in the undeclared doctrine of many church groups which says if you follow all the rules properly you will be reasonable.

3.3 Is Perfection Possible?

The argument on sanctification are hotly debated because in sanctification surrounds the idea of perfection. Is it possible to be completely sanctified in this life, living completely above sin? The response to this question has separated the Catholic, Wesleyan, Keswickian, and Pelagian theologies from Lutheranism, Reformed, and evangelical theologies. The Bible seems to give contradictory viewpoints. On the one hand we are told by Jesus, "Be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect (Matthew 5:48). Paul said the ministry was given until we come to a perfect man (Ephesians 4:13), and even prayed that the Thessalonians would be sanctified wholly (I Thessalonians 5:23). Although one is tempted when drawn away by their own lusts (James 1:14-15), God always makes a way for us to escape falling into the sin which temptation brings before us (I Corinthians 10:13). The Apostle John even declared that the one abiding in Christ does not sin (I John 3:6), and indeed cannot sin (I John 3:9).

While John gallantly acknowledged that believers do not sin, he as well affirmed in the same epistle, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us" (I John 1:8-10). Jesus, in the Lord's Prayer, told His disciples to pray, "Forgive us our sins" (Luke 11:4). In Romans 7 Paul used present tense verbs to illustrate his struggle with sinful desires, and even noted that he is, at times, overcome by them. He confessed that he is carnal and sold under sin (7:14), sin dwells in him (7:17, 20), no good thing dwells in his flesh (7:18), and that there is still a law of sin working in his members which wars against his mind which desires the good (7:21-23). at last, Paul confessed that he had not yet attained to that which God had apprehended him for, but sustained to struggle toward the prize (Philippians 3:12-14).

Are these two perspectives of Scripture opposing? It is not so because for "perfection" the word of God is to be understood in their context it can be seen that total moral perfection is not envisaged. Instantly after confessing that he had not yet attained (Philippians 3:12-14), Paul speaks of himself as being perfect (Philippians 3:15). The Greek *teleios*, translated as "perfect," refers to an end, completion, or maturity, not absolute perfection. When Jesus said to be perfect, He was not referring

to moral perfection, but spiritual maturity. John's words that believers do not and indeed cannot sin must also be understood in its context. The Greek word *poieo*, translated "commit" is in the present tense. This is a customary or habitual use of the present stressing a state of action that is habitual and ongoing. Believers are not characterized by continual sinful behavior, but this does not mean that they never display sinful behavior.

Romans 3:23 teach us that not only have all sinned, but that all (including saints) fall short of God's glory. "Fall short," or "come short" is also being used as a habitual present. Its syntactical force is that every human being continually falls short of God's glory. This does not mean that we constantly sin, but that none of us ever match up to God's perfect standards. Our only hope is to stand in Christ's perfect sanctification. The goal of the Christian life is spiritual maturity in this life, and moral perfection in the next level. Though moral perfection is something to which we strive by the grace of God, we shall never accomplish sinless perfection in this life.

4.0 Summary

In this study, the fact of the matter is that justification and sanctification are ideal compliments, not diametric opposites. To hold the two as theoretical opposites is to be bias to the Biblical data. Both are essential for the growth of the Christian life. It unveils how there is a relationship between grace and endeavor is evidenced by several NT passages. The same grace which brings salvation is the same grace which teaches us to refute ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present age (Titus 2:11-12). Our holy living is derived from, and reliant on the same grace that saved us. It is with grace that can we serve God with reverence and godly fear (Hebrews 12:28). Ephesians 2:1-10 wonderfully demonstrates the appropriate relationship between grace and works. Though good works cannot save us, good works will unavoidably flow from salvation.

God's grace and sanctification are both indispensable for a healthy Christian life. These two components can be theoretically labeled as dependence and discipline; reliance and effort. We rely on God's grace for our justification and sanctification, yet we also work together with God, exerting personal effort to achieve the goal of sanctification. God's grace is not just God's undeserved favor towards us in justification, but an impartation of ability whereby we are able to perform His will (Romans 12:3; I Corinthians 3:10; 15:10; Galatians 2:8; I Peter 4:10-11). God enables us to work, but He does not do the work for us. Justifying faith is passive, but sanctifying faith is active, working together with God's grace. God does not make our effort redundant, but rather makes it useful. Justification is once-for-all while sanctification is continuous.

When we relate to God based on our level of sanctification, we tend to feel that we cannot come before Him. Understanding that our acceptance in God's sight has been secured when we were initially justified gives us freedom to come before His throne of grace. Christ's righteousness is imputed to us by faith even before we begin to mortify the deeds of the body and separate ourselves to God and from sinful attitudes and behaviors. Understanding the acceptance, we were given in justification apart from sanctification should not lead one to see the latter as optional in the Christian life. It is not sufficient to know that we are received through faith in Christ, but we must also comprehend that we are set free from the dominion and bondage of sin through Christ. We cannot maintain the power of justification except we also admit the delivering power of sanctification. Sanctification, then, is not the prerequisite of our salvation and relationship with God, but the outflow of it (Ephesians 2:8-10). Grace and good

works must both be accentuated if we are to have a Biblical and practical Christianity. We must persist on grace, not as the *alternative* to good works, but as the *means* to good works.

On the other hand, we must persist on good works, not as the *alternative* to grace, but as the result of grace. Justification is only one aspect in our spiritual liveliness, not the totality. It alone does not cause full spiritual health. We also need a revelation of God's holiness and personal progress in sanctification to escape suffering in other areas. As Martin Luther has said, "We are saved by faith alone, but the faith that saves is never alone." Although our relationship with God is recognized by faith and justification, it is advanced by sanctification. A believer should pursue holiness in light of our acceptance before God, not for our reception.

5.0 Conclusion

Sanctification does incur a moral change in us, but not moral perfection, and not a perfection of the will. Those who advocate the perfection of the will in holiness fall into the trap of basing salvation on the will of man in conforming to the law of God, and not in the grace of God and our union with Christ. The Scripture is very clear that our salvation comes as a result of our union with Christ, whereby we receive His righteousness and life. Salvation is not based off of works, although good works will necessarily flow from salvation. If salvation is a matter of our will always obeying God's moral character, then none of us are saved. God's law is weak because of the flesh (Romans 8:3). It gives us the right requirements, but mankind does not have the ability to keep it (Romans 7). We may have the right desire to do so, but cannot apart from the Spirit (Romans 7:18—8:17). The human will can never achieve our sanctification. Only by the incarnation could sin be condemned, and we could be given power over it (Romans 8:3). Our holiness is rooted in Christ's holiness, our union with Him, and our cooperation with His leading to become in practice what we were acknowledged to be in justification.

Self-Assessment Exercises

1. What is sanctification in according to Pauline corpus?
2. How can sanctification be a finished action and still a continuing process?

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MODULE 3

Unit 1: The Resurrection of Christ and the Resurrection of Believers 1

Contents

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1.0 Introduction

This unit focuses on Paul's idea of resurrection in his eschatology. We have some perspective from our own work, so we can appreciate that Paul does this not so much by talking about the kingdom, but Paul does what Ridderbos says he does by focusing on those events, which are decisive in the coming of the kingdom of God. He does that in terms of the diagram for the staging or phases of the coming of the kingdom, looking back on the events of Christ's death and resurrection, and looking forward to His coming again. The center of Paul's theology is the fulfillment that has taken place in Christ; his eschatology, his kingdom outlook is Christ-eschatology. Even more specifically, the focus is the death and resurrection of Christ. They are not isolated events, but the cross and resurrection in context, in their broad redemptive-historical context, in their eschatological significance.

2.0 Objectives

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Explore Paul's understanding of the resurrection of Christ in the eschatological frame.
- Explain the dynamics of Christ's resurrection and our future resurrection.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 The Resurrection of Christ and the Resurrection of Believers

Remember how well 1 Cor. 15:3, 4 pointed that up. Let's not lose sight that the cross and resurrection are inseparable; the one is unintelligible without the other. Or as Calvin puts it already at a point in the Institutes (2:16:13), a reference to the cross alone or to the resurrection alone is synecdochic, by which he means that for a biblical writer to speak of the cross without any explicit reference to the resurrection is to be at the same time speaking of the resurrection, and vice versa. I stress that in the interest not of downplaying the significance of the death of Christ, but to focus on the resurrection. I do that here for what are essentially pragmatic reasons. But pragmatic reasons of a rather broad sort, and pragmatic reasons of substance. To put things in a certain historical context, we can say that in the area of soteriology, the theological tradition of the Western church, and I'm including Roman Catholicism as well as the Reformation, so this is a very broad perspective now, the tendency has concentrated heavy and almost exclusive attention on the *death* of Christ. And that has been especially true since the time of Anselm in the 11th C. Especially since then, in this Western vein, the atonement and the work of Christ have been virtually synonymous.

Accordingly, we may observe further that debate over the salvation accomplished by Christ has concentrated on His death and its significance. And the church has been intent on making clear that in

the death of Christ, he is not simply an example--simply an ennobling, inspiring, challenging model. He is certainly that, but not just that. But beginning with Anselm, the concern has been that the death is a *real* atonement, that substitutionarily satisfies divine justice, to propitiate and remove God's just wrath. The concern has especially been to keep clear that the death of Christ is a *penal substitution*. In drawing attention to this development, you will appreciate that it is not at all my interest to challenge the validity or necessity of these conclusions, of this development and certainly not the conclusions that were reached. With that point made clearly, that the non-negotiables of the Pauline gospel are involved, I do want to point out what appears to have happened: in this dominating preoccupation with the death of Christ in the area of soteriology, *the resurrection has tended to be eclipsed*; more specifically, the doctrinal or theological significance of the resurrection has tended to be overlooked.

All too frequently, the resurrection has been considered exclusively in terms of its apologetic or evidential value, as a stimulus to Christian faith, as it supports faith in Christ. Again, the resurrection does that; it does have profound evidential significance. But in the case of Paul, seeing the resurrection of Christ only in its evidential significance, that oversight is an especially impoverishing thing to Paul's teaching. He is *intent* on bringing out just that significance of the resurrection, pointedly, the doctrinal (and more specifically, the soteriological) meaning of the resurrection. We have substantial materials that we may aptly refer to as Paul's resurrection theology--teaching to which he addresses questions that may fairly be put like the following:

- What is the redemptive efficacy of Christ's resurrection? What is the *saving* efficiency, specifically, of the resurrection?
- How is Christ's resurrection integral to our salvation?
- Or in other terms, what more specifically is the significance of Christ's resurrection for the history of redemption?

Now that sets the direction, we want to go further in our work here; they set the framework, the context, in which we come to develop and address things in such a way. The question we have to deal with is: How is resurrection central to our salvation?

3.2 The Unity of Christ's Resurrection and Believers' Resurrection

The basic format will be to look at various passages. But before we come to the first one let me just say this: As I have just been indicating, our concern in this section is how the teaching of Paul makes central the resurrection of Christ. It might then seem odd, even questionable, that the first thing we do, at the outset, we bring into the picture the resurrection of the believer. Doesn't this involve a blurring of our focal point? Ought we not first to consider Christ's resurrection, and then go on to the resurrection of believers? As a matter of fact, however, as we move into the Pauline materials, nothing is more fundamental to Paul's understanding of the resurrection of Jesus--nothing is more basic as he teaches about the resurrection of Christ than this: just as we deal with the resurrection of Christ in its historical particularity, then we are (and what Paul does) to bring into view the close connection, the solidarity, the *unity* that exists, between Christ and believers in resurrection. That we can see most clearly as we look at our first passage.

1 Cor 15:20:

Now Christ has been raised from the dead, firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

What is of concern to us is the description of Christ as firstfruits, and it is a description of Christ as resurrected. Nowhere in Paul is the unity that we are concerned for expressed more pointedly and clearly, and even strikingly, as you have it here. It is the word *aparche* that is of particular interest here. Johannes Weiss says that this little word contains a thesis. James Barr would not like the semantics of that statement, but the word as it functions here in context does involve implicit in the use of the word, the thought that underlies the entire argument here in 1 Cor. 15, which is the great epochal chapter on the resurrection. And it is not too much to say that this passage is largely representative of Paul's teaching on the resurrection as a whole. *Aparche* is by vintage an agricultural term; it has the sense then of "first-fruits." It has an OT background, and there in the OT has cultic significance, as the firstfruits language refers to those sacrifices that are brought each year at the beginning of harvest time. Cf. Ex 23:19 and Lev 23:10, 11. Thus particularly with that OT background, what the term does is to bring into view the initial portion of the harvest, the first installment of the whole harvest. But in doing that, the term is not only an indication of temporal priority, of what comes first in time, because the notion of organic connection, of the unity is quite apparent and essential. The unity is of the part and the whole. That is what the firstfruits sacrifice entails. The initial quantity is brought into view in the sacrifice only as it is a part of the whole, as it is inseparable from the whole harvest, and in that sense is *representative* of the whole harvest, to acknowledge that the whole harvest is from God. Paul is saying that the resurrection of Christ and of believers cannot be separated because Christ's resurrection is the firstfruits of the resurrection harvest. The firstfruits imply the harvest. You can see that more explicitly in v. 23. (It is important to remember that in this chapter, and particularly in this statement, it is the resurrection of the believer that is in view. The resurrection of the unbeliever is not in Paul's sights here; it is not in the purview of the passage (which is true nonetheless as seen in 1 Thess). So, to say that Christ's resurrection is the firstfruits of the final resurrection as it includes unbelievers is to push this passage beyond what it says. This passage is a soteriological affirmation. This is not to say that Paul would deny the resurrection of unbelievers. In Acts 24:15 in his appearing before Felix, he clearly affirms a resurrection of unbelievers, both of the just and the unjust. The resurrection harvest, then, is that of Christ and believers.) Therefore, we need to get the full impact of what Paul is saying. It doesn't go far enough, at least for Paul, to say that Christ's resurrection is the *guarantee* of our resurrection. That is true, but doesn't go far enough if we are thinking of a decreed connection between the two, or because Christ has promised. Rather, what Paul is saying here is that Christ's resurrection is a guarantee of our resurrection in the sense that it is nothing less than the representative, actual beginning of the general epochal event (as Vos puts it). Paul is saying here that the general resurrection begins with the resurrection of Christ. Consequently, as we might envisage it here, to make a point, if we had Paul as an invited speaker at a prophecy conference, and we were to ask Paul when the general resurrection of believers would take place, he would say that it has already begun to take place. In Christ's resurrection, the resurrection harvest becomes a visible reality; the entire harvest-resurrection becomes visible and we will see that in 15:42ff. Hence, we can draw two conclusions then from this passage:

First, we can see very clearly here the eschatological significance for Paul of the resurrection. It is not just an isolated event in the past. It is of course has taken place in the past, at a point in history past, no question about that. But as he sees the resurrection here, it is not so much an event in the past, but rather as a past event, it points us to the future, and even has come from the future into the present. It has invaded history from the future. So, when according to the NT does the kingdom come, and is

eschatology inaugurated? You could make a case for the incarnation, and the Jordan baptism of Jesus. But certainly, what the apostle accents is that it is specifically in the resurrection of Christ that the age to come begins, that the new creation dawns, which the eschatology inaugurates. It has pride of place, we could say, without wanting to do anything toward the insignificance of the death of Christ.

Secondly, the unity that is between Christ and believers in resurrection, the solidarity between Christ and His bodily resurrection and the future bodily resurrection of believers. We can make a parallel point to the broader observation we have made about the day of the Lord, the Parousia of the messiah. According to Paul, as we look at the resurrection and our future bodily resurrection, these are not so much two events they are two episodes of the same event, temporally distinct, to be sure, the one having taken place 2000 years ago, and the other historically future, but they are the same event essentially. *They are the beginning and the end of the same harvest.*

1 Cor. 15:12-19

Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? [13] But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. [14] And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. [15] We are even found to be misrepresenting ("false witnesses of") God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. [16] For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. [17] And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. [18] Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. [19] If in this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied ("pitiable").

Inseparable Resurrection

Here in these verses we encounter the same notion of unity, not only present, but also as controlling the argument. In this segment, Paul has not yet come to v. 20, the affirmation, the ringing declaration highlighted by the "but now." So, he is arguing hypothetically--and doing that as he anticipates the point he is going to make in v. 20. (The validity of the vv 1-19 argument rests on the truth of v 20.) If the resurrection of Christ is true, then the resurrection of the believer can't be questioned (v.12). Notice that the argument can move in the converse, v. 15. If there is no resurrection of the dead, then neither is Christ raised. We then are found to be false witnesses of God, because we testify of God that He raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. The denial of the future resurrection of the believer implies a denial of the resurrection of Christ. How can Paul argue that way? He can, because he is operating with a certain assumption, a certain supposition that he will affirm in v. 20. That is the assumption that the two resurrections are so intimately related, so inextricably connected, that the one is given with the other. The one is inseparable from the other. Even though as we have seen, Paul can argue both ways, from Christ's to ours, and ours to His resurrection, nevertheless the primary direction of the argument lies not as we might think, from Christ's to ours, but from ours to the resurrection of Christ. That I would take to be an indication of just how firm and just how close a bond he sees to exist between the two. He sees the two resurrections not so much as separate occurrences, as they are two episodes of a single event, the same harvest event. To Agrippa, Paul says, "Why is it so incredible that God raises the dead." "That's the foundation of my whole ministry" (so Paul might say). We see that here.

Col. 1:18

And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might have preeminence.

Our concern is the expression "firstborn from among the dead." This expression, the whole unit, expresses virtually the same thought as the firstfruits of 1 Cor. 15:20. But immediately we should see that firstborn by itself does not bring out the element of organic connection in the same way the word "firstfruits" does. The thought is plainly this: the solidarity or unity of Christ with the dead; there is those dead, plural, and out of that group of the dead, *ek nekron*, Christ is *prototokos*. It is not the indiscriminate dead, but particularly the dead believers, those who are to be raised as Christ is *prototokos*. From that group He is the firstborn.

Prototokos is not to be understood in the sense, in which it is often taken, that the resurrection of Christ and others is being likened to a birth-process. We should not focus on the literalness of the *tokos* component of the word. Rather, the term has a derivative sense, a sense that it already has in the OT particularly as we look at the LXX usage of it. There the term connotes or has reference to special dignity, to exalted status, to supremacy. Ex. 4:22, Israel is the firstborn as a nation. In v. 15 Christ is referred to *prototokos tes ktiseos*, firstborn of all creation. If you imply the literal sense there, that would give the suggestion that Christ is the first creature, which the Jehovah's Witnesses emphasize from this passage. But to call Christ *prototokos tes ktiseos* is to indicate his status, His supremacy over the creation that all things are made through Him. Here in v. 18 the term is to be understood in connection with the arche, the preceding designation, which likewise in the background of the LXX, is not only of temporal priority, but denotes headship, and origin. The two together bring to the thought that the general resurrection begins with the resurrection of Christ. That is confirmed by other descriptions in the context, Christ as *head* of the church *body*. We can put it this way: *prototokos* indicates the uniqueness of Christ, the prepositional phrase "from the dead" brings out the solidarity, his representation with that group, the one with the many. *Prototokos* expresses the uniqueness of Christ; *ek ton nekron* brings out his solidarity with believers.

We could draw a quick connection to the other occurrence of this term *prototokos* in the description of Christ, in Rom. 8:29: "For those whom he foreknew he also predestined conformable to the image of his Son, in order that he might be firstborn among many brothers." We are bound to remember that it is specifically as Christ is resurrected that He is firstborn among many brothers, dead brothers who will be resurrected as He is resurrected. It is specifically as resurrected, and that as the omega-past tense of predestination. His being firstborn is connected here to our being made in His image, and the contrast between the image of the earthly and the image of the heavenly. Firstborn and image are correlative ideas. Cf. down in v 42, as we have borne the image of the earthly one, so we will bear the image of the resurrected one. These considerations linking Christ and believers are focused specifically to the linking of believers to the *resurrected* Christ.

2 Cor. 4:14 / 1 Thess. 4:14

2 Cor. 4:14 "knowing that the one who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence."

1 Thes. 4:14 "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, so also God will bring those who have fallen asleep through Jesus with him."

Just to read them is enough in light of what we have said. Again, the connection of Christ in His resurrection with believers, and that includes the very comforting thought that believers died through that bond with Jesus.

Eph 2:5-6, Col 2:12-13; 3:1; Rom 6:4ff; Gal. 2:20

Eph 2:5-6 (ESV) "even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ, by grace you have been saved and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus," Eph 2:1-10 (BNT) Eph 2:1-10 (ESV) "And you were dead in the trespasses and sins [2] in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— [3] among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. [4] But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, [5] even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ by grace you have been saved [6] and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, [7] so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. [8] For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, [9] not a result of works, so that no one may boast. [10] For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."

The verses that we have examined so far, they stress strictly speaking the connection between Christ's resurrection and the believers' future bodily resurrection. But in order to get the full picture, it is necessary to bring in another line of teaching, and now those verses, where Paul speaks of the resurrection of believer in the past tense, in the aorist, where he speaks of believers having already been raised with Christ. He assumes that it has already happened. We need to reflect on how we are to understand this past dimension, this past resurrection. It has often been maintained that in saying this, what is in view, there is our involvement with Christ at the time-point of His resurrection, our solidarity with Christ in His resurrection, in the sense that Christ was raised for us, that our own resurrection is in view in His resurrection as He is our *representative*, our substitute on the cross. Now, no doubt there is an element of truth in viewing things this way; that is certainly true. We go wrong to eliminate that point from Paul's language. But I want to note in these references another aspect that comes into view that is most important not to miss, *crucial* in fact to Paul's teaching on the resurrection. That is to say that as we look at these occurrences, what Paul is referring to is not merely an involvement at the time point of Christ's resurrection as He was our representative, that He was raised for us, but is also and even primarily to an involvement that we can describe as experiential or existential. What Paul is referring to is resurrection as it has taken place in the actual life-history of the individual believer.

4.0 Summary

Now some grounds for that conclusion, for viewing things that way:

You were raised and seated in the heavenlies in Christ. What Paul affirms here, that God made alive and raised, is that it took place precisely when we were dead in our trespasses and sins. A controlling idea in the Eph 2 passage is the believers' walk, their way of life. Their former walk in transgressions and sins, and the passage closes with an indication of their new walk, as they have been created in Christ Jesus for good works, that we should walk in them. This is the new creation walk in Christ. There is a stark contrast of its good works to the former walk in transgressions and sins. The question is what explains this transition, this radical reversal in walk or way of life, these 180 degrees turnabout in actual conduct. The answer to that is right in the middle of the passage, the pivot around which everything turns. What explains this turnaround in walk is in v 6: God having raised us up, made us alive, and seated us in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus. This is what explains the change in conduct, in walk--that they have already been resurrected in Christ. This then highlights the existential dimension of resurrection in Christ. Also, in Col. 2:12, we are raised in connection with faith. It is something that has taken place by faith. This has happened in the actual life-history of believers. In Col. 3 and Rom. 6, what we discover there is that the past resurrection that is affirmed for the believer is not only the motive, but in fact the *basis*, the dynamic, for individual obedience and holy living. It is interesting that in these contexts, Paul is talking about baptism. What Paul says in Rom. 6, that we have been raised with Christ. To speak of our having been raised is to speak of a personal change, a personal transformation.

5.0 Conclusion

We want to conclude, at least initially here, in light of what we have been saying here, when Paul says we have been raised with Christ, or God has raised you with Christ, the resurrection in view is *real, actual, existential*. It is not merely in principle, as it is sometimes said, but it is an actual experience. When Paul speaks as he does in this past usage, the primary reference is to the *application* of salvation, not its once for all accomplishment. Even though the application is tied to its once-for-all accomplishment, the language is the language of *historia salutis*, but the reality in view involves *ordo salutis*. Three factors have to be taken into account, as we assess and take in Paul's teaching on resurrection unity. The first is the resurrection of Christ in the garden of Joseph, 3 days after the crucifixion, the actual event of the resurrection of Christ. The inception of the Christian life is the believer's initial experience of salvation, what happens as they have been rescued and are taken out of trespasses and sins. What takes place at the beginning of a believer's Christian life and the future of bodily resurrection of believers?

Self-Assessment Exercises

- i. Explain how the resurrection of Christ defines the goal of eschatology.
- ii. What is the connection between the resurrection of Christ and the resurrection of believers?
- iii. Explain Paul's idea of Christ as the firstfruits among the dead.

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Unit 2: The Resurrection of Christ and the Resurrection of Believers 2

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- 6.0 References/Further Readings

1.0 Introduction

This section continues the discussion on the nature of the resurrection. Here we shall deal with the issue of terminology: What language should we use to express this distinction of our resurrection between already and not yet? One is the bodily and non-bodily resurrection; what has already taken place is not bodily.

2.0 Objectives

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Distinguish between external and internal, the invisible and visible resurrection in reference to Christ's return.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 The Nature of the Resurrection Involved

Now keeping in view, the *organic connection* between these elements, we may express the basic control or structure of Paul's teaching on the resurrection as follows: the unity of the resurrection of Christ and the resurrection of believers is such that the resurrection of believers consists of two episodes in the experience of the individual believer. One that is past, that has already been realized, and one that is still future, yet to be realized. Notice how the formal structure of the apostle's eschatology, the overlap of the two *aeons*, is reflected in his teaching on the fundamental eschatological occurrence, what is the fundamental eschatological reality for the believer, that is the resurrection. *You can't get more eschatological than the resurrection.* That formal structure of already-not-yet is reflected in the specific matter of the resurrection. Both these aspects of the believer's experience are integrally related to each other. We can't envision the one without the other. In turn they are integrally related to the resurrection of Christ; it is all one big, grand resurrection harvest. We can say that Jesus' own resurrection *refracts itself* into the experience of the believer in a twofold fashion. But when I put it that way, we need to always keep in view that we do not mean to blur the spatiotemporal distinction between all three occurrences. We must not compromise actual spatiotemporal, historical distinctiveness. We want to guard against Barth's idea of *Geschichte*. His understanding of history is not Paul's. That is the idea that the meaning of history is dialectically beyond history, and hinges on history in a tangential fashion, and eliminates all distinctions between redemption accomplished and redemption applied, and the state of humiliation and exaltation. Our salvation is not a-historical or supra-historical.

Let me say finally then that in view of the stress we have been seeing on the unity that exists between Christ and His people in His resurrection, in the passivity of Christ, for Paul, the primary significance of Jesus' resurrection does not lie where we find the difference between Christ and His people. Paul does not see the resurrection especially as display of Jesus' true deity. Rather, the primary significance of the resurrection for Paul is found in terms of what He and His people have in common, genuine

humanity. The resurrection is not so much an evident display of Christ's divinity, it is rather the vindication of the incarnate Christ, Christ's vindication in His suffering, His obedience unto death. And with that, the resurrection is the powerful transformation of His humanity. *Something happened* to Jesus in his resurrection. It brings into existence for the first time a humanity that previously did not exist, a glorified, exalted humanity. So, the resurrection is the constitution of Christ as the firstborn among many brothers. It is the constitution of Christ as the image, the *eikon*, so that He might be the firstborn from among many brothers. The believers will be conformed to this image--the same form. The resurrection for Paul has an Adamic character, His resurrection in His identity as last Adam or second man. Thus, on balance, we could put it this way: the resurrection for Paul is a thoroughly messianic event. Not just representative with respect to his deity, but constitutive as human identity. And it is messianic as is His suffering and death. It is just as much representative and vicarious as are His suffering and death. 2 Cor. 5:15, "the one who died and was raised for them."

It is important to understand that the bodily and non-bodily resurrection has to be approached with caution because both have visible consequences. Others again have proposed: secret and open. Another distinction not mentioned yet which is sometimes used is not helpful and probably should be rejected because it is misleading between spiritual and physical/bodily. If we use the word spiritual as we should, in a biblical sense, as referring to the Holy Spirit, then there is no problem with saying the resurrection that has already taken place is "Spiritual," capital "S," the work of the Spirit; but the problem that comes in here is that the future physical bodily resurrection is just as Spiritual, no less Spiritual. So, if we asked Paul, what would he say? He would turn us to 2 Cor. 4:16.

2 Cor. 4:16 (ESV) *"Therefore we do not lose hope. But even if our outer self is undergoing decay, our inner self is being renewed day by day."*

Here Paul is making an important anthropological distinction between the inner man and outer man, so that inner and outer would be a way of keeping fairly close to Paul's language to distinguish the two aspects of our resurrection. (Cf. Ridderbos, 114-121.) One member of this distinction occurs in Rom. 7:22 and Eph. 3:16. It is not intended to compartmentalize man, as if we are made of two parts, or compartments. But rather, the distinction here is *aspectual* rather than, strictly speaking, partitive; these are aspects, ways of looking at who I am as a believer. So that the inner man would be what Paul has in view when he speaks elsewhere, correlatively, of *the heart*. That seems to be, that brings into view, me at my motivating center, me for who I am at the core of my being deeper than my functions, my thinking, my doing. So that Paul is saying so far as I am an inner man, my truest, deepest self, I have already been raised. It is at the root of the renewal that the believer has already experienced. But so far as I am an outer man, or what Paul will usually refer to correlatively as *soma*, the body, or *melle*, members, viewing the body as a functioning composite of parts. The functioning me is undergoing corruption; so far as I am that outer man I am still to be raised. Always keep in view regarding inner and outer self that the *whole me* has hope. There is not a kind of schizophrenia going on here. Therefore, we should appreciate the full impact of what Paul brings us to consider from a passage like this, and the others we have been looking at: If you are a believer in Christ, you will never be more resurrected than you are at the core of your being. That is not just an analogy, or a figurative way of speaking. That is of course true only as we exist bodily, only as we have an outer man. So, the principle holding things together here is that this is true only in the body, that the inner man, but it is not yet true for the body. What is true *in* the body is not yet true *for* the body. I think that anthropological distinction opens up a great deal of Paul's teaching.

Confirmation: We want to bring out and make explicit something that has only been implicit thus far. This is confirmed in Paul's statements. There is a pattern found in Paul's statements:

Christ is the direct object of *egeiro* God is the subject, of the verb *egeiro* in the active. So Rom 10:9. And sampling here, cf. 1 Cor. 15:15, Acts 13:30, 37. God raised Christ. Correlatively, Jesus can be the object of the participial subject, the one who raised Jesus from the dead. Cf. Rom 4:24; Col 2:12. So far as the subject is concerned here, *ho theos*, the reference is more specifically to *ho pater*, the father, who raises Christ Jesus from the dead. Cf. Gal 1:1; cf. Eph 1:17, 20, 1 Thess 1:9, 10.

Or, the verb is in the passive, with Christ as subject. Approximately half of the references to the resurrection in Paul are in this category. It can be aorist passive, as in Rom 4:25 and 2 Cor 5:15--"was raised." Or it can be perfect, as in 1 Cor 15:20 and 2 Tim. 2:8--"raised from the dead." (It can be middle as well as passive when it is in the perfect, but there is no question here of a middle sense, because of the first pattern we see of the active, that God is the subject, Jesus the object. It can have an intransitive active sense (he rose), but here it is a truly transitive active force that the verb has.)

4.0 Summary

So, to summarize, as we look at Paul's passing, undeveloped references to Jesus' resurrection, we can notice two things in it. 1) It is God in His specific identity as the Father who raises Jesus, and 2) correlatively, Jesus is passive in His resurrection. And this is a viewpoint that is held consistently without exception by Paul. Nowhere does Paul say that Christ was active or contributed in His resurrection, or that Jesus raised Himself. To put it provocatively, Paul does not teach that Jesus *rose* from the dead, but that Jesus *was raised* from the dead in a passive sense. The stress everywhere is on the creative, enlivening power of the Father, through the Holy Spirit, of which Christ is the recipient, the beneficiary. What is the theological significance? We can connect this with what we have already seen to be Paul's central controlling conception, the unity of Christ's resurrection and the resurrection of believers. His being raised passively evidences His identification with those who slept. He is the beginning. This passive language reflects His solidarity with the dead as he is firstborn.

5.0 Conclusion

How do we relate this to statements of Jesus such as John 2:19? "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up." Future active indicative of *egeiro*. He was talking about His body, looking toward His own resurrection. He was active in His resurrection. Or more fully in 10:17-18: "I lay down my life in order that I may take it again. No one takes it from me.... I have the power to lay it down, and the power to take it again." Very definite, forceful active assertion. These statements in Paul are not in conflict but are *complementary*. Here is where the church's formulations as at Chalcedon becomes very helpful. (Cf. 451.) *Anything that is true of either of Christ's natures is true of Christ as a person*. The controlling substructure of NT revelation expressed in the creed is that the two natures exist without confusion, but without separation. What is true of one of the two natures may be affirmed about the person. Paul is looking at Jesus' resurrection in reference to his *Adamic identity* (what is true in reference to His true humanity, his identification with humanity). In John, Jesus is affirming what is true in reference to His true deity (what is true in his identification with the Father). We may affirm both that Jesus rose from the dead, and that He was raised from the dead.

Self-Assessment Exercises

- i. Explain how the resurrection of Christ was a powerful transformation of his person.
- ii. Explain the nature of our solidarity with Christ in his death and resurrection.

6.0 References/Further Readings

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Unit 3: The Place of the Holy Spirit in Eschatology

Contents

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objective
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 The Work of the Holy Spirit
- 4.0 Summary

- 5.0 Conclusion
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1.0 Introduction

This unit exposes the student to Paul's view of the Holy Spirit in the eschatological dawn. The relationship between the work of the Holy Spirit and Christ's resurrection is explored. In this connection Christ has been juxtaposed with Adam. This is as a result of the work of the Holy Spirit by which Christ also became the life-giving Spirit. The Holy Spirit is involved in the resurrection of Christ and of believers.

2.0 Objective

By the end of this unit, you are should be able to:

- Explain the core redemptive work of the Holy Spirit.
- Discuss the nature of the resurrection work of the Holy Spirit.
- Explain the contrast between the first and second Adam

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Christ and the Holy Spirit (*Historia Salutis*)

What we have established in section B is the unity between Christ and believers in His resurrection. C focuses on Christ, and D on the Christian life, in this resurrection. What it meant for Christ personally, what it meant for Him, for Jesus Himself to pass through and experience resurrection, we see as Paul highlights best, as we explore the relationship between Christ and the Holy Spirit.

1 Cor 15:45:

"The last Adam became life-giving Spirit."

Note the deliberate antithetical parallelisms. This is a contrast between this present aion and the aion to come; that is the controlling structure, even if that language is not there.

42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable body, it is raised an imperishable body; 43 it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; 44 it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. 45 So also it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living soul." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. 46 However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural; then the spiritual. 47 The first man is from the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven. 48 As is the earthy, so also are those who are earthy; and as is the heavenly, so also are those who are heavenly. 49 And just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

We are concerned with the statement that the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit. We can proceed here in focusing on that statement by answering two key questions. First, what is the meaning by *pneuma zoopoion*, and secondly, there is a time question. Paul doesn't merely say that there *is* such a

life-giving Spirit, but that Christ *became* a life-giving Spirit. There is a point in time at which this occurred; so, *when* did He become a life-giving Spirit? The answer to the first is the Holy Spirit, and to the second is the resurrection.

Paul's Opposition (v 35): I can imagine how you could wonder how Christ became the Holy Spirit, and how Paul could mean this. What is the meaning of *zoopoion*? The context we read is a unit, vv 42-49. As Murray said, here we have one of the most striking and significant rubrics in all of Scripture. But we can only treat this briefly. (From a Systematic Theological Perspective, it really does touch on just about every subject--and in a decisive way.) We should look back at v 35, where we have an earlier transition point, what opens up the discussion at the end of the chapter. V 35 raises two questions: *how* are the dead raised, and with *what sort of* body do they come? There is a double question here; a question as to the *pos*, the how, the mode, of the coming resurrection, and the *poio*, the nature of the resurrection body. These questions are posed by opponents (we can say from earlier in the ch), and as such they were probably raised in a somewhat derisive fashion, and I say that in view of the sharpness of Paul's reply: one word, "fool," without qualification. I think this will be a place to say something about this opposition; some things are clear, others lead into gray areas. Surely their opposition centers in a denial of the future bodily resurrection. Where things are less clear is where you try to determine the exact nature or grounds of that denial. If you look back at v. 12, "Now if Christ is preached, that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?" so between Paul and his opponents, there is a formal agreement that Christ has been raised. But beyond this there has been quite a diversity of opinion as to how the position of this opposition should be understood. You can observe that this is a believer Paul is responding to.

However, there is a fairly wide consensus, with which I would identify, that Paul has in view some form of belief controlled by a pagan Hellenistic dualism, that involves a depreciation of the body as part of the material of existence; a depreciation of the material aspect of reality, as not being reality, and more pointedly, the body. It is probably a proto-Gnostic type of error which makes a sharp division even an opposition in Christology, between the Christ in the present as a spiritual (heavenly) being in the sense of immaterial, a being with which Christians now are substantially identified, identified in substance, which carries with it a depreciation of the earthly, bodily historical Jesus of the past as having no significance for Christian faith. Accordingly, what this view involved is spiritualization in the sense of an immaterialization. And the believer's resurrection is seen as spiritual in the sense of being immaterial. The resurrection then is entirely what has already happened to the believer, in his regeneration. The true self, the spiritual essence has already been brought to perfection, and has in fact become part of the pneumatic Christ. So, on this view the body has no positive significance; it can either be suppressed or abused, or it can be indulged, in various forms of licentiousness. We can even go on here to speculate or suggest that Paul is dealing with a distortion of his own teaching, as we have been considering it in Rom 6 and Eph. 2, where Paul taught that believers have *already been raised* with Christ. So, there's a one-sided misuse of Paul resulting in drastic error. It may be then akin to the position of these individuals in 2 Tim. 2:17-18, Hymenaeus and Meletus, that they were upsetting the faith of some by saying that the resurrection has already taken place. Ridderbos' chapter on the resurrection is helpful here. But whatever prompts Paul's sharp reply in v 35, Paul takes up these two questions, and treats them as a single compound question, that structures the discussion to the end of Ch. 15.

The Meaning of *Pneumatikon* (vv 42-49)

As you could see from our reading, in v. 42 Paul begins to reason antithetically, reflecting the antithesis of the two ages. That becomes clear as you move toward the latter part of the passage, v. 47, where he uses specifically cosmological language. He describes the resurrection, eschatological body of believers, and contrasts that with the pre-resurrection, pre-eschatological body of believers. The resurrection body is marked by incorruption, glory, power; in contrast, the pre-resurrection body, decay, dishonor, weakness. So that when he comes to v. 44, he is providing a summary description of the two bodies, an all-embracing designation, looking for a one-word description of the pre-resurrection body, *psukikon*, natural, with reference to the creation, and with reference to what has happened in the fall. The one-word description of the resurrection body he uses is *pneumatikon*. Here particularly with reference to the question controlling our discussion, we see that *pneumatikon* has reference to the Holy Spirit. It is to be rendered "Spiritual," with reference to the activity of the Holy Spirit. It is helpful to think with a capital S. To put it negatively, then, to distance from some misunderstandings that have been fairly pervasive in the history of the church, the adjective here is not anthropological, not referring to the human spirit, not a body associated with the human spirit. This is the view that is taken by Charles Hodge in his commentary, who speaks here of the body "adapted to *pneuma*, understood as the rational, immortal principle in man." I think there are contextual reasons that argue against that understanding; nor does the adjective have a *compositional* sense, as if spiritual describes the material of which the resurrection body is made of. That would imply that the body is made up of an immaterial spirit-substance, involving then a denial of the truly physical character of the resurrection body, which is to deny the resurrection of the body, which scripture and Paul teach. However, the reference here is referring to the Holy Spirit.

For one thing, we could point up here that *pneumatikon* is contrasted, juxtaposed, with *psukikon*. Now what needs to be observed here further is that in the NT, and more broadly, early Christian writing up to the period of the apostolic fathers, this contrast is found only in Paul, and in only one other place in Paul, which is elsewhere in this same letter, back in 1 Cor. 2:14-15. The distinction between *anthropos psukikos* and *pneumatikos*. At least so far as the body of Christian literature, the rest of the NT and the first extrabiblical materials, this is a distinctively Pauline usage, and is rather specialized, one which he is rather deliberately employing. These categories could be found widely employed across Gnostic materials beyond the time of the NT, and that raises the question of that background; what is happening here is that Paul is taking those Gnostic categories and is using them to make a decidedly anti-Gnostic point. When you look back in 2:14-15, the contrast that is there between natural person (or "man") and spiritual person, is in a context where the stress is on the Holy Spirit, His activity, and the necessity of His activity in revelation. So, I would say that clearly in the Ch. 2 context, *pneumatikos* there has reference to the Holy Spirit. Consequently, Spiritual person is that in the sense of *one who is indwelt, taught, motivated by the Holy Spirit*. There is also something that comes close to Paul's antithesis when you look in Jude 19, where he talks about those who are *psukikoi*, and then he describes them as "not having the Spirit." And this is to describe them as unbelievers in their worldly-mindedness, those who follow their natural instincts, and do not have the Spirit of God. Thus, in effect this would point up a reference to the Holy Spirit. We do find this adjective in a number of places in Paul, though not in contrast to *psukikon*. In Paul it clearly and consistently refers to the Holy Spirit and His work. The only exception is in Eph. 6:12, where Paul talks about "the spirituals of evil in the heavens." Pointing to the spiritual dimension of the opposition to the believer. That would not bear against seeing the reference in Ch. 15 here as to the Holy Spirit. V. 46 has reference to the Holy Spirit. We might just take the time now to accent the positive point Paul is making about the resurrection

body. It describes the body, this presently *psukikon* body, the believer's body, as it will be, in contrast to the way in which it is now. It is spiritual in that it is so transformed and indwelt by the Holy Spirit, such that the one term that best characterizes that body is *pneumatikon*. It is not a spiritual body in the sense of being immaterial, but rather it is this body in its genuine corporeality, in its genuine physicality, transformed by the Holy Spirit. This is where the ultimate work of the Holy Spirit comes to its final expression in the life of the believer. Accordingly, when some translations, most notably the NRV, say "physical body" and "spiritual body," that is decidedly a most unhappy rendering. Rather, the contrast is not here; the contrast is between a present, sin-cursed physicality and a transformed physicality. NT Wright, who can be helpful in many ways, suggests "trans physical." Of course, there's great mystery here as to continuity and discontinuity, but as so many things among Christians, we need to talk about mystery in a biblically bounded way.

The life-giving person of the Holy Spirit (v 45)

What we can go on further to point up in support of the reference to the Holy Spirit is to look at v. 45, and notice that in the immediate context, it functions to support an argument at the latter part of v. 44. So, you have the summary statement of 44a and Paul changes the discourse mode--from an assertive, antithetical parallelism to this linear argumentative form ("if there is, then"). It is that argument which we gave close attention to in Salvation 1. *Psuke* (taken from the Greek of Gen 2:7) on the one side refers to Adam, and *pneuma* on the other side of the contrast referring to Christ as the last Adam, those two descriptions define or anchor the adjectives we have in v. 44: *psukikon* and *pneumatikon*. As *pneumatikon* refers to the Holy Spirit, that would point us to that, the noun refers to the person of the Holy Spirit. What we would go on to point out further is that Paul doesn't simply say that the last Adam became *pneuma*, but *pneuma zoopoion* (life-giving or life-producing Spirit), and that is important, because we find out that the same word is connected with the Holy Spirit, in 2 Cor. 3:6. God who has made us (apostles) competent as ministers of the new covenant; it is a covenant not of letter but of Spirit. The Spirit makes alive (the Corinthian congregation, 3:2). That activity of making alive Paul associates particularly with the Holy Spirit. We could more broadly take note of those places in Paul where there is a close connection between the Holy Spirit and life. Rom. 8:2 the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, 6, the mind of the Spirit is life, and 10; and Gal. 6:8. We are brought to the conclusion that *pneuma* refers to the Holy Spirit; in this sense Paul affirms that the last Adam became a/the life-giving Spirit. This is certainly surprising, and it raises questions (particularly regarding trinitarian considerations, and the ontological distinction between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit). Before considering those questions, let me address the other question that we had raised here, and that is the time question.

The Time Question: Look at v 45 and the way that contrast is broader. Bodies were concerned; now whole persons are concerned. Also note that this Adam considered in 45 is created, prefall man (despite those that argue differently). I think there can be little doubt as we keep in view the immediate and broader context that the reference is to the resurrection, or more broadly, the ascension. It almost obscures the point to belabor it, but there are those who have questioned that. The immediate context: whatever else may be involved in describing Christ as a life-giving Spirit, Christ is brought into view as the primary and first realization of the soma of the *pneumatikon* of v. 44. Christ is the first to instance of the Spiritual body in v. 44, the body that will be received by believers in the resurrection. Adam is the primary ("first") instance of the *psukikon* body, and Christ of the *pneumatikon* body. Bodies imply an environment. They are exponential of a context. v 46 has generalizing words. Two

orders are contrasted, 1st and 2nd. Problem countering the Hellenistic pagan notion of things. Paul's eschatological point: the ideal is to be seen as history coming to its consummation.

The Pauline Biblical Worldview:

Perfection is not at the beginning of history nor above history but arrives at the end of history in the consummation of God's creative purposes. Vv. 47-49 confirm and elaborate what we have said is the general or comprehensive scope of v 46. But the contrasts are different: earth-heaven. It makes explicit the environmental context that was implicit in v 42. Christ is the heavenly one, v. 48, referring to the ascended Christ, whose image those who are heavenly will bear bodily at their resurrection. The earthly one is representative and constitutive of the earthly order and the earthly ones. And the heavenly one is representative and constitutive of the heavenly order and the heavenly ones. (Cf. 47: *ek gys and ek ouranon*. Not "from" in the sense of Adam from the earth and Christ from heaven. Rather these are qualitative. So there is no reference to the incarnation, but to resurrection. V 49 brings us back around to the original concern begun in v 42. At the resurrection, believers experience the full transformation, the full spiritual renovation of their existence, of their bodily existence. They will bear the image of their heavenly one; they too then will receive the *soma pneumatikon* of v 44, which is already existent in the person of their head, Christ.

Note that there is a significant semantic break between 44a and 44b. The fallen natural body, then the Adamic natural body. Let's remind ourselves of our primary interest in looking at this passage, Christ became life-giving Spirit. When? The answer, keeping the context in view, is his resurrection, ascension and exaltation (with the resurrection as the alpha point of that). With those observations, directed toward answering the question, we can draw the threads together, that the thought of v. 45 is this. Christ is the first instance of the *soma pseukikon*. Thus, the point could be made here by analogy, what Christ instances for believers, and what believers will receive at their resurrection, Christ received and became at His resurrection. Looking at the broader context: 1 Cor. 15. The entire argument of Ch. 15 is based on the resurrection of Christ, and more particularly, the connection between His resurrection and the resurrection of believers. It would make no sense to construct the argument in this way as Paul has, if Christ were already life-giver by virtue of something else, if Christ were already qualified as life-giving Spirit, by virtue say of His preexistence or His incarnation. In fact, if He were by virtue of anything other than His resurrection, more broadly, His exaltation, the basic structure of Paul's argument breaks down. In terms of keywords to capture this point: v. 20 He is *aparche*, v. 45 He is *pneuma zoopoion*. As firstfruits, He is life-giving Spirit. Or, as life-giving Spirit, He is firstfruits. It's not as if the *divine preexistence* is not absolutely essential to Paul; nor is it the case that the *incarnation* as an event does not have its significance; but it is specifically in his resurrection and ascension as contingent upon and following out of his obedience unto death that Christ is qualified as life-giver, the giver of eschatological, saving life. To blunt that in any way as some traditions do, to locate soteriologic life, in the act of incarnation is too blunt, at the very least, the biblical significance of cross and resurrection; the gospel centrality of that for Paul he makes clear (as in vv 3-4). This heaven is the place he has created in exaltation (here, in Paul, keeping Christ's incarnate existence is in view). At His resurrection, more broadly the exaltation, because of the language of heaven which comes later in the paragraph, Christ, as last Adam, became life-giving Spirit in the sense of the Holy Spirit. And he continues to be that. in his heavenly estate. More so, there would be the obvious tie between *zoopoio*, and that in Christ all will be made alive. So, the key question now we should be clear on, and be clear on the answer, is what is the sense of this "becoming?" How more exactly are we

to understand the equation between Christ and the Spirit, the unity? The identity? To that question let me say this first of all: we need to keep in view the scope of the apostle's discussion. Which is to say, here, this is contrary to the way so many handles this passage today, Paul is not concerned with essential inter-trinitarian relationships, so the statement is pushed too far or we go beyond it if we take it in an ontological sense, as if Paul is here denying the trinitarian distinction between second and third persons. Or, as he describes, it concerns Christ's specific identity as the second man. It is quite wrong-headed when contemporary scholarship such as James Dunn says that Paul has an entirely adoptionistic, functional Christology, and that the later church trinitarian doctrine of the ontological trinity is something Paul wouldn't know anything about. That conclusion is not respecting the terms of this passage, and what Paul is intending to do, as well as Paul's clear trinitarian view elsewhere. Trinitarian doctrine later in the church builds on Paul (cf. 1 Cor 12:4-6; 2 Cor 13-14; Eph 4:4-6). His outlook here is not ontological relationship between the 2nd and 3rd person as eternally existent.

Rather, we must remember always in looking at this statement, Paul is speaking here of what *happened* to Christ, and what happened to Christ, not a timeless *estin*, but a historical *egeneto*, a historical became, as last Adam. That is, we need not to miss the historical scope of his outlook to express things positively, what Paul is affirming in the passage is that the resurrection brought about in Christ, first of all, two interrelated aspects of reality, it brought about a conjunction between the incarnate Christ and the Holy Spirit that did not previously exist, a possession by Him of the Holy Spirit that previously was not the case. But as the resurrection brings about such a culminating conjunction of Christ and the Holy Spirit, it also brings about His transformation, by the Holy Spirit. There is a climactic possession of the Spirit by Christ (v 45). There is also an unprecedented transformation of Christ by the Holy Spirit here. Conjunction between Christ and the Spirit, and transformation of Christ by the Holy Spirit. Both those aspects come into view by the passage. This is a conjunction and transformation that is so complete, climactic, and eschatological, that Christ and the Spirit are one. Or maybe we should just speak as the apostle does, that the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit. But with that accented, the uniqueness and the climactic point, we need at the same time not to lose focus that when we speak of Christ and the Spirit as one, it is their being one and identical in a specific respect, and that is a functional respect, the activity of giving *zoe*, of being life-giving, the giving of eschatological life. They are united in life-giving. How are we to categorize this equation between Christ and the Spirit, this oneness, we could use terms of theology, economic, as distinct from ontological. Or, the unity is functional, or if you will, eschatological. At any rate, whatever term we use here, what we are affirming is an equation or oneness in terms of their saving activity, a oneness that does not obliterate their personal distinctions.

Christ as the last Adam as Spirit makes alive

In time it has become more and more helpful to in effect to read 1 Cor 15:45, last clause, as Paul's one-sentence commentary on Pentecost and the significance of Pentecost. So, let me just comment here that it continues to be a concern for me, and we all and I need to be ready to hear what others have to say, that our English translations do not reflect this point. We confront a broad consensus in the exegesis, commentaries and monograph literature, that Spirit here is a reference to the Holy Spirit. That is the case in the way I have developed things here, I have depended on Murray, Vos, and Ridderbos, who hold that conclusion, but we find a situation in the translations that it is spirit with a small "s." The ESV sticks with the lower case. I made the case for the capital, and I challenge you as you read and teach from 1 Cor. 15:45, think of capital "S." Within the framework of biblical teaching,

what does it mean to say that the resurrected Christ is a life-giving spirit with a small s? What would that mean? A spirit does not have flesh and blood, as I have, doesn't eat fish. (The resurrected Jesus in John.) The translations will catch up.

4.0 Summary

Having followed Paul's perspective here closely, we draw the following observations:

We understand this statement in terms of the staging principle we have spoken of earlier in this class, the staging of the coming of the kingdom. The staging of his state of humiliation and the state of his exaltation. So, in the larger context of the NT, we could say that there is a conjunction, if you will, of Christ and the Holy Spirit earlier on. From conception (Lk). At baptism and then culminating climactically what we have just considered, in 1 Cor 15:45, and as Peter does in Acts 2 and 3. What we have here then is the staging principle in the coming of the one kingdom, as that bears on the relationship between the incarnate Christ and the Holy Spirit. This is the climactic oneness between Christ and the Holy Spirit because it means now that the Spirit and Christ are together for the first time as Christ is in a state of exaltation; that was not true before.

I find it very helpful across the range of issues discussed in the church, to see 1 Cor. 15:45 as Paul's one-sentence commentary on Pentecost and the significance of Pentecost. What Peter delineates in his Pentecost sermon in Acts 2:32-33, "This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. Therefore, having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear." Paul telescopes all that here, by saying that the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit. We don't want to let down the redemptive-historical point here. To say that as Paul does is not to deny the life-giving activity of the Spirit prior to Pentecost, or to deny that there was that activity proleptically in the Old Covenant. Think of the way he puts it in 1 Cor 10:3-4--Paul refers to those who were baptized into Moses, and speaks there of that wilderness community that they partook of the spiritual, the *pneumatikon*, food and drink that was ministered to them, and then Paul glosses the description, by referring to the *pneumatikon petra*, the spiritual rock, and that rock was Christ. Christ present with the wilderness community, ministering the Spirit (Typological connection in the Old Covenant here between the Spirit and the person of Christ). But however, we would judge that passage, the point here is not to deny a prior activity of the Spirit, or a prior relationship between Christ and the Holy Spirit, which Paul seems to accent there, but rather, that the Spirit is now at work as a result of the finished work of Christ. The point is a redemptive historical point: the Holy Spirit is here and at work in a way that he was not previously, as a result of the finished, once-for-all work of Christ and as he is the transformer of the person of the incarnate Christ. In that sense, the last Adam became life-giving Spirit. To say that Christ has become a life-giving Spirit is to say that the Spirit is now at work on the basis of Christ's finished work, and that the Spirit is the transformer of Christ's humanity. The point is not just that the Spirit makes alive, but that Christ as the risen last Adam, as Spirit, makes alive.

Paul does not just look at the resurrection for its evidential value. Rather, as we see in this passage, the resurrection is a *constitutive event* in the history of salvation. It is constitutive event particularly in the experience of our Savior, and so, as it is constitutive for the last Adam so it is constitutive for our salvation. And we could just express that further in the category, the eschatological category of glory. Christ has glory that he did not have previously. That which constitutes him as exalted, glorious savior over the church (Col 1:18). Believers are now being transformed from glory to glory as they behold or

reflect his glory (cf. 2 Cor 3:18). The link between glory and the Holy Spirit in Paul is inextricable. The resurrection constitutes Christ as possessor of that *body* of glory that believers will have upon his return (cf. v 49).

The cosmic scope of the contrast:

Paul has cosmic considerations in view. The question Paul is dealing with in our passage is an apparently restricted one, he is asked a question about the resurrection body. The how and the what sort of. His answer at first glance can seem an exercise in theological overkill. We need to appreciate what has happened in this passage. The perspective he generates in this pericope, is a perspective that is nothing less than cosmic, encompassing the whole of history in its scope, and that appears in the way in which Adam and Christ are categorized, introduces in our passage. Adam is *protos*, first. In the order of the apostle's thinking, there is no one before Adam. Christ, then, is *deuteros*, second. There is no one between Adam and Christ, on the order of the apostle's thinking here. Not Moses, David, etc. They are below the horizon of the apostle's sweeping outlook. But Christ is not only 2nd; he is last. In other words, at the level of concern, there is none after Christ, no one counts after Christ; He is quite literally the eschatological man. As we could look further at this passage, the two are heads, representatives; they bring into view two orders of existence, orders of life, environments, which we are to understand in this way: the order of Adam is first, and has become subject to corruption and sin. The new order of Christ is second and last, the order of incorruption, the eschatological order. What we have coming into expression in this passage are orders of life, that are *consecutive*, *comprehensive*, and *antithetical*.

4.0 Conclusion

In so many words, the two-aion structure is what is present and underlying the apostle's addressing this pastoral question about the resurrection body. That is the sense of v 46, creation and eschaton; each came with an order of its own. What comes into view is the thoroughly eschatological character of the work of Christ for Paul. When does the eschatological new order dawn? It begins in the resurrection of Christ. The new creation begins with the resurrection of Christ. 2 Cor. 3:17-18 says:

“Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. 18 But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.” A more careful exegesis will show this: that *ho kurios* (the lord) is a reference to the exalted Christ, and similarly, *pneuma* (spirit) is a reference to the Holy Spirit. That is clearer as you reflect on statements that follow here.

There are some exegeting interpreters who question that this *kurios* is Christological, and rather think that it is a reference to the Spirit. But with Ridderbos I think it is a reference to the exalted Christ. So, we have a statement that is parallel to 1 Cor. 15:45. Again what I want to stress as we take this statement into consideration, is that it is to be understood in a redemptive-historical sense. Within the scope of the contrast that is begun in v. 3:6ff, the apostle says that the letter kills, but the Spirit makes alive, Old Covenant and New Covenant distinction. Christ takes the veil away. To turn to the Lord is to turn to Christ. On the New covenant side, Christ interchanges with the Spirit. How can Paul make that interchange? The answer is v 17: because the Lord is the Spirit. V 18 refers to the glory of the Lord. I don't see any way that we can take that other than Christological. You see, believers are being

transformed into the same image, and what is that image? That of Christ (not of the Spirit). And the glory-image of 3:18 is that of 4:4; and cf. Rom 8:29--"conformed to the image of His Son." (Internal terms of vv 17-18 and the flow base this whole argument.

Again, we don't want to lift this statement out of its context, and take it to create ontological trinitarian confusion. He surely assumes they understand what he has said in 1 Cor. The "is" of 2 Cor. 3:17 is not a timeless, ahistorical, eternal "is," but is based on the event of 1 Cor. 15:45; it is because of what happened in the resurrection, that it is now the case, and will remain the case, that He, the resurrected and exalted Christ, that ho kurios, the Lord is the Spirit. The exaltation of Christ results in a relationship, a working relationship of him and the Spirit unprecedented oneness, of new intimacy. Here they are equated more particularly with freedom eschatological freedom. And that is the close correlative in Paul of eschatological life. Cf. Rom 8:2: "The Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from sin and death".

Self-Assessment Exercises

1. Define the role of the Holy Spirit in the resurrection of Christ?
2. How is Christ the life-giving Spirit?
3. Explain how you understand Christ as the eschatological man
4. Describe the two ages that Paul is talking about.

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Unit 4: THE COLLECTION FOR THE SAINTS: 2 CORINTHIANS 8-9

Contents

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Theological foundations for Collection for the Saints
- 4.0 Summary
- 5.0 Conclusion
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1.0 Introduction

Christian stewardship occupies a key place in contemporary Christian thought. Through the various media, as well as the pulpit, many Christian speakers call for Christians to give their material resources for the development of Gospel ministries. Often, 2 Corinthians 8-9 forms the biblical basis for giving.

2.0 Objectives

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

- Write a treatise on Christian offering
- Explain the need to undertake collections for the church
- Enumerate the benefits of sowing abundantly for the church

3.0 The Main Content

3.1 Theological foundations for Collection for the Saints

The Scriptures articulate often of material possessions. It warns about mishandling of what God has provided, about the acquiring of things as a life goal, and about the inevitability of using material things to produce spiritual blessings and eternal rewards. The foundation for this occurs in the OT, and Jesus himself taught that we should "lay up treasures in heaven" (Matt 6:20). The sarcasm of this teaching is that laying up treasures in heaven involves a shrewd spending of the treasures of earth. This passage speaks in a roundabout way to that issue. At a deeper level, however, Paul speaks here of Christian brotherhood. While apparently the relief offering occupies the well-known place, the passage concerns the well-being of Christian brothers and sisters. It speaks to a Christian's world and life view, the actuality of a spiritual tie that transcends physical dimensions, and the fulfilling of OT prophetic expectations. The literature on this section of Scripture is wide-ranging and great.

These two chapters (8-9) their center of attention have based on the grace of giving. Written while Paul was on his third missionary journey, they reflect one of his major concerns: a collection for the saints at Jerusalem which Paul hoped to distribute at the Passover celebration. This exceptional offering helped make available for the financial needs of Christians from another ethnic and national

milieu. The monies were neither the tithe nor the gifts given for the functions of the church. This was an actually benevolent offering. The early church took sincerely the social and economic conditions of fellow believers. Many different Scriptures recommend care for those who have endured difficulties. These include widows and orphans (Jas 1:27), natural disasters (famines, Acts 11:27-30), and persecution.

The most expected instantaneous concern was for the financial loss suffered in Jerusalem because of a famine, which came in the mid-40s of the first century. It left many, including Christians, in dire straits. Before turning to the content of these chapters, two preliminary comments require attention. The first relates to the purpose of the collection for the saints. Perceptibly Paul considered it an important part of his ministry, devoting a seemingly inordinate amount of time and energy to help those in need. Many have suggested reasons for the offering, most of which expand the significant work of D. Georgi. R. Martin reduces these to four: (1) Paul was remembering the poor as he promised the "pillar apostles" of Jerusalem; (2) he was conveying genuine concern by the Gentile congregations; (3) he was seeking to unite the two diverse elements in the early Christian community; and (4) he was cooperating in the eschatological fulfillment of Israel's conversion. Without a doubt each of these deserves legitimate discussion.

Beyond it all, however, the words of E. Best serve as a good souvenir. They are based upon the character of the apostle himself. "Paul in all probability initially accepted the obligation to raise the money because he saw the need in Jerusalem and was inspired by the love of Jesus to take action. Other reasons might have come to his mind as time went by. The second introductory comment relates to the unity of the two chapters. Many interpreters assume Paul wrote the two chapters at different times and, perhaps, to different churches. Others have argued for their unity. Recently C. Talbert supported the unity of the section based on a perceptive literary and thematic analysis. The objections are not insuperable. Concerning the relationship of chaps 8 and 9, C. K. Barrett concludes: "the transition is not as sharp as is sometimes supposed. It is therefore best to treat it as a continuation of chapter viii, and as belonging to the same letter as chapters i-viii."

Theological Foundations

In general, Paul's Christian ethic emerges from theological certainty calling for a life lived thoughtfully and knowingly. There are many suggested theological underpinnings. Some interpreters see ecclesiastical concerns in the front of the passage while others see a broader theological foundation. Talbert sees a threefold theological significance: "(a) it would be a realization of Christian charity (Gal 2:10; 2 Cor 8:14; 9:12; Rom 15:25); (b) it would be an expression of Christian unity (2 Cor 9:13-14; Rom 15:27); and (c) it would be an expectation of Christian eschatology (Romans 9-11 . . .)." The ecclesiastical argument assumes that the collection is from churches to church. For them the project displays a strong clerical tie. The passage, though, neither asserts nor assumes that, here at least two primary theological pillars support Paul's program of giving.

Soteriological Concerns

Conceivably the most striking theological underpinning is soteriological, emphasizing the outworking of salvation. The typical employment of the term "grace," the example of Christ, and the Pauline concept of Christian community support this interpretation.

The Employment of "Grace": Semantically, the word grace preponderates in these chapters. Its regularity has led some to argue for the unity of the two chapters based upon the rather consistent use of the term. Undeniably, the chapters open with the concept of grace (8:1) and close in the same manner (9:14-15), forming an inclusion. The term occurs at least ten times, and the root occurs in compound words twice more (translated "thanksgiving"). The most common use of the term "grace" speaks of the act of giving as a "grace" (8:4, 6, 7, and 19). The employment of the term "grace" so frequently and naturally reflects Paul's theology. First, by using the term "grace" for the act of giving, Paul changed expressions from the Jewish concept which no doubt formulated his thinking as a rabbi.

The Jews usually referred to benevolence as an act of righteousness. Jesus also spoke in these terms in the Sermon on the Mount when he addressed almsgiving as an act of "righteousness" (Matt 6:1ff.). His vocabulary reflected a state of law and a preoccupation with legal requirements. Paul, on the other hand, used the term righteousness in this correlation only once. In 9:10 he speaks of the gift as coming from the Corinthians' righteousness, but he by and large refers to giving as an act of grace. By this turn of phrase, Paul emphasizes both the situation of the giver and the motivation for the gift. Those who have received God's grace engage in benevolent activities as the fruit of the state of grace. Paul cautiously avoids any "works ethic," choosing rather a terminology and concept to root these activities in his characteristic theme, God's grace. E. Best appropriately states, "If giving loses its origin and purpose in God and his grace, both it and our faith will wither and die."

As a second factor, the concept of grace applies to a precise action related to the experience of grace. Time and again, Paul refers to giving as "this grace." At the end of the day Paul considers all human responses to God outworkings of grace. This is particularly true of the gifts, which work for the betterment of the Christian community. Though a spiritual gift of giving occurs in the lists of spiritual gifts, here individual gifts come as the result of God's grace ("Let each person give as he has determined," 9:7). Rather than an act for attaining righteousness, this giving marks the grace of God in the lives of the Corinthians. In this regard Barrett's comment regarding the Macedonians applies. He notes that Paul may mean "the grace of God himself" or "that God has given grace to the Macedonians," and that Paul may not distinguish between these two. The term "grace," therefore in the approved manner designates the action in its full theological definition.

Paul also uses grace to refer to the grace of God, which initiates a good action. Here, again, he expresses his understanding that everything good originates from the grace of God and glorifies his grace (Eph 1:3-14, e.g.). The passage begins with the grace of God working in the Macedonians (8:1), continues with the grace of God in Titus (8:16), and ends with an expression of God's grace (9:14). Undoubtedly, the grace of God motivates Christians to give. Paul commends them for their contribution in the gift, because it means that God is at work in them.

4.0 Summary

The grace of God is demonstrated in Jesus. His action of self-denial is a meticulous expression of the grace of giving (8:8). When Christians give of their time/lives/resources (for financial resources represent them all), they are fulfilling the same action of Jesus in kind, though not in degree. That is, he gave of himself for them, and they are giving of themselves for others. The example of Christ, which undergirds this passage, occurs in 8:8-9. The picture calls to mind the basic Christological truth.

Three elements support Paul's argument, and each has meticulous application to the matter at hand. First, Jesus was rich (8:9). The term applies to possession of resources satisfactorily to achieve a proposed task. Here it must refer to spiritual riches, since there is no substantiation that Jesus had material possessions on earth. On the other hand, it is improbable that simply spiritual blessings are in mind, since the Scripture teaches that Jesus entered a state of poverty. Paul may be speaking of the "spiritual-environmental" riches of the pre-incarnate state, which Jesus left in the journey to earth for redemption. Jesus' *kenosis* lies behind Paul's thought here. The example does not propose divesting oneself of spiritual riches, which uphold us through difficult times, but speaks of the enthusiasm to change the conditions of life for the sake of others.

The second spotlight in the illustration is Jesus' poverty. He became poor. Jesus left the environment of heaven to assume the limitations (hence poverty) imposed by both his humanity and his earthiness. Paul stresses here the state of poverty by an ingressive aorist. Third, the reason of his change of condition was soteriological, i.e., that we might become rich. Jesus' riches and poverty were not principally spiritual; neither are the Christian's.

5.0 Conclusion

Paul has in mind the eschatological reality of the full spiritual life, including heaven, when he speaks of riches. Jesus left what he had to take us there with him. The relevance of this illustration challenged the Corinthians. They were not to think of their environments or material possessions as of primary concern. Just as Jesus left his, so we are to understand that this world and its goods must not enslave us. Although the cross is unmentioned, it lies in the background. The point is that to accomplish what Jesus wanted, material (environmental) blessings of earth must serve God's kingdom. Now, the Corinthians had opportunity to imitate Jesus' action by giving of their materials to accomplish a spiritual result.

Self-Assessment Exercises

1. Explain the goal of giving in the church.
2. What are the theological foundations for giving?
3. What are the soteriological concerns for giving?

6.0 References/Further Readings

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Unit 5: The Concept of the Christian Community and Giving to the Gospel

Contents

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 The Nature of the Christian Community and the Grace of Giving
- 4.0 Summary
- 5.0 Conclusion
- 6.0 References/Further Readings

1.0 Introduction

This unit discusses the concept of the church as a community. The concept of Christian community permeates the soteriological foundations. Christians form one brotherhood because of the saving grace of Christ. The offering displays this unity. Following Paul's idea should help believers today to practice this with serenity.

2.0 Objectives

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the theological foundations of the church as a community.
- Discuss the eschatological and soteriological concerns of the church as a community.
- Analyze how giving in such community serves the Gospel.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 The Nature of the Christian Community and the Grace of Giving

Naturally Christians shared with those in need, but this was more significant because it was a substantial expression and validation of the Pauline mission to the Gentiles. Repetitively Paul expressed his typical theological insights in symbolic forms. His reliable emphasis on the principle of justification by faith alone led him to have Timothy circumcised but not Titus (Gal 2:3). This well-known occurrence crystallized Paul's theology and exemplified it for the Christian community. In similar fashion the relief offering symbolized the real unity of the churches and their theology. The gospel of grace meant that the gospel could go to non-Jews without the cultural practices inherent in its original (Jewish) roots. When it spread beyond Jewish culture, would it be anti-Jewish or apathetic to the Jewish system, which had birthed it? There was an apparent soteriological tie between the peoples, which took account of the deeper basis of unity. Afterward Paul expressed the soteriological tie with a reference to the removing of the barriers between the two groups, allowing a new man to appear (Eph 2:1-11). Thus, in the offering, the Christian community expressed itself as unified beyond racial and cultural boundaries. Paul cautiously avoids the term "church" in this passage, preferring words like "saints." He emphasizes the Christian community but not in ecclesiastical terms.

Eschatological Concerns

A second theological foundation relates to the eschatological structure within which Paul operated. Obviously, his understanding of the historical outworkings of God's redemptive plans formed the basis for much of his plea. Particularly, Paul saw a historical development in God's works. Some interpreters tie the offering to Rom 15:27 and the Christian obligation for those who profit spiritually to share their physical/material blessings with their spiritual benefactors. Others have a preference to make the situation theoretical, indicating that if the Jerusalem saints have the resources in the future they will, of course, be able to help Gentiles. The latter approach, however, fails to deal with the text at two crucial points: (1) the text says "their abundance" with no hypothetical element slotted in, (it is a given for Paul), and (2) the purpose clause moves to the point of equality (a true equality measures spiritual with spiritual and physical with physical). Both interpretations ignore the most obvious parallel earlier in Romans (11:12 specially, and the argument of 9-11 normally). In the past, God worked through Israel to accomplish his purposes. With the rejection of Christ, however, national Israel lost her Christological blessings (Romans 9-11). However, Paul expected a time in the future when God would again bless Israel. In Rom 11:11ff., Paul makes two points relating to Gentile and Jewish relations which have significance here. First, the fall of Israel was not chiefly punitive, but it provided for the salvation of the Gentiles. Second, God will restore Israel in the future. That, too, will have impact for the Gentiles (Rom 11:12) in bringing them even greater riches.

This eschatological structure finds expression in 2 Cor 8:14. The key to Pauline thought here is the term for time, which he employs. The "now time" contrasts with another time, a typical Jewish and Pauline way of contrasting the present age with a future age. As a result, Paul urges involvement in the relief offering because of its eschatological significance.

The eschatological dimension takes us deeper into Paul's understanding. Here there are visibly two realms of blessing and responsibility: spiritual and physical. The spiritual situation of Israel past brought spiritual blessings to the Gentiles. The spiritual blessings projected in correlation with Israel's future will bring spiritual blessings to the Gentiles. The Gentiles, therefore, are to respond in providing physical blessings for the Jews who are in need. In this eschatological framework two ideas develop. First, there is a close unity between the spiritual and physical realms, and Paul moves straightforwardly between them. The blessings of the present time engross principally the spiritual aspects of redemption. The future blessings, nevertheless, comprise the entrance into the environmental (physical) blessings connected with the Second Coming of Christ. The physical and spiritual unite in Paul's thought, since ultimately, at the return of Christ, both appear together for the enjoyment of Jews and Gentiles in Christ.

Second, the various churches acting constantly with the example of Christ must conduct themselves in light of the economy that characterizes the kingdom environment. Like Jesus, the Gentile Christians must give of their earthly environmental blessings, aggravated in part by the expectation that they will be recipients of the future spiritual environmental blessings of Israel. In a way, therefore, the work of Christ continues on earth through the work of the church. Christian people must pray and work for "thy kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven."

The eschatological significance of the offering, thus, goes beyond the immediately visible. Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, "remembered the poor" as the Jerusalem apostles requested (Gal 2:10). This was particularly significant to his ministry to the Gentiles since it symbolized the unity of the churches and his support of the Jewish Christian community. Paul understood full well that the future would be a time of unity of all persons in Christ and the complete satisfaction of every need. It was indispensable, therefore, for all Christians to share in anticipation of that great day.

One final portion of the collection requires awareness. Paul realized the OT predictions about the future relationships between Israel and the Gentiles. Many of them anticipated a time when the Gentiles would bring gifts to Jerusalem. Passages like Isa 60:5ff explain that in the last days Israel will enjoy the wealth of the world. Given that Paul expected this accomplishment in the future, perhaps he saw the offering prophetically as well. It was another step in the fulfillment realized through Christ. Even more, when Gentiles gave to Jews, the gospel message reached maturity. Christian unity was confirmed. Paul could then go on with his expected mission to the West (Rom 15:24-26). Currently, however, he must holdup his trip to Rome (and the western mission) until he delivered the offering (Rom 15:28-29). The eschatological foundations of the collection were solid, and Paul's growing understanding of salvation history no doubt inspired him in his efforts.

Motivations for Giving

Having seen two of the major theological foundations for giving, the motivations may be considered. The discussion is suggestive rather than complete.

The Example of Others

The first motivation found in this section is the example of others. Paul includes two examples: the churches of Macedonia and the example of Christ. The Macedonian Christians keenly contributed in the offering for the saints. Paul founded the Macedonian churches, Philippi, Berea, and Thessalonica, on the second missionary journey. They had taken the same peninsula as Corinth in what is now Greece and were the nearest Christian neighbors to the north. Since little is known about Berea and Thessalonica, Philippi must stand for the situation there. The church had a troubled history, it was founded amid difficulties which Paul here identifies as tests. Their condition makes the gifts all the more impressive,

Two ostensibly contrary characteristics make them important. Foremost, they were poor. The term Paul uses to illustrate their poverty may well be translated "dirt poor." The reasons for their poverty are not lucid, even though their political history no doubt contributed. The church enclosed some wealthy and influential persons at its founding, such as Lydia and, probably, the influential Romans. Their poverty, on the other hand, did not reduce their extreme joy, nor did it affect the size of their gift.

Paul identifies the gift as the "riches of single-mindedness." The expression suggests that their gift was (1) generous, and, (2) purposeful. As to the latter, they gave "single-mindedly." The term frequently is translated "liberally, generously," but conceivably it is better translated in this context as "focused." They simply gave to meet the needs of others. That single-minded focus produced a generous gift. Though the size of the gift is unknown, four elements in the text suggest it was considerable. First,

Paul calls it "riches", an exceptional term to use in such a context. Second, it is illustrated as "to their capacity and beyond" (8:3-4), indicating the sacrificial nature of the gift. Their giving began with ability and moved to their inability ("beyond themselves"). Third, they begged Paul to allow them to give (8:4). This statement reflects both their persistence on giving and their situation. Maybe Paul thought the gift was more than they could really give, but they begged for the privilege of giving. Here again Paul uses the word "grace" to describe the gift. If Paul were troubled by the size of the gift, he received it because it came from the grace of God. Fourth, Paul took great care in the administration of the gift. With justification, some see a chief transfer of funds because of the size of the envoy chosen to accompany the gift to Jerusalem.

Each of these factors opines that generosity is not dependent on the possession of significant resources, but is a matter of the purposes of the heart. Paul says as much in his commendation of the Macedonians (8:5). They "gave themselves first to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God." Their giving was twofold: to the Lord and to us. Although many suggest a temporal argument here (that they gave themselves first *in time* to the Lord), the logical expression is more likely. The financial gift stood for a higher giving than was expressed. The actual issue was their relationship to the Lord and the personal implications it brought. The material gift was "natural" because they had already cared for the greater matter of presenting *themselves* to the Lord. That preceding obligation led them to commit themselves to Paul and the concerns he brought to their attention. Thus, the gift was truly Christian. It was an outworking of their relationship with Christ; it was a participation in the lives of other Christians, and it was sacrificial. The Macedonians were certainly exemplary in their giving.

The Continued Development of Christian Graces

A second motivation is the conclusion of the work of Christ in them. Here Paul builds on the desire of all mature Christians to grow in grace. In 8:7-9 Paul lists six virtues in two triads. The first triad includes faith, word, and knowledge. Even a cursory reading of the Corinthian mail reveals the significance of word and knowledge. First Corinthians 1:5 states that they were present in the church. These two became the subjects of conflict in the church as well as the vehicles by which Paul answers the problems of divisiveness. The Corinthian correspondence, yet, does not reveal a church particularly known for its faith, yet Paul commends the church for these qualities, which were obviously prominent. The second triad commends the church for qualities, which are more unswervingly related to the offering. First, they possess great passion. The term frequents these chapters. Generally, it stands for zeal to do appropriately what is correct. If that meaning obtains here, Paul commends them for the desire and ability to implement the plans for the offering. Second, they are commended for their love.

Third, they are to nurture the gift (grace) of giving. The argument is straightforward, yet demands responsible action. Since the church was spiritually rich and prided itself in the manifestations of spiritual gifts, they should bring that spiritual heritage to bear on the material and financial needs of other Christians. If they would devote themselves to the offering, it would provide an occasion for them to develop another Christian grace in their lives individually and corporately. If the argument of 1 Corinthians 12-14 applies here as well, the offering takes on more significance. In 1 Corinthians the evidence of the reality of these other gifts is the exercise of love. So here, the verification of their claim to these spiritual qualities depended upon the exercise of love shown in the offering. The motivation is twofold: (1) the development of the total person so every area of life falls under the

lordship of Christ and the process of sanctification; and (2) the complete exercise of their spirituality calls for a substantial act of love.

The Completion of a Promise Made

The third motivating factor is the completion of a dedication made to the offering. This first appears in 1 Cor 16:1-4, where Paul opens his remarks in a way typical of the first Corinthian correspondence. The phrase "now concerning" indicates that he was responding to questions from the church. Therefore, there was a prior knowledge of the offering. Perhaps it was Titus who informed them of the offering and secured their initial participation (2 Cor 8:6). Following that, Paul wrote definite instructions in 1 Cor 16:1-4. They included (1) laying aside an offering on the first day of the week, (2) giving as God had prospered them, and (3) selecting some trusted persons to carry the offering to Jerusalem. The same instructions had been given to the churches of Galatia (1 Cor 16:1) at the beginning of Paul's third missionary journey. Clearly the project formed a major concern during this time of Paul's life.

The church at Corinth was the first of the churches to give, but a year had passed since Titus went to Corinth for Paul. Now Paul felt the need to address them again regarding the offering. Almost certainly, they had given instantly upon hearing of the need (2 Cor 8:10) and left Titus with the promise of more to come. Such passionate and spontaneous giving may with no trouble fall down into forgotten promises.

Paul's approach contains several elements. He first showed indisputable concern for their comfort in this undertaking (8:10). He stated what all should remember: it is in our best interests to keep our promises. He also called them to comprehend that the desire to perform will not reinstate the actual feat, and he continued by reminding them of the pressing need. They must complete the task. Second, he sought for Christian equality. Each person measured his giving in light of what he had, not what he did not have (8:12). Once more, the goal was not that others prosper at someone's expense, but that there would be equal sacrifice and equal supply of needs (8:13). The OT supports these ideas. Paul quotes the LXX of Exodus 16:18 (8:15) to tell the people again that when God supplied in the wilderness, he did it in a way that all would receive sufficiently and equitably. The situation applied to the Corinthians. If God were supervising the distribution of resources, as he was in the desert when he supernaturally supplied their needs, there would be sufficient supply for all and equitable distribution. The Corinthians had the task of acting God-like in their stewardship of resources.

The Principle of the Harvest

The final key motivation is the principle of the harvest. The principle occurs in both natural and special revelation, coming from knowledge of farming and Scripture. Paul states it: "Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously" (9:6, NIV). Statements like this had become proverbial by the first century, occurring in both biblical and extra-biblical contexts. Perhaps Paul crystallizes such proverbs as Prov 11:24-25 and 22:9, which extol bounteousness in sharing with others. The form of the proverb, however, resembles that of Cicero who said, "As you sow, so shall you reap." Here Paul applies it to one's relationship to material things and makes it a normative Christian principle; Interestingly, the phrase translated "generously" is literally

"upon blessings", stressing the principle of impartial giving. The Corinthians were to give according to how God blessed them.

Paul provides a commentary on the last two portions of the proverb, "He that soweth bountifully shall reap bountifully" (9:6). Rather than warn of the repercussions of stinginess, which Paul assumes are self-evident, he urges them positively toward the rewards of giving. The commentary provided expands "soweth bountifully" and "reapeth bountifully." On the subject of sowing bountifully, God loves a cheerful giver. Two guidelines put in plain words cheerfulness. First, the gift must be in relation to conviction ("every man according as he purposeth in his heart"). Rather than exterior motivation or standards, possibly imposed by the collector of the gifts, each one is to react to the promptings of the Holy Spirit in light of his own personal situation. A unique joy and contentment come from following through on what God has placed in the mind and heart. Since it is constantly easier to purpose than to do, and the remoteness between the obligation and the follow-through constitutes the amount of irritation one will experience, Paul urges them to submit with the Holy Spirit and happily follow God's promptings. Second, the gift is not to be given reluctantly. The similar words "not out of regret" and "not out of necessity" imply that one should not yield to the external pressures imposed on him. "Regret" means literally "out of sorrow". Possibly Paul has in mind the grief that comes from mishandling material possessions and learning this significant principle of stewardship after many difficulties. The expression "necessity" speaks to the possibility of being pushed (by God) into a situation of giving. To shun these erroneous motives for giving, the giver should give out of a free enactment of a prearranged commitment. Not only does this supply the best condition for the conscience, the burden of this piece, but it places one in an environment of God's special love since God loves a cheerful giver. Accordingly, sowing generously means responding constantly to the promptings of the Lord to give according to what God has laid on the heart.

The second piece of the commentary addresses the matter of reaping generously (9:9-11). Those who sow will receive. This passage has given rise to the idea of "seed faith," i.e., that God will make available more to those who give. The context, though, speaks against this idea. First, Paul states that God can make all grace flourish. Once more he prefers to use the term "grace" for this type of giving (typical of this context), and thus the grace God will provide must refer to some gift received in return. As the Corinthians are to be the vehicle of God's grace to the Jews, so God is able to work so his grace comes to them through some suitable vehicle in their time of need. Note that Paul does not guarantee a great influx of financial provision, but reminds them that God can remember them. Since God placed the Jewish condition on Paul's heart, resulting in a generous gift for them, so God can place anyone on another's heart with the same result.

Again, Paul designates that this grace accomplishes "good work." Two statements crystallize this teaching. In v 9:8 the goal of God's provision is that they "might abound to every good work". This proclamation is further explained by 9:10, where Paul states that God may "increase the fruits of your righteousness." Some have taken these to mean that God will supply financial blessing because of the righteousness (or good work). Taken in this sense, the gift becomes a means of securing bigger financial blessings. The troubles with this interpretation are: this represents a non-Pauline use of the term "righteousness," and this makes giving a way of receiving rather than the single-minded giving that Paul has spoken of earlier. Christian giving is never to be a means of receiving material things. To a certain extent, Paul states that God is able to expand the gift given so that the giver may be able to engage in greater generosity ("every good work," v 8), and that the gifts given will generate fruit. The

latter phrase, found in verse 10, teaches that the actual benefits of giving are the spiritual blessings that accumulate because of the righteous state of the giver (i.e., that he is saved), and because he has spent in the work of God as a result of that state of grace.

The critical goal is "thanksgiving to God," expressed here in vv.11 and 12. Distant from being a promise that one who gives will at all times receive more fiscally, this suggests that the giver will receive, in that he will appreciate the workings of God better and be in a better position to trust his own needs to God who *can* supply grace to those in need *even as he did through the giver to another's needs*, and the results of a gift driven by the Spirit and given for the work of God will be that God is glorified in new ways by broader circles of people. The inspiration from the principle of the harvest, thus, is that God will do more with a gift given (sown) than the palpable. The act of giving cheerfully will place the giver in a unique milieu of God's love, and the gift will at last bring praise to God. There is no assurance that God is bound to enlarge the resources of the giver, nor is there a promise that God "must" meet the needs of one who gives. The matter is a matter of God's grace, not of law.

Administrative Responsibilities

Susceptible to the charges of abuse in this area, Paul noticeably sets forth responsibilities in the physical matters. The responsibilities are two-dimensional, surrounding both the giver and the collector of funds. The main focal point of these chapters is on the giver and his responsibility before God. A summing up statement will be adequate to review to this point. The giver is: (1) to be insightful to the promptings of God in his life; (2) to be familiar with the fact that giving is an expression of the grace of God and brings with it a responsibility of stewardship; (3) to find out for himself what amount is proper; (4) to follow through on his commitments, giving cheerfully; (5) to give single-mindedly, with a focus just on being faithful to God's prompting to give; and (6) to give expecting that God will use the gift beyond what can be imagined to bring praise to himself. Obviously, Paul conceived of stewardship as necessary in the lives of believers and as unique proof that the grace of God was operative in their lives.

Paul in addition defined responsibilities for the collectors of the monies, sometimes by command and sometimes by example. Though the offering was of tremendous importance to Paul as a justification and achievement of his own ministry, he recognized the higher magnitude of his calling to spread the gospel to the world. His main mission was the ministry of the Word, and not even the offering could discourage him. He chose to make the most of Titus as the conciliator. Possibly he learned from the early church that while "waiting on tables" is significant, there is a higher calling of "giving oneself to teaching" (Acts 6). Paul understood himself as plainly in the line of the apostles both by spreading the gospel and by his participation in the Gentile mission, which was a ministry and insight distinctive to Paul (Eph 3:1-10). Whether or not this was his motivation, Paul chose not to involve in the "hands-on" aspect of the offering. Firstly, he did not even intend to escort it to Jerusalem, but later appreciated the importance of this gift and changed his mind. The procedures for the collection are, thus, instructive. Paul assigned the work to trained brethren. He addressed their character and their concern in 8:16-9:5.

The Character of the Men

The most outstanding of the men chosen was Titus, Paul's trusted companion. Considerably, he is the only one named in this passage, a fact which suggests that Paul wanted Titus to be famous because of his relationship to both Paul and the Corinthians. Having been sent to Corinth as Paul's messenger, he had made the preliminary arrangements for the offering. Apparently, he also bore the major accountability for it. Three statements disclose Titus' fitness for the mission he undertook. First, he devotedly cooperated with the promptings of God in this service (8:16). Once more, Paul thanked God for so moving in Titus' life. His "natural" concern for them and the collection qualified him for this vital position. Possibly Titus bore this burden from the onset, since he heard the apostles advised Paul to "remember the poor" (Gal 2:1-10). Second, Titus was approachable. He "accepted the exhortation" from Paul. Third, he was concerned to go. Paul indicates that he was eager of going to the church to see them again, a fact, which evidences the unique relationship God had given to Titus and Corinth (8:17). Paul's major representative, thus, had an enthusiastic dedication to the project, knew the theological significance of the offering, and enjoyed the trust and respect of the church at Corinth.

Another Christian brother accompanied Titus. Undisclosed by Paul, this man also had the reverence of the Gentile Christian community. His status in the work of the gospel was renowned (8:18). The churches chose him for this mission (8:19). Paul seemed concerned to have this man because he wanted to do things correctly in the sight of the Lord and in the sight of men (8:21). The distress for good manners before the Lord suggests that Paul lived with the awareness that God watches each person and action. In actuality, Paul did not need a delegation to safeguard his character, as 1 Thessalonians 1-2 reveals. Nonetheless, the group would produce an added accountability, which would be praiseworthy to the Lord as well as convince human expectations. Paul had settled financial matters at the outset of the ministry, preferring not to be supported by others. However, this procedure would ease the minds of those who gave, as well as provide an objective protection for the administration of funds.

A third brother, also anonymous, accompanied the two (8:22). Portrayed by a proven sincerity, which now was at its height, and no doubt equally well known to the churches, this brother would lend his trustworthiness to the offering. If Acts 20:4 speaks of the same delegation, it is considerably larger than these three because it included local representatives consisting of Asians, Europeans (Macedonians), and Romans. The offering encompassed many nationalities and was delivered by a composite group.

The Concern of These Men

The volume of the group and its mode of choice further stress the significance of the offering to Paul. Nothing was to obstruct with their expression of love, and the three men were to secure it. The group had an extra role, however, that of appropriately overseeing the matters so there would be no reproach brought to the name of the Lord or to Paul and his ministry. If there would be opposition to Paul, it would be on spiritual/theological grounds, not on financial matter. The group functioned also in other ways. First, it was to help in the collection of the offering. Paul planned a coming at Jerusalem at Passover. The feast was not only the proper time for all Jewish men to emerge at Jerusalem, but was also the time of the festivity of redemption, sacred to the Jews because of Egyptian bondage, and consecrated to Christians because it pictured the salvation accomplished in Christ. The gifts from the Gentiles received at the feast of redemption were, in a sense, the last fruit of redemption. Therefore,

the timing was of great importance. The group of three was to guarantee that the collection would be ready on schedule.

They were also to make sure that the gift was not of "covetousness" (9:5). The expression is complicated to interpret here. In 1 Thess 2:5 Paul uses the term in defending himself against the charge of "extortion or greed." possibly, thus, Paul wanted them to know that the gift did not come from his own avariciousness, but it is complex to see how their prior arrival would solve that problem. First, Paul could still have used the gift for his own ends even after the influx of the group; and second, the term contrasts with "thanksgiving". The covetousness to avoid, therefore, must be an approach on their part.

Conceivably it is best to understand it as Martin does. He suggests that the gift was not to be from the "'love of money,' which in turn leads to a niggardly gift." The arrival of these three prior to Paul would help the Corinthians to offer a genuine thanks offering to God. They could fulfill their promises, give as God had prompted, and no ulterior motives would either produce the gift or manage its amount.

4.0 Summary

There are, therefore, a number of concerns relative to the matter of the collecting of the offering. First, Paul must be the motivator for the giving since God laid it on his heart. Second, others who share the vision and the burden must be involved in the actual handling of the monies. Third, the group who deals with the money should represent faithful men from Paul and the churches. This provides answerability before the Lord and men. Fourth, the participation of the group encouraged the churches to give more generously by reducing the likelihood of misconduct. The early arrival of the group gently reminded them of past pledges. Significantly, Paul deals in great detail in this chapter with responsibilities for both the giver of funds and the collectors.

5.0 Conclusion

In these two chapters Paul presents his most wide-ranging teaching for giving to deprived Christians. His theological motivations incorporated the common salvation and an awareness of the historical outworking of God's redemptive agenda. He altruistically motivated the Corinthian church to follow the example of the Macedonian Christians, to remain true to their prior commitments, and to collaborate with the work of God in their lives. They were to keep in mind the example of Christ who gave himself for them. In conclusion, his administrative procedures exposed his concern that all things should be done above reproach. Paul's concerns help the contemporary church. In a day of increasing demand for financial support of ambitious ministries, there is danger that the end will rationalize the means of fund raising. Sometimes both Christians and non-Christians take offense at high-pressure tactics and the continuous emphasis on finances. A study of this passage though, reveals that Paul would have none of these. As significant as this offering was and as indispensable for the Corinthian Christians as an expression of their spiritual lives Paul remembered his priorities. In a masterful way he promoted the cause while disassociating himself from the process of collection and the destination of the funds. Above all, he saw this as an obligatory outworking of salvation. It would unite Christians of many ethnic and national backgrounds in a tangible fellowship and, finally, put in to the praise of the glory of God's grace.

Self-Assessment Exercises

- i. Explain Paul's concept of the Christian community.
- ii. Explain the importance of Christian giving.
- iii. What are the administrative responsibilities in giving?

6.0 References for further Reading

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Unit 6: The Christian Life Part 1

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1.0 Introduction

This unit expounds the nature of the Christian life. The Christian life has two important aspects, namely what God has done to change the status of the sinner and what the sinner is required to do. Paul combined these aspects of the whole person and connects with the overall work of the Holy Spirit in the believer. More particularly, Rom. 8:9-11 presents an observation that will draw the connection of the Holy Spirit, Christ, the church, the believer (or more formally, the intersection between pneumatology, Christology, ecclesiology, and soteriology).

2.0 Objectives

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

- Explain what the totality of the Christian life calls for.
- Explain the connection between the work of Christ and the Holy Spirit in obtaining the status of the believer.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 The Christian Life

Rom 8:9-11

9 You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. 10 But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11 If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

Recall that Paul has connected the flesh with death, the Spirit with life, and those *en sarki* are not able to please God. But you (speaking to the church) are not of the flesh if the Spirit of God dwells in you. Having the Spirit parallels Paul's more common "in Christ." You have all possible combinations: the life of the church, and the individual. You in Christ, and Christ in you; you in the Spirit, and the Spirit in you. These are different ways of looking at the same thing; they all come down to the same thing. In the life of the church, the experience of the believer, Christ and the Spirit are interchangeable. There is no union, no relationship to Christ, which is not at the same time a fellowship in the Spirit, a

fellowship with the Spirit in power. That Spirit-fellowship is not only the reserve of only some believers but not all. And the reverse can be said, too. There is this unbreakable unity, inseparable conjunction, between the Spirit and Christ, not because God has decided somewhat arbitrarily that it would be this way; but it is not constituted in our experience; but there is this constitution based on and constituted by what happens back of our experience; and that is the experience of Christ, the work of Christ, in its once-for-all, definitive accomplishment of our salvation. There is this interchangeability because of what the Spirit is and notice how Paul expresses it: "**The Spirit of Christ**" that's who the Spirit is now in view of the resurrection. But also because of who Christ is; **Christ is life-giving Spirit**. Eph 3:16-17: This is the beautiful, powerful prayer of Paul for the church in the close of Eph 3. Among other things, he is praying to God the Father:

16 that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inner self, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith - that you, being rooted and grounded in love. The empowering Spirit in the inner self is interchangeable with Christ through faith dwelling in our hearts.

Resurrection-Life (Eph 2:5-6)

The Christian life as it is located between resurrection and return of Christ in this interim where you and I and the church is, believers are not only those who will be raised, but also it is the case that they are those who have already been raised. For Paul, resurrection is not only a future hope but a present reality. It is not only at the *end* of history, but *in* history. And so, it is the case that the entirety of Christian life may be subsumed under the heading of resurrection. The last Adam has become life-giving Spirit that is a description of who Christ is now, in the church. Christ is life-giving, the dispenser, through the Spirit, of resurrection life. This is not only not yet, but also already, right now. Again, the Christian life as Paul sees it is an outworking, a display of the resurrection life and power of Christ, the life-giving Spirit. Thus, Gal 2:20, where Paul asserts autobiographically but surely representatively, "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me." That is reality (not mere metaphor or overstatement). It is in this sense that the believer, as we say, has *eternal* life; we could just as well say *eschatological* life. Because this is the way John meant it, as well as Paul.

It is not eternal in some vague sense; certainly not above or beyond history; not timeless in a historical sense; but it is eternal because it is the life that is revealed at the end of history and comes to us out of its consummation. We have arrived at a conclusion that can be amplified and developed in any number of ways. (And one of the fair criticisms of this course is that we ought to have been at this point much sooner in our work. And maybe I will figure out in the future how to do that. But don't hold your breath). Col 3:1-4: We have touched on these vv and now we want to zero in on them with more care. We will focus as we look at various passages on the hortatory of Paul's teaching, the imperative, the Pauline *paranesis* (a technical term for commands, exhortation). If you will, we are going to look at the ethics of Paul.

1 If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. 3 For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

First of all, here, I want to make some comments to bring out this point: The way in which the resurrection life of the believer is presented in these verses. And there are two sides to the matter. On the one hand, as we have seen in passages such as Eph 2:5-6, the believer's resurrection is referred to as an already accomplished fact. It is referred to indicatively, which is true through faith (Col 2:12). This life is what the believer already enjoys by virtue of union with Christ. "You have died" (3) (cf. Rom 6:1ff.). "Your life is hidden with Christ in God" (4). We need to emphasize this because of the tendency in the church *not* to embrace this. This is who we are. In the deepest sense of who you are, you will never be more resurrected than who you are right now, because of your present union with Christ. And, on the other hand, we can see that there is a sense in which something remains to be obtained. So, we can fairly gloss, "Seek after the things of resurrection life." Direct your thinking, your willingness to resurrection life. The common notion, resurrection life is brought into view as both a possession (a secured one, we could find in other passages) and also a goal. It is both a gift and task. Set your mind toward what you already have (paradoxically spoken). Verse 1: The conditional (protasis) contains an indicative; the consequence (apodosis) is an imperative.

Paul is saying, *If* the indicative, *then* the imperative. If you have resurrection life, then seek resurrection life. Or assuming "Since" or "because" rather than "if": seek what you already have, because you already have it. Clearly the things above refer to the resurrection and ascension life. Because this is where Christ is. This is not a timeless *ano* (dualism); but a redemptive-historical *ano*. This is important especially in interpretations in the modern period. Sometimes this is referred to as the indicative-imperative "problem" in Paul. But this is not the problem in as much as the *pattern* in Paul.

Some other passages with this pattern:

Gal 5:1: For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore and don't burden yourself with a yoke of slavery.

Gal 5:25: If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

Eph 5:8: you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light

1 Cor 5:7: Clean out the old leaven in order that you may be a new lump even as you are (really are) unleavened.

Coordinating Gal 3:27--[you] have put on Christ--and Rom 13:14--put on the Lord Jesus Christ. (The imperative is to the church.)

Col 3:9-10: you have put off the old self with its practices 10 and have put on the new self.

Rom 6:2: you have died to sin; Rom 6:12: don't let sin reign in your mortal body.

4.0 Summary

More broadly, we can observe conceptually, that on the one hand, sanctification is God's work; it's a gift of God: Phil 1:6, 1 Cor 1:2, and 1 Thess 5:23. But it is also brought into view as a task of the believer: 2 Cor 7:1. Or what are considered fruit of the Spirit in Gal 5, in Gal 6 are referred to as "your fruit." Or, they are: the fundamental dimension of loving: love is first as fruit or the gift of the Spirit (Gal 5); but love is also the first commandment (Rom 13:8ff). Thus, there is this pattern that appears throughout the Pauline corpus. Remember, these are exhortations to believers; not outside the church, among those of unbelief. Therefore, Paul's exhortation, his ethics for believers can be summed as "Become what you are." But a qualification is important. There is an all-embracing "in Christ." So, "Become what you are in Christ."

5.0 Conclusion

This raises an important issue: the relationship between indicative and imperative. Much is at stake in this relationship because it takes us to the heart of Paul's understanding of the Christian life as a whole. Conversely, if we miss the balance between indicative and imperative, that is going to strike at the heart of his teaching of sanctification, and with that his understanding of justification. In this history of interpretation, and particularly the historical-critical tradition, much has seen the coexistence of these as antimony or even a contradiction. So that in exegesis, the one or the other is effectively eliminated. Sometimes it is seen as an apparent contradiction, softened in one direction: that the indicative is really a softened imperative, or vice versa. Or sometimes called an inconsistency on Paul's part (the imperative as a relapse back into his Pharasaic past or addressing the church in its immature state with these imperatives, or the indicatives as an idealism, a theory-praxis lack of realism). Such approaches are hardly satisfying. Paul connects them deliberately and explicitly even in the same verse! 1 Cor 5:7. Gal 5:25. Note how this indicative-imperative relationship shows how *thoroughly* Paul is a covenantal theologian, how thoroughly he is oriented to God as the God of the covenant, of his covenant people, who now in Christ encompasses not just one nation but all nations.

Self-Assessment Exercises

- i. How is sanctification both the work of God and of man?
- ii. Differentiate between the nature of our present resurrection with Christ and the future resurrection.

6.0 References/Further Readings

Nickle, K. F. (1966). *The Collection: A Study in Paul's Strategy*. London: SCM.

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Unit 7: The Christian Life (Part 2)

Contents

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
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- 4.0 Summary
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1.0 Introduction

This section continues with discussion on the Christian life. The new creation is central in Paul's soteriology. These are new creation issues from the eternal plan of God. The believer is required to appropriate what God has achieved for him/her in Christ. The Christian life is both actualized and progressive in character.

2.0 Objectives

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the nature of the new creation
- Distinguish between the relationship between the passive and the active nature of the resurrection life.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 The Christian Life (Part 2)

Further on the related question, indicative and imperative *belong* together; they have a non-polar, non-dialectical, positive relationship. It is *not* a contradiction in Paul. The indicative: what we have in view is salvation accomplished once-for-all in Christ and received in being united to him by faith. The imperative: has in view the Law of God (and I would say the 10 Commandments at its core (a disputed proposition); as expressing the covenanting will of God and which has its core in the *1 Cor 7:19: For neither circumcision counts for anything nor uncircumcision, but keeping the commandments of God. (Gal 5:6: For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love. Gal 6:15: For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.)*

Paul is speaking from the vantage-point of the new creation. The distinction *did* very much have significance in the old covenant. What matters is faith working through love. But Paul is emphatic that keeping God's commandments belongs on the new covenant side of the equation. What is key is how are we to understand the reference here to the commandments of God. I would refer to 1 Cor. 7:19; Rom 13:8-10, where Paul refers to many of the 10 Commandments, and as incumbent upon the church; and Eph 6:2, where it is the 5th commandment (re: parents). So, I'm seeing the Law of God

here as they find their core in the 10 Commandments; and the 10 Commandments as summed in the law of love. (Others say this refers to commandments only as found in Jesus (and possibly Paul).)

The indicative-imperative state of affairs comes to expression. The relationship is a positive one. Salvation revealed in Christ and received by faith by being united to Christ, the will of God can still be summed for the believer in the Decalogue.

The indicative-imperative relationship is irreversible. The indicative has priority; it is the foundation of the imperative. It's the root. Paul's gospel as gospel is on the line here. The integrity of his gospel depends on maintaining the priority of the indicative. It is not like the indicative is constituted by responding to the imperative or expresses only a possibility that is actualized *through* the imperative. Rather the indicative supplies, as we might put it, the impulse or the incentive to responding to the imperative. Paul never writes in the imperative without first at least implicitly writing first in the indicative. Paul knows all too well that it does no good to beat a dead horse; and that's exactly of what the congregation is apart from Christ. So, this irreversible priority is the point that has to be made, in Church, in the face of "liberal" Christianity, so-called, a tradition, which denies the gospel and results in one form or another of moralism.

This relationship is also inseparable. Paul never writes in the indicative without having the imperative in view (at least implicitly). This reflects how thoroughly Paul is a *covenant* theologian that in Christ reflects that bond which in salvation God gives and man in response believes and obeys; they belong together. The inseparability needs to be particularly maintained, to uphold the lineage of the reformation. The imperative without the indicative is soteriological legalism; it leaves me in some way to work out my salvation in my own strength. Whatever format legalism takes, that leaves us with Paul the moralist. On the other hand, the indicative without the imperative tends to antinomianism, to various forms of quietism. And it leaves us with Paul the mystic. The indicative does not describe a reality or state of affairs that exists by itself, in the sense that the imperative follows as something subsequent and perhaps detachable. They are given together. And response to the imperative is the consequence apart from which the indicative does not exist. It is the *attestation* apart from which there is no indicative.

Westminster Confession of Faith 16.2 says that response to the imperative is "the fruit and evidences of a lively faith." Paul's exhortations to the *church* as he does are very clear indication that the life of new obedience does not result automatically in those united to Christ and justified by faith. That concern for the imperative will surely follow in the lives of the justified; but that does not happen automatically or indifferently. The imperative has a *critical* or discriminating function. So, wherever there is the reality of concern for the indicative, there *will be* the reality of concern for the imperative. Ridderbos says both indicative and the imperative are the object of faith in Christ. Faith in its *receptivity*, as resting in Christ, as the uniting bond with Christ answers to the indicative. Faith in its *activity*, the obedience of faith answers to the imperative (286).

Phil 2:12-13: A passage that provides us with the perhaps the deepest perspective on this relationship in Paul.

12 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, 13 for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

He begins with the imperative: "You, the church, are to work out your salvation with fear and trembling." This reflects on the intensity, the depth of the response. And then, what follows is the indicative. V 13: "God is at work in you." Again, intending to be comprehensive, "for you to will." He enjoins the indicative and imperative. Paul, does not say, God's work parallels our efforts as if we are alongside each other. Nor does Paul say that God's work supplements ours, nor ours his. Nor is God working to compensate for our defects in our doing. Rather, God, we are working just because of what? *God* is working. Here is what might be fairly called a certain kind of synergy though you must be very careful how you use that language.

It is not the synergy of a divine-human partnership, of a cooperative enterprise, each side making his own contribution. It is not a kind-of 50/50 undertaking (or any other percentage). Involved here is a mysterious mathematics of God's covenant, of the relationship of God and man restored in Christ, where the relationship is 100% and 100%. Sanctification is 100% the work of God, and just for *that* reason, it is to engage the full 100% activity of the believer. What comes in to view here is the "mystery" of the Christian existence, of the life of faith, of the work of the Spirit sanctification. There is a demand to do justice to the full involvement of the believer without compromising that or allowing that to become competitive or supplement to the grace of God. We are not just stating the general truth that divine sovereignty and human responsibility cohere; that may be in the background. But we are dealing with a *soteriological* truth that is revealed in God's covenant, to his people through Christ in the Spirit. It is the mystery of the covenant whose God in grace promises and makes good on the promise "I will be your God and you will be my people" (Jer 31:33). But that same God no less of grace commands, "You be holy as I am holy" (Lev 11:44-45; 1 Pet 1:16). *There is probably no theological technique or formulation that is going to keep the imperative from becoming the occasion for legalism or keep the indicative from antinomianism--such is the state yet of who we are as believers, the state of our hearts; we tend to gravitate into one or the other of those errors.* But in the midst of the challenge here, remember that the imperative no less than the indicative is a concern of *faith*. It is not like the indicative gets us beyond the "by faith" of our salvation. Those who walk by faith and not by sight are going to be able to negotiate the narrow ledge, the razor's edge that confronts us here. What faith recognizes is that on the path of sanctification, no less than that of justification, the signposts read "Christ alone, by grace alone, through faith alone." Or the prayer that goes back to Augustine: "Lord, give what you ask; ask what you will." We could reverse that here.

Rom 6:1ff; 12-13

(The larger context is 6:1-7:6.) What we are seeing as the integration of eschatology and ethics is quite prominent in these verses, particularly as Paul relates the death and resurrection of Christ to Christian experience. What we have in this passage is perhaps the most important single passage in Paul for the Christian life on sanctification. In 6:1 in the flow of Romans, Paul begins a unit as sub-unit that continues to 7:6. The section that begins in 3:21ff emphasizes the totally gracious character of justification. It is "not by the works of the law, but by faith, in order that it might be according to grace" (4:13-16 language). And that teaching then is summarized in what immediately precedes Ch. 6. (It either summarizes 5:12-21 or has a bridging function, anticipating 6:1ff.)

1 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? 2 By no means! Those who died to sin--how can we still live in it?

Paul's taking up an objection (about can we sin that grace may multiply--probably a real objection, but this isn't for sure; it's certainly a live danger). It's sharply negated. "May it not be!" Paul counters with another question (rhetorical). It specifies on its negative side the central thesis that governs this entire argument (thru 7:6): Believers have died to sin; they are dead to sin; and they live, have been made alive to God, to righteousness. And that raises a question that has been alive particularly since the Reformation: How dead? In what sense have believers died to sin?

3 Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4 We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so also we might walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been planted with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be planted (understood) with him in a resurrection like his. 6 We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. 7 For one who has died has been justified from sin.

What's interesting here is Paul's concern to ground his thesis in v 2. And he does that appealing to water baptism and the significance that has. It signifies and seals union with Christ--the incorporation of the believer into Christ. Baptism has reference to union with Christ in his death and resurrection. The redemptive-historical factor is decisive here. It signals union with the Christ who is what he now is by virtue of his death and resurrection--union with the *exalted Christ*. So, reasons Paul, Christ's death is the believer's death, and Christ's resurrection is the believer's resurrection. Back to the question of how believers have died to sin, it's important to see as we have in Eph 2 and Col 3, so here, in Rom 6, the union in view is not only a representative union, contemplating the past historical only, although that is undeniably in view. But the union in view is also *vital*, or, as the Puritans said, experimental. Union with the exalted Christ grounds the existential reality that is expressed in v 2, that believers have died to sin and no longer live in it. Which takes us back to the theme of walking in the Eph 2 passage. Believers have been baptized into Christ to the end that they also might *walk* in newness of life (v 4), and this amplifies the "live" of v 2 and brings out the resurrection side of the picture. In what sense are we dead to sin? Paul is teaching here that what believers have experienced by virtue of their union with Christ is a definitive break with sin, a decisive cleavage. A once-for-all break with sin. How? It is a break with the controlling power of sin in our lives such that the old man of unbelief has been crucified with Christ, with the outcome that believers are no longer slaves of sin. They no longer *serve* sin. That one is free from sin and has been declared righteous. It is not just death to the guilt of sin, but also death to sin as power. Paul having spoken on justification now brings us into the area of sanctification.

10 For what he died to sin he died once for all, but what he lives he lives to God. 11 So also reckon yourselves dead to sin and living to God in Christ Jesus.

Verse 11 sums up the preceding verses. Believers are to count/reckon/consider themselves dead to sin (on the one side) and correlatively (on the other side) alive to God. And looking at the datives: for Christ (v 10) and for believers, the church (v 11).

These are datives of reference, and what they respect has to be determined by the context. So we have to say that believers are dead to sin as the controlling power of our lives--so far as service to sin or bondage to sin is concerned (cf. v 6; correlatively v 14--"sin will not rule over you").

A comment on the verbal imperative: This reckoning, counting it to be the case. It is not (like some formulations have it) a positing of some ideal, of a limiting concept that does not really measure up to the situation of believers. Paul is not an idealist. Nor is Paul a Kantian. He is not saying we make it so by saying it is so. He is not here an apostle of positive thinking, of self-esteem (of the crystal cathedral or any other variety). What we are being called to here is the reckoning of faith. It is a matter of taking into account what are the facts of my situation as a believer, how believers are in fact to understand themselves, what they are to presuppose about themselves. They are to consider who they really are. And who they are is not in themselves, but in Christ Jesus: "Become what you are in Christ."

The connection between v 11 and v 10: *houtos kai* ("so also") points us to a parallel between believers and Christ. It runs from Christ to believers: as for Christ, so for the church. And you can't reverse that. Paul is saying what is true of Christ is true also for believers. Because Christ died to sin, believers also have. The believers' death to sin and living for God is not to be understood in any other terms or in any other way than union with the crucified and resurrected Christ. It is not recognized in any other pattern or efficiency than union with the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ who is now life-giving Spirit. So, his death to sin and being made alive with God is my death to sin and being made alive to God. As for Christ, so for believers: having died to sin is a decisive, once-for-all event. Accordingly, it is permanent; it is abiding. Paul announces here to the church, "We have been rid of sin, set free from it as the dominating and controlling power in our lives, as lord in our lives, and that has happened decisively once-for-all." Yes, it is the case, as he will go on in 7:7ff as it is best understood, sin remains indwelling in the believer. Is sin indwelling in the believer? Yes. Is that sin overpowering? No. That's the point of Rom 6. This freedom is not by some pattern of imitation of the Christ, not by some regimen of spiritual exercises; but the point of Rom 6 is union with Christ by *faith*; and union with Christ by faith, we should be clear, that is the same faith that justifies (not some additional act of faith).

12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, in order to obey its lusts. 13 Do not either present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as living from the dead, and your members present as instruments of righteousness to God.

The antecedent of the *autou* here is not "sin," but "the body.") Paul is summing up and at the same time advancing the argument. What we have here is overarching, general, sweeping exhortation (*oun*, "therefore," akin to Rom 12:1-2). And the theme of resurrection is present and decisive, pivotal. Don't let sin reign in your mortal bodies. Don't offer your body-parts, the members of your body to sin (12). Believers are to offer themselves as living from the dead, as *resurrected*, to God; they are to offer their members as instruments of righteousness to God.

4.0 Summary

Note how these 2 verses present an overview of the Christian life: alive from the dead in the moral body. I think nothing better brings to perspective the structure of the Christian life. This pattern or even "dialectic" of being alive in mortal bodies. We are alive with the life of the age to come as we continue to live in this present evil age (Gal 1:4). We are participants of a new creation order (2 Cor 5:17) within what Paul calls the schema, the framework of this world which is passing away (1 Cor 7:31). Or in terms of the flesh-spirit distinction: believers are not those who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit *in* the flesh (bringing together Rom 8:4 and 2 Cor 10:3). (Cf. 2 Cor

5:7--those who walk in faith and not by sight particularly with respect to the resurrection in view.) And 2 Cor 4: 16, between inner man and outer man. Rom 8:10--if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life on account of righteousness.

5.0 Conclusion

There is the juxtaposition of body mortality and Spirit or resurrection life. Alive from the dead specifies the present indicative of salvation (the already) *and* indicates the basis (or the dynamic) for responding to the imperative. In the mortal body, specifies the future indicative of salvation (the not yet) *and* expresses the need (and the scope of concern) that the imperative has. This is how the congregation and we have to assess its situation: Adam--sin, condemnation, death; Christ -- righteousness, justification, and life.

Self-Assessment Exercises

- i. What is the nature of the indicative and imperative in the Christian life?
- ii. Explain Pauline understanding of death to sin and alive in Christ

6.0 References/Further Readings

Nickle, K. F. (1966). *The Collection: A Study in Paul's Strategy*. London: SCM.

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MODULE 4: PAULINE EPISTLES OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

UNIT 1: Pauline Epistles

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Preamble to Pauline Epistles
 - 3.2 Lost Pauline Epistles
 - 3.3 Clusters of Pauline Letters
- 4.0 Summary
- 5.0 Conclusion
- 6.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 Introduction

This section is set to introduce the basic things or background to Pauline Epistles. It unravels how Paul contributed significantly to the rise and spread of Christianity in the Greco-Roman world. His message embraced the outstanding teaching that Jesus died for the salvation of both Jews and Gentiles. The major division of Pauline epistles is portrayed in consonance with the proof of his authorship as disputed in different quarters.

2.0 Objectives

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

- Determine the authenticity of Pauline authorship of the epistle ascribed to his name
- Ascertain the significance of Pauline epistles in the New Testament writings
- Recapitulate the major divisions of Pauline epistles
- Prove the non-perseverance of some Pauline writings

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Preamble to Pauline Epistles

In Christian tradition, it appears that Paul contributed greatly to the rise and spread of Christianity. Thirteen of the twenty-seven books of the New Testament claim to be written by Paul, and tradition has attributed yet another to him (Hebrews). The book of Acts, also, dedicates over half of its history to Paul's ministry. Following his conversion to Christianity, Paul boarded on a missionary journey, bringing his message chiefly to Gentiles all over the Roman Empire. His message comprised the claim that Jesus died for the salvation of both Jews and Gentiles.

Pseudepigrapha, writings under a false name, were not rare in the ancient world. Most scholars trust that some of the New Testament letters attributed to Paul are, in fact, pseudepigraphic. Based on authorship issues, the Pauline corpus is divided into three groups: the Pastoral Epistles (1–2 Timothy and Titus), the Deutero-Pauline epistles (Ephesians, Colossians, and 2 Thessalonians; this group is often called the “Disputed Pauline” corpus), and the undisputed Pauline letters (Romans, 1–2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians, and Philemon).

Moreover, pupils of Paul must consider the historical worth of Luke's account of Paul's ministry in the Acts of the Apostles. Luke's account of Paul's missionary journeys and teachings vary significantly from Paul's own accounts. In Paul's letters, it is also significant to note their occasional and conditional nature. Paul's letters are records of correspondence with explicit communities he instituted (with the exclusion of Rome), and in these epistles he addresses definite issues with which these churches wriggled. Due to the nature of Paul's letters, we should not read them as systematic theological treatises. The sporadic nature of the letters inspires the use of the contextual method, which can help rebuild the conditions in which Paul linked with his churches. The idea of context will aid the right interpretation.

Though Paul's letters did not recurrently divulge his life involvements, on occasion these involvements served his missionary desires, and so he encompassed them in his letters. Paul's life can be separated into three phases: The first phase of his life was when he was a devout Jew. He was born to Jewish parents and appears to have gotten a good education. Since Paul spoke and wrote in Greek, he knew and used the Septuagint. As a Pharisee, Paul cautiously followed the Jewish Law and would probably have been apocalyptically inclined. At this moment of his life, Paul kicked against Christianity, possibly because it revealed that the messiah suffered and died. The second phase of his life encompasses Paul's conversion and modification of his theology in light of Jesus. Paul does not reveal his conversion involvement, but does submit that it involved a meeting with Jesus in his post-resurrection, bodily form. His belief in Jesus' resurrection proved Paul's apocalyptic views. He describes Jesus as the first fruits of the resurrection, the sign that God had already conquered death and, thus, the planetary battle between good and evil had started.

Subsequent to reinterpreting his prospects of the messiah to conform to the events of Jesus' death, Paul had to tackle the hard-hitting problem of the Jewish Law in respect to the new era. After Paul's repentance, he did not believe that a person could become righteous by following the Law; one could become righteous only by faith in Christ (or through the "faithfulness of Christ"; the Greek can mean either). God gave the Law and was good, but it was given as a guide for right behavior, not a way of turning righteous. When Paul believed that it was not the Law that made a person righteous, he seemingly deduced that Gentiles did not need to translate to Judaism to acquire salvation. Besides, God's original covenant with Abraham in the Jewish Scriptures now involved people from all nations.

The third period of Paul's life centers on his missionary activities. Paul wrote to communities he had founded but had subsequently left to continue his mission elsewhere. This correspondence represents only one side of a conversation since Paul often responded to letters he received from his churches. In many of these letters, Paul urged Christians ostensibly to return to their original faith (especially when other missionaries had come preaching a different gospel) and clarified characteristics of his teaching that church members had misunderstood or forgotten.

Paul's designation appears in thirteen epistles, but his authorship is challenged. Consistent with different biblical scholars, the number of letters actually ascribed to Paul differs from four to thirteen, with a majority approving seven. A revisit to authorship ascription problem resulted to two operative methods Burrows' Delta, and Labbé's intertextual distance. Built on these results, a hierarchical clustering is then used portraying that four groups can be obtained, that is (Colossians-Ephesians), (1 and 2 Thessalonians), (Titus, 1 and 2 Timothy), and (Romans, Galatians, 1 and 2 Corinthians).

Besides, an authentication method based on the impostors' approach shows obviously that the collection (Colossians-Ephesians) is written by the similar author who appears not to be Paul. The similar deduction can be found for the cluster (Titus, 1 and 2 Timothy). The Letter to Philemon remains as a singleton, deprived of any adjacent stylistic relationship with the other epistles. Lastly, a group of four letters (Romans, Galatians, 1 and 2 Corinthians) is surely written by the same author (Paul), but the confirmation procedure also specifies that 2 Corinthians is interrelated to 1 Thessalonians, rendering a clear and simple interpretation hard.

Undoubtedly, it is attested that the Pauline Letters come to an agreement with fourteen letters accredited to Paul the apostle and written between around AD 47 (projected year for the Epistle to the Galatians) to around AD 68 (2 Timothy). Being in the New Testament, these letters are the oldest Christian writings and epitomize a classical authorship provenance problem. As stated by the Orthodox tradition, Paul penned these fourteen letters, but the Catholic canon accredited only thirteen to Paul. The last one (Hebrews), written incognito, a parallel to Paul's doctrine but it is commonly acknowledged that the exact author is not Paul. To Protestantism churches, the number of letters penned by Paul differs from four to thirteen. Regarded as revered text, people admit that the authorship of these letters cannot be evaluated because they agree with words of God. Biblical scholars have though disputed the authorship of these letters from the early stage, with Marcion of Sinope (85-160) or St Jerome (347-420).

The Pauline missives, similarly named Epistles of Paul or Letters of Paul, are the thirteen books of the New Testament, composed of letters, which are largely attributed to Paul the Apostle, although authorship of some is in argument. Among these letters are some of the earliest extant Christian documents. They offer awareness into the beliefs and debates of early Christianity. As part of the canon of the New Testament, they are introductory texts for both Christian theology and ethics. The Epistle to the Hebrews, even though it does not bear his name, was traditionally ascribed to Pauline for a thousand years, but from the 16th century headlong view progressively moved against Pauline authorship and few scholars now attribute it to Paul, typically because it does not sound like any of his other epistles in style and content. Most scholars agree that Paul actually wrote seven of the Pauline epistles, but that four of the epistles in Paul's name are pseudepigraphic (Ephesians, First Timothy, Second Timothy, and Titus); scholars are separated on the validity of two of the epistles. The Pauline epistles are generally positioned in-between the Acts of the Apostles and the general epistles in modern editions. Most Greek manuscripts, though, place the General epistles first, and a few minuscules (175, 325, 336 and 1424) position the Pauline epistles at the end of the New Testament.

3.2 Lost Pauline Epistles

Paul's own writings repeatedly ascertain some of his letters that have not been found:

- A first epistle to Corinth, referenced at 1 Corinthians 5:9
- A third epistle to Corinth, also called the Severe Letter, referenced at 2 Corinthians 2:4 and 2 Corinthians 7:8–9
- An earlier epistle to the Ephesians referenced at Ephesians 3:3–4
- The Epistle to the Laodiceans, referenced at Colossians 4:16

The first group of the Pauline epistles is held to be that of Marcion of Sinope in the early 2nd century, while it is possible that Paul first gathered his letters for publication himself. Paul's assemblage circulated disjointedly from other early Christian writings and was later added to the New Testament.

3.3 Clusters of Pauline Letters

In our New Testament, Pauline letters are published in downward order of length, first the series of letters to communities, then the series of letters to individuals. This published order transmits no submission of sequential order. A suitable consortium is:

1. Early Epistles: 1-2 Thessalonians.

The authorship of the first is undeniable. Some scholars would dispute authorship of the second.

2. The Major Epistles: Galatians, 1-2 Corinthians, Romans.

These structure the standard for Pauline letters. Their authorship is undisputed. Some have though proposed that Second Corinthians is in fact an assemblage of several Pauline letters.

3. The Captivity or Prison Epistles: Philippians, Colossians, Ephesians, Philemon.

Each of these claims to have been written by Paul during his imprisonment, each of them has a problem excluding Philemon. Philippians is once more conceivably an assortment of Pauline records. Colossians and Ephesians display a substantial development of thought and language from the Great Epistles; there is disagreement whether such development within five years is psychologically reasonable. Furthermore, Ephesians has the problem that it appears to use in a curiously deliberate way ideas and words taken over both from Colossians and from the earlier letters.

4. The Pastorals: 1-2 Timothy, Titus.

These three letters suppose a mission of Paul to the East after his detention in Rome. Their Pauline authorship comprises quite a lot of problems, and they are usually measured post-Pauline and pseudepigraphal.

4.0 Summary

Paul contributed immensely to the propagation of the gospel of Christ in the world of his day hitherto and most of his writings are preserved for propagation of the gospel. The Pauline Letters come to an agreement with fourteen letters accredited to Paul the apostle and written between around AD 47. Some of the letters written by Paul were lost.

5.0 Conclusion

It is attested in this study that Paul as missionary authored most of the New Testament books that bears his name. Paul's designation appears in thirteen epistles, but his authorship is challenged. His message comprised the claim that Jesus died for the salvation of both Jews and Gentiles. Paul's life centered on his missionary activities.

Self-Assessment Exercises

1. Who authored Pauline epistles?
2. What are the major divisions of Pauline epistles?

3. Give a brief highlight on “Lost Pauline Letters”

6.0 References for further Reading

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Unit Two: Early Epistles

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1.0 Introduction

Early epistles in this piece refer to 1 and 2 Thessalonians. The New Testament epistles comprise theology applied to the life of the Church. They should not be regarded as transitory personal letters. They have a certified character by virtue of their connotation with the apostles of Christ. Thus far, neither should they be treated as formal theological treatises. They are letters, written to meet relatively definite needs. First Thessalonians is believed to teach an imminent return of Christ, while 2 Thessalonians emphasizes that certain historical actions will transpire before Christ's return **2.0**

2.0 Objectives

By the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- Identify Early Epistles
- Ascertain the reasons why these epistles were written
- Prove authenticity of Pauline authorship of Early Epistles

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Epistle of 1 Thessalonians

Author, Purpose and Date:

The author of this epistle identified himself as the apostle Paul (1 Thess. 1:1; 2:18). Paul's authorship has sporadically been challenged, but with noteworthy lack of success. The prospect of contributions from Silas and Timothy in respect to the substance of the Thessalonian letters cannot be ascertained with any inevitability. Certain distinctiveness of these epistles, in relation with the rest of the Pauline corpus, may be traceable to the inspiration of one or the other of these handy companions of Paul. Paul wrote this letter to guarantee the Thessalonians of Paul's love and to educate them on the significance of living for Christ and appropriately understanding the implications of his return. God is to be appreciated for the faithfulness of his people. Believers are to be applauded for their faithfulness and are to live lives pleasing to God. Believers who have died will rise when at the second coming of

Christ. Believers must continuously be prepared for the return of Christ. The letter is dated in A.D. 50-51.

Time, Place of Writing and Audience

Paul virtually wrote his first letter to the Thessalonians from Corinth, where Silas and Timothy, co despatchers of the letters, were reunited with him (Acts 18:5; 2 Cor. 1:19). This epistle was most probable written in A.D. 50 or 51, and 2 Thessalonians was written soon afterward. Consequently, 1 and 2 Thessalonians are among the earliest letters we have from Paul's hand, the letter to the Galatians holding the only rational claim to an earlier date. The city of Thessalonica was called for the half-sister of Alexander the Great and was originated about 315 B.C. by her husband, King Cassander of Macedonia. In Roman times it was the provincial seat of government, and it was governed by five or six "city officials" (Acts 17:6; from the Greek, *politarch*, "city ruler").

On Paul's second missionary expedition, he and his associates Silas and Timothy had come to this city of over 200,000 along the Egnatian Way after having been "insulted" at Philippi (1 Thess. 2:2), their last base of ministry, according to the book of Acts. Paul preached and argued in the synagogue in Thessalonica for three consecutive Sabbaths (Acts 17:2). The Thessalonian correspondence designates that the composition of the congregation was principally Gentile, encouraging the view that an efficacious ministry among Gentiles sustained after Paul's admittance to the synagogue was detached. During their truncated visit in Thessalonica, which cannot have persisted more than numerous months, the missionaries ostensibly received more than one trivial contribution for their sustenance from the Philippian parishioners (Phil. 4:15-16). This token was added to earnings from their own labors (1 Thess. 2:9; 2 Thess. 3:7-8), intended that they were able to sustain themselves without having to expect support from the Thessalonians for any financial payment. They set an example of meek, hardworking behavior for a minority in the Church who desired to withdraw from working for a living.

In due course, some followers of the Jewish community enlisted crooked men to kindle hostility against the Christians. A riot erupted, and a number of Christians, as well as a Jewish convert named Jason, were hauled before the authorities. Jason and the others were compelled to post security money to ensure the amiable demeanor of the new group. Paul, Silas, and Timothy were instantly whisked away under cover of darkness and soon found themselves in Berea to the west (Acts 17:5-10).

Content

First Thessalonians was motivated by an account Paul had received from Timothy concerning the condition the Thessalonian congregation was going through (1 Thess. 3:6-7). Paul penned with joy and respite, for, according to this account, the Thessalonians were enduring to stand firm in the faith in spite of the untimely withdrawal of Paul and his coworkers and despite aggravation from aggressive factions. Paul built on two significant themes in this letter:

Christ's Second Coming

Much teaching about Christ's return runs through both Thessalonian epistles, particularly in chapters 4-5 of the first letter and chapters 1-2 of the second. Paul's preaching at Athens (Acts 17) confirms that

his strategy among non-Jewish audiences at this time was to address the coming judgment (1 Thess. 4:6), which God has positioned in the hands of the exalted Christ.

The return of Christ for judgment will proximately precede a resurrection of the just for their eternal rest and salvation in the Lord's presence (1 Thess. 4:16; 5:9; 2 Thess. 1:7), along with a resurrection of the unrighteous that Paul supposed would be for their eternal departure from Christ (2 Thess. 1:9). The beginning of the end will be preceded by a prevalent crusade of apostasy and by the advent of a diabolical "man of lawlessness" (2 Thess. 2:3; cf. 2 Thess. 2:1-12). Since this person had not yet sighted, those in the Thessalonian congregation who had been claiming that the "day of the Lord" (2 Thess. 2:2) had already arrived were to be quietened.

The Divine Christ

Another prominent feature of these letters is Paul's hypothesis of Christ's divine status. This is all the more outstanding because of the early date of the letters and the spontaneous and imprudent nature of the references. Several times Jesus Christ and God his Father are allied together as the common source of divine blessing and the mutual object of prayer (1 Thess. 1:1; 3:11; 2 Thess 1:1-2, 12; 2:16; 3:5, 16). Paul's usage of the Old Testament expression "day of the Lord (Yahweh)," in which "the Lord (Yahweh)" is now discovered to be the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thess. 5:2). The unified work of the three Persons of the Trinity is declared in 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14.

3.2 Epistle of 2 Thessalonians

Author, Purpose and Date

Paul claimed authorship of this epistle (2 Thess. 1:1; 3:17). Ignatius of Antioch, Polycarp, and Justin Martyr were all apparently acquainted with this letter during the first half of the second century. Regardless of this early confirmation, 2 Thessalonians has suffered more recurrent and more persuasive attacks on its authenticity than has 1 Thessalonians. Some scholars have seen the close resemblances in theme matter and phraseology between the two letters as a sign of inauthenticity. But this indication should be read another dimension. Who was more skilled of reverberating Paul's views and expressions than Paul himself? Some transcribers maintain that the two letters teach contending views of the return of Christ and therefore cannot both be products of the same author. First Thessalonians is believed to teach an imminent return of Christ, while 2 Thessalonians asserts that certain historical actions will transpire before Christ's return. The hypothetical conflict is illusive. 1 Thessalonians says nothing certain about the imminence of the second coming, emphasizing only the unexpectedness and swiftness with which the day of the Lord will overtake the imprudent. 2 Thessalonians stipulates an order of events so as to counter a new misinterpretation at Thessalonica that the day of the Lord had already taken place.

Moreover, 2 Thessalonians 2:5 and 2 Thessalonians 3:10 equally unveil information that, had it not been genuine, could effortlessly have been verified counterfeit for at least a full generation. It is also hard to envisage why the warning against letters deceptively written in Paul's name (2 Thess. 2:2) would have been included in a counterfeit letter. In totality, there is every reason to uphold that Paul is the author. The purpose of the letter is to follow up his aforementioned letter (1 Thessalonians) by tutoring the Thessalonians more about the return of Christ and the significance of responsible daily

living. Believers are to endure through persecution until Christ's return. Followers of Christ must not be misinformed by conjectures about his second coming. The return of Christ will bring inordinate judgment and reward. Believers are to live reliably in their regular dealings in this world as they anticipate Christ's return. The epistle is dated in A.D. 50-52.

Time, Place of Writing and Audience

This is already taken care of during 1 Thessalonians.

Content

Two foremost leitmotifs in this letter warrant distinct consideration. As in 1 Thessalonians, Paul again addressed questions raised up about the return of Christ. After conveyance of 1 Thessalonians, the apostle had received additional reports relating to the Thessalonian congregation. There was cause for delight, for the Thessalonians continued to grow in faith, love and perseverance (2 Thess. 1:3-4), but there was similarly cause for worry in relation to doctrinal and behavioral matters. 2 Thessalonians was written primarily to complement Paul's earlier teaching. In it he amended a disturbing false belief that the day of the Lord had already taken place (2 Thess. 2:1-11). This erroneous claim may have been due in part to wrong inferences drawn from Paul's own teaching, on top of the congregation's aching experience of persecutions alleged to designate the coming end of the world.

Paul also dealt with lingering inactivity (2 Thess. 3:6-15). This erroneous conduct of some within the Church had continued undiminished after the first letter (1 Thess. 4:11-12; 5:14), stemming from the time the missionaries had been present (2 Thess. 3:10-11). Paul had already given discourses to remedy the situation, but according to renewed reports (2 Thess. 3:11) matters had only deteriorated. Many scholars attribute this idleness to a nervous anticipation that the Lord's return was imminent (2:1-2 Thess. 3), accompanied by the supplementary conclusion that ongoing work for one's daily nourishment amounted to a renunciation of faith. Yet it must be pointed out that Paul never overtly stated that construction himself. Since 2 Thessalonians 3:10 powerfully proposes that the problem had surfaced already while the missionaries were in Thessalonica, it would appear to be improbable that eschatological blunders gave birth to the problem, though they may have provided an appropriate rationale for its spread.

4.0 Summary

The return of Christ for judgment will imminently herald a resurrection of the just for their eternal rest and salvation in the Lord's presence (1 Thess. 4:16; 5:9; 2 Thess. 1:7), accompanied by a resurrection of the unrighteous that Paul asserted would be for their eternal departure from Christ (2 Thess. 1:9). The beginning of the end will dawn before by a rampant battle of apostasy and by the advent of a diabolical "man of lawlessness" (2 Thess. 2:3; cf. 2 Thess. 2:1-12).

5.0 Conclusion

1 and 2 Thessalonians were written by Paul apostle to Christian congregations in Thessalonica to guarantee the theme of Paul's love and to instruct them on the implication of living for Christ and

suitably understanding the significance of his return. God is to be cherished for his faithfulness to his people. Paul gave a thorough teaching on the second coming of Christ to erode mixed feelings.

Self-Assessment Exercises

1. Who authored early epistles?
2. What was the purpose that prompted the writing of early epistles?
3. Name the recipients of early epistles

6.0 References for Further Reading

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Unit 3: Major Epistles

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 - 3.2 Epistle of 1 Corinthians
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1.0 Introduction

The composition of major epistles comprised the letters to Galatians, 1 and 2 Corinthians and Romans. He wrote to help believers in Galatia fight false teachers who taught that salvation comes only to those who obey the laws. They were made to understand that justification before God comes by faith alone. Paul wrote 1 Corinthians to address divisions that emanated out of crises among believers and for the 2 Corinthians, he wrote to express affection and gratitude for earlier repentance in Corinth and to increase further allegiance to Paul as an apostle of Christ. The purpose he penned Roman is almost similar to what he addressed in 1 Corinthians. He wrote to present the Gospel message to the believers in Rome and to describe how the Gospel heals divisions between Jewish and Gentile converts.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Epistle of Galatians

Author, Purpose and Date

The apostle Paul wrote Galatians (Gal. 1:1). He revealed a cluster of his coworkers who had some role in sending the letter (Gal. 1:2), but its style and theology determine that Paul was its author. A few scholars, beginning in the 18th C, measured the letter pseudonymous (written by someone else, using Paul's name), but their arguments are now inquisitiveness of Biblical scholarship. He wrote to help believers in Galatia fight false teachers who taught that salvation comes only to those who complement the human worth of obedience to the law to their faith in Christ. Justification before God comes by faith alone. Sanctification in daily life originates by faith through the power of the Spirit. Paul's message of salvation by faith apart from works can be reliable. The Gospel of salvation by faith is imparted in all the Scriptures. Legalism turns us away from Christ to vainness and judgment. Freedom from legalism is liberty to live for Christ by the Spirit. Eternal salvation emanates only to those who believe and live in the true Gospel. The missive is dated in A.D 49-55.

Time, Place of Writing and Audience

The question of the letter's date is intertwined with the problem of its destination. Paul named the addressees as "Galatians" (Gal. 3:1; cf. 1:2), but to which Galatians was he writing? He may have been directing his letter precisely to the Celtic people who lived in northern Galatia and who were extensively known as "Galatians," or he may have been addressing churches in the whole province of Galatia. When we survey the path of Paul's first and second missionary journeys (Acts 13-14; 15:36-18:22), we realize that this question has insinuations for the epistle's date, in addition to its affiliation to Paul's other letters. Paul toured Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe (all cities in southern Galatia) on his first and second missionary journeys. If he wrote to southern Galatia, he may well have written to those churches first in his ministry, undoubtedly soon after the first missionary journey, about the time of the Jerusalem council (c. A.D. 48; cf. Acts 15; cf. Gal 2:11-14). The most prevalent date among those who embrace this view is A.D. 48-49. If they are accurate, Galatians may be Paul's earliest extant epistle. It has also been proposed that Paul wrote to southern Galatia after the Jerusalem council (Acts 15) and that he referred to the council in Galatians 2:1-10, but this view appears doubtful because Paul did not depend on the verdict of the council to support his views.

Many scholars deduce, though, that Galatians was written to the ethnic Galatians in the north. If this view is precise, Paul possibly wrote the letter after passing through "Galatia and Phrygia" (Acts 18:23) on his third missionary journey. Many who follow the "northern Galatian hypothesis" maintain that Paul wrote the letter either during his two-year stay in Ephesus (Acts 19) or as he was traveling through Macedonia on his way to Greece near the end of his third missionary journey (Acts 20:1-6; cf. 2 Cor. 2:13). If this is right, then Galatians was doubtless written in A.D. 54 or 55. Theories that date the letter late in Paul's career have the worth of placing Galatians within the similar period as 2 Corinthians, Romans, and perhaps Philippians - epistles with which Galatians bears some thematic correspondence.

Content

Galatians was written to respond to explicit problems within specific Churches. In order to comprehend the epistle, some knowledge of that situation is indispensable. Not long after the Galatians had believed the gospel, protesters came among them who confronted Paul personally (Gal. 4:17) and discoursed an inaccurate form of Christianity (Gal. 1:6-7). Their "gospel" demanded circumcision of Gentile Christians as an emblematic obligation to looking for salvation through works of the law (Gal. 6:12). The protesters contended that the Galatians not only had to believe in Christ for salvation, but also had to exercise circumcision (Gal. 2:3-5; 5:2, 6, 11; 6:12-13, 15). The enthusiasm of these protesters, probable echoes Jewish burden as well as their own pride. They were endeavoring to turn these Gentile Christians to Jewish traditions under pressure from nationalistic Jewish groups in Judea. Consistent with the Jewish historian Josephus, Judean Jews were becoming progressively bigoted of contact between Jews and Gentiles throughout the last half of the first century.

The protesters were not contented simply to preach their brand of the gospel; they also struggled to disrepute Paul (Gal. 4:17), who had originated the Galatian Churches. Their attacks may have taken one or more of the succeeding forms: First, they may have asserted that Paul was a traitor who had rebelled his superiors, the Jerusalem apostles. Paul replied to this attack in Galatians 2:1-10. Second, they may have declared that Paul had freshly argued with Peter over whether the gospel demanded

Gentiles to turn out to be Jews in order to become Christians. Paul gave his explanation of the meeting with Peter in Galatians 2:11-14. Third, the protesters may have blowout the view that Paul had firstly preached circumcision for salvation (Gal. 5:11) but had lately changed his gospel so that he might more effortlessly accommodate the Gentiles (Gal. 1:10). Paul responded that his change of viewpoint occasioned from a revelation received unswervingly from Christ (Gal. 1:11-24).

The Galatians, for their portion, were displaying curiosity both in the gossips about Paul and in the protesters' new formula of the gospel. By the period Paul wrote to them, they were in the course of abandoning the true Gospel and, accordingly, God himself (Gal. 1:6-7). They now sought to be "under the law" (Gal. 4:21; cf. 5:1) and, precisely, to become circumcised (Gal. 5:2). This conversion to a "different gospel" (Gal. 1:6) was not a plane one. Opposition broke out within the community (Gal. 5:15; 6:3-5). Paul's purpose in writing was to influence the Galatians that circumcision is not compulsory in order to be saved. The "truth of the gospel" (Gal. 2:5, 14) is that salvation comes by faith in Jesus Christ. Anyone who endeavors to disrupt that consecrated sphere of faith by announcing other necessities degrades the gospel and must be resisted at all costs (Gal. 1:8-9).

Galatians has played a fundamental role in Reformed theology since it obviously asserts that salvation is the gift of God's grace. Salvation is undeserved and unmerited (Gal. 1:3, 6, 15; 2:19, 21; 6:18) and is received by faith alone (Gal. 2:15-16). Pretty simply, this is "the truth of the gospel" (Gal. 2:5, 14). Paul exhibited profound anger over the protesters' renunciation of this truth (Gal. 3:1; 5:12), cautioning that those who castoff this truth cannot imagine to be saved (Gal. 1:8; 5:4).

Paul's prominence on the doctrine of faith alone upsurges from his view of what Christ has accomplished. Christ is the One who introduced the age to come, the final phase of salvation and judgment for the world. He bore the curse of the law in our place on the cross (Gal. 3:13; 6:14) and saves us from this age of sin and death (Gal. 1:3-4). Made one with him, we are covered with his righteousness (Gal. 3:26-27), our sure hope (Gal. 5:5). Because we are united to Christ, we will enter the age of the new creation (Gal. 6:15), to obtain the rights of his Sonship (Gal. 4:4-5) and are empowered by the Spirit of the Son to live lives pleasing to God (Gal. 5:16-18, 25). Against the proud arrogance of sinners who think they can make their own salvation by keeping God's law, Paul's boasting was only in the cross and in receiving the promise of God by faith (Gal. 6:14).

3.2 Epistle of 1 Corinthians

Author Purpose and Date

This letter attributes Paul as its author, and the Pauline authorship of the Corinthian correspondence has not been extremely interrogated. Even radical scholars admit that the epistle is essential to our understanding of Paul's ministry and message. He wrote to oppose insolence, divisions and dearth of love that had arisen out of arrogance and pomposity in the Corinthian Church. The Church must be united not divided. Christians must look to God for their standard of wisdom, not to the world. Appropriate Church courts and discipline safeguard the peace and spotlessness of the Church. Christian freedom must be exercised in ways that defend those who are feeble in faith. Worship and the practice of spiritual gifts must reverence and honor God and fellow believers. The authenticity of the future bodily resurrection of believers is essential to the Gospel. The letter is dated in c. A.D. 55.

Time, Place of Writing and Audience

Paul wrote from Ephesus (1 Cor. 16:8), virtually during his third missionary journey (c. A.D. 53-57). Since Paul remained in Ephesus for well over two years (Acts 19:8, 10), we may date the writing of 1 Corinthians about the year A.D. 55. Although the book of Acts is silent about this correspondence, Acts 18:1-11 gives us some vital information about the founding of the Church in Corinth during Paul's second missionary journey (c. A.D. 50-52). First, Paul came to Corinth after his visit to Athens (Acts 17:16-34), an experience that had prompted him of the foolishness of worldly wisdom. Second Corinthians 2:1-5 advocates that this event with the Athenian philosophers made Paul more resolute than ever to preach the simple message of the cross, nevertheless disgusting it might be to some. Second, with the backing of the powerful Christian couple Aquila and Priscilla (1 Cor. 16:19), Paul preached in the synagogue in Corinth till Jewish antagonism forced him to concentrate his ministry on Gentiles. Third, the Christian worshipers in Corinth, comprised of both Jews and Gentiles, thrived dramatically (Acts 18:8-10). Lastly, Paul's ministry in Corinth persisted more than 18 months (Acts 18:11,18). Paul had purpose to anticipate a degree of spiritual growth from the Corinthian Christians. This letter discloses that after Paul left Corinth, the Church advanced an extraordinary number of grave problems. Backbiting and division, misinterpretation of the sacraments, lack of orderliness during the worship services, theological heresy and the excesses of moral negligence and unwholesome abstinence plagued the congregation. However, Corinth was not only one of the biggest cities in the Roman world, but also one of the most corrupt. A strategic commercial center, the city sought to deliver international pleasures. It was a background that polarized the Christians, some insisting that identifying with sinners was allowable and essential, others arguing that some measure of separation was important to reserve holiness. These contrasting propensities spun out of control in Corinth and threatened the future of the believers.

Content

We may deduce from 1 Corinthians 5:9 that Paul had sent the church a previous letter (which is no longer existing), encouraging them to detached from immoral Christians. This letter must have also enclosed an appeal for an offering, not tithe (1 Cor. 16:1-4), and undoubtedly other instructions correlated to problems within the congregation. The problems did not decrease. In due course, the apostle got information that the Church in Corinth was being torn apart by interior divisions, predominantly as an upshot of some in the congregation observing themselves as more spiritual and educated than their fellow believers (1 Cor. 1:11-12; 3:1-4; 8:1-3). Pride also led to criticisms threw at Paul (1 Cor. 4:1-4), gross immorality by some Church members (1 Cor. 5:1) and lawsuits among Christians (1 Cor. 6:1-6). Additionally, the Church itself had written a letter to Paul demanding teaching about such matters as marriage and divorce, meat offered to idols, spiritual gifts, and the process Paul was using for his collection (1 Cor. 7:1, 25; 8:1; 12:1; 16:1). The Corinthians also requested for a visit from Apollos (1 Cor. 16:12). Paul was antagonized with an immense task, and he wrote to solve the problem.

The explicit issues that had come up in Corinth determined the composition of the letter. Many interpreters have proposed that the letter is slackly divided into two parts: (1) the matters that had been conveyed to Paul (1 Cor. 1-6) and (2) the problems the Corinthians had elevated in their letter (1 Cor. 7-16). The Greek phrase *peri de*, usually translated "now about," appears to familiarize Paul's responses to their precise questions (1 Cor. 7:1, 25; 8:1; 12:1; 16:1, 12). Though such a division may

not precisely reflect every section of the epistle, it does deliver a treasured synopsis. One should note, though, that behind the great variety of matters tackled in this document lie some profound and periodic problems. Confrontations to Paul's authority and an absence of love exposed that the Corinthian believers had become occupied with pride, considering themselves more spiritual and insightful than other Christians. In the instance of dealing with these matters, the apostle Paul set forth his teaching on a number of specific doctrines that he believed the Corinthians required to receive.

3.3 Epistle of 2 Corinthians

Author, Purpose and Date

It is attested that the apostle Paul was the author of this letter (2 Cor. 1:1) is almost universally recognized. He wrote to express affection and gratitude for earlier repentance in Corinth and to boost additional allegiance to Paul as an apostle of Christ. Christians should be consoled and encouraged from God's care in the midst of suffering. God's strength is demonstrated through human weakness. The New (renewed) Covenant in Christ wonderfully achieves the prospects of the Old Covenant. Christians must help meet each other's physical needs. The epistle was written in A.D. 55.

Time, Place of Writing and Audience

Paul undoubtedly wrote this letter within a year of writing of 1 Corinthians, after his departure from Ephesus in Asia Minor (Acts 19:1; 20:1) but previously he reached Corinth in Greece (Acts 20:2). After instituting the Church in Corinth in A.D. 51-52 (Acts 18:1-18), Paul came back to Antioch, ending his second missionary journey (Acts 18:22). On his third missionary journey Paul toured to Ephesus and remained there for three years (Acts 19:1-41; 20:31). During his stay in Ephesus, envois came from Corinth with requests, which Paul responded in 1 Corinthians (1Cor. 16:17-18). Erstwhile, Paul outwardly heard of ongoing hitches at Corinth and made a speedy journey from Ephesus to Corinth. This first visit in Corinth (after his initial 18-months stay) did not go healthy, and Paul subsequently mentioned it as a "painful visit" (2 Cor. 2:1). Though a later visit is not documented in Acts, Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians that he planned to travel to Corinth a "third time" (2 Cor. 12:14; 13:1). Details were not given about what made the first visit painful, but seemingly one or more of the believers at Corinth confront or extremely offended Paul (2 Cor. 2:5, 10).

Most analysts maintain that after his "painful visit" Paul wrote the Corinthians what is commonly referred to as a "severe letter," which has not been conserved (2 Cor. 2:3-4; 7:8). Other interpreters aver that the letter referred to in these verses is in fact the one now called 1 Corinthians. Still others believe that the letter referred to is 2 Corinthians 10-13, which now follows 2 Corinthians 1-9 was initially a detached letter.

While scheduling a second brief journey to Corinth which would be his third stay there, Paul sent Titus by sea to deliver his "severe letter," while Paul himself took the lengthier land route through Troas and Macedonia (2 Cor. 2:12-13; 7:5-9,13-15; Acts 20:1-2). Paul did not know how the Corinthians would accept Titus and the letter he bore. So when he left Ephesus and traveled toward Troas, he experienced substantial worry concerning the Corinthian Church (2 Cor. 2:13; 7:5). Though there was a prospect for operative ministry when he reached Troas (2 Cor. 2:12), Paul's spirit was still intensely bothered. He left Troas and went on to Macedonia (2 Cor. 2:13; most probable to the Church

in Philippi), wanting to meet Titus there. When Titus lastly arrived perhaps at Philippi, but possibly at Thessalonica, Paul was overawed with joy as he overheard about the Corinthians' honest repentance and deep warmth and allegiance to him (2 Cor. 7:6-15).

Paul wrote 2 Corinthians from Macedonia to show appreciation for the repentance and transformed submission of the Corinthian believers (2 Cor. 7:5-16). He also wrote to encourage them to finish their collection to help the poor Christians in Jerusalem (2 Cor. 8-9). Paul safeguarded his ministry against the indictments of "false apostles" (2 Cor. 11:13) in Corinth, who were challenging his authority and veracity (2 Cor. 10-13; cf. 2 Cor. 3:1-6; 7:2).

Paul arrived in Corinth and continued there for three months (Acts 20:2-3). He then left for Jerusalem with the collection that had been sent from many churches to support the poor Christians there (Acts 20:3-21:17). The audience is the same as found in "Introduction to 1 Corinthians."

Content

Second Corinthians is a very personal letter full of expressions of profound feeling. As such, it affords us astonishing intuition into Paul's heart. Two main themes manifest in consonance with this: divine comfort and encouragement in the midst of suffering and troubles (2 Cor. 1:1-7:16; cf. 2 Cor. 1:3-7; 7:4, 7, 13) and God's strength displayed through human weakness (2 Cor. 10:1-13:14; cf. 2 Cor. 12:9-10). Other important secondary themes comprise the irreproachable nature of Paul's behavior (2 Cor. 1:12, 17-18; 6:3-10; 7:2-3), his recurrent suffering for the sake of the Church and for God's glory (2 Cor. 1:5-11; 4:8-12; 6:4-10; 11:23-12:9), his strong love for all the Churches and particularly for the Corinthian Church (2 Cor. 2:4; 11:2, 7-11; 12:14-15) and his apostolic authority to build up the Church and to defeat any antagonism (2 Cor. 2:9; 10:8; 13:8-10). Other distinguishing emphases comprise the glory of the New (renewed) Covenant ministry (2 Cor. 3) and the principles of Christian stewardship and charity (2 Cor. 8-9).

As designated above, some scholars have proposed that 2 Corinthians was not initially a single letter. They most often claim that 2 Corinthians 10-13 constitute a separate epistle written on a different instance and later attached to 2 Corinthians 1-9. The main reason for thinking of 2 Corinthians 10-13 as a distinct message is that Paul's tone and attitude toward the Church at Corinth appear positive and confirming in 2 Corinthians 1-9, but severe and bullying in 2 Corinthians 10-13. Could both sections have been written on the similar occasion, and could the two be addressing the same situations in the same Church? The variation of tone at 2 Corinthians 10:1 may be as a result of the change of subject matter. In the previous part of the epistle, Paul was chiefly concerned with sharing his joy and thanksgiving at the repentance of the Corinthians. He also desired to give an all-embracing and positive account of his own ministry of the gospel. Having finished, he appealed to the Corinthians to complete the gathering of gifts for the Jerusalem Christians (2 Cor. 8-9). Lastly, leaving the most repugnant duty until the end, he condemned the problem of the false apostles and their indictments against him (2 Cor. 10-13). In spite of the conditions, such a change in tone is reasonable. Besides, it is noteworthy that from the initial times in the history of the church there has been no sign of division in this epistle, either in the manuscript tradition or in the earliest historical writings of the church. It has been read and understood as a unified epistle, and this still appears to be the finest account.

3.4 Epistle of Romans

Author, Purpose and Date

The author is the Apostle Paul. The opening (Rom. 1:1) and the biographical details (Rom. 1, 15-16) show that the Apostle Paul wrote the letter to the Romans. The letter was already cited and listed as Paul's during the 2nd Century. Its authenticity has been disputed only rarely and never persuasively. He wrote to present the Gospel message to the believers in Rome and to describe how the Gospel heals divisions between Jewish and Gentile converts. Jews and Gentiles are sinners under God's judgment consequently they obtain justification through faith alone besides works. Sanctification, which considerably leads to glorification, takes place through relying on the Holy Spirit. Jews and Gentiles have interrelated roles in history and they must learn to relate the gospel to practical living. The letter is dated in A.D. 55-57.

Time, Place of Writing and Audience

Paul wrote Romans soon before he distributed the gift from the Gentile parishioners to the church in Jerusalem (Rom. 15:25; Acts 24:17). Internal signs recommend that at this time he may have been an inhabitant of Corinth: (1) Phoebe (Rom. 16:1-2) was a member of the Church at Cenchrea, the port of Corinth, (2) Paul's host, Gaius (Rom. 16:23), may have been an inhabitant of Corinth (1 Cor. 1:14), and (3) Erastus had networks with Corinth (Rom. 16:23; Acts 19:22; 2 Tim. 4:20).

Paul undoubtedly wrote this letter during the three months labelled in Acts 20:2-3. While it is not possible to fix an accurate date, a number of issues should be well thought-out. For example, Paul was sighted before Gallio (Acts 18:12), the proconsul (usually a one-year appointment), in Achaia in A.D. 52. Around this time, Paul was in Corinth for some time (Acts 18:18), apparently during the period A.D. 51-53. He then navigated to Ephesus for a short-lived visit and went to Caesarea and possibly Jerusalem and Antioch also (Acts 18:22). Getting back through Galatia and Phrygia (Acts 18:23) to Ephesus, he stayed there for about three years (Acts 19:8, 10) before heading to Jerusalem through Macedonia and Achaia (Acts 19:21). Hence, the earliest likely date for the writing of Romans is toward the end of A.D. 54. But a later date leaves more freedom for Paul's many activities, so the letter is more probable dated sometime amid the end of A.D. 55 and the early months of A.D. 57.

It is attested that the faith of the Roman believers was very popular (Rom. 1:8) and that Paul had anticipated visiting them for some time (Rom. 1:13) submit that the Christian faith had been built in Rome for a considerable period. This idea is reinforced by the report of the Roman historian Suetonius that, Claudius had debarred the Jews in A.D. 49 for rioting "at the provocation of Chrestus" (debatably a reference to Christ). Companions from Rome were live in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:10-11) and may have been the first to bring the Good News to the city. Regardless of tradition extending back through Irenaeus, it is comparatively firm that neither Peter nor Paul instituted the Church in Rome. Paul had never visited the church before writing his epistle to the Romans (Rom. 1:8-13), and the nonappearance of any reference to Peter or the other apostles recommends that the Roman Church had not gone through direct apostolic ministry.

Both Jews and Gentiles were adherents of the Church(es) in Rome. Romans 1:13 designate a preponderance of Gentiles, as perchance does the warning to Gentile Christians not to be self-

esteemed (Rom. 11:13-24). The skirmish between weak and strong (Rom. 14:1-15:13) may have provoked from conflicts between Jewish and Gentile believers. It is even conceivable that some of the house Churches in Rome were wholly Jewish or Gentile (cf. Rom. 16:5, 14-15).

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Paul was at a critical stage in his ministry at the time Romans was written. He held that he had satisfied his ministry in the eastern Mediterranean (Rom. 15:17-23) and that the time was ready for him to move west and evangelize in Spain (Rom. 15:24). He expected to visit the Roman Christians on the way, satisfying a long-time desire and possibly gaining their support as a supporting Church (Rom. 15:24). In this direction, it was crucial for him to present his apostolic identifications, note the expression "my gospel" in Romans 2:16 and 16:25, so they would diagnose the authenticity of his ministry. Paul may also have deemed it necessary to protect his ministry from the false allusions of gossipmongers (Rom. 3:8). Paul's work similarly stood at a critical period in terms of his burden to see the Christian Church as a joint fellowship of Jews and Gentiles merged in the one body of Christ. This is vibrant from the importance he committed to the Gentile love-gift to the Jerusalem Church. It as well surfaces all over Romans in the topic of the uniting of Jews and Gentiles both in sin because of Adam and through grace in Christ. Both Jews and Gentiles need the saving righteousness of the gospel, since all have sinned; it may be received by anybody, since it comes by grace through faith. The outworking of this saving righteousness in history is the key to God's decisive drives for both Jews and Gentiles, and this saving righteousness is to be articulated in the lives of all personally, communally and socially cohesive within the body of Christ as the new people of God. The occasion for writing while in Corinth, the persistent burden of his visit to Jerusalem and the prospect of visiting the capital of the empire before bringing the Gospel to the bounds of the then known world were all influences that inspired Paul to write this letter.

Romans' epistle is Paul's most full description of the Gospel. John Chrysostom, the fifth century's greatest preacher, had Romans read aloud to him once a week. Augustine and all of the Reformers saw Romans as vital to an appropriate understanding of the rest of Scripture. In Romans Paul brought together numerous themes that have held a dominant role in Reformed theology: sin, law, judgment, human destiny, faith, works, grace, justification, sanctification, election, the plan of salvation, the work of Christ and of the Spirit, the Christian hope, the nature and life of the church, the place of Jews and Gentiles in the purposes of God, the meaning of the Old Testament, the duties of Christian citizenship and the values of personal godliness, and morality. Nevertheless, Paul did not combine all of these topics merely for the sake of explaining Christian theology. Relatively, each of these teachings subsidized to his superior purposes of uniting Jews and Gentiles in the Roman Church and founding the Roman Church resolutely in the gospel and as a part of the Roman community. He expected that solidifying them in these ways would not only help them mature as a Church, but also better train them to support in his planned missionary activities to Spain.

4.0 Summary

Major epistles refer to letters of Paul to Galatians, 1 and 2 Corinthians and Romans. Under this category he addressed believers in Galatia to avoid dishonest teachers who impart erroneous teaching that salvation is obtainable through submission to the laws. They were informed that justification before God comes by faith alone. In 1 Corinthians he gave instructions on divisions that stemmed out

of crises among believers and for the 2 Corinthians, he expressed friendliness and gratitude for earlier repentance in Corinth and to encourage more allegiance to Paul as an apostle of Christ. Roman is almost parallel to what he addressed in 1 Corinthians.

5.0 Conclusion

Paul's most full description of the Gospel is found in major epistles. Paul addressed several issues that formed the basic teachings in Reformed theology: sin, law, judgment, human destiny, faith, works, grace, justification, sanctification, election, the plan of salvation, the work of Christ and of the Spirit, the Christian hope, the nature and life of the church, the place of Jews and Gentiles in the calendar of God.

Self-Assessment Exercises

1. State Paul's purpose of writing letters to Galatians and Romans
2. When did Paul write 1 and 2 Corinthians?
3. Describe Pauline doctrine of election in his epistles to Romans

6.0 References for Further Reading

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Unit 4: Captivity or Prison Letters

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- 1.0 Introduction
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1.0 Introduction

Prison letters were written when Paul was in chains or prison. This imprisonment in other circumstances was termed as “house arrest.” Captivity epistles include Philippians, Colossians, Ephesians and Philemon. It is apparent in Prison letters that the gospel of Christ will go forward, even in the heart of persecution. Suffering for Christ is a pleasure and results to glory for believers. Christ is sovereign and supreme in condemnation to all other powers. Christ is ultimate over all of creation and over the Church. The Church has amazing blessings in her union with Christ and has been brought from death to life in Christ. Christians are encouraged to uphold forgiveness and reconciliation.

2.0 Objectives

By the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- Differentiate prison epistles from other Pauline epistles
- Appreciate the purpose for which Paul wrote prison epistles
- Articulate the circumstances surrounding all prison letters

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Epistle of Philippians

Author, Purpose and Date

The author identified himself as Paul (Phil. 1:1). This obvious claim is established by the fact that the early church consistently attributed this letter to Paul, based on its many personal references and its resemblance to the other Pauline writings. Paul's initial connection with the Church at Philippi is documented in Acts 16. Encouraged by a vision (Acts 16:6-10), Paul and his contemporaries toured to Philippi (Acts 16:12). Throughout their short-lived visit, God did enormous works and a church was founded (Acts 16:40), as Paul's first fruit in Europe. Paul came back on at least two other instances to encourage the believers there (Acts 20:1-6; 2 Cor. 2:13). He wrote to show gratitude to the Philippians

for their cohesion with him while he was in prison and to cheer them to unity and meek service toward each other in Christ. The gospel of Christ will go advancing, even in the midst of persecution. Suffering for Christ is a delight and results to glory for believers. Believers are to show the Gospel in their lives by helping each other in Christ. Believers are to cling unto the truth and sidestep the excesses of legalism and antinomianism (the credence that the Christian is not subject to the moral law of God). Supporting others in ministry is a vital Christian practice. The letter is dated in c. A.D. 61

Time, Place of Writing and Audience

Paul wrote this letter from prison (Phil. 1:12-30), but the position of the imprisonment is indeterminate. Some scholars deliberate he wrote from Ephesus, but Acts 19 says nothing of his being imprisoned during his prolonged Ephesian ministry. It has similarly been proposed that he wrote this letter during his incarceration in Caesarea (Acts 23:23-26:32). It is most probable, nevertheless, in line with age-old tradition, that Paul wrote Philippians while imprisoned in Rome (Acts 28) and that he did so near the end of that period, around A.D. 61. Philippians 1:13 and 4:22 accord best with a Roman background, and the language of Philippians 1:7-26 proposes legal reports at the highest level-proceedings that were parallel to those Paul faced in Rome. Lastly, Acts 28:16-31 (cf. Phil. 1:12-14) speaks of Paul's freedom to preach during this imprisonment.

The city of Philippi was named for Philip of Macedon, father of Alexander the Great. One purpose for its reputation is that it rests on the Via Egnatia, the main road between the eastern provinces and Rome. As a Roman colony occupied in part by retired Roman soldiers, its peoples adored the rights of Roman citizenship. The nonappearance of Old Testament quotations and Jewish names shows that the church of Philippi was principally Gentile.

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Paul wrote this letter to express both delight and concern. The epistle rings with gratitude for the way God was blessing his saving work among the Philippians and for the distinct oath that occurred between Paul and his readers. At the similar period, there is a gravity to the letter. The Philippians confronted persecution (Phil. 1:27-30) and pressures from false teachings (Phil. 3:2-21). Besides, skirmishes within the Church threatened the ministry in Philippi (Phil. 1:27-2:18; 4:2-3). Paul wrote both to express his joy and to give teaching to the Philippian believers. He concentrated predominantly on the succeeding themes:

- (1) This epistle adequately confirms to the distinct bond of love Paul felt toward the Philippians (Phil. 1:3-8; 4:10-19). They had been faithful in their support of Paul's ministry, and their disposition to suffer with him for Christ's sake was a basis of reassurance for Paul.
- (2) Regardless of the conditions of his imprisonment, Paul's letter echoes with the theme of joy. Diverse expressions point to joy at best 16 times in the letter. Paul's happiness stemmed mainly from the authenticity of the Philippians, and he wanted the same for them as a remedy to all worry (Phil. 4:4-7).
- (3) Philippians concentrates much on the modest state of Jesus' incarnation. The grand "hymn to Christ" (Phil. 2:6-11) offers an archetypal for believers. In his preincarnate condition, Christ Jesus was "in very nature God" (Phil. 2:6). Nevertheless, he took the form of a slave and made himself nobody by taking on human nature and exposing himself to his own creatures. Still, even in this state of disgrace, Christ did not stop being completely divine.

(4) Contrary to those who commanded submission to the Old Testament law as a condition for meriting salvation, Paul emphasized that God has desired for his people to be saved by receiving his righteousness instead of striving to launch their own. Though Paul had been trustworthy in his obedience to the law, he came to realize that his self-assurance in such obedience was a great sin, for it reserved him from believing God. Paul observed his former arrogance with repugnance (Phil. 3:7-8) and embraced Christ alone as his source of self-assurance (Phil. 3:3, 9).

(5) This epistle is full of teaching on practical Christianity. Just as Christ turned out to be a servant, so also the Christian grows into the servant of Christ (Phil. 1:1). Only the person enslaved to Christ is unrestricted to love and serve others (Phil. 2:3-5). Paul emphasized the significance of following Christ in his death and resurrection. As with Christ, the believer's suffering is the prelude to resurrection (Phil. 3:10-11). For the current, it is in the midst of the continuing fight that the Christian experiences joy and enablement (Phil. 3:10; 4:13). Paul emphasized the significance of struggling toward the goal of final salvation. Assured in God's calling, the apostle moves ahead toward the heavenly prize (Phil. 3:13-14). Only as Christians work do they comprehend that God is working in them (Phil. 2:12-13). Human struggle is surely the area in which the power of God is demonstrated.

3.2 Epistle of Colossians

Author, Purpose and Date

The traditional view that apostle Paul wrote Colossians is undeniably accurate (Col. 1:1; 4:18). However, many contemporary scholars have arguments but Pauline authorship is affirmed. First, some critics contend that this letter does not prove Paul's distinctive courtesy to Church officers. This epistle does not speak of elders and deacons, but the letter assuredly does not show any antagonism to Church offices; it simply does not make any remark on them. Second, some dispute to Pauline authorship on the basis of linguistic uniqueness of the letter. Nevertheless, most of the language and style in Colossians is well within the range Paul displays somewhere else. Some rudiments of the vocabulary of this epistle are typical (terms such as "fullness," "mystery," "basic principles," and "humility"), but these words all manifest somewhere else in Paul's writings. Third, the false teaching rebuked in this epistle is not to be recognized with second-century Gnosticism, which did not completely develop until after Paul's period. A vigilant reading designates that if the false teaching was linked with Gnosticism, it was at most an emerging form of it. In light of the obvious declaration of Pauline authorship and the early Church's support of the epistle as trustworthy, we may assuredly declare that Paul wrote this letter. He wrote this letter to uphold and elucidate the sovereignty and sufficiency of Christ in disapproval to all other powers. Christ is ultimate over all of creation and over the Church. Believers must not be jumbled by false virtues that blend true faith with false religions or philosophies. Christ is totally adequate to bring the fullness and newness of life to believers. Christians must rely on Christ, not on any other power. The epistle is dated in c. A.D. 60.

Time, Place of Writing and Audience

Throughout Paul's first imprisonment in Rome (Acts 2:16-31), Epaphras joined him under house arrest (Acts 28; Col. 4:12-13). He informed Paul about false teachings that endangered the Church of Colosse and stayed with Paul to pray for the Churches of the Lycus Valley. It is most likely that Paul wrote his letter to the Colossians in reply to this visit (c. A.D. 60). Paul at no time visited Colosse (Col. 2:1). The Church there had been instituted by Epaphras, a Colossian, obviously in the wake of

Paul's work in Ephesus (A.D. 53-55). Luke acknowledged that Paul's message in Ephesus spread until "all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia listened to the gospel" (Acts 19:10). In former days, Colosse, a city on the Lycus River in southeastern Asia Minor, had been wealthy and big, enjoying a flourishing wool industry and a strategic position on a main overland trade path between Ephesus, 100 miles to the west, and the Euphrates River, some 400 miles to the east. During Paul's time, however, Colosse had deteriorated in the face of the progress of two sister cities in the Lycus Valley: Laodicea and Hierapolis. In Paul's time, Colosse was honestly unimportant market town. It was simply the least important city to which any of Paul's remaining letters was addressed.

Content

The Colossian epistle spoke to Christians who had come under the effect of a false teaching which is Greek philosophy and Judaism. In some measure, this movement taught that the Colossian Christians were under a variety of spiritual forces that required to be conciliated through adoration, asceticism and the adherence of superior sacred days. Paul wrote to assist members of the Church in Colosse hold determinedly to the truth that God had before now acknowledged them by virtue of their relationship with Christ. Whereas rightness, or maturity, still stood before them as an achievement (Col. 1:22-23, 28), they already adored "fullness in Christ" (Col. 2:10), the perfect One.

It is hard to restructure the accurate elements of false teaching to which Paul replied because the epistle is less an evaluation of blunder than a positive speech of the sufficiency of the person and work of Christ. Nevertheless, certain features of this false teaching are obviously seen. First, it appeared to be a "philosophy" (Col. 2:8). As was habitually the case in the Hellenistic era, the word philosophy did not refer to coherent investigation, but to occult assumptions and practices based on a body of "tradition" (Col. 2:8). Second, this false teaching seems to have been powerfully reliant on Judaism. It positioned much worth on legal ordinances derived from the Old Testament, such as food regulations, Sabbath and New Moon adherence, and other stipulations of the Jewish calendar (Col. 2:16). The indication of circumcision (Col. 2:11) similarly points to the Jewish nature of this false teaching, but it does not recommend that the Old Testament rite was a dominant matter in Colosse, as it was in Galatia. Third, the duty of angelic spirits was an imperative element in this teaching. Three crucial features point to that effect:

(1) Paul emphasized Christ's supremacy to and conquest over "the powers and authorities" (Col. 2:15; see also Col. 1:15-16, 19; 2:10, 18-19). He needed the Colossians to stand strong in their obligation to Christ as the Lord of all.

(2) The expression "the basic principles of this world" (Col. 2:8, 20; cf. Gal. 4:3) might also refer to angelic beings. Though some transcribers in the past connected this expression with Jewish legalism, a pagan identification is more probable. The Greek word *stoicheia*, which is translated as "principles," may also be translated "elements." In the first century this word was used in the Greek setting to refer to gods of stars and planets, and even to the physical elements (earth, wind, fire, and water) that were understood to govern the destinies of men and women (note that these similar elements are still taught to possess spiritual power in certain sects of satanism and witchcraft today). For example, the Phrygian god Cybele and her lover Attis are recognized to have been transformed by common pagan piety (though the dating is obscure) into astral and cosmic powers. Equivalent advances took place in Jewish traditions, which unlocked the way for mingling Judaism with these pagan beliefs. Some Jewish

intellectuals fused angels with astral powers believed to be shielding the planets. Furthermore, intertestamental Jewish literature projected Israel caught in the middle of a conflict between two kingdoms led, correspondingly, by good and evil powers that claimed her loyalty. The victory of the good powers over the evil was the assured result of Israel's repentance, full compliance and perfect Sabbath adherence. It seems that the Colossians also may have come under the inspiration of a syncretistic piety, partly Jewish, partly pagan that stimulated homage to these astral or cosmic powers.

(3) The duty of angels in this false teaching is similarly manifest in the phrase "the worship of angels" (Col. 2:18). Early Christians understood angels to be agents in creation and in the giving of the law (Acts 7:53; Gal. 3:19; Heb. 2:2). The teaching in Colosse mixed-up the restricted role angels rightfully have as "ministering spirits" (Heb. 1:14) with the larger planetary role being bestowed on them in some Jewish quarters, along with the role accredited to astronomical powers beyond Judaism. As a means of overpowering fear of the astral or cosmic powers, and under the guise of revelations the "philosophers" received in ecstatic conditions, the Colossians were being advised to follow a routine of asceticism, abstinence and angel veneration.

Paul wrote this letter to attack these false teachings, whatsoever their origin. He disallowed ceremonialism (Col. 2:16-17), asceticism (Col. 2:21, 23), and angel worship (Col. 2:18). Paul dignified Christ as ultimate overall and as the source of all wisdom (Col. 1:15-20; 2:2-3, 9).

3.3 Epistle of Ephesians

Author, Purpose and Date

The apostle Paul wrote this epistle (Eph. 1:1; 3:1). Themes and language identical to other Pauline letters proliferate in Ephesians; its verbal resemblances with Colossians are particularly outstanding. In the contemporary age, however, questions have been raised up about whether Paul really wrote this epistle. Some believe that Ephesians gives the impression to be too reliant on Colossians. It has been observed that even though this letter looks a lot like other letters from Paul, phrases tend to pile up more than in the previous epistles. The letter is less didactic and more prayerful. Doctrine has paved way to doxology; rational argument to admiration. Ideas that are only contained in his earlier letters become obvious here. Such deliberations lead many to assume that Paul himself did not author Ephesians, but by one of his pupils who was trying to further some of Paul's ideas, specially those articulated in Colossians.

The language and sentence structure of Ephesians are surely typical. They are so Pauline, nevertheless, that even if the letter did not bear the name of its writer, it is hard to envisage the Church ever ascribing its authorship to anyone but Paul. It is difficult to sure, as the skeptics of Pauline authorship do, that a person slavishly making efforts to sound like Paul, even lifting some verses word-for-word from Colossians, would equally artistically alter Paul's regular style and enlarge Paul's doctrine. Even less presumable would be the early Church's letdown to determine that such an imitation was not an authoritative Pauline letter. It is far easier to account for the verbal resemblances with Colossians by assuming that Paul wrote Ephesians soon after finishing Colossians. It requires far less credulity to envisage Paul adopting a remarkably prayerful mode to emphasize on the cosmic worth of Christ's Church and of Christ himself. Paul wrote to impart to Christians at Ephesus the wonder and practical insinuations of being the Church in Christ. The Church has gotten amazing blessings in union with

Christ and has been brought from death to life in Christ. The Church will spread universal with Jews and Gentiles combined together in Christ. The Church must endeavor for unity in Christ and must live in the ways of Christ, not return to the habits of the corrupt world. The Church must find strength for spiritual warfare in Christ. The letter is dated in A.D. 60-62.

Time, Place of Writing and Audience

The imprisonment stated in Ephesians 3:1 and Ephesians 6:20 is similar as the one referred to in Colossians 4:3, 10, 18. It undoubtedly references Paul's two-year house arrest (A.D. 60-62) in Rome, which is described in Acts 28. Ephesus was the capital of the Roman province of Asia on the western coast of Asia Minor. A bridge city between the western and eastern splits of the Roman Empire, and among the uppermost five cities of the empire in the first century; it was likewise one of the most significant cities in the spread of Christianity. Paul's evangelism there in A.D. 53-55 is narrated in Acts 19. During Paul's bizarrely lengthy stay there, Ephesus turned out to be the center for the evangelism of the western part of Asia Minor (Acts 19:10). Paul's loving ties with this Church are mirrored in his speech to its elders as he left for Jerusalem (Acts 20:16-38).

The city's most protuberant civic memorial was the temple of the goddess Artemis (Diana), one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. One inscription labelled the city as the "nurturer" of the goddess. Artemis, in turn, was said to have made Ephesus "most glorious" among all the Asian cities. People from this upbringing would have cherished the irony in Paul's words about Christ "nurturing" his own body, the church (Eph. 5:29). They would well have known the point of distinction when Paul defined Christ's goal to present his church as a glorious or "radiant" bride (Eph. 5:27). It was similarly in Ephesus that Paul's preaching of Christ came into battle with an economic structure reliant on pagan worship (Acts 19:23-41) and the occult (Acts 19:17-20). Paul's appeal to expose disgraceful and unproductive deeds of darkness (Eph. 5:8-14) and to get ready for warfare against "spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms" (Eph. 6:12) would have hit readers in Ephesus with unusual vigor.

There are signs that Paul wrote the letter for a wide-ranging audience than Ephesus. The earliest and best Greek manuscripts do not comprise "in Ephesus" (Eph. 1:1) in the address of the letter, but read, "To the saints who are also faithful in Christ Jesus." Numerous significant second- and third-century Church leaders were ignorant of an Ephesian address. Three verses in Ephesians (Eph. 1:15; 3:2; 4:21) fail to recommend the private ties we know to have occurred between Paul and the Ephesians. Furthermore, the letter lacks the personal references and greetings Paul virtually often encompassed in his communication. At the same time, no manuscripts name any other city as the receiver of the epistle. Consequently, many scholars admit Ephesians was written as a general letter that Paul envisioned circulating among a number of churches in western Asia Minor. This would be in keeping with the far-reaching contents of the letter as an unabridged. Even so, it is hard to envisage why "in Ephesus" would have been added to the irresistible majority of manuscripts that do comprise the address if it had not been there in the first place.

Consequently, one of the two theories is most feasible. Paul may have written originally to the Ephesians, but as the letter was spreading from Church to Church over time the address may have begun to be lost. On the other hand, Paul may have sent the letter in two forms: one directly to the Ephesians and the other as a circular for a more universal addressee.

Content

As the letter to the Romans, Ephesians affords a unique insight into Paul's theology, for it was written when Paul had the extravagance of not addressing a critical, local hullabaloo. What stands out about Ephesians is the admiration with which it considers the mystery of the Church. Ephesians designates the church as God's new humankind, a gathering in which the Lord of history has established a sample of the rehabilitated unity and self-respect of the humankind (Eph. 1:10-14; 2:11-22; 3:6, 9-11; 4:1-6:9). The Church is a community in which God's power to reconcile people to himself is practiced and then shared in transformed relationships (Eph. 2:1-10; 4:1-16; 4:32-5:2; 5:22-6:9). It is a new Temple, a building of people, grounded in the sure revelation of what God has done in history and ever growing to become the place where God resides on earth (Eph. 2:19-22; 3:17-19). The Church is an organism in which power and authority are manifested after the pattern of Christ himself (Eph. 1:22; 5:25-27) and as a stewardship, a means of service (Eph. 4:11-16; 5:22-6:9). It is a settlement in a dark world (Eph. 5:3-17), under aggressive attack (Eph. 6:10-17) but presenting light to the lost, standing against humanity's spiritual enemies and expecting the day of ultimate redemption. The Church is a bride being equipped for the approach of her lover and husband (Eph. 5:22-32).

3.4 The Book of Philemon

Author, Purpose and Date

The author is the Apostle Paul, the genuineness of this epistle has not been extremely challenged. The purpose he wrote is to gain forgiveness for the runaway slave Onesimus. Christians must show love and forgiveness toward one another. Christian submission ought to be prompted willingly rather than compellingly. It was written in c. A.D. 60

Time, Place of Writing and Audience

This letter was written while Paul was in prison in Rome (c. A.D. 60), probably at approximately the same time he wrote to the Colossians. This letter was probably delivered to Philemon along with the letter to the Colossians. Paul wrote to Philemon, a Christian brother and slaveholder in Colosse. Philemon's slave Onesimus had run away and, perhaps seeking assistance, had come into contact with Paul in Rome. During this visit Onesimus had become a Christian.

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Paul's overriding purpose in writing this letter was to appeal to Philemon to receive Onesimus back as a Christian brother (Philemon 1:12-16). To accomplish this purpose, Paul reminded Philemon of the brotherly relationship he and Philemon shared in Christ. Since Onesimus had become very dear to Paul (Philemon 1:12, 16), Paul encouraged Philemon to receive back his runaway slave in the same manner as he would receive Paul himself (Philemon 1:17).

Philemon provides us with a clear example of how to apply the teaching of Scripture to everyday problems. Following Christ's example, Paul acted as a mediator out of love for Onesimus, and he pointed to the unity of believers as brothers and sisters in Christ as the basis for mutual love and forgiveness.

4.0 Summary

This same Timothy would later receive two personal letters from Paul that are included in the New Testament (1 and 2 Timothy). Colossians, also written with the help of Timothy, was addressed to the Christians in Colossae. It speaks to the deity of Jesus, Jewish rituals that some had attempted to add to the Christian faith, as well as Paul's request for prayer to advance the Gospel message (Colossians 4). Philemon, in contrast, was a short, personal letter penned regarding a runaway slave named Onesimus. Onesimus had apparently run away from Philemon, his owner who had also become a Christian under Paul's ministry. During Paul's time in Rome, he came into contact with Onesimus and led him to faith in Christ. To address his situation properly, Paul wrote to Onesimus about these events, asking Philemon to release Onesimus. Though a brief letter, Philemon offers perhaps the strongest apologetic in the New Testament regarding how Christians viewed slavery in their world and implications for Christians who desire to help in the freedom of slaves today.

5.0 Conclusion

Despite Paul's situation during the writing of the Prison Epistles, he was not hindered from sharing the Gospel message with others or writing letters to encourage individuals and churches. Acts 28:30-31 tells us, "He lived there two whole years at his own expense, and welcomed all who came to him, proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance." Even in this difficult context, God was at work to empower Paul to change the lives of many.

Self-Assessment Exercises

1. Who were the recipients of Pauline epistles?
2. Explain Pauline Theology in Colossians and Ephesians
3. Describe the purpose that prompted Paul to pen Philemon

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Unit 5: Pastoral Epistles**Contents**

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 - 3.2 Second Timothy
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1.0 Introduction

The history of the Church's use of and attention to 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus, commonly known as the Pastoral Epistles, is varied. Sharply polarized opinions exist on overarching questions of authorship and intended audience, as well as on numerous specific issues of interpretation. These include submission to authority, gender issues, differentiation within the leadership, marital status of church leaders, appropriate care of widows and the elderly, and questions of familial and household relationships. One passage, which has not received sustained treatment outside of commentaries in recent scholarship, is 1Tim 5:17-22. It deals with the significant issues of the reward, discipline, and installation of leaders of the young Christian community. These seem worthy of further study.

2.0 Objectives

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

- Ascertain the authenticity of Pastoral Epistles
- Identify the purpose of Pastoral Epistles
- Describe the main teachings in the Pastoral Epistles and its relevance to Church leadership

3.0 Main Content**3.1 First Timothy****Authorship**

Consistent with the salutations of the Pastoral Epistles (1 and 2 Timothy and Titus), the apostle Paul authored them. In contemporary era, yet, some scholars have argued that Paul himself did not constitute these letters but anonymous writer wrote under Paul's name, a tradition called pseudepigraphy. Arguments against Paul's authorship are progressed on numerous grounds. Some of the additional significant comprise: (1) renunciations of early church familiarity of these letters, (2) the handy correspondence between these letters and the Christian writings of the early second century, (3) diverse manners of addressing heresy than found in Paul's other letters, (4) the difficulty of locating

these letters in the recognized conditions of Paul's life, and (5) the alterations in writing styles and language between these letters and Paul's other epistles.

In reply to these oppositions to Paul's authorship it should be known that Paul himself admonished his readers to discard the act of pseudepigraphy as dishonest forgery (2 Thess. 2:2-3), even the Pastoral Epistles comprise cautions about fraudsters (1Tim. 4:1-2; 2 Tim. 3:13; Tit. 1:10). This makes it doubtful that an early Christian make effort to honor Paul or to make use of his authority in order to battle heresy would have employed pseudepigraphy. Furthermore, the early Church declined to receive as canonical all of the gospels, apocrypha, and acts that they identified to be pseudonymous, and there is no strong indication that any pseudonymous epistles were ever formed in the early centuries of the Church. In documented cases in which pseudonymous writings were exposed in the early Church, the writings were occasionally endured if their content was measured innocuous, but never accounted canonical status. They were continuously condemned if found to teach blunder.

That the Pastoral Epistles were encompassed in early lists of canonical books and eventually confirmed as honest powerfully designates that the early Church resolutely believed the Pastoral Epistles to be genuine. Some academics, nevertheless, contend that the early Church cannot be proven to have identified these epistles. For instance, they take issue with Polycarp's usage of 1 Timothy the Epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians ch. 4, which seem to quote 1 Timothy 6:7 ("we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it") and 10 ("the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil"). Though Paul did not originate these formulaic declarations, there is adequate information to designate that Polycarp's use of them was a direct quotation from 1 Timothy. Unambiguously, both Paul and Polycarp used both these statements in close propinquity to one another (within three verses in 1 Timothy, and in successive sentences in Polycarp's Epistle to the Philippians), and both encompassed them in the context of discoursing righteousness and obedience to God. Remarkably, some critical scholars have recommended that Polycarp himself wrote the Pastoral Epistles, signifying how close a correspondence is between Polycarp's teaching and the content of the Pastoral Epistles. That Paul's writing of the Pastoral Epistles has been rejected both on the ground that Polycarp had no knowledge of them and on the basis that Polycarp had full knowledge of them as their writer calls into serious inquiry the means and ideals by which Pauline authorship has been rejected.

Equally, flimsy are the oppositions to Paul's authorship based on the Pastoral Epistles' linguistic style (which may be a bit advanced than his previous writings), approach to heresy (which seems less precise than in his previous works), and lack of relationship to acknowledged proofs about Paul's life. Current studies have confirmed that the vocabulary, style, and theology of the Pastoral Epistles are relatively well-suited with the rest of Paul's works, and undeniably that the Pastoral Epistles differ from one another as much as they differ from Paul's other writings. Paul's language and approach to dealing with heresy in these letters may contrast slightly from his former writings, but this should not be shocking given that the Pastoral Epistles were written: (1) later in Paul's life, (2) to address different glitches, and (3) to individuals who were close friends of Paul rather than to Churches. It should not be thought uncommon that Paul would write in a different way at several periods in his ministry, or that he preferred one style of correspondence to Churches and another to persons. Furthermore, Paul's fewer precise treatment of heresy in these letters may merely designate that he knew that Timothy and Titus were already conscious of the details. To end, branded proofs about Paul's life at this period are limited, and are not unswervingly in conflict with any information in the Pastoral Epistles.

Purpose and Date

The purpose of writing was to direct Timothy on opposing false teachers in Ephesus. False teaching in the Church must be attacked. Legalistic traditions lead people away from the true Gospel. Worship and Church authority must be well-organized. Several groups within the Church have different needs and love for money has no place in the ministry of the Gospel. The letter is dated in A.D. 62-64

Time, Place of Writing and Audience

Some evidence in the Pastoral Epistles has led to the submission that these letters were written all through what may have been Paul's fourth missionary journey. Acts concludes not with Paul's demise, but with his house arrest in Rome (Acts 28:16, 30-31). Whereas, the late first-century writing, 1 Clement asserts that Paul was martyred in Rome, it does not associate his martyrdom with the incarceration documented in Acts 28. The fourth-century Church historian Eusebius well-preserved a tradition that Paul was unfettered from that imprisonment, carried on with his missionary works, and was martyred by Nero on his second visit to Rome. This tradition is reinforced by Philippians and Philemon, which, if they were penned during the Roman imprisonment documented in Acts 28, offer proof that Paul anticipated to be released (Phil. 1:25-26; Philemon 1:22), in addition to the Pastorals themselves. A fourth missionary journey and a second imprisonment after the one recorded in Acts 28 constitute to form the most likely setting for the Pastorals.

Supposedly there were two imprisonments in Rome, Paul was released from his first around A.D. 62. Consistent with later tradition he was martyred by Nero, who died in A.D. 68. Under this situation, 1 Timothy, was written while Paul was still in the middle of his fourth missionary journey, was undoubtedly written during the earlier part of this time, between A.D. 62 and 64. Paul may have written from Macedonia (1 Tim. 1:3) in northern Greece.

First and Second Timothy were written to the man whose name they carry. Timothy comes from Lystra, a Roman colony in the province of Galatia. His father was a Gentile and his mother a Jew (Acts 16:1). Little is expounded about his father, who seemingly never became a Christian, but his mother and grandmother were doubtless transformed to Christianity as a result of Paul's visit to Lystra on his first missionary journey (2 Tim. 1:5). Timothy had from his youthful been coached in the Jewish Scriptures (2 Tim. 3:14-15), and these two women were indubitably significant in Timothy's own repentance to Christianity. When Paul went back to Lystra on his second missionary trip, some of the Christians called his attention to a young believer named Timothy, and Paul took decision to engage him on his tour (Acts 16:1-3). Hence Paul would be preaching to Jews, he circumcised Timothy based on Jewish custom (Acts 16:3). Paul and the elders of the Church also laid their hands upon Timothy to set him apart and prepare him for ministry (1 Tim. 1:18; 4:14).

Timothy toured with Paul during most of Paul's second and third missionary journeys (Acts 17:14-15; 18:5; 19:22; 20:4-6), and seemingly for part of his fourth. He appears to have become Paul's ward, and Paul spoke of himself as Timothy's "father" (Phil. 2:22) and of Timothy as his "son" (1 Tim. 1:2, 18; 1 Cor. 4:17; 2 Tim. 1:2; 2:1). As Paul's colleague, Timothy served as his archetypal in the Churches of Thessalonica (1 Thess. 3:2, 6), Corinth (1 Cor. 4:17; 16:10), Philippi (Phil. 2:19, 23), and Ephesus (1 Tim. 1:3). If Timothy had a fault, it was that he was hampered by what Paul categorized as a "spirit of timidity" (2 Tim. 1:7). Paul felt it obligatory to ask the Church in Corinth to accept Timothy in a

manner that would set him at ease (1 Cor. 16:10-11). In his letters to Timothy, Paul urged him not to let anyone loathe him on account of his youth (1 Tim. 4:12), not to disregard the spiritual gift that he had received (1 Tim. 4:14), and not to be embarrassed to speak out confidently for the gospel (2 Tim. 1:8). Apart from the mysterious account in Hebrews 13:23 that Timothy had been "released" (probably from prison), little is known about what transpired to Timothy after the writing of 2 Timothy.

Content

Undoubtedly, Paul had left Timothy in Ephesus to care for the Church as his unique representative (1 Tim. 1:3), and he wrote this letter to help Timothy deal with a variation of doctrinal issues that were raised up by false teachers there. Paul had founded the Ephesian Church early on his third missionary journey, spending about three years there (Acts 19; 20:31). At the end of that tour he had cautioned the Ephesian elders that false teachers, some coming from the leadership itself, would pollute the Church (Acts 20:29-30). This epistle designates that his prophecy had come true (1 Tim. 1:6, 19; 4:1-2; 6:3-5, 10, 21). Paul labelled the false teaching in Ephesus as coming from within the Church itself (1 Tim. 1:6, 19; 4:1; 6:10, 21; 2 Tim. 2:18; 4:4). It was pigeonholed by a concern with myths (1 Tim. 1:4; 4:7; 2 Tim. 4:4), genealogies (1 Tim. 1:4), squabbles about words (1 Tim. 6:4; 2 Tim. 2:14, 23), controversies (1 Tim. 1:4; 6:4), knowledge (1 Tim. 6:20), worthless talk (1 Tim. 1:6), and godless gossip (1 Tim. 6:20; 2 Tim. 2:16). The false doctrines comprised proscriptions against marriage and certain foods (1 Tim. 4:3), in addition to the belief that the resurrection had already taken place (2 Tim. 2:18). The false teachers erroneously construed Jewish law (1 Tim. 1:7) and consequently placed boundaries on prayer (1 Tim. 2:1-7). The leaders of the movement comprised Hymenaeus (1 Tim. 1:20; 2 Tim. 2:17), Alexander (1 Tim. 1:20), and Philetus (2 Tim. 2:17). Those who sought leadership positions in the movement seemingly did so for monetary gain (1 Tim. 6:5, 10). The false teachers had been disruptive (1 Tim. 6:4-5) and appear to have been predominantly effective in misleading women (1 Tim. 2:14; 2 Tim. 3:6-7).

A number of these elements were seen; the specific doctrinal teachings, the interest in myths and genealogies and the concern for "knowledge" (the Greek word is *gnosis*) propose that the false teaching in Ephesus may have been an embryonic form of Gnosticism, a heretical movement that became a sturdy opponent to the emerging orthodox church in the second and third centuries. Nevertheless, some of the more characteristic facets of advanced Gnosticism are missing here, and some emphasize that the movement in Ephesus can be clarified in terms of Jewish and Hellenistic influences. These two proposals need not be seen as inconsistent, for Gnosticism itself was a product of both Jewish and Hellenistic thoughts. But regardless of all that Paul said about the false teaching in Ephesus, its accurate nature remains indefinable.

First Timothy is remarkable for its curiosity in Church organization. It affords the lengthiest account in the New Testament concerning the qualifications for being an overseer or elder (1 Tim. 3:2-7). It similarly offers evidence for a difference between those elders who principally rule and those who principally teach (1 Tim. 5:17). It gives remarks about supporting and scolding elders (1 Tim. 5:17-20) and comprises the only obvious account in the New Testament of the qualifications for deacons (1 Tim. 3:8-13). Paul's precise commands to Timothy also comprise much practical guidance on how a church leader is to operate. This epistle is also branded by its stress on sound doctrine (1 Tim. 1:9-11; 3:9; 4:6; 6:3-4), and it encompasses two theological reflections on the salvation God has accomplished in Jesus Christ (1 Tim. 1:13-16; 2:3-6). These embrace confirmations of salvation by grace (1 Tim.

1:13-16), Christ as the one mediator between God and humanity (1 Tim. 2:5) and the substitutionary atonement of Christ (1 Tim. 2:6).

First Timothy similarly comprises a deliberation on the work of Christ that upholds his incarnation, resurrection, and ascension (1 Tim. 3:16), an expectation of the second coming of Christ (1 Tim. 6:14), a wonderful doxology (1 Tim. 6:15-16), and indication of the extension of the concept of "Scripture" beyond the Old Testament to embrace fundamentals of Christian tradition (1 Tim. 5:18). Also characteristic about 1 Timothy are its remarks about women (1 Tim. 2:9-15), including an extensive unit on appropriate care for widows in the church (1 Tim. 5:3-16), and the background information it delivers about Timothy, as well as viable references to both his baptism (1 Tim. 6:12) and his ordination (1 Tim. 1:18; 4:14).

3.2 Second Timothy

Author, Purpose and Date

The author is the Apostle Paul. The purpose is to call for Timothy to visit Paul in his latter days and to inspire Timothy in his ministry against false teachers in Ephesus. False teachers will continually worry the Church and Church leaders must be brave in their fight against false teachers. Church leadership must be based on the Scriptures so that God will preserve true believers, but others in the Church will be arbitrated. He penned the letter in A.D. 64-68.

Time, Place of Writing and Audience

Second Timothy is most probable the last of Paul's letters. It was written after what may have been termed his fourth missionary journey and possibly dates between A.D. 64 and 68. Paul wrote 2 Timothy from prison, undoubtedly during a second Roman imprisonment (2 Tim. 1:8; 2:9). Indeed, why he was under arrest, or even where he was captured, is unidentified. He had been given an initial hearing, at which he had received no backing (2 Tim. 4:16). His trial still awaited him, but he was aware that it would result to his death (2 Tim. 4:6). Most of Paul's associates found it appropriate to be in another place (2 Tim. 4:10-11). He had been bothered by the activities of Phygelus and Hermogenes (2 Tim. 1:15-16) and Alexander the metalworker (2 Tim. 4:14), though a Christian named Onesiphorus had been a consolation to him (2 Tim. 1:16-18). Paul wrote to his friend and assistant, Timothy. Timothy was still in Ephesus (2 Tim. 4:19), where Paul had formerly left him (1 Tim. 1:3) and where the false teaching that Paul had addressed in his first letter to Timothy continued to be a problem (2 Tim. 2:14-18, 23; 3:1-9, 13). At that moment, recollecting their long-lasting relationship, Paul anticipated to see Timothy one last time before his demise (2 Tim. 1:4). Timothy's mother, Eunice, and his grandmother, Lois, were both Christians (2 Tim. 1:5) who had given Timothy early upbringing in the Scriptures (2 Tim. 3:15). The letter comprises a feasible reference to his ordination (2 Tim. 1:6; 2:2).

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Paul appears to have written 2 Timothy with two reasons in mind. First, he needed to provide Timothy with a last letter of personal reassurance in his ministry (2 Tim. 1:5-14; 2:1-16, 22-26; 3:10-4:5). Second, he asked Timothy to come to Rome (2 Tim. 4:9, 21), providing directions on who and what (2

Tim. 4:11-13) to bring with him. Like 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy displays a solid concern for sound doctrine (2 Tim. 1:13-14; 2:2; 4:1-5) and encompasses wonderful theological deliberations on the grace of God (2 Tim. 1:8-11), the faithfulness of Christ (2 Tim. 2:11-13) and the nature and function of Scripture (2 Tim. 3:15-17). There are confirmations of salvation by grace (2 Tim. 1:9), election (2 Tim. 1:9; 2:10, 19) and the divine inspiration of Scripture (2 Tim. 3:16). Second Timothy also upholds the resurrection (2 Tim. 2:8) and the second coming (2 Tim. 4:1, 8) of Christ.

2 Timothy is the last of Paul's epistles, it is particularly significant because it offers us with some final intuitions concerning the apostle Paul. His condition was miserable. He could no longer look onward to productive ministry (cf. Phil. 1:22-26). Most of his associates had left him (2 Tim. 4:10-11). Yet Paul remained self-assured. He was not embarrassed to suffer for the Gospel (2 Tim. 1:12) and was willing to "endure everything for the sake of the elect" (2 Tim. 2:10). He knew that he had been realistic to Christ (2 Tim. 4:7) and that Christ would continually remain faithful (2 Tim. 1:12; 2:13). Consequently, Paul had assurance that the One who had saved him from death in the past (2 Tim. 3:11; 4:17) would save him through death into eternal life (2 Tim. 4:8, 18).

3.3 Titus

Author, Purpose and Date

The author is the Apostle Paul. He penned this letter to encourage Titus to complete the organization of the Churches on Crete, attack the effects of false teachers there and teach believers in appropriate Christian behavior. The Church must be systematized with competent leaders and false teachers must be attacked. Special responsibilities exist for precise groups in the Church. Some overall responsibilities are to be shared by all believers. All Christian behavior must rest on God's saving work in Christ. He wrote in A.D. 62-64

Time, Place of Writing and Audience

Titus was most probable collected during Paul's fourth missionary journey, which occurred after his first imprisonment in Rome, and it undoubtedly dates between A.D. 62 and 64. Paul may have been in or on his way to Nicopolis in Epirus (western Greece) when he wrote Titus (Tit. 3:12). Titus was a Gentile Christian who was possibly transformed by Paul (Tit. 1:4). The New Testament offers little information about him, and he is not cited in Acts. Paul took him to Jerusalem early in his missionary works. Whereas in Jerusalem Paul declined to have Titus circumcised (Gal. 2:1-3). Titus obviously toured with Paul on his second and third missionary journeys and subsequently on what may have been part of his fourth missionary journey. He was Paul's reliable subordinate, and Paul reckoned on him in delicate conditions, such as that in Corinth (2 Cor. 8:6, 16, 23; 12:18). Titus later served as Paul's archetype on the island of Crete (Tit. 1:5) and in the province of Dalmatia (2 Tim. 4:10). From the onset of Paul's fourth missionary journey, Paul and Titus were occupied with missionary work on Crete, an island in the Mediterranean Sea whose populations were identified as degraded with no exemplary conduct (Tit. 1:12). When Paul moved on, he left Titus behind to continue the work (Tit. 1:5).

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Paul wrote to reassure Titus to accomplish his ministry on Crete. Precisely, Paul desired Titus to finish the organization of the Churches (Tit. 1:5-9), deal with the false teachers who were existing (Tit. 1:10-14; 3:9-11) and give directives to the Churches on appropriate behavior (Tit. 2:1-3:8). Like 1 Timothy, Titus is remarkable for its information on Church organization. It affords a drawn-out report of the qualifications for being an overseer or elder (Tit. 1:6-9) and significant indication that the terms "overseer" and "elder" refer to one office rather than to two distinct offices (Tit. 1:5-7).

Similarly, like 1 Timothy, Titus displays a strong concern for sound doctrine (Tit. 1:9, 13; 2:1-2) and comprises two theological deliberations on the grace that God has protracted in Jesus Christ (Tit. 2:11-14; 3:4-7). These comprise assertions of the second coming of Christ (Tit. 2:13), Christ's substitutionary atonement (Tit. 2:14), regeneration by the Holy Spirit (Tit. 3:5), and justification by grace (Tit. 3:5, 7). Titus also confirms the deity of Christ in an outstanding manner: The title "Savior" is applied easily and in the same contexts, to both God (Tit. 1:3; 2:10; 3:4) and Christ (Tit. 1:4; 2:13; 3:6), with 2:13 speaking of "our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ." Paul's zeal for sound doctrine was well-adjusted by an emphasis on good Christian behavior. For Paul, the two undoubtedly are on the same level. To be specific, he emphasized the quality of "self-control" (Tit. 1:8; 2:2, 5, 6, 12) and the significance of doing "what is good" (Tit. 2:7, 14; 3:1, 8, 14).

It is hard to ascertain in detail the nature of the false teaching on Crete. Paul labelled this false teaching as something that had emerged from within the Church (Tit. 1:10, 16). It has to do with Jewish myths (Tit. 1:14), genealogies and squabbles about the law (Tit. 3:9), and human commandments (Tit. 1:14). The false teachers represented a narrow Jewish-Christian perspective (Tit. 1:10) and pursued leadership positions for financial advantage (Tit. 1:11). They brought division into Churches and led numerous believers astray (Tit. 1:11; 3:10). Almost everything that Paul wrote in Titus about the false teaching on Crete equals what he said in 1 and 2 Timothy about that in. While there is no cause to assume a direct connection between the erroneous teachings in Ephesus and Crete or to assume that every idea being taught in one place was also being promoted in the other, the false teachings in the two areas may have been parallel appearances of a more general predisposition to mix Christian faith with forms of Jewish syncretism.

4.0 Summary

The First and Second Epistles to Timothy, and Titus form a distinct group among the letters written by Paul, and are now known as the Pastoral Epistles because they were addressed to two Christian ministers. When Timothy and Titus received these epistles they were not acting, as they had earlier done, as missionaries or itinerant evangelists, but had been left by Paul in charge of churches; the former having the oversight of the church in Ephesus, and the latter having the care of the churches in the island of Crete. The Pastoral Epistles was written to guide them in the discharge of the duties entrusting upon them as Christian pastors. Such is a general portrayal of these epistles. In each of them, nevertheless, there is a great deal more than is covered or implied by the designation, "Pastoral" much that is personal, and much also that is focused on Christian faith and doctrine and practice generally

5.0 Conclusion

The “Pastoral Epistles” are 1st and 2nd Timothy and Titus. The designation is suitable here because alike addressed to persons engaged in pastoral work, and chiefly discoursing of matters relating to such work. These are not only for pastors: they are for every believer. Timothy was not too happy in his church in Ephesus; Titus was in a difficult situation on the Island of Crete. To both of them Paul wrote: “Be faithful. It’s too soon to quit.”

Self-Assessment Exercise

1. Comment on the authenticity of Pastoral Epistles that claimed Paulinism

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