



PAULINE EPISTLES

THE LETTERS OF ST. PAUL

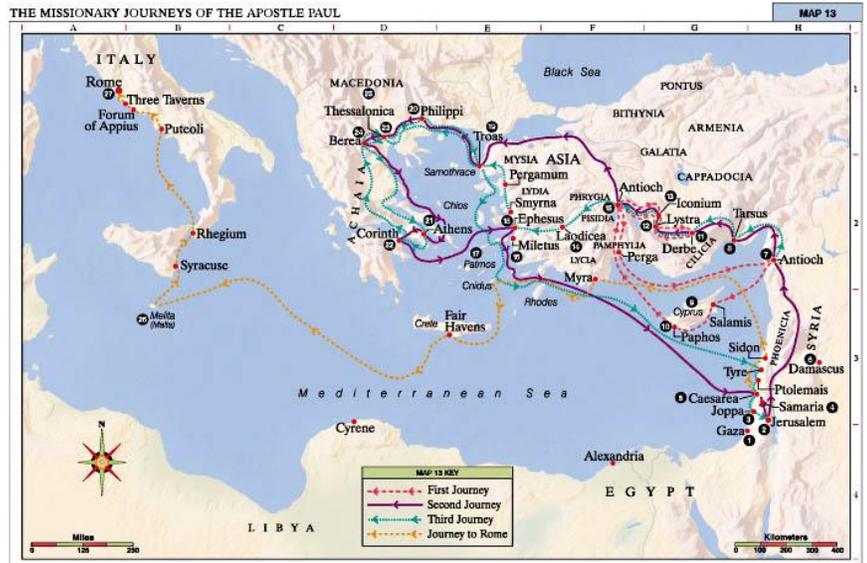
We're accustomed to hearing the letters of St. Paul as the Second Reading at Mass. What we hear at Mass are snippets of these letters. To understand St. Paul better, and to follow his example of devotion to Jesus, we need to:

- Know more about the Apostle Paul and the conditions in which he lived
- Read each letter in its entirety and discuss his letters as a corpus
- Appreciate the sacrifices he made for Christ and His Church
- Trace his apostolic journeys
- Learn about the people he converted and the churches he founded
- Understand his styles of writing
- Grasp how radical he was in his abandonment to God

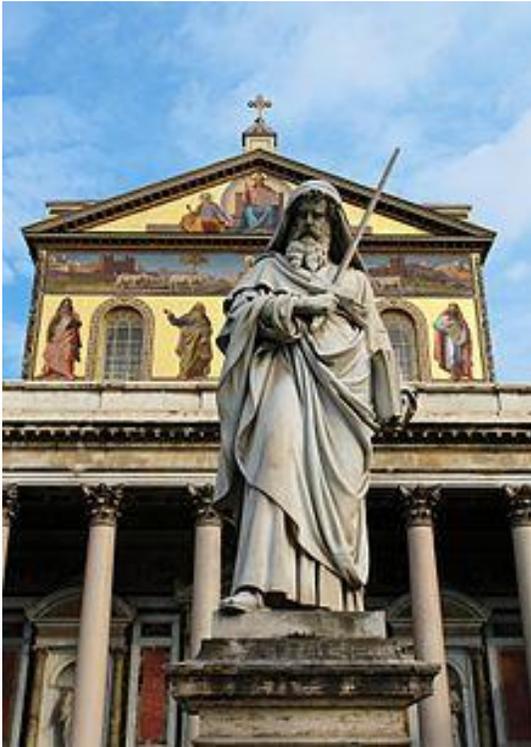




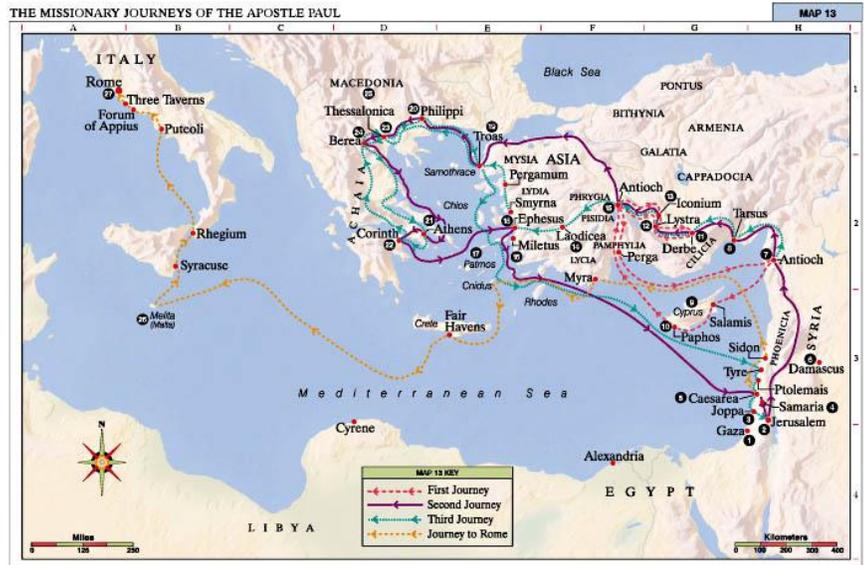
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SESSION ONE	May 8, 2021 - Overview
SESSION TWO	May 15, 2021 – Paul’s Resume
NO SESSION	May 22, 2021
SESSION THREE	May 29, 2021 – Paul’s Letters
SESSION FOUR	June 5, 2021 – Paul’s Gospel
SESSION FIVE	June 12, 2021 – Paul’s Spirituality
SESSION SIX	June 19, 2021 – Paul’s Theology
SESSION SEVEN	June 26, 2021 - Thessalonians
NO SESSION	July 3, 2021
SESSION EIGHT	July 10, 2021 - Galatians
SESSION NINE	July 17, 2021 – 1 Corinthians
SESSION TEN	July 24, 2021 – 2 Corinthians
SESSION ELEVEN	July 31, 2021 – Colossians, Ephesians
SESSION TWELVE	August 7, 2021 – Romans Part One
SESSION THIRTEEN	August 14, 2021 – Romans Part Two
SESSION FOURTEEN	August 21, 2021
SESSION FIFTEEN	August 28, 2021



PAULINE EPISTLES



Apostle of the Crucified Lord, Michael Gorman, 2004 is the main book I studied along with notes and references in the New Jerusalem Bible and my own class notes.

Historical, literary, theological, and religious aspects of Paul's letters to be covered

1. Pay attention to small details and grand themes - the themes inform the details and the details create the themes. This is the "hermeneutical (interpretative) circle."
2. Six key words describe the frame of reference in which Paul is understood:
 - a. Jewish
 - b. Covenantal
 - c. Narrative - salvation history from promise to ultimate fulfillment (eschatological)
 - d. Countercultural
 - e. Trinitarian
 - f. Cruciform
3. Worked directly with Greek text; scriptural quotations come from New Revised Standard Version
4. Let's **engage Paul and his letters as the pastoral, spiritual, and theological challenge Paul intended his letters to be.** Our driving question is: **What does this letter urge the Church to believe, to hope for, and to do?**

Chapter 1: Paul's Worlds

1. Greek-speaking (koine = common); born of Jewish parents of the tribe of Benjamin - a Pharisee of Second Temple Judaism; a Roman citizen under Caesar Augustus. Culture: Greek; Religion: Judaism; Political power: Romans.
2. Hellenization - most people of the time spoke, thought, and wrote in koine; Jews used Greek translation of Hebrew Scripture (Septuagint, LXX). Greek culture permeated the Mediterranean basin, but did not replace local customs - rather, Greek culture merged with each local community.
3. Mediterranean cultures defined themselves primarily in terms of group identity. **Monadic** = self is defined alone; emphasis is on the person. **Dyadic** = self is defined only in reference to another: family, religion, city/region, or group values. In dyadic cultures, emphasis is on inheriting and living by the norms and customs of the group; deviation from cultural norms would be disastrous for the person.
4. Culture of honor and shame. For Romans, the criteria were wealth, power, status, education, rhetorical skill, family/pedigree, political connections. For Jews, the criteria were tribe affiliation and religious observance. Peer pressure was the norm.
5. Hierarchy of Greco-Roman culture: small pinnacle of elite (the emperor and the governing class of senators, **equestrians** - high-ranking military, and **decurions** - aristocrats with land or wealth); small support sector of “retainers (political and religious leaders and merchants who kept the culture going); a massive foundation of the non-elite (day laborers, slaves, artisans, the unclean and degraded, and the “expendables” - widows, orphans, the disabled).
6. Jews participated to a certain extent in this hierarchy, but with a hierarchical culture of their own
 - a. In the Diaspora - merchants and artisans interacted with the elite and with Gentiles; very few, even the most educated, were “elite.”
 - b. In Palestine - a few Jews participated in ruling class, some were retainers, others were artisans and merchants, but most were poor.
 - c. Jews had their own concentric or horizontal hierarchy. Closest to the center were male religious of high standing (the Sanhedrin and the High Priest) - like the Holy of Holies in the center of the Temple; other Jewish males with some religious standing in the next closest court; women and children related to those males in the Court of Women; then the poor and disabled, widows, and orphans again one court removed; then the Court of the Gentiles, the furthest out from the Holy of Holies.
7. Inherent aspect of this hierarchical arrangement was patriarchy. Men had the power at whatever level, women, children, slaves were all subject to his authority, often considered as property. Elite women had more freedom than others and might receive an education. In Greco-Roman cultures, priestesses held important roles in the religious rites (some were temple prostitutes) and Greek and Roman goddesses were revered. In the **Diaspora**, Jewish women were active in their communities and sometimes synagogues as benefactors and leaders. Cults, especially **mystery religions**, primarily attracted women. **Merkabah** Judaism (“chariot” - referring to Ezekiel) was a

mystical form of Jewish spirituality; people had ecstatic experiences in dreams and visions, believing they had gone up to Heaven and encountered God or heavenly beings. This form of Judaism existed in the first century, as Paul attests in 2 COR 12:1-4.

8. Mediterranean culture had slaves, a person who belonged not to oneself but to another and who lived to do the other's bidding with no right of refusal. In urban areas, the majority of inhabitants were enslaved. Slaves had few (if any) rights; slavery was a debased state.
 - a. Slaves could be abused, tortured, and killed (in Imperial Rome, had to have a just reason for killing a slave).
 - b. Slaves could be made through conquest, piracy, or from children taken from the garbage dumps (those who had been "exposed"), or born into slavery (child of a slave automatically was enslaved).
 - c. Slaves could acquire skills and could rise to prominence (as pedagogues or as apprentices in master's business). A small number functioned as the empire's civil service, constituting the "imperial household."
 - d. Manumission, the freedom of slaves. Elites could release slaves to demonstrate the virtue of generosity; slaves could be liberated at the age of 30 (life expectancy was not much more than that). Slaves could pay for their freedom monetarily. Roman gods could force a "sacral manumission." Some slaves were emancipated when the master died, if the master included that in his will.
 - e. Freed slaves were called a "freedperson." They could travel freely but not vote. Often they became the clients of their former owners. Some became economically or politically successful; some failed and died in poverty. Some freedpersons became Roman citizens.

9. In Paul's time, the one overriding and unifying reality was the Roman Empire (from **27 BC** when Octavian defeated Marc Antony at the Battle of Actium and received from Roman Senate the name "Augustus" - revered one), thanks to Alexander the Great. Aspects of Paul's social, political, and religious worlds which affected his mission and message:
- a. Pax Romana - enforced by Roman army, taxes, and tributes - unified a huge land area of diverse ppl - similarity of government, military, art and architecture, aqueducts, paved roads
 - b. Community in the Empire - family was fundamental unit of Roman society, and the emperor was the *pater patriae* - the father of the country. Family/household in Greek: *oikos*; in Latin: *domus*.
 - c. Mobility in the Empire due to Roman roads and the Mediterranean Sea - had to be careful of robbers or pirates and inns with bad food, unsanitary conditions, and prostitutes
 - d. Imperial unity through cult and theology - the pagan cult of the emperor- word comes from the Latin *imperator*, meaning "commander." Julius Caesar called himself "imperator" and his successors took it as their *praenomen* - first name. Caesar's adopted son Octavian kept Caesar as his *cognomen* - last name. Octavian was hailed as "savior" and the "incarnation of divine good news for the whole world." He was also known as god and lord. Christians, of course, used these words to describe Jesus Christ and the Good News - *euangelion*.
 - e. *Res gestae divi Augusti* - things accomplished by the divine Augustus - Roman law, values, gods, roads, and coins.
 - f. Dark side to Roman Empire: as the Empire was born, republics died. The army had to enforce the pax romana, using conquest, subjugation, humiliation, taxes, tributes, punishments: *peace through war*: invasion, exile, enslavement, crucifixion (only for non-citizens - this is why Paul was beheaded, not crucified.) Nothing could be more un-Roman than to *honor and deify* a man crucified by the Romans.
 - g. Many families lived in cities. Some cities were also colonies if they had special obligations and duties to the emperor. Within the cities, everyone was aware of the socioeconomic differences between citizens and non-citizens; slaves, free, and freedpersons; poor and wealthy. Love of honor or status (Latin: *philotimia*) created a fiercely competitive society to accrue honor and respect for themselves, their city, and/or the emperor. No middle class existed.
 - h. Working class had little status but formed their own *collegia* - clubs with religious overtones, trade guilds, or the burial society to defray the high cost of burials.
 - i. There was a system of patron-client whereby ppl of means acted for the benefit of those with lesser means, starting with the emperor.
 - j. Throughout the Empire, there was a diversity of peoples, cultures, religions, geographical landscapes, and political structures. Cult of the Emperor unified the Empire and permeated the culture - it was a *theopolitical* allegiance, serving to unite people as a **social outing, religious belief, and political statement**. Cult of the Emperor was one of the most **fundamental cohesive elements in the Empire**. It was a continuation of the Hellenistic ruler cult. For Rome, it was a significant change from the Roman Republic, and some Roman citizens resisted it. It was defended as "only a god could subdue such a

- large Empire, such a large part of the world.” Emperor was the *pontifex maximus* - the main bridge-builder, the chief priest with incense burned at altars in temples dedicated to the Emperor. Imperial cult was political, social, religious, human, and divine - and compulsory. The Jews were exempt because their religion pre-dated the Roman Republic and the Roman Empire.
- k. Theology of Imperial cult: Rome was the gods’ choice to rule the world, obviously, from the string of victories and the “peace.” The divine Emperor was patron, protector, father, and the epitome of Roman power, peace, and security: the savior (*soter*) who brought the *euangelion*, the Good News of salvation to the world since his *epiphanein*, his appearance.
 - l. This cult spread during the first half of the first century throughout Greece and Asia Minor: Pisidia, Antioch, Corinth, and Philippi. Herod the Great had built and dedicated two cities to the Emperor: *Caesarea Maritima and Sebaste (Samaria)*, three temples for the imperial cult, and numerous statues of the Emperor. He dedicated games to Augustus, even in Jerusalem. These temples were often the largest and most central sanctuaries in a city. Coins now bore the images of Greek or Roman gods **and the Emperor** (Render unto Caesar...)
10. Paul lived in early or Second Temple Judaism (First Temple, built by Solomon, destroyed in 587 BC; rebuilt by the returning exiles under Cyrus [538 BC] - Nehemiah and Ezra - and greatly expanded by Herod the Great in 20 BC; destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD.) There were a variety of groups within Judaism (Sadducees, Pharisees, Essenes, Zealots, Diasporian Jews, mystics, and God-fearers), but they were united in:
- a. Monotheism
 - b. Covenant (election)
 - c. Land
 - d. Moses
 - e. The Law (Torah) - love, obedience, and faithfulness to God and love/justice for others
 - f. Temple and synagogue (not the Essenes)
 - g. Circumcision
 - h. Hope for the Messiah when subjugation and suffering would cease
 - i. Subjugation to Rome
 - j. Boundary markers: Circumcision, food laws, calendar (feasts and holy days)
11. Jewish unity in diversity: theological development which affected many Jews (mysticism or apocalypticism) and the different Jewish groups/schools/parties
12. Subjugation to foreign power - Rome, in Paul’s day - some Jews collaborated with them or worked for them (Herod, tax collectors) - some accepted the domination - some fought it (the zealots) like the Maccabees of 167-164 BC. Full-scale rebellion in AD 66-74 to cast the Romans out of Palestine - Rome besieged them; the ppl starved, ate their own children. Rome destroyed the Temple AD 70 and Jews committed mass suicide in the citadel of Masada rather than be subject to Roman rule (AD 74). Some thought their revolutionary activity would hasten the coming of the Messiah, as if we can force God’s hand - and they did not recognize the Messiah

who had come. ***No Jew expected a suffering Messiah*** who would be crucified and would rise from the dead.

13. Jews - the Chosen People - to be holy meant to be set apart for God's purposes, to be obedient to God's commandments. First century Judaism: covenantal nomism (keeping of the Law as a way of staying in the covenant). Recent perspectives: (1) Observant Jews kept the commandments in gratitude for being the Chosen People. (2) Paul's criticism of Judaism and Judaizers was its cultural imperialism or ethnic pride.

14. Boundary markers functioned as ritual signs of their covenant with God and often cannot be separated from the substantive religious and ethical distinctives of their covenant with God.
- a. **Ritual boundary markers** - circumcision, calendar, and dietary laws - with righteousness as aim - often repelled Gentiles
 - b. **Religious/ethical (religio-ethical) boundary markers** - monotheism and morality - Jews worshipped one God exclusively and abstained from the imperial cult and did not participate in Greco-Roman cultural behaviors (exposing children, throwing infants on garbage dump, adultery). These markers often attracted Gentiles. These became “God-fearers” - those who admired Judaism’s religio-ethical markers but did not undergo the ritual markers. These God-fearers would have been attracted to Paul’s circumcision-free monotheistic moral Gospel. In Romans 2-3, Paul opines that the Jews maintained the ritual boundary markers but had caved into the pagan culture and transgressed the religio-ethical markers.
15. Essenes in the Qumran community - Dead Sea Scrolls - Second Temple not true Temple - no Divine Fire - did not participate in Temple worship - believed in ritual baths (*mikvah*) - and with the Pharisees, believed in Revelation (apocalypse) - worldview of the meaning and goal of history as a cosmic battle between God and the forces of evil, communicated through dreams and visions (Daniel 7-12, Revelation, and Mark 13). Two types of revelation: **historical/horizontal** - revealing future events: judgment and salvation) and **cosmic/vertical** - revealing present heavenly reality (visions or trips). These two can be mixed together. Paul claims to have made trips to Heaven and had an apocalyptic view of history. Revelations give hope to people who are suffering with no end in sight in this world - a new Heaven and a new Earth; a day of judgment and salvation. Two kinds of unseen realities: **vertical or spatial** dimension and **horizontal, eschatological, temporal** dimension, giving a foretaste of the future and a means to endure **and engage** the present. Apocalypticism - multifaceted dualism, belief in strong pairs of opposites, characterized by cosmic, chronological, and ethical dualism.
- a. **Cosmic dualism** - the cosmos is a battleground between good and evil. Participants include angels, demons, and people who side with either God or the devil. God will ultimately defeat evil.
 - b. **Chronological dualism** - history is divided into (1) the present age and (2) the age to come. The present age is beleaguered by evil, injustice, and oppression. The age to come is blessed with righteousness, justice, freedom, and peace. A spectacular Divine intervention will usher in the age to come. - No hope of humans acting in history to resolve the crisis. Apocalypticism is both optimistic in the eventual victory of God but pessimistic in the view of the present age.
 - c. **Ethical dualism** - good and evil, God and Satan - no moral gray areas, only black and white, sheep and goats, weeds and wheat.
16. Apocalyptic mindset expressed in Ezekiel, Zechariah, Daniel and some non-canonical books (1 Enoch, 4 Ezra, 2 Baruch). Also in Dead Sea Scrolls, early Christian literature, and some Pauline epistles. It is important to understand the apocalyptic to appreciate the New Testament.

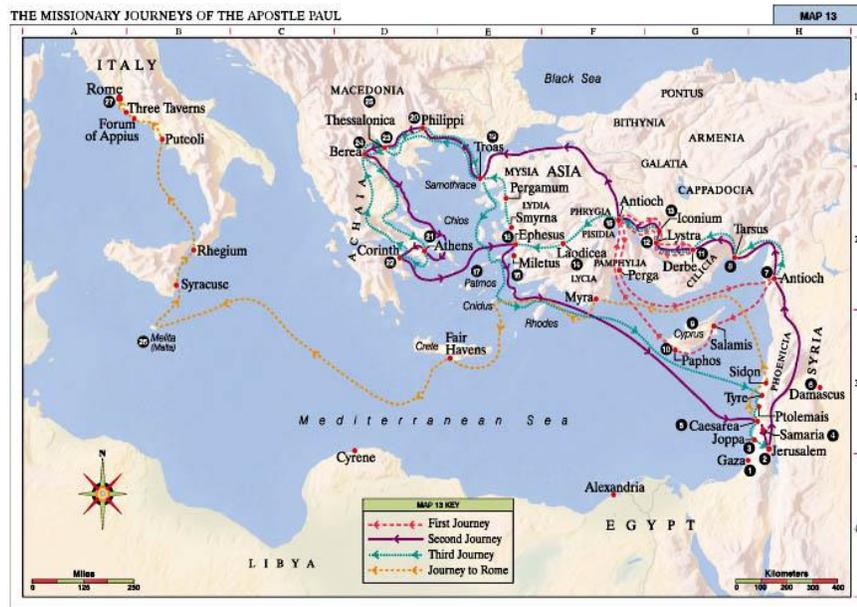
17. Jewish schools/groups:

- a. Sadducees - priestly aristocracy - focused on the Torah, denied angels, resurrection
- b. Pharisees - non-priestly group zealously dedicated to the protection and promotion of the Law and the purity of Israel. They were experts on the written Law but also believed in oral tradition. They developed a way of interpreting Scripture called *midrash* - applying ancient texts to modern situations. They affirmed the resurrection and the existence of angelic beings and spiritual powers. They embodied an apocalyptic and nationalistic perspective.
- c. Essenes - apocalyptic, nationalistic, committed to purity. Some lived in the wilderness, such as the Qumran community. Some lived in the city and gathered to interpret and observe Scripture together. Considered themselves to be a pure remnant preparing for God's final battle. Anonymous founder called "Teacher of Righteousness." They awaited *two messiahs*: one priestly and one royal (a military victor and a prophet). Their method of scriptural interpretation was called *peshet*, based on the assumption that Scripture was fulfilled in the present experiences of their community as the true Israel.
- d. Zealots - radical theopolitical movement for Jewish liberation from the Romans. Heroes: Phineas the priest who impaled the adulterers; the prophet Elijah; the Maccabees. They were prepared to take their religious zeal to the point of violent revolt.
- e. Jews in the Diaspora - established synagogues in the absence of the Temple; distinguished themselves with ritual and religio-ethical boundary markers. They were exempted from military service and the imperial cult since their religion pre-dated the Roman Republic and the Roman Empire. While the Gentiles tolerated these Jews, they sometimes persecuted them. There was tension between assimilation into the community and separation to maintain their religious identity. Jews existed within a range of antagonism and accommodation. Some were interested in Hellenic intellectual values and philosophies. Philo of Alexandria (died AD 50) was known for his allegorical approach to Judaism - he blended Jewish tradition and classical philosophy.
- f. Mystics - *Merkabah* Judaism - meaning "chariot" referring to Ezekiel's chariot of fire - mystical Jewish spirituality like charismatic Christians - ecstatic experiences (dreams, visions, trances, trips to Heaven where they encountered God or angelic beings and powers). Paul speaks of this strain of Judaism in 2 COR 12:1-4.
- g. God-fearers - Gentile converts attracted to the monotheism and morality of the Jews who did not subscribe to the ritual boundary markers.

18. Paul's missionary journeys took him to Italy, Greece, Anatolia (the "land of the East," Asia Minor - modern-day Turkey) - lands with many gods and many lords - polytheistic and pagan. Greek and Roman deities, Egyptian gods, local deities, gods of "mystery religions," and sometimes shrines to the God of Israel. Large temples in the cities; shrines in the countryside. Hierarchy of gods - Jupiter/Zeus at the top, older gods higher than the newer ones. Most people could be devoted to many gods (except Jews and Christians). Identities of several gods could be merged - syncretism within the empire, for accommodating the local gods facilitated subjugating the people. Monotheists were intolerant in this regard.

19. Common rituals: prayer, sacrifice, meals, processions, festivals, contests (athletic, artistic, rhetorical). Nearly every public event had religious dimension or undertones. The entire culture was inherently religious. From the gods, people wanted peace and prosperity, health and long life, guidance and protection. The gods were given sacrifices but made no moral demands upon the people. The relationship was *contractual*, focused on *ritual*. Jews and Christians focused on *covenant and morality*. Mystery cults promised access to secret knowledge (gnostics, anyone?) and rebirth, salvation, or immortality through an initiation rite which involved a sacral meal. Most people were more concerned with surviving the struggle of life rather than living forever. Most pagans did not believe in an afterlife. People used astrology and magic to escape their enslavement to the forces of nature.
20. Philosophical schools
- Cynics (literally, dogs - the name they were disparagingly given) - a radical countercultural group known for frugality, inattention to clothing and bodily care and comfort, brash speech, begging, public sex. Used a confrontational style of preaching the pursuit of freedom. Influenced the Stoics.
 - Epicureans - pleasure: virtue known through the senses - was the goal of human life. They downplayed the existence of gods, denied immortality, fought superstition. Epicureans influenced the people of Corinth.
 - Platonists - the body is the tomb of the soul and was therefore unimportant (gnostics again)
 - Stoics - the universe is permeated by Reason, *Logos*, identified with God (or Zeus). A spark of this Reason is within each person, constituting the “true self.” The goal of life: to live in harmony with Reason and be unaffected by life. *Apatheia* - indifference to physical pleasure or difficulty - things that cannot affect the true self. Self-sufficiency and contentment are virtues. Philosopher Zeno (333-264 BC) founded it. By the first century, emphasis on ethics. Influenced Seneca, Epictetus, and Marcus Aurelius.
21. Some of Paul’s converts would have come from these schools of thought and could have influenced how Paul presented the Gospel (how and to what extent?) ***Paul spent most of his time in cities***, especially major cities, so the spread of the Gospel far and wide was facilitated. He was an “urban missionary.”
22. Cities Paul visited - some were ancient, dating back to classical or Hellenistic times, when the roads, temples, and other buildings were built. Some cities had been devastated by war and had been rebuilt as colonies, like Corinth and Philippi. These cities were the religious and commercial hub of the region, providing regular and rapid exchange of goods and ideas, and were significant trade routes.
- Large cities Paul visited: Rome, Ephesus, Pisidian Antioch, Thessalonica, Athens
 - Modest cities Paul visited: Philippi, Colossae

23. Most of these cities were built around a buttelike natural formation, a “high city” - *acropolis* - visible for miles (a city built on a hill cannot be hidden). Features of these cities:
- a. Large temple to the chief god or goddess, temple to the emperor
 - b. *Agora* - marketplace
 - c. Colonnades - covered outdoor sidewalks
 - d. Temples and shrines - temple of Artemis at Ephesus one of the world’s seven wonders
 - e. Restaurants
 - f. Synagogues - sometimes Jews met in houses
 - g. Shops
 - h. Public buildings, such as public baths
 - i. Basilicas - for municipal or provincial activities
 - j. *Bouleuterion* - a small, semi-circular theater for meetings of city officials
 - k. *Bema* - a bench in the agora for official public announcements and public hearings - like the judgment seat upon which Pilate sat?
 - l. Fountains and monuments dedicated to the emperor or to gods or goddesses
 - m. Theaters and arenas often built into a natural structure for acoustics - athletic contests, religious and political ceremonies, music. *Ampitheaters* were more common in the western part of the Empire. The *circus* was elliptical and used for races. The *odeion* was used exclusively for music. *Arenas* were used for gladiator fights.
 - n. Baths - hot, warm, and cold water baths; sometimes saunas. Some single-sex, some open to both sexes.
 - o. Residences - small homes or apartments (*insulae*)
24. The churches Paul founded met in homes or small apartments
- a. Triclinium - room for three couches
 - b. Atrium - reception room
 - c. Open interior courtyard
 - d. House size varied from accommodating a dozen people to several hundred
25. City neighborhoods were organized according to ethnicity or trade. The elite and the rich lived either in the main part of the city or out in the countryside. Poorer people lived atop one another in the *insulae* in very close quarters. Everybody knew everyone else. Troublemakers could be subdued with mob violence or ostracism. Word spread quickly, so the Good News spread rapidly among the non-elites, creating Christian communities.



Chapter Two - Paul's Resume:

The Mission of the former persecutor

1. Paul was
 - a. a Jew of the Diaspora - born in Tarsus in Cilicia (eastern Turkey)
 - i. Tarsus was a thriving, cosmopolitan university town
 - ii. Several schools of rhetoric in Tarsus - **Hellenistic**
 - iii. Tarsus was a center of **Stoicism** - ethics and daily life, not so much philosophy
 - iv. Jews of the Diaspora were common in Tarsus
 - v. Scripture in Tarsus would have been written in Greek - the **Septuagint** (LXX)
 - vi. Paul may have also read Scripture in **Hebrew/Aramaic** as he self-designated as a "Hebrew of Hebrews"
 - b. Major influences upon Paul: Judaism, Hellenism, Stoicism - he was well-versed in Hellenistic and rabbinic models of argumentation (due to his tutor, Gamaliel)
 - c. Became a Palestinian Jew - different from a Jew of the Diaspora - but for all first century Jews, **politics and religion were inseparable** - so opposition to Rome was both on a religious and political level and accounts for the rise of the Zealots
 - d. Of the tribe of Benjamin, named after King Saul (also a Benjaminite)
 - e. May have had a Roman middle name of Paul to reflect his Roman citizenship
 - f. a Pharisee in Palestine - an expert in Scripture who awaited the Messiah
 - i. Zeal for the law, both written and oral (tradition) - protect and promote the Law - could lead to intimidation or violence against fellow Jews who violated the Law or anyone who opposed God
 - ii. Committed to the purity of Israel - free from Gentile contamination
 - iii. Believed in the bodily resurrection from the dead
 - iv. Apocalyptic view - reworked in light of God's salvation in the Incarnation and Paschal Mystery

- g. Zealously committed to extinguishing the early Christians, apostate Jews - could mean a range:
- i. Scriptural arguments
 - ii. Private reprimands, intimidation, public renunciation
 - iii. Lethal violence
 - iv. Handing them over to Jewish authorities for 40 lashes minus one
 - v. Handing them over to the Romans for crucifixion
 - vi. Role models for his zeal
 1. Phinehas, Eleazar's son, Aaron's grandson, who impaled the adulterous couple
 2. Prophet Elijah, who killed 450 priests of Baal after the battle of the gods
 3. Priest Mattathias and his sons - the Maccabees - killed a Jew about to sacrifice to pagan gods before declaring war on the Romans
 - vii. Reasons for his zeal: the **convictions, conduct, and composition of the community** of the early Christians, who
 1. Had a relaxed attitude towards the Law
 2. Had a critical stance towards the Temple
 3. **Accepted Gentiles** without circumcision - **focus** of his persecution
 4. Committed blasphemy by calling a criminal the Son of God and Messiah
 5. Placed Israel at risk of Roman political reprisals by claiming the Messiah's advent
- h. Converted by a personal encounter w/Christ around AD 32-35, within a few years of Resurrection, which meant:
- i. Jesus was alive and could be encountered personally
 - ii. God exalted and vindicated Jesus' ministry and confirmed Him as God, Lord
 - iii. Jesus' death was efficacious for all, not a curse, but a blessing
 - iv. The end times had begun with the advent of the Messiah and inclusion of **Gentiles** - Israel's **prophecy that all nations** would stream to the new Jerusalem at the end times
 - v. Persecution against the Church was a grave error
 - vi. The Temple, the Law, and circumcision had to be re-evaluated
 - vii. **Gentiles** were part of God's plan in salvation history and must be part of the Church - focus of his persecution and the commission given to him by Jesus
 - viii. Paul saw himself in the line of prophets such as Jeremiah and Isaiah (Isa 49:5-6 and Jer 1:4-8); he had a specific commission from God to speak God's Word
 - ix. Paul experienced unmerited grace with this personal encounter with Jesus; he received a mission to urge the Gentiles to convert to Christianity; he would suffer for his mission as much as he made others suffer with his persecution of the early Church
 - x. Paul was **called** to believe that the Messiah had come - that Israel's hope had been fulfilled - he was a "Jew for Jesus" - he **did not convert** in the conventional sense - he was **converted** in the sense of religious identity - he experienced a radical reorientation of his fundamental commitment to (a) **convictions**; (b) **conduct**; and (c) **community**. (aka **belief, behavior, belonging**). His zeal for the Torah became zeal for the resurrected Messiah.



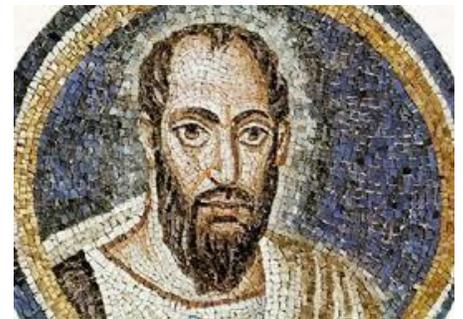
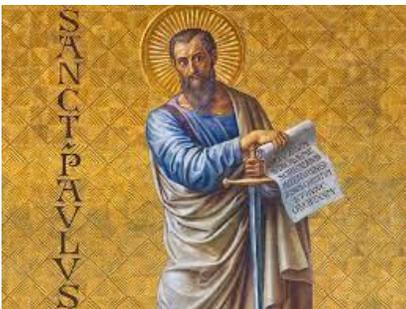
- i. An apostle (*apostolos*: one sent with a message, with the authority of the sender, in the sender's stead). Paul self-identifies as an apostle and considers apostleship to be the most important gift in the Church which came with grave responsibilities and certain rights:
 - i. Preach the Gospel and form communities/churches
 - ii. Live the Gospel for his own salvation and to set an example - conformity to Christ in His suffering and persecution as the ***Suffering Servant and as light to the nations***
 - iii. Stewardship of those new communities
 - iv. He was accountable for the quality of his preaching and parental care of the Church
 - v. Rights of financial support, companionship, regard for his advice and authority; yet
 1. He renounced the financial support, working to provide for himself even as he preached and formed new communities of believers
 2. He renounced personal power/authority and referred everything to Jesus
 3. He endangered himself by preaching in synagogues, several times being subject to stoning, beaten with rods, mob violence, 39 lashes, and i
- j. He sought to create a multinational network of Gentiles and Jews (to the Jews first, then to the Gentiles):
 - i. Who would obey and glorify the One True God of Israel and His crucified, risen Jewish Messiah
 - ii. By living lives of faith, hope, and love
 - iii. By the power of the Holy Spirit
 - iv. Emphasized God's faithfulness and grace, unmerited mercy
- k. Influences on Paul - Isaiah chapters 40-66
 - i. Isaiah of Jerusalem - 8th century
 - ii. Deutero-Isaiah: chapters 40-55, written during the Babylonian exile, 587 BC
 - iii. Trito-Isaiah, chapters 56-66, written during the return from exile, over 140 years in 3 stages: Zerubbabel in 538 BC (altar); Ezra 458 BC (Temple); and Nehemiah (walls), 445 BC
- l. Paul's vision:
 - i. Monotheism: Yahweh, the God of Israel, is the One True God
 - ii. Good News of redemption and salvation
 - iii. Universality - all nations will stream toward the New Jerusalem
 - iv. Newness: new creation, new covenant, new exodus - yielding a new song
 - v. National servanthood and mission: Israel is God's servant, a ***light to the nations***
 - vi. Personal servanthood and mission: spread the Good News to all the nations
 1. Jesus is the ***suffering servant***, whose example we follow
 2. Jesus' resurrection is His vindication; He is exalted above all as God and Lord
 3. God brings about through Jesus' mission the new exodus, the new creation, the new covenant - a ***light to the nations***

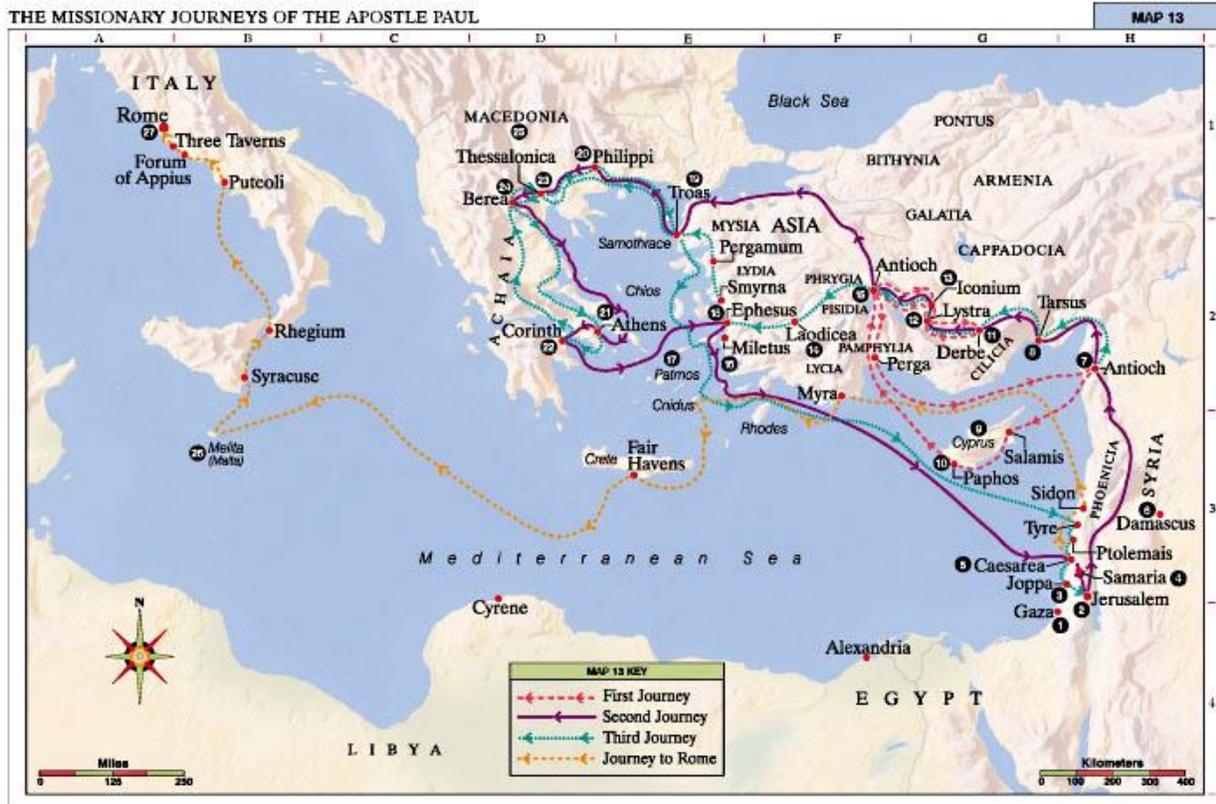


- vii. Paul:
1. Proclaimed the Good News (traveled as a preacher)
 - a. He traveled by land and by sea
 - b. Possibly 10,000 miles
 - c. At considerable danger to himself - mountains, rivers, bandits, pirates, storms, and shipwrecks
 2. Formed communities of Gentiles and Jews (a light to the nations) - mostly in commercial hubs where the Good News would spread rapidly - he enlisted the assistance of coworkers, perhaps 3 dozen of them, calling them fellow slaves, soldiers, and prisoners. Some of these were: Timothy, Titus, Barnabas, Silvanus/Silas, Mark (John Mark), Priscilla (Prisca) and Aquila, and Sosthenes.
 3. Suffered for his efforts to bring the Good News (in conformity to Christ) - Paul did not charge for his services; he provided for himself. Manual labor was considered beneath the social status of teachers. Paul thus identified with Jesus:
 - a. Had privileged status and rights
 - b. Which he freely released
 - c. Lowering himself to the status of a slave for the benefit of others
 - d. To bring the Good News of salvation to all
 - e. Suffering was core to the Gospel message; Paul lists his sufferings (see 2 COR 11:23-28)
 4. Paul's life was a Gospel message of conformity to Christ; he preached the Good News; and he performed "great works" such as healings, exorcisms, and even raised a boy from the dead who had fallen out of a window during Paul's preaching
 5. The house churches were central to Paul's teaching that he was forming communities more than "merely" converting individuals. In these house churches (of wealthy individuals which could accommodate large gatherings), the rich and the poor, the slave and the free, the Gentile and the Jew would intermingle as one Body of Christ.
2. Sources of information about Paul
 - a. Seven Pauline letters whose authorship is undisputed (ROM 1 & 2, COR 1 & 2, GAL, Philippians, 1 THES, and Philemon)
 - b. Six letters bearing Paul's name whose authorship is disputed (2 THES, COL, Ephesians, 1 & 2 TIM, Titus)
 - c. The Book of Acts
 - d. Other documents, inscriptions, archeological evidence, coins, and other physical evidence from Paul's era
 3. All historians rely most heavily upon the undisputed letters - Paul is more or less directly responsible for **eleven of the thirteen letters** - all but 1 TIM and Titus.



4. Inaccuracies or lack of perfect agreement between the Paul we read about in Acts, the Paul from whom we read in the undisputed letters, and the Paul presented in the disputed letters - could be a difference of perspective
 - a. Acts never specifically states that Paul wrote letters
 - b. Acts presents three missionary journeys Paul undertook, while his letters don't specifically narrate the missionary journeys (although he does refer to places he's been and places he's going)
 - c. Acts does not detail Paul's teaching, which is given in his letters
 - d. Acts describes Paul's tutelage under Gamaliel or his Roman citizenship, but Paul doesn't mention these in his letters
 - e. Acts narrates his conversion on the road to Damascus although Paul's letters don't
 - f. It is difficult to ascribe definite dates to New Testament events
5. Acts paints an historically portrait of Paul
6. I believe that Paul focused on the message he was given to spread - the Good News he was commissioned to give to all people, but specifically to the Gentiles - Paul would not give a biography of himself in his letters, which were meant to exhort, praise, chasten, and support the churches he founded on his missionary journeys.
7. Among historians, there is general agreement about Paul's life and ministry. Disagreements about minutiae do not prevent an intelligent reading of Acts or the Pauline epistles. Differences can be seen as mutually complementary rather than contradictory.
8. Acts and the Pauline epistles have theological and rhetorical "angles". There is a spectrum along which historians fall when evaluating Acts and the Pauline epistles:
 - a. Maximalist - Acts is reliable and can be correlated to the letters
 - b. Centrist - Undisputed letters should be primary source for knowledge about Paul and supplemented with information from Acts and the disputed letters
 - c. Minimalist - Letters should be primary source for a picture of Paul; Acts should be taken with suspicion. Only certain items from Acts are accepted: Paul's 18-month stay in Corinth; his journey to north Galatia; and his stay of two or three years in Ephesus.
9. The most important information for recreating a history of Paul's life and work would be the **reasons (or situations) he wrote his letters.**
10. An approximated chronology of Paul's life, beginning with his birth in Tarsus between 5 BC-10 AD and his martyrdom under Nero in 62-68 AD - so he lived approximately 72 years (maximum, 52 minimum). His conversion on the road to Damascus occurred approximately 33-36 AD, with his major missionary activity during the years 42-62 AD.



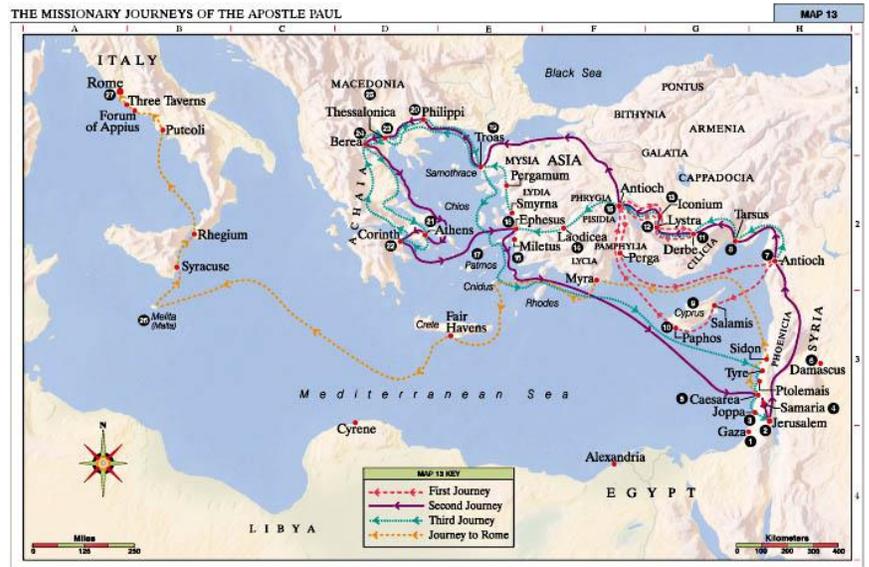


11. Paul's missionary journeys

- First trip:** Cyprus, Pamphylia, south Galatia (Pisidian Antioch, capitol of Galatia) - Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, Perga, Attalia, Syrian Antioch - narrated in **Acts 13-14**
- Second trip:** Syria, Cilicia, Galatia, Phrygia, Asia, Macedonia (first European area), Achaia - Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, Troas, Samothrace, Philippi, Amphipolis, Appolonia, Thessalonica, Berea, Achaia, Athens, Corinth, Cenchreae, Ephesus (provincial capitol of Asia), Caesarea, Syrian Antioch - narrated in **Acts 15:36-18:22**.
- Third trip:** Galatia, Phrygia, Asia, Macedonia, Cyprus - Syrian Antioch, Galatia, Phrygia, Ephesus, Macedonia, "Greece" = Achaia, Athens, Corinth, Macedonia, Philippi, Troas, Assos, Mitylene, Samos, Miletus, Cos, Rhodes, Patara, Tyre (in Syria), Ptolemais, Caesarea, Jerusalem - narrated in **Acts 18:23-21:16**.
- Trip to Rome:** Arrested in Jerusalem, on to Antipatris, Caesarea (hearing with Felix), Sidon, Cyprus, Myra in Lycia, Lasea, island of Crete (shipwreck), escape onto the island of Malta, Syracuse, Sicily, Rhegium, Puteoli, Rome (for two years) - narrated in **Acts 21:15-28:31**

12. Chronology of Pauline epistles:

- 1 & 2 THES and Galatians - 48-51 AD
- 1 & 2 COR - mid-50s AD
- Romans - mid to late 50s AD
- Prison Epistles: Philippians and Philemon, COL, Ephesians - mid to late 50s AD or early 60s
- Pastoral Epistles: 1 TIM and Titus - earlier in Paul's ministry
- 2 TIM - during Roman imprisonment



Chapter 3: Paul's Letters: Apostleship in Absentia

1. Especially in the early centuries, letters were means of exploring important theological issues
2. Paul was an avid correspondent; the preserved letters attributed to him comprise 13 of the 27 books of the New Testament. These are a new type of letter: the apostolic (or pastoral) letter, meant to speak for the Apostle in his absence to make his presence (and his authority) felt and to remind the communities of the gracious gift of God, given, unmerited, to them: the salvation wrought by Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit
3. Basic outline/content of Pauline epistles:
 - a. Greetings
 - b. Blessings, prayers, thanksgiving
 - c. Review of the relationship between community and Paul and of their experiences with God
 - d. Summary of basic beliefs
 - e. Citations from Scripture and exegesis
 - f. Explanations of theological concepts
 - g. Moral exhortations and arguments
 - h. Criticisms and warnings
 - i. Autobiographical content
 - j. Travel plans

4. Characteristics of Paul's letters:
 - a. **Narrative** - 3-way intersection of God's story, Paul's story, and recipients' stories. Purpose: to rehearse the past and guide the future of the intersections of these three stories. There is always a story in Paul's letters, as well as one taking shape within it.
 - b. **Occasional** - occasioned by circumstances within the intersection of relationships; a "word on target." Difficult to discern just from Paul's side what was happening in the community. "Mirror reading" is the debunked theory that one can deduce the other side with exactitude.
 - c. **Pastoral** - Paul's continued faith formation of churches he founded with parental care: correction, exhortation, admonishment, encouragement (*paraklesis*), advice (*parenesis*)
 - d. **Authoritative** - intended to be read aloud in the midst of the congregation, have a liturgical quality to them, were regarded as Scripture, placed the congregation in the Presence and Grace of God. Paul speaks prophetically, in the power of the Spirit, from the mind of Christ. Paul speaks not on his own authority, but as an ambassador of Christ: conform yourselves to Christ as I have. Do what I do, which is what He said and did.

5. General form of ancient letters
 - a. Opening: identification of sender and recipient and relationship; greeting (*chairein*)
 - b. Thanksgiving or other prayer
 - c. Body of letter
 - d. Final wishes, exhortations
 - e. Closing and Farewell

6. Paul used this format with embellishments of his own, including "grace and peace" as part of the greeting, playing on the Greek word *chairein* for greeting and *charis* for grace. He can make his authority as an Apostle felt in the opening. Sometimes his greeting foreshadowed the body of the letter (1 COR 1:2 - to the church in Corinth, called to be saints). Paul's thanksgivings are especially important and often presage the body of the letter (1 COR 1:4-9). If thanksgiving is absent, it is intentional and noticeable (GAL 1:6-10) - when Paul was angry and either saw no reason for thanks or wanted to rush into the meat of the message.

7. The body of Paul's letters combine rabbinic or Hellenistic rhetoric, *paranesis* or parental advice, scriptural exegesis, autobiographical information, review of relationships or graces received from God, and future plans. His closing often includes doxologies, benedictions, prayers, warnings, and apostolic authority - showing he anticipates his letters to be read in the midst of Mass to the congregation.

8. Three types of Greco-Roman rhetoric:
 - a. Forensic - defend or criticize a **past** action
 - b. Deliberative - urge, persuade, or dissuade about a possible **future** action
 - c. Epideictic - praise or blame a **present** or **ongoing** action or quality OR a reflection of past actions

9. Paul's letters could combine all three of these types, as 1 COR
 - a. Some lines of forensic rhetoric (self-defense)
 - b. Chapter 13 is epideictic rhetoric (praise of love)
 - c. Overarching theme is deliberative rhetoric, seeking to alter the Corinthians' behavior

10. Stoic rhetoric included the **diatribe** - not a lengthy rebuke as is connoted today, but a creative dialogical mode of instruction or exhortation. It uses:
- Imaginary conversations
 - Rhetorical questions
 - Exaggerations
 - Hypothetical objections
 - Erroneous conclusions
 - Refutations to imaginary interlocutor, beginning with *me genoito!* (By no means! Or Of course not!) See ROM 1-11, and GAL 2 and 3
11. The letter was a speech in letter form, focusing on a particular issue (*stasis*), with several parts:
- Exordium* - introduction to the character or issue
 - Narratio* - telling of the central issue
 - Propositio* - the thesis
 - Probatio* - arguments in support of the thesis
 - Refutatio* - refutation of opponents' arguments (real or imagined)
 - Exhortatio* - exhortation
 - Peroratio* - recapitulation of argument with final appeal, elicitation of agreement, **emotional**
12. Three types of appeal
- Ethos - appeal to the moral character of the speaker
 - Pathos - appeal to the emotions of the recipient
 - Logos - appeal to logic of the argument
 - Also, appeals to authority. In Pauline epistles, mostly religious authorities.
13. Paul adopts and adapts both epistolary and rhetorical conventions of his time, mixing them and using them to advantage in his letters to the churches he founded. Paul cites from **Jewish sources, non-Jewish (pagan) sources, and messianic-Jewish (Christian) sources.**
- Jewish sources: midrashic (interpretative) techniques; citations from scripture; appeals to Moses and Abraham
 - Pagan sources: Stoic terms (*autarkes* in Phil 4:11), quotes from pagan sources (1 COR 15:32)
 - Christian sources: Words and deeds of Jesus; creeds; summaries of Gospels; confessions of faith; hymns or poetic texts; prayers in Aramaic (*Abba* in GAL 4:6 and ROM 8:15 and *Marantha* in 1 COR 16:22); Eucharistic Rite from Lord's Supper, baptismal Rite; apocalyptic tradition; lists of virtues and vices
14. Paul's writings have **focused intertextuality** - they weave many sources, with many types of appeal, using many different forms of argument, within the usual epistolary forms yet with his own twist into a cohesive whole which points directly to the Lord Jesus.
15. Only ROM, Ephesians, 1 & 2 TIM, and Titus do not name co-senders.
- Other letters named co-senders: were they also co-authors? If so, to what extent?
 - Were co-senders also the deliverers of the letter? Were they added to add familiarity?
 - Amanuensis not only took dictation, did they edit or even compose a letter?
16. Criteria used to judge Pauline authorship:
- Language (vocabulary and style) of the letter
 - Theology of the letter

- c. Historical situations described in the letter
17. Letters with undisputed Pauline authorship: ROM, 1 & 2 COR, GAL, Philippians, 1 THES, Philemon.
Other letters are judged against these as a baseline for the criteria.
- a. Eschatological perspective of 2 THES conflicts with that of 1 THES (claimed)
 - b. Theology of COL and Ephesians conflict with GAL and ROM (claimed)
 - c. Creed and ministry of 1 & 2 TIM and Titus seem foreign to Paul (claimed)
18. Letters dubbed "**pseudonymous**" - under a false name - not Pauline
- a. 2 THES (half of biblical scholars reject Pauline authorship)
 - b. COL (60% of biblical scholars reject Pauline authorship)
 - c. Ephesians (70% of biblical scholars reject Pauline authorship)
 - d. 2 TIM (80% of biblical scholars reject Pauline authorship)
 - e. 1 TIM and Titus (90% of biblical scholars reject Pauline authorship)
19. Scholars also debate passages in undisputed letters which don't seem to fit
- a. Pre-Pauline - early creeds or hymns, known by Paul and used by him
 - b. Post-Pauline - **interpolations** - believed to have been inserted into the letter after he wrote it
 - c. See page 89 for a list of the disputed passages
20. See authorship of the letters as a spectrum or continuum, a confluence of theology from Paul as he talked it over with trusted associates whose opinion he valued or whose positions agreed with his.
21. There is a domino effect of recognizing/identifying differences and similarities.
- a. Philemon and COL share very close connections, yet Philemon is undisputed and COL is not
 - b. Very distinct language permeates 1 TIM, 2 TIM, and Titus, yet 2 TIM has recently been regarded as possibly authentically Pauline while the other two have not.
22. In antiquity, writers of letters **imitated** their spiritual masters and wrote as **disciples of that school of thought**. Signing a letter with a master's name was to indicate the school of discipleship, to continue that line of thinking. It was not seen as dishonest; it was seen as honoring the Apostle by allowing him to "speak" to new situations.
23. Some of the doubt of Paul's authorship springs from distaste of the theology: anti-Catholic bias. Source: early Protestants who wanted to purge "Catholicism" from Paul's writing - institutionalized creed and ministry.
24. From a theological perspective:
- a. The Holy Spirit inspired all of canonical Scripture; therefore, ascribing certain human authorship is not really all that important. Accepting all Pauline epistles as coming directly and exclusively from Paul or recognizing that some was Paul's thought and some was his co-senders' thoughts, does not change the fact that the Holy Spirit included all which He wanted included and none of which He wanted excluded.
 - b. Canonical status of books - the Holy Spirit guided the process of determining which books were to be included in the canon of Scripture and which were to be excluded. Criteria included apostolicity (did it stem from the time of the apostles or did it reflect the thought of the apostles);

universality (did much or all of the early Church use this) and (I have forgotten - theological purity?).

- c. Times change; theology develops in a person's outlook - even Paul - and certain letters take a certain tone depending upon the situation he was addressing.

25. Hebrews does not purport to be from Paul and does not reflect his style or theology. It is not included in the 13 Pauline epistles. Its authorship is unknown.
26. Although Paul's letters were written to specific communities or individuals, they were circulated among the various churches he founded and speak to us today. Ephesians and the Pastoral Letters may be the only letters written deliberately to be circulated. Paul encouraged churches to read his letters aloud and to share them with other communities.
27. Some people wrote in Paul's name and he called them out on it if the letters did not genuinely come from him or his co-senders (see 2 THESS 2:2).
28. Early on, churches gathered Paul's letters into a collection. **1 Clement** mentions this collection by the year 96 AD. **2 Peter** also mentions "all" of Paul's letter, indicating a collection of his writings.
29. **Marcion**, a 2nd century presbyter, loved Paul but hated all things Jewish; he stripped the canon of all Jewish references.
30. **Irenaeus** (died 200 AD) fought against the Marcionite heresy. By the end of the second century, the **Muratorian Canon** existed - a canon of the New Testament. This list included 13 letters of Paul divided into two groups: those written to individuals and those written to churches. This list also recognized **two heretical forgeries of Marcionites** (not part of the Muratorian Canon). Hebrews was not listed.
31. **Papyrus 46**, the oldest surviving manuscript of Paul's letters, dating to the year 200. It includes Hebrews.
32. **Clement of Alexandria** (died 215) mentions 13 Pauline letters which included Hebrews and excluded Philemon.
33. **Origen** (died 254) mentions 13 Pauline letters, but notes that Hebrews is disputed.
34. **Eusebius of Caesarea** (died 339) mentions 13 Pauline letters "plus Hebrews."
35. 4th century canon contains 27 books of the New Testament (including 13 Pauline epistles). **Athanasius** (bishop of Alexandria) confirms this canon in 367.

36. The order of the letters has several theories:

- a. Collected by the church to whom it was addressed and then listed according to length from longest to shortest, measured in **stichoi** - "lines" - which can differ according to the scribe's lettering habits
- b. Ephesians, as a summary of Paul's theology, listed first, and then letters to the seven churches listed according to length
- c. Listed according to chronology within the list of the seven churches and to individuals:
 - i. COR
 - ii. Ephesians, Philippians, COL, GAL, THES
 - iii. ROM, Philemon, Titus, TIM
- d. According to perceived theological or pastoral importance
 - i. **Hauptbriefe** "chief letters": ROM, 1 & 2 COR, GAL
 - ii. Used by **Erasmus** in 1516 when he prepared the first printed Greek NT
- e. Our study of the Pauline epistles will be according to chronology:
 - i. 1 THES - probably the earliest
 - ii. 2 THES
 - iii. GAL - probably early and precedes ROM
 - iv. 1 & 2 COR can be dated specifically
 - v. ROM can be dated specifically
 - vi. Undisputed captivity letters **Philippians and Philemon** - difficult to date. Philippians has much in common with the **Hauptbriefe** letters. Philemon more closely relates to COL.
 - vii. COL - as late as possible if authentically Pauline; as early as possible if not
 - viii. Ephesians - builds on COL
 - ix. 2 TIM
 - x. 1 TIM
 - xi. Titus
 - xii. Pastoral Epistles - probably the latest whether authentically Pauline or not

37. 4th and 5th century manuscripts list the Pauline epistles in the order we know today, except that Hebrews is inserted between 2 THES and 1 TIM.

- a. "B" Vaticanus - 4th century
- b. Sinaiticus - 4th century
- c. "A" Alexandrinus - 5th century
- d. "C" Ephraemi Rescriptus - 5th century



PAULINE EPISTLES

Paul's Gospel The Good News of Christ Crucified and Raised

1. ***Euangelion*** - Gospel, Good News - of salvation - efficacious utterance of God, His Word
2. Content of Paul's Gospel
 - a. Summary statements
 - b. Larger story these statements embody and infer
 - c. Theopolitical character of the Pauline Gospel
 - d. Benefits of the Gospel for those who respond to it in faith
3. **Crucial to Pauline Gospel: Christ crucified** - implies Resurrection, but Suffering Servant uppermost. The Cross is the signature of the One risen. All of salvation history is to be interpreted through the lens of the Cross. The Resurrections makes that perspective **possible and necessary**.
4. Gospel in Creed and Hymn
 - a. Paul attests that the source of the Gospel is God alone
 - b. Paul often cites creeds, hymns, confessions of faith from the early Church
 - i. Affirms these items
 - ii. Creatively re-purposes them for his Gospel
 - iii. Pre-Pauline fragments: God promised beforehand; Jesus was descended from David; was declared as Son of God; rose from the dead; we are justified by His grace as a gift through the redemption of Jesus, whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement by His Blood; Jesus was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification; God did not withhold His own Son, but gave Him up for all of us; confess that Jesus is Lord and believe that He rose from the dead, you will be saved; No one can say "Jesus is Lord" except in the Holy Spirit; Jesus gave Himself for our sins to set us free from the present evil; Jesus loved me and gave Himself for me; when the fullness of time had come, God sent His Son...so that we might receive adoption as children; being in human form, He became obedient to death on a Cross; you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God to wait for His Son whom He raised from the dead; Jesus rescues us from the coming wrath.

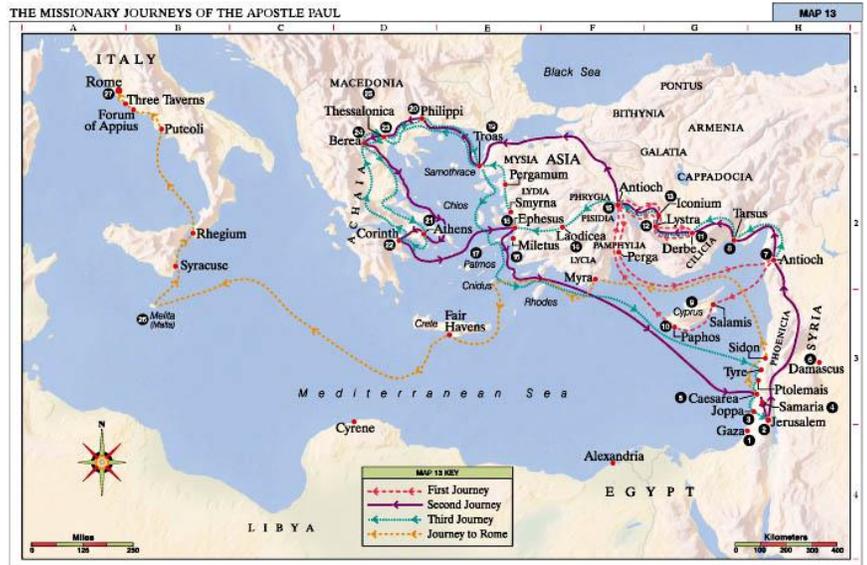
- c. Basic Pauline Gospel:
 - i. Divine Promise was issued through the prophets
 - ii. Jesus fulfilled that Divine Promise
 - iii. Jesus has messianic and royal status as Son of God and Son of David
 - iv. Jesus' death by crucifixion is both God's gracious gift and Jesus' self-giving
 - v. God raised Jesus from the dead, making Jesus Lord (*kyrios*)
 - vi. Jesus will return for a day of judgment - salvation or wrath
 - vii. Human response is required: faith, confession of Jesus as Lord, service to God
 - viii. Effects of Jesus' Paschal Mystery: outpouring of the Spirit; forgiveness of sins; liberation from sin and from the present evil age; justification; redemption; deliverance from the coming wrath.
 - d. Traditional and/or liturgical character of Pauline epistles (1 COR 15:3-8) - four chief affirmations or articles - creedal statements:
 - i. Christ the Messiah died - for our sins; according to the Scriptures
 - ii. He was buried
 - iii. He was raised - on the third day; according to the Scriptures
 - iv. He appeared - to Cephas, then to the Twelve; to more than 500 brothers at one time; to James, then to all the Apostles; last of all, also to me.
 - e. All of these are not theological or philosophical assertions but **narrative statements**. Paul's Gospel has twofold character: it is good news **about God** and His Messiah and is therefore good news **for us**. Therefore, the theological and soteriological (salvific) dimensions of Paul's Gospel are inseparable. We must participate in the Good News to benefit from it - we must bear our own cross and unite it with His; we must die with Him to rise again with Him. We must live with Him in this age to live with Him forever. We must conform ourselves to Christ as we partake of His Divine Nature. **Divine initiative requires our human response in faith.**
5. By confessing that Jesus is Lord, the entire Gospel is confessed - for Jesus, the crucified Messiah, was raised from the dead and is Lord; He rightly shares in the honor due the One True God of Israel. This is portrayed most graphically in Philippians 2:6-11, which is possibly a fragment of a Christian hymn - a creed sung in worship - the drama of the Paschal Mystery in two acts: **humiliation and exaltation**.
 6. At the end of Philippians 2:6-11, Paul borrows from Isa 45:23: "To Me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear." Paul interprets Israel's *SHEMA* as an affirmation of One God, the Father and One Lord Jesus: Deut. 6:4 - Hear, oh, Israel, the Lord (*kyrios*) our God, the Lord (*kyrios*) alone.
 7. 1 COR 8:4-6: One God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.
 8. 2 COR 5:19 - in Christ, God was reconciling the world to Himself.

9. Philippians 2 allusions to important figures:
 - a. Adam, with whom Christ is contrasted
 - b. Suffering Servant of Isaiah, to whom Christ is compared
 - c. To the imperial cult, as a contrast and challenge to the misplaced honor given to the emperor rather than to the universal *kyrios*, Lord Jesus Christ
 - d. Is narrative: theological and christological, but **not soteriological** - does not mention the salvific effect of Christ's sacrifice and **not ethical** - as an example - but Paul uses this text **ethically** as he sees his own ministry and the life of believers as recapitulating "**the Christ event**" - Jesus' coming, death, and exaltation.
 - e. Paul presents in this narrative a story of obedient **faith**, self-giving **love**, and unwavering **hope**, even in the face of suffering and death. He therefore presents the source of salvation and its shape as participation in the Christ event. Jesus' story is the Church's story, and is the story of each believer. This text is Paul's **master story**, telling his Gospel most fully and succinctly. A shortened version is found in 2 COR 8:9.
10. Paul's Gospel is salvation history told within God's covenantal relationship with Israel, that Jesus was the fulfillment of God's Promises and the ultimate fruition of all of the covenants: **new exodus, new covenant, new heart, and new creation** all came to pass in Jesus. God is always faithful and is saving Israel and all mankind, even as Israel's prophets foretold. Isa 52:10: all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God - points to the inclusion of the Gentiles in God's Kingdom. God's name is a political term: Lord (*kyrios*), as the union of religious and political realms was natural for Jews. For Paul, a theopolitical Gospel was natural. Was his co-opting of political terms from the Greco-Roman world a deliberate slap in the face, a challenge to Caesar?
 - a. **Euangelion** - Good News - in Roman terms meant that Caesar had won a battle or to the onset of an Emperor's rule
 - b. **Kyrios** - meaning Lord - connoted a powerful political figure - an imperial title
 - c. **Ephphanein** - epiphany of Caesar - his appearance on the scene to usher in the Pax Romana
 - d. **Soter** - salvation - military victory
 - e. **Eirene** - peace - Pax Romana
 - f. **Pistis** - faith - loyalty between Rome and its citizens (Latin **fides**)
 - g. **Eleutheria** - freedom - political autonomy
 - h. **Dikaïos** - justice, righteousness - Roman justice
 - i. **Ekklesia** - church - local assembly of citizens in a city (**polis**) or the meeting of a club (**collegium**)
 - j. **Parousia** - Second Coming - imperial or other official arrival, visit, presence
11. Jesus preached the coming of the reign of God; Paul preached the Lordship of the Crucified, whose reign would be definitive, a new creation, where all would be judged and either participate or be excluded forever. The Good News summons a response: acceptance or rejection.
 - a. As a religious event: Divine intervention was a summons to know God anew
 - b. As a political event: acknowledgment of Jesus as Lord in continuity with Israel's prophets and in contrast to the Emperor
 - c. As a cosmic event: Divine intervention is apocalyptic which inaugurated the age to come, the Final Days.

12. Paul's Gospel is personal - it invites a personal response, a personal commitment to conform to the Crucified - but it is not **private** - it is meant for all people of all times. Two key themes: justification and salvation - meant at an individual level but also as we experience them with others. The Good News is good because (a) God is good and (b) we are saved by God's gracious gift. Polyvalent experiences of grace include these benefits:
- a. Justification - to be in right covenantal relationship with God here and now with the expectation in hope that we will be acquitted by God on the day of judgment. **Jesus is our righteousness.**
 - b. Reconciliation and peace - God has taken the initiative to repair our relationship. We must respond by cooperating with His grace and reaching out to Him to continually reconcile with Him. **Jesus is our mediator and our peace.**
 - c. Forgiveness - sins and trespasses against God require atonement. **Jesus is our sacrifice.**
 - d. Redemption or liberation - the human condition is one of bondage to sin and concupiscence and to the evil forces around us. Through Christ, we are liberated, redeemed from slavery to sin to become "slaves" of God. **Jesus is our liberation and our freedom.**
 - e. Present Resurrection - Paul clearly affirms that believers participate in Christ's Resurrection by being raised to new life. This new life conforms us to Christ's Cross. **Jesus is our life.**
 - f. Incorporation into the People of God - Christians constitute the covenant People of God - calling us Body of Christ, new creation, temple of the Holy Spirit. **Jesus is our community.**
 - g. Gift(s) of the Holy Spirit - affirms the personal Presence of God in the Christian assembly. The Spirit makes known and empowers a life of faith, hope, and love. **Jesus is our power.**
 - h. Certainty of God's love - Jesus Christ is proof positive of God's love for us - **Divine Agape.**
 - i. Sanctification - Jesus enables Christians to embody the holy, distinctive, countercultural life appropriate for People of the Covenant. **Jesus is our salvation.**
 - j. Deliverance from wrath - accountability on the day of judgment. Divine wrath is the fate of unbelievers and the disobedient. God's love manifested in the death and Resurrection of Jesus insures protection from this coming wrath. **Jesus is our security.**
 - k. Salvation - specifically, the future experience of God's grace and glory resulting from justification. Salvation includes bodily resurrection, glorification, and eternal life. **Jesus is our salvation.**
 - l. Bodily resurrection and eternal life: Paul's Pharisaic view that human life is embodied spirit both in this life (before physical death) and in the next (at the general resurrection). This hope of Christians is a transformed bodily existence in God's Presence. **Jesus is our hope.**
 - m. Glorification: In this life, Christians begin to transform into the likeness of Jesus, the Image of God, which will be completed in the life to come. **Jesus is our goal, our telos.**
13. To experience these benefits in their fullness requires an acknowledgment of the totality of God's claims on humanity in Christ - God's grace is salvation for Israel and for all the nations. These benefits are experienced in community within the Church which Jesus founded.
14. Each benefit is:
- a. Ultimately derived from God's grace manifested in Jesus
 - b. Centered in the Cross
 - c. Confirmed by the Resurrection
 - d. Made effective by the Spirit
 - e. Experienced in community

15. The Gospel is Trinitarian; Christians enter into a relationship with the Holy Trinity.

PAULINE EPISTLES



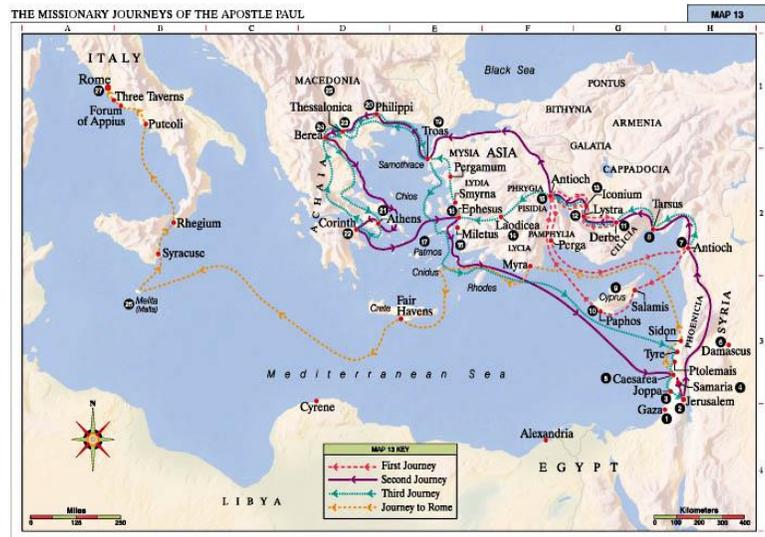
Chapter Five: Paul's Spirituality Covenantal, Cruciform, and Charismatic: Communal, Countercultural, and (New) Creational

1. Inseparability of Gospel and life, of believing and living, or relationship with God and others.
2. Spirituality is deeper and more relational than “ethics”. Definition of spirituality for Christians is “the lived experience of Christians that Jesus is Lord.” It can also be understood as life in the Spirit.
3. Paul’s spirituality stemmed from the fact that he believed the Jewish Messiah had come for the salvation of the whole world. His spirituality was not inward or insular but experienced in a community which was devoted to a covenantal relationship with God **through** Jesus, Crucified and Risen, who is Lord; this new life is made possible by the graces and power of the Holy Spirit.
4. Paul’s spirituality is:
 - a. Covenantal - in relationship with the God of Israel
 - i. Restoration of covenantal relationship for the Jews
 - ii. Establishment of covenantal relationship for Gentiles
 - iii. Always initiated by God and requiring a response from man: love of God and neighbor.

- iv. Four attributes of God:
 1. He is **faithful** and **merciful** - Paul had been surprised by grace in his conversion God grants His grace to sinners, His enemies, that they might have life. Paul begins and ends his letters blessing his readers with God's grace. ROM 9-11: Paul's lengthy treatise on Israel's faithlessness and God's fidelity.
 2. He is **Trinitarian** - 2 COR 13:13 - the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you. ROM 5:1-11: God's love is seen in Christ's sacrifice, poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit. Paul experiences God the Father: **Abba**; he experienced the Risen Jesus, the Son of God; he experiences the power of God the Holy Spirit. Each is a person and none are separate from the others; they are distinct yet inseparable; three, yet one. Our covenantal relationship with God mirrors the communion of the Trinity.
 3. He is **Cruciform** - the Cross is not **initiated by** God but it **reveals** God - Christ Crucified is the power and wisdom of God. When we contemplate the Cross, we understand something about God, who is powerful in our weakness. God is faithful and loving beyond measure, towards sinners and enemies. Jesus, who went to the Cross in obedience to the Father and out of love for Him and for us, continues in the Spirit to create a community - a cruciform Church.
 4. He is **Father** - the title "Father" was sometimes used by the Jews as He is worthy of honor and obedience, and He provides for His children. For Christians, God is our Father by adoption through the waters of baptism.
- v. Christians are to know, love, worship, and serve God - be **alive to God**, fully open to the gracious power, wisdom and love of God. It necessitates a death to self, to attachments to have this life with God.
- b. Cruciform - conformed to Jesus - put on Christ as a way of life, not a one-time experience
 - i. No longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.
 - ii. Be in Christ, in His Body - He is the Head, we the members of His Body
 - iii. Jesus permeates the life of the Christian
 - iv. Mutual indwelling - Christ is our internal power and our outer protection
 - v. Dying and rising with Christ - crucified with Him, crucifying our flesh - death to sin, rise to new life in Christ as ongoing reality
 - vi. Christ lives within the Christian as the Christian lives in Christ - conformity to Christ is this mutual indwelling - not simply imitating a model of uprightness, but participating in Him

- vii. The Cross is the definitive and paradigmatic revelation of faith and love, of right relations with God and with others. ***Faith expresses itself in love.*** Triad of virtues: faith, hope, and love. Faith and hope relate to God; love to others.
 - 1. Faith: the appropriate response to the Gospel, the required response for justification based upon Jesus' faithful obedience to the Father. Faith is both belief (cognitive dimension) and trust (relational dimension). In covenantal terms, ***faith is love for God.*** Faith is death to sin and resurrection to new life - as a slave of God - to live to God in Christ. Faith may be costly as we are loyal to God against temptations of this world.
 - 2. Hope: the assurance that conformity to Christ will be completed in God's Presence after bodily death AND confidence in the general resurrection - hope assures us of sharing in the fullness of God's Presence. Suffering precedes this glory to come and should build up our hope, as the glory to come is enhanced by the faith-filled suffering, the ready surrender to God's Will, here and now.
 - 3. Love: conformity to Christ's self-giving - sacrificial love for all. Love is an action, a choice, not a feeling.. Love wills the good of the other and builds them up. Love is our gift of self to others. Love is faith in action. It is the horizontal (person to person) dimension of covenant faithfulness (love for God is vertical).
- c. Charismatic - made possible by the power of the Holy Spirit
 - i. Presence of the Spirit - Jesus pours out His Spirit to all baptized Christians; life in Christ is life in the Spirit
 - ii. The two-fold gift of Jesus and His Spirit inaugurated the new age, the eschaton. This is the age of the outpouring of the Spirit, who is the first fruit of the glory to come.
 - iii. The Spirit of God makes us Temples of the Holy Spirit.
 - iv. The Holy Spirit forms Christians into a holy covenant community; Paul calls his congregations "saints" or "holy ones."
 - v. The Spirit of Christ conforms Christians to Him. The primary work and sign of the Spirit is cruciformity, not ecstatic manifestations or mystical journeys, although these may occur. The best and primary sign of the Spirit is a life conformed to Jesus, fidelity to God, hope in the midst of suffering, loving sacrificially.
 - vi. Living in the Spirit is true freedom - freedom to choose the good, to love without counting the cost, freedom from bondage to sin.
 - vii. Fruits of the Spirit: GAL 5:22-23 - love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Love is listed first; it holds all else together.
 - viii. Gifts of the Spirit - 1 COR 12 - are given to help others - permanent dispositions which make us docile to the promptings of the Holy Spirit - derived from Isa 11:1-3 - wisdom, understanding, knowledge, counsel, piety, fortitude, and fear of the Lord.

- ix. Humility, joy in suffering, and continuous prayer proceed from life in Christ
 1. Jesus was a man of humility and meekness - try to show honor rather than receive it.
 2. Rejoice in suffering, knowing that Jesus was delivered from His suffering and exalted; His suffering benefited all people of all time; know that our suffering can benefit others; and unite our suffering to Jesus' suffering.
 3. Continuous prayer supports a life of faith, supports our hope, and is one way to love others
- d. Communal - lived out in the company of other Christians - the Spirit forms a community of Christians who live in distinction to the spirit of the age - they are a reflection of Heaven - God's People are called to be "holy" and therefore different from others. - Paul calls them "Body of Christ" and "Temples of the Holy Spirit". Internally, members love one another: if one suffers, all suffer; if one is honored, all are honored. Externally, they bear witness to life in Christ to the point of loving and blessing enemies.
- e. Countercultural - in contrast to the norms and mores of this evil age all are equal in the Church - equality does not connote being the same. The Spirit gifts us differently, but with equal dignity. Called to holiness, proclaiming Christ Crucified and Risen, is a life to be lived in the Spirit.
- f. Creational - God the Creator redeems His creation and makes a New Creation - Paul's vision of God's work is cosmic and universal: "in Christ, God was reconciling all things to Himself" - 2 COR 5:19. When we are reconciled to God, we are part of this universality and are part of God's new Creation. Isa 65:17 - God creates new Heavens and a new earth - but this is incomplete now and will be finished in the future. The new creation is underway in Christian communities which brings together Jews and Gentiles, rich and poor, slave and free. This present life is part of God's greater plan to free all creation from bondage to decay. We suffer and groan in community with all creation for the fulfillment at the end of time.



PAULINE EPISTLES

Chapter Six: Paul's Theology A Dozen Fundamental Convictions

1. Paul was an evangelist, a pastor, a spiritual director, a community builder, a person deeply in communion with God. He was not primarily a theologian, although his theology runs through all of his letters.
2. Paul operated with a set of clear convictions which he consistently and creatively communicated in his letters. He was clear and persuasive, sometimes praising, sometimes exhorting, sometimes taking to task, the communities to whom his letter was addressed. He was a "pastoral theologian" in that his theology was not theoretical but always practical.
3. To understand Paul's theology and his pastoral approach, proceed letter by letter with twelve fundamental Pauline convictions, his basic theological tenets. They are narrative statements, and all of his letters are built upon this narrative framework.
4. By searching across contingent letters, we can see the development of Paul's theology, even though specific situations occasioned the letters. The texts chosen to illustrate Paul's twelve "big ideas" highlight key dimensions of Pauline theology - they do not exhaust it.
 - a. **Covenant God of Israel** - God chose, covenanted, and tabernacled with His Chosen People who were meant to be a Divine blessing to the nations. God is an impartial judge who expects obedience to the Law of Moses or to the natural law (*covenantal nomism*). Israel is faithless and disobedient; the Gentiles are idolatrous and immoral. God therefore makes a New Covenant.
Illustrative texts: ROM 1:18-3:20; Jer 31:31-34; 2 COR 3:6; 1 COR 8:6; ROM 3:29-30; ROM 2:9-13; GAL 3:8.
 - b. **Power of Sin and Powerlessness of the Law** - Sin operates as a power within and upon the human race. It manifests itself in *sins* relating to God or to others, on an individual level and on a national level. Sin enslaves people; we are *covenantally dysfunctional*. The Law of Moses told us what to do and what not to do, but it could not empower us to do so; it could not free us from enslavement to sin AND could not forgive sins. We needed a Savior! **Illustrative texts:** GLA 3:21-22; ROM 3:9; ROM 8:3.

- c. **Righteousness of God: Faithfulness to Israel and Mercy to Gentiles - *Hesed*** - God's covenantal faithfulness and saving power, manifested in God sending His Son even though we were sinners, Jew and Gentile alike, fulfilling the promise to Abraham that in him, all nations would be blessed. **Illustrative texts:** ROM 1:16-17; ROM 3:3-4; ROM 3:21-26; GAL 3:29
- d. **Revelatory, representative, and reconciling crucifixion of Jesus, the Messiah** - For Paul, Jesus' death by crucifixion has a rich, polyvalent, inexhaustible significance. Three of the most important dimensions are: (1) Jesus' death on the Cross **reveals** the faithfulness, love, and power of God; (2) As Messiah, Jesus dies as the faithful, obedient **representative** of Israel and all people; He is the New Adam who counteracts Adam's sin. His death echoes the Father's **hesed** - faithful covenantal love; and (3) Jesus' death **reconciles** us with God and repairs the relationship, elevating us to adopted children, bestowing forgiveness for sins and freedom from sin. **Illustrative texts:** ROM 5:12-21; 1 COR 1:22-25; ROM 5:8; ROM 5:15; GAL 2:20; 2 COR 5:14, 19 -
- e. **The Lordship of Jesus** - Paul affirms the pre-existence and Divine status of Jesus. When Paul speaks of Jesus' Lordship, he refers to the exalted status He received from the Father because of His faithful obedience to the Father's Will. God's raising Jesus from the dead vindicates Him as the Messiah of Israel and Lord of all. If Jesus is Lord, then Caesar is not, nor is any god. Jesus is to be confessed as Lord and obeyed as God. Those who live "in Him" share in His grace. **Illustrative texts:** Philippians 2:9-11; Isa 45:23; 1 COR 12:3; Philippians 2:9-11.
- f. **Climax of the Covenant and the overlap of the Ages** - In Christ, all God's promises are fulfilled. The New Covenant is established in the Paschal Mystery. Christ becomes the lens through which Paul interprets the Scriptures. Jesus is the goal and focus of the Law and the Prophets. His Incarnation, Passion, death, and Resurrection usher in the New Age, the Age to Come, the New Creation - even as this Age continues. We are in the here-but-not-yet-there phase, an in-between overlap of the ages. Christians live with an eye to the future (Second Coming) while we celebrate the past (His Incarnation and Paschal Mystery) in the present (in the Mass). **Illustrative texts:** ROM 10:4; 2 COR 1:20; 1 COR 10:11; 2 COR 5:17; 1 COR 11:25.
- g. **Justification by grace through faith - *Dikaiosyne*** can mean justification or righteousness. Paul draws from three primary spheres for its significance: (1) God's character [righteousness, holiness, fidelity, salvation]; (2) the covenant with its expectation of righteous conduct; and (3) the law court with its idea of a verdict of acquittal. Paul would define "justification" as: "the establishment or restoration of right covenantal relations with God, including fidelity to God and love for neighbor, with the certain hope of acquittal on the day of judgment." Justification is reconciliation with God and inclusion into His covenant community. God takes the initiative by giving us His **grace** and we respond in **faith**: trust, obedience, and confession of faith. This is an ongoing covenantal relationship with God. **Illustrative texts:** Philippians 3:9; ROM 3:28-30; ROM 5:1-2; ROM 6:11; ROM 8:3-4.
- h. **Trinitarian experience of God** - Paul knows God in three realities: **Abba**, Father; **Messiah**, Son of God; and **Holy Spirit**, the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ. Christians are adopted by God the Father; they live in the Crucified, Risen Messiah in the power of the Spirit. **Illustrative texts:** GAL 4:6; 1 COR 12:4-6; 2 COR 13:13; ROM 8:9-11.
- i. **Cruciformity, the law of Christ** - Christians must conform themselves to Christ, which means acceptance of suffering - cruciformity. Twice Paul refers to this as the "law of Christ," the narrative pattern of the Crucified - faith working through love which is rooted in the Cross where the Son of God expressed His faithfulness and obedience by His self-giving love. This is Paul's

master narrative: faith toward God, love toward others. Faith oriented toward the future is hope; and there you have the theological virtues. **Illustrative texts:** GAL 6:2; 1 COR 9:21; GAL 5:5-6; GAL 2:19-20; Philippians 2:1-11 and 3:10-11; 1 THES 1:2-3.

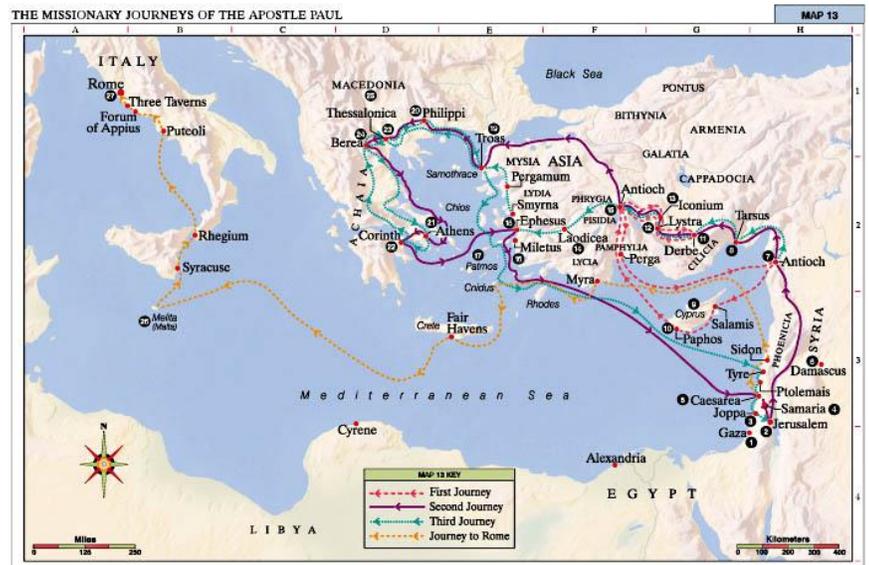
- j. **The Spirit as Promise fulfilled and hop guaranteed** - The New Age brings the promised outpouring of the Spirit which would renew Israel and bring all nations to worship the One True God. The Gentiles' experience of the outpouring of the Spirit is proof that the New Age had begun which would come to full fruition in the future. All Christians possess and can be guided by the Spirit if they listen to Him. **Illustrative texts:** GAL 3:13-14; 2 COR 5:5.
 - k. **The Church as alternative (countercultural) community** - The Church is a covenant community, holy, set apart, distinct from the culture/society. It exists in continuity with Israel and against the pagan Roman Empire. Within the Church should be an ethos of harmony, humility, and love toward all. **Illustrative texts:** 1 COR 6:9-11; 1 THES 4:3-5; 1 COR 12:12; Philippians 3:20; 1 THES 5:14-18.
 - l. **The Parousia, the Resurrection, and the final triumph of God** - Paul was an apocalyptic Jew and a Pharisee; therefore, he saw Jesus' Resurrection as representative of the general resurrection. Jesus was the "first fruits" and the assurance of God's final definitive defeat of sin and death and the restoration of all creation. God will be "all in all." The Divine plan will have been fulfilled. **Illustrative texts:** 1 COR 15:20; 1 COR 15:28; Philippians 3:10-11; 1 THES 4:16-17; 1 COR 15:20-28; ROM 8:18-21.
5. This list of twelve can be condensed into three overarching themes of **covenant, cruciformity, and community**. Paul's letters are instruments of his mission: "to create a network of multicultural communities obeying and glorifying the One True God of Israel by living lives of cruciform faith, hope, and love in Christ Jesus the Lord by the power of the Spirit."
 6. For Paul, there was nothing wrong with Judaism, but there was something wrong with humanity - and only the God of Israel, acting in the Messiah awaited by the Jews through the power of the Holy Spirit can fix the problem. Judaism is the solution for Paul - Judaism which recognizes the Messiah for whom it has long waited - a converted Judaism whose hearts are filled with faith, hope, and love for friend and foe alike; Jews who welcome the stranger into the eschatological community; Jews who live in the Spirit and by the letter of the New Covenant. When Paul disassociates from his past life in Judaism (GAL 1:13-14), he affirms his ongoing ministry on behalf of the God of Israel to bless and unite all the world in the worship of the One True God.

The letters in the order in which they may have been written:

1 THES, 2 THES; GAL; 1 COR, 2 COR; ROM; Philippians; Philemon; COL; Ephesians; 2 TIM; 1 TIM; Titus



PAULINE EPISTLES



Chapter 7: 1 Thessalonians: Holiness and hope in a pagan world

1. Probably Paul's earliest surviving letter, and therefore the earliest New Testament document. Paul addresses the past effects of the Gospel, the present demands of Christianity, and the future promise for the faithful. He writes about eschatology and ethics.
2. Thessalonica was named for Alexander the Great's sister. It was a walled city, the capitol of the Roman province of Macedonia, and had been operating since 316 BC. It was a large, important port city. It was a "free" city, not a Roman colony (like Philippi) with its own independent government and Greek heritage; it maintained the imperial cult and cults to Egyptian gods. Mount Olympus was visible from Thessalonica.
3. According to Acts 17:1-9, Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy founded the Catholic Church in Thessalonica on Paul's second missionary journey, following flogging and imprisonment in Philippi. Paul began in the synagogues but found the Gentiles more open to the Gospel. Paul preached Jesus, Crucified and Risen, which contradicted the emperor's decrees which declared Jesus another emperor. This led to mob action instigated by Jews in the marketplace and then official investigation. The Gospel was seen as an assault on religious, economic, and political status quo. Despite the persecution, Paul preached with conviction and "power" - perhaps miracles.

4. Paul was very fond of the Thessalonians. Persecutions against Christians continued after Paul left; some may have been martyred. Paul sent Timothy to check on the young church. The Christians were bearing up well under the persecutions such that they brought encouragement to Paul in his sufferings. Paul, unable to visit Thessalonica personally, wrote 1 THES while in Corinth to **strengthen** them with reassurance and instruction, to get them ready for the apocalypse by remaining “sound and blameless” at the **Second Coming**. This hope made the demands of holiness worthwhile. Paul weaves three strands together for the narrative of this letter: the Crucified and Risen Jesus, the cruciform life of the Apostles and the persecution of the Thessalonians, and the Second Coming. The letter is an outpouring of thanksgiving for the arrival and persistence of the Gospel in Thessalonica, followed by **parenesis** - instruction.
5. Opening of the letter identifies three authors, although Paul is the principal author. The church is “in” Christ and also “in” God the Father; the role of the Holy Spirit is prominent in the letter. The church at Thessalonica experienced the Trinity in the Gospel.
6. Thanksgiving goes on for three chapters. Paul rejoices in the conversion and perseverance in persecution in the church of Thessalonica. Paul thanks God for having brought the Gospel to Thessalonica and thanks the church there for their perseverance and authentic conversion. Paul’s message: (1) turn from idols; (2) serve the One True God; and (3) wait for God’s Son in His Second Coming. His message is apocalyptic and christocentric. Their conversion is the Pauline triad of the theological virtues, with the emphasis on “hope” in persecution and hope for the Second Coming. They love God the Father who chose them; God the Son (Jesus the Lord) who saved them; and God the Spirit who empowers both the preachers and the adherents of the Gospel.
7. Paul’s evangelization was authentic and selfless. He rebuffs the idea that they, like the Cynics, preached for material gain. He reminds the Thessalonians that he worked “night and day” to provide for himself while he preached the Gospel. He invokes three images to describe his missionary team: **paternal, maternal, and christological**. The suffering for the sake of the Gospel Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy endured in Philippi and in Thessalonica should debunk the idea of base motives, of status or financial gain. He reminds the young church how he “nursed them with the gentleness of a mother.” Paul’s team modeled themselves on Jesus, as every Christian is to do. Paul was then an example to the young church as to how they should comport themselves.
8. Paul refers to the suffering of the Jewish prophets, whose words often went unheeded and who were derided, punished, and ignored or hated - all experienced by Jesus and by Christian preachers and missionaries and their converts. **Suffering is the common bond of Christians**. Those who oppose God will not be delivered from the coming wrath.
9. Paul, although absent from Thessalonica, continues to care for them. He prays for them, writes to them, and sends Timothy to them. He wants to visit but has been prevented from doing so several times. Their authentic conversion and perseverance in persecution are Paul’s “crown” - his success story. Timothy returned from Thessalonica with encouraging news: their love and faith were undiminished, and they loved Paul. This encouraged him.
10. Main themes of these first three chapters:
 - a. Faith, hope, and love are a way of life between the Resurrection and the Parousia
 - b. Persecution and suffering are the expected lot of the followers of the Crucified
 - c. Ministry is to be done: with integrity; in the power of the Spirit; in conformity to Christ.
 - d. Christians strengthen and confirm one another in the faith; ministry is a two-way street.

11. Instructions in chapters 4 and 5 - serving God and waiting for the Son

- a. Conversion from idols and immorality
- b. Holiness = a life owed to and pleasing to God
- c. Sexual purity:- refrain from **porneia**, sexual impurity - be different from the Gentiles/pagans who do not know God. Forbidden to Christians, as to Jews: adultery, fornication, abortion, infanticide, homosexual relations. Have pure love and concern for the good of the other. Christians should marry Christians to build one another up.
- d. **Philadelphia** - brotherly love within the Christian community and love for all others, which entailed encouragement, exhortation, practical help, non-retaliation, and seeking to do good to all. The church's practical assistance should go to those who are truly needy. All others are to be self-sufficient so as not to be a burden to others. While waiting for the return of the Son, keep working.
- e. **Parakaleo** - encouragement, meaning "comfort" and "exhort" - the promises and demands of hope. Paul explained that while we wait for Jesus' return, some may die. This should shake the hope of other believers. The dead will be raised on the last day and will be the first to meet the Lord. He uses words which evoke the arrival of the true Emperor and Victor, Jesus. The final fate of all Christians is to be with the Lord forever.
- f. Watchfulness is the posture of Christians. Paul uses apocalyptic and political imagery and emphasizes faith, hope, and love. Paul mocks the Roman motto of **pax et securitas**. Only those who believe in the Lord and live accordingly will find the Day of the Lord one of peace and security - salvation rather than judgment. Paul separates the children of the light from those in darkness. Those who live in the light will not be surprised when the Day of the Lord comes - but they must remain watchful and sober and remember that Christ died to forgive our sins and to reorient our lives to be worthy of the children of light.
- g. Paul closes his letter with 17 exhortations; some are relational and some are liturgical.
 - i. Church leaders are to be esteemed.
 - ii. Peace
 - iii. Patience
 - iv. Non-retaliation
 - v. Doing good
 - vi. Help those who cannot contribute
 - vii. Exhort those who can contribute to do so
 - viii. Eight short exhortations were perhaps to be memorized (i.e. Always rejoice) and include joy, thanksgiving, prayer without ceasing.
 - ix. Abstain from every type of evil
 - x. Benediction closes the letter with the themes of holiness and hope
- h. Paul ends the letter with four elements:
 - i. Prayer for himself and for his ministerial team
 - ii. Exchange the holy kiss when this greeting of his is read
 - iii. According to his apostolic authority, this letter is to be read to all
 - iv. His apostolic blessing is to be given to all.
- i. Paul's use of apocalyptic language in Roman terminology indicates that the Lord would shatter the Roman peace and security, offering true peace and security

- j. Surprising how early (51 AD) the Trinity and the theological virtues were already common in Christianity
- k. By marrying present suffering with future peace and present holiness with future reward and by stressing the importance of the community building each other up while loving others, Pauline epistles formed the backbone for Negro spirituals.

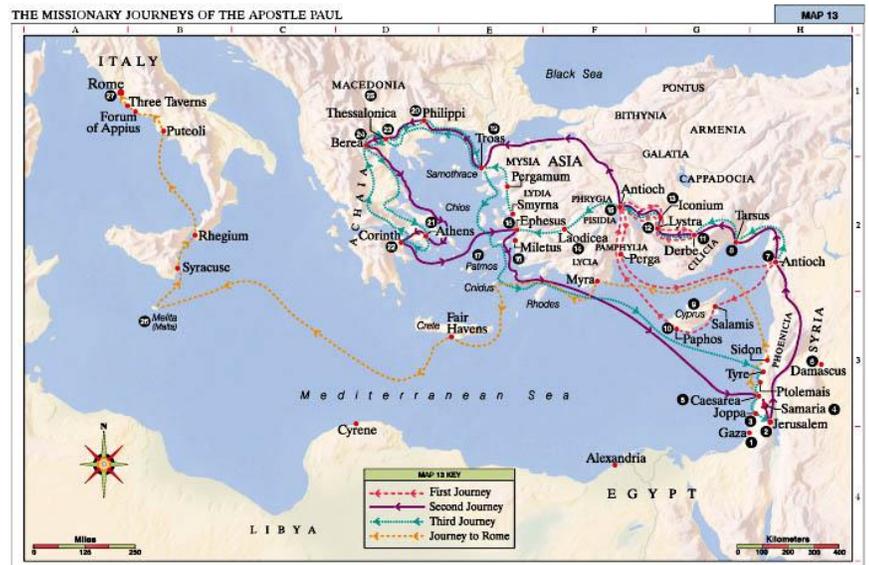
2 Thessalonians: Cruciform faithfulness and goodness before the Parousia (pp 167-181)

1. A brief, strategic note to the Thessalonians with nuanced pastoral admonitions to conform themselves to Christ - to be faithful and good while we wait for the Second Coming. Knowing that the world will end is no excuse for not working. Thessalonians were eager for the Parousia and perhaps questioning the "delay."
2. Many similarities and differences to 1 THES which have led some to question the order of the two THES letters and the Pauline authorship. The situation in Thessalonica may have been worsening and this occasioned the second, more forceful letter. The combination of similarities and differences points to the same author relating to the same group in different circumstances.
3. 2 THES is less personal and more forceful than 1 THES and they differ in style, vocabulary, tone, and eschatological conviction. Some biblical scholars have overstressed Paul's apparently different approach to the Parousia. In 1 THES he seems to anticipate an imminent Parousia; in 2 THES, he elaborates on the unknown day and time of the Parousia. In 1 THES, he speaks of the Second Coming to "comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable." In 2 THES, he reassures those who fear the Lord has already come and they have missed it.
4. In 2 THES, the persecution had intensified, but so has the Thessalonians' fidelity and endurance. Paul may have written to reassure them that their suffering was not in vain. Some Thessalonians have claimed with "apostolic authority" or "speaking in the Spirit" that the Parousia has already come; Paul reassures them that this is not the case.
 - a. Some were concerned that despite their suffering and fidelity, they had been "left behind."
 - b. Some were apathetic about working or doing good works because "why bother?" If the Day of the Lord had come and gone, there was no need to toil for the Kingdom.
 - c. Paul is upset by the erroneous eschatological announcements and the harm it did to faithful Christians who wondered why they were not with the Lord in glory; and he was irritated by the apathy of those who would not work.
 - d. 2 THES identifies Silvanus and Timothy as co-senders of the letter, which was sent not too long after 1 THES (most likely from Corinth in AD 51). Paul steers a middle path between the idleness of an "irrelevant" Parousia in the distant future and apathy about a Parousia which has already come and gone. He wanted to exhort the Thessalonians to continue their good works and their fidelity in persecution. The **three themes** of this letter are **Parousia (doctrinal), persecution (experiential), and idleness/work (ethical)**. Paul offers thanksgivings, benedictions, and prayers throughout the letter.
5. **Opening** (1.1 - 1.12) - (1) the meaning of persecution (fate of faithful Christians - put the present afflictions into a future perspective; persecutors will face Divine wrath); (2) thanksgiving for their endurance in faith and hope; (3) prayer for their continued fidelity through the power and grace of God.

6. **Persecution and the Parousia** (2:1 - 3:5) Paul deals with the deceit that the Parousia had come, yet the persecutions continue. Paul links their enduring under persecution with their future reward to share in Jesus' glory. He **warns** them against the error of believing the false teaching of an accomplished or realized eschatology. Paul **teaches** them that two things must happen before the Second Coming: the great apostasy and the arrival of the "man of lawlessness." This figure is the perpetrator of the desolating sacrilege, a false Messiah, the first beast of Revelation, the anti-Christ. He will have influence in the world whose evil is restrained at first; he will exalt himself above God; he is an agent of Satan who ensnares unbelievers and some believers as well; he will deceive people with miracles; he will be destroyed by the "breath of Jesus' mouth" - the Holy Spirit (?) when Jesus comes again. **Paul is anxious to reassure the Thessalonians that the Parousia has not yet come.** Paul **exhorts** the Thessalonians to continue to persevere in good works and fidelity to his teaching of the Gospel - to stand firm in **conviction and conduct**, and he **prays** in thanksgiving for them, reminding them to rely upon the grace of God the Father, the power of the Lord Jesus in His Spirit..He reminds the Thessalonians that God will comfort them in their afflictions and will strengthen them to practice goodness "in work and word."
7. **Error of Idleness** (3:6 - 15) - he who will not work should not eat - Paul sees the idle busybodies as malformed believers who fail in their cruciform love. They are a burden to the Christian community and a scandal which could lead others to sin. Paul reminds the Thessalonians that he and his ministry team worked "day and night" to provide for themselves while they preached the Gospel - they took no free food, which they could have done on their apostolic authority. Their voluntary renunciation of this right echoes Jesus' self-giving, self-emptying humility and love. Those guilty of idleness - "getting out of work instead of into it," not keeping busy but minding the business of others" - should be shunned by the other Christians to shame the idle busybodies back into good behavior.
8. **Conclusion** - a three-part benediction for the peace, Presence, and grace of the Lord for the persecuted church. Paul writes something "in his own hand" to emphasize the legitimacy of this letter as opposed to the false teaching of those who had deceived Thessalonica about the Second Coming.
9. Summary - the time between the Incarnation (epiphany/first appearance) and the Parousia (Second Coming) of Jesus is **marked by the sign of the Cross**. There will be daily difficulties and challenges, the need to conform yourself to Christ, and various levels of persecution for Christians. The simple act of admitting the difficulties of a cruciform life is freeing and makes the Cross easier to bear, because it reminds us of the One Who bore it for us and with Whom we bear it now.



PAULINE EPISTLES



Galatians The Sufficiency of the Cross and Spirit

1. The most passionate, angry, yet caring pastoral letter of Paul's. It concerned the controversy of whether Gentiles must be circumcised. Some of Paul's most powerful and influential texts came from this letter. Luther said it was "his" epistle as it concerned the intersection of freedom and obligation, considered by some as the ***Magna Carta of Christian freedom***. In content, GAL resembles ROM. In tone, it resembles 2 COR 10-13.
2. Important theme: justification by faith rather than works for some, this is the central concern of the letter. Paul claims that absolutely nothing can or should be added to the Gospel of the Crucified Messiah and His liberating Spirit, a Gospel which yields cruciform faith and love.
3. Galatia was at first a territory and then a province of Rome located in north-central Asian Minor (Anatolia - Turkey), populated by a Celtic tribe which migrated there around 300 BC. The provincial capitol was Pisidian Antioch. The province included cities such as Derbe, Lystra, and Iconium, cities which Paul visited. The letter to the Galatians, therefore, was not to one church but to all of the churches Paul founded in this vast territory.
4. Paul first visited Galatia in AD 48 or 49 when he preached with Barnabas in the synagogues of Pisidian Antioch; rejected by the Jews, they turned to the Gentiles until they were driven out of the city at the behest of the Jews. Paul and Barnabas then went to Iconium to preach with "signs and wonders," narrowly escaping stoning. They traveled to Lystra, where they were hailed as Greek gods Zeus and Hermes after Jesus healed a crippled man through them. Paul was stoned nearly to death in Lystra when Jews from Antioch and Iconium incited the crowd and was left for dead outside the city walls; upon the approach of Christian disciples, he stood up, ready to take up his ministry again. They went to Derbe where their preaching was successful and ***they were not persecuted***. In the face of persecution and opposition, Paul and Barnabas retraced their steps from Derbe to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, encouraging the Christian churches and appointing leaders.

5. Paul next visited Galatia in AD 49 or 50 after the Jerusalem council decided that circumcision and adherence to the Law of Moses (the 639 laws, not the Ten Commandments) was unnecessary. Paul went with Silas to Tarsus, Derbe, and Lystra. Timothy came on board. Timothy had a Greek father and a Jewish mother; because the local Jews knew of Timothy's mixed heritage, Paul had Timothy circumcised to accommodate these local Jews (probably before the letter was written). These three visited other (unnamed) towns before heading north and west to Greece.
6. Paul visited Galatia a third time, but no specific towns are named.
7. The Christian churches of Galatia experienced persecutions and miraculous deeds.
8. Paul's success in Galatia was more with the pagans than with the Jews. These pagans worshipped deities from the East, from Greece and Rome, and adhered to the imperial cult. On the acropolis of Pisidian Antioch, there remains a temple to the mother goddess Cybele - decorated with the head of a bull, and whose priests castrated themselves - and the remains of a temple dedicated to Augustus Caesar.
9. Paul came to Galatia due to a physical infirmity - illness, perhaps related to his eyes - or because of the "thorn in his flesh". Did he have the stigmata? He "publicly exhibited Christ Crucified" - scars and all - and was well received, like a Divine angel. Many Galatians believed, were baptized, and received the Spirit, who was evidenced by miracles, in prayer to God the Father, and in good works (right living). ***Some persecution accompanied the establishment of these churches*** and there were some moral issues to address.
10. **The Judaizers** - those who advocated living like a Jew, even after having been baptized as a Christian and have received the Spirit - attempted to undermine Paul's evangelization. They may have been Jewish Christians from outside Galatia, perhaps who traveled around to the new communities Paul founded and attempted to bring the new Christians into the practice of Judaism - so as to be better Christians? Or perhaps they thought you had to go through Judaism to arrive at Christianity. Perhaps they were not Jewish Christians, but Jews who sought to convert the Gentile Christians to Judaism. ***Paul saw the Judaizers as false believers in the circumcision faction - the people from James who thought less of Gentile Christians because they did not have the rich patrimony of Judaism behind them.*** They were zealots committed to the Law and the purity of Israel, who wanted Gentile Christians to live like Jews:
 - a. Be circumcised
 - b. Follow the Jewish calendar of feasts and customs
 - c. Follow the whole Law (not just the Ten Commandments)
 - d. This way, Gentiles would ***consummate*** their faith in the Jewish Messiah; they would be part of the ***covenant***, the Chosen People and would embrace the ***Jewish boundary markers*** of circumcision, calendar, and food.
 - e. Otherwise, the Gentile Christians would be ***outside the covenant***, unable to live in ***holiness***.
 - f. Their christology was not centered on Christ as the Crucified and Risen Messiah, but on His teaching of the Law.
 - g. They were Second Temple Jews - ***messianic covenantal nomists*** who believed that the God of Israel was inviting Gentiles to the covenant; entrance into the covenant was gained by faith in the Messiah ***followed by circumcision***; and God expected His covenant people to be ***holy*** by adhering to the entirety of the Law.

- h. Perhaps they found Paul's apostleship dubious; his message deficient; his ministry dangerous (his message of Cross and Spirit without circumcision, calendar, and the Law prompted unnecessary persecution from the Jews and through the Jews, pagan mobs and Roman officials), and his Gospel truncated - a shortcut for the Gentiles to join the Chosen People without coming into the (old) Covenant. They misunderstood Jesus' New Covenant in His Blood.
11. **Opening** (1:1 to 1:5): Paul's letter begins emotionally, with a stern rebuke in place of the customary thanksgiving; he calls the Galatians "foolish"; he is heartbroken over their confusion and feels he has wasted his time with them, that he must evangelize them again from scratch and from a distance.
 12. Paul indirectly but clearly pronounces a double curse on the Judaizers (circumcisers), accuses them of perverting the Gospel and of sorcery; he advises them to castrate themselves (reminiscent of the priests of Cybele - pagans). He charges them as hypocrites, as they fail to keep the Law themselves, and they seek to circumvent the Cross to avoid persecution, replacing the Cross and the Spirit with "flesh" - presumably, the foreskin.
 13. Paul embraces the Cross, rejoices in the Spirit, and welcomes the persecutions. He might be called a **cruciform covenantal charismatic** whose followers fulfill the covenant through cruciform conformity to Christ lead lives of faith and love in the power of the Spirit.
 14. For Paul the truth of the Gospel is at stake.- the Judaizers are not supplementing or correcting the Gospel, they are supplanting it and leading Christians astray. To subjugate yourself under the Old Covenant is to reject the New Covenant in His Blood - and therefore, to cut yourself off from Him, our only salvation.
 15. The letter to the Galatians presupposes persecution when Paul asks them: "Have you suffered so much for nothing?" (GAL 3:4)
 16. Paul tells stories of the Gospel, about himself, about the Galatians, about the Law, about OT characters. Paul was skilled at creatively interpreting early Christian tradition and Scripture and weaving his own experience into that tale. These stories were told for the purpose of keeping the Galatians holding fast to the Gospel of cruciformity, charisms of the Spirit, and embrace of the New Covenant, told in three main divisions:
 - a. Jesus gave Himself for our sins - **in faith (obedience) and love**
 - b. To set us free from the present evil age - **ushered in the Age of the Spirit, the New Covenant**
 - c. According to the will of our God and Father - promises made in the covenants with Adam and Eve, with Noah, with Abraham, and with David. The proto-evangelium promised a Savior; the sign of the covenant with Noah can be seen in the sky as a reminder of God's Presence; Abraham was promised numerous descendants who would stream from all nations to worship the One True God of Israel; and David was promised a kingly line which would last forever.
 17. Paul focused on the Cross and Jesus' freely-embraced salvific death in obedience to the Father's Will, setting us free to live in the realm of the Spirit - all of which the Father promised throughout Scripture. Paul enveloped this message in hard-hitting and passionate words to convince the Galatians to return to the Gospel as he had preached it to them.
 18. Paul asserts the Divine origin of his apostleship (Jesus) and the scriptural precedent for it.
 19. He interprets Jesus' death on the Cross as an act of the Son's fidelity to the Father's Will and of His love for us: a death in **faith and love**.

20. Jesus' death on the Cross inaugurated the promised New Creation and ushered in the Age of the Spirit, where we are adopted as God's children. To return to OT laws would be a return to slavery, to live an anachronism. The Spirit of Christ is the Spirit of the Father and is the Holy Spirit who enables Christians to be crucified with Christ, to ***rise with Him to new life of faith and love***, and thereby to fulfill the Law. Since Jesus' death fulfilled God's promises in faithfulness and love, then our death to sin in Baptism and rising to new life in the Spirit to lead lives of faithfulness and love ***also*** fulfills the demands of the covenant without subscribing to OT laws. Gentiles would be included in the covenant apart from compliance with the laws. To require the Judaification of the Gentile Christians would be a serious mistake: it's about cruciform faith and love, living in the Spirit; inclusion into the covenant as a grace from God with which we cooperate.
21. Key theme of opening chapter: Paul is an Apostle from God, not sent by or made an apostle by humans. He structured it as a chiasm: (a) not from humans; (b) nor through humans; but (b prime) through Jesus Christ and (a prime) from God the Father. Paul asserts that "all the members of God's family" recognize his authority and agree with the Gospel he preaches: the universal Church welcomes Gentiles into the New Covenant without circumcision.
22. Paul's Gospel is Christocentric, and in GAL he links Jesus with God the Father to demonstrate that Jesus' salvific death is the will and the work of the Father in fulfillment of His promises. The ultimate proof of Jesus' connection to the Father is the Resurrection (the Father raised Him from the dead and exalted Him). Paul's grace/peace benediction comes from "Jesus Christ our Lord and God the Father). Paul uses three phrases to identify Jesus, referring to His death, its purpose, and its Divine sanction (see # 16 on the 3 major themes of the letter).
23. The phrase "gave Himself for our sins" is a common NT idiom; Paul uses it with the traditional Jewish emphasis on death as a sacrifice for sins; he then connects it to his second theme "to set us free from the present evil age, another Jewish apocalyptic hope for the end of this age and the beginning of an age of righteousness and justice, marked by the knowledge of God and His Presence throughout the world. ***Therefore, the death of Jesus was THE apocalyptic event*** as it ushered in the New Age. The present age and the New Age overlap, allowing us to escape this evil age "and the flesh."
24. Jesus' death was:
- Sacrificial
 - Apocalyptic
 - Offering liberation/redeemed us from sin
 - Saves us from our sins/offers forgiveness
 - Unleashed the gift of the Spirit, Who continues Jesus' liberating work
 - Willed and promised by the Father
 - Exalted Jesus to God's right hand (where He was before time began, but which He voluntarily renounced), where He is to be glorified forever
 - Trinitarian - willed/promised by ***the Father***, effected by ***the Son***, and empowered by ***the Spirit***
25. **Gospel of Christ: Justification through Crucifixion (1:6-2:21)**
- Lacks customary thanksgiving at beginning of letter; issues rebuke instead
 - Rehearses the Gospel's origins, progress, and current threatened status due to the Judaizers
 - Presents the content of the Gospel in 2:15-21

26. Apostolic Rebuke, curse, and claim (1:6-10) - begins with "I am astonished" and other negative claims which parody the traditional thanksgiving.
- Rebukes them for deserting the One True God who graciously called them into covenant with Him; they have turned to a false gospel which stirred up confusion and perverts the Gospel of Christ Crucified
 - Paul calls down a double curse on them: "let them be anathema" or "eternally condemned" if they contradict the original Pauline Gospel. His curse targets those who preach any gospel contrary to the one the Galatians received from Paul, even if an "angel" should claim a gospel contrary to that of the Crucified Messiah. Paul is not a people pleaser; he is the **slave (doulos) of Christ**. Paul is absolutely confident of the truth of his message because he received it directly from a revelation (**apokalypsis**) of Jesus. This was a "conversion," a "call," and a "commission" Paul received from the Son of God.
27. Divine origin of Paul's apostleship (1:11-24) - his apostleship is independent of Jerusalem, having been received directly from Jesus. The churches of Judea and the leading apostles in Jerusalem approved of Paul's apostleship, message, and mission.
- He warns the Judaizers that they are tampering with a Divine Gospel - not one made by humans.
 - He narrates his conversion from his earlier life in Judaism to his current life in Christ in the Church. His zeal for the traditions of his ancestors has been transformed to zeal for the Good News. The zeal of Phinehas and Mattathias led them to kill fellow Jews to maintain the purity of Judaism. Elijah's zeal led him to kill 450 priests of Baal.
 - This is not a change of religions but an organic growth - Paul saw Christianity as Judaism fulfilled. His Judaism is not Torah-centric but Christocentric - messianic Judaism. He, who violently persecuted the Church, was willing to suffer on behalf of the Church.
 - Paul calls his conversion a prophetic call and commission to bring God's Good News to the nations (Gentiles). He quotes Jer 1:5 (I appointed you a prophet to the nations) and Isa 49 (Second Isaiah) (I will give you as a light to the nations that My salvation may reach to the ends of the earth.) God's grace reveals the Son not only **to Paul, but in Paul**. He proclaims Christ Crucified with his words and with his life.
 - Three years after Paul's conversion, he conferred with the leading Apostles in Jerusalem. Paul was in Arabia (possibly at Mount Sinai) and in Damascus. He may have been praying, receiving revelations, and/or preaching, but he did not confer with the other Apostles for three years due to his singular experience with the Risen Lord. He knew that his commission was valid.
 - After his meeting with Peter and James, he preached in the cities of Syrian Antioch and Tarsus in Cilicia, developing a reputation as the persecutor-turned-proclaimer. Paul's narration of these events, known already to the Galatians, was to underscore his independence from the apostolic authorities in Jerusalem and their approval of his mission and message, as they recognized the grace of God at work in him.

28. Jerusalem's initial approval of Paul's Gospel (2:1-10) and his meeting with the pillars of the Church 14 years later - Paul met with Peter, James, and John, Jesus' inner circle in Jerusalem. With him, he brought Barnabas (a circumcised Levite) and Titus (an uncircumcised Gentile active in Paul's mission in Greece) as living symbols of the Gospel and the success of his ministry. Paul wanted to explain his message/mission to the Gentiles and ensure apostolic approval of it. He relates this story in GAL to show that as an Apostle himself who had received his commission directly from Jesus, he did not **need** the approval of the pillars of the Church, but **he had it**. His second reason was to contrast his Gospel with that of the Judaizers, who did not have apostolic approval nor carry apostolic weight, as Paul did. The three pillars advised Paul:
- Not to circumcise Titus - admitting Gentiles to the Church without circumcision
 - Approved his evangelistic ministry to the Gentiles as God's grace working through the Spirit - they extended the "right hand of fellowship" to Paul and Barnabas
 - Required Paul and Barnabas to "remember the poor."
29. Betrayal of the Gospel (2:11-14) - Paul, Barnabas, and Peter understood the decision of the Jerusalem Council that Christian converts from Judaism and paganism should have fellowship together - including table fellowship. "People from James," meaning the circumcision faction, convinced Peter and Barnabas that Gentile and Jew converts should not have table fellowship, and that Gentiles should be circumcised and "live like the Jews."
- Paul interprets this change of heart as "cowardly, hypocritical, reprehensible, and **a betrayal of the Gospel.**"
 - Peter was no longer following all of the Jewish customs (laws), so Paul saw Peter as a hypocrite, placing a burden on the Gentile converts which Peter was not bearing himself.
 - Paul would not tolerate opposition to the Gospel of God's unconditional grace for all - including Gentiles - who need not become Jews to become Christians. Paul confronted Peter "to his face." Paul relates the summarization of his Gospel for his Galatian readers of his letter.
30. The Gospel of Christ (2:15-21) - this is the **thesis (propositio) of GAL** - Paul had an original audience (Peter "to his face") and, via the letter, a new audience, the Galatians. This is the densest portion of the Pauline letters and is crucial to understand Paul and his Gospel. **Thesis:** The grace of God, given to all in the death of Jesus, is the means by which sinners who believe (thus sharing in Jesus' death and Resurrection to new life) are justified (made righteous) and find Life. **Justification is by God's grace, but has serious and thorough ethical dimensions as a response from us.**
- Jesus/Christ Jesus/the Son of God appears **nine** times in this portion
 - Justify/justification (**dikaioo and dikaiosyne**) appears **five** times - a **covenantal term** - a legal/judicial/forensic concept associated with the image of **God as Judge** issuing a verdict of "not guilty." A relational, covenantal concept paired with "reconciliation." **Justification is a restoration of right covenantal relations now** with the certain hope of acquittal on the Day of Judgment. Jesus' death on the Cross is the **basis** for our right relationship with God, not anything we do. (Psalm 130:3 - If you, Lord, keep account of sins, Lord, who can stand? 130:7-8 - With the Lord there is mercy; with Him is plenteous redemption. And He will redeem Israel from all its sins.) (Psalm 143:2 - before You, no one can be just.) (Eccl 7:20 - there is no one on earth so just as to do good and never sin,) (Job 4:17 - Can anyone be more in the right than God? Can mortals be more blameless than their Maker?) (Nahum 1:6 - Before His wrath, who can stand firm, and who can face His blazing wrath?) We are not exempt from obedience to the Great

Commandment: love God above all else, and love one another - we are not exempt from good works.

- c. Live, appears **five** times in this portion
 - d. Faith/believe (*pistis and pisteuo*) appears **four** times in this portion - is a **covenantal term** connoting not simply intellectual assent but **personal fidelity** - total commitment from the heart - more akin to **devotion, loyalty, and loving obedience** than “belief,” although belief and trust in God are part of Faith. Jesus’ life, death, and Resurrection rained God’s grace down upon us; we are called to **conform ourselves to His devotion, loyalty, and loving obedience** to the Father.
 - e. Sin/sinner/transgressor appears **four** times in this portion
 - f. Works of the Law (*erga nomou*) appears **three** times - originally misunderstood as **any human effort - obedience or good works** - were useless for our justification. While it is true that apart from Jesus and God’s free gift of grace, no one would have any hope, it is also true that our cooperation with God’s grace is required. Another original misconception with has been corrected is that Paul meant “works” as in anything we do; we understand it now as “works of the Law” - as in the boundary markers of Judaism - circumcision, calendar, and diet.
 - g. Die/crucify appears **three** times in this portion
31. The source of all believers’ justification is **Christ’s death at God’s initiative and as the expression of God’s grace**. Pair of antithetical grounds for justification - Christ’s death vs. works of the Law appears here and in 2:16, where God is the actor (3 times) in that one verse. The **objective ground** of our justification **is the faith, (love, and obedience) of Jesus to the Father’s Will**, achieved in the salvific and sacrificial death of Jesus. Our **required response** is **faith, (love, and obedience)**, which is the **subjective ground** of our justification. This faith response moves us **into Jesus** - (2:20 - it is not I who live, but it is Christ Who lives in me).
32. 2:17-18, Paul links the social situation of Gentiles and Jews in Antioch and Galatia. The Judaizers claimed that if Jews are brought into contact with Gentiles in Christ, the Jews are tainted with sin. Paul counters that by retorting that Christ, then, is a “servant of sin,” and that Paul will not build back up what He had torn down (the temple wall of Jew-Gentile separation). **Paul is adamant about the social implications of this new life/justification in Christ.**
33. Paul uses two images to depict faith:
- a. The response of faith is “death to the law, so that I might live in God.”
 - b. The response of faith identifies so completely with Christ that it is a participation in His death to rise to new life - a ‘co-crucifixion’ **synestauromai** - the perfect tense of the Greek indicates a past act with ongoing consequences. The old life with its old passions is gone; in us is new life - we live in the Risen Christ and share in His life. Christians continue living in “the flesh” (in the body), but not on our own strength. We live **in or by the faith of the Son of God.**
34. Jesus’ death was a unified act of covenant fulfillment of love for God and love for us - faith working through love. Christians live by the faithfulness of Jesus as we conform ourselves to Christ; our earnest devotion to God flows out in sacrificial (cruciform) love for others, made possible by the outpouring of grace from the Holy Spirit.

35. Summary of GAL 1-2: an autobiographical presentation of the essence of the Gospel, each aspect of which is instructive and exemplary.
- a. Paul's apostleship and Gospel are rooted in the Divine call and commission (**apokalypsis**)
 - b. Paul converted from a persecutor into a proclaimer, changing his zeal for the law into zeal for Christ Crucified -
 - i. His faithful love for the Father
 - ii. His salvific and sacrificial death which called God's grace down upon us
 - iii. We participate in His death to the point of **synestauromai** - co-crucifixion
 - iv. Jesus' death is the only means of justification
 - v. God requires a **response of faith and love** from us as we conform to Christ
 - vi. We live in Christ; we are a new creation. We are called to live His faithful love.
 - c. Paul's missionary activity among the Gentiles was unofficially approved by Peter and James and then officially approved by Peter, James, and John - there was agreement that Gentiles need not be circumcised.
 - d. Paul opposed Peter "to his face" when Paul thought Peter hypocritical and a traitor to refrain from table fellowship with Gentiles and requiring them to "live like the Jews."
36. GAL 3:1-4:31 - The Promise of the Father: The Testimony of Scripture - Paul interweaves the experience of the Galatians, their baptism and Confirmation, with his conversion within scriptural interpretations. His **thesis**: the liberating reception of the Spirit has made them adopted children of God; this began and continues in their faith. This outpouring of the Spirit to all the nations is the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham. Seeking circumcision would be a foolish return to slavery.
37. 3:1-5 - Paul connects the faith which works through love (Jesus' covenantal fulfillment in His faithful love for the Father's Will) with the Galatians' experience of baptism and the outpouring of the Spirit.
- a. Paul rebukes them for even considering placing themselves under the burden of the laws when they have been freed by Jesus and His Spirit, which they received by faith and manifested by the working of signs and wonders (miracles).
 - b. To accept circumcision would be to abandon the Spirit for the flesh - to account humanly-defined status above the grace of God.
 - c. To accept circumcision and the laws is to abandon the Cross - no Cross, no crown
 - d. The Galatians' reception of the Spirit is evidence that they are incorporated into the Body of Christ - the Crucified, Risen Messiah. They are now living in the messianic age as the Gentile recipients of God's promise. Nothing more is needed or possible. To change is to regress.
38. GAL 3:6-14 God's promise to Abraham **Thesis**: "In Christ Jesus, the blessing of Abraham has come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." This summarizes Paul's Gospel and the Galatians' experience. Paul focuses on Abraham because:
- a. He was a pagan who converted at the advent/epiphany/theophany of God
 - b. His faith was renowned - GN 15:6 - Abraham's righteousness was based on his faith, this making **faith**, not circumcision, the defining characteristic of Abraham and his children.
 - c. Paul cited GN 12:3 - Abraham's righteousness (based on faith), his descendants, and his blessing would extend to all nations (**ethne**) who believe. For Paul, this was the Gospel announced in advance - faith, righteousness, blessing (of the Spirit).

- d. Prophecies about all nations streaming to Jerusalem, when the Spirit would be poured out, not only on sons and daughters, but on “male and female slaves” (Joel 3:1-2) - presaged Gentiles receiving the Spirit as well as Israelites
 - e. The Judaizers probably focused on him “we are children of Abraham.” In GN 17, Abraham had all members of his household circumcised as a sign of the covenant.
 - f. At stake is the definition of “Abraham’s descendants” - in the flesh, or in faith?
 - g. If Abraham and his descendants had to be circumcised to be part of the covenant, AND if Christians were descendants of Abraham by faith, did Christians have to be circumcised to be part of the covenant?
 - h. That was the OLD Covenant. The NEW Covenant in Jesus’ Blood satisfied the demands under the OLD laws.
 - i. Paul quotes passages from Deut (27:26; 28:58-59; 3:10; 21:23; 3:13) and Habakkuk (2:4 and 3:11) - three main points:
 - i. The Law carries with it a curse rather than a blessing
 - ii. Justification and life derive from **faith**, not the Law
 - iii. Jesus redeemed Jews from the Law’s curse to open the blessing of Abraham (the Spirit) to Jews and Gentiles alike. This point was made using two images:
 - 1. Man hanging on a tree - “cursed by God” DT 21:23 - several texts from the Dead Sea scrolls apply DT 21:23 specifically to crucifixion.
 - 2. Christ was cursed **for us** so that we might be blessed **in Him**
 - 3. Therefore, God’s Divine blessing came through a curse - this is why the Gospel would be a stumbling block for Jews
 - 4. Christ’s Cross inaugurated the Age of the Spirit in which Jews and Gentiles inherit Abraham’s blessing of the Spirit
 - 5. Jews and Gentiles alike are justified by believing the Gospel and are incorporated into His Body; Christians live in Him
39. GAL 3:15-29 The Law and the Promise - Paul answers questions about the Law:
- a. The Law was later in time than the Promise and cannot alter the Promise
 - b. The Law was not opposed to the Promise, but because of sin, could not deliver Life
 - c. The Law had a crucial but temporary role until the Promise was fulfilled.
 - d. All who are “in Christ” are Abraham’s offspring/descendant/seed
40. Paul begins his discussion with **diatheke** - a person’s will OR a covenant - Paul suggests that a will and the promises it contains cannot be canceled by a third party. Since the Law on Sinai arrived 430 years after the Divinely-ratified covenant **diatheke** with Abraham, it cannot void the Abrahamic Promise. The inheritance associated with the Abrahamic **diatheke** - the outpouring of the Spirit upon the Gentiles - comes under the terms of the Abrahamic covenant, not under the terms of the Law.
41. Paul refers to Abraham and his **one descendant - Jesus** (3:16). Therefore, all Christians, who are **in Christ - in whom Christ lives** - are the descendant of Abraham.
42. The Law was (1) later than the covenant; (2) temporary; and (3) limited in scope. It could not alter the Abrahamic **diatheke** because it did not come directly from God; it came through a mediator, Moses. It was intended to function only until Abraham’s descendant (Jesus) arrived. It was added only because of “transgressions” - to reveal and restrain them.

43. Paul does not pit the Law against the Promise. He argues that the Law cannot give Life, which would be given under the Promise; a life-giving power would liberate those under the power of sin. The **faithfulness of Jesus** liberates us from our enslavement to sin and gives us life; **our faith in response** to His brings the benefit - the outpouring of the Spirit - down upon us.
44. The Law as pedagogue (**paidagogos**) - a trusted servant, custodian of the male children, disciplined them, guided them morally, and protected them from harm. By using the term **paidagogos**, Paul highlights the temporary nature of the Law (for children mature) while also teasing out the other aspects: discipline, moral guidance, protection from harm.
45. In Christ, although we become adopted children of God, we have also reached adulthood and no longer need the pedagogue of the Law; we are instructed, guided, and protected by the Spirit.
46. **In Christ and into Christ** dominates 3:26-29. Since Jesus is the one Seed, the descendant of Abraham, all who are **in Him** are heirs according to the Promise. **In Him**, we have responded in faith and have moved via baptism **into Him**. We are clothed with Christ - we identify with His death so as to be conformed to Him in **synestauromai**. Paul's experience of faith, baptism, new garment is one of total attachment to and participation **in Christ**.
47. Since the sole criterion to be a Christian is to be **in Christ in faith and love**, all divisions cease - Jew or Gentile, free or slave, man or woman, rich or poor. These differences no longer matter from a faith perspective; they must not divide the Body of Christ. Our common baptism unites us in a new creation to live in faith, hope, and love.
48. Circumcision involved only males in the covenant. A radical point of Christianity and Paul's letter to the Galatians is that it erased the distinction between male and female. Both sexes were equally Christian. There was no patriarchal preference for males.
49. The fruit of the Spirit remains crucial to the meaning of life in Christ. The division between moral and immoral remained and was a crucial difference. Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Light. There is no room for the darkness of sin in the Light. There can be no lie in the Truth. There can be no wandering in the Big Empty, lost, if you are on the Way.
50. GAL 4:1-7 - The Father's Gift of the Son and the Spirit - Paul uses the analogies of inheritance, slavery, and majority/minority status to depict the radical change brought about by the Trinity's inauguration of the New Age.
 - a. Minor children cannot inherit unless the father alters their status - they are on the same plane as slaves, who cannot inherit. Paul uses the term **ta stoicheia** - the elemental spirits - the four elements of earth, fire, water, and wind, but can also mean hostile cosmic spirits and powers which promise life but deliver death, which promise freedom but deliver enslavement.
 - b. God the Father, on His initiative, has altered our status from slaves to adopted children, and from minors to legal heirs. (This dovetails nicely with his analogy of the Law as pedagogue - minor children have outgrown the need for the pedagogue **and** can now inherit. God did this by sending the Son **and** the Spirit.
 - c. Jesus: born of a Jewish woman and to manual labor, fully human: Jesus was not fundamentally a teacher but a **Redeemer**. By His death and Resurrection, He has set us free and allowed us to be adopted as children of God, heirs to the Promise.
 - d. The outpouring of the Spirit is a continuation of the Son's mission to redeem us. The Holy Spirit enables Christians to experience God as our Father. Slavery has ended, and we have all the privileges of adoption (under Roman law, adopted children were treated as biological children).

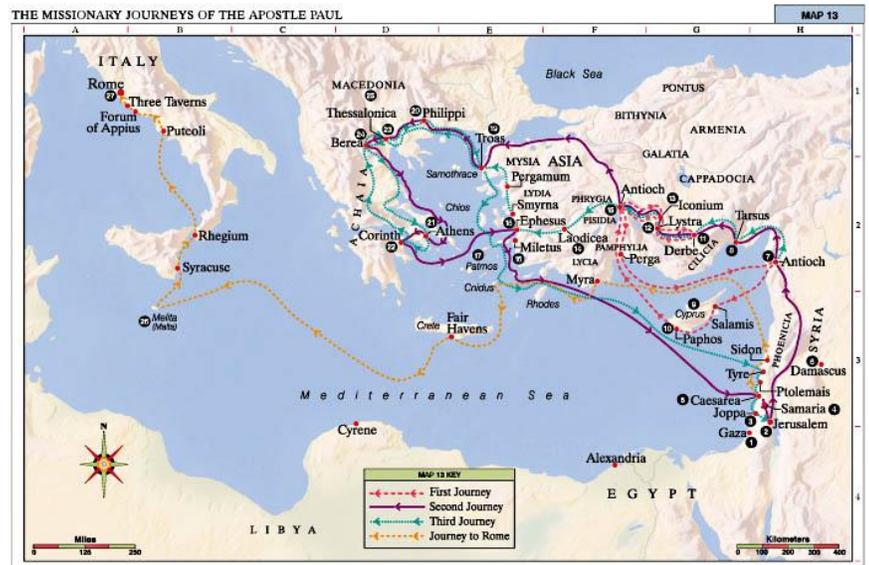
51. GAL 4:8-20 - Apostolic appeal - Paul makes an impassioned plea to the Galatians not to turn back, not to reject the freedom and the privileges they have as children, not to place themselves under enslavement to the Law. He begs them not to waste his evangelization, likening his work with them to pregnancy and childbirth.
- He urges them to imitate him as he imitates Jesus. He accommodated any community into which he preached. He tells the Gentile Christians to live like Gentile Christians and not like Jews.
 - They should treat him with as much respect as they did when he first came to them, in weakness because of a "thorn in his flesh" - probably as a result of persecution. They treated him as a divine messenger (angel) - even as Christ Himself.
 - Paul urges them to abandon these new "friends" - the Judaizers - and return to the Gospel he preached to them.
52. GAL 4:21-31 - Freedom and slavery: the allegory of Hagar and Sarah - Paul claims that the Law supports the promises of God and the Gospel by interpreting the OT story of Hagar and Sarah: the child of the slave will not inherit the Promise made the Abraham; only the child of the free woman, Sarah, will inherit the Promise.
- Ishmael is the father of "certain" Jews - those who cling to the Law
 - Isaac is the father of "certain" Gentiles - those who are Christians
 - The point is to emphasize the Law and its covenant **as interpreted by the Judaizers** in Galatia
53. Paul draws two conclusions from his allegory: (1) drive out the circumcisers, the children of the slave woman; and (2) recognize and remain in the freedom of Christians
54. Summary of 3-4 Galatians: - Gentile Christians are already descendants of Abraham and heirs to the Promise. There is no need to place themselves under the Law, to "live like Jews" to inherit the Promise. Nothing more is needed and anything added would reverse and annul their freedom.
- The Galatians already possess the Spirit by responding in faith to the Gospel
 - God promised to Abraham and his Seed to bless, justify, and give the Spirit to all Gentiles who respond in faith like He did.
 - The Law came after the Promise and cannot alter or annul it.
 - The Law was temporary; it revealed and restrained sin until the Redeemer came.
 - Jesus' death as a curse was a blessing for us; He redeemed us from enslavement to sin, death, the Law, and hostile cosmic powers.
 - All Christians are equal in the eyes of God and should be treated as such in the community.
 - God sent the Son and the Spirit on a mission; they radically altered our status as slaves to mature, adopted children able to inherit the Promise, the **diatheke**.
55. GAL 5:1-6:10 - The Freedom of the Spirit: the life of faith and love - **Focus:** the ethical implications of Paul's Law-free Gospel of Cross and Spirit. Freedom from the Law does not mean libertine behavior. Paul has to lay out the criteria for Christian ethical behavior. Fidelity to God, love for others, conformity to Christ constitutes **life in the Spirit lived according to the Cross**. Such a life fulfills the Law.
56. GAL 5:1-12: Christ, the Spirit, and circumcision - Paul warns against Gentile circumcision in principle and against the Judaizers personally; and he affirms Jesus and what conformity to Him entails (grace, faith, the Spirit, the virtues, etc.) Paul is absolutely convinced that Jesus and the Spirit are sufficient for justification and righteousness. Jesus, by His death, freed us; we respond in faith and love and are saved; we must remain in the freedom and not slip back into sin or enslave ourselves to circumcision.

57. For Paul, Jesus is everything or nothing. Either God has inaugurated the eschatological Age of the Spirit or He has not. Either ***faith working through love*** is the essence of covenantal existence or it is not. Christians who are circumcised become an anachronism, losing any benefit from Christ and His grace. Circumcision was a gateway into a way of life, but that time has now passed with the coming of the Messiah and the Spirit. All Christians are ***in Christ through faith; hope for future righteousness on the Day of Judgment; and express that faith and hope through love.***
58. Seeking circumcision as a Christian betrays a lack of confidence in the power of grace and faith - it is inappropriate and incompatible with being a Christian.
59. Being circumcised as a Jew (before becoming a Christian) is irrelevant - it doesn't hurt you; it doesn't give you greater status.
60. Paul wants the Judaizers deported. He warns that they will be judged and punished by God (for hurting the young Church) and hopes that Christians who circumcise themselves will ***castrate*** themselves, as the priests of Cybele did.
61. GAL 5:13-15: Freedom, cruciform love, and the fulfillment of the law - For Paul, the Judaizers were attempting to steal the freedom of Christians and return them to slavery. The freedom of Christ and His Spirit was comprehensive: redemption, liberation from false gods and elemental spirits, from sin, from the flesh, from the Law, from the present evil age.
62. Freedom is a communal reality - not an excuse for indulgence or the flesh (concupiscence). The opposite of the flesh is the Spirit of God, the Spirit of the Son. Freedom allows the Spirit to bear fruit in love - radical, sacrificial love - mutual slavery to one another - seeing to the needs of others. Loving our neighbor fulfills the law (Lev 19:18 - you shall love your neighbor as yourself).
63. Verse 15 - "Bite and devour one another carefully lest you consume one another" is a graphic warning of licentiousness rather than charity. Love builds up, it does not tear down; it unites, it doesn't divide.
64. GAL 5:16-26 Walking in the Spirit - Paul uses three images to convey Life in the Spirit - cruciform faith and love:
- Walking - within the Spirit's sphere of influence, being led and guided by the Spirit
 - Warring - between the Spirit and the flesh (***sarx*** - concupiscence) DT 30: the two ways
 - Fruit bearing - the Law produces "works"; the Spirit produces "fruit". Paul's list of vices are covenant violations contrary to the Faith (idolatry) and Love. Those whose actions show these vices do not have the Spirit; they are not ***in Christ***, they are outside the covenant and will not inherit the Kingdom. The Spirit imparts the fruit in its entirety to all believers (in contrast to the gifts, which the Spirit distributes as He Will). Paul's list involves covenant obligations (love is listed first). This fruit bearing, while given by the Spirit, requires our cooperation in cultivating the fruit. This occurs individually but also communally and within relationships.
65. GAL 6:1-10 - The law of Christ in the life of the community - Paul names three concrete areas of responsibility: (1) for self; (2) for others; and (3) for teachers. He then offers an image of this life: sowing in abandon.
66. The first responsibility Christians have is for others:
- Restoration - gently and carefully restore those who have sinned - so that they can return to the practice of the Faith and they don't become regular practitioners of works of the flesh
 - Burden bearing - concern for others in their temptations, hardships, grief, or loss is faith in action, loving like Jesus loves: the "law of Christ" - not something He issued but the way He lived. It's the covenant "law" of ***faith expressing itself in love.***

67. Second responsibility: self-sufficiency - don't be a burden to others if you can help yourself.
68. Third responsibility - for teachers - to share with the teachers of the community.
69. The image: we reap what we sow - Paul connects this with the "two ways" - sow in the flesh, reap death, which is the way of all flesh. Sow "with abandon" in the Spirit - reap a rich harvest both in this life and the next.
70. GAL 6:11-18 - Summary and final summons - the conclusion, or *rhetorical peroratio*, echoes several parts of the letter and drives home Paul's message: (1) avoid circumcision; and (2) remain focused, with Paul, on the Cross.
71. Paul personally writes in his own hand (to emphasize his passion) a condemnation of the Judaizers, accusing them of pride and hypocritically avoiding the Cross. Circumcision, the Law, and flesh are all in opposition to the Spirit. Circumcision has to do with human values and standards and can be an occasion of boasting, even though it doesn't lead to obedience to the Law. He sees the Judaizers as opposing the Cross and its consequences. Paul's only boast is the Cross - through the Cross, the world has been crucified to Paul and Paul to the world.
 - a. Paul's co-crucifixion *with Christ (synestauroma)*
 - b. Paul's crucifixion *of his flesh*
 - c. Paul's crucifixion *to the world*
72. To die with Christ is to sever all interest in the values and standards of the world. Circumcision or uncircumcision don't matter. The Cross matters in its inauguration of the New Age of the Spirit, which Christians live out in faith expressed through love, looking forward in joyful hope to the Second Coming.
73. Paul closes with a final blessing, a Jewish benediction addressed to the Israel of God - a new creation of all people who together make up Abraham's descendants as God's own children distinguished by the sign of the Cross. Paul literally bears the sign of the Cross - the stigmata - the scars he's received in persecutions from 39 lashes to stoning to beatings with rods, to mob violence. His words and deeds correspond to those of his Master.
74. Summary of GAL 5-6 - the Gospel of Cross, faith, and the Spirit is sufficient to counteract the powers of sin AND are sufficient for justification and righteousness.



PAULINE EPISTLES



1 Corinthians Chaos and the Cross in Corinth

1. Church in Corinth was in utter chaos, divided along social and spiritual lines. They failed to understand the real-life consequences of following “Christ, and Him Crucified.” Paul’s goal was to show them that no disciple is greater than the Master, and that we are each expected to pick up our cross and follow Him in the hopes of eternal life.
2. This letter presents:
 - a. Clearest picture of an early Christian community
 - b. Paul’s most practical and contemporary letter
3. Corinth had such a reputation for immorality that it became a verb: to become *korinthianazesthai* was to become thoroughly immoral and materialistic. This pagan city had many temples to pagan gods, some of which practiced ritual sex orgies.
4. Corinth was strategically crucial for the spread of the Gospel, as it was a thriving commercial metropolis. It was the “master of two harbors” - so bustling sea trade between Asia Minor and Italy - (1) Cenchreae and (2) Lechaion. The Corinthians were not wealthy but took every social and material advantage to become “upwardly mobile.” Paul probably chose Corinth because:
 - a. There was plenty of opportunity for work (for him to support himself)
 - b. Plenty of immorality to set straight and ideas of gods to correct
 - c. Strategically situated along major trade route for the spread of the Gospel
5. Paul spent 18 months there around AD 50-51/52. The dating can be this precise because of the mention of proconsul Gallio. He arrived alone after little success in Athens and after persecutions in Beroea, Thessalonica, and Philippi. Here he met up with Prisca and Aquila. He started in the synagogues, with little success, and turned to the Gentiles when Silvanus and Timothy joined him.
6. Paul developed a diverse community of Gentiles and Jews, slaves and freed, women and men, rich and poor. There may have been several house churches which could accommodate differing sizes of congregations.

7. Paul's visit was followed by the visit of Apollos, an Alexandrian Jew and possibly a visit from Peter.
 - a. Congregations split over who baptized them (Apollos faction, Peter, Paul)
 - b. Some professed to "belong to Christ" - of course the right position, but it added on to the divisions rather than healing them.
 - c. Some Corinthians took their fellow believers to court (1 COR 6:1-11)
 - d. Some Corinthians avoided the pagan temples, while others ate there and perhaps mocked their fellow believers (1 COR 8:1-13)
 - e. People brought their own food to the Mass of the Lord's Supper in the house churches, so some ate lavishly while others went hungry
 - f. Some flaunted their gifts of the Spirit or valued them more highly than other gifts of the Spirit (1 COR 12:1-14:40)
 - g. Moral depravity arose among believers: prostitution, incest, fornication, adultery
 - h. Some Christians in Corinth denied the general resurrection at the end of time
 - i. Some were "puffed up" with pride at their socio-economic status, their education, or of their gifts of the Spirit - they looked down upon fellow Christians and upon Paul, who preached the Cross, fidelity to the Father's Will, looking for reward in the life to come.
 - j. Paul in Ephesus was told of the problems in Corinth by letter and in person. He sent Timothy ahead since he was occupied in Ephesus. He wrote again to the Corinthians around the year 54, still having been delayed and prevented from visiting. Scholars believed that Paul wrote *at least* four letters to the Corinthians.
8. Paul's deliberate rhetoric was designed to:
 - a. Strengthen the faith; sanctify the people; and unify the community
 - b. Urge that all be done with love - these are the two bookends of his argument - 1 COR 13, "the love chapter" is the core of his argument. The problems in Corinth stem from a failure to love as Christ loves, as we Christians are called to love. At the heart of this heart is verse 5 "love does not insist on its own way," also translated: "love does not seek its own welfare or interests," a Greek idiom which also appears in
 - i. 1 COR 10:24 and 10:33
 - ii. 1 COR 11:1
 - iii. Philippians 2:4 and 2:7-8
9. Their stories, ideologies, and spiritualities had to be reshaped to be cruciform and countercultural.
10. Opening and Thanksgiving: **1:1-9** addresses the church as one community. He cites Sosthenes as one of the letter writers, who may have been a synagogue official in Corinth who converted and whose credibility was influential. He stresses that Corinth is one church among a widespread Church called to be countercultural and saintly (do not be transformed by this age, but be conformed to our Lord Jesus).
 - a. Themes in the thanksgiving: grace (*charis*)
 - b. Spiritual gifts (*charismata*)
 - c. Wealth in speech and knowledge
 - d. Blamelessness/holiness
 - e. Day of the Lord
 - f. Fellowship (*koinonia*)
11. God's work may begin with the power of the Spirit but does not end there; the people must work every day, bearing their cross as they follow the Lord to their personal judgment and to the Second Coming. Their charismatic community must be true to its Christian identity as cruciform and countercultural.

12. Address Ecclesiological chaos: the wisdom and power of the Cross **1:10-4:21** - main theme is UNITY, which is part of the broader theme of holiness letter-wide. They should boast only in the Lord, in Whom and through Whom all things are done. Intersection of three stories:
 - a. Christ Crucified as the power-in-weakness of God
 - b. Paul's cruciform ministry
 - c. Conversion of the Corinthians from pagans to Spirit-filled charismatics
13. The divisions spoken of as "I am of..." means "I belong to" - as a servant would to a master or devotees to a god. Paul therefore stresses that he, Apollos, and Peter are all servants of God, so we are all disciples "of" God - not of Peter, Paul, or Apollos. He posits three statements:
 - a. Christ is One Body
 - b. Christ was crucified to free us all from our sins
 - c. Corinthians were baptized into Christ.
14. Preachers are called to preach, not to baptize - perhaps the presbyters or the deacons did that. Preachers are merely the messengers; it is the message which is of primary importance - the power of Christ crucified. It is not the eloquent wisdom or the power of fancy rhetoric which should be attracting souls - what saves souls is Jesus.
15. Wisdom and power paradox - God's power is most evident in the "powerless" Crucified Christ; and God's wisdom is seen as foolishness to the world. Conventional wisdom does not reveal God - only faith in Jesus the Son reveals God the Father in the power of the Holy Spirit. This is the **kerygmatic paradox**: the stumbling block of a crucified Messiah.
16. Paul uses the congregation of the Corinthian church to show the nature of God's wisdom and power: God's preferential option for the poor, of making great the lowly. He quotes Jeremiah 9:23-24: boast only in the Lord, which is to celebrate Jesus as the Wisdom from God. Through Christ Crucified comes redemption, righteousness, and sanctification.
17. Just as in Corinth God did not *choose* the rich and powerful, so also God does not always *use* the rich or the powerful, as the Corinthians don't seem to think highly of Paul's rhetorical style in public, which Paul admits as being weak and fearful (as opposed to his impassioned letters). His weakness is a demonstration of God's Wisdom, for instead of hearing Paul's powerful rhetoric, they heard the message of Christ Crucified. They could concentrate on the message rather than be transported by the messenger.
18. Thus far, Paul has focused on
 - a. Rejection of human wisdom and power and
 - b. Affirmation of Christ Crucified as Divine Wisdom and power
 - c. But now Paul wants to focus on the divisions in the Corinthian community
 - d. Paul now wants to affirm the reality of Spirit-inspired wisdom and gifts AND
 - e. Stress its connection to Christ Crucified
 - i. The wisdom and rulers of this age failed to perceive Jesus as the Messiah
 - ii. For Corinthians to disconnect the gifts of the Spirit sent by Jesus at their Confirmation from His Cross shows an *absence* of wisdom on their part.
 - iii. Inability to connect Spirit and Cross reveals an immature spirit, one which is "fleshly"
 - iv. The truly spiritual (or spiritually mature) person sees the connection between the Paschal Mystery and the Holy Spirit - these people have the mind of Christ and can actively hope for the future - the eschaton

- v. The divisions in Corinth negate the Cross and reveal the Corinthians as “fleshly” people far from Jesus and the Spirit, yet Paul still calls them “the church of God.”
- f. Paul reminds the Corinthians that preachers, apostles are servants of God and the church; they are God’s possession. If they are destroyed (martyred), the Church will continue. Apostles live a cruciform existence as they live the message of Christ Crucified. This is the Church’s foundation. Theocentric tone: boast only in the Lord. Paul uses two analogies:
 - i. Paul planted; Apollos watered; God caused the growth
 - ii. Paul laid the foundation (Christ Crucified); Apollos (and others) build upon it; God will judge the work at the end: good work will be rewarded; poor work will be punished.
 - iii. They are building God’s Temple - God owns and inhabits the Church. The Corinthians, as the Body of Christ, is the Temple of the Holy Spirit
 - iv. Verdict of men matters not; only the judgment of God matters.
 - v. Paul establishes his apostolic authority AND shames the Corinthians who pride themselves by naming his conformity to Christ:
 - 1. A criminal awaiting death penalty
 - 2. A prisoner in chains, paraded in public
 - 3. Physical suffering
 - 4. Blessing his persecutors and forgiving them
 - 5. Being “foolish” and weak, relying on the strength of Jesus
 - 6. Echoes Jesus’ teaching in MT 5
 - 7. Treated like garbage
 - vi. Paul, having sent Timothy, warns the Corinthians that he may come to rectify the situation himself.

19. Summary of 1 COR 1-4: Paul’s perspectives on Jesus, church, spirituality, and ministry

- a. Allegiance to individual leaders is divisive and wrong - we all submit to the authority of the Church
- b. Crucified Christ is the power and wisdom of God
- c. Living the message of the Cross in a cruciform life is more evidence of spiritual maturity than boasting of one’s spiritual gifts
- d. Fidelity to God in word and deed is the mark of apostleship/ministry
- e. God’s servants are accountable to Him for the quality of their labor
- f. The Church does not belong to human leaders, but to God

20. **1 COR 5:1-7:40**: Addressing moral chaos: life between the Cross and the Parousia - Paul believes that the Church in Corinth misunderstands how to live the Gospel in everyday life. Paul has received reports of certain problems in the Church which he address in chapters 5 through 7, with his underlying conviction that Christians are to live with one eye on the present to faithfully live according to God's Will and one eye on the future Beatific Vision to help maintain constancy in difficulties (fortitude). One eye on Jesus' death; one eye on the Parousia.

- a. First problem: *porneia*- sexual relations immorality - one of the believers is having sex with his stepmother, forbidden by the Torah and by Roman law. Paul recommends expelling (excommunicating) the offender.
 - i. Offender betrays Jesus, in Whose Body he is a part - for his own salvation, he should go
 - ii. He give scandal to the other believers - who seem to tolerate his behavior
 1. One bad apple spoils the bunch
 2. Yeast of the Pharisees "puff them up" - grows and spreads immorality
 3. The Church lives a permanent Passover/only unleavened bread may be eaten - keep it simple, basic, spartan
 4. Paul's Gospel of freedom does not translate into libertinism or licentiousness
 5. Community should discern when evil is present and act to oust it.
 6. Principle of holiness - all evil, malice (yeast) must go
 - iii. He gives scandal to pagans and Jews about Christians
- b. Second problem - lawsuits among Christians in the pagan courts - a three-dimensional failure:
 - i. Of wisdom - how can you judge at the end of time if you cannot judge arightly the things of this world? - Taking the decision to pagans degrades their wisdom.
 - ii. Of cruciform love - No matter who wins or loses, the Christian loses in love. Isn't it better to be defrauded than to defraud? "Turn the other cheek," taught Jesus. Cruciform love absorbs injustice.
 - iii. Of conversion and sanctification - the unjust will be excluded from the Kingdom of God because they have not been washed, sanctified, justified. This behavior is one of non-conversion and betrays their identity as Christians, for they have forsaken the Cross of the Lord. Once you have been baptized, died to sin and risen to new life in Christ, you cannot continue in your old ways.
 - iv. Third problem - sex with prostitutes - could be (1) ordinary; (2) sacral (cultic prostitutes); or (3) after dinner guests common for Corinthian elites.
 - v. They blame Paul's "all things are lawful for me" Gospel - activities done in the body carry no spiritual significance.

- vi. Paul's rhetorical diatribe to this libertinism and dualism makes theological points
 - 1. Consists of slogans/counter-slogans, theological correction and claims, and exhortations
 - 2. Parallel strands made up of:
 - a. Paul's lawless Gospel/slogan of "sins are committed outside the body have no spiritual significance" - his counter-slogan: the body is meant for the Lord and the Lord is meant for the body; the fornicator sins against the body itself and is a sin which has spiritual consequences - it subverts the spiritual union between Christ and the Christian. The body is destined for temporary death but ultimate resurrection. Whether in life or death, keep your body pure for the Lord, as your relationship with Him is expressed in your body.
 - b. Theological corrections: your bodies are members of Christ and should not be members with a prostitute; anyone united to the Lord becomes one spirit with Him; your body is a Temple of the Holy Spirit; you were bought with a Price - therefore, your body belongs to God. Treat God's possession (your body and soul) with dignity, respect, and love.
 - c. Exhortations - shun fornication (*porneia*!); glorify God in your body.
 - 3. Bodily activity has spiritual consequences because of the present and future status of the body as:
 - a. The locus of spirituality and redemption
 - b. Is in union with Christ now - present purpose: love like Jesus
 - c. Will be resurrected - future destiny
 - d. Is the Temple of the Holy Spirit
 - e. Is not our own - it is the possession of God, bought at a dear price
- c. Fourth problem - confusion about marriage - can married partners have sexual relations?
 - i. Paul responds that abstinence within marriage could be a temptation to adultery
 - ii. Married partners may mutually abstain for periods of prayer or other reasons
 - iii. Married partners should share the marital embrace exclusively with each other
 - iv. The single life of celibacy is the best because it allows one to concentrate on the Lord without the distractions of a family. Paul counsels the unmarried and widows to remain unattached so they can dedicate themselves to the Lord.
 - v. Celibacy is a gift of the Spirit; not all have it.
 - vi. Believers married to believers may separate but not divorce (Paul cites as authority: "not I, but the Lord")
 - vii. Sometimes a Gentile would convert but not their spouse - was the marriage valid? Was it impure? Paul advises them not to divorce. The spouse may convert; the children would suffer from a divorce.
 - viii. If the nonbeliever initiates the divorce, the believer is free to accept it.
 - ix. Paul holds men and women to the same standard.

- x. Paul's program of "**positive apathy**" - remain as you are when God called you (as was the case with deacons). What matters is obedience to God, not social station or marital status. This brought up the question of slaves - should they remain slaves or take freedom if offered? Paul's point is that all are free in Christ - there is no Gentile or Jew, woman or man, slave or free - all are equal in the Church - and all free persons are slaves to Christ.
 - xi. Paul believes that because in Jesus the eschatological age has begun, the old world is passing away. In Christ, the new age is invading (breaking in) to the present. All social structures should align themselves with the eschaton in mind and be **in Christ**.
 - xii. Widows and engaged bachelors should remain single but may marry **believers** ("in the Lord") with the expectation for widows that the Church would help her financially - that remarriage would not be a financial necessity.
- d. Summary of 1 COR 5-7** Basic principles for life between the First and Second Coming of Christ
- i. You belong to Jesus - live morally, then
 - ii. Keep one eye on the Cross and the other on the Parousia
 - iii. Bear wrongs patiently rather than taking a fellow Christian to court
 - iv. Sexual immorality has consequences for the believer in this life and the next and impacts the community
 - v. Your body is meant to glorify God in celibacy (gift of the Spirit) or in marriage with another believer
 - vi. Marriage between believers is permanent and exclusive between one man and one woman. It is a gift even though it is a distraction from devotion to the Lord. Marriage will end with the death of one spouse and will end at the eschaton.
21. **1 COR 8:1-14:40**: Addressing liturgical chaos: the Cross and worship - The Church interacted with the religious dimensions of Greco-Roman idolatry (directly and indirectly). Paul wanted to establish order and unity to the Corinthians' liturgical life as grounded in the Cross yet fully alive in the Spirit. He argues that freedom and order are compatible, as are freedom and love. **This is the crossroad of Paul's ecclesiology and ethics**. Twice in these chapters he uses a chiasm: chapters 8:1-11:1; and chapters 12-14. Paul grants pride of place to the fulcrum of these arguments in **Chapters 9 and 13**; therefore, we should pay special attention to those chapters.
- a. Meat associated with idols within the pagan temples or in private homes - social divide between Corinthian elite (knowers) and the non-elite ("weak conscience").
 - i. Jews were forbidden to eat meat sacrificed to idols whether (1) sacral - within pagan temple; (2) in a restaurant within the precincts of a pagan temple (leftover meat could be on the menu; or (3) leftovers purchased at the temple market to be eaten at home.
 - ii. Corinthians who knew that idols are nothing, and therefore that eating meat sacrificed them, meant nothing, ate the meat at any one of the three scenarios. They were not harmed spiritually, as they were not worshipping the idol by eating meat sacrificed to it.
 - iii. Other Corinthians with a weak conscience felt that eating such meat constituted idolatry.

- iv. Paul replies that those with knowledge should not give scandal to those with weak consciences. In love, they should abstain from eating meat so as not to lead others astray. He tells them that meat sacrificed to idols is sacrificed to demons, and they should not eat at the table of the Lord and from the table of demons. **Knowledge puffs up but love builds up.** Those with knowledge **sin against charity** - they may cause a "little one" to sin AND they sin against Christ, Who died for that "little one" and Whose Body is made up of those with knowledge AND the "little ones."
- v. In **Chapter 9**, Paul shows how he embodies that teaching.
 1. He gives up his 'right' to support as an apostle and preacher by supporting himself. He establishes his apostolic authority as (a) one who has seen the Risen Lord and (b) one who founded the Corinthian church.
 2. He gives up two rights: financial support and spousal support. He gives three reasons for his right to financial support:
 - a. Common practice, both secular and religious - soldiers do not pay their own way, and farmers benefit from their own produce
 - b. The Law - do not muzzle an ox while he is treading the grain
 - c. Jesus' command - a laborer is worth his pay
 3. He denies himself out of cruciform love for his brethren.
 4. When Paul writes autobiographically, he also writes paradigmatically. Renunciation of his apostolic rights is part of his apostolic identity and MO; he does it to win believers to Christ and to ensure his participation in the eschatological victory. His eye is on the Cross and the Parousia.
 5. Corinthians ought to follow his example and refrain from eating meat so as not to scandalize weaker brethren (for their salvation) or those who are not yet believers (for the good of the Gospel); and to keep their own conscience clean for the Day of Judgment (for their own salvation)
 6. Paul is boasting in the Lord, whose grace enables Paul to make this sacrifice out of cruciform love for others and for the salvation of his own soul. Paul's story parallels Jesus' story:
 - a. He had a status with certain powers and rights
 - b. Which He voluntarily renounced (emptied Himself) for the benefit of others - motivated by love, Paul became all things to all people - he emptied himself so that Christ shone through
 - c. He became a slave (manual labor was considered debased in Greco-Roman world) - voluntary debasement equal to the shame of the Cross - the Corinthians despised him because he worked manually
 7. Paul reaps the rewards of this self-renunciation in this life and the next - the wealth of imperishable salvation. Like the athlete who renounces luxuries and disciplines his body for the reward of winning, Paul renounces and disciplines for a heavenly reward, one which will not pass away. In this, Paul does not renounce his freedom; he exercises it in acts of love.

- vi. Paul turns to the issue of idolatry, warning the Corinthians not to share the table of the Lord and eat at the table of demons, for you can be incorporated into only one body, and it should be the Body of Christ. He narrates the Golden Calf story to illustrate that even those whom God has saved can stray into idolatry.
 - 1. Israelites had been redeemed/saved
 - 2. Israelites had been washed (baptized) through the Red Sea
 - 3. They had eaten the bread from heaven and had drunk water from the rock which is Christ.
 - 4. Nevertheless, they desired evil and became idolatrous and sexually immoral (both problems the Corinthians faced). These are the two great covenant-breaking temptations: idolatry and sexual immorality. His “flee from idolatry” of 10:14 echoes “shun fornication” in 6:18
 - vii. Paul offers rebuttals to arguments/slogans of the Corinthians:
 - 1. Not all things are beneficial (although all may be lawful)
 - 2. Not all things build up - not all deeds are acts of love as they should be
 - 3. Do not seek your own advantage, but that of your neighbor
 - 4. Whatever you eat/drink/do, do it for the glory of God
 - 5. Give no offense/do not be a scandal or stumbling block to the Gospel
 - 6. Be imitators of Christ
 - viii. **Summary of 1 COR 8:1-11:1** You must order your actions for the good of others, the good of the Gospel, and your salvation. The truest expression of freedom is cruciform love, following Jesus’ example Even theologically correct knowledge can be a sin if you scandalize others, placing their salvation in danger (and your own). Allegiance to the Lord is exclusive; there is no room for idolatry.
22. **1 COR 11:2-16:** Disorderly people in the assembly - Paul assumes that men and women may pray and prophesy - speak to God and for God - in the gathered church. Men and women are equal *in Christ*. Truly Spirit-filled worship respects an order appropriate to worship. However, this is the only point of agreement scholars have about this passage:
- a. Words are difficult
 - b. Complicated, tortured, or inconsistent logic of thought and interrelated sentences
 - c. Veiled reference to ancient social phenomena
 - d. Does the text refer to men and women or husbands and wives? The Greek words used can mean either.
 - e. What does the word “head” mean? The Greek can refer to authority, source, most prominent, or contrast or complement to the body. Paul appeals to apostolic tradition and universal (cultural) custom (headship) in these matters pertaining to head covering. He states that the head (physical body part, Corinthian church, universal Church?) can be either the glory or the disgrace by the behavior of the body.

- f. Does the text refer to veils or to loose or bound hairstyles? To both? - The freedom in Christ was being used by some women to uncover their heads and let their hair loose. This signaled (at a cultural level) a male identity (change of gender) or sexual looseness. Paul advises these women not to abandon cultural norms in the name of religious freedom. Men, on the other hand, signal a feminine identity by covering their heads and shame Christ by treating Him like an idol since men with high social status in pagan temples covered their heads to pray to their idols.
- g. Does the passage interpret male-female or spousal relationships to be hierarchical, reciprocal, or both? Most probably, the relationship between men and women is a matter of source (God made Adam freely, and made Eve as a companion/helpmate for Adam. Adam had a job: till the garden. Eve had a job: be a helpmate to Adam. Men and women build one another up through prayer and prophecy. In the natural world, men are born of woman and both come from God.

1 COR 11:17-34: Abuse of the Lord's Supper - this is the only discussion of the Lord's Supper in the Pauline letters. He sees it as a time of *koinonia* - solidarity, commemoration, and proclamation (of the Gospel and of prophecy) which blesses the community and is a participation in the eschatological banquet. The way the Corinthians practice the Lord's Supper, however, causes division, and is a betrayal of their incorporation into the One Body, and shows forgetfulness of the Gospel message and Christ's sacrifice. They fail to celebrate the Supper of the Crucified, Present, and Coming Lord. Something which should be a blessing is for them a curse, as they are lacking in love in the way they celebrate Mass. Paul is quite concerned and his watchword to them is Wait and Welcome all.

- h. The Lord's Supper should be a cause of community, not division. We share one loaf, one cup as we are members of One Body, the Church. God has a "preferential option" for the poor, so the Corinthian elites should especially wait for the poor, who are coming in "late" after working - generally after the elites have eaten and drunk freely and the poor eat the leftovers or go home hungry.
- i. Eating and drinking without discerning the Body means (1) the Real Presence and (2) co-members in the Body of Christ, the Church, missing the interconnections of Christ, Cross, and community.
- j. The Lord's Supper is a Mass of remembrance, which means making the past present. Members ought to faithfully remember and faithfully respond to God's saving love, re-presenting the death of the Lord for our salvation. This is the New Covenant in His Blood.
- k. The Lord's Supper is an act of proclamation of the Cross. We must be constantly reminded of the critical importance of the Cross and to take up our own to follow the Master.
- l. The Lord's Supper is a foretaste of the Eucharistic banquet in the future, while it blesses us in the present and re-presents the past.

23. **1 COR 12:1-14:40** - Spiritual Gifts - Continuing his theme of unity in the Cross-centered community, Paul emphasizes that spiritual gifts are given to unify and build up the Church, and are meant to be exercised publicly for the good of the community. Paul's use of parts of the body to refer to the community is not unique to him.

- a. Equality within a hierarchy - there are many gifts, all given by the same Spirit, but there is a hierarchy of gifts - some build up and unify the Church better than others. Paul denigrates status and raises up the lowly - an inversion of societal status in Corinth.
- b. Paul uses two terms to refer to spiritual gifts - *pneumatika* (gifts of the Spirit) and *charismata* (gifts of grace).

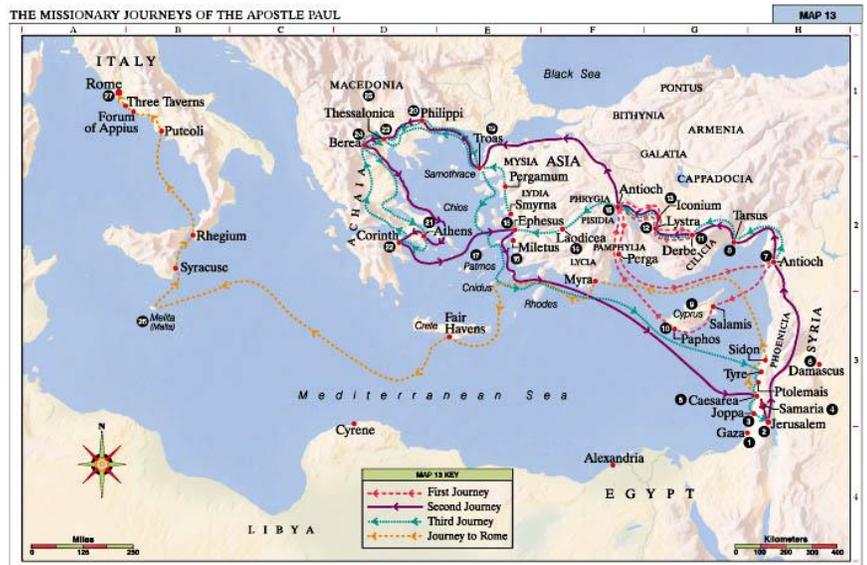
- c. The most basic criterion of all believers is to confess: Jesus is Lord. For Paul, that means our Crucified Jesus, raised by the Father, is Lord and is present with us by the power of the Spirit.. Anyone who professes this is a Spirit-filled member of the Church, for only in the Spirit can this confession be made. Anyone who curses using the name of Jesus is not inspired by the Spirit.
- d. The Spirit gives the gifts; Jesus, as Head of the Body, is served by these gifts in His members; and the Father activates the gifts. Everyone has a gift, not the same gift and not to the same degree, but **every gift is for the good of the community** and not for personal gain. **Diversity** of the gifts; **unity** in source and purpose.
- e. The body imagery conveys four interconnected points: (1) bodily unity in diversity; (2) necessity of each body part; (3) mutual interdependence of all the parts upon each other - solidarity; and (4) the weaker or less honorable members are indispensable and treated with greater honor and respect. This fourth point is Paul's presentation of his inverted status hierarchy. Due to the solidarity of the Body, when one member suffers, all suffer; when one is honored, all are honored.
- f. Hierarchy of gifts: apostles, prophets, and teachers rank higher than splashier gifts such as healing - because the first three do so much to build up and unify the Church. At the bottom: glossolalia - the speaking in tongues of which the Corinthians were so proud.
- g. 1 COR 13 is a "encomium" - discourse in praise of a virtue - in this case, Love. Love is patient, love is kind, etc. Paul means to show the Corinthians how their gifts ought to be exercised - in love. He shows them the antidote for their self-centered and self-destructive behavior. Love is necessary, permanent, and superior to other virtues or gifts. This type of love - **agape** - is a fruit of the Spirit, the love with which God created the world and holds us in existence, the love with which Jesus incarnated, suffered, and died for us.
- h. If I (fill in the blank) but have not **love**, I am nothing. The glossolalia is a "noisy gong," perhaps an allusion to the frenzied Cybele worshippers. Love is the Christian's hallmark.
- i. The list of "love is" has no adjectives, only verbal phrases - seven positive and eight negative. Paul alludes throughout this list to actions of the Corinthians which he's addressed in the letter. Paul strikes at "love does not insist on its own way" by hearkening back to the slogan/counter-slogan in chapters 8 and 10:
 - i. Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up (8:1)
 - ii. All things are lawful, but not all are beneficial; all things are lawful, but not all build up; do not seek your own advantage, but that of the other. (10:23-24)
 - iii. Imitate me as I imitate Christ - I try to please everyone in all I do, not seeking my own advantage, so that all may be saved. (10:33-11:1)
- j. Love endures forever, while all other gifts pass away - Paul intends to strip the Corinthians of their pride in gifts which had been given to them, while love is an action which requires work to cultivate and share, but which ultimately, is the best for edifying and unifying the Church. Pursuit and practice of love bridges the gap between seeing in a mirror darkly and seeing God face to face.

- k. The concrete issue of the use of the gifts is addressed in 14:1-40. Corinthians' worship was chaotic and self-indulgent which overemphasized the gift of tongues, especially when there was no one to interpret the tongues. How does that build up the Church if we don't know what the Spirit is saying to us? Prophecy, on the other hand, edifies, encourages, and consoles (and warns). Other "inherently edifying" gifts: revelation, knowledge, teaching, and interpretation of tongues.
 - l. 14:20-25 is confusing, but the point seems to be that whatever is done should build up and unify the community.
 - m. Paul goes on to give practical advice: since gifts are meant to build up, encourage, enlighten, and unify the Church, ppl should speak in tongues one at a time and allow someone else to interpret. Prophets as a group should mutually discern and self-correct. God is a God of peace and order, not of chaos and division.
 - n. 14:33-36: a woman should be silent - another confusing section, possibly inserted by someone else.
 - o. **Summary of 1 COR 11-14:** Paul's major concerns: (1) worship should be orderly but not moribund - a mixture of freedom and order; (2) the Church is the Body of Christ, interdependent upon each other, diversity of parts in the unity of the One Body, where poorer parts are the more honored; (3) cruciform love is patient, kind, does not seek its own interests, and endures forever; (4) cruciform love gives meaning and shape to worship and life.
24. **1 COR 15:1-58** - Theological Chaos - Resurrection as vindication of the Cross - the pinnacle of Pauline rhetoric and theological argument, embodying his conviction that his mission, his message, has life and death consequences. He addresses eschatology:
- a. Judging apostles and their work (chapters 3, 4, & 9)
 - b. Man to be delivered to Satan (5:1-13)
 - c. Lawsuits between Christians (6:1-11)
 - d. Prostitution (6:12-20)
 - e. Passing away of this age (chapter 7)
 - f. Condemnation for not discerning the Body (11:17-34)
 - g. Permanence of Love over gifts (chapter 13)
25. Corinthians seem to believe in present spiritual resurrection (in the gifts) coupled with a denial of future, bodily resurrection - in this, they were pagan. Chapter 15 is Paul's exposition of the implications of Jesus' bodily Resurrection from the dead for Christians in this life and the next. The Resurrection vindicates the Cross and puts to death the power of sin and death; it therefore validates the crosses we bear, the little deaths we endure in our sacrifices, until the Parousia. **Chapter 15 is the foundation of the entire letter.**
- a. Paul reminds the Corinthians of the Creed and hopes that his labors with them has not been in vain - one of this chapter's themes. The 4 main points of the Creed:
 - i. Jesus died for our sins, in accordance with Scripture
 - ii. Jesus was buried
 - iii. Jesus was raised on the third day, in accordance with Scripture
 - iv. Jesus appeared to Cephas, then to the Twelve, then to more than 500, then to James, then to all of the apostles, and then to Paul.
 - b. If Jesus did not rise from the dead, then Paul could not have encountered Him so miraculously, and the Church is in vain - empty. Paul, naturally, is certain that Jesus rose from the dead and appeared to him.

- c. As a former Pharisee, Paul begins with the Resurrection - a possibility which became a reality in Jesus. Corinthians, former pagans, deny bodily resurrection. They interpret Jesus' Resurrection in a way which denies His bodily Resurrection.
 - d. Paul begins a series of if...then correlations which stress that denying bodily resurrection is a grave mistake:
 - i. Paul's preaching and the Corinthians' faith are in vain
 - ii. Paul's preaching misrepresents God
 - iii. Believers are still dead in their sins if Jesus' death did not kill sin
 - iv. Believers who have died have perished and will not be raised to new life
 - v. Apostles and Christians are pitiable, for they endure much for nothing
 - vi. Corinthian ritual of baptism on behalf of the dead is pointless
 - vii. Paul's daily danger and suffering are absurd and gain him nothing
 - viii. Hedonism is the logical lifestyle
 - ix. Without resurrection from the dead, there is no reason for faith, hope, or love. Death is the ultimate enemy. Life is meaningless.
 - e. Paul then refutes this line because Christ has been raised from the dead, as Paul knows from personal experience and the Corinthians know by Paul's witness. Paul focuses on the Parousia, the future general resurrection, God's ultimate victory over death:
 - i. Jesus is the first fruits of the resurrection
 - ii. Jesus is the New Adam who undoes the reign of death inaugurated by the first Adam
 - iii. Jesus is alive now and is reigning as Lord
 - iv. God will ultimately defeat death, and God will be all in all
 - v. Paul advises the Corinthians to avoid those who deny the resurrection; wake up and embrace the Creed you profess
 - f. Paul considers two issues which address possible objections to the Resurrection: (1) *how* the general resurrection will occur; and (2) the nature of the resurrection (the *what*). As to *how*, Paul offers an analogy: the seed which is sown, dies to sprout new life, which is different from the seed (the *what*) - you do not sow the body that is to be.
 - i. There is continuity and discontinuity in death that transforms the dead body to the resurrected body;
 - ii. There are different kinds of bodies, each with its own kind of glory.
 - iii. Death and resurrection mean transformation: from perishable, dishonorable, weak, and physical into imperishable, honorable, powerful, and spiritual - not flesh and blood. It has been transformed from glory into glory - but both forms of existence are bodily.
 - iv. The self continues in the purely physical body AND in the glorified body. When the apocalyptic trumpet sounds, all bodies, living and dead, will be transformed by God.
 - v. For this reason **alone**, Corinthians should be steadfastly faithful in the Lord.
26. **1 COR 16:1-24** - Closing - Paul asks for the Corinthians to provide for the church in Jerusalem; he repeats the request in 2 COR and delivers the collection in Romans. He hopes to revisit Corinth after he leaves Ephesus, which he cannot leave yet due to the opposition to the Church there. He writes of Timothy and Apollos - asking for a warm welcome for Timothy and indicating that Apollos had remained with Paul so long of his own accord. He exhorts the Corinthians to be firm in faith and hope and to do everything in love. He ends with a prayer for the Parousia: "maranatha" and a benediction with an offer of the apostle's love.



PAULINE EPISTLES



2 CORINTHIANS - Paul's defense of Cruciform Ministry

Paul attempts to reconcile with the Corinthians to reconcile them ultimately with God. There are three distinct components to this letter: Chap 1-7; Chap 8-9; Chap 10-13. Dated to mid-50s (54-57) from Macedonia.

According to Acts 18-20, after Paul established the Church in Corinth, he returned to Antioch and then embarked upon his third missionary journey. 1 COR may not have been Paul's first letter, because in 1 COR he mentions a previous letter. Additionally, a "harsh" letter is mentioned which was written after a painful visit. Paul's letters to the Corinthians are possibly: **A** - the missing letter mentioned in 1 COR; **B** 1 COR; **C** - the missing harsh letter; and **D** - 2 COR.

C, the harsh letter, resulted in the Corinthian community expressing deep regret, dealing with the offender, and renewing affection for Paul. Titus reported this to Paul in Macedonia, which is included in 2 COR.

2 COR Chap 8-9 - the COR had promised to donate to the collection for the impoverished Church in Jerusalem. Paul used this news to prompt the poorer Church in Macedonia to donate lavishly. Paul now reminds the COR of their promise and send Titus (known to and respected by the COR) and a member of the Macedonian church to prompt the COR to make good on their promise.

2 COR Chap 10-13 - the Foolish Speech and Paul's defense of his ministry against Jewish Christian pneumatics (Spirit people, whom Paul sarcastically termed "super-apostles").

Chap 1-7 are conciliatory in tone and explanatory in purpose, an example of forensic rhetoric

Chap 8-9 are hortatory in tone and motivational in purpose, an example of deliberative rhetoric

Chap 10-13 are polemical in tone and dissuasive and persuasive in purpose, a blend of forensic and deliberative rhetoric to edify COR through self-examination

There is a rhetorical strategy of moving from issues of lesser to greater sensitivity and from less combative to more combative forms of persuasion. Paul's strategy is to (1) cement the reconciliation with the COR; (2) by following through on their financial pledge; and (3) separating themselves from the false apostles.

The ultimate focus is the cruciform shape of life in Christ. Paul desires to know nothing - and to boast in nothing - but Christ Crucified. Cruciformity is the shape of apostleship, grace, and the Spirit.

1:3-11 and 13:13 - beginning and end - *Inclusio* - bookends - Trinitarian benediction

1:3-7:16: The Cruciform Apostleship of Reconciliation uses the rhetorical device of *narratio* to tell the story of Paul's relationship with COR in the larger context of their relationship with Jesus

1:3-11 - God consoles the afflicted - a treatise on consolation in suffering since life in Christ is about affliction and suffering, troubles and endurance, God grants comfort and graces through His Spirit and through the partnership of mutual care in the Christian community. God is merciful and consoling by nature. Those who receive God's blessings are to be conduits of grace to others and not contain the grace in themselves only. Affliction and consolation are a participation in Christ - a fellowship (*koinonia*), a sharing in others' affections and comforts. Paul has been undergoing "unendurable affliction" in Asia, so extreme that he and his fellow ministers had expected death. God delivered Paul, renewing his trust in God and yielding praises.

1:12-2:13 - Paul accepts the renewal of affections from the COR after his harsh letter, offers them his forgiveness, and approves that they have rebuked the one who offended him; he offers his forgiveness to the offender as well. Paul stresses the interdependence between his ministerial team and the COR. They will be each other's source of pride at the parousia. Paul had planned a second visit to COR which had to be put off and then sent a letter instead.

In Christ, all of God's promises are a Yes. This is Paul's governing hermeneutic, his way of reading Scripture and history. All of God's promises are fulfilled in Jesus. The purpose of this letter was reconciliation, yet he had heard about these false apostles turning the heads and hearts of the COR and so Paul had to speak the truth to them in love. Paul offers this love to the offending party of the harsh letter out of good for relations between him and Paul and him and God, but also for the good of the community, as excessive sorrow can be an open door for Satan.

2:14-6:10 - Cruciformity and reconciliation: the character of Paul's ministry - Paul shifts into an explanation of his ministry of the centrality of the Cross and reconciliation, placing this within the context of God's reconciling work in Jesus. Paul uses two governing metaphors: (1) the Roman imperial triumphal procession and (2) the aroma of the knowledge of Christ. (1) Paul and his co-workers are paraded through the world like weak captives sentenced to death; this procession is the spread of the gospel in word and in cruciform life. (2) The aroma of the knowledge of Jesus disperses throughout the world - aroma like incense which implies sacrifice. Paul asks "Who is qualified?" for such work - the answer: those with a Divine commission and accountability. Paul's point is that a weak captive under a death sentence and one with a Divine commission would be sincere.

3:1-18 - Ministry of the New Covenant - the COR are Paul's letters of recommendation to other churches being established. This letter is a visible, public reality, the subject of which is Jesus, prepared by Paul with the "ink" of the Holy Spirit; this Spirit is inscribed on the hearts of the COR. This Trinitarian description evokes JER and EZEK - a new Spirit put into hearts of flesh - has now been fulfilled in Christ. Paul praises the New Covenant because of its surpassing greatness and glory against the already glorious Old Covenant. This is Paul as a Jew describing the fulfillment of his Jewish hopes for a New Covenant, which is different from and far superior to the Old, for the law is written on our hearts - internalized - and begets an indwelling of the living God. The NC came through the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus, and Paul's suffering and daily dying are an extension of Christ's. **Key word** in this passage: **Glory**. Those who proclaim the NC do so with boldness, highlighting its glory, in

comparison with Moses, who had to keep his face veiled, as the Glory of the Lord shining upon his face frightened the Israelites.

Paul makes the point that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God (the Father, Yahweh) and Jesus the Son. Those who gaze upon the image and glory of God are transformed into the Divine Image. Paul experiences this Spirit-giving God as Triune: (1) the God of Israel is fully revealed in Jesus, the Son; (2) the Spirit of the Son is also the Spirit of the Father; (3) to have the Spirit of God within is also to have the Spirit of the Son in this new Spirit-centered Covenant.

4:1-5:10 - Courage and confidence in cruciform ministry - Paul works in a ministry characterized by weakness - treasure in earthen vessels - to contrast the value of the treasure and the fragility of the vessel. Despite the afflictions, Paul does not lose hope because of the Spirit and the certainty of future glory. His ministry was given to him by Jesus Himself; as long as Paul acts and speaks with honesty and integrity, spending himself in the service of the Lord, Paul is not ashamed. He takes on the form of a slave in conformity to Christ, for he sees the combination of a life of suffering and the reward of glory. Paul's earthen vessel has been subject to affliction, but his spirit has not been crushed; he has been perplexed, but not driven to despair; he has been persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed. His sufferings are a continuation of the death and resurrection of the Lord - a death which engenders life. Cruciform ministry makes Jesus' life visible: death in life, power in weakness. Paul's suffering is not for his own future glory alone, but for the good of the communities for which he prays. Participation in Jesus' death is a prelude to participation in His Resurrection. Paul is convinced that (1) our bodies' temporary, mortal states will give way to a glorified, permanent state; and (2) present suffering will be repaid by future glory. (1) Paul refutes the notion that the body is a tomb from which the soul must escape. Our mortal bodies will decay; the glorified body will not. (2) Paul refutes that suffering is final, although it is inescapable. Suffering is slight compared with the glory to come. The Spirit is our guarantee of our future life of glory as we transform into the likeness of Jesus. Both stages involve pleasing the Lord and seeking to do His Will, helping and loving one another in an ongoing life of cruciform apostleship.

5:11-6:10 - the message of reconciliation - the heart matters more to Paul than outward appearances. Everything Paul has done has been for the good of the COR. Paul is motivated by Christ's love which was expressed in His life and in His death. (1) Motive - Christ's death was an act of love; (2) Scope - Christ died for all; (3) Purpose - Christ died for the benefit of all so that we would live no longer for ourselves, but in Christ; (4) Effects - **all** have died in Christ; a new creation has begun; the New Age has dawned; we are reconciled with God and forgiven; (5) Ultimate source: God the Father, Who sent Jesus; (6) Mode: sinless Christ became sin for our sake.

When Paul says "**all**," he most likely means "all Christians who have responded to and benefited by Christ's death and share in His Cross." If Paul meant *all people*, he would hardly be so motivated to evangelize, nor would he press so hard for reconciliation with God, nor would he speak so passionately about humanity outside of Christ who live for themselves at enmity with God, guilty of trespasses, identified with sin.

Jesus died as an act **for** others means: for our benefit AND in our place. Christ did not simply offer forgiveness of sins so that we could keep on sinning. We should look to Him and follow in His footsteps. This is the new creation inaugurated by Christ's death. The community in Christ is the beginning of the prophetic promises for the renewal of creation (ISA 40-66). We cease to see the world through human standards and begin to use the Cross as the criteria for our evaluation. Paul notes that COR listening to false apostles after having received the Gospel from him is evidence of their need for reconciliation with God.

Paul lists the character of his ministry (1) tribulations/cruciformity; (2) virtues/integrity; and (3) paradoxes (life in death, power in weakness. The words he uses for (1) endurance, affliction, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleeplessness; hunger. For (2): purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness, genuine love, truthful speech, power of God with the weapons of righteousness. For (3): honor and dishonor; ill repute and good repute; treated as imposters, yet true; unknown yet well-known; dying yet alive; punished, not killed; sorrowful yet rejoicing; poor yet enriching others; having nothing yet possessing everything. He and his co-workers have met the ultimate test: conformity to Christ by carrying about in their bodies the death of Jesus and making visible His life.

6:11-7:16 - final appeal for reconciliation - These chapters demonstrate that Paul's relationship with COR has been a microcosm of his cruciform ministry; they constitute the basis for the appeal for reconciliation. Paul vividly describes his love for them. He mentions body parts which were considered sources of affection in antiquity: mouth, heart, and *splanchna*, bowels. He refers to his as open to them, freely and frankly. He believes the COR have restriction in their bowels and need to open up to receive him again as their father in faith. He calls them to a radical holiness and advises them to avoid being "unequally yoked" - married to unbelievers. Paul warns COR against associating with false apostles who proclaim a different Jesus, Spirit and gospel. He calls these false apostles "Beliar," another name for Stn. Paul rejoices that the harsh letter he sent had the desired result, although he is grieved that it caused them pain; but this pain was "godly" in that it led to repentance, renewed zeal, and reconciliation with the church with Paul and God.

Summary of 2 COR 1-7 - (1) Believers participate in a partnership of tribulation and comfort by sharing in the sufferings of Jesus and the comfort of God the Father. (2) Ministerial faithfulness and integrity are founded on God's faithfulness in Christ. (3) True ministers are characterized by sincerity and cruciform love. (4) Always carrying about in your bodies the death of Christ is a display of God's power of resurrection, as Jesus' life and Resurrection benefits all believers. (5) This present life of suffering pales in comparison with the future glory. (6) Ministry with integrity is characterized by difficulty, virtue, and paradox.

8:1-9:15: Cruciform grace of generosity - Paul mentions the collection for the impoverished church in Jerusalem is mentioned in four of his letters: ROM, GAL, and 1 and 2 COR and he made extensive efforts in at least three regions: Galatia, Macedonia, and Achaia. While the COR had made promises to donate to the collection, Paul was not sure they would follow through and he wasn't sure those in Jerusalem would appreciate it (possibly because of the reputation of COR?) Paul was anxious for COR to donate to promote unity between Gentile and Jewish Christians; so the Gentile believers could acknowledge their spiritual debt to Jewish believers; to embody the gospel of God's gift and Christ's sacrifice concretely; and to create a sense of the catholicity of all communities in Christ. Paul uses words like fellowship, partnership, service, ministry, overflow, zeal, eagerness, and especially grace (*charis*) to prove the reality of God's love and grace in their lives. **Grace is central** in these chapters: the grace of God; the grace of gratitude; the grace of giving; using the word grace to mean thanksgiving.

8:1-24: Paul describes the incredible generosity of the Macedonian churches, who were poorer than COR but heard of the pledges COR had made; their zeal overflowed and they provided out of their own need during a time of grave ordeal. They were so joyful to have received the Gospel that they begged to participate in the collection (such a ministry of God's grace). This was proof of the Spirit at work in the Macedonians. Paul stresses the abundance of spiritual gifts and God's grace as the COR were proud of their spiritual gifts to the point of flaunting them like a party game. Paul stresses the great love of the Macedonians, seeming to wonder if COR can show such love. Paul speaks of the Incarnation and death of Jesus, whose love urges us on, for although He was rich, He became poor for our sakes, so that by His poverty, we might become rich. This echoes Paul in 2 COR 5:21 - God made the sinless One to be sin so that we could become God's righteousness. Jesus' spending Himself on us is His grace, His love, the means of salvation for COR. Grace is experienced as grace only when it is

extended to others - we must be conduits, not containers. God gives us what we need - calling to mind EX 16:18 - Israelites collected only what manna they needed, some more (for larger families) and some less (for smaller families) - none had too little or too much.

9:1-15 - The boasting promises of COR had motivated the Macedonians; now Paul is sending Titus and a member of the Macedonian church to manage the Jerusalem collection in COR. Paul advises that their gifts should be offered liberally and cheerfully. God will provide for those who are generous (the measure you use will be measured out to you); such generosity is an act of ministry and worship (*diakonia* and *leitourgia*).

Summary of 2 COR 8-9 - a brief but comprehensive theology of generosity: (1) generous giving is an experience of Divine grace - expressing thanksgiving for graces received and a means to conform to the generous self-giving of Jesus; (2) giving should be done liberally and cheerfully; (3) God supplies the needs of the generous; (4) generosity demonstrates the reality of grace.

10:1-13:13 - Cruciform power in weakness of the Spirit - This is one of the most rhetorically and theologically powerful portions of all of the Pauline epistles. It's a no-holds-barred defense of Paul's ministry and his attack on the opponents. The fundamental problem with the false apostles is that they are so thoroughly antithetical of the message of Christ Crucified as to be demonic. The hallmark of the Spirit and thus of true apostles is power in weakness, the Spirit of Christ Crucified, Who is the power of God and the wisdom of God. Paul boasts only in the Lord, in his own weakness; his cruciform ministry is obedience to Christ.

10:1-6 Paul declares war - while he desires to deal with COR with Christ's meekness and gentleness, he declares spiritual warfare on the false apostles. He comes with Divinely-empowered weapons to engage in destruction, captivity, and punishment of resistance. He will destroy the arguments of the false apostles, take captive the thoughts and hearts of COR to the Lord, and punish any residual resistance. War is necessary - the false apostles are leading COR away from God; they have "poached" on the Lord's territory, which God had assigned to Paul. Paul uses military imagery to oppose those who contradict the Cross, the only true means to peace and reconciliation. This is the only kind of war Paul is willing to wage - a holy war of words.

10:7-18 - This letter is for the edification of COR; he exercises his apostolic authority on their behalf. His primary weapon will be boasting in the Lord (JER 9:23-24), using the boasting of the false apostles against them. Paul rejects self-commendation and self-praise to boast in the cruciform shape of his life. The only legitimate pride is in obeying the Lord, being conformed to His self-humbling and weakness.

11:1-15 - Paul, as the COR father in faith, has the responsibility of a daughter's pure devotion to her husband to her betrothed until their wedding day. Since COR is the Bride of Christ, the wedding day will be the parousia. Paul's problem with the false apostles is that they preach "another Jesus, a different Spirit, a different gospel." Since Paul had preached the authentic Gospel, both Christ and the Spirit live in COR believers. To disassociate the powerful, resurrected Jesus from the crucified Christ is to preach another Jesus. To separate the Spirit of God from the Spirit of cruciformity is to preach a different Spirit. To abandon Christ Crucified and His God-given Spirit of cruciformity is to preach a different gospel. This necessary confluence of cruciformity and apostleship leads Paul to speak of his weakness. (1) lack of showy rhetoric - shows the power of God in converting COR operating through Paul's weakness. Paul claims to possess true knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Here the false apostles reveal their true lack of knowledge of God. (2) working with his hands (manual labor) and not taking money for his apostleship - the false apostles were happy to take the COR money. Paul was happy to follow his Lord in voluntary self-humbling. Paul, motivated by love, lowered himself for the exaltation of COR. (3) Paul will continue this method of ministry because of the false apostles so as not to lower himself to their level, calling them "enemies of the Cross" opponents of the gospel, deceitful workers, ministers of Stn the deceiver. While this is standard rhetorical fare in antiquity, Paul means for COR to take it seriously.

11:16-12:10 - the Fool's Speech - the most potent section of these four rhetorically and theologically powerful chapters. Paul lets loose with an impressive rhetorical arsenal: sarcasm and invective, self-praise and self-denigration, irony and paradox, *synkrisis* (comparison) and antithesis, narrative and catalog. He parodies the arrogance and pride of the false apostles. Paul boasts of his powerful feats and military successes, so common an occupation in Roman life - but Paul's achievements were failures according to human standards. He boasts in the Lord, whose power manifests in Paul's weakness and whose Life is visible in Paul's daily dying. The *propositio* of his speech is "whenever I am weak, then I am strong" - that God's foolishness and weakness in the Cross of Jesus are manifested in Paul's ministry. COR have tolerated the "birds of prey" who take their money in the name of Jesus; the issue of Paul refusing to take COR money was obviously a central issue. Paul then takes on the opponents on their own boasts: if they are Jewish, so is Paul (and better!) If they are apostles, so is Paul (and better!) Paul then catalogs their tribulations and his - and he wins, by a landslide. Paul "the warrior" summarizes his service:

Uncounted tribulations - years of hard labor; imprisonments; floggings; and near-death experiences.

Enumerated adversities - 5 times officially flogged at synagogues, each of which could have been lethal; 3 times beaten by Romans; stoned once and left for dead; 3 shipwrecks; once adrift at sea; and frequent dangerous trips

Dangers - most related to the dangerous trips, both natural dangers (rivers, seas, wilderness) and bandits, mobs of Jews and Gentiles, and false brothers and sisters

Difficult conditions - physical pains and deprivations; hard work (manual labor); sleeplessness; hunger and thirst; exposure to the elements.

Anxiety for the churches - daily anxiety and a deep sense of sharing in the persecutions and weaknesses of the churches he established.

Paul boasts of his weakness is being let down in a basket from the walls of Damascus to escape King Aretas IV. Warriors boast of being the first to scale the walls of a city they attack: they receive a *corona muralis*, a "crown for the wall." Paul paradoxically boasts of the power of God in saving him by letting him down the wall. This is his *corona muralis*.

Paul then narrates a "heavenly trip" which he took not long after the Damascus escape, a vision experience called *Merkabah*, Hebrew for "chariot," mystical encounters with God. Paul does not describe what he saw and was not permitted to describe what he heard, but his experience was stunning. While the false apostles claimed to have visions, Paul beats them at this game as well. This was not his only vision; he had others equally stunning. For this reason, Paul says, he was given a "thorn (in) or (against) his flesh" to inculcate humility and dependence on God. According to the Dead Sea Scrolls, this thorn was Paul's opponents. Paul terms the thorn both a "messenger of Stn" due to its adversarial character AND that it was "given to" him, as a Divine gift. The thorn may be the life of tribulation he faces as an apostle. He has the privilege of participating in the suffering of Christ - a Divine gift, yet the tribulations are the work of the adversary. These trials teach Paul the power of God's grace in his times of weakness and need and allow him to experience Jesus' power. He is now content to abide with the thorn. The Damascus incident was his first experience of God's power and came to accept that tribulations were the essence of an apostolic life. The thorns keep ministers from becoming too elated - the thorn *against* the flesh is a help *for* the Spirit. The God of Paradise is revealed in the Cross of Jesus and in the cruciformity of His ministers. Paul, then, possessed an "extraordinary power" from God by which the life of Jesus is manifested in his affliction and persecution.

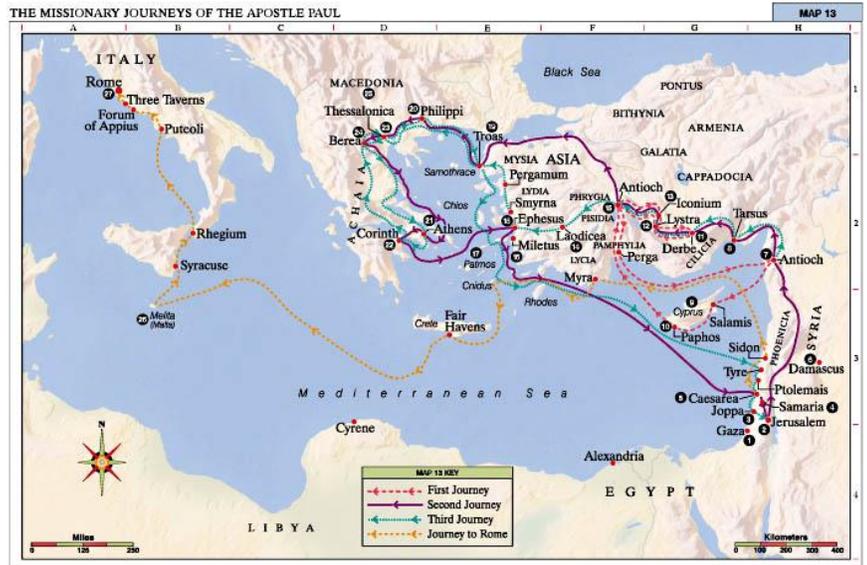
12:11-13 - Conclusion to the Speeches - COR did not know how good they had it in their apostle, Paul; they lacked nothing - mighty works, mighty preaching, perhaps miracles, certainly the joy of the Truth revealed to them - everything except the burden of having to support him. Paul sarcastically remarks: Forgive me this wrong! Paul spent himself (economic language) for love of COR.

12:14-13:13 Final Summary, Warnings, Appeals, and Greetings - Paul has been playing both defense and prosecution (against the false apostles). Now he prosecutes COR to discipline his wayward children. He wants them, not their money - and he wants them only for the Lord. He loves them in a godlike, Christlike way. His defensive tone dominates the letter (except when he is being offensive). He fears that as COR are taken in by the false apostles, they will fall away from the true Gospel. He warns of a third visit, which could mean a visit of Divine justice administered through Paul. He can and he will exercise his Divinely-granted authority to discipline his children. The living Christ cannot be repudiated in His church without consequence.

The essence of being the church is to be indwelt by Christ; proof of that reality is a cruciform life as preached and lived by Paul and his missionary team. COR should rally around Paul's admonitions in a spirit of peace and unity with the mind of Christ.

The Trinitarian benediction which concludes the letter echoes the Trinitarian benediction which began the letter - a nice *inclusio*, bookend technique. The *koinonia* - fellowship, communion - created by the Spirit among believers is known most fully in the sharing of suffering and consolation and in the sharing of resources. Believers participate in the Lord's grace of generosity and in His all-sufficient powerful grace in times of weakness. The One True God known in God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and the one Spirit of the Father and the Son have been experienced in COR and ought to be celebrated.

PAULINE EPISTLES



Colossians: The Cosmic Crucified Christ as the Wisdom of God

Air of majesty about this letter, which presents Jesus as the pre-existent Wisdom of God. This letter also inspires a down-to-earth spirituality which surpasses misguided attempts to renew humanity with ascetic practices which don't recognize the reality and power of the Resurrection. There is a singularity of purpose to COL just as in GAL.

The letter seeks to convince COL that Jesus is sufficient for their spiritual liberation and life. They ought to resist the temptation to engage in particular practices which supposedly supplement, but in fact, supplant, their participation in Christ's death and Resurrection.

COL was a moderately important city due to its location as a trade route between the Aegean Sea and Ephesus (west) and the provincial capitol, Pisidia Antioch (east). It was in the fertile Lycus River Valley in the region of Phrygia. It was not a Roman colony. Its population was Phrygians, Greeks, and Jews - syncretism stronger here than anywhere else in Paul's time. The Jews were of the Diaspora, brought to COL from Babylon and Mesopotamia by Antiochus III in 200 BC. COL was destroyed by an earthquake in the early 60s and never rebuilt. The remains of COL have never been excavated.

The COL church was almost certainly NOT founded by Paul. It was probably founded by Epaphras. The congregation reflected the multiethnic makeup of COL: Greeks and Jews. Certain Jewish Christian mystical ascetics with Hellenized views promoted a philosophy which is opposed to Jesus. This "COL heresy" was present in COL before the church was founded. It was **dualistic**, claiming that the purpose of worship is to escape the flesh and enter the heavenly realms. The prerequisite for entry was observance of the appointed fasts and other means of detachment from the flesh. Some were led to ascetic competition, which gave rise to pride. The dualism in this philosophy was **incipient Gnosticism** - not yet full-blown. Paul's teachings **against "the flesh"** and in favor of **charismatic** experiences (tongues, visions, etc.) could have led some believers to over-emphasize these dimensions in their everyday life.

Elements of this philosophy: (1) observation of Jewish calendar, dietary laws, and circumcision; (2) extreme asceticism - fasting and other disciplines (see COL 2:18, 21, 23); (3) worship of angels, which could mean veneration of angels OR participation with the angels at worship; (4) visions (see COL 2:18); (5) interest in the elemental spirits of the universe, the forces which rule the cosmos and human life (COL 2:8).

Merkabah Judaism, a mystery cult, could have syncretized their hellenized culture with the practices of the mystery cult, finding Paul's teachings against the flesh and in favor of charisms of the Spirit and blended it all into this new philosophy. Paul's letter to COL addresses those Christians under the influence of this cult, using the vocabulary of those he seeks to condemn. He corrects them that the heavenly life of believers is NOT one of extreme asceticism but one of ongoing, daily death to self to new life in Christ, accomplished solely by the indwelling Presence of Christ, Who empowers the community with **faith, hope, and love**. COL tells of the wisdom, power, and sufficiency of Jesus: (1) Nothing reveals more about God than Jesus; (2) Nothing is more powerful than the risen, glorified Jesus; and (3) nothing is more necessary than life in Christ.

There are differences in form (style and vocabulary) and substance (theology) from Paul's other letters. COL uses syntactical patterns and terms not found in the other, undisputed Pauline epistles, but ARE found in EPH. COL differs from other Pauline letters in (1) Christology - the cosmic Christ; (2) ecclesiology - the church as universal or cosmic; (3) eschatology - a realized eschatology - the resurrection is present today, not just an anticipated future event; and (4) ethics on key theological topics, such as a patriarchal ethic in the household code COL 3:18-4:1.

(1) the pre-existent, cosmic Christ is still Christ Crucified in COL **and** Christ Crucified is the pre-existent, cosmic Christ of the undisputed letters. The identity of the crucified Messiah with the exalted Lord is a hallmark of Paul's experience and theology. (2) One of Paul's goals is to help the local churches understand themselves to be united to a universal church (hence the Jerusalem collection); (3) In the eschatology of the undisputed letters, there is an emphasis on the life of the Spirit in the present tense - the new life received in Baptism is simultaneously resurrection from the dead and ongoing death as we carry about in our bodies the dying of Christ - this is also simultaneously transformation from glory into glory; (4) the social and literary contexts of the household code reveal how radical it is. Paul's conviction that we are all equal in Christ and that we each equally live in Christ erases the traditional boundaries - male and female, Gentile and Jew, slave and free.

For the first three points, some say that the temporal (horizontal, or eschatological) emphasis of the undisputed letters has become a spatial (vertical, or heavenly) emphasis. Yet in COL, life in heaven is still life on earth and the resurrection life is the cruciform life. Therefore, there is more continuity between COL and the undisputed letters than some scholars maintain.

There are differences in style and theological emphasis in COL, but it is so close that someone who knew Paul's mind must have written it. Paul was writing it literally in chains and could not hold the pen except to write his name and a personal greeting at the end. He probably gave general directions to an assistant, who wrote the letter. Paul then signed it. Tychicus is a likely candidate; he reported on Paul's condition to the churches; he bore the letter to COL and EPH. If Tychicus served as Paul's assistant in writing the letters to COL and EPH, that would explain the similarities between them.

If COL was composed by Paul or in Paul's lifetime, it is dated to mid to late 50s, possibly from prison in Ephesus or in the early 60s from his house arrest in Rome. This would place it following Philemon and before EPH. **Motto:** If by Paul, as late as possible; if after Paul, as early as possible.

1:1-2 - Opening Paul identifies himself as "an apostle by the Will of God" to lend weight to his letter. Paul is confident that the COL can resist this new philosophy.

1:3-23 - Liturgical Introduction: Christ Pre-Eminent - COL has a liturgical air about it, a sense of majesty and worship. Paul gives thanks for the COL *faith, hope, and love* “in Christ”. Jesus is the location of their faith and the Spirit is the “sphere” where their love for one another takes place. The mutual indwelling of Christ and His believers is a hallmark of Pauline spirituality in the undisputed letters.

There is a strong eschatological emphasis right from the start, along with emphasis of the Gospel of God’s grace, planted on Paul’s behalf by Epaphras in COL; it is twice linked to “truth.” Paul prays for COL, for full knowledge of God’s Will through spiritual wisdom and understanding. This Christocentric prayer, with its allusions to Jewish Wisdom themes, announces that you know the Father by knowing the Son. The English translations lose some of the dimensions and nuances of the letter. The Greek suggests that the basic content of the prayer is about “fullness, knowledge of God’s Will, wisdom, and understanding” - derived from the Jewish Wisdom tradition. Knowledge of God is not intellectual but has a practical and ethical purpose: a covenantal way to live - to walk the Way - to live worthily, to live for the Lord. There are four basic aspects to such a way of life: (1) bearing fruit in every good work; (2) growing in the knowledge of God; (3) strengthened for suffering via endurance, patience, and joy; and (4) giving thanks to God the Father. The *source* for strength in suffering is the power and might of God, who is sovereign over all hostile powers. God’s Divine action has past, present, and future dimensions; believers will one day receive the inheritance due the saints.

Paul praises God for what He has done. This part of the letter is a narrative hymn full of poetic imagery and “thought rhymes” which tell the story of creation and reconciliation through Christ. The Wisdom literature of the OT reveals that Wisdom played a role in the creation of the world and in its re-creation. This narrative hymn drew upon Proverbs 8 and Wisdom of Solomon 7:22-8:1. Each stanza is dominated by the image of the *firstborn* (*prototokos*), the privileged child of Jewish antiquity who inherited a double portion (Elisha, anyone?) AND the one through whom subsequent generations receive their *family heritage and status* (fellow heirs with Christ). The “in Christ” language now refers to the locus of the Father’s activity.

The first stanza claims for Christ all the attributes of Wisdom and more: pre-existent Image of the invisible God in Whom *and through Whom* all things were made; all things were created *for* Christ. All things continue to hold together in Christ, including the “powers of the universe” whether visible or invisible. Christ is supreme over creation and supreme over all the powers.

The second stanza shifts the focus from creation to re-creation. Christ is the head of His Body, the Church, where the new creation is constituted. He is the *firstborn* of many who will share His inheritance of resurrection and glory. Christ receives the place of pre-eminence because of His uniqueness as the place of God’s indwelling and the means of God’s reconciliation with mankind through His Incarnation and Cross. Christ is God, Wisdom Incarnate, the very seat of Divine Wisdom. Because of the wisdom of God, Jesus is crucified; Incarnation is inseparable from crucifixion. This is cosmic in scope, including “all things” - all creation is reconciled to God through Christ’s sacrifice. His sacrificial death liberates humanity from the hostile forces of the universe and yet will restore those powers to their rightful place for their divinely-created purpose. This combination of liberation and reconciliation is another hallmark of Pauline theology. Paul here reminds COL of their place in the grand sweep of salvation history. Paul exhorts the COL to be mindful of God’s purpose in reconciling all things to Himself: the undoing of the way of life of those who are unreconciled to Him so that Christ may one day present His believers “holy and blameless and irreproachable” to the Father on that Day. COL and all believers are responsible for their own fidelity to the Gospel.

1:24-2:5 - Narrative Introduction: Paul’s Ministry - Paul gives a narrative summary of his ministry to establish the appropriateness of his present communication to COL. Paul’s summary begins with his characteristic combination of suffering and joy, completing what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions: believers are called to

continue the suffering and death of their Lord. Because Christ suffered and died for us, Paul, His Apostle, suffers for His Body, the Church. As a suffering servant, he preaches the Gospel in which he participates in the full revelation of God's mystery. The essential content of that mystery is the Word of God, Christ living in you, the hope of glory - combining present reality of Christ's indwelling Spirit in believers with the future hope of glorification with Him. The very indwelling of Christ enables and empowers believers to walk in a way which pleases God and assures their future inheritance. This is why Paul devotes himself tirelessly to preaching the Gospel, always recognizing Christ as the true source of his strength. Paul states the goals of his ministry more specifically to COL, as he has not yet met them face to face. Paul desires united communities characterized by love and faith. Paul, present in spirit with COL, rejoices in advance that they will withstand the temptations of the cult and remain firm in their faith in Christ Jesus.

2:6-23 - Life in Christ as Freedom from the Powers - Paul's goal in this letter is to persuade COL to remain firm in Christ and to dissuade them from embracing the deceitful philosophy of the mystical ascetics. Paul here will contrast the emptiness of those practices with the fullness of life in Christ. COL have received Jesus in faith and are to walk with (live in) Him. This means both stability and growth and a constant spirit of thanksgiving. They ought not be seduced and captured by any alternative or supplement to Christ stemming from human tradition or from the hostile elemental powers of the universe. **That which is not Christ is human at best, demonic at worst; it is not the Gospel.**

Believers have come to fullness in Christ; they share in His Cross, an experience of *Christus victor*. Three images portray this share in Christ's victory: circumcision; burial and resurrection; and debt forgiveness. **Circumcision** is spiritual, not physical, a removal of the inner anti-God force which manifests itself in sin - this spiritual circumcision is publicly displayed in Baptism in which believers move from being dead in sin to new life in Christ - resurrection and forgiveness of sin. Outside of Christ is guilt, death, and hostility to God.

Two allusions to the message of the Jewish Christian mystical ascetics are addressed here - circumcision and the Law. Their focus on physical circumcision is misguided; baptism into Christ accomplishes what circumcision could not. The Law did not help the human condition but exacerbated it, for it showed what needed to be done but did not empower believers to do it. The Spirit of God through Baptism into Christ confers the graces and power needed to obey the Law and to live a life pleasing to God.

This section ends with a significant twofold depiction of the Cross as God's act of victory. (1) God erased the record that stood against us and nailed it to the Cross; and (2) God disarmed the rulers and authorities; by His Cross, God has defeated the cosmic powers which hold humanity in the grip of fear. *Deus victor* through *Christus victor* liberates us from guilt and from the hostile powers, cosmic forces, and personal demons, rendering them powerless.

The error of the deceitful philosophy: (1) observance of Jewish calendar, dietary laws, and circumcision; (2) severe ascetical practices; (3) worship of angels or worship in the company of angels; (4) fixation on visions. Since believers have died with Christ to the elemental spirits of the universe, they need not subscribe to the human traditions of this new cult in an attempt to pay them homage or venerate them. The ascetic practices are quite worldly, unable to promote true wisdom and piety, ineffective in treating the root human problem of the flesh; they lead to judgmentalism and arrogance; they take the focus off Christ as the true source of wisdom and growth in God. Simply Christ, and Christ alone, is the Head, the substance, the reality, to which all Jewish symbols ultimately point. Receiving Christ the Lord, dying with Him, and continuing to walk in Him and with Him will assure you of victory over the elemental spirits through Christ.

3:1-4:6 - The Shape of Life in Christ - What constitutes true wisdom and piety? Paul answers this in the remainder of his letter to COL. His response to the visions of the mystery cult ascetics is believers must have a resurrection experience of Christ, which is also a death experience - death to the old self, death to slavery to sin - and arisen to new life in Christ, a cruciform life which embodies the virtues of Jesus on the Cross. This expresses covenant membership in substantive ethical boundary markers like compassion and humility. While living in the body and honoring it as a gift from God, believers live in the thanksgiving and praise inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Paul begins by focusing on the vertical dimension of Christianity: resurrection to new life in Christ. This is in opposition to the deceitful philosophy in COL which overemphasizes visions and mystical experiences at the expense of the body. These visions and ascetical extremism are actually very worldly as they inspire pride, competition, and a superiority complex. True life is hidden with Christ, to be revealed on a future day of glory. This is not triumphalism. Believers live in the “now, but not yet” experience of growing towards that future glory by living the Gospel and by remaining in Christ, united to Him in prayer, worship, and suffering daily. Identification with the exalted, risen, glorified Christ is simultaneously identification with the Crucified Christ. Resurrection implies death, and means daily death for believers in the hope of the future resurrection. Resurrection also means that the glorified, risen Christ dwells within believers, who thereby experience His new life.

Paul continues with the exhortations: Put to death... (3:5) providing a list of sins related to sex and speech. Paul calls for radical surgery - amputation - of the sins and temptations which keep believers from living fully in Christ. This is not a set of regulations such as the old Law; it is a freeing oneself from the winding cloths of sin and death, just as Lazarus, risen from the dead by Jesus, had to be freed: Untie him, Jesus ordered. Believers have been radically transformed by the grace of God, have stripped off the old self and been clothed in Jesus and His Spirit. This refers to the sacrament of Baptism and its subsequent change in lifestyle.

The list of the two sins include the thought life (impurity, passion, lust, anger, wrath, malice) as well as the actions as an outgrowth of those thoughts (fornication, sexual immorality, slander, abusive language, lying). These are the ordinary passions which destroy the soul and personal relationships, extending out to taint the community. These passions are generally untouched by the visions and extreme asceticism of the new cult. Only the action of God, our Divine Healer, can restore us to harmony within ourselves, within our relationships, and with the Holy Trinity. The Church has begun this work by restoring harmony between Gentiles and Jews, as both are equally included in the blessings of the Church. This renewed humanity, depicted in images of creation, is expressed in covenantal terms. God chose His beloved believers to be set apart from the world - *in* the world but not *of* it. Paul continues with the language of baptismal clothing and covenant. Believers in Christ will exhibit compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, patience, forbearance, mutual forgiveness, and *above all, love*. Love unifies the other traits and the believers who embody them; these traits constitute the ongoing life of the cross as death to the old life and the positive shape of their new life.

Paul describes the renewal of life in Christ in three exhortations. **(1)** To allow Christ’s peace to rule in His Body (3:15). **(2)** To allow Christ’s word and wisdom to permeate the community through praise, gratitude, and mutual instruction. **(3)** Do everything in a manner consistent with Jesus and honoring God.

Relationships in the household make up the last portion of this section of the letter. Paul realized, perhaps spurred on by the situation between Onesimus and Philemon, that for many cultural reasons, immediate emancipation of all slaves would be impractical or even impossible. However, Paul stresses that slave and free are equal in Christ, as all have been freed from the deathgrip of sin. Paul imposes new guidelines upon COL so that believers in a household would treat each other with the dignity befitting to Christians.

Paul's household code focuses on the *paterfamilias*. In antiquity, the head of the household wielded ultimate authority over all members of his household, extending even to the power of life and death. COL subverts and transforms the power (*patria potestas*) of the *paterfamilias*, turning the domicile into a domestic church in three crucial ways: existential, literary, and cultural contexts. **(1)** the duties of the household members are situated within the reality of ***life in Christ*** (existential). All are to keep the teachings and example of Jesus ever in mind as they honor the reality of His dwelling. Even the *paterfamilias* must keep ever in mind and heart the fact that he answers to the Master. **(2)** All believers in a household are accountable for their conduct; all must live by Christian precepts. The *paterfamilias*, above all, is endowed with the duty to establish his household in love, humility, forgiveness, and the building up of the household (literary). He cannot act with impunity in anger, greed, lust, or abusive language. **(3)** The cultural context focuses on the ***duties*** of the household, beginning with the head of the household. This is an alternative to the legal code which focuses on the ***rights*** of the *paterfamilias*. He has no right to punish or kill them; he has a duty to be patient, kind, and forgiving, leading the Way of the cruciform life, standing in the place of Christ as head of his household body.

Paul thus rewrites the patriarchal system in his household code in the context of ***life in Christ*** in which all believers, regardless of societal status, are called to a cruciform life. Paul exhorts wives to submit to their husbands in love; children are to obey their parents (not just the father) in everything; the father may not harass the children lest he drive them to sin. Slaves are called to obey their masters as a way to serve their true Master, for since both slave and master in a believing household are slaves of the Master, neither one is the property of the other (despite Roman law).

Paul asks COL for prayers for his evangelical mission and reminds the COL that they, too, are evangelists and missionaries. By their lives they must embody the Gospel, exhibiting its wisdom and grace.

Paul wraps up the letter with greetings naming eleven people, perhaps to lend the letter authority and credibility. He mentions Tychicus and Onesimus, bearers of this letter. Paul describes Tychicus as a beloved brother, a faithful minister (*diakonos*), and a fellow servant (co-slave, *syndoulos* - which he also called Epaphras). Paul calls Onesimus a faithful and beloved brother (but not a slave - perhaps he was freed by Philemon to work with Paul as Paul requested). Others mentioned are Aristarchus (also in prison); Mark; Jesus called Justus - these three are his sole Jewish coworkers. Paul greets Epaphras, the evangelist from COL, one who vigorously intercedes for the churches in COL, Laodicea, and Hierapolis.

At the end of the letter, Paul, in chains, takes up the pen to write his name so as to authenticate the letter; he sends a word of grace: the fullness of grace of God in Christ.

Ephesians Walking Worthily of the Cosmic Crucified Christ

- ❖ Liturgical celebration of God's eternal purpose in Christ
- ❖ Exhorts the Church to embody that purpose in daily life
- ❖ Like COL - may have been written by same amanuensis as COL - Tychicus is likely
- ❖ Circular letter not specific to EPH containing general exhortations and no specific incident; it doesn't move from the general to specific concerns
- ❖ EPH was capitol of the Roman province of Asia. Paul had spent time in EPH; it became the epicenter of the spread of the Gospel. EPH letter possibly battles gnosticism.
- ❖ EPH was a large city, a Greek colony, with sea trade and land trade routes. It had many temples to pagan gods and with the famous temple to Artemis - one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. "Artemis of the Ephesians" because they blended this Greek goddess with Cybele whose priests castrated themselves and gashed themselves.
- ❖ EPH was a strategic center of the early Church. John wrote a letter to EPH in Revelations; St. Ignatius of Antioch wrote to it on his way to martyrdom.
- ❖ EPH became the site of church councils
- ❖ The letter is modeled on COL: structure, vocabulary, theology, and liturgy (worship and catechesis).
- ❖ Paul likely wrote EPH in prison in the early '60s. He mentions Tychicus as the bearer (and likely the one who physically wrote Paul's words for him) of the letter.
- ❖ "Realized eschatology" = now, but not yet fully realized
- ❖ "Realized soteriology" = salvation is an ongoing process - we were saved, we are being saved - salvation can be lost or can continue unto eternity
- ❖ EPH known for its exalted Christology and ecclesiology
- ❖ Paul uses "saved" or "justified" - past tense (strange) - our resurrection to new life of cruciform self-offering AND being seated with Christ in the Heavenly places (2:6)
- ❖ The power of the resurrection to new life IS the power to be conformed to the Cross in suffering and selfless love.
- ❖ Our future hope: 1:12 - set our hope on Christ; 1:21 - the age to come;; 4:30 - day of redemption
- ❖ Christ is the head, the Lord, of the Church, both local and universal.
- ❖ God's plan does not end in the Church, but when all all Creation will be gathered up in Christ (EPH 1:10 and ROM 8:18-25)
- ❖ The Prison Epistles are PHIL, COL, and EPH - all contain Christ's authority over all powers: anti-imperial texts
- ❖ EPH Chapters 1-3: God's plan to unify all in Christ
- ❖ EPH Chapters 4-6: advice on counter-cultural cruciform Christlike lifestyle = spiritual warfare
- ❖ The grace of being *in Christ* and being incorporated into God's plan = we have responsibilities in our everyday witness

- ❖ **EPH 1:3-14 - Berakah** - Jewish prayer of praise. The wealth of God's grace - past, present, future
 - **Election** - of the Gentiles as well as the Jews = covenant made before the foundation of the world - God's eternal plan. We are chosen to live a counter-cultural life of cruciform love.
 - **Adoption and Grace** - we are adopted in the Beloved Son (1:6). As the Church, we owe to God the honor due to a father. The Emphasis is on the present reality and future hope.
 - **Forgiveness as Redemption** - a present reality which will fully be realized at the eschaton
 - **Revelation** - of the mystery of His Will to unify all Creation in Christ in the fullness of time - this phrase refers to the future, whereas it usually refers to the past (Incarnation)
 - **Inheritance** - in the death of Christ. This is not yet fully realized, but it generates the blessing of hope marked by a life of praise and thanksgiving in the present time.
 - **Gift of the Holy Spirit** - (a) a seal which marks and protects believers as God's possession; (b) a pledge, deposit, or first installment of our future redemption.
- ❖ Believers ought to praise the Trinity for all of these blessings.
- ❖ **Trinitarian prayer of praise 1:15-23** - dimensions of the covenant
 - Faith = vertical - Heaven-ward
 - Love = horizontal - we love each other
- ❖ Our Faith, our Church are very public, cosmic realities - NOT hidden knowledge (possibly against gnosticism in the churches of Asia)
- ❖ Enlightenment = knowledge AND participation in redemption AND grace and hope and power, Divine power. Believers fight against spiritual forces with the power and grace of the Holy Spirit
- ❖ Christ's rule is both present AND future. His power protects the Church with the Spirit as the Church battles.
- ❖ As the Church is the Body of Christ, we share in His Lordship, but this is not triumphalism
 - There is still evil in the world
 - There is still a future in God's plan
- ❖ **God's Grace in Christ: 2:1-10** - the Church as the fullness of Christ, sharing in His power
- ❖ Restoration to unity now but not yet fully revealed
- ❖ This is a magnificent summary of "Word of Truth, the Gospel of your salvation." (1:13)
- ❖ Faith working through love AND being a new Creation in Christ echoes GAL 5:6 and 6:15
- ❖ We are destined to **walk** in good deeds; we **walked** in sin and darkness until God's grace intervened
- ❖ Jewish metaphor of life as a **walk** becomes the dominant metaphor for life in Christ
- ❖ Non-believers are dead, enslaved to sin, the flesh, and the "ruler of the powers of the air"
- ❖ Although Christ is Lord of these powers, they can still exercise power during this "present darkness"
- ❖ God co-enlivened, co-raised, AND co-exalted us with Christ
- ❖ The new life to which believers are raised must conform to Christ AND to the love of God
- ❖ In God's Church, we experience His love and power: **theocentric** - shows God's grace
- ❖ By grace we have been saved: (2:5, 8) - use of the past tense with a future dimension
- ❖ Unmerited Divine gifts: salvation, redemption, resurrection, and new life
- ❖ The purpose of the Divine gifts: to walk in Christ; to do good works; and to participate in God's plan
- ❖ Forgiveness without new life is not redemption
- ❖ Good works matter as the **purpose and result** of salvation - not the cause
- ❖ Faith must show itself in love
- ❖ **Unity of Jew and Gentile in Christ 2:11-22**
- ❖ Gentiles were outside of the Old Covenant

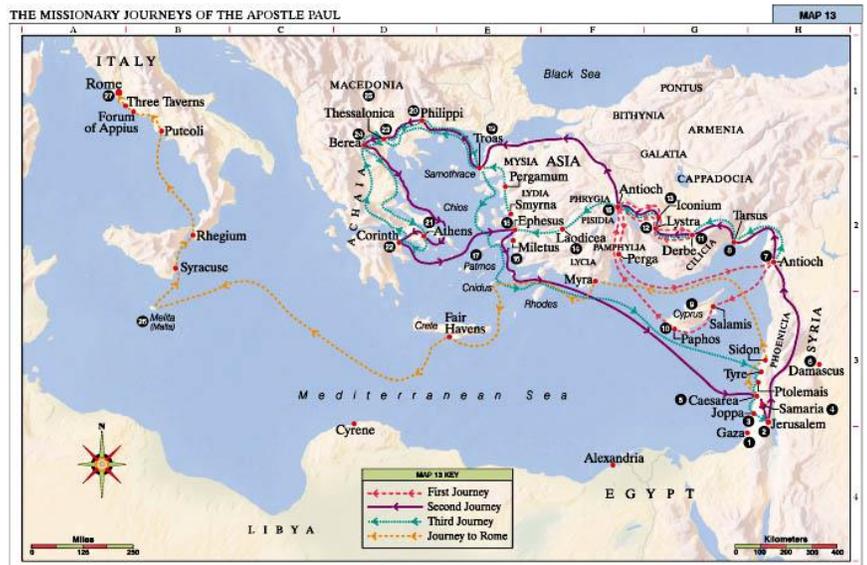
- ❖ In the New Covenant, Gentiles do not become Jews
- ❖ God, in Christ, has made peace, creating the New Israel from both Gentiles and Jews on His Cross
- ❖ Circumcision and Temple divisions no longer matter
- ❖ Cross: **vertical** - reconciliation with God; **horizontal** - unites all people
- ❖ In Christ, through the Spirit, to the Father
- ❖ All are members of God's household, built upon the Apostles and prophets (OT and NT) with Christ as the cornerstone/keystone/capstone
- ❖ **Paul's role in God's plan:** 3:1-3 - Paul establishes his identity
- ❖ Repeatedly uses the words "mystery" and "unveiled secret" to disclose God's plan, revealed to the Apostles and prophets
- ❖ All believers are fellow heirs, members of the same Body, and sharers in the Promise
- ❖ Paul = servant of the Gospel according to God's grace and plan
- ❖ God's power as Creator and re-Creator
- ❖ The Church = vehicle to proclaim the Gospel - God's eternal Christocentric plan
- ❖ EPH should glory in Paul's suffering for the Church, the fruit of his mission from God
- ❖ **Paul's Second Prayer** - 3:14-21 - prayer is addressed to the one source and unifier of every human family and nation
- ❖ Intercessions:
 - Spirit's power and strength in our inmost being
 - Indwelling of Christ via faith and love
 - Power to understand the extent of His love - only by living in self-sacrificial love
 - Knowledge of Christ's love - only by living in self-sacrificial love
 - Believers are in the Spirit AND in Christ
- ❖ **Life in Christ** - 4:1-6:20 - **Propositio**: Walk worthily in unity and love
- ❖ **The Unity and Maturity of the Church** 4:1-16 - links chapters 4-6 with liturgical celebrations and theological reflections
- ❖ Diverse gifts contribute to the Church's unity and maturity
- ❖ Walk:
 - Worthily of your calling
 - In love - the key to exercising your gifts which produce fruit in unity and in peace
- ❖ The Seven Unities of the Church
 - One Body
 - One Spirit
 - One hope
 - One Lord
 - One Faith
 - One Baptism
 - One God and Father of all
- ❖ All believers have a gift issued from the grace of Christ AND from God and the Spirit
- ❖ Psalm 68:18 - the enemies of the Lord acknowledge the power of God by giving gifts (Exodus)
- ❖ Christ is now Lord - He is the Giver of Gifts
- ❖ Christ ascended and has cosmic sovereignty

- ❖ Emphasis: gifts of preaching and teaching the Gospel.
 - Apostles and prophets received the Divine mystery and are the foundation of the Church
 - Evangelists, pastors, shepherds, and teachers are indirect recipients of revelation
 - All of these equip the saints for ministry; to edify the Church; for unity in faith and knowledge of the Son
- ❖ The way to maturity is to speak the Truth in love. The Truth is the revelation of God's plan in Christ. Love builds up and matures the Church.
- ❖ **Learning and living in Christ** - 4:17-6:9
- ❖ Exhortations on how to mature in Christ
 - Contrasts former and present ways of life
 - Emphasis is on speech
 - Household code/table 5:22-6:9
- ❖ Former life - darkened, futile, ignorant, hard-hearted, immoral
- ❖ Christ transforms life: put away the old self and put on the new self, renewed in mind
- ❖ Contrast the new life with series of don't do (X); do (Y)
- ❖ Speech can either impart grace OR detract from grace
- ❖ Prohibit falsehood; **instead**, speak the Truth in love as we are members of one Body
- ❖ Prohibit anger; **instead**, resolve quickly so as not to provide an opportunity for the devil
- ❖ Prohibit stealing; **instead**, work honestly to assist the needy
- ❖ Prohibit evil talk; **instead**, edify with speech to impart grace to others and not grieve the Holy Spirit
- ❖ Prohibit bitterness, wrath, anger, slander, and malice; **instead**, practice kindness, tenderness, and forgiveness as we are loved and forgiven by God
- ❖ Imitate God's love sacrificially
- ❖ Purity in thoughts, words, and actions
 - Speak like saints, not like pagans
 - Thank God rather than indulging in vulgar talk
 - Maintain your salvation and don't lead others astray
- ❖ Take God's wrath seriously
- ❖ To live like pagans is to be outside of Christ
- ❖ Walk as children of the Light
 - Bear witness against evil
 - Bear witness to Christ, our Light
- ❖ **Community and Trinity** - 5:15-21 - contrasts wisdom and foolishness
- ❖ Walk wisely with an apocalyptic awareness of the darkness and evil of the present age
- ❖ Make good use of your time - understand AND do God's Will - **exagorazomenoi ton Kairon**
- ❖ Be filled with the Holy Spirit (contrasts with drunkenness)
 - This is an ongoing experience, not once and done
 - Expressed in :
 - Singing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs **to each other**
 - Sing and make music in your heart **to God**
 - Have gratitude at all times and for all things in the Name of Jesus to the Father
 - Be subject **to one another** in reverence/honor/imitation of Christ
 - Chiasm: a: to each other; b: God; a': God; b': each other
 - The Trinitarian prayer of gratitude is a hallmark of Paul's spirituality

- ❖ Household code is divided into three sections. In each, the pater familias is seen. Paul upends societal values where the father/husband had all of the rights but few duties
- ❖ Paul imposed Catholic cruciform love to the existing patriarchal structure, transforming it in a radical, revolutionary way. Paul blends ethics and Christology.
- ❖ **Wife subject to husband**
 - Part of her obligation as a Christian is to be subject to one another in reverence of Christ
 - Husband has that same obligation
 - Husband must also love his wife as Christ loves His Church = self-sacrificial, cruciform love
 - Wife, as a believer, must also love her husband with Christlike sacrificial love
 - As in the Church:
 - Mutual care is for **unity** of the spouses
 - Different gifts and duties shows **diversity** of persons
 - Husband is head of his wife - she is the body - they are intimately connected, made one flesh
 - Image of Christ as Head of His Church - He nourishes the Church with His own Blood: power in weakness
- ❖ **Father-child relationship** -
 - Fourth Commandment - honor your father and mother; promise of long life
 - Fathers guide and guard their children with love and gentleness
 - Fathers speak the Truth in love
 - Fathers are not to provoke their children so that they go astray
- ❖ **Master-slave relationship** -
 - Slaves to serve as if they are serving Christ - obediently and humbly
 - Master is subject to God and must treat the slave as (a) Christ would treat them AND (b) as another Christ
- ❖ **Spiritual Warfare** - 6:10-20
- ❖ Participation in an ongoing spiritual battle with the power of God' indwelling Spirit AND with prayer
- ❖ This battle continues until the Second Coming
- ❖ Echoing Isaiah and Wisdom, Paul uses a soldier metaphor for **all believers**:
 - Belt of Truth
 - Breastplate of Righteousness
 - Shoes to proclaim the Gospel
 - Shield of Faith
 - Helmet of Salvation
 - Sword = the Word of God
- ❖ With Prayer:
 - Pray always
 - Pray for all the saints
 - Pray for Paul:
 - That he proclaim the Gospel with boldness
 - As an ambassador for Christ in chains
- ❖ Paul ends EPH with: peace, love, faith, and grace to all who have an undying love for Christ



PAULINE EPISTLES



Romans: Gentile and Jew in Cruciform Covenant Community

- ❖ “Christ has become the servant of the circumcised on behalf of the Truth of God in order that He might confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, AND in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy.” ROM 15:8-9
- ❖ Most influential letter ever written; most significant letter in Christianity; very complex
 - Spurred Augustine’s conversion (ROM 13:13-14)
 - Spawned Reformation:
 - Martin Luther
 - Philip Melanchthon
 - John Wesley (founded Methodists)
 - Swiss theologian Karl Barth, early 20th century wrote a commentary on ROM which inaugurated a theological revival
 - 1999 Roman Catholic-Lutheran “Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification”
- ❖ Theologically broad and deep; Paul’s most systematic presentation of Gospel
- ❖ Local as well, addressing problems in the Roman church
- ❖ ROM covers:
 - Grace of God toward sinful humanity for Jews and Gentiles
 - Multicultural cruciform community of obedient faith
 - Generous love and expectant hope
- ❖ Paul wrote from Corinth between AD 55-58
- ❖ Paul had never visited Rome but there was a hub of believers due to traffic between Jerusalem and Rome AND as the Gospel spread throughout the Empire, communication between believers afar to family and friends in Rome and relocations to Rome would have built up the ROM church.
- ❖ Paul knew at least 30 believers in Rome (Ch 16), 10% of the church in Rome
- ❖ **Why** did Paul write this letter? Much debated question. Possible answers:

- Friction between Gentiles and Jews - in AD 49, Claudius expelled all Jews from Rome due to controversy over “Chrestus” - an intra-Jewish debate about the Messiah. Gentiles thus constituted the bulk of the ROM church for many years (possibly the entirety of the church). Jews returned to Rome upon the death of Claudius, possibly finding differences in beliefs and customs, leading to disunity between believers. Paul describes such conflicts in Ch 14-15: disputes over diet and calendar - matters incidental to the Gospel *adiaphora* - non-essential, discretionary, neutral.
- Reasons for the letter depend upon which part of the letter the reader deems most important. Some believe Ch 1-8 and 12-15 to have the primacy, making ROM a theological treatise on justification, sanctification, and glorification: the grand story of salvation. No local story.
- Others believe CH 9-11 are the key to ROM: Paul’s concern about God’s fidelity and Israel’s fate
- Others believe Ch 14-15 are the key: Paul’s concern about factions and judgmentalism and his interest in Rome for support of his ministry
- Most believe that ROM must further his ministry of pastoral work
- It functioned as an introduction to Paul and his teaching
- He was collecting funds for the Judean Christians and sought moral and financial support
- ❖ Paul’s theology always has pastoral function. The possible Gentile-Jew conflict would have been fertile ground for his profound theology about unity in the community.
- ❖ ROM can be read theologically, pastorally, rhetorically - it is all of these
- ❖ **Theme:** God’s grace creates a New Covenant community of Christians (Gentile and Jew) - eschatological, emphasis on God’s mercy and faithfulness, emphasis on obedience of faith
- ❖ **Thesis** of letter: ROM 1:16-17: For I am not ashamed of the Gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written ‘The one who is righteous will live by faith.’”
- ❖ **Ch 1-4:** Story of God’s faithful response to faithless humanity
- ❖ **Ch 5-8:** New situation: those who are justified by faith, they die and rise with Christ and live in the Spirit
- ❖ **Ch 9-11:** Question the future fate of ethnic Israel as most Jews rejected the Gospel
- ❖ **Ch 12-15:** Need for the Roman community to embody the Gospel as they live cruciform lives of holiness and hospitality
- ❖ **Ch 15-16:** Relationship of all the foregoing to God’s great story of salvation and Paul’s mission within it
- ❖ Two Covenant Interpretation - to be rejected
 - Put forward by NT scholars LLOYD Gaston and John Gager
 - Hinges on Ch 2
 - Believes that Paul taught that Gentiles are saved by Christ’s sacrifice - the New Covenant BUT not the Jews; they are saved by keeping the Law of the Old Covenant
 - Attempt is to save Paul and Christianity from charges of *supersessionism* and anti-Judaism with the idea that Christianity replaces Judaism rather than fulfilling and perfecting it
 - The Truth: Paul believed that keeping the Law was *adiaphora*, while faith in Jesus was central, crucial, and non-negotiable

- ❖ ROM trumpets one Gospel for Gentile and Jew alike:
 - Thematic statement that Gospel is power of salvation for all
 - Impartial criterion of judgment according to deeds
 - Theme of one God for all
 - Charge of universal enslavement to sin
 - Offer of justification and salvation to all by grace and through faith
 - Multicultural character of the Church
 - Need for Gentiles and Jews to tolerate cultural differences and welcome one another
 - Mutual benefit between Gentile and Jewish believers in the Diaspora and Jerusalem
 - Creation of one Church which calls upon the Name of Jesus
- ❖ Paul is a Jew participating in debates about what constitutes real Jewishness, what is the True Israel, and what God has done and is doing in salvation history
- ❖ Paul critiques Jews as the prophets did - for their unbelief - like Isaiah, Hosea, Amos, Jeremiah, and Jesus Himself
- ❖ Paul believes that in and through Jesus, God has made a New Israel, composed of Gentiles and Jews, as prophesied by Isaiah. This True Israel is
 - Filled with the Spirit
 - Circumcised in the heart
 - Empowered to live in covenant with God and others (fulfill the Law)
 - The very blessing promised to Abraham and foretold by the prophets
 - Israel is not **replaced** but **remade, reconstituted**
 - True Israel is eschatologically inclusive rather than ethnically exclusive in conformity to the eternal purpose and promises of God - see outline of ROM pp 345-346
- ❖ **Opening:** 1:1-15 - Paul establishes his identity as an Apostle and his commonality with the Romans
 - Paul, a **doulos** “servant” or “slave” of Christ through Whom he has received grace (as have the believers in Rome) - but Paul has received the particular grace to be an Apostle
 - Ultimate identity: being called by God
 - Romans have been called by God to a life of holiness as beloved children of God; they are also **doulos** of Christ
 - Romans exemplify the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles - this is the meaning and truth of the Gospel
 - **Key terms:** faith, obedience, grace - faith and obedience are not separate terms; they require or generate each other - they are one unified response to God’s grace
 - The Gospel is the Divine and royal announcement of
 - Good news from God
 - Promised in Scripture
 - About God’s Son
 - Who is David’s descendant
 - Who is the Promised Messiah - Son of God and Lord - early creed, possibly
 - Spirit of holiness is at work in the lives of all believers
- ❖ Adoptionism = the false belief that Jesus was not always the Son of God but **became** the Son of God
- ❖ Paul’s vocabulary of Christ’s “declaration” of Sonship or Messiahship or His appointment to such describes God’s vindication of Christ’s death and the commencement of His royal Messianic reign
- ❖ As in PHIL 2:6-11 and GAL 4:4, this shows Paul’s belief in Christ as the Pre-existent Divine Son of God

- ❖ Because Paul uses an early Christian creedal statement and cites Scripture, he places himself on the same solid ground as teachers and believers in Rome. He has established rapport with Romans
- ❖ Paul then expresses thanks for the Roman believers and their faith.
- ❖ He tells them that he prays constantly for them.
- ❖ He expresses his prayer and desire that he can visit them as a fellow believer and Apostle. Fellowship is a two-way street for mutual upbuilding and encouragement. As an Apostle, he intends to impart spiritual gifts and to reap a harvest for the Lord (bear fruit). Generally, he goes to the unevangelized. In Rome, he will be teaching the converted AND converting unbelievers.
- ❖ **Paul proclaims** the Gospel: The Power of God for the salvation of all - 1:16-17 - the *propositio* of the letter. Key terms: ashamed, gospel, power, God, salvation. belief/faith (*pistous*), Jew and Greek, righteousness of God, revealed, written, one who is righteous, live.
- ❖ There is no direct reference to Christ. Is there an implicit reference to Him? In 1:16, Paul “is not ashamed of the Gospel” - inherently Christocentric - and that this Gospel is the “power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith.” The words “ashamed,” “power,” and “salvation” confirm that Paul speaks of the Crucified Messiah. This may allude to 1 COR 1:18, 21-24, 31.
- ❖ Paul actually boasts of the Crucified, far from being ashamed of the Gospel which is a powerful force which does God’s Will and does not return to Him void (ISA 55:11). It is a “performance utterance.”
- ❖ Salvation for all - to the Jew first - God’s election of Israel had in mind the ultimate inclusion of all - always understood to be a blessing to all the nations.
- ❖ Unique theology to ROM: God’s deliverance of Israel opened to everyone the good news. Condition to receive salvation: faith. Salvation and faith are complex and comprehensive. Paul will unpack their depths during the course of the letter
 - Salvation - future hope of eternal life
 - Salvation - present reality of being in right covenantal relationship with God
 - Faith - the righteousness of **God**
 - Originates in God
 - Characteristic of God - Divine quality
 - Divine activity
 - **Hesed** - God’s saving covenant faithfulness
 - Faith - the **human** response to God’s saving covenant faithfulness
 - From/through God’s **hesed** (source or agency)
 - To/for/toward the human response (goal)
 - Faith could refer to **Christ’s** faithfulness/obedience to God which wrought our salvation, rendering the sentence in 1:17 - “For in the Gospel, God’s saving covenant faithfulness is revealed through the faithfulness of Christ to generate faithfulness of those who hear it.”
- ❖ Paul restates this thesis in 3:21-26 (God’s faithfulness revealed in Christ’s death, demanding our faith response)
- ❖ Paul restates this thesis in 5:12-21 (description of Christ’s faithful/obedient death)
- ❖ Paul restates this thesis in 6:1-23 (our response in faith by obedient participation in Christ’s death)
- ❖ Paul quotes Habakkuk in the second half of 1:17 Three possible interpretations:
 - The one who is righteous by faith will live
 - The one who is righteous will live by faith
 - The one who is righteous by the faithfulness of God or Christ will live.
- ❖ Faith - *pistous* - means engagement, commitment, loyalty, fidelity, as well as intellectual assent

- ❖ Faith of this kind makes believers righteous/justified (*dik* root) - in a right covenantal relationship with God. We are not “counted” righteous - not a legal fiction. Believers become righteous and live by faith - live faithfully - in obedience to God and His Will. The ultimate result will be acquittal at judgment.
- ❖ Goal of Paul and reason for his proclamation of the Gospel: live in right relationship with God now and experience eternal life with Him.
- ❖ **God’s** faithful and merciful **response** to human sin: 1:18-4:25 (for this Session, stop at 1:32)
- ❖ Paul calls all violations of the covenant “sin” where we call them “sins”
- ❖ Jesus’ death, which embodies God’s *hesed* and mercy, break the bonds of sin and death
- ❖ Paul’s goal is pastoral: recognition of universal sin, judgment, and mercy for those with faith - this places Jewish and Gentile Christians on an equal footing:
 - In debt to God for His mercy
 - Equally children of God
 - Equally children of Abraham and inheritors of the Abrahamic Promise
- ❖ 1:18-3:20 move as a whole towards the conclusion in 3:9-20 - that all are under the power of sin; none are righteous; all are accountable to God; works of the law are not the means of justification - establishing right covenantal relationship with God. His argument is a chiasm: aba’:
 - A - the Gentile predicament (1:18-32)
 - B - God’s impartial judgment according to deeds (2:1-16)
 - A’ - the Jewish predicament (2:17-3:8)
- ❖ All people are covenantally dysfunctional - unwilling and unable to live in right relationship with God and others - and they are without excuse. Apparently Paul’s reinterpretation of WIS 11-19.
- ❖ Apart from Christ, Gentiles are evil and God is faithful; Jews are not preserved from Divine judgment.
- ❖ Paul’s pastoral concern is for the behavior of believers *in Christ*.
- ❖ The cause and manifestation of God’s wrath - His righteous response to human idolatry, immorality, and injustice. These represent violations of the covenant’s two great commandments: love God and love your neighbor. People lacked piety and justice.
- ❖ Common in Judaism to charge Gentiles with idolatry and immorality (especially sexual immorality)
- ❖ Paul is also charging the Gentiles with idolatry and immorality - but he is also charging the Jews. They will not see themselves explicitly in this letter until Chapter 3.
- ❖ Paul speaks of the Jewish covenant. He does not mention (or does not know) about the Seven “Noahide” commandments for the Gentiles (from the time of Noah)
- ❖ Basic error: idolatry. All other problems/sin devolve from idolatry.
- ❖ God’s invisible, eternal power and Divinity can be discerned from nature. All are without excuse for not knowing, honoring, and thanking God. Their minds were darkened by this sin and they fell into immorality.
- ❖ “God gave them up” from idolatry to immorality - Paul states this three times. God allows human folly to run its course to its inevitable end - this is the revelation of God’s wrath.
- ❖ The exchange of Truth about God led to the exchange of Truth about God’s creatures, including our fellow human beings; natural intercourse was exchanged for unnatural intercourse - contrary to the truths revealed in Creation.

- ❖ Paul lists 20 other sins, but his main concern is the Gentile predicament, not individual sins. 1:29-31 unleashes a flood of evils which are symptomatic of comprehensive cancer which affects body, mind, heart, and soul of every individual and in community relations. This moral chaos leads to death.
 - Idolatry leads to darkening of the mind AND leads to
 - Immorality leads to breakdown of individual heart, mind, soul AND leads to
 - Breakdown in society such that we applaud/approve of each other's sins AND
 - Brings upon us God's wrath/judgment
- ❖ Chapters 2 through 8 to be covered in Session 12

ROM Chapters 14 - 16 Hospitality: A community of Jews and Gentiles (14:1 - 15:13)

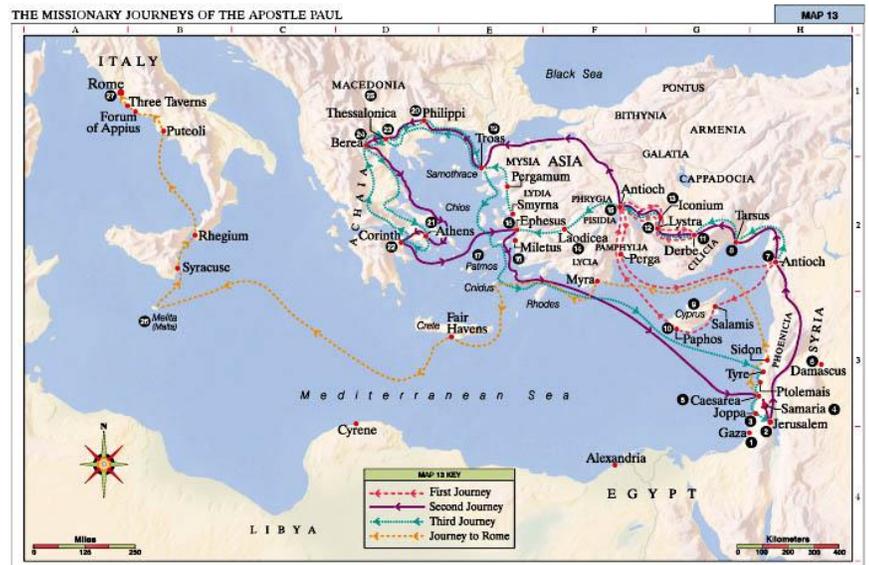
- ❖ Paul speaks to the conflicts in the Roman church about diet and calendar -this section is the *climax*, the goal towards which Paul has been building in this Gentile and Jew section of the letter.
- ❖ **Key** word for Paul: hospitality or welcome - welcome one another as Christ welcomed you.
- ❖ Paul's mission to proclaim the Messiah to the Gentiles does not exclude the Jews. He seeks to unify the fractured, multicultural community. He draws on 1 COR 8:1-11:1.
- ❖ Paul speaks of the "weak in faith" and the "strong" - those observant of diet and calendar and the non-observant. This is a plea for patience and tolerance and to avoid prejudice. Paul addresses both the specific situation in Rome at the time and enunciates general principles:
 - Consider yourselves brothers and sisters
 - Both serve Christ
 - Called to live in harmony through Christlike love
- ❖ "Weak" or observant believers abstain from meat and wine, judge one day to be better than others, and observe special holidays.
 - Not restricted to ethnic Jews
 - God-fearers and
 - Pagans who wanted to completely forsake paganism by observing strict diet and calendar
- ❖ "Strong" or non-observant eat and drink anything and do not observe special holidays.
 - Not restricted to Gentiles
 - Ethnic Jews may have wanted the freedom Christianity gave them from diet and calendar
- ❖ Paul is not the Apostle of post-modernism or laissez-faire. It's not "anything goes."
- ❖ Paul addresses the *adiaphora* - the non-essentials. Diet and calendar are not the Gospel.
- ❖ Paul does not advocate: you do you or private conscience over revealed Truth. Although these are non-essential issues, he is pastorally concerned for the community as a whole and for the glory of God, which is undercut by this internal strife and is a scandal to believers and non-believers alike.
- ❖ Paul requires:
 - Multicultural cruciform hospitality which accepts diversity in non-essential matters;
 - Cruciform self-denial for the good of others
 - Praise God through obedience to Christ
 - Burden is on the strong, but the weak have responsibilities as well
- ❖ **14:1-12**, Paul paints a picture of the Roman church in view of service and accountability to the Lord

- ❖ Two points are made:
 - Judgmentalism does not reflect the welcome of God in Christ
 - Each believer is accountable for their actions(in life and death) to the Lord.
 - Believers live to/for Christ.
 - This is how they live to God.
 - Seek to honor God in everything you do.
 - Glorify God in Christ. This is the criterion for judgment we all must face.
- ❖ **14:13-23** - Words directed to the strong which echo 1 COR 8. The strong may be an obstacle to the weak and a cause for scandal. They may be leading the weak astray. While in Christ no food is unclean, charity in Christ demands that they curtail their freedom for the good of the others. This is the Kingdom of God: love seeking the good of the other. Only those who walk in cruciform love, conformed to Christ through the power of the Spirit, enjoy the Presence and blessings of the Triune God.
- ❖ **15:1-13** - Cruciform Hospitality - call to harmony and hospitality. Paul structures this in parallel form, beginning with an exhortation, then an appeal to Christ, a warrant in Scripture, and a closing prayer.
- ❖ Paul identifies with the strong and calls upon them to “put on the failings of the weak” rather than pleasing themselves. It is a call to unity in love.
- ❖ Bearing others’ burdens follows the Master. Loving others is loving Christ. A loving, Christlike community is possible only when all believers follow Christ. “Pleasing others” means building them up in love, not caving in to their whims or affirming them in their sins. He cites Psalm 69, commonly associated with Christ’s death: Christ absorbed the insults of those who had insulted God. Jesus freely chose a prayerful attitude of obedience to God; we are called to do likewise.
- ❖ Paul prays for harmony in life and in liturgy. He exhorts ROM to hospitality grounded in Christ and aimed at the glory of God. Scriptural citations follow about the plan of God for Gentiles to join Jews in glorifying God.
- ❖ Christ became obedient to God for the benefit of the Jews in fulfillment of the patriarchal promises, which were meant to extend to all the nations. This is the **THEME** of the letter: God’s faithfulness to the Jews and mercy to the Gentiles.
- ❖ Scriptural citations come from Law, Prophets, Writings (DT, Isaiah, Psalms) - Greek version
- ❖ Gentile and Jewish Christians must embody this wisdom of God in His economy of salvation by accepting one another as different but equal children of God. Then they can experience faith, joy, peace, and hope.
- ❖ **15:14-33**: Paul’s Mission and Plan as one aspect of God’s plan in the world.
- ❖ Paul writes boldly to people he has not met to remind them of what they know to be true. This is part of his priestly ministry - his offering to God (the Gentiles). He must ensure that this offering is holy, blameless, and acceptable to the Lord. He wants to boast in what Christ has accomplished among the Gentiles through Paul. Paul’s work is proclamation, signs, and wonders. He sees his ministry to the Gentiles as fulfillment of ISA 52:15.
- ❖ Paul’s specific mission is to the unconverted Gentiles, which has kept him from Rome. His letter goes ahead of his visit to acquaint the Romans with him and his preaching. He plans to pass through Rome on his way to Spain. He hopes to get to know the community, to help where he can, and to gain a missionary base of support: prayers, finances, and companions.
- ❖ Generosity to fellow believers and to apostolic work is important. Paul knows that Gentiles and Jews must be unified across the world, so sharing the prayers and resources with each other by helping in mission work is crucial.

- ❖ Jerusalem collection:
 - Took many years for Paul to accumulate and deliver
 - Unified believers
 - Paid Gentile debt to Jewish faith
 - Jewish Christians grateful to their Gentiles brethren
 - All praise and glorify God
- ❖ If Romans provide a missionary base for Paul, they can share in the proclamation of the Gospel in the West (Spain was the western-most extent of the Roman Empire). They can pray for Paul's protection and success.
- ❖ **16:1-27** - Closing - Paul greets about 30 believers in Rome whom he already knows, adds final instructions, and closes with a doxology. His list includes at least nine women who have helped him in his ministry. See chart pp 403-405 for a partial list of those Paul knew and their relationship to him.
- ❖ The list includes Gentiles, Jews, slaves, freed persons, rich, poor, men, women, from all corners of the Empire. They are apostles in Christ, fellow prisoners, those who have been "in Christ" longer than Paul; those whom he converted; fellow tentmakers. Paul sends the letter with Phoebe, who would be expected to proclaim it as well.
- ❖ The doxology links the prophets to Paul's apostleship, and links both to the Gentiles. It repeats the purpose of Paul's mission and "the obedience of faith" which began the letter.



PAULINE EPISTLES



Chapter 2:1 through Chapter 8

- ❖ **Chapter 2** Paul begins his diatribe with “You have no excuse...” This is a rhetorical device which uses an imaginary conversational partner, the interlocutor, to argue against or preach to.
- ❖ Basic structural principle: God impartially judges all based upon their deeds done in the flesh (*sarx*)
- ❖ Paul first addresses hypocrites who presume upon God’s mercy and patience as an excuse to sin. God’s merciful patience is an opportunity to repent and convert.
- ❖ God will judge both Gentiles and Jews - He will judge everyone
- ❖ Those who do God’s Will, either by knowing it from the Law (Jews), from the Gospel (Christians), or obeying the law written on their hearts (pagans), will be rewarded with glory.
- ❖ Those who do evil will be repaid with eternal wrath and punishment
- ❖ Paul connects the doers of the Law in the flesh with eternal spiritual placement. Performance of the Law matters more than mere possession of the Law.
- ❖ The point of Chapter 2 is Divine impartiality, since all are sinners, none can be justified apart from His grace.
- ❖ Paul, a covenant theologian, Paul offers a new way of keeping the covenant - through Jesus Christ and His Holy Spirit
- ❖ Paul, like the prophet Amos, reveals Divine Judgment will fall upon the Jews for the sins of pride and hypocrisy. **Pride** in the Jewish name, law, and mission to instruct the Gentiles. **Hypocrisy** in failing to keep the covenant, guilty of idolatry, immorality, and failure to be the light to the Gentiles, becoming instead a stumbling block for them.
- ❖ Paul redefines the word “Jew” - not someone circumcised in flesh, but one who is circumcised in heart, drawing from DT 10:16-17 and JER 4:4 and 31:31-34.
- ❖ Ritual boundary marker of physical circumcision does not guarantee keeping the Law, which is the ethical boundary marker. All who believe and live the Gospel are the **true Jews**, members of the New Covenant.

- ❖ The faithlessness of the Jews to keep the Covenant does not impede God's faithfulness in keeping the Covenant. Paul uses his interlocutor to raise theological objections to which he forcefully responds: By no means! Paul cites the Psalms as support.
 - Israel's injustice and falsehood confirm God's justice and truth
 - God's wrath is not unjust; He judges fairly and impartially
 - Although God draws good out of the evil men do, this does not give men license to do evil
 - Human faithlessness does not compromise Divine fidelity
- ❖ **Chapter 3** Paul offers a jackhammer indictment of sin
 - All are under the power of sin - a power so real that Paul personifies it with the word "sin" in the singular, not plural
 - Evidence for human sin: none is righteous; all have sinned. Paul uses the Psalms to enumerate a chain of sins. God Himself has indicted humanity through the Psalms.
 - Fail to seek or fear God
 - Fail to treat others with respect and love
 - Not in right covenant relationship with God
 - Evil committed with every part of the body - we sin from head to toe
 - We are in bondage to sin
 - Verdict will have to deal with sins and with the problem of sin. Verdict is based on the Law. Everyone is without excuse or defense.
 - Logical corollary - deeds prescribed by the Law cannot be the means of justification
 - Are these deeds moral deeds? Or boundary markers like circumcision, diet, and calendar?
 - Doesn't matter to Paul, who believes that boundary markers don't matter, but ethical/moral deeds do matter.
 - Even those who possess the Law/boundary markers are not performing the deeds of the Law - the Law points the way but cannot empower them.
 - Only the graces from our Lord and the Holy Spirit, through the Church and her sacraments, can empower us to act rightly.
- ❖ Paul describes humanity before the Incarnation and Paschal Mystery.
- ❖ 3:21 Paul says, "But now..." to segue into what saves us - the revelation of God's righteousness in Christ's Paschal Mystery, which inaugurates a new age, the age of grace.
- ❖ God's righteousness is God's saving covenant faithfulness = **hesed**
 - What is manifested: God's *hesed*
 - Where or how it is manifested: in Christ's faithfulness
 - For whom is it manifested: all who respond in faith
- ❖ **What:** God's righteousness is apart from the Law - distinct from the ethnic manifestation on Sinai
- ❖ Christ manifested God's *hesed* in His sacrificial death - Paul melding obedience and faith
- ❖ God would not allow sins to permanently disrupt His relationship with us
- ❖ God would not ignore sin - the problem had to be dealt with
- ❖ God dealt with the problem of infinite proportions with His Son's gift of infinite love and mercy, faith and obedience
- ❖ We who share in the faith and obedience of Jesus are in right relationship with God

- ❖ **Where/how:** Christ's death is God's faithful and merciful gift to us which
 - Forgives sins (atonement - Jewish sacrificial system for sin) **and**
 - Redeems us from bondage to sin (redemption - Go-el; deliverance, freedom)
- ❖ **For Whom:** Universal sin called for universal atonement and redemption - available to all who believe
 - God's faithfulness is not complete until it is met with our fidelity
 - When our faith meets God's faithfulness, we are justified - put into right covenantal relationship with God and assured of acquittal at the judgment - providing we persevere
 - No grounds for boasting since the initiative is God's, the empowerment is God's; the response is ours - no cause for pride, but a cause for gratitude and thanksgiving
 - No one can earn right standing with God - it is a gift from God - but we can lost right relationship
 - Faith is our response. Paul says "Faith." Luther added: "alone". Paul is clear that doers of the Law and not hearers of the Law will be justified. Works flow from our faith as we seek to imitate the Master, to be His Image in the world. We are called to obedience to God's Will and commitment to the Covenant. This does not overthrow the Old Covenant but upholds it.
- ❖ **Chapter 4** Paul calls on Abraham and David to support his claims (two or three witnesses DT 17, 19)
 - Justification is through grace by faith - Abraham, the proof and paradigm of faith
 - Irrespective of circumcision and the Law - the Promise came before the Law
 - Exclusive of pride - Abraham was to be the father of many nations - Gentile and Jew
- ❖ Paul uses diatribe and *midrash* - he rereads GN 15-17 with emphasis on Abraham's justification by his faith before he was circumcised. Paul uses 15:6 and 17:5
 - Jews saw Abraham as the founder of monotheism
 - As the paradigm of virtue, meritorious obedience, and faith
 - Father of all the Jews, first to be circumcised, first member of the covenant
 - Paradigmatic proselyte/convert
- ❖ For Paul, Abraham is our father according to the flesh AND our father in faith - the paradigm for Jew and Gentile believers in Christ. He was justified without the Law and before his circumcision by his faith in God, "reckoned to him as righteousness." Paul supports this claim with the Psalm 32:1-2 - free gift to the ungodly versus wages to a worker.
- ❖ Circumcision was a seal of the covenant already in place, after Abraham was justified by faith. Circumcision is like Baptism as a seal, a mark of ownership.
- ❖ Faith is forward-looking: eschatological in orientation, centered on the resurrection
- ❖ Faith is virtually synonymous with hope - it trusts the promises of God. In the face of Abraham's "dead" body and Sarah's barren womb, Abraham trusted that God would make good on His Promise of life - abundant heirs for Abraham.
 - This foreshadows God raising Jesus from the dead and giving life to all of those who believe.
 - Abraham bears witness to the nature of faith as trust and hope
 - And to the nature of justification: faith in God bringing life from death
 - Abraham received grace, faith, and justification apart from circumcision and the Law
 - While Abraham is Jewish, he is also universal, the father to many nations
 - Paul fulfills the covenant by taking the Gospel to many nations.

- ❖ **Chapters 5-8** Theologically profound
 - Paul maps out progress in the Faith as Israel's exodus from slavery to freedom
 - From Justification in Chapter 5 - its meaning and character
 - To sanctification in Chapter 6
 - To despair at one's ongoing sin in Chapter 7
 - To freedom in the Spirit in Chapter 8
 - Paul uses narrative to explain how those outside of Christ have moved to be inside Christ. He uses three antitheses:
 - From enemies to friends - overview
 - Theme: justification as reconciliation
 - The Cross as God's love
 - Adam vs the New Adam, Christ - cosmic, or salvation/historical
 - Theme: free from sin, under grace
 - The Cross as Christ's obedience
 - From slavery to sin to slavery to righteousness - baptismal
 - Theme: dead to sin, alive to God
 - The Cross = we are crucified with Christ
 - Flesh vs the Spirit - existential
 - Theme: in the Spirit, not in the flesh
 - The Cross: death of a believer to the old life; cruciform, salvific suffering
- ❖ Paul shows not the results or effects of justification as much as he explains its meaning: to experience the fullness of the Triune God
- ❖ Just as all have sinned and stand accountable before God
- ❖ Those who believe and live the Faith live under grace, free members of the covenant community, living under the sign of the Cross by which they were saved - reconciled to God through the death of His Son in the power of the Spirit
- ❖ **Chapter 5** Key Pauline words and themes appear: Justification through Christ
 - Hope for future glory; Christ's death as God's love
 - Hope for future salvation
 - Reconciliation through Christ
- ❖ The *Inclusio* pattern - beginning with Justification through Christ and ending with Reconciliation through Christ - highlights that justification is the present experience of reconciliation with God; peace with God. Paul here uses justify and reconcile interchangeably.
 - Transformation from enemies to friends
 - Those who were far off and outside the covenant are now inside the covenant
- ❖ Focal point of God's reconciling work is Jesus' death
- ❖ Justification is past, present, and future. Justification is not salvation, but it includes salvation.
- ❖ Salvation is in the future
- ❖ A working definition of justification - reconciliation with God in the **present**, together with certain hope of salvation in the **future**, based upon the death of Christ in the **past**; all known through the gift of the Spirit
- ❖ Justification began in the past with response to the Gospel in faith AND has an ongoing effect
- ❖ Justification is blessedness, standing in grace with God, at peace with God

- ❖ Justification's future aspect is the hope of participation in the glory of God - GN renewed as we truly Image God. We have the sure hope of this beatitude and this is our grounds for boasting of God's goodness, mercy, and love
- ❖ The road to glory is cruciform as believers conform themselves to the Cross of Christ
- ❖ Suffering begins a chain of character, endurance, and hope. The Holy Spirit gives us this assurance of hope.
- ❖ Justification is a unified experience of the Spirit, suffering, love, and hope
- ❖ Christ's death is the ultimate manifestation of God's love - a counterintuitive, sacrificial death for those who were His enemies. The gracious gift of Christ's death is a display of God's *hesed*
- ❖ Salvation is rescue from God's wrath at the judgment (future)
- ❖ Jesus' Resurrection is the guarantee of our hope in the general resurrection
- ❖ Past, present and future aspects of justification/reconciliation and salvation are united by God's love for us in Christ through the Spirit
- ❖ Paul affirms the universality of sin - Adam sinned and we all have sinned
- ❖ Sin existed before the Law. Once the Law entered, violations could be reckoned.
- ❖ Adam is a type of Christ - head of the human family, close to God, tending His garden
- ❖ Adam's deed = sin and death; Christ's deed = forgiveness and life.
 - Adam trespassed. Consequence: many died
 - Christ brought grace. Consequence: free gift of grace for many
 - Adam - one sinned, many trespassed
 - Christ - His free gift means justification/acquittal for many
 - Adam's transgression meant condemnation for all
 - Christ's act of righteousness means justification/acquittal and life for all
 - Adam's transgression meant death for all
 - Christ's free gift of His death means life for all
 - Adam's disobedience meant many were made sinners
 - Christ's obedience means that many will be made righteous
- ❖ Yet where sin abounded, grace abounded all the more, creating a reign of grace through justification which leads to eternal life
- ❖ As all shared in Adam's sin, all who wish to share in Christ's life and glory must share in His Cross
- ❖ **Chapter 6-7** Dead to Sin/Alive to God - Paul explains how believers move from domination under sin to the reign of grace.
- ❖ Just because grace abounded more where more sin is, there is no excuse for sinning just to get more grace! Believers participate in a death like Christ's which inaugurated the reign of grace.
- ❖ Only through the Messiah's death were we freed from sin and the Law
- ❖ Chapter 6 presents Paul's theology of baptism as the starting point for participation in the New Covenant
- ❖ Paul contrasts pre-baptismal life and post-baptismal life: what must I do after I've been saved in the waters of baptism?
- ❖ Post-baptismal: life in God, our participation in His Divine Nature = cruciform conformity to Christ
- ❖ Life is slavery either to sin or to God, the master to whom they present their bodies
- ❖ Paul uses rhetorical questions punctuated by "By no means!" to his imaginary interlocutor
- ❖ Believers have died to sin in Baptism, therefore the justified should not remain in sin. They should present their bodies to God, not to sin

- ❖ Baptism and faith are closely interconnected because the baptized are “in Christ” - conviction and confession brings about **justification** with the promise of future **salvation**
- ❖ Baptism is justification by faith - **justification** is an experience of dying and rising. Resurrection following baptism is to walk in newness of life - a **present** resurrection - which points to a **future** resurrection on the Last Day which completes our baptism and is our **salvation**.
- ❖ Justification is an ongoing process of being dead to sin, sharing in the Cross on the way to our future salvation.
- ❖ Justification through baptism is a present resurrection to newness of life
- ❖ Salvation is a resurrection to eternal life
- ❖ Believers experience Christ’s death NOW as death to sin
- ❖ Believers experience resurrection in two stages: to newness of life, alive to God NOW; and freedom from death in Christ in the FUTURE
- ❖ Ethical conclusion: liberated from sin, believers are to avoid sinning. The justified present their bodies to God as an acceptable sacrifice, in service to God - under grace and not under the Law
- ❖ If sin is not required to bring forth a bounty of grace, is sin permitted? - Paul says no - do not place yourself back into slavery to sin. Remain a servant of God. Wages of sin are death, but eternal life is God’s free gift to the faithful.
- ❖ The Law aroused man’s sinful passions - part of the old regime which ended with Christ’s death. The Old Covenant was perfected and fulfilled in the New Covenant in His Blood. Through His death and Resurrection, our debt to God was discharged. Paul uses the metaphor that when a husband dies, the wife is discharged from her obligation to her husband and is free to remarry. Believers are discharged from sin, which Christ put to death on the Cross, and are now free to marry themselves to Christ - to belong to Him and bear fruit through the new life of the Spirit.
- ❖ Paul contrasts life in the flesh and life in the Spirit, in whom the faithful can fulfill the Law. The Spirit empowers us to obey the Law and please God.
- ❖ Romans 7:7-25 is one of the most difficult and diversely interpreted texts in this dense and complex letter.
 - Paul pronounces the Law good and holy
 - Paul depicts sin as a force or power which makes use of the Law and enslaves people
 - The “I” of the text experiences a divided self and resultant moral frustration
 - Paul presents Christ as the solution to the dilemma of the “I”
 - Life in the Spirit (chapter 8) is the alternative to life in the flesh (chapter 7)
- ❖ The identity of the “I” - is Paul speaking autobiographically? Is Paul speaking representationally? Both?
- ❖ Is Paul speaking of his Jewish experience outside Christ? In Christ?
- ❖ Is Paul speaking about all Jews outside Christ? Is he speaking about all men outside Christ?
- ❖ Is Paul speaking about all the faithful in Christ?
- ❖ Is Paul’s goal to depict an existential plight? To defend the Law? To defend his view of the Law?
- ❖ Historically, most readers of ROM understood Paul to narrate his own existential situation either before his conversion or as a believer. Everyone can relate to his interior struggles.
- ❖ Today, most modern biblical scholars do not believe that Paul is narrating his pre-conversion Jewish experience **because** elsewhere he is proud of the Law, as a Pharisee, keeping the Law was life. They believe that Paul speaks representationally as a believer about those outside of the Messiah. This is how he sees humanity through the lens of his redemption in Christ.
- ❖ After baptism, believers must still struggle for sin not to regain mastery over their lives.

- ❖ Pau’s “I” can also be Adam, as everyone “lives in Adam” and are enslaved to sin, death, and the Law
- ❖ Paul expects believers to grow in sanctification. He calls the faithful “saints”
- ❖ He expects them to grow closer in cruciform conformity to Christ - they have been liberated from sin, yet they continuously lose the battle and relapse into slavery to sin. They are empowered by the Spirit to obey the Law and do God’s Will as they put to death the deeds of the body.
- ❖ Paul defends the Law as good, even though he’s said that believers have died to sin and the Law. The Law cannot bring life (as Jesus does) and cannot empower obedience to it (as the Spirit does). It can only point the way and condemn those who fail to follow it.
- ❖ Paul says that sin deceived and killed people by seizing an opportunity in the commandment (7:11) - he alludes to God’s life-giving commandment in GN 2, 3), Satan’s deception which brought the curse of death; and the covetousness of Adam and Eve (3:6). Satan seized an opportunity to provoke covetousness (of which he is guilty - coveting equality with God); Adam and Eve’s disobedience led to death. The Law is good, holy, and just but is used by sin to identify sin and to increase sin (7:13).
- ❖ Paul transitions from the past to the present to describe the ongoing effects of sin’s exploitation of the Law. People are divided within themselves, wanting to obey but being tempted to sin. “I do not do the good I want to do, but I do the evil I don’t want to do.” (7:15) His delight in the Law and desire to obey do not empower him to avoid sin.
- ❖ Paul’s diagnosis: men are enslaved to sin and cannot extricate themselves: sin **indwells** people just as God makes His home in the hearts of those who love Him. Because sin lives in man, **sin** does the evil men don’t want to do. Sin is not only an external force but an interior master. This is life without the indwelling of God’s Spirit = life in the flesh. This does not mean that the body is inherently evil. Through Baptism, the situation can be remedied.
- ❖ People are not exonerated; they have no excuse. Once they have gotten themselves enslaved to sin, they are stuck, “covenantally dysfunctional.” The only solution is the one God provided: the life, death, and Resurrection of Jesus and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.
- ❖ **Chapter 8:** Cruciform Life in the Spirit - climax of chapters 5-8 AND climax of the letter thus far
- ❖ Paul presents a picture of life **in Christ** as God’s children, living in the Spirit (as opposed to living in the flesh, where Paul believed sin **indwells** in the absence of God indwelling)
- ❖ Salvation is the work of the Trinity
- ❖ Spirit of cruciformity in two ways:
 - Puts to death life in the flesh (the indwelling sin) - dying to this indwelling sin
 - Suffering with Christ
- ❖ Life lived in this way is proof of the indwelling of the Spirit and a guarantee of eternal life and glory
- ❖ Identification with Christ and His Spirit is expressed with words beginning with **co-** (*syne*)
 - *Synemartyrei* - co-witness
 - *Syngkleronomi* - co-heirs
 - *Sympashcomen* - co-suffer
 - *Syndoxasthoman* - co-glorified
 - *Systemazei* - co-groan
 - *Synantilambanetai* - co-take hold of; co-help
 - *Synergei* - co-work
 - *Symmorphous* - co-formed
- ❖ Main thrust: death gives way to life: suffering with Christ results in co-glorification with Him
- ❖ In anticipation (as a pledge and promise) of that glory, the Triune God dwells within us

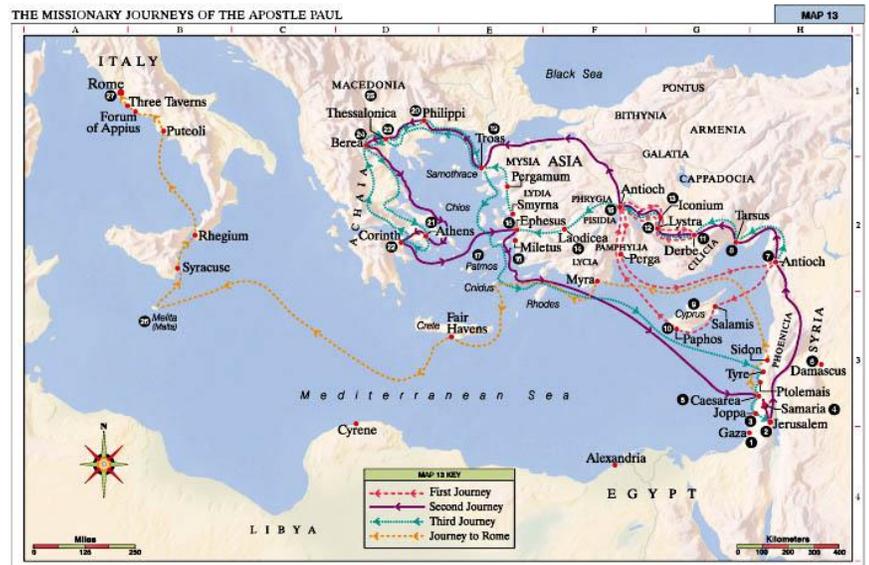
- ❖ **8:1-17** - Paul contrasts life in the Spirit with the believers' previous life in the flesh
- ❖ The Spirit enables us to please God, to do His Will, and to live as His adopted children (8:14-17)
- ❖ The Spirit replaces sin = life replaces death - therefore, there is no condemnation for believers who live a Spirit-filled, cruciform life
- ❖ Death is the natural outcome of those who live in sin, as sin indwells them. The Law cannot unseat sin from the heart of a person.
- ❖ The Spirit casts out sin and dwells within, giving life to the believer who has died with Christ and risen with Him, and who live in conformity to Him. Believers have the prophetic promise of a new heart and a new Spirit (EZ 36:36-38 and JER 31:31-34)
- ❖ Believers are the new, True Israel (ROM 2:25-29)
- ❖ God sent Jesus:
 - Who condemned sin (since He is sinless) (2 COR 5:21)
 - Who killed sin and death - He defeated and disabled death by His Cross and Resurrection
 - So that believers enabled by the Spirit can keep the Law - obeying the Father as the Son does
- ❖ The Spirit of the Father is the Spirit of the Son (8:9, 15) (GAL 4:4-6)
- ❖ Walk according to the Spirit, not according to the flesh (8:4-5)
- ❖ Please God (8:8)
- ❖ Put to death the deeds of the body (8:13)
- ❖ Cease division and judgmentalism in the Church (GAL 5:13-6:5, 1 COR 3:1-4)
- ❖ Live animated by the Spirit of Christ - experience His power and Presence. Paul speaks interchangeably about the Spirit and Christ dwelling within, replacing sin. (8:9-13)
- ❖ Paul speaks interchangeably of believers being *in Christ* and being *in the Spirit* (8:1,9)
- ❖ Life in the Spirit requires our active cooperation and participation
 - Set our minds on the Spirit (8:5-6)
 - oppose the flesh (8:12-13, GAL 5:16-26)
- ❖ Baptism cleanses us of sin, but believers must continually conform to Christ - our glorification is conditional on living in Christ, in the Spirit, a sacrificial life of love for God and others.
- ❖ **The Spirit delivers what the Law could not: resurrection and life (8:11, 13) - this conviction leads Paul to the metaphor as adopted children and heirs with Christ**
- ❖ Led by the Spirit, we are freed from slavery, death, and fear; we are members of God's family by adoption (8:15)
 - Roman law: adopted children fully inherit
 - Jewish law: being God's children means intimacy with Him and entitlement to inherit (a) the land and (b) eschatological salvation.
- ❖ Proof of adoption in 8:15: we cry out with Jesus: Abba! Father! - intimacy with and obedience to the Father. Paul focuses on familial status and privilege believers receive when they conform to Christ
 - As co-heirs, we share in the resurrection and the life
 - As co-heirs, we inherit eternal life with God
 - IF we suffer with Him (8:17)
- ❖ Sharing the glory of God is humanity's ORIGINAL state and final goal
- ❖ Now, to be co-heirs with Christ is to co-suffer with Him
- ❖ **Suffering and Glory:** 8:18-39 - life in Christ is a life of suffering, BUT no suffering can separate us from the love of God, no suffering can destroy our hope in God
- ❖ The present age is one of suffering which cannot compare to the coming future glory (2 COR 4:17)

- ❖ This conforms to Jewish eschatological belief of **messianic woes** - life of tribulation now before the age of eschatological salvation - **Psalm 44:22 - suffering is expected of those devoted to God**
- ❖ Paul sees these messianic woes in the life of Christ, Who suffered before entering into His glory
- ❖ **Life in the Spirit means the presence of trials and tribulations, hardships and woes - not the absence**
- ❖ Paul is so sure of future glorification that he speaks of it in the past tense by 8:30-2 - God justified, God glorified.
- ❖ Paul speaks of this present age of Creation being in **labor pains** during which Creation, believers, and the Spirit groan - perfect imagery, as there is intense pain before intense joy
- ❖ **Suffering shapes believers into the Image of Christ**
- ❖ **We suffer** because we are in bondage to decay and subjected to futility **because of Original Sin** (GN 3:17-19); the Earth suffers with us. It will be liberated with us and will prosper with our redemption (8:20-22).
- ❖ Salvation is **cosmic** as all Creation will participate in our salvation
- ❖ We suffer as we await the **completion of our adoption - bodily resurrection** (8:23) - therefore, until the Second Coming and the general resurrection, our salvation is incomplete. This requires hope and patience, gifts of the Spirit.
- ❖ The Spirit is the first fruits of this promised salvation, the first installment (2 COR 1:22), The Spirit aids us and intercedes for us (8:26). God the Father and the Spirit are of **one mind and Will** (8:27) - so the Father groans with and aids His adopted children in their labor pains.
- ❖ Because of God's love and Will for us: all things work together for good for those who love God (8:28) - could also be translated: God works all things together for those who love God - for Paul, both translations mean the same thing. This **does not mean** that God makes our Earthly life easy, but that all things work together for our **ultimate good at the eschaton** - glorification, ultimate conformity to Christ.
- ❖ This conformity to Christ in His glory is the purpose for which believers have been called and predestined. (8:28-29). This language refers back to Israel's election as the Chosen People. The new, True Israel is the Church, made up of Gentiles and Jews in Christ.
- ❖ This election and predestination does NOT mean that some have been chosen and others haven't. This language identifies the scope, purpose, and dependability of God's call **to which we must respond**. God calls all in Christ: those who conform (*symmorphous*) will co-suffer (*sympaschomen*).
- ❖ God is **pro nobis** - for us, not against us. He does not mean us harm. Nothing can separate us from the love of God. Paul is passionate about this and uses nine successive emotionally-charged rhetorical questions in 8:31-35. The final answer is given definitively in 8:37-39.
- ❖ God so loves us that He did not withhold His Son for our salvation - allusion to Abraham's obedient offering of Isaac (GN 22).
- ❖ God, who justified us, will certainly bring the work of salvation to completion (8:32)
- ❖ Suffering does NOT mean that Jesus opposes us. He loves us, as proven by His Incarnation and Paschal Mystery. He intercedes for us with the Spirit and the Father - all three Divine Persons groan with us, suffer with us, and intercede for us. (8:34-35)

- ❖ 8:37 - "in all these things, we are more than conquerors (*hypernikomen*) through Him Who loved us."
 - Jewish attitude to suffering: endure it; resist and overcome it if possible
 - Stoic attitude to suffering: conquer it - it cannot affect your true inner self.
 - Paul: we conquer suffering because we know God's love; He is faithful to His covenant with us. Our hope for future glorification is sure as long as we suffer **with Christ**.
 - Therefore, **nothing** can separate us from God's love and His purpose in Christ for His adopted children
- ❖ **Summary** of ROM chapters 5-8
 - Justification is reconciliation with God in the present with the certain hope of salvation (acquittal and glorification) based on the death of Christ - all known to us by the Spirit
 - Adam's one act of disobedience brought death to all; Christ's obedience brought life to all and inaugurated the reign of grace.
 - In Baptism, we die with Christ and rise with Him to new life. We are liberated from our old self which was enslaved to sin, death, and the flesh to become a new self indwelt by the Spirit of life who gives us hope of future resurrection and eternal life.
 - The justified are no longer indwelt by sin but by the eternal, living, Triune God. We can now live in covenant relationship with God as His adopted children.
 - Our new life is cruciform: (a) dying to the flesh and (b) suffering in this present age. Our new cruciform life culminates in glory.
 - Bodily resurrection completes our salvation as we will then be completely conformed to Christ and will perfectly reflect His Image. All Creation will share the splendor of the eternal Most High God.



PAULINE EPISTLES



Paul was a **Pharisee** - a non-priestly group zealously dedicated to the protection and promotion of the Law and the purity of Israel. They were experts on the written Law but also believed in oral tradition. They developed a way of interpreting Scripture called **midrash** - applying ancient texts to modern situations. They affirmed the resurrection and the existence of angelic beings and spiritual powers. They embodied an apocalyptic and nationalistic perspective. Paul was Greek-speaking (koine = common); born of Jewish parents of the tribe of Benjamin - a Pharisee of Second Temple Judaism; a Roman citizen under Caesar Augustus. Culture: Greek; Religion: Judaism; Political power: Romans. He had one foot in the Jewish culture and one in the Roman Empire.

The First Temple, built by Solomon, was destroyed in 587 BC; it was rebuilt by the returning exiles under Cyrus [538 BC] - Nehemiah rebuilt the walls and Ezra the priest rebuilt the Temple - this was greatly expanded by Herod the Great in 20 BC; it was destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD. The different Jewish groups were united in:

- ❖ Monotheism
- ❖ Covenant (election)
- ❖ Land
- ❖ Moses
- ❖ The Law (Torah) - love, obedience, and faithfulness to God and love/justice for others
- ❖ Temple and synagogue (not the Essenes)
- ❖ Circumcision
- ❖ Hope for the Messiah when subjugation and suffering would cease
- ❖ Subjugation to Rome
- ❖ Boundary markers: Circumcision, food laws, calendar (feasts and holy days)

Most people of the time spoke, thought, and wrote in koine; Jews used the Greek translation of Hebrew Scripture (Septuagint, LXX). Greek culture permeated the Mediterranean basin, but did not replace local customs - rather, Greek culture merged with each local community.

Mediterranean cultures defined themselves primarily in terms of group identity. **Dyadic** = self is defined only in reference to another: family, religion, city/region, or group values. In dyadic cultures, emphasis is on inheriting and living by the norms and customs of the group; deviation from cultural norms would be disastrous for the person. Culture of honor and shame. For Romans, the criteria were wealth, power, status, education, rhetorical skill, family/pedigree, political connections. For Jews, the criteria were tribe affiliation and religious observance. Peer pressure was the norm.

Christianity was counter-cultural: can you appreciate how radical it was to embrace Christianity? It truly was a sacrificial embrace of the cross.

- ❖ Suddenly, you might lose the support of your family – emotional, physical, financial.
- ❖ You would work on the Jewish Sabbath and worship on Sunday – you could lose customers and/or the ability to shop and do business as you had before.
- ❖ Suddenly, you were mixing with who you previously would have called “unclean dogs” or pagans.
- ❖ This no doubt underlies the reason “the community of believers were of one heart and one mind...they held everything in common.” (Acts 4:32-33) They had to stick together.

In Paul’s time, the one overriding and unifying reality was the Roman Empire (from **27 BC** when Octavian defeated Marc Antony at the Battle of Actium and received from Roman Senate the name “Augustus” - revered one), thanks to Alexander the Great. Aspects of Paul’s social, political, and religious worlds which affected his mission and message.

- ❖ Pax Romana - enforced by Roman army, taxes, and tributes - unified a huge land area of diverse people - similarity of government, military, art and architecture, aqueducts, paved roads
- ❖ Community in the Empire - family was fundamental unit of Roman society, and the emperor was the **pater patriae** - the father of the country. Think of the Lord’s Prayer and how that contradicted this title of the Emperor: **Our Father**, who art in Heaven. Early Christians knew that their true home was in Heaven and that our true Father is in Heaven.
- ❖ Mobility in the Empire due to Roman roads and the Mediterranean Sea - had to be careful of robbers or pirates and inns with bad food, unsanitary conditions, and prostitutes. Think of Paul’s list of dangers in 2 Cor 11:25-27: imprisonments, beatings, and numerous brushes with death. Five times at the hands of the Jews I received forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, I passed a night and a day on the deep; on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my own race, dangers from Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers at sea, dangers among false brothers; in toil and hardship, through many sleepless nights, through hunger and thirst, through frequent fastings, through cold and exposure.
- ❖ Imperial unity through cult and theology - the pagan cult of the emperor- word comes from the Latin *imperator*, meaning “commander.” Julius Caesar called himself “imperator” and his successors took it as their *praenomen* - first name. Caesar’s adopted son Octavian kept Caesar as his *cognomen* - last name. Octavian was hailed as “savior” and the “incarnation of divine good news for the whole world.” He was also known as **god** and **lord**. Christians, of course, used these words to describe Jesus Christ and the Good News - *euangelion*.
- ❖ Dark side to Roman Empire: as the Empire was born, republics died. The army had to enforce the Pax Romana, using conquest, subjugation, humiliation, taxes, tributes, punishments: **peace through war**:

invasion, exile, enslavement, crucifixion (only for non-citizens - this is why Paul was beheaded, not crucified.) Nothing could be more un-Roman than to **honor and deify** a man crucified by the Romans.

- ❖ Many families lived in cities. Within the cities, everyone was aware of the socioeconomic differences between citizens and non-citizens; poor and wealthy. Love of honor or status (Latin: **philotimia**) created a fiercely competitive society to accrue honor and respect for themselves, their city, and/or the emperor.
- ❖ Working class had little status but formed their own **collegia** - clubs with religious overtones, trade guilds, or the burial society to defray the high cost of burials.
- ❖ There was a system of patron-client whereby people of means acted for the benefit of those with lesser means, starting with the emperor.
- ❖ Throughout the Empire, there was a diversity of peoples, cultures, religions, geographical landscapes, and political structures. Cult of the Emperor unified the Empire and permeated the culture - it was a **theopolitical** allegiance, serving to unite people as a social outing, religious belief, and political statement. The cult of the Emperor was one of the most **fundamental cohesive elements in the Empire**. The Emperor was the **pontifex maximus** - the main bridge-builder. **Today, that is one of the titles for the Pope**. The chief priest with incense burned at altars in temples dedicated to the Emperor. Imperial cult was political, social, religious, human, and divine - and **compulsory**. The Jews were exempt because their religion pre-dated the Roman Republic and the Roman Empire.
- ❖ Theology of Imperial cult: Rome was the gods' choice to rule the world, obviously, from the string of victories and the "peace." The divine Emperor was patron, protector, father, and the epitome of Roman power, peace, and security: the savior (*soter*) who brought the *euangelion*, the Good News of salvation to the world since his **epiphanein**, his appearance or epiphany. You see how loaded these terms were which Paul used.
- ❖ This cult spread during the first half of the first century throughout Greece and Asia Minor: Pisidia, Antioch, Corinth, and Philippi. Herod the Great had built and dedicated two cities to the Emperor: **Caesarea Maritima and Sebaste (Samaria)**, three temples for the imperial cult, and numerous statues of the Emperor. He dedicated games to Augustus, even in Jerusalem. These temples were often the largest and most central sanctuaries in a city. Coins now bore the images of Greek or Roman gods **and the Emperor** (Render unto Caesar...)
- ❖ Nearly every public event had religious dimension or undertones. The entire culture was inherently religious. From the gods, people wanted peace and prosperity, health and long life, guidance and protection. The gods were given sacrifices but made no moral demands upon the people. The relationship was **contractual**, focused on **ritual**. Jews and Christians focused on **covenant and morality**. Mystery cults promised access to secret knowledge and rebirth, salvation, or immortality through an initiation rite which involved a sacral meal. Most people were more concerned with surviving the struggle of life rather than living forever. Most pagans did not believe in an afterlife. People used astrology and magic to escape their enslavement to the forces of nature.

Jews - the Chosen People - to be "holy" meant to be set apart for God's purposes, to be obedient to God's commandments. First century Judaism: **covenantal nomism** (keeping of the Law as a way of staying in the covenant). Recent perspectives: (1) Observant Jews kept the commandments in gratitude for being the Chosen People. (2) Paul's criticism of Judaism and Judaizers was its cultural imperialism or ethnic pride. No Jew expected a suffering Messiah who would be publicly executed and rise from the dead.

Six key words describe the frame of reference in which Paul is understood:

- ❖ Jewish
- ❖ Covenantal
- ❖ Narrative - salvation history from promise to ultimate fulfillment (eschatological)
- ❖ Countercultural
- ❖ Trinitarian
- ❖ Cruciform

Boundary markers functioned as ritual signs of their covenant with God and often cannot be separated from the substantive religious and ethical distinctions of their covenant with God.

- ❖ **Ritual boundary markers** - circumcision, calendar, and dietary laws - with righteousness as aim - often repelled Gentiles
- ❖ **Religious/ethical (religio-ethical) boundary markers** - monotheism and morality - Jews worshipped one God exclusively and abstained from the imperial cult and did not participate in Greco-Roman cultural behaviors (exposing children, throwing infants on garbage dump, adultery). These markers often attracted Gentiles. These became “God-fearers” - those who admired Judaism’s religio-ethical markers but did not undergo the ritual markers. These God-fearers would have been attracted to Paul’s circumcision-free monotheistic moral Gospel. In **Romans** 2-3, Paul opines that the Jews maintained the ritual boundary markers but had caved into the pagan culture and transgressed the religio-ethical markers.

Apocalyptic passages - multifaceted dualism, belief in strong pairs of opposites, characterized by cosmic, chronological, and ethical dualism. An apocalyptic mindset is expressed in Ezekiel, Zechariah, in the Dead Sea Scrolls, early Christian literature, and some Pauline epistles. It is important to understand the apocalyptic to appreciate the New Testament. Think of where in Paul’s letters you see these elements:

- ❖ **Cosmic dualism** - the cosmos is a battleground between good and evil. Participants include angels, demons, and people who side with either God or the devil. God will ultimately defeat evil.
- ❖ **Chronological dualism** - history is divided into (1) the present age and (2) the age to come. The present age is beleaguered by evil, injustice, and oppression. The age to come is blessed with righteousness, justice, freedom, and peace. A spectacular Divine intervention will usher in the age to come. - No hope of humans acting in history to resolve the crisis. Apocalyptic is both **optimistic** in the eventual victory of God but **pessimistic** in the view of the present age.
- ❖ **Ethical dualism** - good and evil, God and Satan - no moral gray areas, only black and white, sheep and goats, weeds and wheat.

Large cities Paul visited: Rome, Ephesus, Pisidia, Antioch, Thessalonica, Athens. Modest cities Paul visited: Philippi, Colossae. These cities were the religious and commercial hub of the region, providing regular and rapid exchange of goods and ideas, and were significant trade routes. The churches Paul founded met in homes or small apartments. City neighborhoods were organized according to ethnicity or trade. The elite and the rich lived either in the main part of the city or out in the countryside. Poorer people lived atop one another in the *insulae* in very close quarters. Everybody knew everyone else. Troublemakers could be subdued with mob violence or ostracism. Word spread quickly, so the Good News spread rapidly among the non-elites, creating Christian communities.

Some of Paul's converts would have come from these philosophical schools of thought and could have influenced how Paul presented the Gospel. **Paul spent most of his time in cities**, especially major cities, so the spread of the Gospel far and wide was facilitated. He was an "urban missionary."

Philosophical schools:

- ❖ Cynics (literally, dogs - the name they were disparagingly given) - a radical countercultural group known for frugality, inattention to clothing and bodily care and comfort, brash speech, begging, public sex. Used a confrontational style of preaching the pursuit of freedom. Influenced the Stoics.
- ❖ Epicureans - pleasure: virtue known through the senses - was the goal of human life. They downplayed the existence of gods, denied immortality, fought superstition. Epicureans influenced the people of Corinth.
- ❖ Platonists - the body is the tomb of the soul and was therefore unimportant (gnostic)
- ❖ Stoics - the universe is permeated by Reason, *Logos*, identified with God (or Zeus). A spark of this Reason is within each person, constituting the "true self." The goal of life: to live in harmony with Reason and be unaffected by life. *Apatheia* - indifference to physical pleasure or difficulty - things that cannot affect the true self. Self-sufficiency and contentment are virtues. Philosopher Zeno (333-264 BC) founded it. By the first century, emphasis on ethics. Influenced Seneca, Epictetus, and Marcus Aurelius.

Major influences upon Paul: Judaism, Hellenism, Stoicism - he was well-versed in Hellenistic and rabbinic models of argumentation (due to his tutor, Gamaliel). He was a Palestinian Jew - different from a Jew of the Diaspora - but for all first century Jews, **politics and religion were inseparable** - so opposition to Rome was both on a religious and political level and accounts for the rise of the Zealots.

He was a Pharisee in Palestine - an expert in Scripture who awaited the Messiah.

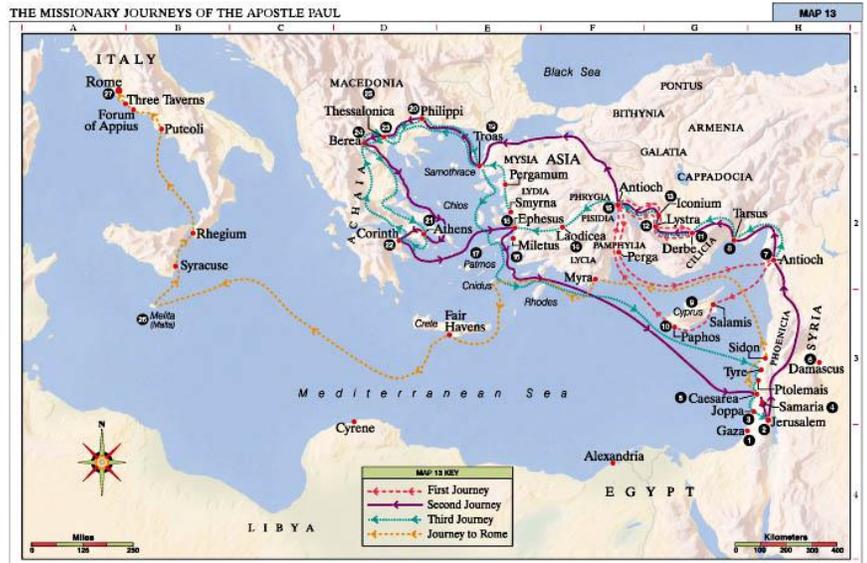
- ❖ His zeal for the law, both written and oral (tradition) – he wanted to protect and promote the Law – this could lead to intimidation or violence against fellow Jews who violated the Law or anyone who opposed God.
- ❖ He was committed to the purity of Israel - free from Gentile contamination.
- ❖ He believed in the bodily resurrection from the dead and in angels and visions.
- ❖ Apocalyptic view - reworked in light of God's salvation in the Incarnation and Paschal Mystery.
- ❖ Zealously committed to extinguishing the early Christians, apostate Jews - could mean a range:
 - a. Scriptural arguments
 - b. Private reprimands, intimidation, public renunciation
 - c. Lethal violence
 - d. Handing them over to Jewish authorities for 40 lashes minus one
 - e. Handing them over to the Romans for crucifixion
 - f. Role models for his zeal
 - ❖ Phinehas, Eleazar's son, Aaron's grandson, who impaled the adulterous couple
 - ❖ Prophet Elijah, who killed 450 priests of Baal after the battle of the gods
 - ❖ Priest Mattathias and his sons - the Maccabees - killed a Jew about to sacrifice to pagan gods before declaring war on the Romans

- ❖ Reasons for his zeal: the **convictions, conduct, and composition of the community** of the early Christians, who
 - a. Had a relaxed attitude towards the Law
 - b. Had a critical stance towards the Temple
 - c. **Accepted Gentiles** without circumcision - **focus** of his persecution
 - d. Committed blasphemy by calling a criminal the Son of God and Messiah
 - e. Placed Israel at risk of Roman political reprisals by claiming the Messiah's advent

Paul self-identifies as an apostle and considers apostleship to be the most important gift in the Church which came with grave responsibilities and certain rights:

- ❖ Preach the Gospel and form communities/churches
- ❖ Live the Gospel for his own salvation and to set an example - conformity to Christ in His suffering and persecution as the **Suffering Servant and as light to the nations**
- ❖ Stewardship of those new communities
- ❖ He was accountable for the quality of his preaching and parental care of the Church
- ❖ Rights of financial support, companionship, regard for his advice and authority; yet
 - a. He renounced the financial support, working to provide for himself even as he preached and formed new communities of believers
 - b. He renounced personal power/authority and referred everything to Jesus
 - c. He endangered himself by preaching in synagogues, several times being subject to stoning, beaten with rods, mob violence, 39 lashes, and
 - d. He sought to create a multinational network of Gentiles and Jews (to the Jews first, then to the Gentiles):
 - ❖ Who would obey and glorify the One True God of Israel and His crucified, risen Jewish Messiah
 - ❖ By living lives of faith, hope, and love
 - ❖ By the power of the Holy Spirit
 - ❖ Emphasized God's faithfulness and grace, unmerited mercy

PAULINE EPISTLES



Paul's vision. Where in his letters do you see the following elements?

- ❖ Monotheism: Yahweh, the God of Israel, is the One True God
- ❖ Good News of redemption and salvation
- ❖ Universality - all nations will stream toward the New Jerusalem
- ❖ Newness: new creation, new covenant, new exodus - yielding a new song
- ❖ National servanthood and mission: Israel is God's servant, a **light to the nations**
- ❖ Personal servanthood and mission: spread the Good News to all the nations
 - a. Jesus is the **suffering servant**, whose example we follow
 - b. Jesus' resurrection is His vindication; He is exalted above all as God and Lord
 - c. God brings about through Jesus' mission the new exodus, the new creation, the new covenant - a **light to the nations**

Chronology of Pauline epistles. Can we track the maturity of his faith through this timeline?

- ❖ 1 & 2 THES and Galatians - 48-51 AD
- ❖ 1 & 2 COR - mid-50s AD
- ❖ Romans - mid to late 50s AD
- ❖ Prison Epistles: Philippians and Philemon, COL, Ephesians - mid to late 50s AD or early 60s
- ❖ Pastoral Epistles: 1 TIM and Titus - earlier in Paul's ministry
- ❖ 2 TIM - during Roman imprisonment

Paul's missionary journeys

- ❖ **First trip:** Cyprus, Pamphylia, south Galatia (Pisidian Antioch, capitol of Galatia) - Iconium, Lystre, Derbe, Perga, Attalia, Syrian Antioch - narrated in **Acts 13-14**
- ❖ **Second trip:** Syria, Cilicia, Galatia, Phrygia, Asia, Macedonia (first European area), Achaia - Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, Troas, Samothrace, Philippi, Amphipolis, Appolonia, Thessalonica. Beroea, Achaia, Athens, Corinth, Cenchreae, Ephesus (provincial capitol of Asia), Caesarea, Syrian Antioch - narrated in **Acts 15:36-18:22**.
- ❖ **Third trip:** Galatia, Phrygia, Asia, Macedonia, Cyprus - Syrian Antioch, Galatia, Phrygia, Ephesus, Macedonia, "Greece" = Achaia, Athens, Corinth, Macedonia, Philippi, Troas, Assos, Mitylene, Samos, Miletus, Cos, Rhodes, Patara, Tyre (in Syria), Ptolemais, Caesarea, Jerusalem - narrated in **Acts 18:23-21:16**.
- ❖ **Trip to Rome:** Arrested in Jerusalem, on to Antipatris, Caesarea (hearing with Felix), Sidon, Cyprus, Myra in Lycia, Lasea, island of Crete (shipwreck), escape onto the island of Malta, Syracuse, Sicily, Rhegium, Puteoli, Rome (for two years) - narrated in **Acts 21:15-28:31**

Summary of some epistles:

1 & 2 THES – Thessalonica was a large city, visited by Paul on his second missionary journey. Paul's authorship of 1 THES is undisputed; some exegetes dispute his authorship of 2 THES, claiming that the eschatological perspective of 2 THES conflicts with that of 1 THES. Half of biblical scholars reject Pauline authorship of 2 THES. In antiquity, writers of letters *imitated* their spiritual masters and wrote as *disciples of that school of thought*. Signing a letter with a master's name was to indicate the school of discipleship, to continue that line of thinking. It was not seen as dishonest; it was seen as honoring the Apostle by allowing him to "speak" to new situations. Some of the doubt of Paul's authorship springs from distaste of the theology: anti-Catholic bias. Source: early Protestants who wanted to purge "Catholicism" from Paul's writing - institutionalized creed and ministry. Some people wrote in Paul's name and he called them out on it if the letters did not genuinely come from him or his co-senders (see **2 THES 2:2**).

From a theological perspective:

- a. The Holy Spirit inspired all of canonical Scripture; therefore, ascribing certain human authorship is not really all that important. Accepting all Pauline epistles as coming directly and exclusively from Paul or recognizing that some was Paul's thought and some was his co-senders' thoughts, does not change the fact that the Holy Spirit included all which He wanted included and none of which He wanted excluded.
- b. Canonical status of books - the Holy Spirit guided the process of determining which books were to be included in the canon of Scripture and which were to be excluded. Criteria included apostolicity (did it stem from the time of the apostles or did it reflect the thought of the apostles); universality (did much or all of the early Church use this) and (I have forgotten - theological purity?).
- c. Times change; theology develops in a person's outlook - even Paul - and certain letters take a certain tone depending upon the situation he was addressing.

These letters were likely written between 48-51 AD. Overarching theme: Holiness and hope in a pagan world.

Cruciformity, the law of Christ - Christians must conform themselves to Christ, which means acceptance of suffering - cruciformity. Twice Paul refers to this as the “law of Christ,” the narrative pattern of the Crucified - faith working through love which is rooted in the Cross where the Son of God expressed His faithfulness and obedience by His self-giving love. This is Paul’s master narrative: faith toward God, love toward others. Faith oriented toward the future is hope; and there you have the theological virtues. **Illustrative texts:** 1 THES 1:2-3.

The Church as alternative (countercultural) community - The Church is a covenant community, holy, set apart, distinct from the culture/society. It exists in continuity with Israel and against the pagan Roman Empire. Within the Church should be an ethos of harmony, humility, and love toward all. **Illustrative texts:** 1 THES 4:3-5; 1 THES 5:14-18.

The Parousia, the Resurrection, and the final triumph of God - Paul was an apocalyptic Jew and a Pharisee; therefore, he saw Jesus’ Resurrection as representative of the general resurrection. Jesus was the “first fruits” and the assurance of God’s final definitive defeat of sin and death and the restoration of all creation. God will be “all in all.” The Divine plan will have been fulfilled. **Illustrative texts:** 1 THES 4:16-17.

Thessalonica was named for Alexander the Great’s sister. It was a walled city, the capitol of the Roman province of Macedonia, and had been operating since 316 BC. It was a large, important port city. It was a “free” city, not a Roman colony (like Philippi) with its own independent government and Greek heritage; it maintained the imperial cult and cults to Egyptian gods. Mount Olympus was visible from Thessalonica. You can see why Paul wrote to this fledgling church of “holiness and hope in a pagan world.”

According to Acts 17:1-9, Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy founded the Catholic Church in Thessalonica on Paul’s second missionary journey, following flogging and imprisonment in Philippi. Paul began in the synagogues but found the Gentiles more open to the Gospel. Paul preached Jesus, Crucified and Risen, which contradicted the emperor’s decrees which declared Jesus another emperor. This led to mob action instigated by Jews in the marketplace and then official investigation. The Gospel was seen as an assault on religious, economic, and political status quo. Despite the persecution, Paul preached with conviction and “power” - perhaps miracles.

Paul was very fond of the Thessalonians. Persecutions against Christians continued after Paul left; some may have been martyred. Paul sent Timothy to check on the young church. The Christians were bearing up well under the persecutions such that they brought encouragement to Paul in his sufferings. Paul, unable to visit Thessalonica personally, wrote 1 THES while in Corinth to **strengthen** them with reassurance and instruction, to get them ready for the apocalypse by remaining “sound and blameless” at the **Second Coming**. This hope made the demands of holiness worthwhile. Paul weaves three strands together for the narrative of this letter: the Crucified and Risen Jesus, the cruciform life of the Apostles and the persecution of the Thessalonians, and the Second Coming. The letter is an outpouring of thanksgiving for the arrival and persistence of the Gospel in Thessalonica.

Paul’s message: (1) turn from idols; (2) serve the One True God; and (3) wait for God’s Son in His Second Coming. His message is apocalyptic and Christocentric. Their conversion is the Pauline triad of the theological virtues, with the emphasis on “hope” in persecution and hope for the Second Coming.

Paul's evangelization was authentic and selfless. He reminds the Thessalonians that he worked "night and day" to provide for himself while he preached the Gospel. He invokes three images to describe his missionary team: **paternal, maternal, and Christological**. The suffering for the sake of the Gospel Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy endured in Philippi and in Thessalonica should debunk the idea of base motives, of status or financial gain. He reminds the young church how he "nursed them with the gentleness of a mother." Paul refers to the suffering of the Jewish prophets, whose words often went unheeded and who were derided, punished, and ignored or hated - all experienced by Jesus and by Christian preachers and missionaries and their converts. **Suffering is the common bond of Christians.**

Main themes:

- a. Faith, hope, and love are a way of life between the Resurrection and the Parousia
- b. Persecution and suffering are the expected lot of the followers of the Crucified
- c. Ministry is to be done: with integrity; in the power of the Spirit; in conformity to Christ.
- d. Christians strengthen and confirm one another in the faith; ministry is a two-way street.

Instructions are given for serving God and waiting for the Son. Sexual purity:- refrain from **porneia**, sexual impurity - be different from the Gentiles/pagans who do not know God. Forbidden to Christians, as to Jews: adultery, fornication, abortion, infanticide, homosexual relations. Have pure love and concern for the good of the other. Christians should marry Christians to build one another up. The church's practical assistance should go to those who are truly needy. All others are to be self-sufficient so as not to be a burden to others. While waiting for the return of the Son, keep working. Paul explained that while we wait for Jesus' return, some may die. This should not shake the hope of other believers. The dead will be raised on the last day and will be the first to meet the Lord. Watchfulness is the posture of Christians. Paul uses apocalyptic and political imagery and emphasizes faith, hope, and love. Paul mocks the Roman motto of **pax et securitas**. Only those who believe in the Lord and live accordingly will find the Day of the Lord one of peace and security - salvation rather than judgment. Paul's use of apocalyptic language in Roman terminology indicates that the Lord would shatter the Roman peace and security, offering true peace and security. It's surprising how early (51 AD) the Trinity and the theological virtues were already common in Christianity.

The major theme of 2 THES is cruciform faithfulness and goodness before the Parousia. This letter is a brief, strategic note to the Thessalonians with nuanced pastoral admonitions to conform themselves to Christ - to be faithful and good while we wait for the Second Coming. Knowing that the world will end is no excuse for not working. Thessalonians were eager for the Parousia and perhaps questioning the "delay." 2 THES is less personal and more forceful than 1 THES and they differ in style, vocabulary, tone, and eschatological conviction. In 1 THES, he speaks of the Second Coming to "comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable." In 2 THES, he reassures those who fear the Lord has already come and they have missed it. In 2 THES, the persecution had intensified, but so has the Thessalonians' fidelity and endurance. Paul may have written to reassure them that their suffering was not in vain. The **three themes** of this letter are **Parousia (doctrinal), persecution (experiential), and idleness/work (ethical)**. Paul offers thanksgivings, benedictions, and prayers throughout the letter.

Galatians - This letter was likely written between 48-51 AD. Overarching theme: The Sufficiency of the Cross and the Spirit. This is the most passionate, angry, yet caring pastoral letter of Paul's. Paul personally writes in his own hand (to emphasize his passion). It concerned the controversy of whether Gentiles must be circumcised. Some of Paul's most powerful and influential texts came from this letter. Paul's letter begins emotionally, with a stern rebuke in place of the customary thanksgiving; he calls the Galatians "foolish"; he is heartbroken over their confusion and feels he has wasted his time with them, that he must evangelize them again from scratch and from a distance. An important theme is justification by faith rather than works (of the Law, those 639 laws, not the Ten Commandments). Paul claims that absolutely nothing can or should be added to the Gospel of the Crucified Messiah and His liberating Spirit, a Gospel which yields cruciform faith and love. Paul embraces the Cross, rejoices in the Spirit, and welcomes the persecutions. He might be called a **cruciform covenantal charismatic** whose followers fulfill the covenant through cruciform conformity to Christ and lead lives of faith and love in the power of the Spirit.

Galatia was at first a territory and then a province of Rome located in north-central Asian Minor (Anatolia - Turkey), populated by a Celtic tribe which migrated there around 300 BC. The provincial capitol was Pisidian Antioch. The province included cities such as Derbe, Lystra, and Iconium, cities which Paul visited. The letter to the Galatians, therefore, was not to one church but to all of the churches Paul founded in this vast territory. Paul visited Galatia on all three of his missionary journeys.

Paul came to Galatia due to a physical infirmity - illness, perhaps related to his eyes - or because of the "thorn in his flesh". Did he have the stigmata? He "publicly exhibited Christ Crucified" - scars and all - and was well received, like a Divine angel. Many Galatians believed, were baptized, and received the Spirit, who was evidenced by miracles, in prayer to God the Father, and in good works (right living). **Some persecution accompanied the establishment of these churches** and there were some moral issues to address.

The Judaizers - those who advocated living like a Jew, even after having been baptized as a Christian and have received the Spirit - attempted to undermine Paul's evangelization. They may have been Jewish Christians from outside Galatia, perhaps who traveled around to the new communities Paul founded and attempted to bring the new Christians into the practice of Judaism - so as to be better Christians? Or perhaps they thought you had to go through Judaism to arrive at Christianity. Perhaps they were not Jewish Christians, but Jews who sought to convert the Gentile Christians to Judaism. **Paul saw the Judaizers as false believers in the circumcision faction - the people from James who thought less of Gentile Christians because they did not have the rich patrimony of Judaism behind them.**

Paul focused on the Cross and Jesus' freely-embraced salvific death in obedience to the Father's Will, setting us free to live in the realm of the Spirit - all of which the Father promised throughout Scripture. Paul enveloped this message in hard-hitting and passionate words to convince the Galatians to return to the Gospel as he had preached it to them. Jesus' death on the Cross inaugurated the promised New Creation and ushered in the Age of the Spirit, where we are adopted as God's children. To return to OT laws would be a return to slavery, to live an anachronism. The Spirit of Christ is the Spirit of the Father and is the Holy Spirit who enables Christians to be crucified with Christ, to **rise with Him to new life of faith and love**, and thereby to fulfill the Law. Since Jesus' death fulfilled God's promises in faithfulness and love, then our death to sin in Baptism and rising to new life in the Spirit to lead lives of faithfulness and love **also** fulfills the demands of the covenant without subscribing to

OT laws. Gentiles would be included in the covenant apart from compliance with the laws. To accept circumcision and the laws is to abandon the Cross - no Cross, no crown.

To require the Judaification of the Gentile Christians would be a serious mistake: it's about cruciform faith and love, living in the Spirit; inclusion into the covenant as a grace from God with which we cooperate. The phrase "gave Himself for our sins" is a common NT idiom; Paul uses it with the traditional Jewish emphasis on death as a sacrifice for sins; he then connects it to his second theme "to set us free from the present evil age", another Jewish apocalyptic hope for the end of this age and the beginning of an age of righteousness and justice, marked by the knowledge of God and His Presence throughout the world. **Therefore, the death of Jesus was THE apocalyptic event** as it ushered in the New Age. The present age and the New Age overlap, allowing us to escape this evil age "and the flesh."

Jesus' death was: sacrificial, apocalyptic, offering liberation/redemption from sin, offer of forgiveness, unleashed the gift of the Spirit, willed and promised by the Father, and therefore Trinitarian - willed/promised by **the Father**, effected by **the Son**, and empowered by **the Spirit**.

Paul rebukes them for deserting the One True God who graciously called them into covenant with Him; they have turned to a false gospel which stirred up confusion and perverts the Gospel of Christ Crucified. Paul calls down a double curse on them: "let them be anathema" or "eternally condemned" if they contradict the original Pauline Gospel. His curse targets those who preach any gospel contrary to the one the Galatians received from Paul, even if an "angel" should claim a gospel contrary to that of the Crucified Messiah. Paul is not a people pleaser; he is the **slave (doulos) of Christ**. Paul is absolutely confident of the truth of his message because he received it directly from a revelation (**apokalypsis**) of Jesus. This was a "conversion," a "call," and a "commission" Paul received from the Son of God.

This is not a change of religions but an organic growth - Paul saw Christianity as Judaism fulfilled. His Judaism is not Torah-centric but Christocentric - messianic Judaism. He, who violently persecuted the Church, was willing to suffer on behalf of the Church. Paul wanted to explain his message/mission to the Gentiles and ensure apostolic approval of it. Jerusalem's initial approval of Paul's Gospel (2:1-10) and his meeting with the pillars of the show that as an Apostle himself who had received his commission directly from Jesus, he did not **need** the approval of the pillars of the Church, but **he had it**. The Gospel of Christ (2:15-21) is the **thesis of GAL** - Paul had an original audience (Peter "to his face") and, via the letter, a new audience, the Galatians. This is the densest portion of the Pauline letters and is crucial to understand Paul and his Gospel. **Thesis**: The grace of God, given to all in the death of Jesus, is the means by which sinners who believe (thus sharing in Jesus' death and Resurrection to new life) are justified (made righteous) and find Life. **Justification is by God's grace, but has serious and thorough ethical dimensions as a response from us**. The **objective ground** of our justification is **the faith, (love, and obedience) of Jesus to the Father's Will**, achieved in the salvific and sacrificial death of Jesus. Our **required response** is **faith, (love, and obedience)**, which is the **subjective ground** of our justification. This faith response moves us **into Jesus**

Justify/justification (**dikaioo and dikaiosyne**) appears **five** times - a **covenantal term** - a legal/judicial/forensic concept associated with the image of **God as Judge** issuing a verdict of "not guilty." A relational, covenantal concept paired with "reconciliation." **Justification is a restoration of right covenantal relations now** with the

certain hope of acquittal on the Day of Judgment. Jesus' death on the Cross is the **basis** for our right relationship with God, not anything we do.

Faith/believe (*pistis and pisteuo*) appears **four** times in this portion - is a **covenantal term** connoting not simply intellectual assent but **personal fidelity** - total commitment from the heart - more akin to **devotion, loyalty, and loving obedience** than "belief," although belief and trust in God are part of Faith. Jesus' life, death, and Resurrection rained God's grace down upon us; we are called to **conform ourselves to His devotion, loyalty, and loving obedience** to the Father.

Works of the Law (*erga nomou*) appears **three** times - originally misunderstood as **any human effort - obedience or good works** - were useless for our justification. While it is true that apart from Jesus and God's free gift of grace, no one would have any hope, it is also true that our cooperation with God's grace is required. Another original misconception with has been corrected is that Paul meant "works" as in anything we do; we understand it now as "works of the Law" - as in the boundary markers of Judaism - circumcision, calendar, and diet. Paul will not build back up what Jesus had torn down (the temple wall of Jew-Gentile separation). **Paul is adamant about the social implications of this new life/justification in Christ.** The response of faith is "death to the law, so that I might live in God." The response of faith identifies so completely with Christ that it is a participation in His death to rise to new life - a 'co-crucifixion' **synestauroumai** - the perfect tense of the Greek indicates a past act with ongoing consequences. The old life with its old passions is gone; in us is new life - we live in the Risen Christ and share in His life. Christians continue living in "the flesh" (in the body), but not on our own strength. **We live in or by the faith of the Son of God.**

"In Christ Jesus, the blessing of Abraham has come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." This summarizes Paul's Gospel and the Galatians' experience. Paul focuses on Abraham because:

- a. He was a pagan who converted at the advent/epiphany/theophany of God like the Galatians.
- b. His faith was renowned - **GN 15:6** - Abraham's righteousness was based on his faith, this making **faith**, not circumcision, the defining characteristic of Abraham and his children. Circumcision became a covenant marker in GN 17, after Abraham had relations with Hagar, Sarah's maid, and borne a son, Ishmael. Rather than waiting in faith on God's promise, Abraham acted on his own.
- c. The Law was later in time than the Promise and cannot alter the Promise. Since the Law on Sinai arrived 430 years after the Divinely-ratified covenant (**diatheke**) with Abraham, it cannot void the Abrahamic Promise. The inheritance associated with the Abrahamic **diatheke** - the outpouring of the Spirit upon the Gentiles - comes under the terms of the Abrahamic covenant, not under the terms of the Law.
- d. The Law was not opposed to the Promise, but because of sin, could not deliver Life.
- e. The Law had a crucial but temporary role until the Promise was fulfilled.
- f. All who are "in Christ" are Abraham's offspring/descendant/seed.
- g. Paul cited GN 12:3 - Abraham's righteousness (based on faith), his descendants, and his blessing would extend to all nations (**ethne**) who believe. For Paul, this was the Gospel announced in advance - faith, righteousness, blessing (of the Spirit).
- h. Prophecies about all nations streaming to Jerusalem, when the Spirit would be poured out, not only on sons and daughters, but on "male and female slaves" (Joel 3:1-2) - presaged Gentiles receiving the Spirit as well as Israelites.

Since the sole criterion to be a Christian is to be ***in Christ in faith and love***, all divisions cease - Jew or Gentile, free or slave, man or woman, rich or poor. These differences no longer matter from a faith perspective; they must not divide the Body of Christ. Our common baptism unites us in a new creation to live in faith, hope, and love. Circumcision involved only males in the covenant. A radical point of Christianity and Paul's letter to the Galatians is that it erased the distinction between male and female. Both sexes were equally Christian. There was no patriarchal preference for males.

The Freedom of the Spirit: the life of faith and love - ***Focus***: the ethical implications of Paul's Law-free Gospel of Cross and Spirit. Freedom from the Law does not mean libertine behavior. Paul has to lay out the criteria for Christian ethical behavior. Fidelity to God, love for others, conformity to Christ constitutes ***life in the Spirit lived according to the Cross***. Such a life fulfills the Law. Freedom is a communal reality - not an excuse for indulgence or the flesh (concupiscence). The opposite of the flesh is the Spirit of God, the Spirit of the Son. Freedom allows the Spirit to bear fruit in love - radical, sacrificial love - mutual slavery to one another - seeing to the needs of others. Loving our neighbor fulfills the law (Lev 19:18 - you shall love your neighbor as yourself). The first responsibility Christians have is for others. The second responsibility: self-sufficiency - don't be a burden to others if you can help yourself. The third responsibility - for teachers - to share with the teachers of the community. The image: we reap what we sow - Paul connects this with the "two ways" - sow in the flesh, reap death, which is the way of all flesh. Sow "with abandon" in the Spirit - reap a rich harvest both in this life and the next.

1 and 2 Corinthians – written in the mid-50s. Theme: Chaos and the Cross in Corinth and Paul's defense of Cruciform Ministry. The Church in Corinth was in utter chaos, ***divided along social and spiritual lines***. They failed to understand the real-life consequences of following "Christ, and Him Crucified." Paul's goal was to show them that no disciple is greater than the Master, and that we are each expected to pick up our cross and follow Him in the hopes of eternal life. Corinth had such a reputation for immorality that it became a verb: to become ***korinthianazesthai*** was to become thoroughly immoral and materialistic. This pagan city had many temples to pagan gods, some of which practiced ritual sex orgies. Corinth was strategically crucial for the spread of the Gospel, as it was a thriving commercial metropolis. It was the "master of two harbors" - so bustling sea trade between Asia Minor and Italy - (1) Cenchreae and (2) Lechaion. The Corinthians were not wealthy but took every social and material advantage to become "upwardly mobile." Paul probably chose Corinth because:

- a. There was plenty of opportunity for work (for him to support himself)
- b. Plenty of immorality to set straight and ideas of gods to correct
- c. Strategically situated along major trade route for the spread of the Gospel

Paul spent 18 months there around AD 50-51/52. The dating can be this precise because of the mention of proconsul Gallio. He arrived alone after little success in Athens and after persecutions in Beroea, Thessalonica, and Philippi. Here he met up with Prisca and Aquila. He started in the synagogues, with little success, and turned to the Gentiles when Silvanus and Timothy joined him. Paul developed a diverse community of Gentiles and Jews, slaves and freed, women and men, rich and poor. There may have been several house churches which could accommodate differing sizes of congregations. Paul's visit was followed by the visit of Apollos, an Alexandrian Jew and possibly a visit from Peter.

- a. Congregations split over who baptized them (Apollos faction, Peter, Paul)
- b. Some professed to “belong to Christ” - of course the right position, but it added on to the divisions rather than healing them.
- c. Some Corinthians took their fellow believers to court (1 COR 6:1-11)
- d. Some Corinthians avoided the pagan temples, while others ate there and perhaps mocked their fellow believers (1 COR 8:1-13)
- e. People brought their own food to the Mass of the Lord’s Supper in the house churches, so some ate lavishly while others went hungry
- f. Some flaunted their gifts of the Spirit or valued them more highly than other gifts of the Spirit (1 COR 12:1-14:40)
- g. Moral depravity arose among believers: prostitution, incest, fornication, adultery
- h. Some Christians in Corinth denied the general resurrection at the end of time
- i. Some were “puffed up” with pride at their socio-economic status, their education, or of their gifts of the Spirit - they looked down upon fellow Christians and upon Paul, who preached the Cross, fidelity to the Father’s Will, looking for reward in the life to come.
- j. Paul in Ephesus was told of the problems in Corinth by letter and in person. He sent Timothy ahead since he was occupied in Ephesus. He wrote again to the Corinthians around the year 54, still having been delayed and prevented from visiting. Scholars believed that Paul wrote *at least* four letters to the Corinthians.

Paul’s deliberate rhetoric was designed to strengthen the faith; sanctify the people; and unify the community. He urges that all be done with love - these are the two bookends of his argument - 1 COR 13, “the love chapter” is the core of his argument. The problems in Corinth ***stem from a failure to love*** as Christ loves, as we Christians are called to love. At the heart of this heart is verse 5 “love does not insist on its own way,” also translated: “love does not seek its own welfare or interests,” a Greek idiom. Themes in the thanksgiving: grace (*charis*); Spiritual gifts (*charismata*); Wealth in speech and knowledge; Blamelessness/holiness; Day of the Lord; Fellowship (*koinonia*). God’s work may begin with the power of the Spirit but does not end there; the people must work every day, bearing their cross as they follow the Lord to their personal judgment and to the Second Coming. Their charismatic community must be true to its Christian identity as cruciform and countercultural. Wisdom and power paradox - God’s power is most evident in the “powerless” Crucified Christ; and God’s wisdom is seen as foolishness to the world. Conventional wisdom does not reveal God - only faith in Jesus the Son reveals God the Father in the power of the Holy Spirit. This is the ***kerygmatic paradox***: the stumbling block of a crucified Messiah.

Paul focused on the rejection of human wisdom and power and the affirmation of Christ Crucified as Divine Wisdom and power. He wants to affirm the reality of Spirit-inspired wisdom and gifts AND stress its connection to Christ Crucified. The wisdom and rulers of this age failed to perceive Jesus as the Messiah. For Corinthians to disconnect the gifts of the Spirit sent by Jesus at their Confirmation from His Cross shows an *absence* of wisdom on their part. Inability to connect Spirit and Cross reveals an immature spirit, one which is “fleshly.” The truly spiritual (or spiritually mature) person sees the connection between the Paschal Mystery and the Holy Spirit - these people have the mind of Christ and can actively hope for the future.

The divisions in Corinth negate the Cross and reveal the Corinthians as “fleshly” people far from Jesus and the Spirit, yet Paul still calls them “the church of God.” Paul reminds the Corinthians that preachers, apostles are

servants of God and the church; they are God's possession. Apostles live a cruciform existence as they live the message of Christ Crucified. This is the Church's foundation.

Paul holds men and women to the same standard. Paul's program of "**positive apathy**" - remain as you are when God called you (as was the case with deacons). What matters is obedience to God, not social station or marital status. This brought up the question of slaves - should they remain slaves or take freedom if offered? Paul's point is that all are free in Christ - there is no Gentile or Jew, woman or man, slave or free - all are equal in the Church - and all free persons are slaves to Christ. Paul believes that because in Jesus the eschatological age has begun, the old world is passing away. In Christ, the new age is invading (breaking in) to the present. All social structures should align themselves with the eschaton in mind and be **in Christ**. Widows and engaged bachelors should remain single but may marry **believers** ("in the Lord") with the expectation for widows that the Church would help her financially - that remarriage would not be a financial necessity. Paul assumes that men and women may pray and prophesy - speak to God and for God - in the gathered church. Men and women are equal **in Christ**. Truly Spirit-filled worship respects an order appropriate to worship.

Paul presents a series of if...then correlations which stress that denying bodily resurrection is a grave mistake:

- i. Paul's preaching and the Corinthians' faith are in vain
- ii. Paul's preaching misrepresents God
- iii. Believers are still dead in their sins if Jesus' death did not kill sin
- iv. Believers who have died have perished and will not be raised to new life
- v. Apostles and Christians are pitiable, for they endure much for nothing
- vi. Corinthian ritual of baptism on behalf of the dead is pointless
- vii. Paul's daily danger and suffering are absurd and gain him nothing
- viii. Hedonism is the logical lifestyle
- ix. Without resurrection from the dead, there is no reason for faith, hope, or love. Death is the ultimate enemy. Life is meaningless.

Paul then refutes this line because Christ has been raised from the dead, as Paul knows from personal experience and the Corinthians know by Paul's witness. Paul focuses on the Parousia, the future general resurrection, God's ultimate victory over death:

- x. Jesus is the first fruits of the resurrection
- xi. Jesus is the New Adam who undoes the reign of death inaugurated by the first Adam
- xii. Jesus is alive now and is reigning as Lord
- xiii. God will ultimately defeat death, and God will be all in all
- xiv. Paul advises the Corinthians to avoid those who deny the resurrection; wake up and embrace the Creed you profess

Paul considers two issues which address possible objections to the Resurrection: (1) *how* the general resurrection will occur; and (2) the nature of the resurrection (the *what*). As to *how*, Paul offers an analogy: the seed which is sown, dies to sprout new life, which is different from the seed (the *what*) - you do not sow the body that is to be.

- xv. There is continuity and discontinuity in death that transforms the dead body to the resurrected body;
- xvi. There are different kinds of bodies, each with its own kind of glory.
- xvii. Death and resurrection mean transformation: from perishable, dishonorable, weak, and physical into imperishable, honorable, powerful, and spiritual - not flesh and blood. It has been transformed from glory into glory - but both forms of existence are bodily.
- xviii. The self continues in the purely physical body AND in the glorified body. When the apocalyptic trumpet sounds, all bodies, living and dead, will be transformed by God.
- xix. For this reason **alone**, Corinthians should be steadfastly faithful in the Lord.

2 COR Chap 10-13 - the Foolish Speech and Paul's defense of his ministry against Jewish Christian pneumatics (Spirit people, whom Paul sarcastically termed "super-apostles").

Chap 1-7 are conciliatory in tone and explanatory in purpose, an example of forensic rhetoric

Chap 8-9 are hortatory in tone and motivational in purpose, an example of deliberative rhetoric

Chap 10-13 are polemical in tone and dissuasive and persuasive in purpose, a blend of forensic and deliberative rhetoric to edify COR through self-examination

There is a rhetorical strategy of moving from issues of lesser to greater sensitivity and from less combative to more combative forms of persuasion. Paul's strategy is to (1) cement the reconciliation with the COR; (2) by following through on their financial pledge; and (3) separating themselves from the false apostles.

The ultimate focus is the cruciform shape of life in Christ. Paul desires to know nothing - and to boast in nothing - but Christ Crucified. Cruciformity is the shape of apostleship, grace, and the Spirit. In Christ, all of God's promises are a Yes. This is Paul's governing hermeneutic, his way of reading Scripture and history. All of God's promises are fulfilled in Jesus.

Ministry of the New Covenant - the Corinthians are Paul's "letters of recommendation" to other churches being established. This letter is a visible, public reality, the subject of which is Jesus, prepared by Paul with the "ink" of the Holy Spirit; this Spirit is inscribed on the hearts of the COR. This Trinitarian description evokes Jeremiah and Ezekiel - a new Spirit put into hearts of flesh - has now been fulfilled in Christ. Paul praises the New Covenant because of its surpassing greatness and glory against the already glorious Old Covenant.

Paul makes the point that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God (the Father, Yahweh) and Jesus the Son. Those who gaze upon the image and glory of God are transformed into the Divine Image. Courage and confidence in cruciform ministry - Paul works in a ministry characterized by weakness - treasure in earthen vessels - to contrast the value of the treasure and the fragility of the vessel. Despite the afflictions, Paul does not lose hope because of the Spirit and the hope of future glory. His sufferings are a continuation of the death and resurrection of the Lord - a death which engenders life. Cruciform ministry makes Jesus' life visible: death in life, power in weakness. Paul's suffering is not for his own future glory alone, but for the good of the communities for which he prays. Participation in Jesus' death is a prelude to participation in His Resurrection.

Jesus died as an act **for** others means: for our benefit AND in our place. Christ did not simply offer forgiveness of sins so that we could keep on sinning. We should look to Him and follow in His footsteps. Paul lists the character of his ministry (1) tribulations/cruciformity; (2) virtues/integrity; and (3) paradoxes (life in death, power in weakness. The words he uses for (1) endurance, affliction, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleeplessness; hunger. For (2): purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness, genuine love, truthful

speech, power of God with the weapons of righteousness. For (3): honor and dishonor; ill repute and good repute; treated as imposters, yet true; unknown yet well-known; dying yet alive; punished, not killed; sorrowful yet rejoicing; poor yet enriching others; having nothing yet possessing everything. He and his co-workers have met the ultimate test: conformity to Christ by carrying about in their bodies the death of Jesus and making visible His life.

Paul gives a brief but comprehensive theology of generosity: (1) generous giving is an experience of Divine grace - expressing thanksgiving for graces received and a means to conform to the generous self-giving of Jesus; (2) giving should be done liberally and cheerfully; (3) God supplies the needs of the generous; (4) generosity demonstrates the reality of grace.

Paul “boasts” of his weakness and sufferings:

Uncounted tribulations - years of hard labor; imprisonments; floggings; and near-death experiences.

Enumerated adversities - 5 times officially flogged at synagogues, each of which could have been lethal; 3 times beaten by Romans; stoned once and left for dead; 3 shipwrecks; once adrift at sea; and frequent dangerous trips

Dangers - most related to the dangerous trips, both natural dangers (rivers, seas, wilderness) and bandits, mobs of Jews and Gentiles, and false brothers and sisters

Difficult conditions - physical pains and deprivations; hard work (manual labor); sleeplessness; hunger and thirst; exposure to the elements.

Anxiety for the churches - daily anxiety and a deep sense of sharing in the persecutions and weaknesses of the churches he established.

Paul then narrates a “heavenly trip” which he took not long after the Damascus escape, a vision experience called *Merkabah*, Hebrew for “chariot,” mystical encounters with God. Paul does not describe what he saw and was not permitted to describe what he heard, but his experience was stunning. While the false apostles claimed to have visions, Paul beats them at this game as well. This was not his only vision; he had others equally stunning. For this reason, Paul says, he was given a “thorn (in) or (against) his flesh” to inculcate humility and dependence on God.

Colossians: The Cosmic Crucified Christ as the Wisdom of God

There is an air of majesty about this letter, which presents Jesus as the pre-existent Wisdom of God. This letter also inspires a down-to-earth spirituality which surpasses misguided attempts to renew humanity with ascetic practices which don't recognize the reality and power of the Resurrection. There is a singularity of purpose to COL just as in GAL. The letter seeks to convince the Colossians that Jesus is sufficient for their spiritual liberation and life. They ought to resist the temptation to engage in particular practices which supposedly supplement, but in fact, supplant, their participation in Christ's death and Resurrection. If COL was composed by Paul or in Paul's lifetime, it is dated to mid to late 50s, possibly from prison in Ephesus or in the early 60s from his house arrest in Rome. This would place it following Philemon and before EPH. **Motto:** If by Paul, as late as possible; if after Paul, as early as possible.

Colossae was a moderately important city due to its location as a trade route between the Aegean Sea and Ephesus (west) and the provincial capitol, Pisidia Antioch (east). It was in the fertile Lycus River Valley in the region of Phrygia. It was not a Roman colony. Its population was Phrygians, Greeks, and Jews - syncretism stronger here than anywhere else in Paul's time. The Jews were of the Diaspora, brought to COL from Babylon and Mesopotamia by Antiochus III in 200 BC. Colossae was destroyed by an earthquake in the early 60s and never rebuilt. The remains of Colossae have not yet been excavated.

The Colossian church was almost certainly NOT founded by Paul. It was probably founded by Epaphras. The congregation reflected the multiethnic makeup of COL: Greeks and Jews. Certain Jewish Christian mystical ascetics with Hellenized views promoted a philosophy which is opposed to Jesus. This “COL heresy” was present in COL before the church was founded. It was **dualistic**, claiming that the purpose of worship is to escape the flesh and enter the heavenly realms. The prerequisite for entry was observance of the appointed fasts and other means of detachment from the flesh. Some were led to ascetic competition, which gave rise to pride. The dualism in this philosophy was **incipient Gnosticism** - not yet full-blown. Paul’s teachings **against “the flesh”** and in favor of **charismatic** experiences (tongues, visions, etc.) could have led some believers to over-emphasize these dimensions in their everyday life.

Elements of this philosophy: (1) observation of Jewish calendar, dietary laws, and circumcision; (2) extreme asceticism - fasting and other disciplines (see COL 2:18, 21, 23); (3) worship of angels, which could mean veneration of angels OR participation with the angels at worship; (4) visions (see COL 2:18); (5) interest in the elemental spirits of the universe, the forces which rule the cosmos and human life (COL 2:8). *Merkabah* Judaism, a mystery cult, could have syncretized their Hellenized culture with the practices of the mystery cult, finding Paul’s teachings against the flesh and in favor of charisms of the Spirit and blended it all into this new philosophy.

Paul’s letter to the Colossians addresses those Christians under the influence of this cult, using the vocabulary of those he seeks to condemn. He corrects them that the heavenly life of believers is NOT one of extreme asceticism but one of ongoing, daily death to self to new life in Christ, accomplished solely by the indwelling Presence of Christ, Who empowers the community with **faith, hope, and love**. COL tells of the wisdom, power, and sufficiency of Jesus: (1) Nothing reveals more about God than Jesus; (2) Nothing is more powerful than the risen, glorified Jesus; and (3) nothing is more necessary than life in Christ.

Paul identifies himself as “an apostle by the Will of God” to lend weight to his letter. Paul is confident that the Colossians can resist this new philosophy. Paul gives thanks for the Colossians’ **faith, hope, and love** “in Christ”. Jesus is the location of their faith and the Spirit is the “sphere” where their love for one another takes place. The mutual indwelling of Christ and His believers is a hallmark of Pauline spirituality.

Two allusions to the message of the Jewish Christian mystical ascetics are addressed here - circumcision and the Law. Their focus on physical circumcision is misguided; baptism into Christ accomplishes what circumcision could not. The Law did not help the human condition but exacerbated it, for it showed what needed to be done but **did not empower** believers to do it. The Spirit of God through Baptism into Christ confers the graces and power needed to obey the Law and to live a life pleasing to God.

Paul preaches a significant twofold depiction of the Cross as God’s act of victory. (1) God erased the record that stood against us and nailed it to the Cross; and (2) God disarmed the rulers and authorities; by His Cross, God has defeated the cosmic powers which hold humanity in the grip of fear. *Deus victor* through *Christus victor* liberates us from guilt and from the hostile powers, cosmic forces, and personal demons, rendering them powerless.

What constitutes true wisdom and piety? Paul answers this in the remainder of his letter to COL. His response to the visions of the mystery cult ascetics is believers must have a resurrection experience of Christ, which is also a death experience - death to the old self, death to slavery to sin - and arisen to new life in Christ, a cruciform life which embodies the virtues of Jesus on the Cross. This expresses covenant membership in substantive ethical boundary markers like compassion and humility. While living in the body and honoring it as a gift from God, believers live in the thanksgiving and praise inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Paul continues with the exhortations: Put to death... (3:5) providing a list of sins related to sex and speech. Paul calls for radical surgery - amputation - of the sins and temptations which keep believers from living fully in Christ. This is not a set of regulations such as the old Law; it is a freeing oneself from the winding cloths of sin and death, just as Lazarus, risen from the dead by Jesus, had to be freed: Untie him, Jesus ordered. Believers have been radically transformed by the grace of God, have stripped off the old self and been clothed in Jesus and His Spirit. The list of the two sins include the **thought life** (impurity, passion, lust, anger, wrath, malice) as well as the **actions** as an outgrowth of those thoughts (fornication, sexual immorality, slander, abusive language, lying). These are the ordinary passions which destroy the soul and personal relationships, extending out to taint the community. Only the action of God, our Divine Healer, can restore us to harmony within ourselves, within our relationships, and with the Holy Trinity. The Church has begun this work by restoring harmony between Gentiles and Jews, as both are equally included in the blessings of the Church.

Paul's **household code** focuses on the paterfamilias. In antiquity, the head of the household wielded ultimate authority over all members of his household, extending even to the power of life and death. COL subverts and transforms the power (*patria potestas*) of the paterfamilias, turning the domicile into a domestic church in three crucial ways: existential, literary, and cultural contexts. **(1)** the duties of the household members are situated within the reality of **life in Christ** (existential). All are to keep the teachings and example of Jesus ever in mind as they honor the reality of His dwelling. Even the paterfamilias must keep ever in mind and heart the fact that he answers to the Master. **(2)** All believers in a household are accountable for their conduct; all must live by Christian precepts. The paterfamilias, above all, is endowed with the duty to establish his household in love, humility, forgiveness, and the building up of the household (literary). He cannot act with impunity in anger, greed, lust, or abusive language. **(3)** The cultural context focuses on the **duties** of the household, beginning with the head of the household. This is an alternative to the legal code which focuses on the **rights** of the paterfamilias. He has no right to punish or kill them; he has a duty to be patient, kind, and forgiving, leading the Way of the cruciform life, standing in the place of Christ as head of his household body.

Paul thus **rewrites the patriarchal system** in his household code in the context of **life in Christ** in which all believers, regardless of societal status, are called to a cruciform life. Paul exhorts wives to submit to their husbands in love; children are to obey their parents (not just the father) in everything; the father may not harass the children lest he drive them to sin. Slaves are called to obey their masters as a way to serve their true Master, for since both slave and master in a believing household are slaves of the Master, neither one is the property of the other (despite Roman law).

Ephesians: Walking Worthily of the Cosmic Crucified Christ

This letter is a liturgical celebration of God's eternal purpose in Christ. Paul exhorts the Church to embody that purpose in daily life. Paul likely wrote this letter in prison in the early '60s. He mentions Tychicus as the bearer (and likely the one who physically wrote Paul's words for him) of the letter. This was a circular letter not specific to Ephesians containing general exhortations and no specific incident. Ephesus was the capitol of the Roman province of Asia. Paul had spent time in Ephesus; it became the epicenter of the spread of the Gospel.

Ephesus was a large city, a Greek colony, with sea trade and land trade routes. It had many temples to pagan gods and with the famous temple to Artemis - one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. "Artemis of the Ephesians" because they blended this Greek goddess with Cybele whose priests castrated themselves and gashed themselves. Ephesus was a strategic center of the early Church. John wrote a letter to Ephesus in Revelations; St. Ignatius of Antioch wrote to it on his way to martyrdom. Ephesus became the site of church councils.

- ❖ “Realized eschatology” = now, but not yet fully realized
- ❖ “Realized soteriology” = salvation is an ongoing process - we were saved, we are being saved - salvation can be lost or can continue unto eternity
- ❖ This letter is known for its exalted Christology and ecclesiology
- ❖ Paul uses “saved” or “justified” - past tense (strange) - our resurrection to new life of cruciform self-offering AND being seated with Christ in the Heavenly places (2:6)
- ❖ The power of the resurrection to new life IS the power to be conformed to the Cross in suffering and selfless love.
- ❖ Our future hope: 1:12 - set our hope on Christ; 1:21 - the age to come; 4:30 - day of redemption
- ❖ Christ is the head, the Lord, of the Church, both local and universal.
- ❖ **Berakah** - Jewish prayer of praise. The wealth of God’s grace - past, present, future
 - **Election** - of the Gentiles as well as the Jews = covenant made before the foundation of the world - God’s eternal plan. We are chosen to live a counter-cultural life of cruciform love.
 - **Adoption and Grace** - we are adopted in the Beloved Son (1:6). As the Church, we owe to God the honor due to a father. The Emphasis is on the present reality and future hope.
 - **Forgiveness as Redemption** - a present reality which will fully realized at the eschaton
 - **Revelation** - of the mystery of His Will to unify all Creation in Christ in the fullness of time - this phrase refers to the future, whereas it usually refers to the past (Incarnation)
 - **Inheritance** - in the death of Christ. This is not yet fully realized, but it generates the blessing of hope marked by a life of praise and thanksgiving in the present time.
 - **Gift of the Holy Spirit** - (a) a seal which marks and protects believers as God’s possession; (b) a pledge, deposit, or first installment of our future redemption.
- ❖ We are destined to **walk** in good deeds; we **walked** in sin and darkness until God’s grace intervened
- ❖ Jewish metaphor of life as a **walk** becomes the dominant metaphor for life in Christ
- ❖ In God’s Church, we experience His love and power: **theocentric** - shows God’s grace
- ❖ By grace we have been saved: (2:5, 8) - use of the past tense with a future dimension
- ❖ Unmerited Divine gifts: salvation, redemption, resurrection, and new life
- ❖ The purpose of the Divine gifts: to walk in Christ; to do good works; and to participate in God’s plan
- ❖ Forgiveness without new life is not redemption
- ❖ Good works matter as the **purpose and result** of salvation - not the cause
- ❖ Faith must show itself in love
- ❖ The Church is the vehicle to proclaim the Gospel - God’s eternal Christocentric plan.
- ❖ The **Seven Unities** of the Church
 - One Body
 - One Spirit
 - One hope
 - One Lord
 - One Faith
 - One Baptism
 - One God and Father of all

- ❖ Emphasis: gifts of preaching and teaching the Gospel.
 - Apostles and prophets received the Divine mystery and are the foundation of the Church
 - Evangelists, pastors, shepherds, and teachers are indirect recipients of revelation
 - All of these equip the saints for ministry; to edify the Church; for unity in faith and knowledge of the Son
- ❖ Christ transforms life: put away the old self and put on the new self, renewed in mind
- ❖ Contrast the new life with series of don't do (X); do (Y)
- ❖ Speech can either impart grace OR detract from grace
- ❖ Prohibit falsehood; **instead**, speak the Truth in love as we are members of one Body
- ❖ Prohibit anger; **instead**, resolve quickly so as not to provide an opportunity for the devil
- ❖ Prohibit stealing; **instead**, work honestly to assist the needy
- ❖ Prohibit evil talk; **instead**, edify with speech to impart grace to others and not grieve the Holy Spirit
- ❖ Prohibit bitterness, wrath, anger, slander, and malice; **instead**, practice kindness, tenderness, and forgiveness as we are loved and forgiven by God
- ❖ Imitate God's love sacrificially
- ❖ Purity in thoughts, words, and actions
 - Speak like saints, not like pagans
 - Thank God rather than indulging in vulgar talk
 - Maintain your salvation and don't lead others astray
- ❖ Take God's wrath seriously
- ❖ To live like pagans is to be outside of Christ
 - Walk as children of the Light. Bear witness against evil and bear witness to Christ, our Light
- ❖ Household code is divided into three sections. In each, the pater familias is seen. Paul upends societal values where the father/husband had all of the rights but few duties. Paul imposed Catholic cruciform love to the existing patriarchal structure, transforming it in a radical, revolutionary way. Paul blends ethics and Christology.
- ❖ **Wife subject to husband**
 - Part of her obligation as a Christian is to be subject to one another in reverence of Christ
 - Husband has that same obligation
 - Husband must also love his wife as Christ loves His Church = self-sacrificial, cruciform love
 - Wife, as a believer, must also love her husband with Christlike sacrificial love
 - As in the Church:
 - Mutual care is for **unity** of the spouses
 - Different gifts and duties shows **diversity** of persons
 - Husband is head of his wife - she is the body - they are intimately connected, made one flesh
 - Image of Christ as Head of His Church - He nourishes the Church with His own Blood: power in weakness
- ❖ **Spiritual Warfare** – We participate in an ongoing spiritual battle with the power of God' indwelling Spirit AND with prayer. This battle continues until the Second Coming.

- ❖ Echoing Isaiah and Wisdom, Paul uses a soldier metaphor for **all believers**:
 - Belt of Truth
 - Breastplate of Righteousness
 - Shoes to proclaim the Gospel
 - Shield of Faith
 - Helmet of Salvation
 - Sword = the Word of God
- ❖ Prayer: Pray always; pray for all the saints; pray for Paul.

Romans: Gentile and Jew in Cruciform Covenant Community

This is the most influential letter ever written; most significant letter in Christianity; very complex. Theologically, it is broad and deep; it is Paul's most systematic presentation of Gospel. Paul wrote from Corinth between AD 55-58. Paul had never visited Rome but there was a hub of believers due to traffic between Jerusalem and Rome AND as the Gospel spread throughout the Empire, communication between believers afar to family and friends in Rome and relocations to Rome would have built up the Roman church. Paul writes boldly to people he has not met to remind them of what they know to be true. This is part of his priestly ministry - his offering to God (the Gentiles). He must ensure that this offering is holy, blameless, and acceptable to the Lord. He wants to boast in what Christ has accomplished among the Gentiles through Paul. Paul's work is proclamation, signs, and wonders. Paul's specific mission is to the unconverted Gentiles, which has kept him from Rome. His letter goes ahead of his visit to acquaint the Romans with him and his preaching. He plans to pass through Rome on his way to Spain. He hopes to get to know the community, to help where he can, and to gain a missionary base of support: prayers, finances, and companions.

It covers:

- Grace of God toward sinful humanity for Jews and Gentiles
- Multicultural cruciform community of obedient faith
- Generous love and expectant hope

Why did Paul write this letter? Much debated question. Reasons for the letter depend upon which part of the letter the reader deems most important. Possible answers:

- Friction between Gentiles and Jews - in AD 49, Claudius expelled all Jews from Rome due to controversy over "Chrestus" - an intra-Jewish debate about the Messiah. Gentiles thus constituted the bulk of the ROM church for many years (possibly the entirety of the church). Jews returned to Rome upon the death of Claudius, possibly finding differences in beliefs and customs, leading to disunity between believers. Paul describes such conflicts in Ch 14-15: disputes over diet and calendar - matters incidental to the Gospel **adiaphora** - non-essential, discretionary, neutral.
- Some believe CH 1-8 and 12-15 to have the primacy, making ROM a theological treatise on justification, sanctification, and glorification: the grand story of salvation. No local story.
- Others believe CH 9-11 are the key to ROM: Paul's concern about God's fidelity and Israel's fate
- Others believe CH 14-15 are the key: Paul's concern about factions and judgmentalism and his interest in Rome for support of his ministry
- Most believe that this letter furthered his ministry of pastoral work
- It functioned as an introduction to Paul and his teaching
- He was collecting funds for the Judean Christians and sought moral and financial support

- ❖ Paul's theology always has pastoral function. The possible Gentile-Jew conflict would have been fertile ground for his profound theology about unity in the community.
- ❖ This letter can be read theologically, pastorally, rhetorically - it is all of these
- ❖ **Theme:** God's grace creates a New Covenant community of Christians (Gentile and Jew) - eschatological, emphasis on God's mercy and faithfulness, emphasis on obedience of faith
- ❖ **Ch 1-4:** Story of God's faithful response to faithless humanity
- ❖ **Ch 5-8:** New situation: those who are justified by faith, they die and rise with Christ and live in the Spirit
- ❖ **Ch 9-11:** Question the future fate of ethnic Israel as most Jews rejected the Gospel
- ❖ **Ch 12-15:** Need for the Roman community to embody the Gospel as they live cruciform lives of holiness and hospitality
- ❖ **Ch 15-16:** Relationship of all the foregoing to God's great story of salvation and Paul's mission within it
- ❖ This letter trumpets **one Gospel** for Gentile and Jew alike:
 - Thematic statement that Gospel is power of salvation for all
 - Impartial criterion of judgment according to deeds
 - Theme of one God for all
 - Charge of universal enslavement to sin
 - Offer of justification and salvation to all by grace and through faith
 - Multicultural character of the Church
 - Need for Gentiles and Jews to tolerate cultural differences and welcome one another
 - Mutual benefit between Gentile and Jewish believers in the Diaspora and Jerusalem
 - Creation of one Church which calls upon the Name of Jesus
- ❖ Paul is a Jew participating in debates about what constitutes real Jewishness, what is the True Israel, and what God has done and is doing in salvation history
- ❖ Paul critiques Jews as the prophets did - for their unbelief - like Isaiah, Hosea, Amos, Jeremiah, and Jesus Himself
- ❖ Paul believes that in and through Jesus, God has made a New Israel, composed of Gentiles and Jews, as prophesied by Isaiah. This True Israel is
 - Filled with the Spirit
 - Circumcised in the heart
 - Empowered to live in covenant with God and others (fulfill the Law)
 - The very blessing promised to Abraham and foretold by the prophets
 - Israel is not **replaced** but **remade, reconstituted**
 - The true Israel is eschatologically inclusive rather than ethnically exclusive in conformity to the eternal purpose and promises of God
- ❖ Unique theology to this letter: God's deliverance of Israel opened to everyone the good news. Condition to receive salvation: faith. Salvation and faith are complex and comprehensive. Paul will unpack their depths during the course of the letter.
 - Salvation - future hope of eternal life
 - Salvation - present reality of being in right covenantal relationship with God
 - Faith - the righteousness of **God**
 - Originates in God
 - Characteristic of God - Divine quality
 - Divine activity
 - **Hesed** - God's saving covenant faithfulness

- Faith - the **human** response to God's saving covenant faithfulness
 - From/through God's **hesed** (source or agency)
 - To/for/toward the human response (goal)
- Faith could refer to **Christ's** faithfulness/obedience to God which wrought our salvation, rendering the sentence in 1:17 - "For in the Gospel, God's saving covenant faithfulness is revealed through the faithfulness of Christ to generate faithfulness of those who hear it."
- ❖ Faith - **pistous** - means engagement, commitment, loyalty, fidelity, as well as intellectual assent
- ❖ Faith of this kind makes believers righteous/justified - in a right covenantal relationship with God. We are not "counted" righteous - not a legal fiction. Believers become righteous and live by faith - live faithfully - in obedience to God and His Will. The ultimate result will be acquittal at judgment.
- ❖ Justification is past, present, and future. Justification is not salvation, but it includes salvation. It is reconciliation with God in the **present**, together with certain hope of salvation in the **future**, based upon the death of Christ in the **past**; all known through the gift of the Spirit
- ❖ Justification began in the past with response to the Gospel in faith AND has an ongoing effect
- ❖ Justification is blessedness, standing in grace with God, at peace with God
- ❖ Justification's future aspect is the hope of participation in the glory of God - GN renewed as we truly Image God. We have the sure hope of this beatitude and this is our grounds for boasting of God's goodness, mercy, and love
- ❖ Justification is a unified experience of the Spirit, suffering, love, and hope
- ❖ Salvation is in the future - Salvation is rescue from God's wrath at the judgment (future)
- ❖ Salvation is **cosmic** as all Creation will participate in our salvation
- ❖ We suffer as we await the **completion of our adoption - bodily resurrection** (8:23) - therefore, until the Second Coming and the general resurrection, our salvation is incomplete. This requires hope and patience, gifts of the Spirit.
- ❖ Goal of Paul and reason for his proclamation of the Gospel: live in right relationship with God now and experience eternal life with Him.
- ❖ Paul's goal is pastoral: recognition of universal sin, judgment, and mercy for those with faith - this places Jewish and Gentile Christians on an equal footing:
 - In debt to God for His mercy
 - Equally children of God
 - Equally children of Abraham and inheritors of the Abrahamic Promise
- ❖ God's invisible, eternal power and Divinity can be discerned from nature. All are without excuse for not knowing, honoring, and thanking God. Their minds were darkened by this sin and they fell into immorality.
- ❖ "God gave them up" from idolatry to immorality - Paul states this three times. God allows human folly to run its course to its inevitable end - this is the revelation of God's wrath.
- ❖ The exchange of Truth about God led to the exchange of Truth about God's creatures, including our fellow human beings; natural intercourse was exchanged for unnatural intercourse - contrary to the truths revealed in Creation.
- ❖ Paul lists 20 other sins. Sin unleashes a flood of evils which are symptomatic of comprehensive cancer which affects body, mind, heart, and soul of every individual and in community relations. This moral chaos leads to death.
 - Idolatry leads to darkening of the mind AND leads to
 - Immorality leads to breakdown of individual heart, mind, soul AND leads to

- Breakdown in society such that we applaud/approve of each other's sins AND
- ❖ Brings upon us God's wrath/judgment
- ❖ Paul speaks of the "weak in faith" and the "strong" - those observant of diet and calendar and the non-observant. This is a plea for patience and tolerance and to avoid prejudice. Paul addresses both the specific situation in Rome at the time and enunciates general principles:
 - Consider yourselves brothers and sisters
 - Both serve Christ
 - Called to live in harmony through Christlike love
- ❖ Paul is not the Apostle of post-modernism or laissez-faire. It's not "anything goes."
- ❖ Paul addresses the *adiaphora* - the non-essentials. Diet and calendar are not the Gospel.
- ❖ Paul does not advocate: "you do you" or private conscience over revealed Truth. Although these are non-essential issues, he is pastorally concerned for the community as a whole and for the glory of God, which is undercut by this internal strife and is a scandal to believers and non-believers alike.
- ❖ God's righteousness is apart from the Law - distinct from the ethnic manifestation on Sinai
- ❖ Christ manifested God's *hesed* in His sacrificial death - Paul melding obedience and faith
- ❖ God would not allow sins to permanently disrupt His relationship with us
- ❖ God would not ignore sin - the problem had to be dealt with
- ❖ God dealt with the problem of infinite proportions with His Son's gift of infinite love and mercy, faith and obedience
- ❖ We who share in the faith and obedience of Jesus are in right relationship with God
- ❖ Paul calls on Abraham and David to support his claims (two or three witnesses DT 17, 19)
 - Justification is through grace by faith - Abraham, the proof and paradigm of faith
 - Irrespective of circumcision and the Law - the Promise came before the Law
 - Exclusive of pride - Abraham was to be the father of many nations - Gentile and Jew
- ❖ Faith is forward-looking: eschatological in orientation, centered on the resurrection
- ❖ Faith is virtually synonymous with hope - it trusts the promises of God. In the face of Abraham's "dead" body and Sarah's barren womb, Abraham trusted that God would make good on His Promise of life - abundant heirs for Abraham.
 - This foreshadows God raising Jesus from the dead and giving life to all of those who believe.
 - Abraham bears witness to the nature of faith as trust and hope
 - And to the nature of justification: faith in God bringing life from death
 - Abraham received grace, faith, and justification apart from circumcision and the Law
 - While Abraham is Jewish, he is also universal, the father to many nations
 - Paul fulfills the covenant by taking the Gospel to many nations.
- ❖ Paul requires:
 - Multicultural cruciform hospitality which accepts diversity in non-essential matters;
 - Cruciform self-denial for the good of others
 - Praise God through obedience to Christ
 - Burden is on the strong, but the weak have responsibilities as well
- ❖ Bearing others' burdens follows the Master. Loving others is loving Christ. A loving, Christlike community is possible only when all believers follow Christ. "Pleasing others" means building them up in love, not caving in to their whims or affirming them in their sins. He cites Psalm 69, commonly associated with Christ's death: Christ absorbed the insults of those who had insulted God. Jesus freely chose a prayerful attitude of obedience to God; we are called to do likewise.

- ❖ Where sin abounded, grace abounded all the more, creating a reign of grace through justification which leads to eternal life.
- ❖ Just because grace abounded more where more sin is, there is no excuse for sinning just to get more grace! Believers participate in a death like Christ's which inaugurated the reign of grace.
- ❖ As all shared in Adam's sin, all who wish to share in Christ's life and glory must share in His Cross
- ❖ Chapter 6 presents Paul's theology of baptism as the starting point for participation in the New Covenant
- ❖ Paul contrasts pre-baptismal life and post-baptismal life: what must I do after I've been saved in the waters of baptism?
- ❖ Post-baptismal: life in God, our participation in His Divine Nature = cruciform conformity to Christ
- ❖ Life is slavery either to sin or to God, the master to whom they present their bodies
- ❖ Believers have died to sin in Baptism, therefore the justified should not remain in sin. They should present their bodies to God, not to sin
- ❖ Baptism and faith are closely interconnected because the baptized are "in Christ" - conviction and confession brings about **justification** with the promise of future **salvation**
- ❖ Baptism is justification by faith - **justification** is an experience of dying and rising. Resurrection following baptism is to walk in newness of life - a **present** resurrection - which points to a **future** resurrection on the Last Day which completes our baptism and is our **salvation**.
- ❖ Justification is an ongoing process of being dead to sin, sharing in the Cross on the way to our future salvation.
- ❖ Justification through baptism is a present resurrection to newness of life
- ❖ Salvation is a resurrection to eternal life
- ❖ Ethical conclusion: liberated from sin, believers are to avoid sinning. The justified present their bodies to God as an acceptable sacrifice, in service to God - under grace and not under the Law. After baptism, believers must still struggle for sin not to regain mastery over their lives.
- ❖ Baptism cleanses us of sin, but believers must continually conform to Christ - our glorification is conditional on living in Christ, in the Spirit, a sacrificial life of love for God and others.
- ❖ Romans 7:7-25 is one of the most difficult and diversely interpreted texts in this dense and complex letter.
 - Paul pronounces the Law good and holy
 - Paul depicts sin as a force or power which makes use of the Law and enslaves people
 - The "I" of the text experiences a divided self and resultant moral frustration
 - Paul presents Christ as the solution to the dilemma of the "I"
 - Life in the Spirit (chapter 8) is the alternative to life in the flesh (chapter 7)
- ❖ Paul defends the Law as good, even though he's said that believers have died to sin and the Law. The Law cannot bring life (as Jesus does) and cannot empower obedience to it (as the Spirit does). It can only point the way and condemn those who fail to follow it.
- ❖ Paul's diagnosis: men are enslaved to sin and cannot extricate themselves: sin **indwells** people just as God makes His home in the hearts of those who love Him. Because sin lives in man, **sin** does the evil men don't want to do. Sin is not only an external force but an interior master. This is life without the indwelling of God's Spirit = life in the flesh. This does not mean that the body is inherently evil. Through Baptism, the situation can be remedied.

- ❖ People are not exonerated; they have no excuse. Once they have gotten themselves enslaved to sin, they are stuck, “covenantally dysfunctional.” The only solution is the one God provided: the life, death, and Resurrection of Jesus and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.
- ❖ Salvation is the work of the Trinity
- ❖ Spirit of cruciformity in two ways:
 - Puts to death life in the flesh (the indwelling sin) - dying to this indwelling sin
 - Suffering with Christ
- ❖ The Spirit casts out sin and dwells within, giving life to the believer who has died with Christ and risen with Him, and who live in conformity to Him. Believers have the prophetic promise of a new heart and a new Spirit (EZ 36:36-38 and JER 31:31-34)
- ❖ The Spirit delivers what the Law could not: resurrection and life (8:11, 13) - this conviction leads Paul to the metaphor as adopted children and heirs with Christ
- ❖ The present age is one of suffering which cannot compare to the coming future glory (2 COR 4:17)
- ❖ This conforms to Jewish eschatological belief of **messianic woes** - life of tribulation now before the age of eschatological salvation - Psalm 44:22 - suffering is expected of those devoted to God
- ❖ Paul sees these messianic woes in the life of Christ, Who suffered before entering into His glory
- ❖ Life in the Spirit **means** the presence of trials and tribulations, hardships and woes - not the absence
- ❖ Suffering shapes believers into the Image of Christ
- ❖ Suffering does NOT mean that Jesus opposes us. He loves us, as proven by His Incarnation and Paschal Mystery. He intercedes for us with the Spirit and the Father - all three Divine Persons groan with us, suffer with us, and intercede for us. (8:34-35)
- ❖ 8:37 - “in all these things, we are more than conquerors (*hypernikomen*) through Him Who loved us.”
 - Jewish attitude to suffering: endure it; resist and overcome it if possible
 - Stoic attitude to suffering: conquer it - it cannot affect your true inner self.
 - Paul: we conquer suffering because we know God’s love; He is faithful to His covenant with us. Our hope for future glorification is sure as long as we suffer **with Christ**.
 - Therefore, **nothing** can separate us from God’s love and His purpose in Christ for His adopted children.