

## Pauline Letters Outline

### **Paul**

Born in Tarsus (southern Turkey) but moved to Jerusalem to study Jewish Law  
Chief persecutor of the early Christian Church until his conversion  
Becomes “Apostle to the Gentiles” – various missionary journeys around Roman Empire  
First under arrest in Rome in early 60s (number of letters written during this time)  
Acquitted by Roman emperor and allowed to continue missionary work  
Arrested again and executed under Nero between 66 and 68  
Not crucified because illegal for Roman citizen – beheaded  
Body buried in land owned by Christian outside Roman city walls  
Most important/influential Christian in history

### **Typical outline:**

Greeting  
Thanksgiving  
Body  
Travel talk  
Final greetings and blessing

1 Thessalonians (52/53 AD)

2 Thessalonians (52/53 AD)

Focus on end times (eschatology)  
Second coming, resurrection of the dead, final judgment, Antichrist  
Continue to work hard and live holy lives

Galatians (55 AD)

Angriest letter  
Corrects their belief in need for circumcision and Mosaic Laws  
Salvation is not by works of the Mosaic Law but by faith in Jesus Christ  
This main idea may not be relatable to us today, but the deeper issue is important  
Do we rely on our own works or on Christ for salvation?  
“He was a good person...”  
Similar to Romans but more direct – people he had evangelized  
Probably his most personal letter so we can learn more about him

Intro helps explain a lot (1:1-12)

4:4-7 especially poignant – we are adopted sons and daughters by Holy Spirit

5:16-25 – HS guides us against flesh

## 1 Corinthians (56 AD)

Corinth was city of debauchery

Addresses problems in local church including unity, sexual morality, marriage, idol worship, resurrection of the body, and the Eucharist

## 2 Corinthians (57 AD)

Follow-up of previous with emphasis on sexual morality and church discipline

## Romans (58 AD)

Paul writing to make contact with church there before he visits

Longest and greatest theological letter

Good news of Jesus Christ is path to salvation for all – dealing with disunion in church

Outside of Gospels perhaps most influential part of scripture on history of Christianity

Has led to some big divisions among Christians – usually based around “faith alone”

Focus of the letter: Good News of Jesus, way to salvation, for everyone

Everyone has sinned and needs to repent to be saved

Only way to be right with God is faith in Jesus, not by keeping OT laws (3:21-30)

Biggest reason for “faith alone” belief

He is NOT saying “all we need is faith”

He IS saying “salvation is not restricted to those who follow the Mosaic Law”

Answers three possible objections

1: overthrowing OT – but OT itself shows salvation is matter of faith (4:1-5:21)

2: implies we can keep sinning since we don’t have to obey laws – in Jesus we have died to sin and have begun a new life (6:1-7:6)

3: implies OT law was evil – OT law was fine, just not enough (7:7-25)

Chapter 8 is most important

Mosaic Law told us what is right and wrong but didn’t give us power to do it

Crucifixion and Holy Spirit are the power we need

8:17: we need to suffer with Christ so that our love may be proven and purified

Chapters 12-14: how to live lives of humility, love, patience, meekness, kindness, etc.

#### Philemon (59 AD)

Appeal to Philemon to release slave Onesimus so that he can aid Paul in his ministry  
Christian identity as brother and sister in Christ supersedes all other social roles

#### Ephesians (59 AD)

Unique – rather than focusing on problems of particular church, develops theology  
Church's mysterious role in salvation  
Church is Body of Christ and model of marriage and family life

#### Colossians (59 AD)

Similar to Ephesians  
Warning against false teachers focused on Mosaic Law  
Hold on to the perennial truths

#### Philippians (61/62 AD)

Most joyful letter  
Advice on living Christian life and remaining joyful during suffering  
Support each other in face of opposition (1:27-30)  
Qualities of Christians (2:1-4)

#### 1 Timothy (62 AD)/2 Timothy (62 AD)/Titus (62 AD)

“Pastoral” letters to individuals in charge of churches  
Encourages their faith and instructs how to run churches  
Jesus is the one mediator for all and God's plan of salvation for all (1 Tim)  
Holiness essential for Church's ministers and they must be carefully screened (1 Tim, Titus)  
All called to holiness but each according to their life (1 Tim, Titus)  
Necessity for order and discipline within Church  
2 Tim like a “last will” – his last address to his closest disciple  
Especially important: 2:11-13  
Need for perseverance to the end

#### **Next up: Church History Survey**