

Paul's Gospel

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There are two great revelators, or unfolders of Divine Truth in the Bible – Moses and Paul.

Someone may say, “Is not Christ the Great Teacher?” In a sense this is true; but in a real sense Christ is the Person taught about, rather than teaching. The law and the prophets pointed forward to Christ; the epistles point back to Him. Christ Himself, therefore, is the theme of the Bible. Moses reveals human sin, and the utter hopelessness and helplessness of man. Paul in his great epistles reveals Christ as our Righteousness, Sanctification, Redemption, and All in All.

The twelve Apostles were to be the “witnesses” (Acts 1:22) of Christ’s resurrection – that is, the fact of it. They were not to unfold fully the doctrine of it as Paul was.

Just as God chose Moses to be revelator to Israel of all connected with the Law dispensation; so God chose Saul of Tarsus to be the revelator and unfolders of the great body of doctrine for this age; those mighty truths connected with our Lord’s death, burial, and resurrection, and His ascended Person. All the “mysteries” or “secrets” revealed to God’s people in this dispensation by the Holy Ghost are revealed by Paul. Finally, Paul is the unfolders of the great company of God’s elect, called the Church, the Body of Christ, the individuals of which body are called members of the Body of Christ – members of Christ Himself.

No other Apostle speaks of these things. Peter himself had to learn them from Paul (II Peter 3:15-16). It pleased God to choose Paul to be the great proclaimer and revealer of just what the Gospel is for this dispensation.

You can judge any man’s preaching or teaching by this rule – Is he Pauline? Does his doctrine start and finish according to those statements of doctrine uttered by Paul, the apostle?

Paul is the declarer and revealer of the Gospel to us. Paul is the great divinely chosen opener to us of truth for this age.

The great doctrines that Paul reveals may be outlined as follows:

1. **The unrighteousness** before God of all men.
2. **The impossibility of justification by works** before God – that is, of any man’s attaining a standing of righteousness before God, by anything done by him.
3. The fact and the scripturalness of **righteousness on the free gift principle** – that is, of a Divine righteousness, separate from all man’s doings, conferred upon man as a free gift from God.
4. **Propitiation:** That satisfaction of God’s Holy nature and law for man’s sins rendered by Christ’s blood.
5. **Reconciliation:** The removal, by Christ’s death for man of that obstacle to righteousness which man’s sin had set up between God and man.
6. **Justification:** The plan of the actual conferring of the gift of righteousness upon all who believe, without any distinction. The change of a sinner’s standing before God, from one of condemnation to one of righteousness.

Negatively, it is deliverance from guilt on account of Christ’s shed blood, and deliverance out of the old creation, by identification in death with Christ on the cross. Positively, it is a new standing in the risen Christ before God.

7. **Redemption:** the buying back of the soul through the blood of Christ from sin; from the curse of the law, even death, involving exclusion from God, under penalty; from the “power of death,” which involves the hand of the enemy; and from all iniquity.
8. **Forgiveness:** the going forth of Divine tenderness in remitting penalty for sin, in view of the blood of Christ trusted in; and in complacency and fellowship, to creatures who before were necessarily under Divine judgement.
9. **Remission of sins:** that is, the actual removing of transgression or trespass from the sinner, so that for all time and eternity his sin shall not again be upon him.
10. **Identification:** (see above, Justification – #6) the great fact that those who are in Christ were united with Him at the cross, by God’s sovereign inscrutable act; were crucified with Christ and buried with Him; so that their history is now ended before God; and when Christ was raised up as the First-born of the new creation, they also were raised up with Him, and their history began as new creatures in God’s sight, in Christ, the Last Adam.

Of course, in the experience of the believer, there comes a time when he is actually made partaker of this new life – that point of time when he is, as we say, saved. Nevertheless, the life that is in every believer came up out of the tomb, and it is in Christ Jesus that a man is created anew.

11. **Incorporation:** This tremendous doctrine Paul alone mentions, and he makes it practically the foundation of all his exhortations to the saints with regard to their conduct and life. By “incorporation” we mean the fact that all those who are saved and are new creatures in Christ Jesus become members of one organism, which is more real than the very earth we tread upon, called “the Body of Christ” – Christ Himself in heaven being the Head of this Body, and every real believer a member of it.

Believers are thus members one of another here on earth. No wonder Paul is able to exhort the saints to love one another when they are members one of another! (Romans 12, I Corinthians 12, and Ephesians 4).

12. **Inhabitation:** The wonderful fact that the Body of Christ and each member of it individually is inhabited, indwelt, by the Holy Spirit Himself.

This mystery is a great and marvelous one, the fact that we are saved, are partakers now of the life of the Lord in glory, that the Holy Spirit indwells us.

13. **Divine Exhibition** – that is, that through the Church, in the ages to come, is to be made known that which God counts His “riches,” even His Grace (Ephesians 2:7).

The failure or refusal to discern the Pauline Gospel as a separate and new revelation and not a “development from Judaism,” accounts for two-thirds of the confusion in many people’s minds today as regards just what the Gospel is. Paul’s Gospel will suffer no admixture with works on the one hand or religious pretensions and performances on the other. It is as simple and clear as the sunlight from heaven.

The end of man is where God begins Romans 3, at what might be called the opening of the Pauline Revelation. Most unsaved people today believe in their hearts that the reason they are not saved is because of something they have not yet done, some step that remains for them to take before God will accept them. But this is absolutely untrue. When Christ said, “*It is finished,*” He meant that He had, then and there, paid the debt for the whole human race. “*He gave Himself a ransom for all*” (I Timothy 2:6).

Now Paul in his wonderful revelation declares that God hath reconciled the world to Himself; that God was in Christ (at the cross) reconciling the world unto Himself (II Corinthians 5:19). Men do not know this, but they conceive that something stands between them and God, before God will accept or forgive them.

If you tell a man that God is demanding no good works of him whatsoever, no religious observances or church ordinances, that God is not asking him to undertake any duties at all, but that God invites him to believe a glad message that his sins have already been dealt with at the cross, and that God expects him to believe this good news and be exceedingly happy about it – if you tell an unsaved man such a story as this, he is astonished and overwhelmed – yet this is the Gospel!

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