

The Life and Achievements of Paul II

Paul's Life

Pre-Christian	5–34	knowledge of Greek OT — LXX
Christian	34–65	applier not inventor •Revelation from heaven •‘Tradition’ handed Paul from apostles •Gospel sources echoed: Mark, Q, L, M

30 (?) churches in 5 provinces

13 Letters from seven different locations

•From Antioch	Galatians
•From Corinth	1 & 2 Thessalonians
•From Ephesus	Philemon, Colossians, Ephesians, 1 Corinthians
•From Berea	2 Corinthians
•From Corinth	Romans
•From Rome	Philippians, 2 Timothy
•From Mcedonia	1 Timothy, Titus

Strategy

1. To the synagogue first
2. Cross road (Antioch) and ports (Corinth, Ephesus)
3. Chose capable lieutenants — Timothy, Titus, Luke....
4. Inspired local evangelists — e.g., Epaphras
5. Pioneered the pastoral epistle — reinforce traditions, new issues

Paul's Message (as evangelist and pastor)

- Committed to Jesus as the Christ, Son of God, Lord, Saviour.
- Focus: crucifixion of Son of God for forgiveness of sins, redemption.
- Responded to by faith, not “works of the law”.
- Message to Jews: Jesus is the Messiah, has fulfilled Law & prophets.
- Message to Gentiles: Turn from idols to serve the Living God, await his resurrected Son from heaven.

Paul's inner life

- Paul, a man of prayer and an encourager of prayer.
- Blessed by the Spirit of God; much teaching on the Spirit of God.
- Loyalty and love from his mission lieutenants, including women.

Paul's use of 'traditions' (rote learned 'blocks' of teaching
 "Traditions" part of rabbi-culture: in Mishnah covered whole of life

Delivered "traditions" to churches he founded (counter-cultural):

- "Received traditions" —
 - Lord's Supper "tradition", Easter "tradition".
 - second coming
 - payment of ministers
- Paul's "traditions":
 - marriage and family life
 ("house tables" — Ephesians, Colossians)
 - sexuality
 - work (his own example)
 - alcohol (frequency of alcohol; not seen as an evil)
 - respect for "powers that be [i.e., Emperor]".

Keys to OT: Gen 15:6 ("A. believed God...righteousness")
 not Genesis 17 (circumcision).

Also Gen 12:1–3
 "In you all families of the earth blessed"
 (faith not works of the law).

Membership

- Importance of *membership*, exercise of "gifts" for up-building of members: others-centred ("love") — permeates whole of 1 Cor
- Faith-in-Christ expressed in love and humility,

The imitation-of-Christ:

- “just as I try to please everyone in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, that they may be saved. Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ — 1 Cor. 10:31–11:1.
- “Let each...please his neighbour...to build him up. For Christ did not please himself — Rom. 15:2–3.
- “Have this mind in you...he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross”—Phil. 2:8.

Paul’s aim: a church filled with Christ-like members

Paul’s multi-ethnic vision

- Ultimate re-inclusion of the Jews: Romans 11
- The vision of inclusion of Jews, Gentiles, Barbarians — humanity.
Alexander’s vision: *homonoia* by force
Paul’s vision — through the gospel:
“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3:28).

Things Paul opposed:

<i>triumphalism</i>	— 2 Cor. 11-12 (rather, humility),
<i>elitism</i>	— 1 Cor. 4 (rather, service),
<i>legalism</i>	— Galatians (rather, freedom).

The discerning Christian mind:

Much that was noble	—ethics of Seneca
Much that was beautiful	— cities like Aphrodisias, Ephesus
Much that was ugly	— brutal to enemies (Caesar Gaul); crucifixion of slaves

“...whatever is true...honourable...just...pure...lovely...commendable, if there is any excellence...anything worthy of praise, think about these things”. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you (Phil 4:8–9).

Achievements

Planted seeds of Christianity that grew into the Christianity of the Eastern Empire. Importance of John in Ephesus — cathedral of John)

Dignity of *individual* therefore human rights (Siedentop, 2014)

Implied rejection of slavery — metaphors (For freedom Christ..)

Separation of church and state — yet prayer, respect, taxes

Importance of marriage and family: biological children

No to ‘political’ adoption (Tiberius – Augustus’ adopted)

No to abortion — evidence from sewers

No to ‘exposure’ of children — for prostitution, begging

Work-ethic, including Paul’s sacrificial example

Women colleagues — Priscilla, Junias, Chloe, Lydia, Euodia,
Syntyche, Phoebe, Mary

In all the churches: women praying, prophesying (1 C. 11:5)

Tom Holland: society with Paul’s values,
or brutality & corruption of Rome?

Corpus of remarkable literature

- the most widely heard voice from Graeco-Roman antiquity
- unique body of literature (i.e., letters) revealing culture of Judaism, Graeco-Roman cities
 - For example, life in Corinth — wisdom oratory, temple worship, cult prostitution, patronage, fierce competition
- Identified the teaching of Jesus, as applied to pastoral situations

Closeness of Paul to Jesus:

First Easter	33
Earliest letter: Galatians	48
Span of letter writing	48–65

Paul puts a ring fence around Jesus.

Where there’s smoke (Paul’s letters) there’s fire (resurrection)