

2 Corinthians

11:1-4

The importance of
Paul's letters

The 100:
A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History
by Michael H. Hart

1. Muhammad
2. Isaac Newton
3. **Jesus Christ**
4. Buddha
5. Confucius
6. **St. Paul**

Western Civilization



The
Christian
Church

St. Paul = definition, dissemination

Jesus Christ = inspiration

2 Corinthians 11

“I wish that you would bear with me in a little foolishness; but indeed you are bearing with me.”

Paul is embarrassed to have to defend his spiritual authority.

2 Corinthians 12:11

“I have become foolish; you yourselves compelled me. Actually I should have been commended by you, for in no respect was I inferior to the most eminent apostles, even though I am a nobody.”

Point #1

The authority of Paul's teaching is vital to our understanding of the Gospel.

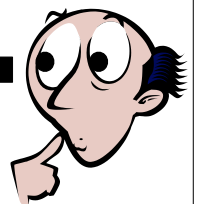
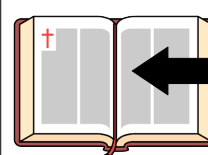
THE GOSPEL STORY



Old Testament

Gospels

Epistles

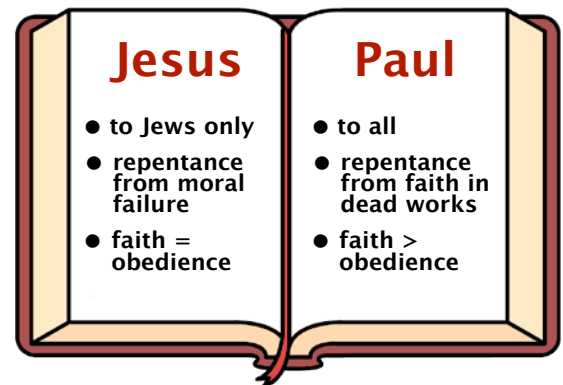


We interpret the
Scriptures through lenses.

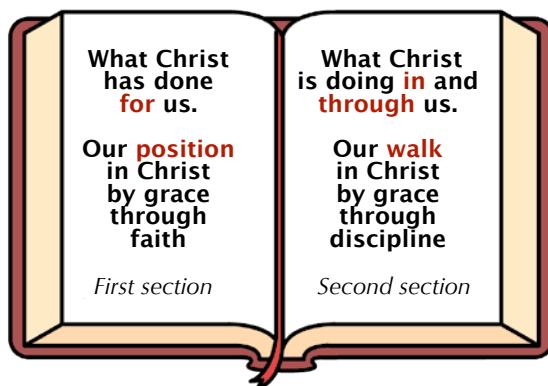
Paul's Gospel has a different emphasis than Jesus' Gospel.



The Gospel of Jesus & Paul



The pattern of Paul's letters



The order is consistent and significant

Paul's Gospel comes from the mind of Christ through the Spirit.

1 Corinthians 2

"¹² Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things freely given to us by God, ¹³ which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words. . . . ¹⁶ For *who has known the mind of the Lord, that he should instruct Him?* **But we have the mind of Christ.**"

Paul's Gospel represents a new revelation.

Ephesians 3:3-5

"that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, . . . which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit;"

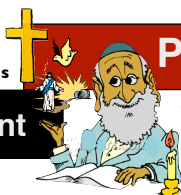
Acts - Epistles

Paul's Gospel

Old Testament - Gospels

Old Covenant

"The Body of Christ"



2 Corinthians 11

"² **For I am jealous** for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin."

Ephesians 5:25-27

"²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her; ²⁶ that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ²⁷ **that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be holy and blameless.**"

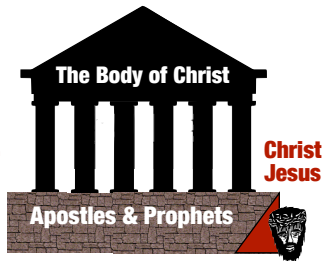
Point #2

The epistles of Paul are vital to our preparation as a bride.

Ephesians 2:20-21

“having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner-stone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord.”

The epistles of Paul are the foundation of Christian theology.



The epistles of Paul teach us about Body Life (church) function.

Ephesians 4

“¹¹ And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, ¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; ¹³ until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. . . . ¹⁶ from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.”



The epistles of Paul teach us the importance of faith based on sound doctrine.

2 Corinthians 11

Eve's mistakes

- 1. Doubt the messenger?**
- 2. Follow what looks good?**

“³ But I am afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds should be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.”

2 Corinthians 11

“³ But I am afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds should be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ. ⁴ For if one comes and preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you bear this beautifully.”

Point #3

The epistles of Paul are vital to our protection as sheep.

Nearly every cult or digression from Christian orthodoxy involves departure from Paul's teaching on grace.

Romans 8:15

“For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.”

Romans 14:17

“For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit,”

2 Corinthians 3:17

“Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.”

Distortion of grace is desertion from Christ, the Spirit, and the Gospel

Galatians 1

“⁶ I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel; ⁷ which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you, and want to distort the gospel of Christ. ⁸ But even though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed.”

2 Corinthians 11

“4 For if one comes and preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you bear this beautifully.”

Which Jesus?
(Before or after the Cross)
Which spirit?
(Slavery or Freedom)
Which Gospel?
(My righteousness or His)

***What poses a threat
to the Gospel of Grace?***

- ✓ **New Covenant as an expression of the Old Covenant.**
- ✓ **Jesus only as an Old Covenant prophet.**
- ✓ **Grace applied through us and not for us.**

Lessons in response

- ✓ **Correctly divide the Word of Truth.**
- ✓ **Be sure that the grace of the Gospel is “really” gracious.**
- ✓ **Distinguish between the centrality of Jesus’ life / teaching and his death / resurrection.**
- ✓ **Our story involves us but is not centered on us.**