

Paul's gospel

The record of the conversion of Saul of Tarsus (Paul) is sandwiched between Acts 7, the stoning of Stephen and Acts 10, Peter unlocking the kingdom gates to the household of Cornelius, a Gentile. There's need to be a *Bookmarker* placed at Acts 9; Saul's conversion.

Prelude to Paul's Gospel

The kingdom was first offered to Israel through the ministry of John the Baptist and was soon later carried forth by Jesus and His disciples. The cross was a stumbling block along the way, but the kingdom was once again offered afterwards.

Matthew 3:1-2 In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, 2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

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- preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying
- Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand

Matthew 4:17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

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Acts 1:6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

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Acts 3:19-20 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; 20 And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you:

- Repent ye therefore, and be converted
- And he shall send Jesus Christ
- which before was preached unto you

Stephen was stoned because of an indictment he preached against the house of Israel, that appeared to be rejecting the kingdom gospel, originally initiated by John the Baptist.

Acts 7:51-52 Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. 52 Which of the prophets have

not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers:

- Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears
- ye do always resist the Holy Ghost
- as your fathers did, so do ye
- Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted?
- they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One
- of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers

This rejection appears to be a turning point in Israel's acceptance or rejection of the highly anticipated reestablishment of the kingdom under their Messiah as prophesied.

A Twist of Sorts

Another twist, of sorts, was when Peter was commissioned to go to a Gentile household, whose attitude was exactly the opposite of those, whom just stoned Stephen.

Acts 10:1-2 There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band, 2 A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway.

- A devout man
- one that feared God with all his house
- which gave much alms to the people
- and prayed to God always

This was, at first, contrary to Peter's way of thinking regarding the proper sequence in which the kingdom gospel would spread. Peter actually asked for what purpose he was summoned!

Acts 10:28-29 And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean. 29 Therefore came I unto you without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent for: I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me?

- Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company
- or come unto one of another nation
- I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me?

Another authority was being raised up in the background with a gospel that would change everything! A gospel of repentance that reached out to the Jew and the nation of Israel was going to be trumped by a gospel that was directly tied to this new authority, Paul the apostle to the Gentiles.

Paul opens the book of Romans referencing himself as being a servant of Jesus Christ and an apostle separated unto the Gospel of God, in accordance to prophecy. Paul ends his epistle with special emphasis on his gospel. That Paul had a gospel and authority specifically issued to him is a clear and constant theme seen throughout his writings, shown as follows.

Paul's Gospel & Authority

Romans 16:25 Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,

- my gospel

Galatians 1:11-12 But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. 12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

- the gospel
- which was preached of me

Galatians 2:2 And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain.

- that gospel
- which I preach among the Gentiles

Galatians 2:7 But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter;

- gospel of the uncircumcision
- was committed unto me

1 Corinthians 15:1-4 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; 2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. 3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; 4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

- I declare unto you the gospel
- which I preached unto you
- what I preached unto you

- For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received
- how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures
- And that he was buried
- and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures

Colossians 1:23 If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;

- the hope of the gospel
- which ye have heard
- whereof I Paul am made a minister

Romans 2:16 In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel

- God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ
- according to my gospel

Focus on forgiveness of sins, in early Acts, is towards the nation of Israel only, until an eye-opening encounter between Peter and the Gentile household of Cornelius, in Acts 10. It is then through the ministry of Paul, where we learn that Christ died for all (both Jew and Gentile), to be manifested in due time via Paul... "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; 4 Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. 5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; 6 Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. 7 Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity." **1 Timothy 2:3-7**

- Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth
- there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus
- Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time
- Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity

From Whom Did Paul Receive His Gospel?

Being that Paul's gospel was unique, the question then arises... "From whom did Paul receive his gospel?" The answer to this question couldn't be clearer. In fact, in Galatians we're not only told from Whom he received it, but also from who he didn't receive it!

Galatians 1:11-12 But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. 12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

- that the gospel which was preached of me
- is not after man
- For I neither received it of man
- neither was I taught it
- but by the revelation of Jesus Christ

Galatians 1:15-16 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:

- who separated me from my mother's womb
- called me by his grace
- To reveal his Son in me
- that I might preach him among the heathen
- immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood

Obviously, Paul didn't get his gospel from John the Baptist and it is just as obvious that he didn't get it from Ananias or the Twelve! As the Twelve were commissioned under the earthly ministry of Christ, Paul was commissioned and given his gospel directly from the heavenly positioned Christ (Acts 9:3).

This explains why, after fourteen years, Paul goes directly to the Apostles at Jerusalem intentionally bypassing bystanders.

Galatians 2:1-2 Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also. And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain.

- fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem
- I went up by revelation
- communicated unto them
- privately to them which were of reputation

Life experience: A lesson learned is that, if at all possible, teach the uniqueness of Paul's gospel to those who are in authority, for in doing so, there's more potential of reaching many more with pertinent truth. Unfortunately, many sheep long to be fed, but sit under ministries and shepherds that are ignorant regarding Pauline truth.

Peter's Recognition of Paul's Gospel & Authority

In anticipation and proclamation of the kingdom at hand, the Twelve were proclaiming Israel's Messiah, according to prophecy, ever since the day of Pentecost. As time lapsed and delay was becoming more evident, Peter began to recognize not only a delay, but also change in how God was justifying both Jew and Gentile. Peter's unexpected call upon the Gentiles, in Acts 10, and future encounters with Paul, led Peter to conclusions seen in several of Peter's responses.

Acts 15:11 But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.

- But we believe
- that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ
- we shall be saved
- even as they

2 Peter 3:15-16 And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; 16 As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.

- longsuffering of our Lord is salvation
- even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him
- hath written unto you
- in which are some things hard to be understood

2 Peter 3:18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

- But grow in grace
- and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ

Where's the Logic in the NIV?

God was dealing with the nation of Israel, on the principle of 'by faith', under the Apostles' early Acts ministry. The NIV fails to see any distinction between the Apostles' ministry and gospel to that of Paul's, as demonstrated throughout this Theme Study and being proved here. In a KJB, Peter is admitting change from past perspective to present. The NIV recognizes no change in confounding 'through the grace of our Lord Jesus', as to how God was actually justifying the Jew during Acts under the kingdom gospel.

Acts 15:11 (KJV) But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.

- we shall be saved
- even as they

Acts 15:11 (NIV) No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are."

- we are saved
- just as they are

Where's the logic behind the NIV? Which came first, the chicken or the egg? The chicken being the Jew and the egg the Gentile. The kingdom offer was to the nation of Israel beginning with John the Baptist and carried through the Gospel's and early Acts' period. If a change was taking place, it's important to note the sequence in comparing the tenses used... 'shall be', in contrast to 'we are'. There are other important distinctions pointed out, in demonstrating this transition, covered in other chapters that deal with Peter's visit to the household of Cornelius.

It was necessary for Peter to come to understanding of what God was doing through Paul and various circumstances delaying the return of Christ in establishing the kingdom back to Israel. It was even more important in conveying these truths to the circumcision who were accountable to Peter. Paul, bypassing those Jewish Christians ministered to by the Apostles, went straight to Jerusalem, by revelation, to communicate what God was doing among the Gentiles through his gospel. If the Apostles were to hear rumored of this other gospel, supposedly being proclaimed by one who was once a great persecutor of the church, I'm sure there would have been less acceptance of Paul on behalf of the Apostles. In fact, Paul was held accountable, in Acts 21, of rumors that were being spread around.

This 'grace', became a topic in Peter's first epistle written to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia... "Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. 10 Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you:" **1Peter 1:9-10**

Paul's gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, remains much of a mystery today!

Unfortunately, most religious leaders and denominational preachers and teachers are so bound by By-Laws and Statements of Faith, that they can't afford to break with the traditions and teachings of the church. Too often, church division is the result of sheep coming to truth before the shepherd. Truth that sets the sheep free, chains the gates that protect denominational doctrine and tradition.