

The Commitment of Paul: Christ and Him Crucified
1 Corinthians 2:1-5

I. Paul

A. Why Paul and why now?

1. Preparing for our study of Romans
 - a. Inspired revelation of the Person and purpose of God in Jesus Christ
 - b. Inspiration through a man named Paul
 - (1) God chooses to work through human beings
 - (a) Who have personalities
 - (b) Who have strengths and weaknesses
 - (c) Who have experiences and histories
 - (d) Who have skills and talents
 - (e) Who bring who they are and what they are to the task of faith and obedience
 - (2) God does not bypass the person He created to do the work through them he calls them to do
 - c. Appreciating the message of Romans includes understanding the man who, inspired by the Holy Spirit, wrote the letter
 - (1) Paul's personality development
 - (2) Paul's experience
 - (a) Prior to Christ
 - (b) In Christ
2. **Who is this man God chose to write the Spirit-inspired word of God to the Christian at Rome in the late 1st century AD?**

B. The Outline of Paul

1. The Conversion of Paul (Acts 9)
 - a. Paul's conversion
 - (1) What Paul was
 - (2) Who Paul encountered
 - (3) How Paul changed
 - b. Have we had a life changing, heart transforming, spirit renewing encounter with Jesus Christ ourselves at the hand of God resulting in faith and ongoing obedience to Christ?
2. The Confession of Paul
 - a. **Galatians 2:20 (ESV) *I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.***
 - (1) A confession is a one sentence summary of life up to this moment
 - (2) Paul confesses that up to the moment of writing Galatians, he is, himself, as a dead man and it is Christ who lives in and through him.

- b. **2 Corinthians 5:17 (ESV) *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.***
 - (1) “In Christ”
 - (a) Called by God to faith in Christ
 - (b) Living obedience to Christ through the indwelling Holy Spirit
 - (2) Such a person, by the will and through the work of God, is a new creation.
 - (a) The old life of selfish pursuit passes away
 - (b) The new life of Christ-centered pursuit of the glory of God has come
 - (c) The old life of sin passes away
 - (d) The new life of holiness ensues
 - (e) The old life of mine passes away
 - (f) The new life of Christ begins
 - c. We faced the question of our own confession
 - (1) If we could summarize our lives with one sentence, how would that sentence read?
 - (2) If we could reduce our lives to one word, what would that word be?
 - (a) Would it be Christ?
 - (b) Would it be self?
3. The Commitment of Paul
- a. **1 Corinthians 2:2 (ESV) *For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.***
 - b. Paul, writing to the Corinthian Christians about the wisdom of God, reminds them of his commitment during his time with them.
4. The Counsel of Paul (2 Timothy 1:8-14)
- a. Paul’s final letter
 - b. Paul’s personal charge to Timothy
- C. Findings so far
- 1. If you look at Paul, explore his heart, examine his thinking, scour his actions, analyze his experiences, they all come up Jesus.
 - 2. **So, in reference to Romans, expect Jesus!**

II. The Commitment of Paul

A. Paul’s Commitment Stated

- 1. **1 Corinthians 2:2 (ESV) For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.**
- 2. We state our commitments as eagerly as Paul
 - a. Mike - committed to running and good health
 - b. MJ - committed to crafts and canning
 - c. Others
 - (1) Advocacy
 - (2) Community service

- (3) Philosophical reflection
- (4) Cooking
- (5) Problem solving
- (6) Grumbling and complaining

3. **Paul's commitment in the midst of the diverse social, religious, political culture of Corinth was to remain absolutely focused on Christ and the cross.**

B. Paul's Commitment Examined

1. In the context of 1 Corinthians

- a. The discussion is on the wisdom of God in the gospel as opposed to the wisdom of men in the world
 - (1) The wisdom of God appears foolish to men wise in the world
 - (a) Who in their right mind would send their hero, their champion to die for their enemies?
 - (b) What good, after all, is a dead hero?
 - (2) **Paul declares that Jesus Christ, crucified, is the wisdom of God!**
- b. **Paul commits to facing every opportunity, every discussion, every teaching, every debate, all of life in every moment in the gospel truth that God came in human flesh and having lived a sinless life, died on the cross in our place, on our behalf. So that in Him we might have forgiveness of sin and the gift of eternal life.**
 - (1) Of all that things that could be taught, should be taught, must be taught, Paul brings them all around to Jesus and God's purpose to save the world through the life, death, and resurrection of His Son!
 - (2) Everything Paul says and does centers in and on the gospel of crucified and risen Christ.

2. A more concentrated examination

- a. The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, as God's plan for redeeming lost sinners from slavery to sin and restoring them, reconciling them to favor with Himself, is the central theme of Paul's life and ministry.
- b. **So what does Paul mean when he commits to knowing nothing among the Corinthians than "Jesus Christ and Him crucified"?**
 - (1) Paul means that Jesus is the God given evidence of His love
 - (a) **John 3:16 (ESV) "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."**
 - (2) Paul means that Jesus alone has the message of saving grace
 - (a) **John 6:68 (ESV) Simon Peter answered him,**

“Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life,

- (3) Paul means that Jesus is the only means of salvation from the curse of death
 - (a) **John 8:24 (ESV)** *I told you that you would die in your sins, for unless you believe that I am he you will die in your sins.”*
- (4) Paul means that Jesus is the only Savior
 - (a) **Acts 4:12 (ESV)** *And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”*
 - (b) There is no other name
 - i) Not Buddha
 - ii) Not Allah or Mohammed
 - iii) Not Hare Krishna
 - iv) Not Jehovah of the witnesses
 - v) Not you or me in our own efforts
 - (c) One name of one man, God in human flesh, the God-man Jesus Christ
- (5) Paul means there is only one gospel
 - (a) **1 Corinthians 3:11 (ESV)** *For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*
 - (b) All hope of eternal life is built entirely and solely upon the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ

III. Paul’s Commitment Calls for A Response

A. Priority Response

- 1. Put your faith in Jesus Christ and make Him the commitment of your life!
- 2. Today is the day of salvation; now is the appointed time

B. Subsequent Response

- 1. Examine your commitment
 - a. Is Jesus merely one among many?
 - b. Is Jesus the commitment to which all other commitments yield?
- 2. End the day of mixed messages in your life