

Pauline Paradoxes (NAS95)

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I. The need to study—2Tim 2:15; 3:16-17

2Ti 2:15* Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.
 2Ti 3:16* All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;
 2Ti 3:17* so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

- A. There is a vast difference between the teaching of a passage and its application. Interpretation may apply only to Israel, or to a particular individual. Application has to do with finding what it may mean to me in my life or the lives of others. God told Hosea to marry a harlot. This is not a command to me or you. Our lesson is that we obey God whatever he may command.
- B. These paradoxes regard our life and future. Salvation is always by the sovereign grace of God and is manifested first by faith in the work of Christ on the cross.

II. Some paradoxes when we compare Paul with others

| Important Question | Answer outside of Paul (some in early letters) | Answer in Paul's Letters |
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| Where do we spend the future? | Mt 5:5 (on earth) <u>Mt 5:5</u> * "Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth. | Phil 3:20 (in heaven) <u>Php 3:20</u> * For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; |
| Are there Jewish Christians? | Ja 1:1 (yes, here is a letter addressed to them) <u>Jas 1:1</u> * James, a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad: Greetings. | Eph 3:6; Gal 3:28 (absolutely not) <u>Eph 3:6</u> * <i>to be specific</i> , that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel, <u>Ga 3:28</u> * There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. |
| Are Jews and Gentiles equal? | Mt 15:24 (not in the ministry of Christ while here on the earth) <u>Mt 15:24</u> * But He answered and said, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." | Gal 3:28; Eph 3:6 (absolutely yes) |
| How many baptisms are there? | Heb 6:2 (many like the law-9:10) <u>Heb 6:2</u> * of instruction about washings and laying on of hands, and the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment. | Eph 4:5 (only one-[which one]) <u>Eph 4:4</u> * <i>There is</i> one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; <u>Eph 4:5</u> * one Lord, one faith, one baptism, <u>Eph 4:6</u> * one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all. |

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| <p>Whom do we follow?</p> | <p>Matt 23:1-3 (those in Moses' seat) <u>Mt 23:1</u>* Then Jesus spoke to the crowds and to His disciples, <u>Mt 23:2</u>* saying: "The scribes and the Pharisees have seated themselves in the chair of Moses; <u>Mt 23:3</u>* therefore all that they tell you, do and observe, but do not do according to their deeds; for they say <i>things</i> and do not do <i>them</i>.</p> | <p>Phil 3:17; 4:9 (Paul) <u>Php 3:17</u>* Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us. <u>Php 4:9</u>* The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.</p> |
| <p>Are there examples of this?</p> <p>This is an example of Paul's Two Ministries</p> | <p>Acts 21:26 (animal sacrifices for the Jews during Acts) <u>Ac 21:26</u>* Then Paul took the men, and the next day, purifying himself along with them, went into the temple giving notice of the completion of the days of purification, until the sacrifice was offered for each one of them.</p> | <p>Col 2:10-16 (believer is ceremonially complete in Christ—there are none for him to follow) <u>Col 2:10</u>* and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority; <u>Col 2:11</u>* and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; <u>Col 2:12</u>* having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. <u>Col 2:13</u>* When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, <u>Col 2:14</u>* having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. <u>Col 2:15</u>* When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him. <u>Col 2:16</u>* Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day--</p> |

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| <p>Paul's Two Ministries</p> <p>Acts Period: Body and Israel</p> <p>After Acts: Body Only</p> | <p><u>1 Cor 9:19</u>* ¶ For though I am free from all <i>men</i>, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I may win more. <u>20</u>* To the Jews I became as a Jew, so that I might win Jews; to those who are under the Law, as under the Law though not being myself under the Law, so that I might win those who are under the Law; <u>21</u>* to those who are without law, as without law, though not being without the law of God but under the law of Christ, so that I might win those who are without law. <u>22</u>* To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak; I have become all things to all men, so that I may by all means save some. <u>23</u>* I do all things for the sake of the gospel, so that I may become a fellow partaker of it.</p> <p>1 Cor 10: <u>31</u>* Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. <u>32</u>* Give no offense either to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God; <u>33</u>* just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit but the <i>profit</i> of the many, so that they may be saved.</p> | <p><u>Phil 3: 1</u>* ¶ Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things <i>again</i> is no trouble to me, and it is a safeguard for you. <u>2</u>* Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the false circumcision; <u>3</u>* for we are the <i>true</i> circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh,</p> <p><u>4</u>* ¶ although I myself might have confidence even in the flesh. If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more: <u>5</u>* circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee; <u>6</u>* as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless. <u>7</u>* But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. <u>8</u>* More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ,</p> |
| <p>Is there another example of this?</p> | <p>At 15:5 (These believers taught that circumcision was needed for believers.)</p> <p><u>Ac 15:5</u>* But some of the sect of the Pharisees who had believed stood up, saying, “It is necessary to circumcise them and to direct them to observe the Law of Moses.”</p> | <p>Gal 2:3; 5:2 (ritualistic circumcision forbidden [medical reasons are a different matter])</p> <p><u>Ga 2:3</u>* But not even Titus, who was with me, though he was a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised.</p> <p><u>Ga 5:2</u>* Behold I, Paul, say to you that if you receive circumcision, Christ will be of no benefit to you.</p> |

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| <p>What do we do when we are sick?</p> | <p>Ja 5:15, 16 (call the elders and be healed by prayers of righteous men) <u>Ja 5:15*</u> and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him. <u>Ja 5:16*</u> Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.</p> | <p>1Ti 5:23 (physical remedies); 2Co 12:7-10 (prayers not always effectual) <u>1Ti 5:23*</u> No longer drink water <i>exclusively</i>, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments. <u>2Co 12:7*</u> Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me--to keep me from exalting myself! <u>2Co 12:8*</u> Concerning this I implored the Lord three times that it might leave me. <u>2Co 12:9*</u> And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. <u>2Co 12:10*</u> Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.</p> |
| <p>Is prayer always effectual? (note: in scripture—for God to hear a prayer is to grant the request)</p> | <p>Ja 5:15, 16; Mt 21:22 (the answer is yes if the person is a righteous man) <u>Mt 21:22*</u> "And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive."</p> | <p>2Co 12:7-10 (an apostle heard 'no') Ro 8:26 (we don't even know what to pray for) <u>Ro 8:26*</u> In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words;</p> |
| <p>Where do we begin the witness?</p> | <p>At 1:8; 11:19 (Jerusalem, etc.) <u>Ac 1:8*</u> but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth." <u>Ac 11:19*</u> So then those who were scattered because of the persecution that occurred in connection with Stephen made their way to Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except to Jews alone.</p> | <p>2Co 5:20 (everywhere) <u>2Co 5:20*</u> Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.</p> |

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| <p>Who opened the door of faith to Gentiles?</p> | <p>At 10:-34-35-; 11:19 (Peter did) <u>Ac 10:34*</u> Opening his mouth, Peter said: “I most certainly understand <i>now</i> that God is not one to show partiality, <u>Ac 10:35*</u> but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him. <u>Ac 11:19*</u> So then those who were scattered because of the persecution that occurred in connection with Stephen made their way to Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except to Jews alone.</p> | <p>At 14:27 (Paul did) <u>Ac 14:27*</u> When they had arrived and gathered the church together, they <i>began</i> to report all things that God had done with them and how He had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles.</p> |
| <p>Are angels superior to believers?</p> | <p>Mt 28:7; At 1:11; 5:19, 20 (yes) <u>Mt 28:7*</u> “Go quickly and tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead; and behold, He is going ahead of you into Galilee, there you will see Him; behold, I have told you.” <u>Ac 1:11*</u> They also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.” <u>Ac 5:19*</u> But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the gates of the prison, and taking them out he said, <u>Ac 5:20*</u> “Go, stand and speak to the people in the temple the whole message of this Life.”</p> | <p>1Co 6:3 (of course not) <u>1Co 6:3*</u> Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more matters of this life?</p> |
| <p>Did the truth come through angels?</p> | <p>At 7:53; Gal 3:19 (of course) <u>Ac 7:53*</u> you who received the law as ordained by angels, and <i>yet</i> did not keep it.” <u>Ga 3:19*</u> Why the Law then? It was added because of transgressions, having been ordained through angels by the agency of a mediator, until the seed would come to whom the promise had been made.</p> | <p>Eph 3:10 (they learn the truth through the church) <u>Eph 3:10*</u> so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly <i>places</i>.</p> |

III. Further questions and problems

| Passage | Problem |
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| Gal 2:2 | <p>If they preached the same message, why did Paul go privately? <u>Ga 2:2*</u> It was because of a revelation that I went up; and I submitted to them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but <i>I did so</i> in private to those who were of reputation, for fear that I might be running, or had run, in vain.</p> |

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| Ro 11:25-29 | <p>If God is forever through with Israel, what is the point of this entire passage? Remember the context includes Romans 9-11</p> <p><u>Ro 11:25*</u> For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery--so that you will not be wise in your own estimation--that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in;</p> <p><u>Ro 11:26*</u> and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, "THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION, HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB."</p> <p><u>Ro 11:27*</u> "THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM, WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS."</p> <p><u>Ro 11:28*</u> From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint of <i>God's</i> choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers;</p> <p><u>Ro 11:29*</u> for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.</p> |
| Acts 2:16-21 | <p>Why has there been a gap in the fulfillment of this prophecy?</p> <p><u>Ac 2:16*</u> but this is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel:</p> <p><u>Ac 2:17*</u> 'AND IT SHALL BE IN THE LAST DAYS,' God says, 'THAT I WILL POUR FORTH OF MY SPIRIT ON ALL MANKIND; AND YOUR SONS AND YOUR DAUGHTERS SHALL PROPHECY, AND YOUR YOUNG MEN SHALL SEE VISIONS, AND YOUR OLD MEN SHALL DREAM DREAMS;</p> <p><u>Ac 2:18*</u> EVEN ON MY BONDSLAVES, BOTH MEN AND WOMEN, I WILL IN THOSE DAYS POUR FORTH OF MY SPIRIT And they shall prophesy.</p> <p><u>Ac 2:19*</u> 'AND I WILL GRANT WONDERS IN THE SKY ABOVE AND SIGNS ON THE EARTH BELOW, BLOOD, AND FIRE, AND VAPOR OF SMOKE.</p> <p><u>Ac 2:20*</u> 'THE SUN WILL BE TURNED INTO DARKNESS AND THE MOON INTO BLOOD, BEFORE THE GREAT AND GLORIOUS DAY OF THE LORD SHALL COME.</p> <p><u>Ac 2:21*</u> 'AND IT SHALL BE THAT EVERYONE WHO CALLS ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.'</p> |