

The gospel according to Paul

- I. The Bad News
 - a. Sin (Mankind in general and Israel in particular - Gen 3; Romans 1-3; Eph 2:1-3)
 - b. Division/Separation
 - i. Between God and man (Col 1:21; Rom 5:10)
 - ii. Between man and man / Jew and Gentile (Gen 11; Eph 2:11-13)
 - c. Judgment
 - i. Already manifest (in Gentiles - Rom 1:18-32; in Jews - Exile)
 - ii. Future judgment coming (Acts 17:31; Rom 2:5)
- II. The Promises
 - a. God would crush the head of the serpent (Gen 3:15)
 - b. God would make a great nation out of Abraham, and through his seed bring blessing to the whole earth (Gen 15)
 - c. God would restore Israel from exile and he would make a new covenant with his people, wiping away their sins, and writing his law on their hearts
 - i. (Jer 31:31-34) “Indeed, a time is coming,” says the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and Judah. It will not be like the old covenant that I made with their ancestors when I delivered them from Egypt. For they violated that covenant, even though I was like a faithful husband to them,” says the LORD. “But I will make a new covenant with the whole nation of Israel after I plant them back in the land,” says the LORD. “I will put my law within them and write it on their hearts and minds. I will be their God and they will be my people. “People will no longer need to teach their neighbors and relatives to know me. For all of them, from the least important to the most important, will know me,” says the LORD. “For I will forgive their sin and will no longer call to mind the wrong they have done.”
 - d. God would raise up a King from the line of David who would rule the nations, and his kingdom would never end
 - i. (Isa 9:6-7) For a child has been born to us, a son has been given to us. He shoulders responsibility and is called: Extraordinary Strategist, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His dominion will be vast and he will bring immeasurable prosperity. He will rule on David’s throne and over David’s kingdom, establishing it and strengthening it by promoting justice and fairness, from this time forward and forevermore. The LORD’s intense devotion to his people will accomplish this.
 - e. Hyper-Reductionist summary of the gospel: All the promises of God find their yes in Christ Jesus (2 Cor 1:20)
- III. Crucifixion (Christ died)
 - a. Background
 - i. Method of execution
 1. Think “electric chair” but with an extended period of excruciating pain and public humiliation, followed by a slow death
 2. Reserved for the most egregious crimes.
 3. Romans citizens were exempt from it.
 4. Reserved for criminals of the lowest status in society. Considered effective in countering resistance in the provinces.

- a. Jesus' claim to be the Son of God, and thus King of the Jews, would fall under this last category (John 18:37; John 19:12)
 - ii. There was nothing stoic or admirable about it. Due to the brutality of the practice, it represented nothing but shame, humiliation, and death.
 - iii. For a Jew, if someone was crucified, it meant they were cursed by God (Deut. 21:22-23).
 - iv. Thus the dilemma of a religion founded on an oxymoron: A crucified Messiah?
- b. For Paul, the cross accomplished:
 - i. Condemnation
 - 1. At the cross, God condemned sin in Christ (Rom 8:3; 2 Cor 5:21; Gal 3:13)
 - 2. Therefore, there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ (Rom 8:1)
 - 3. Through the cross, Christ condemned "rulers and authorities of this age, and made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in the cross" (Col 2:15)
 - ii. Redemption
 - 1. From slavery to sin and death (Rom 6; Titus 2:14)
 - 2. Forgiveness of sin (Eph 1:7-10; Col 1:14; 2:13-15)
 - a. (Col 2:13-14) And even though you were dead in your transgressions and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, he nevertheless made you alive with him, having forgiven all your transgressions. He has destroyed what was against us, a certificate of indebtedness expressed in decrees opposed to us. He has taken it away by nailing it to the cross.
 - 3. From the curse of the law (Gal 3:13)
 - iii. Reconciliation
 - 1. Between Jew and Gentile (Eph 2:14-18)
 - 2. Between God and man (Romans 5:10-11; 2 Cor 5:18-19)
 - 3. Of all things in heaven and earth (Col 1:20)
- c. For Paul, the cross demonstrated:
 - i. God's Love (Rom 5:6-8; Gal 2:20)
 - ii. God's Wisdom (1 Cor 1:18-2:5; Eph 3:9-10)
 - 1. The purpose of this enlightenment is that through the church the multifaceted wisdom of God should now be disclosed to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly realms.
 - iii. God's Faithfulness
 - 1. In keeping his covenant promises
 - a. Both to save and to judge (Rom 3:21-26)
 - 2. Providing assurance for future promises (Rom 8:31-37)

(Rom 8:31-37) What then shall we say about these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? Indeed, he who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all – how will he not also, along with him, freely give us all things? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is the one who will condemn? Christ is the one who died (and more than that, he was raised), who is at the right hand of God, and who also is

interceding for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will trouble, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, "***For your sake we encounter death all day long; we were considered as sheep to be slaughtered.***" No, in all these things we have complete victory through him who loved us!

IV. Resurrection (He was raised)

a. Background

i. In the 1st Century, there were a myriad of views on the resurrection:

1. Those who deny any resurrection (e.g. Sadducees – Matt 22:23)
2. Those who believe in a resurrection of the righteous (e.g. Pharisees)
 - a. "Now, for the Pharisees, they...also believe that souls have an immortal vigor in them, and that under the earth there will be rewards or punishments, according as they have lived virtuously or viciously in this life; and the latter are to be detained in an everlasting prison, but that the former shall have power to revive and live again;"¹
3. Those who believe in a resurrection of the righteous and the wicked
 - a. Daniel 12:2-3
 - i. Many of those who sleep in the dusty ground will awake – some to everlasting life, and others to shame and everlasting abhorrence.
 - b. (Apocryphal Literature) 2 Esdras 7:32-38
4. Those who had no categories for a resurrection at all
 - a. (Acts 17:18) Also some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers were conversing with him, and some were asking, "What does this foolish babbler want to say?" Others said, "He seems to be a proclaimer of foreign gods." (They said this because he was proclaiming the good news about Jesus and the resurrection.)

b. For Paul, the resurrection signifies that

- i. Christ was victorious at the cross and the resurrection is vindication of His truth and the grounds of our hope (1 Cor 15:14-19)
- ii. Christ is the firstfruits of the future resurrection (15:22-23) and the inauguration of the age to come
- iii. As He is, so shall we be (Rom 6:5; 1 Cor 6:14);
 1. (rom 6:5) For if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, we will certainly also be united in the likeness of his resurrection.
- iv. The resurrection is God's declaration that Jesus reigns as the promised messianic King and is the coming Judge (Rom 1:4; Acts 17:31)

¹Josephus, F., & Whiston, W. (1996, c1987). *The works of Josephus : Complete and unabridged*. Includes index. (Ant 18.12-14). Peabody: Hendrickson.