



New Testament Biblical Theology

A Handbook of the Epistles and Theology of the Apostle Paul

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Letter/Epistle of the Apostle Paul	Date	Recipients	Missionary Journey/Book of Acts	Theme	Key Memory Verses
Galatians	48	South Galatian Churches (Perga, Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe)	1 st Missionary Journey/Acts 13&14	Freed Sons of God through Faith in Christ Alone	Galatians 2:16-20; 3:26-4:7; 5:1, 16-24
1 Thessalonians	49-51	Church in Thessalonica	2 nd Missionary Journey/Acts 17	Be Holy in Christ because the End is Near	1 Thessalonians 1:9-10; 5:16-18
2 Thessalonians	49-51	Church in Thessalonica	2 nd Missionary Journey/Acts 17	Be Watchful in Christ because the End is Near	2 Thessalonians 2:1-4
1 Corinthians	ca. 52-54	Church in Corinth	2 nd Missionary Journey/Acts 18	Gospel Love in Christ Unifies and Edifies the Church	1 Corinthians 2:1-5; 13:4-8
2 Corinthians	ca. 53-55	Church in Corinth	2 nd Missionary Journey/Acts 18	The Power of Christ in Weakness	2 Corinthians 4:7-18; 12:9-10
Romans	57	Church in Rome	Acts 2:10	God Justifies the Ungodly in Christ	Romans 1:16-17; 3:23-26; 5:12-21
Philippians	62	Church in Philippi	2 nd Missionary Journey/Acts 16	Joyful Citizens of Heaven in Christ	Philippians 2:1-11
Colossians	62	Church in Colossae	2 nd Missionary Journey/Acts 19-20	Hidden Treasures of God's Wisdom in Christ	Colossians 1:15-20; 2:11-15; 3:1-4
Philemon	62	Philemon	2 nd Missionary Journey/Acts 19-20	Useful Slaves of God in Christ	Philemon 1:15-18
Ephesians	62	Churches in Asia Minor	2 nd Missionary Journey/Acts 19-20	The Power of Christ in Gospel Life and Spiritual Warfare	Ephesians 1:3-14; 3:14-4:6; 6:12-20
1 Timothy		Timothy	2 nd Missionary Journey/Acts 16	Ministry and Missions in Christ	
Titus	ca. 62-64	Titus	1 st Missionary Journey/Acts 13&14	Ministry and Missions in Christ	Titus 2:11-14
2 Timothy	ca. 64	Timothy	2 nd Missionary Journey/Acts 16	God's servants are disciples in Christ who will faithfully fight the good fight, finish the race, keep the faith.	2 Timothy 2:1-7; 4:1-8

Four Primary Elements of Paul’s Epistles through the Gospel of Jesus Christ

1. **The Gospel of Grace:** Union with Christ in the Spirit
2. **Obedience of Faith** (Holiness/Sanctification): Countercultural people
3. **Fellowship** (Love, Humility, Unity): One family, one purpose, one mind, one story, one mission
4. **Mission** (Within-Inreach: Edification/Encouragement – Without-Outreach: Witness/Proclamation and Life)

Federal/Covenantal Structure of God’s Story from Paul’s Theology Rooted and Grounded in Romans 5-8:

Adam- “In Adam”	Christ- “In Christ”
<i>Covenant of Works</i>	<i>Covenant of Grace</i>
Old Man	New Man
Sin- Trespass	Obedience- Gift
Death	Life
Condemnation	Justification
Justice	Grace
Under Law	Under Grace
The Written Letter	The Spirit
Slavery	Sonship
This Present Age	The Age to Come
Devotion/Allegiance to “Lord Sin”	Devotion/Allegiance to “Lord Righteousness”

A Contrast between Justification and Sanctification: Justification and sanctification while distinct, are inseparable. The whole gift of God is the whole Christ is grants both justifying grace and sanctifying grace in Him.

Justification	Sanctification
An Act: Once-for-all act	A Work: Progressive
Imputation of Christ's perfect righteousness	Impartation of Christ's righteousness by the Spirit through our obedience
Penalty of sin is pardoned	Power of sin is subdued
Legal/forensic	Relational/renovative
Monergistic (God alone working)	Synergistic (God and man cooperating through grace and the Holy Spirit)

Apostle Paul's Theology

Paul's Gospel Message	Romans 1:1-17; Galatians 2-3; 1 Cor. 15
Paul's Teaching on the Law of God	Romans 2-3; 7; 2 Cor. 3; Galatians 3-4
Humanity in Sin and Rebellion	Romans 1-3; Galatians 3-4
Christology (Study of Jesus Christ)	Romans 5:12-21; 8; Philippians 2; Colossians 1
Pneumatology (Study of Holy Spirit)	Romans 8; 12; Galatians 5; 1 Cor. 12; 1 Cor. 1; Eph. 1
Ecclesiology	Pastoral Letters; Ephesians; Corinthians 12-13; Romans 12-16
Eschatology	1&2 Thessalonians; 1 Cor. 15:42-49

What Sanctification is...

Simply: *“Becoming who you already are in union with Christ Jesus”* (Dr. Richard Gaffin)

1. Sanctification is progressive (Rom. 6-8; Phil. 3:7-16)
2. Sanctification is a relocation of realms/New Lordship (from condemnation in Adam and “Lord Sin”, to justification-reconciliation in Christ and “Lord Righteousness”) (Rom. 6:6-23)
3. Sanctification takes place primarily in the thought life (“Reckon/Consider/Understand yourself to be dead to sin and alive to God”, Rom. 6:5, 11; “Renewing your mind”, Rom. 12:1-2)
4. Sanctification is joyful, yet very hard at times (Rom. 7:14-25)

Primary Errors Concerning the Biblical Teaching of Sanctification

1. Roman Catholic/Jewish Error: Sanctification, or one’s reliance upon God’s grace plus one’s works, leads to justification, or a justifying state
2. “Let go and let God”: One is passive in sanctification, rather than working hard to aspire and seek to be righteous, dying to sin and living unto righteousness.
3. Perfectionism: Over-accentuating the “already” of sanctification (1 Cor. 6:9-11), without the reality of the “not yet” (Phil. 3:9-14; Rom. 7:14-25)
4. Antinomianism: Sanctification is not important as long as one is justified (as if you could be justified without sanctification, see James 2:14-25)

Important Truths to Keep in Mind When Reading Paul’s Theology on the Law

1. The Law is good, holy and righteous (Rom. 7:12; cf. Matt. 5:17-20, 48)
2. The law has taught humanity what God requires of us concerning perfect righteousness, but it cannot give what it commands. The weakness of the law is sin (Rom. 8:3). As Augustine said in prayer to our God: “Command what you will, give what you command.” The law commands but does not give. Only Christ by His Spirit gives what is needed to live obediently according to the law, and grants believers the ability to delight in God’s law (Rom. 7:18-22; cf. Psalm 119)
3. We are to uphold the law (Rom. 3:31) because the law is fulfilled in Christ by the Spirit (Rom. 8:1-4), and that is what Paul means that Christ is the “end” or “telos” of the law for all who believe (Rom. 10:4)
4. Believers have died to our old relationship to the law “In Adam” (Rom. 7:1-6). We are now alive to the law of God “in Christ”. In Adam, our relationship to the law was condemnation; in Christ, our new relationship to the law is justification by the merits of Christ’s law-keeping in our place, and our sanctification is according to our sincere obedience to the law (Rom. 8:1-4)
5. The contrast for Paul of “under law” and “under grace” is not to split the Old and New Covenants between a time of law and a time of grace (like “Law/Gospel”- this is incorrect). It is a redemptive-historical/covenantal distinction between Old Covenant (that had gospel but was from time of Moses primarily characterized by law, 2 Cor. 3:7-18), and the New Covenant (that is primarily characterized by gospel but has law, (Rom. 8).
6. The law has been abused by “Lord Sin” to aggravate our sins (Rom. 7:7-13)

Definition of Legalism and Antinomianism

While legalism is seeking to do the law apart from a relationship with God, antinomianism is seeking a relationship with God apart from the Law. In Christ, we have both the freedom to live forgiven, and to live joyfully and obediently to the law (Rom. 8:3-4).

