

THE EVOLUTION OF
PAUL'S THEOLOGY

copyright © 2016
Mr. Gary S. Dykes

First published in PDF format at:
www.Biblical-data.org [2016]

Some quotations are from: the New American Standard Bible®,
Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975,
1977, 1995 by the Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.

Paul was most likely about 12 years younger than the Lord Jesus Christ, and thus was probably born circa A.D. 8-10. He was a "young man" when Stephen was stoned, (Acts 7:58,59):

And when they had driven him out of the city, they began stoning him, and the witnesses laid aside their robes at the feet of a young man named Saul. And they went on stoning Stephen as he called upon the Lord and said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!"

Saul was raised in a Jewish home, and most likely knew well the Torah as a child. Later, as a young man, he was trained by the famous Gamaliel himself. He was a zealous and prominent Pharisee. He certainly knew what the OT revealed concerning a coming Messiah. And via his actions he did not believe that Jesus of Nazareth was this promised one. Being loyal to what he believed to be true, he chose to actively remove and crush this new religious heresy. This heresy was of course the Messianic Jews and proselytes who did believe that Jesus of Nazareth was indeed, the Promised One.

At the minimum, one can say that Saul acted on his faith. Saul was not content to let the new religious heresy flourish or spread. He may have been motivated by Scripture itself. Saul must have known of this group's visions, tongue speaking and prophesyings, perhaps Jeremiah 23:31, 32 came to his mind:

"Behold, I am against the prophets," declares the Lord, "who use their tongues and declare, 'The Lord declares.' Behold, I am against those who have prophesied false dreams," declares the Lord, "and related them, and led My people astray by their falsehoods and reckless boasting; yet I did not send them or command them, nor do they furnish this people the slightest benefit," declares the Lord.

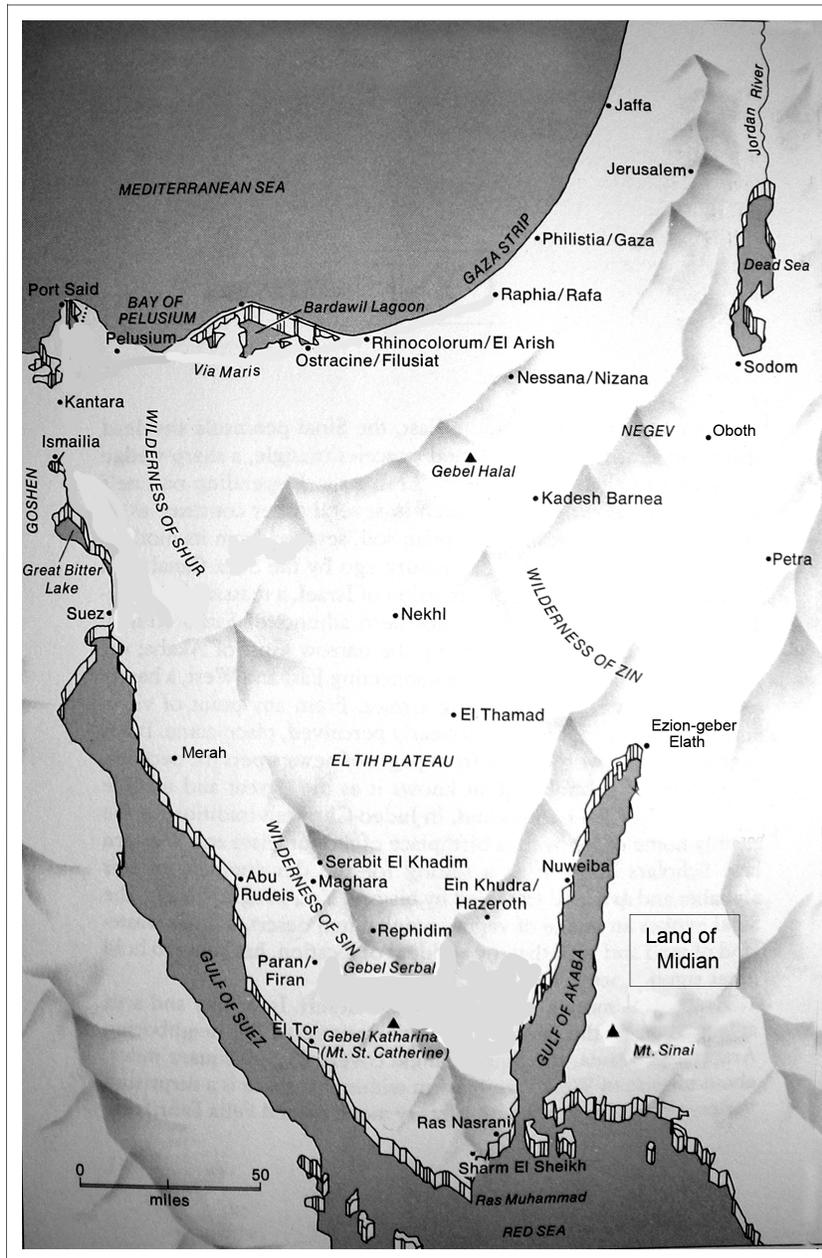
Saul is against such false believers. It is easy to understand how Saul could view these folks who prayed to this Jesus as if He were God, as blasphemous enemies, dishonoring the God of the Bible and the Jewish nation. However after he began persecuting this new movement, God intervened and open up Saul's eyes. Jesus Christ Himself appeared to Saul, and Saul was told Who this One was, the Messiah—and eventually—His full name the "*Lord Jesus Christ*"!

Saul (now Paul) had much to learn, knowledge which went beyond what he had learned as a Pharisee. To him was given the responsibility of proclaiming a gospel from God of grace, not just to Jews and proselytes, but to all! To equip him for his ministry, God began to prepare the mind of Paul, to reveal unto him new revelations, and to deepen and enhance his understanding of many OT teachings. Paul again becomes a student, but not at Gamaliel's feet.

After an outburst of joy in Damascus, and a brief stint in Jerusalem itself, Paul went into the deserts. There in the solitude, in the open places, Paul began his training. It is entirely reasonable to assume that there God, (the Holy Spirit) began ministering to Paul's mind, began injecting into this man the Word from God, injecting new thoughts and revelations. It would appear that his kindergarten sessions lasted about three years. Though in the beginning taught the basics, they were such elementary things which no human being could impart to him, lessons stemming only from God Himself. Galatians 1:16-18

to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went away to Arabia, and returned once more to Damascus. Then three years later I went up to Jerusalem to become acquainted with Cephas, and stayed with him fifteen days.

Where in Arabia? Arabia, was scarcely populated and was a rather vast deserted region. Paul probably meant in Galatians 1:17, western Arabia, (Midian) as Galatians 4:25 suggests; shown below.



[map is adapted from Paul J. Pugliese, GCI; originally published in *Sinai: The Great and Terrible Wilderness*. Viking Press, New York, 1979].

Men often venture into the desert regions to commune with God, they continue to do so unto this very day. Like Elijah, John the Baptist, David (I Samuel 23:14), Jesus Christ spent valuable time in the wilderness: (Luke 5:16)

But He Himself would often slip away to the wilderness and pray.

I like to imagine that God fed Paul like He did Elijah, while he was in the wilderness. But the important point is that wherever he was for three years, Paul evidently received some special schooling! After Paul emerged from these educational sessions, Barnabas located him and brought him to Antioch, there to assist with the new Gentile church of God. Whereupon Paul and Barnabas are sent on their first missionary journey (circa A.D. 47 - 49).

Though Luke, in Acts, does record several of Paul's speeches, it is in Paul's 13 epistles wherein we find his teachings, doctrines and revelations revealed. It is in these, viewed chronologically, that we can discern the progressive growth of Paul's insights, even the evolution of his theology. Paul was not fully trained in just three years, his education was on-going. This is apparent in his epistles.

I like to divide Paul's epistles into two chronological categories, (1) early and (2) later; simple yes?

(1) The Early epistles (A. D. 47 - 55)

Galatians, I and II Thessalonians, Romans and I Corinthians

(2) The Later Epistles

all other epistles (A. D. 56 - 68)

I realize that others have developed other schemes, but the above two general divisions are basic and self-evident. Certainly when one peruses the epistles, a progression of teaching is apparent. First Corinthians is Christian Theology 101, Colossians is much more advanced. From simple facts about salvation, to our heavenly aspirations, Paul teaches in a **CHRONOLOGICALLY PROGRESSIVE** format, his teaching is also **CUMULATIVE**, in that he builds upon his earlier expositions. In a modern sense, this pattern, conforms to scientific concepts of good teaching methods! For example, in *The Seven Laws of Teaching*, [John Milton Gregory, 1970, page 20; reprint of an 1884 work]: Law number seven is:

Review, review, review, reproducing the old, deepening its impression with new thought, linking it with added meanings, finding new applications, correcting any false views, and completing the true.

This describes Paul's inspired method quite well. Of course as the epistles were being penned—it was difficult to see the big picture, the overall design—but when completed and collected together, the effect is complete. It is progressive and cumulative, especially when one reads them in a chronological order. The order as seen in most English Bibles suffices, although I wish that Galatians and both Thessalonian epistles had been placed just before Romans.

By noting this teaching evolution, we can better understand what Paul is teaching, let me repeat that: "by noting this teaching evolution, we can better understand what Paul is teaching". This is because some of his earlier teachings were/are to be modified or

changed as a result of later revelations. His doctrines evolved! By not recognizing their evolution, one could see contradictions in Paul's teachings, or areas wherein he seems to be at odds with his earlier statements. In disclosing several of these "evolutions" I hope to make apparent the need to study and grasp Paul's teachings in the sequence in which they were delivered (or written). By doing so some misunderstandings can be clarified, and comprehension will improve. All knowledge is indeed based line upon line, comprehension comes from working from the foundation upwards.

ON SAVE OR RESCUE

One of the changes apparent in Paul's writings was his hope for the immediate future. In his early ministry, Paul often encouraged his groups to be patient, to endure patiently as soon, at any moment they would be rescued, they would experience that anticipated "rapture" (ἀρπαζω). Paul himself, eagerly expected to be taken, to not experience a physical death—as those living during the event would be instantly transformed into beings suitable for living in heaven—that is as spiritual beings.

Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up [ἀρπαζω] together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord. [I Thessalonians 4:17]

Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. [I Corinthians 15:51-53]

And this do, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed. [Romans 13:11]

and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath to come. [I Thessalonians 1:10]

At Galatians 6:8 and 9, Paul reminds the readers that they would reap "in due season" the life everlasting of verse 8, if **THEY** faint not. Paul is not addressing their ancestors, but those who were alive and then reading the epistle, *they* would reap. It is probable that he is referring to—their coming deliverance, and or heavenly awards ceremony—or the experiencing of heavenly aspects during their daily walk with the Lord Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, it has been established that Paul personally expected, and communicated to his readers, the soon return of the Lord to receive His own. He also taught that soon *after* the rapture, the antichrist would come into power, and later taught that *prior* to the rapture many believers would turn from the true faith, per I Timothy 4:1 preceded by II Thessalonians 2:3, "ἀποστασία [i.e. "a departure"]. Tribulation was therefore part of the agenda. If it (the tribulation) were to occur just after the rapture, then Paul was probably viewing—the then current martyrs, the opposition from Judaism and the Romans as—precursors to the coming tribulation. In other words, as they (the new converts) were experiencing terrible persecutions, *et al* (noted in I Thessalonians) Paul was further motivated to suspect that the rapture was near, as corroborated by the increasing persecutions and opposition.

In his early ministry Paul planted churches, he spread forth his gospel, but was not encouraging others to carry on this type of work! In his early epistles, Paul does not stress the planting of churches by his followers, the building of churches, nor of appointing elders and

bishops to carry on the work. Apparently between the composing of I Corinthians and II Corinthians, Paul had received new revelations concerning the coming events and epochs. In Paul's latter epistles, the anticipation of being soon raptured is absent. Obviously a change occurred. First let us note those passages in which we learn that Paul did receive more revelations, and that he most likely had repeated instructions delivered to him, personally by his Instructor, the Lord Jesus Christ, then we will observe some ramifications.

Then after an interval of fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along also. And 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 did so in private to those who were of reputation, for fear that I might be running, or had run, in vain. [Galatians 2:1,2]

For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a **revelation** of Jesus Christ. [Galatians 1:11, 12]

Note: "a revelation of Jesus Christ" being a genitive construction in the Greek, produces: (1) a revelation *of* Jesus, (2) a revelation *from* Jesus Christ, or (3) a revelation *about* Jesus Christ. I suggest that all three semantic features are intended.

Boasting is necessary, though it is not profitable; but I will go on to **visions and revelations** of the Lord. (7) And 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 buffet me-- to keep me from exalting myself! [II Corinthians 12:1, 7]

'But arise, and stand on your feet; for this purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you a minister and a witness not only to the things which you have seen, but **also to the things in which I will appear to you**; [Acts 26:16]

Indeed, Paul had experienced a number of revelations over the span of his ministry. These impacted his teachings. For example, in his earlier expositions, the word for "rescue" or "save" (σωζω) was used in multiple senses. One of the senses was that of being rescued from some impending doom or event. This is seen in such passages as:

For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save [σωζω] those who believe. [I Corinthians 1:21, note also I Thessalonians 1:10]

Is Paul stating that this "salvation" is based upon faith? Or is he saying that those who believe, and only those who believe shall be rescued? Does verse 13 of chapter 3 [I Cor.], have any bearing?

each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it, because it is to be revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work.

It seems reasonable to suggest, that Paul may have in mind the safety, or state of being rescued from the coming wrath or tribulation. If not, then the common interpretation, held by most evangelicals, would prevail (that being: salvation is based upon a work, upon a willful act of believing). I propose that Paul has a rescue in mind here. The meaning as "rescue" could also be seen in Romans 11:14, wherein Paul wishes to "rescue" some of his fellow countrymen. However Romans 5:9 leaves little room for ambiguity: Romans 5:8-10,

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. **Much more then**, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of

God through Him. For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

Paul mentions the benefits of trusting Christ Jesus, reconciliation, justification and salvation are all mentioned in the context, as well as being rescued from the coming wrath! (Note the article before "wrath" it is not just any wrath, but a future [shall be saved] wrath). I Corinthians 3:15 is not discussing the salvation of the soul but rather persons being rescued from a coming wrath/judgment:

If any man's work is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, [rescued!] yet so as through fire.

Well do I know what the traditional views are of each text I have presented above, I know that very few students of the Bible will agree with my observations, yet I present them for review as I myself, do strongly believe that my interpretations are quite reasonable, and correct. May you consider them.

When the Apostle Peter stepped out of the boat, and later began to sink, he cried out "Lord save me", (Matthew 14:30), Jesus did rescue him (σωζω). Peter did not drown, he was saved. Many other uses of the Greek term for "rescue" or "save" can be demonstrated. My point is made.

In Paul's latter epistles no mention of being rescued from the coming wrath or tribulation is even intimated. It became a far less urgent issue. Paul can say in Ephesians 2:8 and 9, that they have been saved (from the consequences of sin) through faith, and that this faith is a gift from God.

For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast. Ephesians 2:8, 9

This "gift" of "salvation" and "faith" are both imparted by means of grace. This is God's doing, no human efforts or wills are involved, no works. This contrasts with I Corinthians 1:21, wherein "rescue" may be the better translation! Since the modern evangelicals dominate the translation business, and the production of English Bibles, you will not see the word σωζω rendered as "rescue" in I Corinthians 1:21, even in the venerable King James Version. Certainly the noun form of our word, at Acts 7:25, should not be rendered as "salvation", rather "deliverance" is proper. Again, it appears that evangelical interpretations abound, some of which seem to distort the true semantics of many Biblical texts!

Such a probable meaning of "rescue" can help explain Romans 10:13, a quote of Joel 2:32; confessing Jews can be rescued from the coming wrath, if they rightly admit who Jesus Christ is. This surely is the meaning implied by Paul. During the coming tribulation, it is doubtful if any pagans would dare to "call upon the name of the Lord" so as to be rescued, rather they despise that name. It is folly to ignore the context of Joel chapter two and its relationship to Paul's use in Romans chapter 10.

ON CITIZENSHIP

As Paul expected the coming rapture to be imminent—in his early epistles—he proposed that saints patiently abide under the rule and authority of the government, which at that time was Roman. Paul may have seen the Roman empire as functioning as a platform for the

coming antichrist, but he does not elaborate. He does mention the value of Roman citizenship. One wonders if Paul would so instruct those believers who now live in ISIS controlled areas of Syria (circa 2015), or other such terrible regimes or idolatrous religions?

It is odd, upon reflecting upon it, Paul announced to the Philippian authorities, that he was a Roman citizen *after* he (they) had been beaten and imprisoned. One supposes that Paul probably should have mentioned this fact when first arrested and thus he would have avoided the beating, the pain, and the humiliation of being thrown into an inner cell and placed into stocks.

Here is my suggestion: Paul did not intend *at first*, to even mention his Roman citizenship, he apparently planned on suffering in hopes that the new converts in Philippi, themselves, would escape persecution, like being a scapegoat in their stead. However, while laying on his back, in pain, and while singing (!) he probably realized that he could use his citizenship status to further ensure the safety of the new converts by making the authorities to feel guilty, to cause them to feel the fear of swift Roman punishment, to leave a deeper imprint of guilt upon the minds of the authorities. For the peoples of Philippi themselves were citizens of Rome, thus they would align more with Paul when they too learned of his citizenship. Perhaps Paul waited until the moment when the maximum effect could be produced. At stake too, was the safety of the jailer! In fact Paul tells the man that if he too believes (ἐπι) the Lord Jesus Christ, that he and his whole household would be delivered or rescued from punishment. So Paul waited...and received the desired results. Thus, for a brief interlude, the new believers in Philippi dwelt unmolested.

This aspect of Paul, his reliance upon his Roman citizenship, was evidenced in Acts 16 (in Philippi), and later when arrested in

Jerusalem and then during court appearances, he exercises his right as a citizen to appeal to Caesar. All of these scenarios transpire in Acts circa A.D. 51 - 57. In Romans chapter 13 Paul even suggests that the new converts—Christians, submit to Roman rule—via such submission some peace and safety is afforded them. Peace and safety especially from the ever vengeful zealots of Judaism. It appears that Paul saw the zealots of Judaism, who were spread throughout the Roman empire, as more dangerous than the justice which prevailed in the Roman legal system. Paul did see some divine intervention within the Roman justice system, it certainly presented laws which were very humane and better than those which religious hatreds and emotions can produce. Submit, says Paul in Romans 13:5, so as to avoid punishment (from committing a crime) and for conscience sake. "Conscience sake" (συνειδησιν) implies that most reasonable humans recognized that many Roman laws were indeed fair and good.

The severity of—Jewish antagonisms, and the *fervor* of Jewish allegiances throughout the Roman empire—may have in part been the underlying reason why Paul dictated Romans 13 to his scribe. After years of being hounded by these religious zealots of Judaism, he acknowledged their serious threat to the spread of Christianity. Paul was able to use, as an instrument for good and safety, the Roman government.

As time passed, and as Paul's understanding of his place in creation increased, he was able to write to the saints in Philippi these remarkable words: (Philippians 3:20 -4:1)

For **our citizenship is in heaven**, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself. 4 **Therefore**, my beloved brethren whom I long to see, my joy and crown, so stand firm in the Lord, my beloved.

Now, circa A.D. 61 [during his Roman imprisonment, note: *NIGTC; Commentary on Philippians*, Peter T. Obrien, pages 19-26. William B. Eerdmans, 1991], Paul did not expect a miracle to free him on this occasion, nor is he boasting of his Roman citizenship. He did use his citizenship status to acquire an audience with Caesar, but now to these Philippians he writes about *the heavenly* citizenship (*i.e.* that he and they are citizens of heaven)! This produces his "Therefore" of Philippians 4:1, *therefore* they can stand firm. As citizens of heaven they have a far greater source of protection, an everlasting one, one which protects them wherever they may be. Paul himself, had three citizenships:

- (1) He was a Jew of Tarsus, born a Hebrew, Philippians 3:5
- (2) He was a Roman citizen, Acts 16:37, 38 and 22:27
- (3) He was a citizen of Heaven, Philippians 3:20, Ephesians 2:19

As Cornelius Stam illuminates (*Acts Dispensationally Considered*, volume III, page 68) Paul actually reflects the inherent composition of the Body of Christ Church, it was the fusion of Jew and Gentile. Paul was both a Jew and a Gentile! He *reveals* the heavenly citizenship in his later epistles: in which, he also recognizes that the church on earth was going to be there for some time. The church would face a future of all sorts of different human governments and kingdoms. Helping the saints to face this, he shares his new insights about the eternal and powerful position which each elected saint occupies, their heavenly citizenship. This knowledge is quite comforting, for now and in the

future. In Paul's earlier epistles, he was not very concerned with what the next several decades held in store for the saints, he expected to escape prior to the tribulation, soon. Thus his evolving insight concerning his citizenship develops clearly in his *latter* epistles, especially when contrasted with his earlier writings. His scope is broadened; in his early epistles he did not foresee Islam and its Christ-hating institutions as a threat—but provides for such governments for such situations in his later epistles—in declaring to the saints that we can live here now, on earth as heavenly citizens. Islam, or communism, or Hitler's dreams cannot dislodge us.

Somewhere in the 1990s (the exact date escapes me) Mr. Charles F. Baker left this earth. In one of his later writings of 1985, *Understanding the Body of Christ: A Pauline Trilogy*, Grace Bible College Publications; on page 5, he made this comment:

The earlier epistles were written in the childhood of the new dispensation, before there was a written and completed revelation [i.e. before the completion of the New Testament canon, in A.D. 98], and during the time while God in His longsuffering was still dealing in covenant relationship with Israel in signs and wonders. But when we come to the prison epistles, written at the end of the transition period, we come into the mature state of the dispensation. The signs have passed away and the exceeding riches of the new dispensation are unfolded.

Though Paul mentions the word "mystery" at the end of Romans, (and uses it in another sense in I Corinthians 15:51) he does not explain what it fully is, until the three Prison Epistles (Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians). The heart of this mystery was the fusion of the Jew and Gentile into a *new* creature, *the Body of Christ* church. It is only in Paul's latter epistles that this mature teaching is first and fully unfolded. It is quite probable that the full revelation of the

mystery itself was not made known to Paul until after Romans was produced (post A.D. 58). In his earlier epistles, such facts were not really needed to establish or win people to Paul's Gospel. But as time passed, and Paul realized that this "Church Age" was going to last for some time after his own death, it became necessary for him to: (1) lay down solid Biblical foundations for the existence of the new Body, (2) to expose that portion of the mystery which had been hid *by* God in the text of the Old Testament. (εἰς Θεω).

CHANGING WARFARE

As Paul learned that the duration of this "age" was going to extend beyond his life, he learned of new tactics which were needed for long term survival and conflict. In his early epistles, Paul fully expected to be raptured, that he would not experience death, but via revelation he later learned that he was going to experience death, and that the rapture would occur some time after his departure. Elements of Paul's understanding, and his own death are perceptively manifested in G. G. Findlay's *The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Thessalonians*, a Baker Book House 1982 reprint, pages lxiiiif.. Note:

[Findlay explains why the subject of the coming of Christ retreats into the shade in Paul's writings.]. For this, two or three causes may be suggested. Between the writing of 1 and 2 Corinthians St Paul suffered from a sickness which brought him to the gates of death (2 Cor. i 8 - 10, iv. 7 - v. 8), and which profoundly affected his inner experience: from this time he anticipated that death would end his earthly career (Phil. i. 20f.; Acts xx. 24; 2 Tim. iv. 6-8, 18).

Paul still looked for the return of Christ, but it became more of a *hope* and not a *soon* expected event. Titus 2:13.

Knowing that the church needed to prevail, and perhaps endure for a lengthy time, God gave Paul necessary instructions for building up the new Body, for establishing solid foundations, with Jesus Christ as the Chief Corner Stone. Thus Paul introduced some needed tactics for the wars to follow.

In II Corinthians lies one of my favorite passages:

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ, and we are ready to punish all disobedience, whenever your obedience is complete. [II Corinthians 10:3 -6]

The "we" is most likely the mature saints (including Paul, his secretary and Timothy). These three composed and wrote this miraculously-inspired epistle to the plural "you" [the saints in Corinth]. A *battle* for truth is stated in the above quote.

Additionally, as per II Corinthians 3:13, Israelites now cannot see truth, unless the veil is removed by Christ, most remain blind even until the "rapture".

in whose case [*i.e.* Israel] the god [or, God] of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. [II Corinthians 4:4]

Certainly after his near death experiences in Jerusalem, Acts chapters 21 - 26, Paul realized that Israel was truly blind, and that only those who were prior elected would ever respond to the good news about the Messiah Jesus. God allowed the vast majority of Israelites to be blinded. All that Paul and or any other evangelist could now do

was to preach the message, to inform the listeners, it is God Who may then use the Word to activate the heart of the hearer. Paul realized the importance of his gospel, it needed to be kept vital. It needed to be **written, accurately copied**, it needed **spreading** and **translating**. Certainly God assisted with this entire process. It is much like the creation and maintenance of battle plans for a big military operation, like the Battle of the Bulge (and for you youngsters, I am not referring to the waistline). Preparations were prepared, Paul was moved to write and lay-out the strategy, and the lines formed.

Henceforth, Paul never again devotes three entire chapters to the Jewish element in a church as he addresses them in Romans chapters 9 - 11. Water baptizing folks so that the local Jews would not harass new believers was no longer important to Paul as it was in Acts 19. The gift of healing was no longer practiced by Paul, as evidenced with Trophimus. In fact all Jewish "signs" ended or ceased after the writing of I Corinthians, except for isolated incidences and these too ceased when the canon was completed [circa A.D. 98]. Paul no longer sought to appease the local Jews. These sign-seekers (the Jews) faded into the background as Paul struggled with new emerging realities. Israel was just a part of the "enemy" (Romans 11:28), Romans were just a part of the enemy, for the actual foe is Satan, that powerful spirit being who desires to rule, to delete God from the universe.

Paul, in II Corinthians 3:14, does not indicate that a partial hardening or a partial blindness has occurred to Israel, he now speaks of the nation as a whole. Though he also recognizes that some few will accept the Messiah Jesus, as he had done. Now, in the new battle formations, we walk by faith not by sight, not by signs and wonders. (II Corinthians 5:7, 16, 17). From now on we no longer know Jesus Christ after the flesh, we know Him now in a personal spiritual way,

we have the mind, or attitude of Christ II Corinthians 2:16 [*i.e.* Paul and company or, all of us believers?]. Separation and holiness become the distinctive parameters. We clothe ourselves with this spiritual Christ (we fill our hearts and minds with His word and life), we should put on the full armor of God. Our battle is not with flesh and blood. Legalism, and Roman idolatry are no longer the prime foes. Ephesians 6:12 also informs us that we battle "against principalities against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places". Of course this has always been true, in every dispensation, but it is here that Paul forever clarifies the matter, forever identifies the foes. And reveals a portion of the "mystery", that *within* each believer/temple today, lies great power, the Holy Spirit. This revelation was/is good news! Not until the future 1,000 year kingdom is established in the Millennial Reign will these enemies be absolutely subdued.

Thus subtle but important changes are seen in Paul's latter epistles. His tactics and purposes evolved. In them, churches are established with long term goals in mind, bishops are chosen, and guidelines for leaders are established. Faith becomes the shield, we trust the risen Lord. We stand for the truth, we rightly-divide the Scriptures. We *allow* Jesus Christ to fill us¹. This ensures victory.

In conclusion, I have demonstrated three aspects connected with the evolution of Paul's theology. Three areas not often mentioned as changing elements, each being portions of numerous revelations which Paul alone had received.

- (1) The use of the word for "save" and "rescue"
- (2) The meaning of citizenship and its development
- (3) The evolving warfare tactics.

Many other expositors see changes in Paul's theology; they see him leave Israel and focus upon the Gentiles, they see him preach a gospel of UNcircumcision (a shocking concept to most devout Jews!), they see him moving from a sign-filled ministry to one guided by faith. These changes are the standard and common ones noted by others. I hope that the three I have illuminated herein have assisted and contributed to the understanding of the evolution of Paul's theology.

¹ "Be ye being filled" can be a middle voice present tense verb, and in Ephesians 5:18, as with one's choosing to drink wine, so does one *participate* in the filling of the Holy Spirit. Hence the middle voice is preferred-in my mind-to the commonly viewed passive voice here. If the passive were meant, then the subject's own will is not involved. [The subject would also be *made* to drink wine, which is not rational]. Do consider a middle voice, present tense, imperative mood verb here in Ephesians 5:18.