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### **The "Christ" in Paul's (disputed) Letters**

**Examining the "Christ" in Paul's Letters, whose authorship has been questioned by scholars.**

Paul's authorship of certain letters is disputed. Some researchers believe some of these letters were written by Paul's disciples or those he inspired. These letters are part of the New Testament canon, and many Christians consider them authoritative (Savoy). Besides, the chapters utilize "Christ" in several ways, emphasizing Jesus' status as humanity's rescuer. Ephesians 1:7 states, "In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace." "Him" alludes to Christ, the source of redemption and forgiveness.

Christ also refers to the group of Christians who follow Jesus. "Therefore I exult in my sufferings for your sake," Paul writes in Colossians 1:24, "and in my flesh, I am making up what is missing in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church." "Christ's sufferings" relate to Jesus' suffering, but Paul also views himself and the church as members of Christ's body. Similarly, "Christ" is sometimes used mystically to indicate a cosmic reality. Ephesians 1:10 states, "as a plan for the fullness of time, to unify all things in him, things in heaven and everything on earth." "Him" alludes to Christ, but the emphasis is on his global mission to connect all things. Paul's writings employ "Christ" in several ways, reflecting the complexity of

the early Christian movement. Regardless of authorship, these writings' impact on Christian doctrine and practice cannot be contested.

### **What is their relation to Acts and the Gospels?**

Paul's writings are the oldest documented records of early Christian ideas and practices. They provide light on Christian doctrine and the early church. However, Paul's writings were not written in a context but were composed in the context of the larger Christian movement, which was inspired by Jesus' teachings and life as described in the Gospels (Savoy). The Gospels and Paul's letters have numerous commonalities.

The first-century book of Acts recounts the early Christian movement and the spread of Christianity following Jesus' death and resurrection. Acts help people comprehend the environment in which Paul wrote and the struggles early Christians encountered as they spread their message (Novenson, 139). The Gospels, Acts, and Paul's writings also provide a complex view of early Christianity. These publications provide different perspectives on Jesus' life, teachings, and Christianity's origins.

### **What are the parallels between Paul's letters, especially those that are thought by scholars to be written by the Apostle?**

Seven of the New Testament's thirteen letters ascribed to the Apostle Paul were likely written by him. These seven letters are Romans, Galatians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians, and Philemon (Novenson, 150). Although each letter addresses various issues and ideas, numerous noticeable commonalities exist. For instance, in all his writings, Paul stresses the Gospel or the good news of Jesus Christ. He claims that Jesus saves those who believe in him, not the law (Savoy). In Romans and Galatians, Paul argues against people who believe salvation requires circumcision and law keeping. In his writings, Paul regularly uses and refers to the Old

Testament to prove that Jesus fulfilled Old Testament prophecies. He proves Jesus is the Messiah and that redemption has always been through faith using the Old Testament. In Romans 4, Paul argues that believers in Jesus are justified by faith, not deeds, like Abraham (Novenson, 139).

Jesus, the world's saviour, died for humanity's sins and rose again. Paul claims that Jesus is both human and heavenly. In Philippians, Paul says Jesus humbled himself and became submissive even to death on the cross, and God exalted him above every name. In addition, Paul often utilizes personal examples to explain his views in his writings (Savoy). He recounts how an experience with the rising Christ changed him from a church persecutor. He also utilizes his hardship to inspire his readers to keep their faith. In 2 Corinthians, Paul defends his apostleship and describes his Gospel-related afflictions.

Paul stresses solidarity among Christians since he believes the church should cooperate to spread the Gospel. Love, forgiveness, and mutual respect are stressed to him. In Philippians, Paul encourages the church to remain together, put others first, and work together to spread the Gospel. Comparatively, Paul often stresses the prospect of the coming of Christ (Novenson, 142). He contends that Christians need to behave as though Christ's return may occur at any time, and Jesus advises them to sanctify their lives in preparation for his arrival. The expectation of Christ's return is stressed throughout the New Testament, but especially in 1 Thessalonians, where Paul advises the church to keep awake for the Lord's return and act properly.

In conclusion, the Christ letters attributed to the Apostle Paul in the New Testament demonstrate several notable parallels that reveal a consistent theology and perspective on the Christian faith. These letters emphasize the Gospel, the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy in Jesus, the centrality of Christ, the importance of unity among believers, and the expectation of Christ's return. Paul's examples and encouragement to persevere in faith also provide valuable

insights into the Christian life. The study of these letters and their parallels provides a deeper understanding of the development of Christian theology and the beliefs and practices of the early Christian community.

### Works Cited

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