

The “Christ” in Paul’s (disputed?) Letters

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The two comparable texts are Colossians 1-2 and 2 Timothy 1. The two books are from the New Testament. Colossians is one of Paul's letters addressed to the church in Colossae. 2 Timothy is a letter addressed to Timothy, a coworker of Paul in preaching the gospel. Colossians emphasizes Christ's role as the image of God and the creator of all things. It also talks about Christ's role in reuniting Christians with God through suffering and trial. Colossians 1:15 says, "The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation". Christ is solidified as the savior of humanity. The text from this book confirms Jesus Christ as the head of the church and highlights his resurrection as the firstborn from the dead. Jesus Christ is seen as the foundation of Christianity, the church, and the connection between Christians and God.

The second text, 2 Timothy 1, focuses on the theme of salvation and loyalty to Christ as Christians. 2 Timothy 1 states that "Paul became an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, in keeping with the promise of the life that is in Christ Jesus". This verse shows that Paul recognizes Christ and his role in his faith. The book emphasizes the grace of God through Christ Jesus, who died for our sins so that we may receive eternal life. The text talks about how God has called upon his people to life of faith because of their works but his grace and love for his people. Grace to Christians was given by Jesus Christ, the only son of God. He appeared as the savior who destroyed death and brought light through the gospel.

The two texts are related as they are both letters by the Apostle Paul. They both talk about Christ in creation and salvation. The two texts talk about Christ as the bringer of good news and the reconciler of Christians with God. Christ is central to the Christian faith, and his role extends beyond just individual salvation. Beyond the "Bringer of Good News and the Eschatological Prophet," these two texts portray Christ as the bringer of good news through his defeat of death, which offered Christians a new form of life.

The secondary source “Christ Phrases in Paul” by Novenson talks about the phrase "In Christ" in Paul's letters as central to his understanding of Christ's role in salvation. The text talks about how believers are not only associated with Christ but also united with him in a deep and personal way through their faith. Novenson argues that Paul uses "in Christ" to emphasize Christ as the head of a new humanity in which believers are united to God. Novenson notes that "in the Pauline letters, the Christos is never a general term but always a designation for the one Christ Jesus". The secondary text supports the primary text on Christ saving Christians through his death and resurrection. The texts support the Colossians and Timothy texts on Christ's salvation and Christians faith in Christ. Novenson supports the primary texts' emphasis on Christ as the head of the church and the new church, in which believers are united to one another by their faith in Christ and Godchurch. Overall, the primary and secondary texts complement each other on the central role of Christ in the new church.

References

Access your Bible from anywhere. BibleGateway.com: A searchable online Bible in over 150 versions and 50 languages. (n.d.). Retrieved April 18, 2023, from <https://www.biblegateway.com/>

Novenson, M. V. (2012). *Christ among the Messiahs: Christ language in Paul and Messiah language in ancient Judaism.* Oxford University Press.