

PROBLEM PASSAGES FOR PAUL'S PATTERN

QUESTIONS THAT TRY TO UNDERMINE PAUL

"As also in all [Paul's] epistles...in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest...unto their own destruction" – 2 Peter 3:16

1.) REASONS PROBLEMATIC PAULINE PASSAGES EXIST

- a. Oversimplifying or overcomplicating the true doctrine (Look not just for words, but concepts, too!)
- b. Progressive revelation of God's will doesn't stop at Acts 9 – Acts 9:6, 2Cor 12:1 & 7, Acts 26:16
- c. Acts isn't about Paul, the disp. of the grace of God, or the mystery – Acts is about the fall of Israel
 - 1. We learn some things Paul did & said, but Acts doesn't nullify or trump Paul's own testimony
- d. Our own baggage/tradition, misunderstanding, or ignorance (see "Rules for Handling Hard Passages")

2.) THINGS PAUL DID THAT AREN'T YOUR PATTERN

- a. Wasn't Paul Water Baptized? / Why Did Paul Baptize Others? (Acts 9:18, 16:33)
 - a. Just because something happened TO Paul ≠ that same thing has to happen to YOU
 - b. Acts 18:8-9, 1Cor 1:14-17 – Why did he *stop* baptizing? → God told him to stop
- b. Why Did Paul Circumcise Timothy/Take a Vow/Keep Feast Days? (Acts 16:3, 18:18-21)
 - a. So that he could remain innocent & have audience with the Jews – Rom 10:1, 1Cor 9:19-20
- c. Didn't Paul Speak in Tongues, Heal the Sick, Do Miracles, and Encourage Others to Do Also? (1Cor 14:1)
 - a. Yes, as a sign of his apostleship (1Cor 1:22) & to see the Body of Christ established (Eph 4:11-16)

3.) THINGS PAUL SAID THAT SEEM TO CONTRADICT HIS PATTERN

- a. Does Paul Teach Works are Necessary for / to Keep Salvation? (1Co 6:9-10, Phi 2:12, Gal 5:21) – Rom 6:21
- b. How Can Paul Say People Were "in Christ" Before Him? (Rom 16:7) – Is 45:25, Jn 15:5, 1Jn 3:24, Ep 1:10
- c. Doesn't Paul Teach "none other things than the prophets & Moses [said] should come?" (Ac 26:22, 28:23)
 - a. Yes → Jesus Christ, His DBR, salvation to Gentiles, Israel's future restoration & fulfillment of Abraham's promise: all according to the scriptures – 1Cor 15:3
 - b. He preached it out of due time: w/o the kingdom, w/o Israel, w/o the covenants – 1Co 15:8
- d. Does Paul Say He & Peter Preached the Same Thing? (1Co 15:11, Gal 1:23) They preached Christ – Acts 9:5
- e. Does Paul Teach the Kingdom? (Ac 19:8, 20:25, 28:31, Rom 14:17, 1Cor 4:20, 1Th 2:12) – Yes, Col 1:13
- f. Did Paul Teach Two Gospels? (i.e. gospel of grace & gospel of kingdom) – No, Ac 14:3, 7, 20:24 & 32, 2Ti 4:18
 - a. Gospel of the kingdom = Israel's earthly kingdom is coming soon – Mk 1:14-15 v. Gal 3:28, Ro 11:26

4.) OTHER PAULINE PUZZLES

- a. Why Does Paul Go to Jews First (or at all)? – (Ro 1:16, 2:9-10, Ac 17:2) – Ac 3:26, Ro 11:13 & 15:20, Gal 2:9
- b. Didn't Paul Write Hebrews? – God didn't tell us. Doesn't matter. Compare the doctrine to Rom – Philemon
- c. Why Don't You Do Everything Paul Said/Did? (Ro 16:16, 1Co 16:20, 2Co 13:12, 1Th 5:26) – 1Tim 1:5 & 3:9

Rules for Handling Hard Passages

- 1) It's ok to admit your ignorance – just don't stay that way!
- 2) Interpret the hard verses by the easy ones
- 3) Always consult both the immediate and greater contexts
- 4) Leave the words alone – Bible belief = it means what it says
- 5) Don't sacrifice the many clear passages for a few hard ones
- 6) Don't make a bigger mess trying to solve the problem
- 7) Don't read into the passage what is not there
- 8) Don't change, redefine, or Greek the words – Bible belief = Let God be true and even you a liar