

Sermon notes on Galatians 2:20

Background of Paul and his ministry

- Originally called Saul
- Belonged to a religious sect called the Pharisees, meaning the separated ones
- Other sects that were there during that time:-
 1. Saducees
 2. Essenes-Fromalists, free thinkers, Puritans
- The Pharisees emphasized the oral law and the ritual law above the written law
- Washing before eating bread, bathing after returning from the market, washing of utensils, fasting twice a week (Luke 18:12), Sabbath laws
- Pharisees emphasized outward perfection at the expense of inward devotion.
- The sect promoted self righteousness and pride at the expense of confession of sin and humility
- They viewed other peoples and nations with contempt and felt superior to others.
- They secured popularity and political influence
- They eventually had internal divisions and broke into several sects called schools under particular people like Gamaliel
- They were wealthy and luxurious
- Like them, Paul was wealthy having had a lucrative business of tent making which he continued even after his conversion on a part time basis due to his many missionary journeys
- Before his conversion, he had all desired status symbols which gave him a place of respect and influence in society (Philippians 3:4-6)
- Like them, Paul saw the Church of Jesus Christ as a threat to tradition and to his sect and furiously persecuted the church.
- He supervised the killing of Stephen
- His dramatic conversion while on his way to persecute Christians became the foundation of his ministry.
- The focus of Paul's Ministry was to reveal Christ in his fullness.
- 75% of the new testament writings are Paul's letters.
- He wrote to the Romans, Corinthians, Ephesians, Galatians, Philippians, Thessalonians, Timothy, Philemon, Titus and to the Hebrews
- His ministry was opposed by his previous sect and the Jews in general because of its emphasis on Christ above their culture.
- While they focused on the law, Paul focused on the author of the law.
- While they focused on tradition, he focused on the author of salvation
- While they emphasized circumcision, Paul emphasized the crucified Christ.
- While they focused on the symbols, Paul emphasized the substance, Christ
- While they focused on programmes, Paul emphasized the Person of Christ
- While they emphasized methods, Christ emphasized the message
- While they focused on the Sabbath of the Lord, they ignored the Lord of the Sabbath

- While they emphasized feasts and festivals,they ignored the substance
- We/They celebrate Pentecost but never experience Pentecost
- We/they celebrate Passover(good friday) but never experience him crucified
- They celebrated the feast of unleavened bread but ignored him as the sinless one who was buried,the one who sanctifies us
- They celebrated the feast of first fruits(easter) but were ignorant of him,the first fruits from the dead.
- They celebrated the feast of prentecost ,ignorant of him who enabled the Pentecost by his Holy Spirit
- They celebrated the feast of trumpets but ignorant of him who would come following the sounding of the trumpet to take his own in the rapture
- The celebrated and still celebrate the day of atonement but ignore him as our atoning sacrifice who would return again to judge
- The celebrate the feast of tabernacles but ignore him who will some come and reign forever on the throne of David.
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Resemblance between the critics of Paul and Religion today

- Today we emphasise ceremonies like Christmans while ignoring the Christ of Christmans
- We celebrate the day of his birth while ignoring the reason of his birth
- He are comfortable with him as a baby but not him crucified and what that demands of us
- We love the season while ignoring the reason for the season.
- We may focus on building the house of the Lord and ignore the Lord of the house
- We focus on the miracles of God while ignoring the God of miracles
- Paul's dramatic conversion marked a turning point in his life and focus,from the shadows to the substance.
- In all his letters-his focus was on the Person of Christ,not even the person of Jesus
- In Romans Paul reveals Christ as the Justifier
- In Corinthians,Paul Revels Christ as the Sanctifier
- In Galatians,Paul reveals Christ as the Liberator(galatians 2:4)
- In Ephesians,Paul revelas Christ as the Riches of grace (Ephesians 1:7)
- In Philipians,Paul reveals Christ as the one who supplies our every need (Philipians 4:19)
- In Colosians,Paul reveals Christ as the Bodily dwelling of the Godhead (colosians 2:9)
- In Thessalonians,Paul reveals him as the soon coming King(1 thessalonians 4:16)
- In the letters to Timothy Paul reveals him as the mediator between God and Man(1 timothy 2:5)
- In Titus,he revels him as the Blessed hope(Titus 2:13)
- In Philemon, he reveals him as The Lord –verse 3
- In Hebrews,he reveals him as the faithful heigh Priest-Hebrews 2:17
- **Paul's Arguments regarding circumcision**
- It is a symbol of sealing of a covenant with God whose substance was revealed in the crucifiction of Christ.

- Emphasis on an ongoing keeping of this tradition while ignoring its substance is tantamount to nullifying the work of Christ on the cross.
- He emphasizes to his students the perfection that came as a result of Christ's sacrifice being that all believers lost their identity in him. Their life in Christ is Christ's life in them. (Galatians 2:20)
- The entry of Christ in a believer grants his Spirit permission to direct a believer's life as long as the believer abides and consistently focuses on Christ.
- That the indwelling of Christ as permitted by the believer determines the life and the works of the believer. Living from within out not from without it.