

Chapter 1 : Paul the Apostle - Wikipedia

What Was Paul's Christology? by Servetus the Evangelical The Apostle Paul espouses different, yet quite complementary, christologies in his New Testament (NT) blog.quintoapp.com none of them identify Jesus as God, and some of them.

Three of these ideas are especially important for understanding his moral instruction. The first is discerned from the grammar of the passage. As elsewhere in his writings, Paul integrates indicative verbs those indicating facts with imperative verbs those that demand something of the reader. Many scholars have recognized the importance of this grammatical relationship for Paul and have explored its significance. In my opinion, the interplay between indicative and imperative moods of the same verb within a passage expresses the logical connection between what one believes and the way one lives compare "walk by the Spirit" in Gal 5: The result is that our vices are exchanged for virtue. Thus, Paul begins chapter 3 with an indicative statement: He expands its eschatological implications with two other indicative statements: This exchange of the secular life for the sacred constitutes for Paul the central moral reality of the new life; and he envisages it practically in various codes of Christian conduct that he lists and develops in 3: Ethical conduct for him must embody monotheistic faith. There is a morality that pervades all of creation, because there is one Creator. The sorts of persons we have become in Christ and the kinds of actions we now take as his disciples must always reflect what and in whom we believe. Ethical choices can not be divvied up into private morality, rooted in values between "me and thee," and public morality, rooted in another set of values between "me and we. For the Christian, the marketplace, the town square and their ruling elites are under the lordship of Christ too. Behind this moral integration of our private and public lifestyles stands the more encompassing spiritual integration of the visible and invisible worlds. The moral frustration we often feel as believers, when we know what to do but are unable or unwilling to do it, is explained by this spiritual reality: The second emphasis of Pauline ethics is discerned from the literary structure of this opening passage. The christological foundation for ethics is made clear by the four explicit references to Christ in 3: This grammatical strategy is quite unusual and may well stress the decisive importance of Christ for what follows see Harris A Your life he zoe hymon. B with Christ syn to Christo ; 4: This foundational conviction of the moral life is fleshed out in what follows 3: This passage includes three codes of Christian conduct 3: The third emphasis of Pauline ethics is the vital relationship between Christ and God, which Paul envisions in the critical phrase your life is now hidden with Christ in God 3: Paul returns to this theme in 3: Thus, the new life is provided its content by the knowledge of "the image of its Creator" 3: Aim at the Things Above 3: The latter phrase alludes to the Davidic Psalm From the beginning of his letter, Paul has developed the theological implications of this conviction in response to the false teaching in Colosse. He is now prepared to draw out its implications for Christian discipleship. Holy living is one of these results; and we can be confident of this prospect because Jesus is Lord of all. The moral result is a distorted concern for earthly things see 2: Actually, to focus attention on Christ rather than on "basic principles" results in a truer discernment about earthly things. Paul is not asking us to forsake any interest in earthly things; to do so would result in a different version of the asceticism he has just condemned in 2: We tend to think of the moral life in terms of either its rules or its overarching vision. If we define morality by certain rules of conduct, then we view the person who obeys these rules as moral. For example, if we establish that telling the truth is a rule of right conduct, then the person who tells the truth is moral. If, on the other hand, we define morality by the characteristics of a moral world, then we tend to view the person who possesses these same characteristics as moral. For example, if we agree that a moral world is just and compassionate, then the person who is capable of just and compassionate conduct is moral. He is less interested in "doing" codes of rules, although he provides them, than he is in "being" Christian. Paul realizes that to know codes of right conduct without having the moral capacity to act on them gets us nowhere. The moral issue, then, is not whether one complies with some prescribed code but whether one is the sort of person who is able to be moral. If one has moral character, then one will act morally. For Paul, morality is first of all being in Christ, which nurtures the capacity to see the things above. If "to seek" zeteo after the exalted Lord

Christ envisions the "practical pursuit of spiritual goals" Harris His claim is that in Christ we not only are forgiven and redeemed by God but are also transformed into new persons, capable of knowing and doing the will of God. Nothing less than a moral revolution was triggered by the death and resurrection of Jesus! Living with Christ in God 3: With his theological assertion For you died, Paul returns to 2: Having died and risen with the Lord Christ 3: The deeper logic of this poetic phrase is inescapable: In this section of his letter Paul will set down no more important an ethical principle than this: Paul will expand this idea in verses 3 and 4. As I said earlier regarding his use of this "hidden-revealed" motif, Paul seeks to draw attention to certain claims previously made by his Scripture. Implied in what he says is that believing Gentiles are now hidden with Christ in God, further exposing the error of claiming that to become Christian the Gentile believer must also become Jewish. The Colossian error distorted this Jewish concern. Paul also links his realized Christology with his futuristic eschatology. The result of participating with Christ in his death and resurrection is also [to] appear with him in glory. Glory doxe is another apocalyptic motif that is closely associated with heavenly existence. Paul may well be offering a tacit commentary on those who are overly concerned with earthly things:

Paul needed an incarnation Christology (or perhaps, a divine Christology) in order to make his three-part system work. The bait in Paul's message was the resurrection. Do this and you will be raised up into eternal life.

Christology is that part of theology which deals with Our Lord Jesus Christ. In its full extent it comprises the doctrines concerning both the person of Christ and His works; but in the present article we shall limit ourselves to a consideration of the person of Christ. Hence we shall have to study our subject under the triple aspect of the Old Testament, the New Testament, and Christian Tradition. Old Testament From what has been said we understand that the Old Testament is not considered here from the viewpoint of the Jewish scribe, but of the Christian theologian. Jesus Christ Himself was the first to use it in this way by His repeated appeal to the Messianic passages of the prophetic writings. The Apostles saw in these prophecies many arguments in favour of the claims and the teachings of Jesus Christ; the Evangelists, too, are familiar with them, though they appeal less frequently to them than the patristic writers do. Even the Fathers either state the prophetic argument only in general terms or they quote single prophecies; but they thus prepare the way for the deeper insight into the historical perspective of the Messianic predictions which began to prevail in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Leaving the statement of the historical development of the Messianic prophecies to the writer of the article MESSIAS, we shall briefly call attention to the prophetic predictions of the genealogy of Christ, of His birth, His infancy, His names, His offices, His public life, His sufferings, and His glory. He is represented as the seed of the woman, the son of Sem, the son of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the son of David, the prince of pastors, the offspring of the marrow of the high cedar Genesis 3: The Royal Psalmist extols the Divine genealogy of the future Messiah in the words: "Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee" Psalm 2: They locate its place in Bethlehem of Juda Micah 5: Among these are the adoration of the Magi Ps. It is true that in the case of these prophecies, as it happens in the case of many others, their fulfilment is their clearest commentary; but this does not undo the fact that the events were really predicted. Thus in the prophecies of Zacharias the Messiah is called the Orient, or, according to the Hebrew text, the "bud" iii; vi, in the Book of Daniel He is the Son of Man vii, in the Prophecy of Malachias He is the Angel of the Testament ii, 17; iii, 6, in the writings of Isaias He is the Saviour To return once more to the Book of Isaias, the prophet foretells the rejection of the Messiah through a league with death 27; the Psalmist alludes to the same mystery where he speaks of the stone which the builders rejected The general idea of the Messianic victim is presented in the context of the words "sacrifice and oblation thou wouldst not" Ps. The sacrifice of Isaac Genesis The third chapter of Lamentations is justly considered as the dirge of our buried Redeemer. The context of such phrases as "I have risen because the Lord hath protected me" Psalm 3, "My flesh shall rest in hope Psalm 15, "On the third day he will raise us up" Hosea 5: This mystery is also implied, at least typically, in the first fruits of the harvest Leviticus Psalm 67 refers to the Ascension; Joel, ii, to the coming of the Paraclete; Isaiah 9, to the call of the Gentiles; Mich. Other characteristics of the Messianic kingdom are typified by the tabernacle Exodus A Cantic of thanksgiving for the Messianic benefits is found in Isaiah The Books of the Old Testament are not the only source from which the Christian theologian may learn the Messianic ideas of pre-Christian Jewry. Not that all of these works were written before the coming of Christ; but, though partially post-Christian in their authorship, they preserve a picture of the Jewish world of thought, dating back, at least in its outline, centuries before the coming of Christ. New Testament Some modern writers tell us that there are two Christs, as it were, the Messiah of faith and the Jesus of history. They regard the Lord and Christ, Whom God exalted by raising Him from the dead, as the subject of Christian faith; and Jesus of Nazareth, the preacher and worker of miracles, as the theme of the historian. Otherwise the history of the first Christian centuries appears to these writers to be quite inconceivable. The Fourth Gospel is said to lack the data which underlie the definitions of the first ecumenical councils and to supply testimony that is not a supplement, but a corrective, of the portrait of Jesus drawn by the Synoptics. These two accounts of the Christ are represented as mutually exclusive: We shall here briefly review the Christology of St. Thus we shall give the reader a complete Christology of the New Testament and at the same time the data necessary

to control the contentions of the Modernists. The Christology will not, however, be complete in the sense that it extends to all the details concerning Jesus Christ taught in the New Testament, but in the sense that it gives His essential characteristics taught in the whole of the New Testament. God, the human world, and the Mediator. But then the latter is both Divine and human, both God and man. On the other hand the Apostle plainly speaks of Our Lord manifested in the flesh 1 Timothy 3: Paul, the superiority of the Christian revelation over all other Divine manifestations, and the perfection of the New Covenant with its sacrifice and priesthood, are derived from the fact that Christ is the Son of God Hebrews 1: The Apostle understands by the expression "Son of God" not a merely moral dignity, or a merely external relation to God which began in time, but an eternal and immanent relation of Christ to the Father. Christology of the Catholic epistles The Epistles of St. John will be considered together with the other writings of the same Apostle in the next paragraph. Under the present heading we shall briefly indicate the views concerning Christ held by the Apostles St. James The mainly practical scope of the Epistle of St. This doctrine is, however, implied in the language of the inspired writer. He professes to stand in the same relation to Jesus Christ as to God, being the servant of both i, 1: Jesus Christ is both the sovereign judge and independent lawgiver, who can save and can destroy iv, 12; the faith in Jesus Christ is faith in the lord of Glory ii, 1. The language of St. Peter presents himself as the servant and the apostle of Jesus Christ 1 Peter 1: Peter had witnessed the glory of Jesus in the Transfiguration 2 Peter 1: Jesus Our Lord 2 Peter 1: Throughout his Epistle, therefore, St. Peter feels, as it were, and implies the Divinity of Jesus Christ. Jude, too, introduces himself as the servant of Jesus Christ, through union with whom Christians are kept in a life of faith and holiness 1; Christ is our only Lord and Saviour 4, Who punished Israel in the wilderness and the rebel angels 5, Who will come to judgment surrounded by myriads of saints 14, and to Whom Christians look for the mercy which He will show them at His coming 21, the issue of which will be life everlasting. Can a merely human Christ be the subject of this language? Johannean Christology If there were nothing else in the New Testament to prove the Divinity of Christ, the first fourteen verses in the Fourth Gospel would suffice to convince a believer in the Bible of that dogma. Now the doctrine of this prologue is the fundamental idea of the whole Johannean theology. The Word made flesh is the same with the Word Who was in the beginning, on the one hand, and with the man Jesus Christ, the subject of the Fourth Gospel on the other. The whole Gospel is a history of the Eternal Word dwelling in human nature among men. The teaching of the Fourth Gospel is also found in the Johannean Epistles. In his very opening words the writer tells his readers that the Word of life has become manifest and that the Apostles had seen and heard and handled the Word incarnate. The denial of the Son implies the loss of the Father 1 John 2: Towards the end of the Epistle the writer is still more emphatic: This is the true God and life eternal" *ibid.* According to the Apocalypse, Christ is the first and the last, the alpha and the omega, the eternal and the almighty i, 8; xxi, 6; xxii, He is the king of kings and lord of lords xix, 16, the lord of the unseen world xii, 10; xiii, 8, the centre of the court of heaven v, 6; He receives the adoration of the highest angels v, 8, and as the object of that uninterrupted worship v, 12, He is associated with the Father v, 13; xvii, Christology of the synoptists There is a real difference between the first three Evangelists and St. John in their respective representations of our Lord. The truth presented by these writers may be the same, but they view it from different standpoints. The three Synoptists set forth the humanity of Christ in its obedience to the law, in its power over nature, and in its tenderness for the weak and afflicted; the fourth Gospel sets forth the life of Christ not in any of the aspects which belong to it as human, but as being the adequate expression of the glory of the Divine Person, manifested to men under a visible form. But in spite of this difference, the Synoptists by their suggestive implication practically anticipate the teaching of the Fourth Gospel. This suggestion is implied, first, in the Synoptic use of the title Son of God as applied to Jesus Christ. Jesus is the Son of God, not merely in an ethical or theocratic sense, not merely as one among many sons, but He is the only, the well-beloved Son of the Father, so that His sonship is unshared by any other, and is absolutely unique Matthew 3: Elisabeth calls Mary blessed among women, blesses the fruit of her womb, and marvels that she herself should be visited by the mother of her Lord Luke 1: Gabriel greets Our Lady as full of grace, and blessed among women; her Son will be great, He will be called the Son of the Most High, and of His kingdom there will be no end Luke 1: As new-born infant, Christ is adored by the shepherds and the Magi, representatives of the Jewish and the Gentile

world. These accounts hardly fit in with the limits of a merely human child, but they become intelligible in the light of the Fourth Gospel. The very term Son of Man, which they often apply to Christ, is used in such a way that it shows in Jesus Christ a self-consciousness for which the human element is not something primary, but something secondary and superinduced. Often Christ is simply called Son of Man. At His baptism and transfiguration He receives witness from heaven to His Divine Son-ship; the Prophets of the Old Testament are not rivals, but servants in comparison with Him. Again, Christ claims the power to forgive sins and supports His claim by miracles. He is the Lord of the material and moral universe; as supreme lawgiver He revises all other legislation; as final judge He determines the fate of all. Blot the Fourth Gospel out of the Canon of the New Testament, and you still have in the Synoptic Gospels the identical doctrine concerning the person of Jesus Christ which we now draw out of the Four Gospels; some points of the doctrine might be less clearly stated than they are now, but they would remain substantially the same. Christian tradition Biblical Christology shows that one and the same Jesus Christ is both God and man. While Christian tradition has always maintained this triple thesis that Jesus Christ is truly man, that He is truly God, and that the Godman, Jesus Christ, is one and the same person the heretical or erroneous tenets of various religious leaders have forced the Church to insist more expressly now on the one, now on another element of her Christology. The reader will find a more lengthy account of the principal heresies and councils under their respective headings.

Humanity of Christ The true humanity of Jesus Christ was denied even in the earliest ages of the Church. The Docetist Marcion and the Priscillianists grant to Jesus only an apparent body; the Valentinians, a body brought down from Heaven. The followers of Apollinaris deny either that Jesus had any human soul at all, or that He possessed the higher part of the human soul, they maintain that the Word supplies either the whole soul in Christ, or at least its higher faculties. Finally, certain recent Catholic writers distinguish between the Christ of history and the Christ of faith, thus destroying in the Christ of faith His historical reality. The New Syllabus Proposit, 29 sq. Though the definitions of Nice and of the subsequent councils, especially of the Fourth Lateran, deal directly with the doctrine concerning the Most Holy Trinity, still they also teach that the Word is consubstantial with the Father and the Holy Ghost, and thus establish the Divinity of Jesus Christ, the Word incarnate. In more recent times, our earliest Rationalists endeavoured to avoid the problem of Jesus Christ; they had little to say of him, while they made St. Paul the founder of the Church. But the historical Christ was too impressive a figure to be long neglected. This dogma too has found bitter opponents from the earliest times of the Church. Nestorius and his followers admitted in Christ one moral person, as a human society forms one moral person; but this moral person results from the union of two physical persons, just as there are two natures in Christ. These two persons are united, not physically, but morally, by means of grace. It follows that the Divine and the human nature are physically united in Christ. The Monophysites, therefore, believed that in this physical union either the human nature was absorbed by the Divine, according to the views of Eutyches; or that the Divine nature was absorbed by the human; or, again, that out of the physical union of the two resulted a third nature by a kind of physical mixture, as it were, or at least by means of their physical composition.

Chapter 3 : A brief guide to the Apostle Paul, and why he is so important - Beliefnet

The Jewish Encyclopedia's article on Paul criticizes Paul's Christology because it goes beyond what Jesus says -- which "Judeo-Christians" can accept -- namely Jesus atoned for sin. Paul goes further, and says Jesus was the "world's artificer," taking from God an attribute monotheism gives only to God.

As in the area of the doctrine of the Trinity, the general development of Christology has been characterized by a plurality of views and formulations. Solutions intermediate between the positions of Antioch and Alexandria were constantly proposed. Two particular solutions became so controversial. Sources and concepts The basic sources for the historical development of Christology are the New Testament, containing the foundational Christian writings; the creeds of Christianity, especially those from the first five centuries; and the reflections of theologians. Clearly, those three are interrelated, with theological reflection occupying a pivotal place. Theologians explicated what they understood to be the meaning of both the New Testament and the creeds. In so doing they played a crucial role in the formulation of the Christological creeds. The argument has also been put forward that the liturgy of early Christianity played an incisive role in the formulation of the creeds, including those of Christology. By permission of the British Library Reflections about Jesus dominated Christian discourse from the apostolic age onward. Most of that Christological reflection took place in the eastern Mediterranean, where it utilized the language Greek and concepts of Classical antiquity. The Christological debate is quite unintelligible without an awareness of how it was shaped by that context. Since there seem to be echoes of Classical concepts in Scripture, it is not surprising that Christian theologians appropriated them in order to explicate the meaning of Christian affirmations. Two notions in particular played important roles: Logos theology, which was formulated by the Jewish philosopher Philo , sought to describe how God is active and effective through the divine will, reason, and power. That activity was named the logos Greek: Christian reflection understood Jesus as the manifestation of the divine will, reason, and power and therefore applied the concept of the logos to him dramatically so in the opening of The Gospel According to John. The good thus existed with God before any earthly appearance, which is merely the transition from hiding to manifestation. The concept of preexistence is related to the notion that there is nothing that God does not know, that there is neither past nor future with God, and that God is the Lord of History. In the New Testament, notions of preexistence, which Christian exegetes have found expressed in the Hebrew Bible, are applied to Jesus. The Letter of Paul to the Philippians 2: According to the apostle Paul , Jesus is voluntarily obedient in his descent from heaven , which is followed by his return there. Early history The four Gospels portray Jesus as having had a sense of mission much like the prophets in the Hebrew Bible, and they declare that Jesus saw himself as the decisive revelation of God to his people. That revelation consisted of his teachings, both about himself and about his role. Throughout the more than 2, years of Christian history, there has been what might be called a dual emphasis with regard to Jesus: The earliest Christological reflection focused on the titles given to Jesus in the apostolic writings. Those titles, some of which were used more widely than others, derived in one way or another from the Hebrew Scriptures. Jesus was also described as judge and as high priest as in the Epistle to the Hebrews. It was used in the liturgy, however, and the iconography of the lamb, generally depicted with a cross , became one of the foremost Christian symbols. Another title used in the New Testament, but only sparingly afterward, was Servant of God. Despite its clear prominence in the Gospels, the term Son of Man enjoyed less-extensive usage. In Jewish Scripture e. The term does not appear in the writings of the apostle Paul, and the Letter of Barnabas The appellation Son of God seemed consistent with the notion of the eternal preexistence of all that is good. In its broadest sense, the notion of the Son of God denoted a special relationship to the Father: That affirmation marked the beginning of the orthodox Christian assertion that fully equated the Son of God with God, the Son. Christian scholarship traditionally argued that the Jewish expectation of the messiah at the time of Jesus focused on a political figure who would bring redemption to Israel through political might. Scholarship since the mid-th century, however, has challenged that view, insisting that the picture was far more complex. The most widely used title for Jesus was Lord Greek: Kyrios , undoubtedly because for non-Jews it was more

comprehensible than Christ; the former term also implied adoration. As indicated by the preceding discussion, in the apostolic age the titles and appellations given to Jesus were often used in a guarded and tentative way, as in the Second Letter of Clement written c. Ignatius of Antioch died c. Until the middle of the 2nd century, such terms emphasized two themes: The first theme makes use of concepts drawn from Classical antiquity, whereas the second relies on concepts characteristic of ancient Jewish thought. Christologies of the ancient world The earliest controversies Strictly speaking, Christology should be distinguished from Trinitarian theology, though the two subjects are closely related. Christology, on the other hand, focuses on the relationship between the human nature of Jesus and his divine nature. Trinitarian theology is a prerequisite of Christological discourse, a fact reflected in debates between Christian theologians beginning in the 3rd century. The Arian controversy, for example, was not about Christology but about a Trinitarian issue: The basic contours of the controversy provided the context for the Christological debate that began once the church had concluded that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit formed a single Godhead and that the Son was fully divine. The remaining issue concerned how the divine nature of Jesus was related to his humanity. The richness of metaphor in the apostolic writings helped shape the early Christian understanding of Jesus. That extensive vocabulary was first given a coherent framework in the 2nd century, when Ignatius of Antioch rejected adoptionism to argue that Jesus was the conqueror of death, in whom both the divine and the human were present. According to Ignatius, Jesus was spirit and flesh, created and uncreated, suffering and nonsuffering. As spirit, Jesus was one and equal with the Father; as flesh, he was subordinate and altogether obedient to the Father. Ignatius did not reflect on how those contrasting characteristics could be harmonized, nor did he seem bothered by the fact that his views amounted to a series of paradoxes. The combination of the divine and the human in Jesus posed a formidable problem for 2nd-century theologians, especially the Gnostics , who adopted a cosmological dualism and held that the material world was the creation of the Devil. Others taught that Jesus was wholly human, that he was wholly divine, or that the divine entered him at his baptism only to leave him at his Crucifixion. In response to the soteriological question Why did Christ come down? Irenaeus , bishop of Lyon, argued that, in order to be the redeemer of humankind, Jesus, who was divine, also had to be human. But, because he was begotten by the Father, he was inferior to him. The Roman theologian Tertullian died c. Theological discourse in Alexandria, represented in the 2nd century by St. Clement of Alexandria , centred on the concept of the logos, which was understood as the source of all rationality, knowledge, and morality. According to logos theology, logos appeared as philosophy among the Greeks and as the Law among the Jews and reached its final form in Jesus. The problem lay in the difficulty of understanding Jesus as truly human. That was an issue for Origen c. Many of the participants in the controversies surrounding the divinity and humanity of Jesus came from the eastern Mediterranean. They wrote in Greek and employed the concepts and vocabulary of Greek philosophy. Most Western theologians, meanwhile, were preoccupied with other issues, though St. Augustine discussed the nature of Jesus in his magisterial work *On the Trinity*. The question in that bewildering diversity of positions and argumentsâ€”which, nonetheless, had at its core the effort to safeguard both the unity of Jesus with God and his separateness from Godâ€”is whether the debates led to a logical conclusion in the decisions rendered at the great ecumenical councils of the 4th and 5th centuries. Traditional historiography answered that question in the affirmative , maintaining that the apostolic faith was expressed in the resolution of the Trinitarian-Christological controversies through the canons of the Council of Nicaea , which provided the orthodox definition of the relationship of God the Father and God the Son, and the formula of Chalcedon , which established orthodox teaching on the nature of Christ. According to that view, mainstream Christianity battled deviations from the implicit and explicit apostolic faith. The alternative perspective, presently held widely by scholars, sees the historical development of Christology in terms of a rich multiplicity of viewpoints, each with its own persuasiveness and biblical grounding. That perspective notes the serendipity of the course of the historical discussion and the arbitrariness of its resolution at both Nicaea and Chalcedon. Moreover, though the formulations of Nicaea and Chalcedon subsequently served to determine the parameters of orthodoxy and heresy , they were never universally accepted by all branches of Christendom, either at the time or afterward. It is not possible, therefore, to speak of a universal acceptance of classic Christology; rather, classic Christology was normative only in the Western church. The Arian

controversy The lingering disagreements about which Christological model was to be considered normative burst into the open in the early 4th century in what became known as the Arian controversy, possibly the most-intense and most-consequential theological dispute in early Christianity. The two protagonists, Arius c. 300. Both were from Alexandria, Arius a distinguished churchman and scholar and Athanasius a brilliant theologian. Athanasius, detail of a 12th-century mosaic; in the Palatine Chapel, Palermo, Italy. His basic notion was that the Son came into being through the will of the Father; the Son, therefore, had a beginning. Although the Son was before all eternity, he was not eternal, and Father and Son were not of the same essence. In Jesus, who suffered pain and wept, the logos became human. The weakness of his view was that, precisely because Jesus was capable of suffering as a human, it was difficult to understand how he could be fully divine and thus effect the redemption of humankind. According to Athanasius, God had to become human so that humans could become divine. That led him to conclude that the divine nature in Jesus was identical to that of the Father and that Father and Son have the same substance. The controversy did more than severely agitate and bitterly divide the Christian community; it also threatened the political stability of the Roman Empire. Eager for a resolution, Emperor Constantine convened and presided over the Council of Nicaea, which formulated the Nicene Creed, affirming the Athanasian position. Constantine, according to his biographer Eusebius of Caesarea, had sought to achieve a rapprochement between the two sides by suggesting the use of the word homoousios, which was accepted by all in attendance with the exception of Arius and two Libyan bishops. The council rejected the opinion of those who argued, as Eusebius put it in a famous letter, that once he was not, or he was not before his generation, or he came to be out of nothing, or "he, the Son of God, is of a different hypostasis or ousia [Greek: From Nicaea to Chalcedon The decision in favour of the Athanasian view at Nicaea did not immediately end the controversy. For more than a century the church wavered; the Council of Ariminum all but reversed Nicaea, and the emperor in Constantinople turned the Athanasian majority into a minority. Constantine himself leaned toward Arianism later in his reign, and his eventual successor, his son Constantius, was openly Arian. One question of particular importance throughout the controversy was whether Jesus had actually suffered. Apollinaris the Younger c. 350. Nestorius of Antioch died, concerned with affirming the full humanity of Jesus, asserted that he possessed two natures. Meanwhile, Emperor Theodosius I convened the Council of Constantinople, also known as the Second Ecumenical Council, which reaffirmed the Nicene Creed and once again condemned the Arians. Notwithstanding those efforts, much of Christendom during that period was Arian, including the Vandals in North Africa, the Visigoths in Spain, and the Lombards in Italy. Although much has been written about the subject, the reasons for the eventual decline of Arianism remain elusive. Undoubtedly, however, they include the fact that the Arians were never a united front and the fact that the Athanasians, using Greek philosophy, devised cogent rational arguments to support their position.

Chapter 4 : The Christology of Paul

Paul based his Christology on the christological titles, credal summaries and hymns that exploded on the scene in the 20 years between Jesus' death and his first extant letter. The focus of Paul's Christology is the saving significance of Jesus' death and resurrection (soteriology), which in turn provided the basis for all the other.

November 11, in Book Reviews Tags: Jesus The Eternal Son: As Bird explains in the Preface, in his preparation for this conference he became aware much of what is said about adoptionist Christology is incorrect. It is simply assumed the most primitive Christology was adoptionist and scholars tended to reference John Knox or James Dunn rather than examine the evidence. This book calls that quasi consensus into question. Bird argues in this book that although there was Christological diversity in the early church, adoptionism was a second-century phenomenon. As Bird says, it is not correct to speak of a single, monolithic Christology of the early church, but it is equally problematic to speak of a wide variety of competing Christologies proportionally distributed across the early church. After a short chapter describing what he means by both Christology and adoptionism, Bird examines two passages most often used as evidence for adoptionism in chapter 2. Ehrman claims these verses say Jesus was according to the flesh the Davidic Messiah, then he was declared to be the exalted Son of God. For Bird, Romans 1: Bird cites Kavin Rowe to defend the change in Acts 2: For both Romans 1: Bird devotes two chapters to the Christology of the Gospel of Mark. As the earliest Gospel, it is often assumed the book has an underdeveloped Christology and the baptism is clearly adoptionist: Jesus goes into the water a human, and comes out the Son of God. These people were deified because they had provided some benefit to the people and were worshiped because they were perceived as continuing to be a benefit. In the Hellenistic world the idea a human could become a god was doubted, even if there was some cultural benefit from perpetuating the imperial cult. Both Jews and Christians rejected the idea of human deification, although Judaism developed used angels or exalted humans as intermediaries between God and man. But these angelic creatures are never exalted quite to the same level as Yahweh nor were they recipients of cultic worship. Psalm 2, Genesis 22 and Isaiah. It is Jesus who is the Lord, and it is the Lord Jesus who is initiating a new exodus. Bird deals more briefly with three other issues in the Gospel of Mark. First, in Mark 2 Jesus claims to forgive sin. This is not the function of a priest in Judaism, only God has the prerogative to pronounce sins forgiven. Second, calming the storm Mark 4: Third, in Mark. This blending of texts strongly suggests Jesus is the co-enthroned one who will be Lord of all creation. Since the first four chapters of this book argue there are no adoptionist texts in the New Testament, Bird devotes his fifth chapter to explaining how adoptionism developed in the second century. Even here he questions adoptionism in Shepherd of Hermes which he calls complicated and even incoherent, p. Bird thinks the first writer who can be described as an adoptionist is Theodotus of Byzantium about CE. Even here, Bird hedges since there appears to have been some mixture among his followers. In his brief concluding chapter, Bird makes the point the New Testament is not adoptionist, but rather focuses on the enthronement of the Davidic Messiah to heavenly glory. This conclusion favors a Christology developed out of the Hebrew Bible over one influenced by the Greco-Roman world. Modern adoptionism erodes the atonement since a created being cannot redeem another created being and runs the risk of a merit-based theology. Like most contributions to the ongoing discussion of early Christology, this book will probably not convince adoptionists. However, Bird does successfully challenge the assertion the earliest Christology was adoptionist by carefully examining several Pauline texts and the Gospel of Mark and providing a compelling non-adoptionist interpretation of these texts. Thanks to Eerdmans for kindly providing me with a review copy of this book. This did not influence my thoughts regarding the work.

Christology is at the very heart of the faith. Ultimately we know the Father through the Son, and so understanding the Son is crucial. Therefore when certain questionable Christological tendencies appear in the work of a theologian as in the case of Paul Tillich, a critique of those tendencies is necessary.

The Gentile mission and St. Paul Saul, or St. Paul as he was later called, was a Pharisee who persecuted the primitive church. Stephen the first Christian martyr and who regarded Jesus as a spiritual reformer sent to purge the corrupt worship of Jerusalem. While on a mission to Damascus to persecute the followers of Jesus, Paul was suddenly converted to faith in Christ and, simultaneously, to a conviction that the Gospel must pass to the non-Jewish world under conditions that dispensed with exclusively and distinctively Jewish ceremonies. Paul was disapproved by Christian Jews and remained throughout his career a controversial figure. He gained recognition for the converts of the Gentile mission by the Christian community in Jerusalem, but his work was considered an affront to Jewish traditionalism. He saw clearly that the universal mission of the church to all humanity, implicit in the coming of the Messiah, Christ, meant a radical break with rabbinical traditions. Because of the preservation of 13 weighty letters seven of which are accepted by a majority of scholars as authentic, Paul is the only vivid figure of the apostolic age 1st century ce. The crucifixion of Jesus he viewed as the supreme redemptive act and also as the means of expiation for the sin of humankind. But Paul linked this doctrine with his theme that the Gospel represents liberation from the Mosaic Law. The latter thesis created difficulties at Jerusalem, where the Christian community was led by St. James, the brother of Jesus, and the circle of the intimate disciples of Jesus. James, martyred at Jerusalem in 62, was the primary authority for the Christian Jews, especially those made anxious by Paul; the canonical letter ascribed to James opposes the antinomian anti-law interpretations of the doctrine of justification by faith. A middle position seems to have been occupied by St. Peter. All the Gospels record a special commission of Jesus to Peter as the leader among the Twelve Apostles. Jewish Christianity declined and became the faith of a very small group without links to either synagogue or Gentile church. A different emphasis appears in the Gospel According to John, written according to 2nd-century tradition at Ephesus. The history is treated symbolically to provide a vehicle for faith. In antiquity, divine presence had to be understood as either inspiration or incarnation. The tension between these two types of Christology doctrines of Christ first became acute in the debate between the schools of Antioch and Alexandria in the late 4th century.

Chapter 6 : CATHOLIC ENCYCLOPEDIA: Christology

Christology (from Greek $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{o}\lambda\omicron\gamma\iota\alpha$, $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{o}\varsigma$ and $\lambda\omicron\gamma\iota\alpha$) is the field of study within Christian theology which is primarily concerned with the ontology and person of Jesus as recorded in the canonical Gospels and the epistles of the New Testament.

I wish now to prove to those who are either Trinitarian or Unitarian, that you cannot believe Paul is inspired and hold on to your beliefs. Either you must give up Trinitarianism or Unitarianism, or you must give up Paul. While you may believe you can explain away one or two dilemmas, it is an impossible strain to explain all five points raised herein. Paul represents a third view neither compatible with Trinitarianism nor Unitarianism: When Jesus came to earth He emptied himself of an equality with God. However, at some point that apparently was the point of crucifixion, Jesus was indwelled by the Father. See also "God in Christ" in Ephesians 4. While Jesus too said the Father dwelled in Himself John The Law supposedly does not revive when Jesus resurrects because now the Father and Jesus are distinct. Non-trinitarian Christians as Dr. Buzzard provide a critique at this link. I take no position. But instead, Paul teaches that is not the effect of marrying Jesus; instead, it represents the dissolution of the Law. Thus, Paul teaches someone who begins not as God, who had an equality with God, and is indwelled by the Father, ends up as "our great God" but is also not God because Jesus will put everything under God except God himself. It appears Paul believes Jesus replaces the role of God, and becomes thereby a God Himself even though Jesus did not begin as God but as "first-born of creation. Clearly, Paul has made a bizarre reference to Jesus as a created-being who is not God but ends up as a God who will put everything under God. How can this be resolved? The solution for some is to adopt the Septuagint mistranslation of Isaiah 9: We should supposedly realize Jesus was an "Angel of the Lord," and was "God" in that sense. Thus, some evangelical Christians who are otherwise orthodox in belief actually defend that Jesus was an "Angel of the Lord" prior to His apparent transformation into God. This is partially justified on the flawed translation in the Septuagint Greek of Isaiah 9: If you believe in either view as doctrinally correct, you must abandon Paul as inspired, which is my point of raising these issues this way. This is how 1st century gnostics enamored with Paul reconciled all his passages long ago. Thus, Paul correctly wrote: The gnostics did so by claiming Jesus was emptied of God until the moment of crucifixion when God supposedly first fully dwelled in Jesus. Then when Jesus died, the creator-God died, and Jesus supposedly took his place as God. The reason why will become obvious on this page. Which proves Paul cannot be inspired due to his self-contradictions , and anyone believing in either Trinitarianism or Unitarianism cannot regard Paul as fully inspired. Paul says Jesus was the "First-Born of creation. Note that God says instead that His "first born" was Ephraim. Paul at the same time says after God created Jesus that then Jesus created everything else Col. This should shock both trinitarians and unitarians if everyone assumed Paul was correct in saying Jesus was non-eternal in the first place. How could a created being himself be the Creator? How could He be God? A Puzzle, to say the least. See our link on the correct Christology. See also the next point. Second, Paul then says in Phil. First, in verse 28, we read: For a trinitarian who accepts Paul, the trinitarian would also have to accept that Paul just said in verse 27 that Jesus is NOT presently God. For Paul said Jesus is "subject" to God the Father, but when Paul says "everything" is put under Jesus, Paul clarifies that he does not mean "God" is also "under Christ. It is also impossible for Oneness Christians to believe Jesus is "one" in a personal indwelling sense with God when Paul talks this way. Fourth, both trinitarians and unitarians believe Jesus had real human flesh, avoiding thereby the heresy of docetism. That heresy taught Jesus only came in the "likeness of men. Marcion -- the Paul-only advocate -- taught docetism, claiming that Jesus "appeared to be a man" but was not truly a man of human flesh and instead was God alone. This doctrine was later understood to imply that Jesus did not truly suffer on the cross. Paul says in Phil. Paul says we marry Christ in the NT, and this does not perpetuate the Law that only applied when the first husband was alive. This explains how Paul could now assert in Titus 2: This teaching derives from Paul conceiving of a being distinct from the Father who had an "equality with God" who then "empties himself" KENOSIS in Greek of divine attributes to enter this world as one who had the "appearance of men. However, Paul taught that this second being who

pre-existed the Incarnation and became Jesus was not eternal. Hastings at 1: For a child is born to us, and a son is given to us, whose government is upon his shoulder: See our article " Isaiah 9: In the original Hebrew, however, a human annointed one says this instead about God -- God was the Creator. See our article " Begotten Son as Creator. Relying evidently upon Paul, Tertullian then saw the Son did not exist eternally as a separate person and instead was first begotten by the Father to then accomplish the creation of the world, just as Paul said in Col. For discussion of the latter, see Ante-Nicene Fathers at this link. Paul says in 1 Cor. Jesus was distinct and the Lord. This means Paul believed despite Jesus being a creator of the heavens and world that Jesus was not God at that point. If you believe Paul is infallible I do not , then Paul just blew a hole in the ship of Trinitarianism. But a Unitarian cannot claim triumph. Paul claims here that Jesus is a pre-existing creator of everything, yet he himself is distinct from the "one God, the Father. In the Primitive Christian era there was no sign of any Trinitarian problem or controversy The reason for this undoubtedly lay in the fact that for primitive Christianity [i. An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine Zondervan, at Based on this, the Arians held, precisely as Paul teaches in Col. While no orthodox scholar wishes to plainly say what this means, it is clear enough. How did the church cope with the Arian view of A. Pope Alexander of Alexandria said the son exists "independently of God the Father , continually begotten in a state of unbegottenness. From this self-contradictory explanation came the idea Jesus was "begotten not made" which appears in the Nicene Creed of A. Alexander was the leader of the opposition to the Arian heresy at the council of Nicea. This is often called the Athanasian solution even if Athanasius was not demonstrably involved. This first solution thus essentially ignored Paul. Jesus claimed the latter. This change blasted a hole in monotheism. When not only a heavenly personal pre-existence but an eternal, co-essential existence with the Father was attributed to the Son, the idea of the unity of God was lost. This was the important complaint of all Monarchians [i. International Scholars Publication, at In this way, the Trinity of AD of Tertullian which accepted a non-eternal Son with a divine presence of the only true God -- the Father -- was materially altered in AD. It was done in a manner that destroyed Monotheism. Indeed, Gregory of Nyssa, the leader of the Council of Constantinople of AD said the new version of the Trinity was specifically designed to prove the monotheism of Jews was a heresy. Whether Jesus was the "eternal son" as the Athanasians claimed or instead was the "firstborn of creation," as Paul teaches, either way this violates Isaiah There God says no one but Himself created everything, which would rule out, by necessity, a being who himself was created per Paul -- part of "everything" that God says He created -- also being creator of all things. It also rules out an "independent" eternal son who is continually begotten in a state of unbegottenness, employed in the Nicene conception of Christ, as an "independent" creator from God the Father. Professor Hans Wendt taught this was the solution that reconciles all the texts. Loofs, citing Wendt, says this "justifies our finding God in Christ when we pray to him. Thus said Jehovah, thy redeemer, And thy framer from the womb: The Nicene notion of an "eternal son" made no sense. How can a begotten son be an eternal son? In the end, the correct trinitarianism of Tertullian was tossed out, and a new version of trinitarianism employed after AD which by was deliberately reformulated to destroy monotheism, just as Gregory of Nyssa explained was his intention supervising the AD Council that first adopted the Trinity. See Exaltation That Turned Idolatrous. Solution 2 for Some Christians To Col. Some Christians believe Jesus is an Angel equal to God. But an angel is not the same as God, and this is not a proper Trinitarian defense. Incidentally, the Septuagint translation from BC of Isaiah 9: However, this was a Septuagint mistranslation of the Hebrew into Greek. See our page on that issue.

Paul's "sapiential" christology invites us to welcome the salvation offered by the crucified and risen Lord, the Eternal Son, who is the very wisdom and power of God.

What can we learn from the life of Paul? There is much we can learn from the life of the apostle Paul. Far from ordinary, Paul was given the opportunity to do extraordinary things for the kingdom of God. The story of Paul is a story of redemption in Jesus Christ and a testimony that no one is beyond the saving grace of the Lord. Paul was actually born as Saul. He was born in Tarsus in Cilicia around AD 1â€™5 in a province in the southeastern corner of modern-day Tarsus, Turkey. He was of Benjamite lineage and Hebrew ancestry Philippians 3: His household would have spoken Aramaic, a derivative of Hebrew, which was the official language of Judea. At age thirteen Saul was sent to Palestine to learn from a rabbi named Gamaliel, under whom Saul mastered Jewish history, the Psalms, and the works of the prophets. His education would continue for five or six years as Saul learned such things as dissecting Scripture Acts Saul went on to become a lawyer, and all signs pointed to his becoming a member of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish Supreme Court of 71 men who ruled over Jewish life and religion. Saul was zealous for his faith, and this faith did not allow for compromise. It is this zeal that led Saul down the path of religious extremism. Gamaliel was also present and delivered a message to calm the council and prevent them from stoning Peter. Saul might also have been present at the trial of Stephen. He was present for his stoning and death; he held the garments of those who did the stoning Acts 7: Saul became determined to eradicate Christians, ruthless in his pursuit as he believed he was acting in the name of God. Arguably, there is no one more frightening or more vicious than a religious terrorist, especially when he believes he is doing the will of the Lord by killing innocent people. This is exactly what Saul of Tarsus was: Saul was angered by what he had seen and filled with murderous rage against the Christians. On the road Saul was caught in a bright light from heaven that caused him to fall face down on the ground. The light of the Lord blinded him, and as he traveled on he had to rely on his companions. Through prayer, Saul received the Holy Spirit Acts 9: Saul immediately went into the synagogues and proclaimed Jesus as the Son of God Acts 9: The Jews thought he had come to take away the Christians Acts 9: Saul spent time in Arabia, Damascus, Jerusalem, Syria, and his native Cilicia, and Barnabas enlisted his help to teach those in the church in Antioch Acts Saul took his first of three missionary journeys in the late AD 40s. Paul wrote many of the New Testament books. The apostle Paul spent his life proclaiming the risen Christ Jesus throughout the Roman world, often at great personal peril 2 Corinthians So, what can we learn from the life of the apostle Paul? First, we learn that God can save anyone. Some of these people have done despicable things to other human beings, while some just try to live a moral life thinking that God will smile upon them on the day of judgment. When we read the story of Paul, we are amazed that God would allow into heaven a religious extremist who murdered innocent women and children. Today, we might see terrorists or other criminals as unworthy of redemption because their crimes against humanity are just too great. Only God can save a soul from hell. Second, we learn from the life of Paul that anyone can be a humble, powerful witness for Jesus Christ. Arguably, no other human figure in the Bible demonstrated more humility while sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ as Paul. Paul spent all his days, from conversion to martyrdom, working tirelessly for the kingdom of God. Finally, we learn that anyone can surrender completely to God. Paul was fully committed to God. And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. Through his hardships and suffering, Paul knew the outcome of a life well lived for Christ. He had surrendered his life fully, trusting God for everything. Can we make the same claim?

Chapter 8 : Christology - Wikipedia

Today I would like to speak of the teaching that St Paul bequeathed to us on the centrality of the Risen Christ in the mystery of salvation, on his Christology. In truth, the Risen Jesus Christ, "exalted above every other name", is at the centre of every reflection Paul makes.

Introduction Paul encountered the risen Christ on the road to Damascus. After this experience, he changed his understanding of Jesus accordingly. Also it goes without saying that Paul came to believe that Jesus, who had been crucified, was now alive. Only once does the apostle write about the identity of Jesus as his primary purpose Col 1 ; his other christological statements are secondary, being made in the service of other topics. This adds to the difficulty of the task. In addition, it must be noted that Paul does not clearly separate christology from soteriology, so to do so is artificial, the dissection of an organic whole. To express the idea of Jesus Christ as a human being, Paul uses various anthropological terms in his description of him and his salvation-historical work. Paul qualifies this by saying that Jesus Christ is the "second man from heaven" as opposed to the "first man from earth" [1 Cor Similarly, in 1 Tim 2: Paul does not use the phrase "in the likeness of" in order to communicate that Christ only appeared to be flesh, in which case likeness would mean something like resemblance. In other words, it would be an error to conclude that, because he appeared to be a human, Christ was only a human being. Likewise in 1 Tim 3: Finally, in Eph 2: Paul also gives to God the salvation-historical designation of "the one who raised Jesus from the dead" Rom 8: This uniquely Christian title for God implies that Jesus had a human body, for otherwise there could be nothing raised from the dead. Paul affirms that Jesus Christ as a human being was a Jew. Likewise in 2 Tim 2: It should be noted, however, that Paul holds that Jesus Christ as a human being did not "know" sin in the sense that he did not experience sin and so was sinless: He is also described as righteous and obedient to God: His sinlessness and righteousness set him apart from the rest of humanity. Jesus Christ is also said to have humility, unlike most other human beings [Phil 2: Although Paul clearly believes in the humanity of Jesus, he makes little use of the gospel tradition in his letters, although he apparently had access to it see 1 Cor 7: That Paul makes little use of the gospel tradition is probably accidental, and does not reflect any prejudice against it. On three occasions, Paul makes use of gospel traditions that eventually found their way into the canonical gospels are: These are in addition to the trinitarian statements that Paul includes in his letters Rom For God to send forth implies the pre-existence of the one sent, because one must already be in order to be sent; in this case, the son as pre-existent takes upon himself a human existence "born of a woman". Similarly, in Rom 8: Finally, in the two pre-Pauline hymns quoted by Paul Phil 2: The question that now arises is what did Paul think Jesus Christ was before his appearance in human history as a human being. There is one strand of post-biblical Messianic expectation in which the Messiah is conceived as pre-existent. This is perhaps derived from a messianic interpretation of "one like a son of man" in Dan 7: In this regard, we should look at John 7: He has revealed the wisdom of the Lord of the Spirits to the righteous and holy ones The congregation of the holy ones shall be planted, and all the elect ones shall stand before him. The Identification of Jesus Christ with God In spite of his use of different and even unsystematic terminology, the undeniable conclusion is that Paul identifies Jesus Christ with God. This is a remarkable position for a second-Temple Jew to hold, so much so that scholars sometimes cannot believe that Paul has such a high Christology. He probably believed that borrowing from Hellenistic sources was desirable because there were not the conceptual tools available to him from Palestinian Jewish sources, written in Hebrew and Aramaic, in order to express his understanding of Jesus Christ for his churches. There is debate over whether second-Temple Jews ever equated any mediatorial figure with God in any way, thereby compromising a rigid monotheism. Hurtado argues, against W. Thus, the identification of Jesus with God is a unique development in pre-Pauline Christian theology, which Paul accepts and further develops. In the case of hypostaseis, since these are attributes or functions of God and not independent beings, such as angels or human beings, to attribute deity to these is not a compromise of a strict monotheism. There was what Hurtado calls a "mutation" in early Christianity, however, insofar as the early church attributed divine status to Jesus as a mediatorial figure, something unprecedented in any form of Judaism. On this topic,

see also A. Brill, ; Paul the Convert. Yale University Press, chap. Rowland, The Open Heaven. SCM, ; J. Mohr-Siebeck, ; R. And being found in outward appearance as a human being, 8 he humbled himself, becoming obedience unto death, even the death of a cross. It should be noted that the scholarly discussion on this topic has been immense, far too much to consider exhaustively. The term is used of God or the gods, but with the sense of visible, outward appearance Plato, Rep. As used in the hymn in Phil 2: In this way Christ is not simply identified with God, as if they are merely two names for the same being. It is probably too much, however, as Lightfoot suggests, to claim that the author of the hymn intends the full semantic field derived from Aristotelian philosophy *ousia* [essential being] and *phusis* [nature] be imported into an interpretation of the text, as if the author were an peripatetic Aristotelian philosopher. The central idea of the hymn is that Christ Jesus became a human being, not appeared in human history as the pre-existent Heavenly Man. Indeed, some interpreters argue that the hymn is actually contrasting Christ and Adam along the lines of Rom 5: Dunn argues that the hymn in Phil 2: In the hymn, there are two sets of contrasting terms: Unlike, Adam, he did not grasp at "equality with God" but willingly assumed the "likeness of human beings," in order to nullify the effects of the first Adam on the human race. Thus, it is not the point of the hymn to say anything about the pre-existence of Christ, but to compare him to Adam. Context determines meaning, and the context in Phil 2: The implication is that the latter is explicative of the former. Again the problem with asserting the equality of Christ Jesus with God is that, since God is numerically one, there should be nothing equal to God. Paul could be interpreted as identifying Christ Jesus with God. In this state, Christ Jesus appeared to be nothing more than a human being, but was much more than that, even though he had emptied himself and thereby had renounced the advantages of his equality with God. There have been attempts to find allusions to the Isaian suffering servant Isa Thus, in this case, for Christ Jesus to empty himself does not describe the incarnation, but his death on the cross. There is, however, insufficient evidence to conclude that the hymn in Phil 2: All things were created through him and for him. To make his point, he probably quotes from an early Christian hymn 1: On the basis that they disturb the parallelism membrorum of the hymn, G. Beasley-Murray argues that Paul expanded upon *ta panta* "all things" to include "in the heavens and upon earth, whether visible or invisible, whether thrones or dominions or powers or authorities" in 1: He also suggests that Paul added the purpose clause in 1: Essays Presented to F. Bruce on His 70th Birthday ed. Other exegetes make different suggestions. According to Lohse, the fact that some texts have another through-phrase *dia*: It is doubtful that the alleged original form of the hymn will ever be reconstructed given the present state of the evidence. The religious-historical background of this hymn is to be found in Jewish Wisdom theology, according to which God is depicted as both creator and redeemer election of Israel. The hymn found in Col 1: It is the Hellenistic expression of Jewish Wisdom theology in particular that provides the author of the hymn with some of the basic concepts by which he interprets the nature of Christ, so that it is not surprising to find general parallels with Greek philosophical thought. Ridderbos rejects the suggestion that the religious-historical background of Col 1: An Outline of His Theology, In my opinion, Ridderbos does not make his case. This assumes wrongly that there was such a thing as a pre-Christian gnosticism from which the early church could borrow. Philo uses the term in relation to the Logos word or reason , which is said to be the image of God, meaning that the Logos is formally identical to God, but derivative of God *De opf*. Whatever God is, so is Christ, but Christ is ontologically dependent upon God. The fact that Christ is the image of the invisible God, which is to say incorporeal, implies that he is not a physical image or copy of God. The significant advance beyond Jewish Wisdom theology represented by the hymn in Col 1: So the possibility of interpreting "the son of his love," i. Christ, as a personification of some attribute of God, like Wisdom, is excluded. The LXX translates *zelem* image in Gen 1: As already indicated, H. Ridderbos connects 2 Cor 4: This conclusion is probably not justified, since Paul makes no reference to the first man in Colossians or Philippians. All things includes all the spiritual beings, who are designated as "thrones," "dominions," "rulers," and "authorities. In addition, in Wisdom of Solomon, the Logos word of God is said to be the means of creation: Similarly, Philo of Alexandria frequently attributes to the Logos the function of being the means by which all things are what they are. Thinking along Platonic lines, he describes the Logos as the mind of God in which is contained all the Platonic Ideas, from which all things derive their formal, or essential, identity and reality.

As already indicated, this religious-historical background serves partially to illuminate Paul's christology (contrary to Fee, Pauline Christology. An Exegetical-Theological Study,).

Famously converted on the road to Damascus, he travelled tens of thousands of miles around the Mediterranean spreading the word of Jesus and it was Paul who came up with the doctrine that would turn Christianity from a small sect of Judaism into a worldwide faith that was open to all. What we know about Paul comes from two extraordinary sources. The author of Acts claims that he knew Paul and even accompanied him on many of his journeys. The one thing most people do know about St Paul is that he underwent a dramatic conversion on the road to Damascus. Precisely what happened has been hard to determine as the accounts in Acts and the letters differ on the details. For example, when St Paul talks about his conversion he makes no mention of a journey from Jerusalem to Damascus. But behind the paradoxes and the puzzles, there are fascinating glimpses of the man. In his letters, we also discover the Paul who writes warmly of his friends, both men and women, the Paul who frets about how the members of his churches are coping without him and who defends their status as true converts and the Paul who appeals for the freedom of a slave. Paul wrote some of the most beautiful and important passages in the whole of the Bible, but his works have also been used, among other things, to justify homophobia, slavery and anti-Semitism. He has also been accused of being anti-feminist, although many modern scholars would argue that in fact he championed the cause of women church leaders. In the final analysis, Paul was the first great Christian theologian, establishing some of the building blocks of the faith that we now take for granted, though there are those who argue that in laying out these ground rules, Paul has obscured and separated us from the true teachings of Jesus. Yet the utterly bizarre nature of the claims that they were making is easy to miss after two thousand years of familiarity with Christianity. Let us pause to consider for a moment what it was that they were saying. God has acted decisively, once for all, by sending his beloved Son to his own people, Israel. This Jesus, whom some acknowledged as Christ, was subjected to an appalling and humiliating death. Everyone in the Roman Empire knew about crucifixion and the fact that Jesus died in this way was not something one would expect anyone to have been proud of. Paul the persecutor At this stage, it is incorrect to talk about Christianity. These earliest followers of Jesus were devout Jews who continued to offer sacrifice at the Temple and to observe the whole Jewish Law. Essentially, they were a small sect within Judaism. So how would such a sect have been viewed by other Jews who were not members of it? Thankfully, we have a pretty clear answer to this question because one of the most famous converts to the new Messianic sect was a Jew named Paul and before his conversion he was so horrified by the claims of this new movement that, he tells us, he persecuted it violently. The problem seems to have focused around the cross. He describes it as a "stumbling block" to Jews 1 Corinthians 1. It was unthinkable that the Messiah could have suffered in this way. The problem would have been sharply focused for someone like Paul. He was not from Israel but was born in Tarsus, in modern Turkey. Jews like Paul, who lived outside the Jewish homeland, were called diaspora Jews. Since they lived among pagans, they were particularly conscious of how their religion might appear to those around them. Jews were called to be a light to the nations Isaiah It could hold Judaism up to ridicule. So Paul attempted to snuff out this fledgling movement before it could do too much damage. Paul himself finds it difficult to describe what had happened and in a fascinating passage in one of his letters he explains this as a resurrection appearance of Jesus 1 Corinthians Now, with boundless energy, Paul preached the gospel of the Christ crucified for the sins of all people far and wide, beginning at Jerusalem and continuing all the way to Rome. His achievement was a matter of some pride for him: For Paul this was a particularly punishing business. Unlike other early Christian missionaries, Paul earned his own living wherever he went. Luke says that he was a tentmaker Acts He made an impact as apostle, as theologian, and as letter-writer. Paul the apostle had expanded the church far and wide, flinging open the doors to Gentiles, strenuously fighting for his conviction that the gospel was for all people and that no barriers should be put in the way of Gentiles. And Paul the letter-writer gave us not only some of the profoundest pieces of early Christian theological reflection, but also

some of the finest, most poignant writing in history. Revelation At the end of the Bible, though, lies not Paul but Revelation, a book that at first sight looks like the black sheep in the New Testament family. With its fantastic visions of heaven, its gory stories of the future, its impenetrable signs and symbols, many a reader has given up in exasperation in the attempt to fathom out its mysteries. Some Christians have struggled with Revelation; Luther wished it was not in the New Testament at all. Yet at heart, Revelation is a profoundly Christian book. Its central message is that in spite of any appearance to the contrary, God is still Lord and King over the universe. Where there is injustice in the world, this will be rectified. Where there is sin, sickness, disease and the devil, these will be eradicated. John, [its author] is a seer and has been given a revelation of what is going on in heaven. And the message he hears there is that after all, God is indeed in control, through Jesus his Son, who has conquered death through his own victory over death. Paul was born in Tarsu now in the south east of Turkey to a Jewish family. He had a dual identity as lots of Jews did in antiquity. He had a Jewish education, a Jewish way of life and abided by the Law of Moses. But was brought up outside of the homeland and was also at home in Greek culture, fluent in Greek, and had at least some understanding of the Greek or Roman cultural traditions. He was a Pharisee, one of a group of Jews who policed the boundary of the law and made sure that they and others were faithful to the law of Moses. He just becomes passionate for a different cause. Arabia would be quite close to the northern part of Damascus, so he could have gone to reflect on what had happened. When he goes to Jerusalem, it appears that he is accepted and is instructed in the basics of Christianity. He stays with Peter for two weeks and presumably learns a little about Jesus from him. Paul then disappears for a period and later reemerges in Antioch. Antioch in Syria which was the third biggest city in the Roman empire and becomes the center of the movement to expand this new Christian sect - this sect of Jesus the Nazarene. There are many different accounts of what happened when Paul was called back to Jerusalem. But it seems that there was a very strong movement amongst the followers of Jesus to convert Gentiles [non-Jews] into Jews. Following Christ was a Jewish movement; he was a Jewish Messiah. So he brought this idea to the leaders in Jerusalem and the Jerusalem council agreed that Gentiles could become Christians without becoming Jews first. A group of his converts had decided that they want to be circumcised and Paul is absolutely furious about this because he feels it compromises their very nature as Christians. You can almost feel him banging on the table or pacing round the room as he dictates the letter. Paul never shied away from conflict. He could take all kinds of controversy and suffering. He has, in one or two of his letters, long lists of the things that he has endured. He was physically quite weak but he always attributed his staying power to the grace of God or the power of God. He had a strong sense of experiencing the power of God through suffering. The letter is to be delivered by Phoebe, the first deacon we know of in the Christian church. She is also a benefactor or patron and very significant figure. Paul also talks about Aquilla and Priscilla. Priscilla is usually named first when he mentions the couple which implies that she is the head of the household. He also talks about Andronicus and Juniar, one of whom may have been a female apostle. In fact we may have a situation where the apostle, the church founder, perhaps even the founder of the church of Rome, included a woman and the main leadership in Rome was by women. The Catholic Encyclopaedia describes it as of comparatively recent origin and notes that it may have been observed originally to mark the transfer of his remains to their resting place in Rome. It is celebrated alongside the martyrdom of St Peter and is one of the oldest saints days in the Christian calendar.