

that Christ gave to Paul and has ended up in mass confusion. It has mixed the purposes and plans of God through the ages and is not sure what Paul is on about.

WHY PAUL? Without Paul we would not know God's plan for the past 2000 years. If God had not saved Paul and given him **Plan 2**, we would have a large time gap in our Bible.

Sincere Bible students who give careful consideration to these truths which Christ gave Paul, find they can be helped in understanding God's will for this Dispensation or Age of Grace. Here are four basic 'helps'.

1. It helps us understand that God still has Plan 1. After the Rapture of the Church, future believing Jews and Gentiles will be saved. They will inherit the earth, as promised in the prophetic writings (Romans 11:25-29). Christ will return to reign over them in the earthly kingdom for one thousand years as their King and set up his Kingdom on earth (Matt. 19:28; 24:30; 25: 31-34). People from all nations will be saved and all the world will be blessed (Rev. 7: 1-17, v.9).

2. It helps us understand God's present program. Today, believers belong to the Church, the Body of Christ, which was revealed first to Paul and explained to everyone in his letters. (Eph. 3; Col. 1:25-26; Rom. 11; 16:25).

3. It helps us understand the purpose of the Holy Spirit signs, wonders and miracles. Under Plan 1, Jesus the King gave his disciples and others power to use signs and miracles as a '*sample or preview*' of his future earthly Kingdom (Hebrews 6:5) in which there will be no sickness or suffering (Isaiah 11).

Under Plan 2, the Holy Spirit withdrew these gifts (1Cor.13:8) because the destiny of the Church Age believers is in Heaven. Those who

try to reproduce these gifts, are misleading people and not understanding God's program for this Church Age.

4. It helps us understand World Events and our relationship to them. As Church Age believers today we live in anticipation of the 'Rapture' (1Thess. 4:13-18) which will take place before the 7 year Tribulation, described by Jesus in Matthew 24:3-31. Though we may see world events leading towards that time, we do not need to be fearful or make preparations.

So 'WHY PAUL?' As we have seen, God chose Paul to reveal what we have called 'Plan 2' - that is, God's previous hidden plan to save people in this Church age and give them a home with Christ in the heaven (Eph. 1:18-23).

Are you in Christ's family? Have you trusted in Christ as your Savior and Lord? Do you know where you are headed?

"Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31; Rom. 10:9).

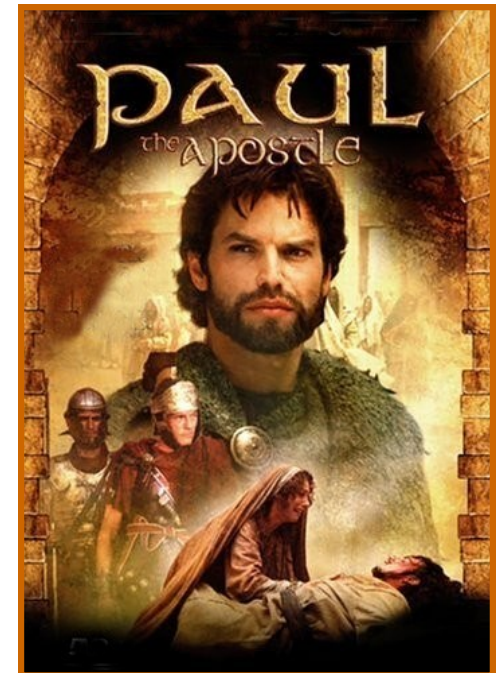
Please read "Why Paul?" Part 1 for more information as well.

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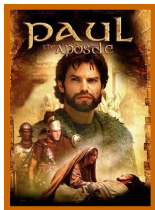
WHY PAUL ?
Part 2 of 2



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WHY PAUL?

Understanding Plan 2

The Ministry and Message of Paul

First let us review a little. With over half of the chapters of Acts speaking about the ministry of Paul and his 14 letters explaining his message, it is evident that God wants us to understand **‘WHY PAUL?’**.

In part one we considered the two plans of God for mankind. God’s overall or major plan has always been to have a redeemed people who would praise and glorify his name (Psalm 96-97; 100). The Bible indicates that God revealed two specific plans for two different groups.

Plan 1 involves the redeemed who will inherit the earth (Psa. 69:35-36) and live for a millennium under the reign of the Messiah - Jesus Christ the King in his Kingdom on earth (Matt. 5:5, 6:10; 19:27-28; 25:34). Later, they will inherit the New earth and New Jerusalem.

In Plan 1, God chose the Nation of Israel as His servants (Isa. 49:3; Deut. 6 - 8; Ex. 19) through whom King Jesus, the Messiah will rule the world for 1,000 years. The twelve disciples were selected to be administrators in that future Kingdom on earth (Matt. 19:27-28). They were instructed to pray for that Kingdom to come on earth (Matt. 6:10).

Though this plan includes the offer of salvation to the Gentiles, (Rom. 15:9) it was always an extension of Israel’s blessings. The gospel of the King and Kingdom was to the Jew first (John 4:22; Rom. 2:10; 9:3-5).

When Israel rejected the message and ministry of the twelve apostles, **Plan 1** was postponed for a future date and God introduced **Plan 2**.

Plan 2 involves a redeemed group in the dispensation of Grace, who form the church which is the ‘Body of Christ’. When this plan of God is completed historically, then those who are members of this group will be taken off the earth – caught up or raptured (1Thess. 4:17) to inherit Heaven and live in the Heavenly places, where God sits on His throne (Eph. 2:6-7; Col. 3:1-5; Phil. 3:19-20).

This plan of God was kept secret in the eternal counsels of God (Rom. 16:25; Eph. 3:10), until he saved Paul, revealed it to him and then commissioned him to *‘make this truth known to all mankind’* (Eph. 3: 8-9).

It is helpful to realise that the Kingdom Age is prophesied throughout the Old Testament, whereas the Church Age was never prophesied but was a secret plan of God revealed to Paul.

What are some of the unique characteristics of this Church age given to Paul?

The Bible contains what some call ‘horizontal’ truth and ‘vertical’ truth. By horizontal is meant the things shared in common from Genesis to Revelation. In the Dispensation of Grace, not everything was new. It contains the same God, the same Saviour and Redeemer. The same Lord, the same Holy Spirit, the same faith, forgiveness, regeneration, love, joy, and peace in believing, etc. But there are differences!!

The idea of ‘vertical truth’ is that some things are different and unique in each plan of God for his people at a certain time in history.

So, let’s do a little Bible exercise. Please read carefully the associated verses in the Bible and notice the two plans of God

Plan 1 presents Christ as **King** - Matt. 2:2

Plan 2 presents Christ as **Head** - Eph. 1:22

Plan 1 speaks about the **Kingdom** - Matt. 3:2

Plan 2 speaks about the **Church** - Eph. 1:21

Plan 1 is for the **Jews** ‘first’ - Acts 1:8

Plan 2 is for **Every Nationality** - Rom. 11:32

Plan 1 has its hope on **Earth** - Rev. 5:10

Plan 2 has its hope in **Heaven** - Phil. 3:19

Plan 1 was given to the **Disciples** - Matt. 10:1

Plan 2 was given to **Paul first**- Col. 1:25-26

Plan 1 was **Prophesied in O.T.** - Acts 3:24

Plan 2 was a **Secret till revealed** - Eph. 3:5

There are far too many unique features to the revelation God gave to Paul regarding the Church (which is called the ‘Body of Christ’), for us to consider in this brief presentation.

It seems that Christianity from its early years moved away from the ministry and message