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THE "EUAGGELION" ACCORDING TO ST. PAUL

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A Thesis Presented to  
The Faculty of Concordia Seminary  
Department of New Testament

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Sacred Theology

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by

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## THE "EUAGGELION" ACCORDING TO ST. PAUL

### Introduction

Of the numerous studies that have been made of various concepts in New Testament theology, perhaps the majority deal with such as are current in Paul's Epistles. Without a doubt, Paul's writings are rich in words that carry with them and in them "the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God." Yet his aim in the use of these words is one: he wishes to make known to all nations "the light of the glorious gospel of Christ." All his life, after the conversion, is dedicated to this one calling. To explain this Gospel, to make it known to men in its various aspects, the Apostle employs every tool of the beautiful Greek language at his command. And to this concept he makes every other concept subsidiary and supplementary.

The supremacy of the *εὐαγγέλιον* has not lost an iota of its importance to man, although centuries separate us from Paul. Despite attempts through the ages to destroy the

εὐαγγέλιον or to change it, it is still the power of God unto salvation that it always was. Controversies that have been waged over it have largely been the result of misunderstandings of the εὐαγγέλιον. Therefore a study of this basic concept of Christianity and of the theology of Paul is purposeful. It is the aim of this thesis to present the correct understanding of the term and to develop its implications.

To Paul, more than to any other, was given the ability to appreciate more fully and to explain more exhaustively the the mysteries of God which had been revealed to him. One indication of this is Paul's frequent use of the term εὐαγγέλιον and his even more frequent references to it. A student of Paul soon realizes that the Apostle has been too big for his interpreters. Unfortunately, however, his great comprehensive Gospel - "the multicolored (πολύποικίλος) wisdom of God," as he himself called it - has been lost by many in a mass of partial and one-sided reconstructions. Much has been read into Paul that is not there; and much of the depth and richness that is there has been ignored. To obtain an insight into the true meaning and the rich implications of St. Paul's εὐαγγέλιον was my ambition. I lay no claim to having exhausted the subject, though I did attempt to clarify the major implications.

Some of the questions that will be touched upon, and which in my opinion are very relevant to the proper understanding of Paul's concept, are these: What is the meaning

of the word εὐαγγέλιον itself? How does it differ from διδασκαλία or διδασκαλία? How does Paul conceive of the relation between εὐαγγέλιον and νόμος? Is εὐαγγέλιον an absolute term? If so, how can the Apostle speak of an εὐαγγέλιον ἕτερον? Furthermore, what was the relation of Paul's presentation of the way of salvation, of his εὐαγγέλιον, to the teaching of the Twelve and to the message of the Savior? Basic to Paul's conception of the Gospel is the relation of himself to the εὐαγγέλιον. I am treating the scope of the Gospel according to Paul not in detail, so as to set forth his whole system of doctrine, but in its essence so that the fundamentals of Paul's εὐαγγέλιον may become evident.

The materials dealing directly with the subject under study are limited. Although there is no dearth of studies on related matters, a discussion of εὐαγγέλιον itself is absent in many virtual analyses of Paul's thought. I must, however, acknowledge my indebtedness to Gerhard Kittel's Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament for the clearest and most exhaustive study of the meaning and implications of εὐαγγέλιον as Paul conceived of it. For the distinctive gospel which Paul preached we naturally depend on his own letters and on the book of Acts, and therefore frequent reference will be made to these writings.

## CHAPTER I.

## THE MEANING OF " EUAGGELION"

## 1. Etymology

In classical literature from the time of Homer to the writings of Plutarch the word εὐαγγελίον originally denoted the reward for a good message or for good tidings. Similarly τὰ δίδασκαλία denoted the fees paid for instruction.<sup>1</sup> According to the same classical usage εὐαγγελίον was understood to mean the sacrifice for a good message. As such it is found in the writings of Isocrates and Sophocles. Later, however, the idea of reward was lost and εὐαγγελίον stood for the good news itself. According to Deissmann, εὐαγγελίον was in use in pre-Christian times in the profane sense of good news; it later became a "primitive Christian cult-word of the first order." In support of his point Deissmann quotes from a fragment of a papyrus which he claims was written by a high official in Egypt near the middle of the third century A.D.

Forasmuch as I have become aware of the tidings of joy concerning the proclaiming as Emperor of Gaius Julius Verus Maximus Augustus, the son of our Lord, most dear to the gods,...

The writer of this fragment, upon hearing the "tidings of joy" (εὐαγγελίου) that G. Julius Verus Maximus had been proclaimed Caesar, called for a procession to be arranged for the gods.<sup>2</sup> Plutarch, Lucian, and Appian use it in this way.

1. The significance of this will be treated below.

2. Adolph Deissmann, Light from the Ancient East, p.366 f.

Ordinarily the word is used in the plural, and only rarely is the singular found among classical writings. The gap between the two ideas, namely, that of the reward for good news and that of the good news itself, can be bridged. Chrysostom establishes a forced connection between the two meanings in Hom. 19 in Act.: "τὸ εὐαγγελίον τοῦτο ἴσθι τὰδε σοι ἔσθι ἰμδὲ." Whereas τὸ διδασκάλιον in earlier literature denoted primarily that which was taught, the doctrine, and only later (after Plutarch) the fee for teaching (in the plural), εὐαγγελίον developed conversely; at first it denoted the reward for a message, and then, subsequently, the good message itself.

The LXX uses the term εὐαγγελίον in the sense of "the good tidings" only in II Sam. 18:20,22,25; and II Kings 7:9. In these passages the Hebrew word for "the good tidings" is טַרְטָוָה. In II Sam. 4:10, however, the same word, טַרְטָוָה is likewise translated by εὐαγγελίον; but although the Hebrew and Greek words are identical with those of the previously listed passages, the meaning is "reward for a good message" instead of "the good message". Where the LXX εὐαγγελίον meant good news, the reference is to the glad tidings of the kingdom of God soon to be set up.

After the death and resurrection of Christ the term εὐαγγελίον comprised the preaching of (concerning) Jesus the Savior, the One who had suffered death on the cross to procure salvation for men in the kingdom of God; it was the



message of Him who was raised again and "restored to life and exalted to the right hand of God in heaven, thence to return in majesty to consummate the kingdom of God."<sup>3</sup> Briefly, it was the glad tidings of salvation through Christ, the proclamation of the grace of God as manifested and pledged in Christ. The constant use of the word in the New Testament and by ecclesiastical writers in the sense of good tidings is not inconsistent with the formation of the word from εὐαγγελίος meaning "publishing good news"; nor was it opposed to the usus loquendi. In the New Testament the word always means good news, and always with special significance. Just as ἐπιγγελία is the promise of salvation, so εὐαγγέλιον is the news of the fulfilment of this promise; it is the news of salvation itself.<sup>4</sup> Significantly, εὐαγγέλιον in the New Testament never has the meaning of a book or a collection of writings.

The word εὐαγγέλιον occurs four times in Matthew (4:23; 9:35; 24:14; 26:13), eight times in Mark (1:1,14; 1:15; 8:35; 10:29; 13:10; 14:9; 16:15), twice in Acts (15:7 and 20:24), and once each in the writings of Peter and John (I Pet. 4:17 and Rev. 14:6). Apart from these instances the word is confined entirely to the Pauline letters. Paul uses it sixty times. Although εὐαγγέλιον does not occur very frequently in

3. Thayer, Joseph Henry, A Greek-English Lexicon of the N.T.

4. Cf. Acts 13:32; Eph. 3:6. Cremer, Hermann, Biblico - Theological Lexicon of the N.T. Greek.

the other writings of the New Testament, the group of words, *εὐαγγελίζεσθαι*, *εὐαγγελίζεσθαι*, and *εὐαγγέλιον* is well established in the gospels and Acts, and it is possible that this combination of words took a strong hold on Paul. He often uses *εὐαγγέλιον* with a genitive. These genitives attach much significance to the term which they modify. And for purposes of classification they can be divided into two main groups, the subjective and objective genitives. These two classifications, however, can be subdivided to illustrate the various shades of meaning which the Apostle intends to convey through these modifiers. The first subdivision of the subjective genitives is the genitive of the author of the subject matter or of the facts on which the glad tidings of man's salvation rest. Thus we find the phrase τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Θεοῦ in Rom. 1:1-3: "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God..." Rom. 15:16: "That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God,..." II Cor. 11:7: "Have I committed an offence in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely?" and I Tim. 1:11: "...According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust."

In addition to the subjective genitive which Paul uses to express authorship of subject matter he employs the same case, usually with the first person personal pronoun, to

denote the author of the particular mode in which the subject matter of the Gospel is understood (his conception of the Gospel) and taught to others. Thus Paul is able to call his exposition of the Gospel (including that of the teachers who agreed with him) τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ἡμῶν. He uses this form to express the distinction of his teaching from the exposition of the Gospel as taught by his opponents, who were preaching differently, a ἕτερον εὐαγγέλιον. It seems strange to think of a teaching contrary to the Gospel as Paul conceived of it, as Gospel, even though it is greatly modified by the ἕτερον. If the Gospel is one, the way of salvation one, namely, through faith in Jesus Christ, then how can Paul speak of another Gospel? Obviously the solution must be sought in the type of genitive used when he speaks of his gospel as opposed to that of the Judaizers and others. What was different about the gospel of the opponents was not the subject matter, the series of events of the life of Christ, but the difference lay in the exposition of the subject matter; and this exposition of the Judaizers was contrary to the true spirit of the Gospel.<sup>5</sup> Passages which exemplify this latter type of genitive are II Cor. 4:3: "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost;" Gal. 1:11: "...the gospel which was preached

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5. Cremer interprets this 'other' gospel thus: "to fall away to another gospel (qualitatively), which, however, is not (numerically) another, because there is no second message of salvation, but at best, "τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ μεταβλητέον μόνον;" Cf. II Cor. 11:4, "εὐαγγέλιον ἕτερον δὲ οὐκ ἔστιν ἕδος." Ibid.

of me is not after man." Other passages with the same type of genitive are Rom. 2:16; 16:25; and II Tim. 2:8. Paul also uses the genitive to denote the person who preaches the Gospel, εὐαγγέλιον ἡμῶν, I Thess. 1:5: "For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power..." II Thess. 2:14: "Whereunto he called you by our gospel..."

The objective genitive, when used to modify εὐαγγέλιον, refers to those who receive this message, the people for whom it is intended, e.g. εὐαγγέλιον τῆς περιτομῆς is the Gospel which God wants the Jews to hear and believe, and τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς ἀκροβυστίας refers to the same message, which is also meant for Gentiles. Both expressions occur in Gal. 2:7. Cremer and Thayer agree that the above-mentioned passages may quite suitably be explained "the news of salvation as delivered by me or us and intended for all people."

In addition to the types of genitive listed above, Cremer distinguishes a genitive of purport as found in II Cor. 4:4,6. Here τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς δόξης Χριστοῦ designates the news of salvation according to its intention. This may also be classified as descriptive genitive, for it elaborates and explains what kind of an εὐαγγέλιον it is - one which shows forth the glory of Christ.<sup>6</sup> Again the descriptive genitive or the

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6. A parallel to this use of Paul's can be found in Matt. 4:23; 9:35; 24:14; and Mark 1:14, τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς βασιλείας.

genitive designating purport can be found in Acts 20:24:  
 "...to testify the gospel of the grace of God;" Eph. 1:13:  
 "the gospel of your salvation;" and Eph. 6:15: "And your feet  
 shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." To show  
 the force of these genitives, Kittel says that the good news  
 of salvation brings salvation; the good news of peace actually  
 brings peace.<sup>7</sup>

Although the genitive carries some weight in the proper  
 understanding of the εὐαγγέλιον in those instances in which  
 it is attached to the word, yet it is definitely a mistake,  
 as Sanday and Headlam point out,<sup>8</sup> to restrict the force of the  
 genitive to any particular aspect (the Gospel of which God  
 is the author or of which Christ is the subject), for all the  
 aspects are included in which the Gospel is in any way related  
 to God and Christ.

## 2. Usage

The term εὐαγγέλιον itself denotes more than the good  
 news. Essential to Paul's concept of the word is the idea  
 of the need of proclaiming it; however, this is a figurative  
 use of the term. Kittel attributes this to a corresponding  
 use in the Old Testament Rabbinical usage, "...das Substantiv

7. Ibid.

8. Sanday, Wm. & Arthur C. Headlam, The Epistle to the  
 Romans (ICC) on Rom. 1:1.

ein nomen actionis ist. Es beschreibt die Handlung der Verkuendigung."<sup>9</sup> In support of this II Cor. 8:18 describes the treatment of preaching (not the contents):

And we have sent with him the brother, whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches.

Phil. 4:15 describes the beginning of the work of preaching the Gospel: "Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia..."

Also in Phil. 4:3 the Apostle speaks of help for the spreading of the Gospel; and II Cor. 2:12 Paul speaks of coming to Troas to preach the Gospel. In each of the above instances εὐαγγελίου occurs by itself without a verb; but the idea of proclamation is in the very word εὐαγγελίου.

Εὐαγγελίου includes the idea of a precise contents which should be announced. This is evident from the connection of the word with verbs of speaking.<sup>10</sup>

- a. λαλέω - speak - I Thess. 2:2
- b. κηρύσσω - preach as a herald - Gal. 2:2; I Thess. 2:9
- c. διαμαρτυροῦμαι - testify thoroughly - Acts 20:24
- d. εὐαγγελίζω - preach - I Cor. 15:1; II Cor. 11:7; Gal. 1:11
- e. καταγγέλλω - proclaim - I Cor. 9:14
- f. ἰεροῦργέω - minister - Rom. 15:19
- g. πληροῶ - preach fully - Rom. 15:16
- h. γνωρίζω - make known - I Cor. 15:1; Eph. 6:19
- i. διδάσκω - teach - Gal. 1:12; II Tim. 1:11
- j. ἀνατιθεῖναι - to set the Gospel forth for discussion - Gal. 2:2

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9. Kittel, op. cit. This point will be treated in greater detail in Chapter VI.

10. Compiled from the list given by Vine, V.E., Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, Vol. 2, p.168, and from Kittel, op. cit. and Gremer, op. cit.

For Paul the story of Jesus with its passion, death, and resurrection is the chief thing of this good news, and hence everything that is connected with this can be considered the preaching of the Gospel. According to Rom. 2:16, the judgment also belongs to the contents of the Gospel which is to be proclaimed: "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel." Kittel points out that the proclamation of the eschatological judgment and good news belong together like penitence and joy, that is, the relationship is comparable.<sup>11</sup>

Inherent in the idea of the εὐαγγέλιον is the element that it is a power, a dynamic. Through the proclamation of the Gospel both the heathen and the Jews inherit salvation and become partakers of the promise.

Weil εὐαγγέλιον Ausrichtung, Inhalt und Wirkungskraft der Botschaft enthaelt, ist in ἵνα μὴ τίνα ἔμκοπήν δῶμεν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ τοῦ Χριστοῦ, I Kor. 9:12, mit ἔμκοπήν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ nicht nur das Hindernis fuer die Verkuendigung gemeint. Paulus will vielmehr der Wirksamkeit des Evangeliums kein Hindernis sein... das Evangelium ist angefuellt, wenn es seine volle Wirksamkeit erlangt hat. Weil Christus sich in der Verkuendigung des Paulus in Wort und Zeichen und Wundern als wirksam erwiesen hat (Rom. 15:18), darum ist das Evangelium von Jerusalem bis Illyrien zur Vollentfaltung gebracht, und Christus wird in den Gemeinden gegenwaertig genannt (Rom. 15:20).<sup>12</sup>

The fact that the universal intent of the Gospel was not accidental, but essential to Paul's proclamation of the Gospel

11. Kittel, op. cit.

12. Ibid.

and to his concept of the εὐαγγέλιον is very apparent. In his mind the Gospel was not the proclamation of Christ's teaching of God's message of love and life for mankind. Its influence was far more direct; DuBose states that the very thing which distinguishes the Gospel from any other good news or information is that it is a communication from God and is a direct and immediate utterance of the Divine Word Himself. The concept of the εὐαγγέλιον, then, closely resembles that of the λόγος. The Gospel is not the mere symbol or inadequate expression of the thing that God means to impart to man.

Rather is it the Thing Itself he means. Jesus Christ Himself is God's Word, and He is no mere proclamation to us of a Divine Righteousness or Life; rather is He Himself the Divine Righteousness and the Divine Life which not only in Him, but as Himself God proclaims to the world as its supreme glad tidings.<sup>13</sup>

The observation that DuBose makes here is significant, and it serves to call attention to this particular aspect of the Gospel; but I believe he overemphasizes the point and overstates it. He apparently overlooks passages such as Rom. 1:17,18: "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith... For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness." According to these words, both the righteousness and the wrath of God are effectually revealed to men. Paul was aware that the

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13. DuBose, William P., The Gospel According to St. Paul, p.47.



true Gospel is not something of any man about Christ or God, but that it is God in Christ, the salvation.<sup>14</sup>

The Apostle Paul is not the only one in the New Testament who, in his views of the εὐαγγέλιον, includes the idea of the proclamation of the message. Machen points out that the characteristic New Testament words are words that deal with 'gospel' and 'teaching' and the transmission of an historical message. "Paul was not a gnostic, but a witness; salvation according to his teaching, came not through a mystic vision but through the hearing of faith."<sup>15</sup> It is of course impossible to read more of Paul's mind than he permits in his Epistles and in the accounts of his activities as recorded in Acts. Yet even these limited accounts reveal much. Perhaps Koeberle is not far from the truth when he says that what gave Paul and the other Apostles "the right, the courage, and gladness of heart to go into all the world and pour out their lives, like a living libation, was the certainty that they were bringing something absolutely new, an εὐαγγέλιον with which no other message could be compared and which alone could bring peace to the deepest longings of mankind."<sup>16</sup> The drive to proclaim these glad tidings did not come from a desire to rival the teachings of the Judaizers, mystics, and other teachers of ethics and wisdom; the impelling force in Paul was the conviction that his Gospel was the only message of salvation.

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14. This aspect of εὐαγγέλιον will be dealt with in Chap.V.

15. Machen, J. Gresham, The Origin of Paul's Religion, p.265.

16. Koeberle, Adolf, The Quest for Holiness, p.55.

The concept of the εὐαγγέλιον including the particular aspect dealing with its proclamation is complemented by the element of the reception of this Gospel. The proclaimed Gospel is also heard. Thus we find εὐαγγέλιον predicated by words of hearing or receiving.

- a. ἀκούω - hear - Col. 1:23
- b. προακούω - hear beforehand - Col. 1:5
- c. παραλαμβάνω - receive with the mind, accept - I Cor 15:1
- d. δεχόμενοι - receive - II Cor. 11:4 / & Gal. 1:12
- e. ὑπακούω - hearken to, obey - Rom. 10:16; I Thess. 1:8
- f. μεταστρέφω - pervert - Gal. 1:7

In the Pauline letters the references to εὐαγγέλιον as something to be proclaimed are twice as many as those references to the word as something to be received or accepted. This is an indication of the emphasis that Paul put on the proclamation of this way of life. He did not, however, make light of its reception or acceptance. This was a serious matter with him, and he evidences it in stressing to the Corinthians and Colossians and others how necessary it is to receive and accept the Gospel; to the Romans and Thessalonians the emphasis is on the hearkening and obedience to the message he proclaimed among them. And to the Galatians he stresses the dangers of perverting the Gospel which is received by hearing. Why was the hearing and reception of the Gospel so vital? It was because salvation could come to man through no other way than through the hearing of faith. As has been observed, the reception of the εὐαγγέλιον and its proclamation are to Paul inextricably bound together, both being essential to salvation.

only the Gospel insofar as it is the true and only fulfillment of the Law, and that it is the only power to fulfill the Law.

## CHAPTER II.

### "EUAGGELION" COMPARED WITH OTHER NEW TESTAMENT CONCEPTS

#### 1. νόμος

Much of the glory of the Gospel, as Paul expounded it, comes to us in the picture of contrasts that he portrays in his Epistles. DuBose considers the relation of νόμος to εὐαγγέλιον a "presupposition" of the Gospel. Other presuppositions which he lists are God's promise to man by His prophets and the Old Testament Scriptures. The reason for considering these elements as presuppositions to Paul's Gospel is that upon the foundation of these "presuppositions" are built the arguments which Paul sets forth.<sup>17</sup> It was in a way through the instrumentality of Paul the missionary that in the minds and hearts of the people was born the conviction that the Gospel had displaced the Law, and that it had displaced it by fulfilling it. In his presentation Paul dwells so much on the impotence of the Law and on the fact that it was superseded by the Gospel, that he actually magnifies νόμος. The Apostle's premise is that the Gospel itself is

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17. "That the pre-existence of the Hebrew Scriptures was humanly and historically a prior condition of the appearance of the Gospel is clear enough. Our Lord regarded Himself as in a sense the product and fulfilment of the Scriptures; although - in a truer sense - He regarded the Scriptures as promise and product of Himself; as the shadow, though cast before, is nevertheless consequence and not cause of the substance that follows after." DuBose, op. cit., pp. 20.21.

only the Gospel insofar as it is the true and only fulfilling of the Law, and that it is the only power to fulfil the Law.<sup>18</sup>

Thus through all the Epistles Paul develops the contrast between the Law and the Gospel as mutually exclusive; this is brought out in the antitheses of law and faith, works and grace, wages and free gift, Gal. 5:4: "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." According to I Tim. 1:11 the Gospel reveals the right use of the law, "According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust." In Romans and Galatians *ἐπαγγελία* and *νόμος* are never confused or even merged with each other, but always appear as expressing a contrast to each other. Kittel claims that the question of law and Gospel is never referred to or ever discussed, that the discussion rather pertains to *ἐπαγγελία* and *νόμος*, thus placing the battle already in the Old Testament; by doing this Paul destroys his opponents, the Judaizers, on their own field. Kittel may be overstating the facts by such

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18. One aspect of this relationship, though important, can be treated here only in passing; and that is well summarized by DuBose, op. cit., pp. 25, 26: "The Hebrew contributed to the final religion not only the moral principle of the law, or righteousness, but the spiritual principle of faith, or holiness; which means that in Hebraism there was not only the end of the Law but the beginning of the Gospel. For the transition from one to the other is that from self-righteousness, or obedience to the Law, to God-righteousness, or the receptivity of faith. Along with and through experience of the insufficiency of the law as a means of righteousness and life, there is developed faith or dependence in God as the source and power of righteousness and life."

a broad statement, but he draws attention to the fact that Paul's emphasis is rather on the contrast between *ἐπαγγελία* and *νόμος*.

Paulus zeigt, dass die Gegensatzlichkeit schon im AT besteht, und dass nach Gottes Willen Gesetz und Verheissung verschiedene Aufgaben in der Heilsgeschichte haben. Durch das Evangelium ist nicht eine neue Beurteilung der Menschen durch Gott eingetreten, so als ob man frueher durch das Gesetz, jetzt durch das Evangelium gerecht wird, sondern der Gegensatz ist im goettlichen Heilsplan begruetet. Die Frage Verheissung oder Gesetz haette noch aufkommen koennen. Jetzt aber, wo die Heilsgeschichte in Christus ihr Ziehl erreicht hat, ist die Ueberlegenheit des Evangeliums ueber das Gesetz erwiesen.<sup>19</sup>

And this opposition between Law and Promise,<sup>20</sup> though glossed over by the Judaizers, was essential and inevitable to Paul.

For his most distinct illustration of the conflict as it appeared in the Old Testament Paul makes use of the example of Abraham. The *ἐπαγγελία* was the fulfilment of the promise made to him; since it was antecedent to the law, it could not be superseded by the law:

...the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. (Gal. 3:17)

More than that, even Abraham himself was saved by faith, just

19. Kittel, op. cit.

20. By the term *ὁ νόμος* Paul generally means the Mosaic system. When *νόμος* has the article, the reference is to the Mosaic law specifically; where the article is omitted, he still refers to the law, but contemplates it more generically, as the expression of the divine will. (Rom. 2:12-15; Gal. 3:23-24) Stevens, George B., The Pauline Theology, p. 160.

as now men are saved by faith in Christ. The law "came in beside, stealthily" (Rom. 5:20,  $\pi\alpha\rho\epsilon\iota\sigma\tilde{\eta}\lambda\theta\epsilon\nu$ ) and carried out a necessary historical function in fulfilment of the promise, for by provoking and condemning sin, the law made man more fully aware of his need of the grace of God, and so the law was a preparation for the Gospel: "Moreover the law entered that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Hastings is of the opinion that

In some respects St. Paul sharpened the anti-thesis between Law and grace to a point that was extreme, in that it did not take into account the prophetic element in the Old Testament which was not legal. <sup>21</sup>

But it must not be overlooked that Paul did stress the element of grace in the Old Testament prophets, even using it as proof of the truth of his gospel preaching. Stevens calls attention to the fact that Paul does not urge a contrast between the principles of the legal and evangelical systems. "Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid." (Gal. 3:21)

The two come into collision only when this position and office of the law are misunderstood, and the law is regarded as a means of salvation, which in itself it never can be. <sup>22</sup>

The problem, according to Stevens, can be solved only by the recognition of Paul's principle that the Gospel antedated and underlay the legal system. To the Apostle the law was but a part of the Divine dispensation of old, and not its most

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21. Dictionary of the Apostolic Church, Vol. 1, p.472.

22. Stevens, op. cit., p.168.

enduring and essential part. The Gospel, on the other hand, existed before the law and continued effective during the period in which the legal system held sway.

The Gospel of Paul was not based upon a "mild view of the law, but upon a strict view; not upon a belief in the complacency of God, but upon the Cross of Christ as the satisfaction of divine justice."<sup>23</sup> And it is because of the fact that in Paul's experience the Cross has proved to him to be the power and wisdom of God unto salvation, that he cannot tolerate any other relation between God and man than what he preached, namely, the relationship of grace on God's part and faith on man's, as set forth by the Cross.<sup>24</sup> In studying Paul's conception of the relationship of νόμος to the εὐαγγέλιον, it is very evident that his whole treatment of it is developed purely from the Christological point of view; his purpose is to show how the law prepared the way to Christ by "deepening the sense of sin and sharpening the desire for salvation."<sup>25</sup> Moreover, since Christ is the "end of the law" (He put an end to its validity by fulfilling it Himself.),

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23. Machen, op. cit., p.177.

24. Garvie, Alfred E., Studies of Paul and His Gospel, p.199. Garvie adds a significant note: "Christ is sufficient for holiness as for forgiveness; and the desire to add any prop or bond of the moral life is the denial of that sufficiency. Can we suppose that law with its rewards and punishments can serve either as substitute for, or supplement to the Gospel which offers the grace of God to men's faith?" op. cit.

25. Stevens, op. cit., p.171.

its purposes were fulfilled in Him and were subordinate to the truths and principles of His Gospel. The conclusion I have drawn from the above observations is that the very essence of Paul's *ἐυαγγέλιον* is to be found in his conception of Christ's relation to the condemning Law.

No study of the Law-Gospel relationship in the mind of Paul is complete without considering the implications of this conflict in the life of man. These implications are best summarized by the Apostle in Gal. 4:4,5:

When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of Sons.

The Law accomplished its purpose by leading the convinced sinner to Christ. But once received by Christ, man no longer needs the law to the extent to which he needed it before, because the Gospel has again restored man to the position of a child of God. So, like the Savior, Paul proclaimed a message that makes man free; "the truth shall make you free."<sup>26</sup> Even the declarations that the Gospel has fulfilled and "established" the law, even these statements have their urgent life-implications. The Gospel is the Gospel only as it fulfils the Law, as it is the power of God in us to do what God's Law calls on us to do. Thus, when *νόμος* and *ἐυαγγέλιον* are considered as means of salvation, they assumed, in Paul's

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26. Cf. John 8:36; Matt. 11:30.



mind, the relation of contraries, mutually excluding one another. In this sense Paul could say to the Judaizers, Gal. 5:2,4: "...if ye be circumcized, Christ shall profit you nothing... ye are fallen from grace."<sup>27</sup>

## 2. Διδάχῃ and διδασκαλία

Whereas νόμος, according to Paul is something entirely different from εὐαγγέλιον, two closely related words which he uses deserve mention. Διδάχῃ in the active sense refers to the act of teaching, teaching, instructing, instruction, tuition.<sup>28</sup> The active use of the word rarely occurs in the New Testament, being confined chiefly to classical writings. II Tim. 4:2 may be an exception: "...reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine." In the passive sense the meaning is, the teaching which is given, that which anyone

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27. A fuller explanation of these implications can be found in DuBose, op. cit., p.76: "As the law is not the end but only the means, and a means which, effectual as far as it goes in bringing us towards the end, is ineffectual to bring us to the end, - so the Gospel itself too, however effectual to the end, is only a means, and as such must be interpreted not in itself but by its end. And what is the end of the Gospel? It is not that men in order to be righteous in the end shall be provisionally accepted and treated as such in the beginning; but exactly the reverse, that they shall be so lovingly and graciously taken into God's righteousness and treated as righteous in the beginning that they shall become, or made so, in the end. It is the end always that determines the meaning and nature of the thing, and the Gospel is the power of God unto an actual righteousness of men; and only by the way, or in a secondary sense, a gracious treating of sinful men as not sinful, and of faith which is not yet righteousness as being already such."

28. Herodotus III, 134.

teaches. And in an absolute sense,  $\delta\iota\delta\alpha\chi\eta$  denotes the  $\delta\iota\delta\alpha\chi\eta$   $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\omega}\nu$  (John 9,10);  $\kappa\upsilon\rho\iota\omicron\upsilon$ , (Acts 13:12);  $\tau\acute{\omega}\nu$   $\lambda\iota\pi\omicron\sigma\tau\acute{\omicron}\lambda\omega\nu$  (Acts 2:42; Tit. 1:9; Cf. Rom. 16:17; 6:17). In later years of the early church the "Didachee" was a collection or summary of the teachings of the Apostles, knowledge of which was required from all members of the church. This word, then, approaches the meaning of  $\epsilon\upsilon\alpha\gamma\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\iota\omicron\nu$  only in its doctrinal aspect, but in my estimation  $\epsilon\upsilon\alpha\gamma\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\iota\omicron\nu$  is more inclusive than  $\delta\iota\delta\alpha\chi\eta$ ; that is, the implications and connotations are richer and more varied. Paul nowhere equates the two terms.

With  $\delta\iota\delta\alpha\sigma\kappa\alpha\lambda\acute{\iota}\alpha$ , however, the similarity is more marked. As in  $\delta\iota\delta\alpha\chi\eta$ , active and passive meanings can be distinguished. Xenophon used it actively as the act of teaching or instructing. More often it is used in the passive implications, doctrine, etc. Gremer makes a few interesting and relevant comparisons.  $\delta\iota\delta\alpha\sigma\kappa\alpha\lambda\acute{\iota}\alpha$  is that which belongs to a  $\delta\iota\delta\alpha\sigma\kappa\alpha\lambda\omicron\varsigma$  (Cf.  $\delta\iota\delta\alpha\sigma\kappa\acute{\alpha}\lambda\iota\omicron\nu$ , the teacher's pay). It also means that which is taught, (like  $\epsilon\upsilon\alpha\gamma\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\iota\omicron\nu$ , properly an adjective, that which belongs to an  $\epsilon\upsilon\alpha\gamma\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\omicron\varsigma$ ) that is, the teaching or instruction, and for the most part in the objective and passive sense, doctrine. This term is distinguished from  $\delta\iota\delta\alpha\chi\eta$  inasmuch as it refers to the authority of the teacher, and  $\delta\iota\delta\alpha\chi\eta$  apparently never had that connotation. Bernhard Weiss notes that the word  $\delta\iota\delta\alpha\sigma\kappa\alpha\lambda\acute{\iota}\alpha$  (much like the use of  $\epsilon\upsilon\alpha\gamma\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\iota\omicron\nu$

as something proclaimed) means the work of teaching (I Tim. 4:13,16; II Tim. 3:16.) and the doctrine as to its contents (Eph. 4:14; Col. 2:22).<sup>29</sup> In I Tim. 6:3, where διδασκαλία might be thought of as approaching the meaning of εὐαγγέλιον, διδασκαλία still falls short of the full meaning that is found in εὐαγγέλιον: "If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness..." All three words, εὐαγγέλιον, διδασκαλία, and διδασκαλία in their original meanings connote something of the element of a fee that is paid for something said or taught. Thus εὐαγγέλιον had in its original usage the meaning 'reward for good news';<sup>30</sup> διδασκαλία has for one of its meanings 'tuition', that is, the fee paid to one who teaches; and it was not uncommon for the word διδασκαλία to mean 'the fees paid to the διδάσκαλος' in such ancient writings as those of Plutarch. In spite of this point which the three terms have in common, neither διδασκαλία nor διδασκαλία are interchangeable with εὐαγγέλιον in Paul's writings. Certainly εὐαγγέλιον means what the other two terms imply; but it means much more; it covers far more territory; its implications are far richer and deeper. In short, εὐαγγέλιον stands by itself, unique in its meaning, connotations, and implications.

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29. Weiss, Bernard, Biblical Theology of the New Testament.  
 30. Cf. Chapter I, "Etymology", p.4.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE SOURCE OF PAUL'S "EUAGGELION"

## 1. Its relation to the message of the Twelve

St. Paul strongly emphasized the direct revelation he had received from the risen Lord, the revelation of that *εὐαγγέλιον* which he was to preach. The need for this emphasis was brought about by attacks made by the Judaizers and other opponents. Paul had to defend himself, and this he did by proving that he in no way received the Gospel from men, but from God Himself. This meant that he was not in error. Naturally, in making this defense, the Apostle used pointed language. His object, however, was not to claim a message that was antithetical to that of the "pillars". Nowhere does he imply that he was in disagreement with the Gospel as it was proclaimed in Jerusalem or elsewhere. Rather the opposite is the case. Paul stresses three thoughts: first, Paul considered himself independent of the twelve original Apostles, that is, he acquired his knowledge of the message of salvation totally independently of any instruction on the part of Cephas, James, and others; secondly, that in spite of this independence, there was no conflict between his proclamation and that of the others, but that he was in agreement with them all; and thirdly, that the Apostles had nothing against Paul's Gospel.

Concerning the attitude of the other Apostles toward his Gospel, Paul says:

I went up by revelation; and I laid before them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, lest somehow I should be running or had run in vain... those, I say, who were of repute added nothing to me; but on the contrary, when they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcized ... and when they perceived the grace that was given to me, James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship...<sup>31</sup>

After listening to Paul's gospel, the other Apostles had nothing to add to it, for they realized that Christ had given it to Paul directly, and it was sufficient and complete.

Machen calls attention to the fact that whatever may be said of the Pauline doctrine of the Christian freedom which the Gentiles possessed, Paul's conception of the person of Christ was never criticized by the original Apostles. "Indeed, so far as can be seen, it was never criticized even by the Judaizers themselves."<sup>32</sup> With strong evidence Paul had to defend the doctrine of Christian freedom against numerous objections. But on the person of Christ, Machen says, Paul appears to have been in harmony with all Palestinian Christians.<sup>33</sup> The fact is of enormous importance. The heavenly

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31. Gal. 2:2-9, taken from the translation of the Revised Standard Version. Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from the Authorized Version.

32. Machen, op. cit., p.129.

33. "But if the Judaizers, who were Paul's bitter opponents, had no objection to Paul's view of Christ, it could only have been because the original apostles on this point gave them not even that slight color of support which may have been found with regard to the way of salvation in the apostles' observance of the Law." Ibid., p.135.

Christ of Paul was also the Christ of those who had walked and communed intimately with Jesus of Nazareth.

The best witness for the independence of Paul's gospel is the second chapter of Galatians, in which the writer shows that he did not receive his gospel through the instrumentality of men. When he states this, however, Paul does not mean that he did not receive any information from Peter, Barnabas, Mark, James, or the five hundred brethren who had seen the risen Lord. What he does mean is that he himself was convinced of the decisive fact - the fact of the resurrection - not by the testimony of these men, but by the divine revelation on the road to Damascus. He also meant that none of these men had told him how he himself was to be saved or what he was to proclaim to the Gentiles about the way of salvation. "Materials for the proof of his gospel might come to him from ordinary sources of information, but his gospel itself was given to him directly by Christ."<sup>34</sup> Some scholars have attempted to dwell with emphasis on the influence which was especially exerted on St. Paul by the testimony of the church as it existed before he began his mission activity.<sup>35</sup> It may be that the beliefs of the early church in the great truths of the Gospel coincided with those of St. Paul, and quite naturally so; yet the manner in which he arrived at these

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34. Ibid., p.147.

35. Notable examples of such attempts are Feine and his associates; Cf. Dictionary of the Apostolic Church.

convictions was too original and personal to permit us to speak of them as derived from any ordinary, human source. The supreme influence on Paul was undoubtedly the conversion itself.

It is clear that Paul's gospel was not attacked by his fellow Apostles and that it was not derived from them. It is also clear that the essence of his gospel agreed with that of the Twelve. Kittel denies the existence of any difference between Paul and the other Apostles:

Was Paulus offenbart ist (Gal. 1:11), stimmt mit dem von den Aposteln ueberlieferten Evangelium ueberein (I Kor. 15:1), und weil es ihm offenbart ist, hat es denselben Ursprung wie das Evangelium der Apostel. Der Auferstandene ist auctor evangelii. 36

In Paul's letters or speeches one can find little if any evidence to the effect that Paul was in any way conscious of introducing something new into the Christian conception of the transcendent Lord. On the contrary, he calls attention to the harmony of his proclamation with that of the intimate friends of Jesus. The implications and significance of this fact are noted by Machen:<sup>37</sup>

They had seen Jesus subject to all the petty limitations of human life: they had seen Him hungry and thirsty and weary; they had toiled with Him over the hills of Galilee; yet they gave the right hand of fellowship to one who regarded Him as the divine Redeemer seated on the throne of all being, and they were quite unconscious of any conflict between their view and his.

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36. Kittel, op. cit., p.732.

37. Machen, op. cit., p.136.

The fellow-apostles of Paul were not of the opinion that Paul's gospel of justification by faith in a glorified Redeemer was an innovation upon the message of Life as taught by their Master. Even the "pillars" in Jerusalem gave him an unqualified endorsement. Peter himself, when taken to task by Paul at Antioch, did not object to Paul's application to him also of the same Gospel of justification by faith in the Crucified (apart from the works of the law), as preached to the Gentiles on Paul's journeys, (Gal. 2:1-10, 14-21). Paul's proclamation of the Gospel was not different from the teaching of the Twelve. There is no schism in the New Testament as to the content of the Gospel message. However, he did find it necessary at times to shift the accent (Gal. 2:7) because of the rapidly changing spheres in which his hearers lived, and because of the pressing need of each individual occasion.

The Gospel as set forth by the other Apostles and as stated by Paul closely resemble each other in subject matter, and at times, even in style and in the very words in which it is expressed.<sup>38</sup> The fact that Paul's view of Christ's person and work is the same as that taken by the various writers of the New Testament is proved by the following comparison.

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38. Jeffrey, The Gospel of Paul, the Gospel of Jesus, p.149: "His own language shows that he himself believed that he was preaching and teaching the faith once delivered to the saints, and his gospel was the same as that generally received by the Apostles and the early disciples of Jesus."



1. The original Apostles represent Jesus as born into this world from a previous existence; as the Son of God, who was with the Father from the beginning, by whom everything was created, and who is the source of life and light. John 1.  
Paul spoke of Jesus as the eternal Son of God, the image of the invisible God, creator of all things, Col. 1:15-17, "in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."
2. The original Apostles state that Jesus voluntarily descended from His original high estate to take upon Himself man's nature in order to enter a position of service, through which He ministered to the needs of His fellowmen. Cf. the account of Christ's life and work as recorded in the four gospels.  
Paul writes that of His own free will Christ left His state of glory ("emptied Himself" is Paul's expression); that He took our nature upon Himself ("was made flesh") I Tim. 3:16; that His earthly position was one of poverty; among His fellowmen He appeared as a servant. Phil. 2:6-11.
3. The original Apostles mention this advent into the world as being for the purpose of man's salvation, "that the world through Him might be saved;" and His life was devoted to the welfare and salvation of man, Matt. 1:21; John 3:17.  
Paul taught that the Savior's purpose in thus coming to earth was the salvation of sinners, the restoration of man to sonship with God, Gal. 3:13.
4. The original Apostles fix our attention on the great central fact, that the work of salvation was to be accomplished by Christ's death on the Cross and by the shedding of His blood for the remission of sin; Cf. the great stress the evangelists place on the account of the Savior's suffering, death, and resurrection.  
Paul, without a doubt, dwelt far more in his writings on the means by which Jesus accomplished this salvation. He emphasizes the suffering and death; he takes pleasure in dealing with the subjects of the crucifixion, His blood, His sacrifice, the propitiation and reconciliation. He presents the theme, "Jesus Christ and Him crucified" in every possible light. I Cor. 1:23 and chapter 15.
5. The original Apostles together bear witness to the resurrection of Jesus, that He was seen by His disciples to ascend into heaven, where He now is at the right hand of God. They testify that Christ is to appear

in the fulness of time in all glory to judge both the quick and the dead. Luke 24:34; John 20:1-31; and Matt. 28.

Paul certainly makes much of the resurrection, for it was the risen Christ whom he knew best; and still more, he recognized the importance of this truth to the very existence of the Christian Church (I Cor. 15:1-11); he also represents the Christ as He who is to appear again in the glory of God the Father to judge the world, and to inflict "vengeance upon those who do not know God and upon those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus... and to be glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at in all who have believed..." (II Thess. 1:8-10).

True, some of the ideas and representations are not as prominent or detailed in the gospels as in the Epistles of Paul, but the true germ of these ideas is there. "These truths are in the bud in the Gospels and blossom in the Epistles."<sup>39</sup>

From the evidence presented above, there is only one conclusion; the gospel of Paul was in complete agreement and harmony with the Gospel message as it was set forth by the

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39. Jeffrey, op. cit., pp.148,149. DuBose offers supplementary material to the above comparison. "According to St. Paul, as according to St. John and according to the whole mind of the New Testament, Christianity recognizes and accepts in Jesus Christ, not alone the manifestation and revelation, but the communication of God's own righteousness and eternal life. The Gospel is not merely a truth, it is a power and an activity. He who is in Jesus Christ is in the actual operation or working of the selfsame forces and causes which made Jesus Christ Himself humanly what He was. Those forces or causes are on one side divine, and constitute all that we express by the general term grace. Grace covers all that God Himself is or does in us, all that we experience as His "motions" or designate as His spirit. They are on the other side of them human, and are expressed by the general terms faith, obedience, etc." DuBose, op. cit., p.302. Furthermore, we find that the New Testament always traces salvation to the love of God. Again John 3:16; Rom. 5:8; and Tit. 2:11 show this harmony.

original Apostles.<sup>40</sup> With the proof of the close relation between the teachings of Paul and those of the disciples of the Lord, it becomes necessary to investigate still further in order to determine whether the same agreement and harmony prevail between Paul's proclamation of salvation and the saving message which Christ proclaimed while on earth.<sup>41</sup>

### 2. Its relation to the teaching of Christ or to Christ Himself

Critics have periodically endeavored to prove that the writings of Paul set forth a different gospel from that contained in the sayings and work of Jesus, as recorded in the four gospels. It is my purpose to show by means of the following evidence that an agreement as close as that found between Paul and the other Apostles is found between Paul's concept of the Gospel and his Savior's teachings. The prevailing conceptions of the Gospel have indeed been largely determined by the writings of the missionary Apostle and by his interpretation of the sayings and deeds of the Nazarene. Jeffrey notes that "the statements of the Savior regarding His own person and work, plain and pregnant as these are, run into a peculiar

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40. Agreement does not exist only between the evangelists and St. Paul; but the same harmony can be established between the other writings of the New Testament and Paul's Epistles. Such passages which support Paul's concept of the Gospel are: James 1:17-21; 2:1,5,21-23; 3:9; 5:8,11,15; I Peter 1:2-12,18-25; 2:5,9,10,21-24; 3:9,18-22; 4:13,19; II Peter 1:1-3,16-20; 2:1; 3:15,16; I John 1:1,5-10; 2:1-3; 2:12,22-24; 3:1,2; 4:2,3,14-16; 5:5-15; II John 1:9; Jude 20-25.

41. In the foregoing harmony between Paul and the original Apostles I resorted to only those passages in the gospels which are the expression of the evangelists themselves. In the following comparison I refer to the words spoken by the Savior Himself.

and definite mould when passing through the mind of Paul and come forth stamped with his own individuality."<sup>42</sup> But this explanation or interpretation that Paul gives to the words of Jesus must not be construed as disfigurement or a changing of the message of salvation offered by Christ. On the contrary, Paul's writings are living witness to the complete oneness of Paul's thoughts with the message of his Lord. And how could it be otherwise, if this Apostle received directly by a supernatural revelation the Word of Life from Him, who is the Word and the Life?

Without a doubt, the conversion was the great change in Paul's life and thought; it was an act of divine intervention in Paul's life, supernatural and wonderful. Its supernatural character, however, does not necessarily involve (as some claim) a complete revelation to Paul of all the facts of Christ's life and ministry. These facts could have been made known to Paul in a natural way - through the reports of friends or acquaintances of his who were also witnesses of the life of Christ. What was given directly to the Apostle was rather the knowledge of how to interpret these facts and how to apply this Gospel. C. Anderson Scott seems to have caught a glimpse of the meaning of this miracle on the road to Damascus:

That seemingly single experience of Jesus as the risen Messiah proved to be complex. It involved a recognition also of the way in which

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42. Jeffrey, op. cit., p. 9.

God dealt and would deal with men in Jesus Christ. It carried with it the abandonment of old views, and the acceptance of new ones as to the way of salvation. It threw into solution all the forms of thought into which St. Paul's theology had crystallized under the influence of Judaism. But it crystallized his thinking afresh round a new centre. Paul entered on that experience intellectually equipped as a Jewish Rabbi; he emerged from it intellectually as well as spiritually equipped as a Christian Apostle. He had found at once a Savior and a scheme of salvation. Details of the scheme remained to be wrought out through later experience, but his gospel was given to him in the revelation which it pleased God to make him of His Son.<sup>43</sup>

St. Paul found it necessary to tell his readers and listeners often how the message which he proclaimed to them was the very same Gospel which he had received personally from God.

Gal. 1:11,12:

But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man; for I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Eph. 3:3:

How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery, as I wrote afore in few words;

and I Cor. 15:1-3:

Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, . . . For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.

This profession was his one strong defense against the accusation leveled at him that he perverted the gospel of Christ. How could his gospel be a perversion when the source of his

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43. Scott, C. Anderson, "The Gospel According to St. Paul," p. 210, from the Expositor (1900), Vol. 2, Series 6.

gospel was not the instruction of men, but the very Word of the risen Savior Himself, directly and personally revealed to Paul.

This revelation of the divine plan of salvation is in agreement with the proclamation of Jesus Himself. The truth is that virtually all the Apostle's great central concepts - the grace of God, the justification of the sinner, the adoption, the death of the Redeemer and His Resurrection, and all others - came to him from the heart of Jesus' Gospel.<sup>44</sup> Jesus inspired every one of them. The result is that this Paul, far from being a perverter of the simple Gospel of Jesus, "is the mirror in which the true nature of that Gospel, and the quality of its influence, have been most accurately revealed."<sup>45</sup> Deissmann, too, supports this view:<sup>46</sup>

Das Christus-Christentum des Paulus ist also kein Bruch mit dem Evangelium Jesu und auch keine Verfaelschung des Evangeliums Jesu. Es bedeutet die Sicherung des evangelischen Gotteserlebnisses des Einen fuer die Vielen durch die Verankerung dieser Vielen in der Seele des Einen.

Similar to the agreement between the gospel of Paul and the gospel of the other Apostles, there is a harmony between Paul's preaching and the teaching of Christ. This harmony

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44. The great concepts of Paul's gospel find their counterpart in such passages as: Matt. 11:28-30; 12:5-8; 16:15-21; 18:11; 26:26-28; 28:18-20; Mark 1:14,15; Luke 8:47-50; 15:7-32; 19:10; 22:70; 24:26,44-48; John 3:3-15; 5:24; 6:35-40; 8:12, 31-32; 10:7,9-12; 11:25,26; 18:36,37.

45. Stewart, James, The Man in Christ, p.19.

46. Deissmann, Adolf, Paulus, p.199.

obtains in various spheres, which cover the essence of the entire Christian Gospel.

1. The kingdom of God. Both Jesus and Paul divorce the kingdom of God from all political and material views. "My kingdom is not of this world;" (John 18:35) and "For the kingdom of God does not mean food and drink but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." (Rom. 14:17, RSV.)  
To both Christ and Paul the kingdom is present and future and is described by both as being transcendent and ethical; and the implications of entrance are also, in a way, ethical. (Cf. I Cor. 6:9)
2. The doctrine of the Fatherhood of God. When Jesus taught his disciples to pray "Our Father", he inaugurated a new era in the history of mankind, for He had restored man to the inheritance of the Father, Luke 11. Parallel to this is Paul's frequent reference to "God our Father", and "Abba, Father." For both Jesus and Paul the relation of fatherhood is not general, but is reserved for that intimate relation between the merciful God and those who have become His children by faith. According to Paul, God stands in close relation to all men, being the author of all being, their preserver. And so Paul is able to say of all men, "For we are also His offspring." But the term "Father" is reserved for a more intimate relationship. In so doing, Paul accepted the truth of this relation where he found it, but he adds to it the truth of the Gospel.
3. The doctrine of God's free grace. Parallels for this doctrine are John 3:16 and Rom. 3:24 and Rom. 11:6.
4. The ethical teachings of Christ and of His chief Apostle are in many respects similar. Both speak of love as the fulfilling of the law; both put great emphasis on faith that is active in good works, or the fruit of faith bearing witness to the faith in the heart. Machen compares the two also in regard to the details of what they say, but still more in the matter of what Paul and Christ do not say, the things they do not emphasize. We find no formalism, triviality, or casuistry with either one;<sup>47</sup> only "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, and self-control."

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47. Machen, op. cit., pp.146-167.

5. And at the bottom of this all is Paul's own regard of himself as the intimate disciple of Jesus. "Neither in Jesus nor in Paul is sin covered up, nor the necessity of a great transformation concealed. Jesus came not to reveal to men that they were already children of God, but to make them God's children by His redeeming work."<sup>48</sup> And Paul proclaimed to men that they were made children of God by adoption through the blood of Jesus.
6. Christ's entire ministry and teaching was directed toward his impending death and suffering. And for Paul, not the details of Jesus' life, but the redemptive acts of death and resurrection are the center of the Gospel.
7. Regarding the sacraments there is remarkable agreement between Jesus and Paul. Paul quotes the words of institution of the Lord's Supper almost verbatim. Luke 22 and I Cor. 11; Gal. 3:15; Mark 14:24 and I Cor. 10:16.
8. Salvation, according to Paul and Jesus, has its rise in God Himself. Eph. 5:25,26.
9. Eschatology. According to the teachings of both Paul and Jesus, death is certain and universal, Rom. 5:12; the soul after death continues to exist, Luke 23:43 and Phil. 1:23; the eternal destiny of man is decided the moment he dies, Mark 16:16 and II Cor. 6:2; Christ will come again, Mark 13:36,37 and I Thess. 4:16; He will come in power and great glory, Matt. 24:30 and I Cor. 2:8; there will be signs to warn of the coming judgment, Matt. 24; Luke 21 and II Thess. 2; II Tim. 3:1-4. Both taught a resurrection from the dead: Matt. 22:31,32 and I Cor. 15.

Although the terms in which Paul states his gospel are his own, the truths contained in it are found in the teaching of Christ.<sup>49</sup>

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48. Ibid., p.164.

49. "What the modern man misses most in Paul's exposition of Christian faith is a positive evaluation of the life and teachings of Jesus. And yet the Master and his apostle are much closer together than most superficial readers suppose. The permanent importance of Paul lies in the way in which he held together the idea of salvation by Christ with that of the coming kingdom of God. Central for him were grace, faith, and love. Without them, religious belief will never be Christian." Craig, Clarence Tucker, The Beginning of Christianity, p. 286.



## CHAPTER IV.

## PAUL'S RELATION TO THE "EUAGGELION"

Closely examining Paul's concept of *εὐαγγέλιον*, we find that the mission and theology of the Apostle are involved in each other, so much so that they cannot be separated. His epistles were originally intended as a means of enlarging his work and influence as a preacher to the nations. But in addition to that we find in these letters of the Apostle a full elaboration of the working principles and the truths which formed the essence of Paul's teaching. These principles were deeply rooted in Paul's life.

They were evolved, under divine guidance and enlightenment, through reflection and experience, from certain elementary facts which center in his conversion; they are divine truths... that are in the closest connection with the whole inner movement of the life that was so effective in teaching them. <sup>50</sup>

It may well have been due to the manner of the direct revelation of the Gospel to Paul that he became conscious of a close relation of this Gospel to himself; since God had given it to him, and not man, he could call the *εὐαγγέλιον* his own. Few men have been able to trace this extremely close relation as did Kittel, and to explain such an interpretation of Paul's thought so clearly. For that reason it becomes necessary to

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50. Stevens, op. cit., p. 26.

rely on Kittel more than on any other authority.

A chain of interwoven ideas from the writings and speeches of the great Apostle constitute an explanation of Paul's relation to the εὐαγγέλιον as he himself conceived of it. First of all, we find that to him the Gospel is the revelation of the glory of God in history in the appearance of the  $\delta\omicron\varsigma\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\tau\omicron\upsilon$  τοῦ Χριστοῦ on earth, II Cor. 4:4. Then, as  $\delta\epsilon\sigma\mu\omicron\iota\omicron\varsigma$  Χριστοῦ  $\text{Ἰησοῦ}$  (Philemon 9), imprisoned for Christ's sake, Paul considers his fetters as being endured for the sake of the Gospel. "Das Evangelium und sein Inhalt sind eins. Das Evangelium wird zu einer persoenlichen Groesze."<sup>51</sup> Hence the choice of the mission command is not determined by the mood or temper of the preacher or any other factor outside of the εὐαγγέλιον; but the urgency and drive to spread this message of Life comes from within the Gospel itself. Paul therefore pushed on in the strength of this power in whose service he was engaged, Col. 1:23,25:

... and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;...Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God.

Thus he could call himself  $\sigma\upsilon\gamma\kappa\omicron\iota\kappa\omega\nu\omicron\varsigma$  τοῦ εὐαγγελίου (I Cor. 9:23), a companion of the Gospel. The previous reference to Paul's use of εὐαγγέλιον with  $\mu\omicron\upsilon$  or  $\eta\mu\omega\acute{\nu}$  deserves re-

51. Kittel, op. cit.; cf. II Cor. 10:14:

emphasis at this point.<sup>52</sup> He stresses his claim that he does not preach a gospel in opposition to the other Apostles. For him there is only the one Gospel, Gal. 1:6-9. When he calls it his gospel, he does this because he is entrusted with the proclaiming of it as an Apostle. As a priceless treasure it is entrusted to him, I Thess. 2:4: "But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak;" and I Tim. 1:11: "According to the glorious gospel... committed to my trust." Paul calls himself κηρὺς καὶ ἀπόστολος καὶ διδάσκαλος of the Gospel (II Tim. 1:11). The next thought according to his thinking is that his calling to the apostleship was also the assignement to bring the news of salvation to the heathen. This new calling, however, must not be thought of as Paul's first experience in the service of his God, for he had also served God as a Pharisee. The difference is that in this new existence he served God as the evangelist of His own Son, (Rom. 1:9). "So ist er als Apostel Gefährte des Evangeliums, I Kor. 9:23."<sup>53</sup> The term 'share' is not sufficient for Kittel. He understands Paul to mean that the Gospel is the driving force, while the Apostle goes alongside as a co-traveler, weaker in power than the Gospel, but necessary to the message as its proclaimer. In addition,

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52. Cf. pp. 8,9 and Rom. 2:16; 16:25; II Tim. 2:8; II Cor. 4:3; I Thess. 1:5; II Thess. 2:14.

53. Kittel, op. cit.,

St. Paul considers himself the servant (dispenser) of the Gospel, δίδκορος κατὰ τὴν δωρεάν τῆς χάριτος τοῦ Θεοῦ τῆς δοδσίσης μοι κατὰ τὴν ἐνεργείαν τῆς δωράμεως αὐτοῦ.<sup>54</sup>

This sequence of ideas gradually leads to the climax, which in the Apostle's mind is the supreme expression of his personal relation to the Gospel. Having established his capacity as Apostle, servant, and proclaimer of the εὐαγγέλιον, Paul reaches for the next step, the intimate association of his apostleship with the Gospel.

Apostolat und Evangelium sind aufs engste miteinander verbunden, (II Kor. 10:14). Leiden mit Paulus ist Leiden mit dem Evangelium, (II Tim. 1:8). Aber wenn der Apostel gefesselt ist, so ist doch nicht das Evangelium gebunden, II Tim. 2:8ff, sondern es laeuft und wirkt und schafft Frucht.<sup>55</sup>

This magnificent statement of Kittel conveys to us an idea of the glorious experience Paul had as the preacher of the Gospel. And in my opinion it is essential to grasp and see the implications of this element in Paul's thinking if we are to understand him at all. This intimate association continues even when the Apostle is bound. And yet the Gospel is not bound; it knows no bounds, but spreads into all the world and bears fruit wherever it is heard. Paul personally does not lose the Gospel or the power of this εὐαγγέλιον while he is imprisoned; but he is fettered for the sake of the

54. Cf. Rom. 15:16; Eph. 3:7; Col. 1:23.

55. Kittel, op. cit.,

Gospel; its glory fills his heart and binds him to it, whether he is in prison or free. At the same time, however, "the word of God is not fettered."

Des Paulus Gefangenschaft ist Verteidigung und Befestigung des Evangeliums, (Phil. 1:16) und darum kann er von seiner Gefangenschaft als einer "charis" sprechen (Phil. 1:7). Sein ergehen laeszt sich nicht getrennt von seiner Aufgabe als Prediger des Evangeliums betrachten. Phil.1:12, wo er von sich erzahlen will, schreibt er von der προκοπή τοῦ εὐαγγελίου. Was ihm widerfahren 56 ist, hat zum Fortschritt des Evangeliums gedient.

The very fact that Paul is fettered proves to be a defense and establishment of the Gospel; and from this viewpoint of his imprisonment Paul can justifiably consider it a "grace" to suffer for the sake of the Gospel of Christ. The reason for this is that he, Paul the person and the Apostle, cannot be distinguished or separated from his responsibility as a witness of the Gospel. Looking at himself and the Gospel from this point of view, it is most natural for Paul to write about the "furtherance of the Gospel" when he means to speak of himself. Such a complete association of self with the Gospel can come only to one who is filled with the true spirit of this Gospel, the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Thus also the personal service of Timothy for Paul is no longer service for Paul alone, but in the Apostle's mind becomes actual service for the Gospel (Phil. 2:22). Paul, as it were, loses practically all sight of himself as a man or as a person, so engrossed he becomes in the εὐαγγελίον.

"Wie ein Kind dem Vater, so hat er mir gedient" verwandelt Paulus in "wie ein Kind dem Vater, so hat er - das Evangelium erzeugt Leben, I Kor. 4:15 - mit mir dem Evangelium gedient." (Phil. 2:22)<sup>57</sup>

No other writer of the entire New Testament becomes so warm in his feelings toward the Gospel; to none other was the Gospel so many-sided in its implications and depth; it required the whole of Paul to express what he understood by

ἐὺκρίνον.

This was the question at issue in the conflicts in Paul's soul and preparatory to his conversion. As soon as this question had been set at rest by the vision of Christ, the fundamental principle of his gospel was settled in his mind. The very thing that had previously been to him the cause of stumbling and offence, then became the foundation and cornerstone of his new religious system. Thenceforth he determined to know nothing but Jesus Christ as the crucified and risen Lord. These two facts constituted the Alpha and Omega of his gospel, whilst nothing else - not even the life of Jesus on earth - was taken into consideration at all.

An indication of this soul struggle, which Pfleiderer refers to, is Paul's answer to the Savior immediately after he had

57. Ibid.

Pfleiderer, Otto, The Influence of the Apostle Paul on the Development of Christianity, pp. 40, 41.

## CHAPTER V.

## PAUL'S EMPHASIS ON CHRIST IN HIS "EUAGGELION"

Any consideration of Paul's concept of the εὐαγγέλιον without reference to the importance of Christ in his mind and teaching is incomplete and untrue to Paul. A virtual struggle of soul must have preceded the Apostle's final assurance of the place of Christ in the whole message of salvation. Though there is no proof for the existence of such soul struggles, numerous events and circumstances point to it. Pfleiderer suggests that the struggle was over the question whether the crucified Jesus was really the risen Christ and Lord from heaven.

This was the question at issue in the conflicts in Paul's soul and preparatory to his conversion. As soon as this question had been set at rest by the vision of Christ, the fundamental principle of his gospel was settled in his mind. The very thing that had previously been to him the stone of stumbling and offence, then became the foundation and corner-stone of his new religious system. Thenceforth he determined to know nothing but Jesus Christ as the crucified and risen Lord. These two facts ... constituted the Alpha and Omega of his gospel, whilst nothing else - not even the life of Jesus on earth - was taken into consideration at all.<sup>58</sup>

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58. Pfleiderer, Otto, The Influence of the Apostle Paul on the Development of Christianity, pp. 40,41.

been struck down on the road to Damascus, "Who art thou, Lord?" These words seem to presuppose some thought on the part of the persecutor as to the real purpose and place of this Jesus who had shortly before died on the cross, and who was now claimed to be alive again. Is it altogether beyond the realm of possibility that he should have been greatly influenced by Stephen's testimony and death?<sup>59</sup> The revelation of Jesus Christ might well have been that flash in the heart of Paul which gave him the answer to his longings and conflicts; yes, the crucified Jesus of Nazareth is the risen Christ and Lord from heaven. Still more, He is the answer to the yearnings of all Israel for a Messiah; He is the promised One of the seed of David. As a result of this conviction implanted in Paul by the Lord Himself, there is in the Pauline Epistles not the slightest trace of any "gnosticizing separation between Jesus the historic person and Christ the divine Lord."<sup>60</sup> With this knowledge and assurance, the meaning and importance of the divine revelation of the Old Testament had become clear to Paul. Now for the first time the "veil of Moses", which had previously concealed the Old Testament from the Jews (and also from Paul), disappeared altogether from the mind of the Apostle, so that he was now able to get to the spirit beneath the letter, II Cor. 3:15-18:

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59. The effect of Stephen on Paul is noticeable even in the latter's sermons, which to a great extent are patterned after the sermons of Stephen.

60. Machen, op. cit., p.118.



Yes, to this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their minds; but when a man turns to the Lord the veil is removed. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit. (Revised Standard Version)

After struggles such as this must have been, it is no wonder that to Paul's mind, and in his preaching, Christ is all in all, the sole source, end, and means of Life. From that moment on, Christ was the sum and substance of the Gospel for Paul. Hence the significant and oft-repeated expression of the Apostle to signify the preaching of the Gospel, "We preach Christ Jesus." Briefly, then, Christ was the essence, the center of Paul's concept of *εὐαγγέλιον*, for without Christ Paul could not have conceived of any gospel whatever. Stalker claims that in its conception of Christ Paul's gospel wears its imperishable crown, for to him was "reserved the task of making known, in its heights and depths, the work which the Son of God accomplished as the Savior of the race."<sup>61</sup>

Having once gained the certainty of the divinity of Jesus, Paul set about to expound the full truths concerning Him, the truths which filled his heart and soul. Thus we find that everywhere in the Epistles the attitude of Paul toward Christ is not merely one of man to man, or of scholar to

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61. Stalker, James, The Life of St. Paul, p. 56.

master; it is the attitude of a man toward his God. And although the Apostle nowhere directly calls Christ God, yet the characteristic Pauline name for Christ, *Κύριος* is, as Machen terms it, "every whit as much a designation of deity as is the term 'God'."<sup>62</sup> This fundamental to Paul's theology, for if Christ were not God, how could the Gospel of Christ be the "power of God unto salvation?" The redemption would be no redemption; the Gospel would be no Gospel. Everything hinges on the divinity of Christ. Oddly enough, however Paul finds little necessity to elaborate on his doctrine of the divinity of Christ, indicating that there was little opposition to his teaching of the divine Christ. But all this is presupposed in the listeners and readers. On the foundation of this truth he builds his instruction of the *εὐαγγέλιον*. One of the fullest statements regarding the work of Jesus is found in Philippians 2:6-11. To these Philippians Paul presented the Gospel of a divine Savior which alone was adequate to the needs of man. The majestic description of the Lordship of Christ is contained in the latter part of this expression of the Gospel:

Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Phil. 2:9-11, Revised Standard Version)

To this same Jesus, says St. Paul, all powers and principalities

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62. Machen, *op. cit.*, p.199.

and angels owed their existence, and by Him alone they are continued in being (Col. 2:13-16). And with this eternal Son of God no creature can compare, "that in everything he might be pre-eminent. For in him all the fulness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross." (Col. 1:18,19, R.S.V.) Concerning the high regard Paul held for Christ, Koeberle says:

Christ is more to St. Paul than a mere symbol of a truth that is valid in itself. Jesus is not simply like Osiris, a timeless myth that served in the history of human thought to depict the coming of "life and death," but through the real historic fact of His death and through His victory over the "principalities and powers of this world" He actually produces an entirely new situation through which judgment is changed to salvation. <sup>63</sup>

A significant sidelight to this consideration of Jesus as the divine Savior is the title of *Κυριος*, which Paul attaches to Christ. It is difficult to say whether such a title found widespread usage through Paul's frequent use of it, or whether it had been used commonly before Paul entered the picture, and he merely reflected in his writings the attitudes of the early Christians. Regardless, this title represented a summary of Christian preaching; "we preach Christ Jesus as Lord" (II Cor. 4:5); "for he is Lord

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63. Koeberle, op. cit., p.56.

of all, rich towards all those who call upon him," (Rom. 10:12) says the Apostle. Scott is of the opinion that the acknowledgment that "Jesus is Lord" was the one audible profession of faith which Paul required of a would-be Christian, and that this was the only and the sufficient external condition of participating in Salvation.

It was the outward expression of that faith in Christ which is the human factor in Salvation. And the significance of the acknowledgment is such that when it is made it is understood to be due to the working of the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 12:3). "No one can say 'Jesus is Lord', but by the Holy Spirit." <sup>64</sup>

Stevens terms this *Κύριος Ἰησοῦς* the earliest creed of Christendom. <sup>65</sup> This is supported by Paul's own words as quoted above from I Cor. 12:3, and also from Rom. 10:9: "...if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." (R.S.V.) And as the Apostle of Christ, Paul preached not himself, but "Christ Jesus as Lord," (II Cor. 4:5) as the saving message for all men, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved," (Rom. 10:13). In confessing Jesus as their Lord, the early Christians also implied faith in Him as their Savior from sin. The fact that Paul required this profession of his converts indicates his stress on the importance of the Lordship of Jesus. And this gives the reader an insight into what Paul considered to be important in the doctrine of Christ, the center of his gospel.

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64. Scott, Christianity According to St. Paul, p.250.  
65. Stevens, op. cit., p.389.

## CHAPTER VI.

## THE SCOPE OF PAUL'S CONCEPT OF THE "EUAGGELION"

## 1. The Historical Aspect

The fundamental question, to which all others are preliminary, is, What is the understanding which Paul had of the Gospel? What did he consider its form and content? Precisely, what did it include? Is the Gospel merely a series of historical events consecutively related? It is all that. But it is more than that. For these facts are put by Paul into some relation with human life and history, and thus they have an influence on human thinking and conduct. They lead to such results as the Apostle predicates for his proclamation.

To take such a statement as that in Rom. 1:2-4, and deduce therefrom that St. Paul's gospel consisted only in the announcement of these facts, is to forget that these facts have no coherence except in connection with the personality of Jesus, no religious or moral value except as illuminated by the purpose of His Incarnation, and no meaning for us except as related at one point to human need and at another to human duty. The announcement of the facts must necessarily be prefaced by some explanation, accompanied by some interpretation, followed by some inference.<sup>66</sup>

Realizing, as perhaps no one else did before him, that the Gospel included far more than just a catalogue of facts concerning the life of one, Jesus of Nazareth, Paul also speaks

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66. Scott, The Gospel According to St. Paul, p.203.

of the meaning and the practical application of these facts. Thus in his writings he uses *σὺψέλιον* to denote three related yet distinct items: a) the basic facts of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection; b) the interpretation of these facts; and c) the application of these facts to the common life of his listeners and readers. He thus views the *σὺψέλιον* historically, doctrinally, and practically. It should be observed, however, that these three uses of the word are not mutually exclusive. They differ only in the emphasis laid on them.

Least frequently the term *σὺψέλιον* is used with reference to certain historic events which, though they have soteriological significance, are themselves a part of the good news. So in II Tim. 2:8:

Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, descended from David, as preached in my gospel, the gospel for which I am suffering and wearing fetters, like a criminal. (R.S.V.)

Similar passages are Rom. 1:2-4; I Cor. 15:1; and II Thess. 2:14. The historical aspect of the Gospel was not to Paul a new or unrelated incident in the history of man or in the course of nature. But it is, as Machen declares, "that which for the first time gives fulness of meaning to them both."<sup>67</sup> Thereby he gave to these facts an unparalleled enrichment of understanding. For perhaps the first time the incarnation,

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67. Machen, op. cit., p. 19.

death, and resurrection of the Lord were viewed in their full historical and logical relationships. The manner in which Paul presented the facts of the Gospel differentiated his message from the philosophies and pagan religions of his day. For he did not proclaim a salvation based on something that had always been true. On the contrary, he gave an account of something that had just happened, not an event in the dim and distant past. So recent were the incidents which he proclaimed, that the facts could be established by adequate testimony of eye-witnesses. And to these eye-witnesses Paul appeals in detail. Machen refers to the single passage in I Cor. 15:1-8 as sufficient to place a "stupendous gulf between the Pauline Christ and the pagan savior-gods."<sup>68</sup> Not only in this one passage, but everywhere in the Epistles Paul actually stakes his whole life upon the truth of these essential historical facts of the death and resurrection.<sup>69</sup>

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68. Ibid., p.316

69. Excursus: Scott claims that "the different gospel (*ἕτερον εὐαγγέλιον*, Gal. 1 - mentioned earlier, p.8), the proclamation and acceptance of which so deeply moved St. Paul, was not a gospel which differed from his in regard to the facts. No one has even suggested, no one could believe, that the older Apostles, say St. James or St. Peter, preached or countenanced a gospel which omitted any of the fundamental events of our Lord's ministry. Equally with St. Paul, they proclaimed the birth, baptism, death, burial, and resurrection." So far as facts are concerned, Paul's and James' gospels were identical. The difference lay in the emphasis and the application of these facts. The gospel according to Paul contained facts - and more. If his gospel had included only facts, it would not have been necessary to communicate it to the Apostles. His gospel must have included some application of facts, deduced from the facts and unpracticed by the Jerusalem

St. Paul understood that these facts of the life of Christ were important for the Gospel. Upon them he based his *εὐαγγέλιον*. For example, the Apostle stated that except for certain misunderstandings which had arisen at Corinth, he would never have set forth in his Epistles the testimony by which the fact of the resurrection of Jesus was established; yet that testimony was fundamental in his missionary preaching. Stevens calls attention to the fact that the Christ whom Paul had seen (I Cor. 9:1; 15:8) was the risen Christ, and the conception of Christ that ruled Paul's thoughts and teaching was that of His glorified character more than that of His historic manifestation.<sup>70</sup> And in my study of the writings of Paul I find this deduction to be tenable. In connection with his doctrinal statements, however, Paul does introduce some historical events, thus betraying his familiarity with them, e.g. that Christ descended from the fathers of the Jewish nation (Rom. 9:5; Gal. 3:16); that He was born of the seed of David according to the flesh (Rom. 1:3); he asserts that he received from the testimony of others the all-important facts of the death, burial, resurrection, and

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69. (Continued from p.52-) Apostles; cf. Gal. 2:2. "...there is some theory of facts, and their application to human necessities, some scheme of salvation which we have scriptural authority for calling 'the gospel'." Scott, The Gospel according to St. Paul, pp. 204-206. We can assume that the knowledge of the facts of Christ's life came to Paul in a natural way, but the knowledge of the interpretation and application of this gospel came by revelation - directly. Gal. 1:12,15,16.

70. Stevens, op. cit., p.206.



appearances of Christ (I Cor. 15:3-7); he speaks often of the crucifixion and sufferings of the Savior, thus suggesting that he had a clear picture of the Lord's death; he even knew the circumstances regarding the betrayal of Jesus and the very words of institution of the Eucharist (I Cor. 11:23-25). Thus it is clear that although Paul does not often speak of the historical factors underlying his gospel, yet when he does mention them, he lays great stress on them, for these facts are fundamental to the entire plan of salvation which Paul unfolds. And wherever such references are made to this aspect of his message, it is never without soteriological significance.

## 2. The Doctrinal Aspect

The second, and perhaps most frequent, use of the term *εὐαγγέλιον* in Paul's letters is its doctrinal sense. *εὐαγγέλιον* as used by Paul often connotes the great body of teaching concerning salvation which constituted the Apostle's message. And since this message came to him from God by revelation of Jesus Christ, he called it the "gospel of God" (I Thess. 2:2,8,9; II Cor. 11:7; Rom. 15:16), or the "gospel of the Christ" (Gal. 1:7; II Cor. 9:13; Phil. 1:27). Most frequently, however, the word is used without a modifier, *τὸ εὐαγγέλιον* (Gal. 2:5,14; Rom. 1:16; 10:16, etc.). It has similar doctrinal meaning in Eph. 1:13:

In him you also, who have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and have believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit... (R.S.V.)

also in Eph. 3:6:

...how the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. (R.S.V.)

and again in Gal. 2:5,14:

To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel...

It is definitely this aspect of the Gospel which is of greatest importance for the understanding of the term. Paul uses the term in this connotation more frequently than in the historical or practical sense.<sup>71</sup> The fact that *εὐαγγέλιον* often suggests more than a catalogue of historical facts, and that it rather includes also a system of doctrine is indicated by the Apostle, when he claims this message to be deeply concerned with human experience, and to be itself a living power in the lives of men and women, (I Cor. 15:3).

Thus Kittel analyzes it:<sup>72</sup>

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71. As has been stressed earlier, the questions at issue between Paul and his Judaistic opponents did not at all concern the historical facts of the life of Jesus, nor did they, so far as is known, have to do with the methods of carrying on the gospel work. "They pertained rather to the way of acceptance with God and the significance of the Christ in relation to such acceptance. They were thus distinctly doctrinal questions." Burton, E.D., The Epistle to the Galatians, (I.C.C.) p.22.

72. Kittel, op. cit.

Das Evangelium will nicht nur von einem historischen Ereignis Zeugnis geben; denn was es berichtet, Auferstehung und Erhöhung, entzieht sich dem historischen Urteil und ist Aufhebung der Geschichte; es besteht auch nicht nur aus einigen Erzählungen ueber Jesus und Worten von ihm, die jeder Christ kennen musz und ueber die man sprechen kann, noch viel weniger ist es eine weltfremde dogmatische Formel, sondern es ist bezogen auf die menschliche Wirklichkeit und erweist sich als lebendige Macht. <sup>73</sup>

As an indication of the little emphasis that the Apostle placed on the historical, as compared with the doctrinal aspect of the *εὐαγγέλιον*, Machen claims that Paul did not even so much as refer to all the sources of information about these facts, although such sources were at his time still numerous. <sup>74</sup>

"Bare detailed information about the words and deeds of Jesus did not in Paul's mind constitute a 'gospel'; they constituted only the materials upon which the gospel was based!" <sup>75</sup>

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73. Ibid. Apparently Kittel is willing to place some facts of the Gospel record outside of the field of history. But the historical aspect must be granted. It is part, and a necessary part of the Gospel which Paul proclaimed.

74. Since we have only a limited knowledge of the factors that played important roles in Paul's thought, scholars have speculated concerning the facts that are unknown; nevertheless, Machen's observations are interesting. "To us the sources of information about Jesus are limited; therefore they are searched out and weighed. But to Paul the sources of information were so numerous that they could not be catalogued. It never occurred to him to regard with supreme gratitude the particular source from which he derived any particular bit of information about Jesus any more than we regard with special gratitude the newspaper from which we derive our knowledge of current events... The sources of information are so numerous that we do not reflect upon them. So it was in the case of Paul's information about the words and deeds of Jesus."

Machen, op. cit., pp.146,147.

75. Ibid.

It is impossible to discuss in detail the interpretations which Paul gave to the various facts of the life of Christ which he proclaimed. My purpose here is to show that in St. Paul's mind, *εὐαγγέλιον* included, in addition to an account of events in the life of the God-man, an interpretation of these events. The following examples will illustrate: Rom. 15:15,16:

But on some points I have written to you very boldly by way of reminder, because of the grace given me by God to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable, consecrated by the Holy Spirit. (R.S.V.)

The context of this passage immediately suggests that Paul did not speak of the Gospel as a mere statement of facts, for historical statements themselves could not have worked in the Romans the knowledge unto salvation, goodness, and charity toward one another which the Apostle attributes to these people. It was the interpretation of these historical happenings in the life of Christ that brought all this about. Thus we find in Paul's writings that statements of facts of the Gospel do not stand alone, but they are consistently followed or preceded by an interpretation of such facts.

Another example is Rom. 1:3-6:

(The gospel of God) Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead: By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name: Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ.

Following the list of events including the lineal descent, the incarnation, and the resurrection, Paul adds the interpretation, without which these facts are meaningless to the Gentiles and Jews. Here part of the interpretation is that the resurrection is proof of the divinity and power of Christ, that this resurrection is the power which alone can bring about obedience to faith for the sake of His name, and that through His resurrection all, including the Gentile nations, have been called to belong to Jesus Christ, to be part of His body. Col. 2:15,16 is a further illustration of this principle, that Paul consistently connects interpretation with statement of fact:

And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holy-day, or of the new moon or of the sabbath-days.

Here the Apostle states the fact that Christ has overcome principalities and powers, that He has blotted out "the handwriting of ordinances that was against us;" therefore, since these forces have been overcome, why should you Colossian Christians still obey them slavishly? Christ has taken them out of the way. Thus also when Paul showed the Jerusalem Apostles how he had been proclaiming the Gospel among Jews and Gentiles (Gal. 2:2), he interpreted the message of salvation as a message of freedom from ceremonial restrictions; for this interpretation he defends himself, and for it he stands to the last.

The very words "for us" and "for our sins" appended to statements of events in the life of Christ are Paul's interpretation of these events. Kittel correctly observes:

"ὅτι Χριστὸς ἀπέθανεν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἡμετέριων ἡμῶν."  
 Dieses 'fuer unsere Suenden' macht die Predigt vom Tode Jesu zu einer Gerichts- und Freudenbotschaft. Die Verkuendigung "ἵνα ἡμεῖς ἐκ νεκρῶν ζήσωμεν" (Rom. 1:4) laeszt die Auferstehung nicht als ein zufaelliges, einmaliges Geschehnis erscheinen, sondern als Beginn der allgemeinen Auferstehung. Das Evangelium zeugt nicht nur vom Heilsgeschehen, es ist selbst Heilsgeschehen; es greift in das Leben der Menschen ein, gestaltet, sie um und schafft Gemeinden.<sup>76</sup>

In other words, Paul interprets the resurrection of Christ not as the climax of his sojourn on earth, but as the beginning of the resurrection of all; Christ has "become the firstfruits of them that slept." (I Cor. 15:20) In addition, Paul interprets the resurrection as the most conclusive proof of Christ's divinity (I Cor. 15:14,15; Rom. 1:4); as the most decisive proof of the atoning value of the death of Jesus (if he had not risen, there would have been no sign to show the world that He who died was more than man; if He were only man, we would have no evidence of the atoning value of his life and death, I Cor. 15:17); as proof of God's approval of the complete work of redemption wrought by Christ (Rom. 4:25); and as the incentive for the Christian to live a holy life (Col. 3:1). These are a few examples of Paul's own interpretation and subsequent proclamation of "What no

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76. Kittel, op. cit.

eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him." The burden of his message was always the same - the salvation of men by the death of Christ. The fact was the death of Christ; but the interpretation of this fact was that this death brought about salvation for man. One aspect is dependent on the other; both the fact and its interpretation are vital. In the same way Paul treats the other facts of the life of Christ; each is accompanied by a revealed interpretation. Guided by Paul's comments and varied modes of expression, it is possible to interpret his gospel, in brief, to be as Farrar says,

...in the Gospel is being made known to the world that inherent righteousness of God, which by a judgment of acquittal pronounced once for all in the expiatory death of Christ, He imputes to guilty man, and which beginning for each individual with his trustful acceptance of this reconciliation of himself to God in Christ, ends in that mystical union with Christ whereby Christ becomes to each man a new nature, a quickening spirit.<sup>77</sup>

Naturally, to the different churches, Paul interpreted the facts of the Gospel from a slightly different point of view. Thus to the Galatians the emphasis is on the redemptive process and on deliverance and freedom. To the Romans Paul stresses the whole process of justification by faith. The keynote in the letters to the Corinthians is reconciliation of man with God. But always it was the same Gospel of

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77. Farrar, F.W., The Life and Work of St. Paul, p.461.

the crucified and risen Christ.<sup>78</sup> At times Paul treats the origin of the Gospel, tracing it to the eternal decrees of the Godhead, I Cor. 2:7: "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory." In this respect he is similar to John, who looked into the unseen and inscrutable counsels of God, I John 1:1. Again at other times the Apostle speaks of the far-reaching aim of the Gospel. This brings into great prominence the universality of the *ἐὸς ἅπαντες*. And even this concept of the universal intent of the Gospel, says St. Paul, can be traced to the divine plan which existed before man, for although the knowledge and enjoyment of the Gospel were long the privilege of the Jews, God's gracious plan for man's salvation was for the races everywhere, and not for the Jews alone. Eph. 3:1-12:

For this cause, I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, if ye have heard... how that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery,... which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:... Unto me, who am less than the least of all the saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God. According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.

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78. Jeffrey, op. cit., p.59.



This truth had been hidden for ages; and although the universality of the Gospel had been foreshadowed at intervals in the patriarchal times, it was not until the advent of Jesus Christ that the implications were clarified.<sup>79</sup> And Paul's call was to define still more clearly to the Gentiles and Jews alike, the implications of the unsearchable riches of Christ. Therefore, to summarize the preceding observations, in order to interpret any way of salvation for sinners Paul had to tell his listeners and readers the facts upon which his interpretation with its various emphases rested. To present the facts without an interpretation, however, was no gospel; it could never be. Both elements are essential and mutually complementary.

### 3. The Practical Implications

In the two preceding sections of this chapter I have showed that Paul used *εὐαγγέλιον* to denote the facts upon

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79. Speaking of Paul's letter to the Romans, Jeffrey says, *op. cit.*, p.59: "Paul in his gospel reasons them (the facts) out and shuts up the sinner, whether Jew or Gentile, to faith in the atoning death of Jesus as the only means of salvation. For this salvation is commensurate with the need of the race; all have sinned and are under condemnation; but this salvation avails for all, and is freely offered to all, for the Roman in his deep moral degradation as well as for the Jew in covenant relationship with the God of his fathers."

which man's salvation is based and that he used the word to include doctrinal inferences. But Paul uses the term *εὐαγγελιστήριον* also by metonymy in a practical sense. In this sense it means (1) the Gospel ministry or the whole task of making the message of salvation known and of securing its acceptance; and (2) the inferences drawn from truths or doctrines and applied to the lives of people. Passages in which *εὐαγγελιστήριον* is used to refer to the office of one engaged in preaching the Gospel, are: Rom. 1:1,9; 11:28; 15:19; I Cor. 9:12,14,18,23; II Cor. 3:12; 8:18; 10:14; Gal. 2:7; I Thess. 3:2; Phil. 1:5,7,12,17; 2:22; 4:3,15; and Philemon 13. In Rom. 1:1, where Paul calls himself the servant of Jesus Christ "separated unto the Gospel of God," he uses *εὐαγγελιστήριον* to include the proclamation of the tidings of salvation, his apostleship. In verse 9, "For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his son," the meaning of the term *εὐαγγελιστήριον* is obviously not the Gospel as the message itself, but the spreading of this message. Thus we render it "whom I serve with my spirit by spreading the good news of salvation..." Rom. 11:28 exemplifies the same meaning of *εὐαγγελιστήριον*: "As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes..." Commentators agree that the context shows that this clause means 'in respect to the spread of the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes.' In I Cor. 9:14 Paul writes: "They which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." *εὐαγγελιστήριον* in this verse, as in verses 12, 18 (three

times) and 23 connotes the gospel ministry, and not the Gospel as doctrine. And in Phil. 2:22: "... he hath served with me in the gospel," refers to the proclamation of the Gospel message. Speaking of I Cor. 9:14, Kittel makes an observation which is pertinent to all the passages quoted in this connection:

Das unmittelbare Nebeneinander zweier Bedeutungen beobachten wir I Kor. 9:14, "ἐκ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου ἡμεῖς ζῶμεν" heisst 'von der Evangeliumsverkündigung leben;' dagegen musz mit κατ'εὐαγγέλιον τὸ εὐαγγέλιον der Inhalt des Evangeliums gemeint sein.

As an example of the emphasis that Paul places on the Gospel ministry as being implied in the very term εὐαγγέλιον we find that he relates the statement of salvation in terms of "the new birth" or a "new creation". The awakening of this new life in turn is attributed to the preaching of the Gospel, and not, as so many of his opponents held, to some rite or to Baptism. I. Cor. 4:15:

... for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me.

To the Romans the Apostle explains why the preaching element is so essential, 10:14:

How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?

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80. Kittel, op. cit.

On this matter Kittel states: "In seiner Verkuendigung vollzieht sich die Offenbarung der δικαιοσύνη τοῦ θεοῦ.<sup>81</sup>

When Paul uses εὐαγγελίον in a practical sense, he sometimes means more than the Gospel ministry. He then includes under the word εὐαγγελίον the inferences drawn from truths or doctrines which are applicable to the lives of people. These inferences or practical applications he labels εὐαγγελίον. This aspect was vital to his concept of the Gospel. In his mind the εὐαγγελίον was also concerned with human actuality. It was a living power for Christian life. Certainly there are indications scattered throughout the Epistles, that Paul lost no time in instructing his converts in Christian duties and Christian privilege. To illustrate this I quote the following passages:

Gal. 5:24: They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

Eph. 2:10: We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

I Tim. 5:17: Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the Word and doctrine.

I Thess. 5:12,13: And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves.

Such examples are numerous in Paul's letters. Every letter of his contains direct application to daily life of the

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81. Ibid.

Gospel, which he had preached or written to them. This in itself indicates the importance that the Apostle attached to the practical aspect. It also shows that he included the practical implications as part of the *εὐαγγελίον*.

Scott draws attention to the close and constant connection between the preaching of the Gospel, which creates "newness of life," and "ethical demand and achievement."

It is indeed one of the most striking general characteristics of his thought that the statement of truth is uniformly followed by the demand for action or disposition to correspond. (Or conversely the ethical demand is frequently buttressed by an appeal to truth or doctrine.) ...A good example relative to the subject of newness of life is found in Col. 3:1 ff. "Since then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above." ...Saving faith for him is faith which becomes operative through love.<sup>82</sup>

The point is that Paul considers the practical application of the principles of the Gospel so entirely a part of the *εὐαγγελίον* that he seldom, if ever, makes a doctrinal statement without appending to it the natural inference that the Christians are to use in their lives. A particularly clear example is Gal. 5:13-16:

...ye have been called to liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. But if ye bite and devour one another take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

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82. Scott, op. cit., pp.148,149.

Other noteworthy examples of Scott's observation are found in Phil. 2:5 and I Cor. 11:17-29. Furthermore, in speaking of reconciliation and the new relation existing between man and God, through the vicarious atonement, Paul is not afraid to say and even to emphasize the fact that the new relationship, no less than the old, involves service, Rom. 6:18: "Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness." Scott makes an interesting, though hardly tenable classification.

We have examined the factors of salvation in its negative aspect; what is common to all three factors of Salvation in that aspect, Redemption, Justification, Reconciliation, is that each of them depends on something accomplished by the death of Christ. What is common to the factors of salvation in its positive aspect is that they are intimately connected with His life, the life of one who 'has been crucified,' but is 'alive for evermore.' 'Much more shall we be saved by his life.'<sup>83</sup>

In the Christian's new birth

...something has happened corresponding to what happened to Christ at the Resurrection, and the Life which they now live is of the same quality as His risen Life.<sup>84</sup>

Scott's division of salvation into negative aspects, such as redemption, reconciliation, and justification, and positive aspects which can be summed up by the term New Life, is arbitrary. I have found it very difficult to classify all aspects of salvation or of the Gospel into two categories.

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83. Scott, Christianity, p.141.

84. Ibid., p. 147.

Since this is impossible, it is also impossible to relate all the factors of the negative aspect to the suffering and death of Christ and the positive factors to the Life of Christ. It is even questionable whether the concepts of salvation or the Gospel can be divided into negative and positive aspects. Scott is not well supported by Paul's writings so far as I could determine.

In Paul's gospel salvation and sanctification invariably go together.<sup>85</sup> As Paul's concept of the *ἁγιασμοῦ* finds expression in the Epistles to the Thessalonians, we find that great importance is attached to its effect on the life of the believer. I Thess. 4:3: "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." And in II Thess. 2:13:

God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.

In much the same way we find that the Epistles to the Corinthians stress the practical aspect of the Gospel message. In fact, all Paul's writings do. I have quoted only some of the outstanding examples here. And certainly the letter to the Corinthians contains excellent illustrations of this very viewpoint of his message.. It is probably for this reason that these Epistles do not follow a set logical pattern,

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85. Jeffrey claims that Paul "knows of no salvation that does not include holiness of heart and life. He cannot imagine the moral condition of those who find in the gospel an encouragement to sin... and the earnest prayer of the Apostle for his Thessalonian converts finds expression in the sublime utterance, 'And the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.' (I Thess. 5:23) op. cit., p.26.

but instead they portray his message in a more natural way, as it best meets the questions he tries to answer. Thus at the end of his great resurrection chapter he says:

But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.<sup>86</sup>

Paul found it necessary to remind his readers occasionally that they had been gathered in and freed from the pollution of heathenism and that the salvation of the Gospel was deliverance from a sinful life as well as from the guilt of sin. Thus in I Corinthians the Apostle rebukes them for all manner of sins, and the truth that he stresses as the motive for holy life is:

Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? ...What! Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. (I Cor. 6:15,19)

The *εὐαγγέλιον* which Paul announces in the Epistle to the Ephesians stressed the deliverance from sin. Eph. 1:4:

According as he hath chosen us from before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.

The divine plan, according to Paul, contemplated also a renewed creation in the hearts of the Ephesians. They

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86. I Cor. 15:57,58.



were "created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Eph.2:10) Paul realized that before these converts could overcome their old habits and manner of life, they would have severe struggles. Therefore he preached to them a gospel of conflict and of victory. He showed them, particularly in the sixth chapter, that the Gospel is a power for holiness of living, a dynamic which alone could enable them to overcome the forces of evil.

Stand therefore having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. (Eph. 6:14,15)

In this final chapter dealing with Paul's concept of the *εὐαγγέλιον* I have shown how he uses the term to denote certain facts basic to the message of salvation. These facts all center around the life of Christ. A second aspect is Paul's use of the term to denote an interpretation of these facts. Thus his gospel was not an ordinary narrative, but a narrative with meaning for the souls of men. In addition, I have attempted to show in the last section of this chapter that the gospel was even more than a statement of facts with a meaningful interpretation. The very word *εὐαγγέλιον* to Paul signalled also the idea of a necessary application to be drawn from his interpretation of the facts of Christ's life. Therefore to Paul's mind the *εὐαγγέλιον* is the proclamation of the history of the work and words of the Savior; this history is interpreted as the one way of

salvation for sinful mankind, the manifesto of spiritual freedom for all men; and the interpretation is then channeled into the lives of Christians as the power for sanctification and holy living. Every one of the Apostle's letters, to some degree, include these three aspects. To him, any message that did not include one of these elements was not the εὐαγγέλιον. But the combination of all three aspects were to Paul the good news, the εὐαγγέλιον.

## CONCLUSION

A glance at the religious and spiritual struggles of mankind in the centuries since Christ reveals a mass of misunderstanding, narrowness, bigotry, moralizing tendencies, and rationalism, all of which have clouded the minds of men concerning the Way, the Truth, and the Life - the one way of salvation. And these struggles, this confusion and misunderstanding has become the heritage of many theologians and laymen today. The error of the past decades is largely due to narrow and false conceptions of the Gospel of Christ. Koeberle points to the three ways in which theological development of the last century has corrupted the Gospel under the influence of Kant, Ritschl, and Schleiermacher. But many others since the days of these men have influenced the religious minds and hearts in a negative way. They have often blinded the minds of Christians or have at least made their vision of the Gospel short-sighted. The reason for this state of affairs is, I am convinced, lack of insight into the true nature and the full implications of the Gospel. Many of the controversies that have risen within the Church can be traced ultimately to a misrepresentation of the Gospel or to ignorance

of the essential inferences of the Gospel.

A study of Paul's Epistles and of the account of his ministry as recorded by Luke in Acts gave me an insight into the true nature and meaning and the rich implications of the *εὐαγγέλιον* as this great Apostle conceived of it. This concept of *εὐαγγέλιον* and the rich connotations contained in it differentiated the Christian religion from all other religions, for it expressed the peculiar character of the Christian message of salvation. Therefore the early Christians, especially Paul, favored the use of *εὐαγγέλιον* rather than *διδάχη* or *διδασκαλία*. No other religion or philosophy used *εὐαγγέλιον* to connote both the basis of salvation and also the power unto salvation.

In treating this vast subject the question arises, What made Paul the greatest missionary? Was it his home environment, his education, his Pharisee background, as some writers suggest? I do not minimize the effect that these factors had on Paul's life. Yet the impetus for his great work as a missionary came from another direction. Stemming from his conversion, a new force entered the Apostle's life. That dynamic was Christ, the Lord. And under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, Paul presented to Christianity the magnificent *εὐαγγέλιον* as he had come to conceive of it. A Pharisee of the Pharisees, a Jew in the strictest sense of the term, Paul sensed keenly the numerous antitheses that existed between

the good news and his former heritage.

The New Testament speaks of those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and St. Paul hears the longing sigh that arises from creation yearning to be delivered from this transitoriness.<sup>87</sup>

He was fully aware of every aspect of the liberty which was his by faith. Deeply moved by the comprehensiveness of the

ἐξυψέλιον, the Apostle expressed his convictions in the language we find in his Epistles. Koeberle summarizes his attitude:

The Gospel is the self-disclosure and self-impartation of God in Jesus Christ. This coming of God to us is a purely miraculous gift of divine love and this love, which has been disclosed in its fullness in the delivery of Jesus to death on the cross, is the only basis for peace with God and for our fellowship with God and our neighbor. Justification through faith alone brings with it the certainty that I may be God's dear child. But that also implies that henceforth I do not belong to myself but to Another, Who has established His kingly rule over my life. So the ability to live a new life and the desire to render a new obedience grow out of the gift of the forgiveness of sins.<sup>88</sup>

In Paul's Epistles we are able to see the many facets of the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ. I have attempted to define and describe some of them. The study is far from exhaustive. Even Paul, when contemplating the many forces inherent in the Gospel of the love of God, admitted his inability to comprehend it all and exclaimed:

Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

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87. Koeberle, op. cit., p.31.

88. Ibid., p.vii.

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