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## Session Guide: Intro to Paul; Galatians 1-3

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### Is 40

Comfort, O comfort my people,  
says your God.

<sup>2</sup> Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,  
and cry to her  
that she has served her term,  
that her penalty is paid,  
that she has received from the Lord's hand  
double for all her sins.

<sup>3</sup> A voice cries out:  
"In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,  
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

<sup>4</sup> Every valley shall be lifted up,  
and every mountain and hill be made low;  
the uneven ground shall become level,  
and the rough places a plain.

<sup>5</sup> Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,  
and all people shall see it together,  
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

<sup>6</sup> A voice says, "Cry out!"  
And I said, "What shall I cry?"

All people are grass,  
their constancy is like the flower of the field.

<sup>7</sup> The grass withers, the flower fades,  
when the breath of the Lord blows upon it;  
surely the people are grass.

<sup>8</sup> The grass withers, the flower fades;  
but the word of our God will stand forever.

<sup>9</sup> Get you up to a high mountain,  
O Zion, herald of good tidings;<sup>[a]</sup>  
lift up your voice with strength,  
O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,<sup>[b]</sup>  
lift it up, do not fear;

say to the cities of Judah,  
"Here is your God!"

<sup>10</sup> See, the Lord God comes with might,  
and his arm rules for him;  
his reward is with him,  
and his recompense before him.

<sup>11</sup> He will feed his flock like a shepherd;  
he will gather the lambs in his arms,  
and carry them in his bosom,  
and gently lead the mother sheep.

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A. Introduction to the Jesus Challenge (5 min)

B. Spitfire<sup>1</sup> (5 min)

1) What does it mean to be Jesus' Disciple today?

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C. Discipleship and Our Culture (10 min)

D. Large Group Discussion: Discipleship Worksheet

E. Evaluate our Culture's Worldview (10 min)

1) What are the main elements of our Culture's Worldview?

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<sup>1</sup> A "Spitfire" is when we take 2 minutes to answer the question to ourselves and then have a 2-3 min group discussion. *Be Quick!*

2) Without reference to the Christian Worldview, what is lacking in our Culture? Where does it fall short?

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F. Overview of the Life of Paul (10 min)

G. Overview of the Theology of Paul (10 min)

H. Exercise & Discussion: Re-read Gal 1-3 and Fill Out the Discipleship Worksheet  
→ Review as Class (10 min)

I. Galatians 1-3 (10 min)

J. *Real World Practice*: While talkng with a friend or co-worker how would you answer one of the following questions they pose? What words of Jesus would you cite? Answer one or two Qs below. (15-25 min)

- a) Who is Jesus? Why does he make a Difference? Why do I need to be a Christian if I am already a good person?
- b) Why are you Christians so hung up on Sex? No one gets hurt by masturbation, pornography, or any kind of sex outside of marriage ...
- c) You Christians talk about “God’s Plan for your life”. I see no divine hand, only randomness. In case you haven’t noticed, things are pretty crappy in this world, though I am happy with my life. Many are isolated and lonely, many suffer (pointlessly) in other ways. Why do you think there is a loving God?
- d) People have a right to define their own ‘gender’ – what is your problem with that? (Extra Credit)

Circle two questions and jot down some points you would make, and any Scripture references.

1<sup>st</sup> Q:

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2<sup>nd</sup> Q:

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## Session Guide: Galatians 1-6

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### Ps 136

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,  
for his steadfast love endures forever.

O give thanks to the God of gods,  
for his steadfast love endures forever.

O give thanks to the Lord of lords,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;

who alone does great wonders,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;

who by understanding made the heavens,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;

who spread out the earth on the waters,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;

who made the great lights,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;

the sun to rule over the day,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;

the moon and stars to rule over the night,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;

who struck Egypt through their firstborn,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;

and brought Israel out from among them,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;

with a strong hand and an outstretched arm,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;

who divided the Red Sea in two,

for his steadfast love endures forever;  
and made Israel pass through the midst of it,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;  
but overthrew Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;  
who led his people through the wilderness,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;  
who struck down great kings,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;  
and killed famous kings,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;  
Sihon, king of the Amorites,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;  
and Og, king of Bashan,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;  
and gave their land as a heritage,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;  
a heritage to his servant Israel,  
for his steadfast love endures forever.

It is he who remembered us in our low estate,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;

and rescued us from our foes,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;

who gives food to all flesh,  
for his steadfast love endures forever.

O give thanks to the God of heaven,  
for his steadfast love endures forever.

A. Salvation History Overview

5 min

B. SG Exercise

20 min

1) Identify the elements of Salvation History in Paul's 1<sup>st</sup> Sermon recorded Acts 13.16-41 first by numbering in the text and then transferring to the list at the bottom of the page.

- List any events of Salvation History that you can think of *before* the call of Abraham:

a) \_\_\_\_\_

b) \_\_\_\_\_

c) \_\_\_\_\_

- List any events of Salvation History that you can think of *after* the Lord's resurrection:

a) \_\_\_\_\_

b) \_\_\_\_\_

c) \_\_\_\_\_

- Compare your listing of the Salvation History and then your answers to 3 and 4.

2) Repeat Steps 1 and 2 for Partial Salvation History contained in Eucharistic Prayer #4.

C. Galatians 1 - 4<sup>7</sup>

10 min

D. SG DQ: Select one of Paul’s explanations for how J saves us, 2.16-20, 3.26-29, or 4.1-7. 15 min

1) Write down how you would explain that to a friend. \_\_\_\_\_

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2) Rehearse your explanation with your small group.

E. How do we grow as Disciples? (Notes, p 4) 5 min

F. Exercise & SG Discussion (15-20 min): Re-read Gal 4-6 and Fill Out the Discipleship Worksheet if you haven’t done so already (allow up to 5 minutes).

1) Compare your answers for each of the seven categories

2) Circle a few that you found most challenging and why. Share with the group.

G. Gal 4<sup>8</sup> – 6 (10-15min)

H. Spitfire: Read I Cor 13. What strikes you most about Paul’s further elaboration of ‘love’? 5 min

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I. *Real World Practice*: While talking with a friend or co-worker how would you answer one of the following questions they pose? What words of Paul would you cite? Answer one or two Qs below. (15-20 min)

a) Who is Jesus? Why does he make a Difference? Why do I need to be a Christian if I am already a good person?

b) Why are you Christians so hung up on Sex? No one gets hurt by masturbation, pornography, or any kind of sex outside of marriage ...

c) You Christians talk about “God’s Plan for your life”. I see no divine hand, only randomness. In case you haven’t noticed, things are pretty crappy in this world, though I am happy with my life. Many are isolated and lonely, many suffer (pointlessly) in other ways. Why do you think there is a loving God?

d) People have a right to define their own ‘gender’ – what is your problem with that? (Extra Credit)

Jot down some points you would make and any Scripture references. Role play answer with your group

1<sup>st</sup> Q:

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2<sup>nd</sup> Q:

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## Session Outline: Gal 6; Philippians

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	<u>Min</u>
A. Prayer; Plan for tonight; R/v of Worldview/Salvation History	10
B. EP IV Group Discussion: Complete and compare answers	10
C. Galatians 5.19-6.18; “Agape”	10
D. SG DQ: Read I Cor 13 and compare answers. What strikes you most about this passage?	10

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How would you explain God’s love to someone?

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... the kind of love he intends us to have?

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E. Intro to Philippians; Our New Identity =Saints	10
F. Exercise & SG Discussion: Re-read Phil 1.27-2.18 and 3.1-4.9 and Fill Out the Discipleship Worksheet if you haven’t done so already (allow up to 8 minutes). 1) Compare your answers for each of the seven categories 2) Circle a few that you found most challenging and why. Share with the group.	15-20
G. Phil 1-2	10
H. DQ-SG: How would you explain to someone that your most fundamentally identity through baptism is either “being in Christ” or a “holy one”? (review notes on bottom of p. 13). Compare answers.	

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I. Phil 3-4	10
J. DQ-SG: Review how Paul specifies the “all-in” requirement for following the Lord in 3.7-17. What are the greatest obstacles for you to go all in?	15

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- K. *Real World Practice*: While talking with a friend or co-worker how would you answer one of the following questions they pose? What words of Paul would you cite? Answer one or two Qs below. (15-20 min)
- Who is Jesus? Why does he make a Difference? Why do I need to be a Christian if I am already a good person?
  - Why are you Christians so hung up on Sex? No one gets hurt by masturbation, pornography, or any kind of sex outside of marriage ...

Jot down some points you would make and any Scripture references. Role play answer with your group

1<sup>st</sup> Q:

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## Session Outline: Contrasting Worldviews; Philippians 2-4

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- A. Our Contemporaries: Contrasting Worldviews 15-25
- B. *Real World Practice*: While talking with a friend or co-worker how would you answer one of the following questions they pose? What words of Jesus or Paul would you cite? 15-25
- a) Who is Jesus? Why does he make a Difference? Why do I need to be a “Christian” if I am already a good person?
  - b) Bonus: Why are you Christians so hung up on Sex? No one gets hurt by masturbation, pornography, or any kind of sex outside of marriage ...

Jot down some points you would make and any Scripture references. Role play answer with your group

1<sup>st</sup> Q:

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2<sup>nd</sup> Q:

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- C. Phil 2 10
- D. DQ-SG: Prayerfully re-read Phil 2.2-5. What do you find most challenging? Is the Lord pointing to you one or two areas that could use a bit of improvement if not an upgrade? Compare answers.

- E. Phil 3 10
- F. DQ-SG: Review how Paul specifies the “all-in” requirement for following the Lord in 3.7-17. 15  
What are the greatest obstacles for you to go all in?

- G. Phil 4
- H. DQ-SG: Re-read 4.4-7. How can we rejoice in the Lord always? How is rejoicing and thanksgiving 15  
an antidote to anxiety? (Hint: everything ultimately is a gift)

Describe why petitioning prayer is also the antidote to anxiety, and brings the peace of God?

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## Session Outline: Philippians 4; I & II Thessalonians; Prayer

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- A. Phil 4 10  
B. DQ-SG: Re-read 4.4-7. How can we rejoice in the Lord always? How are *rejoicing* and *thanksgiving* prayer an antidote to anxiety? (Hint: everything ultimately is a gift) 15
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Describe why *petitioning prayer* is also the antidote to anxiety, and brings the peace of God?

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- C. Overview of I & II Thessalonians 5  
D. Return of the Lord I Thess 4.13-5.11; II Thess 1.10-2.12 15  
E. DQ-SG: Re-read I Thess 5.4-11. What are Paul's instructions to the Thess, 'sons of light' that they are, 15 regarding the Lord's Return?
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How can you live in a more watchful way? Be specific. How can Advent help?

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- F. Prayer I Thess 5.16-21 10  
G. Five Minutes of Daily Prayer 10  
H. DQ-SG: Which of God's attributes most attracts you? Why?
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Pick one of your encounters with beauty you have had recently. Describe what you found beautiful. What particularly appealed to you?

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What would you have to change in your schedule to pray or read Scripture for 15-30 minutes per day (or to make it to daily Mass)?

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## Session Outline: Intro & Roman 1-8

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A. Welcome & Intro

B. Discipleship & Life of Paul Overview

C. Roman Overview & Roman 1-2<sup>16</sup> & the Problem of Sin – Pt 1

D. DQ-SG: 1) How do you think the typical person today would define Sin? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2) How would you describe the Problem of Sin in your own words to a friend or co-worker?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

E. Romans 2.17-5.11 Purpose of the Law; Solution Pt 1 (Atonement)

F. DQ-SG: How would you explain how Jesus forgives our Sins to a friend or co-worker?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

G. Romans 5.12 – 7.25: Baptism; the Problem of Sin – Pt 2

H. DQ-SG:

1) Describe some ways you have experienced not “doing what you want but what you hate?”

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2) How have you overcome such challenges?

\_\_\_\_\_

I. Romans 8: Solution Pt 2 (Indwelling of the Holy Spirit)

J. DQ/SG:

1) Describe some ways you have experienced the Holy Spirit praying for you (8.26-7)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2) What do you think ‘being conformed to the image of his son’ will mean in your life, i.e., what do you think the Lord intends to do with you (8.29)?

## Session Outline: I Corinthians 1-8

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- A. Review of Life of Paul, HS & Baptism
- B. Intro to I Corinthians: Key Foundational Realities
- C. DQ-SG: Which perspective on how we are saved is more intuitive to you: *Dying and rising with Christ through Baptism* or *Being 'Redeemed'* (i.e. bought back)? Why? 1) \_\_\_\_\_

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2) How would you describe how we are saved in your own words to a friend or co-worker?

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D. I Cor 1-4

- E. DQ-SG: Why would a 1<sup>st</sup> century Jew find being 'God's Temple, Filled w the HS' *incredible* (3.16)?

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What does it practically mean to be 'God's Temple, Filled with the Holy Spirit' (3.16)? What's different?

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F. I Cor 5-6

G. DQ-SG:

- 1) Why does sexual misuse of our bodies destroy divine intimacy?

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2) How do you make sense of the kind of Intimacy the Lord desires to have with each of us?

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H. I Cor 7-8

I. DQ/SG:

- 1) Review Key Teachings on 'Belonging to Christ' on bottom of page 46. How is this reflected in your life? What changes might you make to more fully belong to Christ?

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2) How does going 'all-in' simplify and accelerate God's work to beautify our lives, i.e., divinize us?

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## Session Outline: I Corinthians 9 – 15

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### A. Discipleship Worksheet

### B. Intro to 9-15 & Paul's *Theology of the Body Belonging to the Lord*

- 1) Review our Identity as 'Belonging to Christ'. How is this reflected in your life? What changes might you make to more fully belong to Christ?
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- 2) How does going 'all-in' simplify and accelerate God's work to beautify our lives, i.e., divinize us?
- 
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### C. Self-Control and Temptations; Instructions on Celebrating the Lord's Supper – 9-11

- 1) Read 9.24-27. What are some ways we can 'pommel' our body or 'train like a marathoner' to gain self-mastery and grow in holiness? Share about some ascetic practices you have found helpful.
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- 2) Read 10.12-3. How can we guard against hubris in dealing with temptations? How do we activate the promise in v13 when we are sorely tempted?
- 
- 

### D. Spiritual Gifts & Church Offices – 12, 14

- 1) If you have experienced the gift of tongues, how has this benefited your prayer life? If you haven't, why (or why not) would you want to?
- 
- 

- 2) Have you experienced any spiritual gifts? Describe an incident.
- 
- 

- 3) Why does the Church teach that the charismatic gifts are for *the whole church right now*?
- 
- 

### E. Love – 13

- 1) Why does Love transform every act, giving us energy and fulfilling you?
- 
- 

### F. Kerygma & the Resurrection – 15; Cultural Christianity (Moralistic Therapeutic Deism)

- 1) Describe the need to give our life to Christ for a happy judgment and afterlife with a Cultural Christian
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## Session Outline: I Cor Wrap-up; II Corinthians & the New Covenant

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### A. I Cor Wrap-up: Love – 13; Resurrection – 15

1) Why is the exercise of Spiritual Gifts – let alone acts of care and kindness – empty without *Agape* Love?

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2) How does *Agape* Love transform every act, giving us energy?

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3) Why is loving others so satisfying?

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### B. II Cor Overview and Chapter 1-3

1) Read 3.17-18. How does ‘Beholding the Glory of the Lord’ change us into his likeness? How do we ‘behold the glory of the Lord’?

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### C. I Cor 4-5; New Covenant & the Resurrection; “Scripture/Catholicism vs. Cultural Christianity”

1) Re-read 5.10-13. Explain to a Cultural Christian the need to give our life to Christ for a happy judgment and afterlife.

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### D. Recap of Divine Intimacy in Romans & I & II Corinthians; 5 Minutes + of Daily Personal Prayer

1) Which type of prayer do you prefer, Thanksgiving or Praise/Adoration? Why are both important?

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2) *Am I doing my part?* What has to change in order to ensure 5+ minutes of morning prayer? What format do you plan to use? What are some helps to avoid just ‘checking a box’ or ‘autopilot’?

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# Paul's Theology of the Body: 'Belonging to the Lord'

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## A. Body of a Disciple/Believer

- 1) Body is a temple of the HS 6.19
  - (1) Body is meant for the Lord, the Lord for the body (6.13)

- 2) 'Belong to Christ'

- 3) Glorify God in your body - 6.20b
  - a) Sexual immorality is a sin against the body - 6.18

- b) Compete *like a runner* to obtain the prize of eternal life (9.24-25).

- c) I pommel my body *like a boxer* in order to gain self-control, and enslave it (9.26-27)

- d) Our physical bodies will die and be resurrected Bodies that are 'Spiritual' (15.24)
    - (1) Imperishable and immortal
    - (2) In Image of 'man from heaven' (= Jesus)

## B. Eucharistic Body

- 1) Eucharist is communion with blood and body of Christ 10.16
- 2) Partaking of 'One Bread' (=body of Christ) *makes us* 'One Body' 10.17
- 3) 'This is my body' ... 11.27-29

## C. Body of the Lord

- 1) We are *made the body* of the Lord thru baptism 12.13 and eucharist 10.17
- 2) You are the body of Christ and individually organs (members) of it 12.24
  - a) Christ's body is one but has many organs (members) 12.12, 12.14ff
  - b) Many members, but one body 12.20
- 3) Sinning against brethren is sinning against the Lord 8.12

### ***Belonging to Christ***

#### *I Corinthians*

- 1) Belong not to Paul nor other evangelists but to God (1.12-16)
- 2) *We are Christ's* (3.23)
- 3) We are not our own [since] *we were bought with a price* (6.19b)
- 4) Person in slavery is actually a 'freed person belonging the Christ (7.22)
- 5) Bought back from slavery– *you were bought with a price* (7.23)
- 6) 'Those who belong to the Lord' receive a resurrected body (15.23)

*Philippians.* Belonging to Christ is one of Paul's core identities in Philippians. Christ has made Paul his own (3.12), at the cost to Paul of giving up all things (3.4-10). Paul strives to belong to Christ so much so that he hopes that Christ will always be honored in his body, whether by life or by death, for to Paul 'to live is Christ, and to die is gain' (1.20).

*Galatians.* Baptism into Christ 'puts Christ on us', making us Christ's (3.26-9). Those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh with its passions & desires (5.24).

## A Few Comments on *Agape* Love

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### A. Meanings of the Word Love in Hebrew and Greek<sup>2</sup>

- a) OT/Hb, *ahab*: “inner force which impels ... in the case of persons to self-sacrifice for the good of the loved one (Lv 19.18,34 and unswerving loyalty (e.g. I Sam 20.17-42)
- b) OT/Hb, *hesed* (esp. Ex 34.6ff)
- c) NT/Gk, *agape*: “seeing something infinitely precious in its object”
- d) Greek notions of ‘love’
  - (1) *Eros*: erotic, passionate love.
  - (2) *Philia* < φιλῶ>: love of friends and equals.
  - (3) *Storge*: love of parents for children.
  - (4) *Agape* < ἀγαπᾶς> : infinitely value another, i.e., concerned with their greatest good

### B. God’s love for Man - *Agape*

- God delights in his creation of Man
- God considers man his great master work
- God created us to have relationship with us
- God’s love is personal; cares about each of us
- God loves mankind enough that he was willing to die for us

### C. Agape Love in Romans and I & II Corinthians

#### 1) God’s Love *for Us*

- a) God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit (Rom 5.5)
- b) God proved his Love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us (Rom 5.8)
- c) Nothing can separate us from the Love of Christ (Rom 8)

#### 2) Believers Love *for God*

- a) Implicit foundational assumption, see, e.g., ‘those who love God’ in I Cor 2.9 and I Cor 8.3.
- b) Animates Paul’s apostolic service (and suffering) (II Cor 5.14)

#### 3) Believers Love *for Fellow Believers*

- a) Love your neighbor as yourself (Rom 13.8-10)
- b) Love the Greatest of Virtues (I Cor 13)

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<sup>2</sup> *New Bible Dictionary*, #770, p. 752 (1<sup>st</sup> Edition), <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015014729894&view=1up&seq=770&size=125&q1=ahab>  
*Jesus Challenge Session Guide & Handouts* Paul: Winter 2023

## Worldview

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- A. What is a “Worldview”? The underlying shared understanding of a people that includes the following elements and an explanation of
- The origin of the observable universe
  - A purpose, if any, for the universe
  - An explanation of God or gods
  - An explanation of what a human person is
  - An explanation of “evil” and suffering
  - A moral code
  - The Purpose (if any) of human life
  - What constitutes ‘happiness’ or ‘well-being’
  - A hierarchy of Values

A worldview is the bedrock upon which a culture is built.

- B. Families, schools, and (in many cases) religious institutions or ceremonies transmit the worldview to us at a young age, which a cohesive culture will reinforce. In a static culture, the worldview is simply transmitted, its unquestioned skin and bones, so to speak. The Norse didn’t question Thor’s role as a leading god, the value of battle glory and shame of cowardice, nor the wild feasting awaiting at least the heroic in Valhalla. Frodo simply assumes the key values of hobbit-hood and Middle Earth and the narrative of good vs. evil.
- C. Times are changing! In fact, they’ve been changing for a very long-time, at first almost imperfectly with the Enlightenment, lurching forward with the French Revolution and World War, with perhaps a decisive final turn with the Sexual Revolution. The Christian age – with its dominant worldview - is now fully eclipsed by what, at least provisionally, is often called post-modernism.

## Scripture/Catholicism vs. Cultural Christianity

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	<b>Scriptural / CCC</b>	<b>Cultural Christianity</b>
Purpose of Life	God Created us in His Image for Fellowship with Him	God wants us to be happy; call on him when needed; otherwise leaves us on our own
Sin	Harms others or yourself; Effaces God’s Image; Destroys <i>His Handiwork</i>	Harms others
Atonement	Jesus atones for our Sin	– NA –
Judgment at End of Life	Punishment of Sin is Death Love (agape) your neighbor as yourself Be Fruitful	Did you try to be nice?
Requirement to Enter Heaven	Atonement for Sin Only thru Jesus Holiness only thru incorporation in Jesus body	Be nice, and not having done anything really bad
Hell	Yes	Only for people who do really bad things
Live a Good Life on your own?	No	Yes, but sometimes need help from ‘the Big Guy’
Role of HS	Vivify our bodies dead from Sin, remaking (perfecting) us in God’s Image, Holy, Loving, Merciful.	– NA –
	Direct mission, Help us Pray, Moral Power, Power for Ministry (spiritual gifts)	– NA –



# Moralistic Therapeutic Deism.



"What the heck is that?" you ask.

It happens to be a preferred religion of Western culture, which usually (and tragically) goes by the name *Christianity*.

## Moralistic Therapeutic Deism (MTD)<sup>3</sup>

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Identified in a 2005 study of 3,000 religious American youth, Christian Smith and Melinda Denton found that many young people believe in several moral statutes *not exclusive to any of the major world religions* ... a set of commonly held spiritual beliefs<sup>4</sup>:

1. A God exists who created and ordered the world and watches over human life on earth.
  2. God wants people to be good, nice, and fair to each other, as taught in the Bible and by most world religions.
  3. *The central goal of life is to be happy and to feel good about oneself.*
  4. God does not need to be particularly involved in one's life except when God is needed to resolve a problem.
  5. *Good people* go to heaven when they die.
- A significant part of Christianity in the US is only tenuously Christian in any sense to the actual historical Christianity, but has substantially morphed into Christianity's misbegotten step-cousin, Christian Moralistic Therapeutic Deism. (*Soul Searching*, p. 171)
- God is considered "something like a combination Divine Butler and Cosmic Therapist: he's always on call, takes care of any problems that arise, professionally helps his people to feel better about themselves, and does not become too personally involved in the process." (*Soul Searching*, p. 165)
- The problem does not seem to be that churches are teaching young people badly, but that we are doing an exceedingly good job of teaching youth *what we really believe*, namely, that
- (a) *Christianity is not a big deal*, that
  - (b) *God requires little*, and
  - (c) *the church is a helpful social institution* (d) *filled with nice people*...<sup>5</sup>

## Popular Post-Modernism<sup>6</sup>

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1. Absolute truth doesn't exist
2. Reason is only one form of parochial knowledge
3. Truth claims are typically masked assertions of power
4. Morality is relative
5. Nothing is universal
6. Nobody can really know anything for certain

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<sup>3</sup> Much of this summary is taken from the Wikipedia article downloaded 9/1/19: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moralistic\\_therapeutic\\_deism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moralistic_therapeutic_deism)

<sup>4</sup> *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers* (2005); "Nat'l Study of Youth & Religion", (<https://youthandreligion.nd.edu>).

<sup>5</sup> "More Teens Becoming Fake Christians" on Princeton's Kenda Dean's 2010 book *Almost Christian: What the Faith of Our Teenagers is Telling the American Church*. (Oxford University Press, 2010). <http://www.cnn.com/2010/LIVING/08/27/almost.christian/index.html>

<sup>6</sup> p 6, Smith, Christian. *Young Catholic America*. (Oxford University Press, 2014)



## (Partial) Salvation History in Paul's 1<sup>st</sup> Sermon (Acts 13.16-41)

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“You Israelites, and others who fear God, listen.<sup>17</sup> The God of this people Israel chose our ancestors and made the people great during their stay in the land of Egypt, and with uplifted arm he led them out of it.<sup>18</sup> For about forty years he put up with them in the wilderness.<sup>19</sup> After he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, he gave them their land as an inheritance<sup>20</sup> for about four hundred fifty years. After that he gave them judges until the time of the prophet Samuel.<sup>21</sup> Then they asked for a king; and God gave them Saul son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, who reigned for forty years.<sup>22</sup> When he had removed him, he made David their king. In his testimony about him he said, ‘I have found David, son of Jesse, to be a man after my heart, who will carry out all my wishes.’<sup>23</sup> Of this man’s posterity God has brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus, as he promised;<sup>24</sup> before his coming John had already proclaimed a baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel.<sup>25</sup> And as John was finishing his work, he said, ‘What do you suppose that I am? I am not he. No, but one is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of the sandals on his feet.’

“My brothers, you descendants of Abraham’s family, and others who fear God, to us the message of this salvation has been sent.<sup>27</sup> Because the residents of Jerusalem and their leaders did not recognize him or understand the words of the prophets that are read every sabbath, they fulfilled those words by condemning him.<sup>28</sup> Even though they found no cause for a sentence of death, they asked Pilate to have him killed.<sup>29</sup> When they had carried out everything that was written about him, they took him down from the tree and laid him in a tomb.<sup>30</sup> But God raised him from the dead;<sup>31</sup> and for many days he appeared to those who came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, and they are now his witnesses to the people.<sup>32</sup> And we bring you the good news that what God promised to our ancestors<sup>33</sup> he has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising Jesus; as also it is written in the second psalm,

‘You are my Son; today I have begotten you.’

As to his raising him from the dead, no more to return to corruption, he has spoken in this way,

‘I will give you the holy promises made to David.’

Therefore he has also said in another psalm,

‘You will not let your Holy One experience corruption.’

For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, died, was laid beside his ancestors, and experienced corruption;<sup>37</sup> but he whom God raised up experienced no corruption.<sup>38</sup> Let it be known to you therefore, my brothers, that through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you;<sup>39</sup> by this Jesus everyone who believes is set free from all those sins from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses.<sup>40</sup> Beware, therefore, that what the prophets said does not happen to you:

‘Look, you scoffers! Be amazed and perish,  
for in your days I am doing a work,  
a work that you will never believe, even if someone tells you.’ ”

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Vs.	Element of Salvation History
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____
6. _____	_____
7. _____	_____
8. _____	_____
9. _____	_____
10. _____	_____
11. _____	_____

## (Partial) Salvation History in Eucharistic Prayer IV

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<sup>1</sup>We give you praise, Father most holy, for you are great, and you have fashioned all your works in wisdom and in love. <sup>2</sup>You formed man in your own image and entrusted the whole world to his care, so that in serving you alone, the Creator, he might have dominion over all creatures. <sup>3</sup>And when through disobedience he had lost your friendship, you did not abandon him to the domain of death. <sup>4</sup>For you came in mercy to the aid of all, so that those who seek might find you. Time and again you offered them covenants and through the prophets taught them to look forward to salvation. <sup>5</sup>And you so loved the world, Father most holy, that in the fullness of time you sent your Only Begotten Son to be our Savior. <sup>6</sup>Made incarnate by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, he shared our human nature in all things but sin. <sup>7</sup>To the poor he proclaimed the good news of salvation, to prisoners, freedom, and to the sorrowful of heart, joy. <sup>8</sup>To accomplish your plan, he gave himself up to death, and, rising from the dead, he destroyed death and restored life. <sup>9</sup>And that we might live no longer for ourselves but for him who died and rose again for us, he sent the Holy Spirit from you, Father, as the first fruits for those who believe, so that, bringing to perfection his work in the world, he might sanctify creation to the full.

Vs.	Element of Salvation History
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____
6. _____	_____
7. _____	_____
8. _____	_____
9. _____	_____
10. _____	_____
11. _____	_____