

Petrine Versus Pauline Gospel

Intro: Modernism attempts to explain everything about and the Bible by naturalistic forces. They would remove all supernatural influences and miracles from the Scriptures. In this lesson, I want us to consider one doctrine that arose from Modernism and refute it. Some now argue that since Paul was commissioned to preach to the Gentiles and Peter to the Jews, there was a “Pauline Gospel” as distinguished from a “Petrine Gospel.”

I. GEORG WILHELM FRIEDRICH HEGEL

A. He lived from 1770 to 1831 and is one of the heroes of modernism.

B. After his death three groups arose from his teachings.

1. They are called the right, the left, and the center.
 - a. The right represented supernaturalism.
 - b. The left represented naturalism.
 - c. The center had a mediating tendency.
2. Some of those on the left were: Strauss, Ludwig, Feuerbach, Bruno, and Ferdinand Christian Baur.

C. Baur was the originator of the modernistic doctrine we are considering and the founder of the Tübingen school of theology.

II. FERDINAND CHRISTIAN BAUR

A. He lived from 1792 till 1860 and was the founder of the modernistic Tübingen school of theology.

B. Baur's doctrine:

1. The only difference between the Jews and early Christians was the Messiahship of the crucified Jesus.
2. The early apostles and their followers had forgotten the elements of the new religion. When Stephen tried to enforce those elements, he was put to death.
3. Paul “rediscovered these elements of universality and freedom, [yet] the Church stood suspiciously aloof.”
4. There was a section of the church that remained hostile to Paul which led to two parties or factions in the early church: Jewish Christians (Petrinists) and Gentile Christians (Paulinists).
5. Paul was **always** prepared for combat.
 - a. Any epistle that presented Paul in any other way was automatically rejected as authentic.
 - b. The only letters accepted as authentic were Galatians, 1 & 2 Corinthians, and Romans; Baur also rejected Acts.
6. The Petrine party:
 - a. “The Petrine party was very strong until the middle of the 2d century, when it was obliged to yield to, or rather harmonize with, the Pauline.” (John McClintock and James Strong, “Tubingen School,” *Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1970), 10:573.)
 - b. However, the Tübingen school “believed itself able to prove...that no accommodation took place in the apostles’ lifetime.” (J. Haussleiter, “Baur, Ferdinand Christian, and the Later Tübingen School,” *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, editor-in-chief Samuel Macauley Jackson (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1972), 2:9.)

- c. The Petrine party was Jewish both in origin and thinking.
 - (1) “Judaism was the cradle of Christianity; and the latter was only an earnest, restless, reformatory branch of the former. But it was not an offshoot as yet, for Christianity was essentially Jewish all through its first historic period.” (John McClintock and James Strong, “Tubingen School,” 10:573.)
 - (2) “Peter and the other apostles were held fast in the grip of the legalistic conception of Christianity, a sort of Christianized Pharisaism. Paul, when converted, had reacted violently against this view, and became the exponent of gentile freedom. Christianity was divided into two factions, Jewish Christians (Petrinists) and gentile Christians (Paulinists).” (A. T. Robertson, “Paul, the Apostle,” *International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia*, ed. James Orr (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1983) 3:2269.)
7. This supposed conflict lead to the conclusion that Paul and Peter preached a different gospel to different people (Paul to the Gentiles, Peter to the Jews).

C. Evidence for such a doctrine.

1. Absolutely none.
2. It was an invention in the mind of Baur.
3. “This theory, which found influential support in the scholarship of the time (Schwegler, Zeller, etc), could not stand the test of impartial investigation, and is now on all sides discredited.” (James Orr, “Criticism of the Bible,” *International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia* 2:752-753.)
4. However, the remnants of this doctrine remain even to today.

III. EPH. 3:8 “⁸ Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;”

A. Baur:

1. He would not have used this passage because he rejected Ephesians as canonical.
2. He viewed it as a work of the second century which, according to Baur, was *mediating theology*.
3. Concerning the books Baur rejected, “He called them [Paul’s rejected books] ‘tendency’ writings, designed to cover up the strife and to show that peace reigned in the camp.” (A. T. Robertson, “Paul, the Apostle,” *International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia*, 3:2269.)

B. Others would find some supposed evidence of this diversity.

1. Since Paul preached among the Gentiles that he must be teaching something different than those preaching among the Jews.
2. The difference here is not the **message** but the **audience**.

IV. REFUTATION:

A. Paul’s collection for the Jewish saints from Gentiles.

1. Acts 11:27-30 “²⁷ And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. ²⁸ And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar. ²⁹ Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea: ³⁰ Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.”
2. This shows there is not the supposed conflict Baur imagined.

B. Context of Ephesians 3.

1. “The unsearchable riches of Christ.”
 - a. Deals with that which Christ gives—salvation.

- b. Heb. 5:8-9 ⁸“Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; ⁹And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;”
 - c. Peter’s preaching of salvation.
 - (1) Consider Acts 2
 - (2) Peter proved that Jesus was the Son of God; Acts 2:22 ²²“Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:”
 - (3) The Jews had sinned in crucifying Him; Acts 2:23 ²³“Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:”
 - (4) Peter developed faith in the Jews that Jesus is Lord and Christ; Acts 2:36 ³⁶“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.”
 - (5) They needed to repent and be baptized; Acts 2:38 ³⁸“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”
 - d. Paul preached that salvation to the Gentiles.
 - (1) Consider the Philippian jailor in Acts 16.
 - (2) The jailor’s question; Acts 16:30 ³⁰“And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”
 - (3) Paul’s response, his need for faith; Acts 16:31 ³¹“And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.”
 - (4) After preaching to him and instilling that faith, we observe the jailor’s response; Acts 16:33 ³³“And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed *their* stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.”
 - e. Both Peter and Paul preached the same plan of salvation (“the unsearchable riches of Christ”) for all individuals: Jew or Gentile.
2. Earlier in Ephesians 3:
- a. Paul had discussed how he received by revelation the mystery of Christ; Eph. 3:2-3 ²“If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: ³How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words,”
 - b. He explains that mystery; Eph. 3:6 ⁶“That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:”
 - c. The promise refers back to the promise God made to Abraham; Gen. 12:1-3 ¹“Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will shew thee: ²And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: ³And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and **in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.**”
 - (1) There is no distinction made between Jew and Gentile (a distinction which did not exist when God made this promise).
 - (2) In discussing this same promise in relation to the Law of Moses, Paul concludes; Gal. 3:26-29 ²⁶“For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. ²⁷For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. ²⁸There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹And if ye *be* Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”
 - d. Jew and Gentile are fellowheirs of the same body.
 - (1) If Peter and Paul preached different gospels, they would not be **fellowheirs** (heirs together with).

- (2) They would not be members of the **same** body but different bodies.
 - (a) Eph. 4:4 “*There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;*”
 - (b) If different doctrines were taught, there would be two bodies—one for the Jews and another for the Gentiles.

Conclusion: If Peter and Paul taught different doctrines or different gospels, then at least one (if not both) would be eternally cut off from God; Gal. 1:6-9 “*I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: ⁷Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. ⁸But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. ⁹As we said before, so say I now again, If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.*” There is but one Gospel. Both Peter and Paul preached that one Gospel; the difference is that they preached that same Gospel to two different audiences: Peter to the Jews and Paul to the Gentiles. Today all are subject to that one Gospel both Peter and Paul preached.