

The Gospel of Paul

1 My friends I am writing to bring you the good news of our Lord, Jesus Christ; and, to tell you of the remarkable events that happened in the fortieth year of my life. God delivered me twice from death, and now I am writing to reveal His majesty and love.

Verily God is compassionate, God is merciful, God is lenient, God is wise, all knowing. He knows what is in our hearts, He knows what is in our minds. He is the Lord of all Worlds. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

2 Here begins my journey inward: Having been consumed by excess and sin for decades, I was full of the world and the world was full of me. I had devoted my life to indulgence, and the idolatry of money. Material things ruled me, and I worshiped the physical pleasures of this world. It was at this moment that the most terrible and wondrous of events happened. At the twilight of spring a robber attempted to murder me. His attempt failed, I crippled him, and he would later die from the wounds I inflicted. The Lord had saved me from the wrath of man, but not from myself.

The authorities were quick to assess blame, and punish the poor man, but this is not a story of man's law - it is a story of God's Law, of God's love, and the suffering of Jesus Christ.

The world wished me to proclaim my heroic deed. I had prevented a horrible crime, and delivered justice to the criminal with my own hands. The world descended on me. People wished to know the sordid details of the destruction of human life; people patted me on the back; people told me what choice did I have; people hoped through me to express their rage.

My soul was crushed. I had destroyed a man. I had taken life. Life is fragile and

life has a thin veneer. It can be taken by God at any moment, without our realizing what is happening. Life is precious. Beware! Man's valuable soul is contained within a contemptible body.

The Lord's miracles appear when they are least expected. Christ comes to many clandestinely and in stealth. He whispered in my thoughts and dreams. He listened, he did not talk. I wished only for him to go away, but I also wished only to be with him. I desired to return to my sinful life. I wished to ignore the sick, the persecuted, the oppressed. I wished to ignore all of those who had nothing to offer me. But, without Jesus, I could only perceive the world as a horrible monstrous place, full of pain and suffering. I begged God to forgive me, and to release me from my pain.

3 At the arraignment, the robber arrived a broken man. He could barely walk with a cane, his speech was slurred, his family showed the distress of his future incarceration. His lawyers explained to the Court that he would soon die from the wounds I inflicted. The Magistrate asked if I had any thing I wanted to say before sentencing the accused. It was at this moment that Christ revealed himself to all present in the Court. The accused and myself walked toward each other and embraced. We asked each other for forgiveness, and the world stopped. I felt hundreds of hands on my back, and the love of God holding us both up for the world to see - persecutor and persecuted, oppressor and oppressed, criminal and victim, brother and brother. As we had forgiven each other, the Father had forgiven us. Jesus was the Christ. We had all been witnesses to Christ as the Father.

4 Months passed and I could not sleep or eat. But, the world was no

The Gospel of Paul

longer a place of suffering and sorrow. Life was wonderful. Love had consumed me. Life was new. I was in love with the world. I had found the source of truth - God's love. I had found the candle that had been light two thousand years ago. I could think only of the Lord. I wished only to be with God. I could see in every mundane task the purpose behind each day, each event, each minute, each second. My suffering ceased. I had been saved. Christianity had become not a religion, but a personal relationship with God.

I prayed that God would use me as an example. I prayed that God would mold me in the image of his son. I prayed that God would keep me humble, honest, and that he would always make my example exceed my rank and my authority.

5 Through Christ, I could now feel compassion and hope. I could listen to each person I encountered regardless of their position or intelligence. The Lord had revealed to me the Word and shown me that every event and happening is predestined. The color of our hair, our friends, the jobs and positions in life man accepts. The only choices left to man are his piety and his sinfulness. Everything else has been ordained by God before man's creation.

Prayer does not change God's mind, it changes man's. It bends man's will into submission to allow God's will to be done.

6 At the height of my religious ecstasy, my body collapsed. Sickness ravaged my body, pain controlled my life. Illness claimed me. Doctors treated me day and night. I lived in hospitals. I prayed for death. I prayed that God would slay my life and take it quickly.

My body let go of its life and I died. In death, a great white light, brighter than the Sun, stood before me. Unlike the sun, I could look at the light without burning my eyes. All suffering was gone. Love consumed me. All worry was gone. I saw myself floating above my body, and the people caring for me down below. I saw the sorrow in my wife's eyes, and I saw my broken body. I saw Jesus waiting for me, with his large out-stretched hands. I thought perhaps his hands are big because he is a carpenter. Or, perhaps his hands are so large to hold up all the problems of the world. I had arrived at heaven's gates.

Then as quickly as I had died, I was sucked back into the world. Doctors did horrible things to me, and my body screamed in pain.

The death of man's physical body can be compared to a child's whirling ride. We spin till we are frightened, and at this point we lean back until gravity catches. We lose control, and gain ecstasy. Like holding a new born child. We are frightened of dropping the infant, but at the same time we are overcome with joy. We fear losing our bodies, but our souls yearn for the love of God.

7 I had an after death experience documented by science, but now my body was a living corpse. I suffered day and night. Pain was my world. Physicians cut open my body. I lived in one room, no food, no water. I was living at the foot of the cross Jesus had died on. People of all types passed by as I sat at the feet of Jesus. God had answered my prayers. I was now the example. My piety or sinfulness would be the example. God had shown me how Christ had suffered, and had molded my body to mark me as a slave of Christ. All who see me suffer are witnesses to Christ as the Son.

The Gospel of Paul

8 Like the living Christ, I am alive. Look at what God has done. My life has twice been spared. Jesus has done this great thing for me. He has shown me his suffering, mercy, grace, wisdom, eternity. In suffering I learned of the son. In forgiveness I learned of the Father, and in death I learned of the Holy Ghost. Jesus is the one true God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

9 Many men prayed for me while I was ill. Christians, Muslims, Jews, Hindus, Buddhists. God answers prayers. No man, no religion, has a monopoly on suffering and kindness. Some will say this is blasphemy. Who are they to tell Jesus about suffering and forgiveness. God is the king of kings. There is no God, but God, and Jesus the Christ is his Son.

Do not fear. Do not be afraid to learn of your brothers in religion. Man seeks eternal truth. Man seeks the love of God. Come let us talk this over! says the Lord; no matter how deep the stain of your sins; I can take it out and make you as clean as freshly fallen snow. All life has value, every man can and does make a difference. God has not forgotten man, and will not leave his followers behind.

10 Criticism of others, whether Christian, Jew or Muslim is the poison of the soul. Knowledge can be the kingdom, but knowledge can also be the poisonous sin. The sin of pride. Like money it destroys. What problem did money ever solve. Money will not fix people, only things. Money cannot fix a broken heart, or loneliness. What problem did pride ever repair. But knowledge, provides understanding. Understanding provides love, and love solves all problems.

11 Like Christ, man must treat everyone with equal dignity - master or slave. Man rushes to the call of his master, and ignores his slave. After all, his master pays his wage. But, Christ died for everyone sins. Not just the master's, but the slave's as well. I am God's slave, and he is my master.

12 Do not be afraid to die. Man fears the sick and dying because he sees his own mortality. But, God sees the suffering, and sees the Son. Those who suffer show sincerity in the presence of the Lord. The suffering are close to God, but the opportunity for temptation is great. Those who suffer are desperate; desperate for God's healing, His mercy, His forgiveness, His love. Desperate to end the suffering. Beware of the temptation of ingratitude in suffering!

13 For years I was a destructive force in this world. Perhaps, man's suffering and weakness reveals how truly great God is even when man is not a faithful child.

God made man. Man rejected God. God will not give up until he wins man back. God will whisper. He will shout. He will touch and tug. He will take away man's burdens; He will take away man's blessings. If there are a thousand steps between God and man, He will take all but one. He will leave the final one for man. This is because the Lord loves man so much that He wishes man to have the choice to come to Him. The choice of piety or sinfulness. God's goal is not to make man happy, his goal is to make man his. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. It is a world without end. God's love shall survive the stars burning out of the heavens.

God wants man to have the choice of compassion. Just like Christ wandering through the streets of the ignored, sick,

The Gospel of Paul

hopeless, desperate, and persecuted. He wants man to see that God can give him what the world cannot.

Evil wishes man to think that there is no God, and if there is a God how can he let so much suffering take place in the world. Bethesda, an overcrowded nursing home, cancer, orphans in New Delhi, and endless wave of suffering. What kind of God could let innocent children be the victims of war and abuse? Evil wishes man to believe that man is a vial creature, and not worthy of God's love. How can God love something that is so destructive? The answer is as simple as it is illusive. Jesus Christ is the treasure map towards the location of God's love within each man. Alleluia.

14 Pray now, and prostrate yourselves before the Lord. The things you believe will provide you with more time, only give you more responsibility. What was supposed to free you only imprisons you as a slave. Only prayer will give you the power you seek, because only God has power. Submission to the Lord is power. Humble yourself, and at death you may be in the Lord's presence. For only the humble may be in the Lord's presence. Be at peace with the Lord, and you will find rest. Peace is not avoiding life, peace is life; and, life is Jesus. Jesus is the beginning from which all has come, and from which all shall come. He is the beginning and the end.

15 The world is competitive. It rewards achievement. God is not competitive. God does not grade, he judges. Men are judged on their effort, not the result. Men are judged by God on their ability to love. Can you love the world so much that you would die for it ? For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that

whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Will you die for him?

16 God is everywhere, and his joy is everywhere. Joy is not the past or future. These events have passed, or have not happened. Joy is found in the moment. If you are happy now and you die, you die happy. If you are unhappy now and you die, you die unhappy. The happiest man is the one who is happy now. He is the man who has found true love - the love of God. Blessed Be the Name of the Lord. Amen.