Paul’s Teaching on Hell

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“God is love” (I John 4:8, 16).

Paul has been given a very special place in our age. He has been chosen by God as the Apostle to the Gentiles – to the Nations. He is our divinely appointed Apostle.

“For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office” (Romans 11:13).

God revealed to him alone the distinct message for our day:

- **The Gospel of the Grace of God**

  “… The ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the Grace of God” (Acts 20:24).

This gospel was committed to Paul’s trust.

“According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust” (I Timothy 1:11).

Paul calls this distinct gospel given to him by God for us, “my gospel.”

“In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel” (Romans 2:16).

“Now to Him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel …” (Romans 16:25).

“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” (Galatians 1:11-12).
• The Dispensation of the Grace of God

“… The Dispensation of the Grace of God which is given me to you-ward” (Ephesians 3:2).

“… I am made a minister, according to the Dispensation of God which is given to me for you …” (Colossians 1:25).

• The Revelation of the Mystery

“Now to Him that is of power to establish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the Dispensation of God which is given to me for you …” (Colossians 1:25).

“… By revelation He made known unto me the Mystery …” (Ephesians 3:2-3).

God gave these revelations to Paul for us – members of the Church, the Body of Christ:

“… The Church, Which is His Body” (Ephesians 1:22-23).

“… The Body, the Church …” (Colossians 1:18).

Paul is the divinely authorized spokesman of God for this age.

“If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let Him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.” (I Corinthians 14:37).

As C.I. Scofield has stated, “In his [Paul’s] writings alone we find the doctrine, position, walk, and destiny of the church.” (Scofield Reference Bible, Ephesians 3:6, emphasis ours).

These words of Scofield convey the clear teaching of Paul:

“Whereunto He called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle” (II Thessalonians 2:14-15).

“Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus” (II Timothy 1:13).

“And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.” (II Timothy 2:2).

“Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers” (Titus 1:9).
Because Paul is God’s spokesman for us today, we are to study his teaching faithfully when considering the application of any doctrine.

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (II Timothy 2:15).

The subject of Hell is no exception. What follows here in this chapter is a complete listing of every occurrence of Paul’s usage of the word hell as recorded in the King James Version of the Bible. We shall list all of his teachings regarding hell as recorded by Luke in the Book of Acts, as well as himself in all of his epistles (Romans through Philemon) as seen in the following:

**Paul’s Usage of the Word Hell**

**in the**

**Book of Acts**
Are you surprised to see empty columns?

Did you ever stop to consider that Paul, our Apostle, never once used the word “hell?”

He didn’t use the word hell in any recorded messages from the Book of Acts. He didn’t use the word hell in any of his epistles. Not once! None! Zero! How could this possibly be?

How could Paul have conducted a teaching ministry that brought glory to God, and yet never have even once used the word hell? Isn’t the traditional, orthodox doctrine of hell at the very foundation of the religious system’s creeds?
How could Paul have been so negligent? How could he have gone through his entire ministry forgetting to use such a crucial word? What’s up with that?

Or, is it possible that Paul understood something we don’t? Could it be we have been deeply buried under religious tradition?

Consider for a moment this declaration of Paul himself, found in the Book of Acts:

“Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God” (Acts 20:26, 27).

The plain and simple fact is that Paul was NOT negligent in his teaching ministry. Here is a passage that makes this clear. Paul said that he was “pure from the blood of all men,” because he had declared “all the counsel of God” – a counsel which obviously DID NOT include hell at all.

Do we find ourselves perplexed that Paul, the Apostle, never used the word hell and yet was able to declare “all the counsel of God?” Are we amazed that he could have been “pure from the blood of all men” without even once using the word hell? Could our bewilderment here be because we have been steeped in the traditions of men, and not in the traditions of Paul?

“Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle” (II Thessalonians 2:15).

We are to hold Paul’s traditions, “whether by word, or our epistle.” Holding to Paul’s very words and epistles will remove hell from our teaching.

“Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus” (II Timothy 1:13).

Again, “holding fast the form of sound words” that we have heard from Paul will remove hell from our doctrine. We must be like those from Berea and search the Scriptures for ourselves (Acts 17:11). We need to test diligently, or prove the things that we believe against the Scriptures.

“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good” (I Thessalonians 5:21).

We need to see for ourselves if religious hell was a part of the vocabulary divinely given to Paul. We must consult an exhaustive concordance if need be. We must not settle for the party line, or a secondhand faith.

“… Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind” (Romans 14:5).

Isn’t Paul presented as our present pattern (I Timothy 1:15-16)?

Doesn’t Paul tell us to follow him (I Corinthians 4:15-17; 11:1; Philippians 3:17)?
Didn’t Paul tell us to:

“Hold fast the **form of sound words**, which thou hast **heard of me**, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus” (II Timothy 1:13)?

Did we hear **hell** from Paul? Is it a Pauline form of **sound words**? Have we been duped into accepting a religious tradition that is contrary to the sound scriptural teachings of our Apostle?

Wouldn’t we be Pauline if we, like Paul, also excluded **hell** from our teaching? Or, more pointedly, could we possibly be truly Pauline in our teaching, if we continue the use of a theological system that includes the traditional **hell**?

“But speak thou the things which become **sound doctrine**” (Titus 2:1).

The religious system’s teaching concerning hell is not Pauline, and is not sound doctrine. Let’s not be afraid of where truth leads us. Truth truly liberates us from suppressive religious bondage. Well did our Savior say,

“And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32).

Why not enjoy the true freedom of believing the Scriptures over traditional teaching? Why not follow Paul in a **pure** Grace Gospel that has no place for, nor need of a religious **hell**?

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