Alright, let's get started. Last class period we started to look at the final section of Paul's letters known as the Pastoral Epistles. Although that may not be the best label for them it is one that is commonly used; so I'll stick with it although there are probably better ways to describe the first and second Timothy and Titus, the final three letters that we’ll look at. One of the things we want to talk about is how those fit within the temporal framework of Paul's life. For example, how do they fit into the book of Acts? Especially 2 Timothy which is most likely the last letter Paul wrote right before his pending execution. But we ended last class by looking at one of text in 1 Timothy in chapter 2 and asking how our ability to reconstruct the background of 1 Timothy as far as what was going on and what are some of the factors that contributed to the production and writing of the letter, how that might affect the way we read one text in particular. We begin by looking at the first of it towards the end of chapter 2 Paul's instructions to women as far as how they dress, not to adorn themselves with pearls and gold braided hair, and then his command for them to be silent, and not to teach or have authority over men. The question we're wrestling with or started to raise is how are we to read that today? Is that section binding for today or are these instructions meant only for Paul's first century church? So we'll look at that very briefly not necessarily because I want to solve that issue or tell you what you should think about it but just to demonstrate hermeneutically how we approach a text of Scripture the factors that we have to consider when we think about how we read this for today and how do we apply it. Also how understanding the background of the text may help us to read a section of the New Testament in a slightly different way so we'll look at chapter 2 of 1 Timothy. Also, chapter 3, is the section on elders and deacons and then we’ll move on to 2 Timothy and Titus. We'll move through those texts rather quickly. Then I want to try to summarize what do we learn about Paul from his teaching?
What seem to be the dominant threads and the dominant theological themes we find throughout Paul's letters?

Let's open up with prayer. Father we thank you again for the privilege, as well at the same time recognizing the responsibility we have of reading and encountering your revelation to us in the form the New Testament. Lord I pray we will be attentive to not only what does the text meant to how it would have been heard and understood in its first century setting, but having understood and grasp that we'd be better able to respond to it in the in the 21st century. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

Alright as I said we begin to look at the text in 2 Timothy 2 and particularly Paul's instructions to women not to dress ostentatiously with pearls, gold and braided hair and also the instructions to be silent and they're not permitted the teach or have authority over men. Two things we highlighted before we look just a little but more specifically about ways to read this. First of all, I emphasize that most likely Paul's instructions come out of a very specific situation and we talked a little bit about the concept of the new Roman woman in the first century and even a little bit before the concept of the new Roman woman which may have affected the way women were acting in this particular text. So Paul's instructions are probably not just off-the-cuff, that he just decided to say this for no reason, but probably they are in response to a problem that the false teaching and perhaps this idea of a new Roman woman had now caused in the church.

That brings up the second issue. We said that chapter 2 is primarily addressing the situation of the church as it gathers for worship. It's not necessarily addressing what goes on in the home what goes on in the workplace or what goes on in one's private life, although that Paul's not interested in those things, but it's just that when we read chapter 2 of 1 Timothy we must put it in its proper setting and context and that is: Paul is addressing what goes on when the church gathers for worship.

Now how do we read this text basically there are two ways. One can read this text as being universally binding that is these are instructions that Paul gives to the women in the church especially to not teach or have authority over men could be interpreted as universally binding, that is that Paul assumes these instructions would apply to any
church at any time. Not only in the Ephesian church that he is now addressing. So even though this may be the result of a specific problem those that would hold this view would say, “No, these instructions are universally binding, they are instructions that Paul would have given to any church. He just happens to give them to the Ephesians because they are having an issue in the church.” One of the things they would emphasize is that in chapter 2 verses 13 and 14 Paul seems to ground his instructions in creation, when he says for Adam was formed first and then Eve. Paul interestingly seems to ground his instructions then in creation that is the fact that Adam was created first and then Eve and the suggestion then is that God has designed the roles that one finds in chapter 2 for male leadership in the church based on creation--the way things are created. They would emphasize that by grounding his instructions in creation this is the way God has created the roles of male and female, that now Paul is saying this should always be observed in the church. So those that would see that more emphasis on these instructions are universally binding that Paul expects them to be obeyed in all churches in all settings in the first century or the 21st-century would draw attention to the fact that Paul seems to ground his instructions in creation, in the theology of the created order. So that's one way to take them but there's variations within that not all who would hold to these instructions being universally binding would see them as binding in the same way.

The second approach then would be to see these instructions as Paul's instructions only to address this specific problem in the church of Ephesus. So, in other words, Paul would not necessarily have given these instructions to any other church, it's just that there's a particular problem in Ephesus and now he is trying to curb that problem or cut that problem off and so these instructions are only meant for this specific situation. Outside of the situation where it doesn't hold then Paul did not expect these instructions to be universally binding. So depending on whether you think Paul is emphasizing perhaps the creation order and grounding his instructions in the creation order so that you would see these instructions as universally binding or whether you see the text as more focused more on the specific setting and the specific problem and background that would cause you to limit these instructions only to the first century church will determine how
you read the text. Now even the second one even if you think that these instructions are only for the first century church and Paul did not think they were universally binding, it doesn't mean they're not still applicable in some way. You would simply apply the text in a very different way than you would if you thought the text was universally binding. I mean either way it's still God’s word for the church and they still need to be applied but how you apply them will depend on again whether you think the instructions are meant to be binding and that they're there for all times or it's a universally valid principle or whether you see the instructions as mainly limited to the first century context that Paul was addressing. If you're interested in pursuing this more I've mentioned this series of books a couple of times the series called “The Counterpoint Series” by Zondervan Publishing Company. As I said before they have a whole series of books on four views of this two views of that. They have a book on two views of women in ministry where you have two individuals arguing that these instructions are universal, although they come to little bit different conclusions. Then you have two other individuals arguing that they are not universally binding. By the way this is not a male and female issue. I have plenty of males who argue that this is not universal and I've read a number of arguments by women arguing that these instructions are binding and universal. So it's not so much a male or female issue as far as which side you come down on. So if you're interested in pursuing it I would direct you to the Zondervan Publishing “Counterpoint Series” and the book on two views of women in ministry.

Alright, chapter 3 another example much like chapter 2, how we read chapter 2 can depend on the ground that we construct the problem that Paul's addressing. Chapter 3 is similar in that this goes back to our discussion of the Pastoral Epistles especially 1 Timothy in general and how one understands the overarching purpose of it. If one sees 1 Timothy as primarily a kind of a church manual we talked about the church manual view or the instructional manual view of 1 Timothy that primarily sees 1 Timothy as addressing Timothy on how to run the church, how to organize the church, and what the church should be doing. However, I suggested to you that most likely that's not what Paul is doing. Rather, Paul is addressing as he tells us in the first three or four verses of 1
Timothy 1, he clearly tells us that he is addressing a very specific problem and that is as with a couple of other letters he's already written against some type of false teaching or deviant teaching has now infiltrated the church in Ephesus. So he writes to Timothy to enable Timothy to deal with it. So I would not expect that Paul is going to tell us everything that he would if you we were constructing some church manual. Instead he's only going to instruct Timothy with what is necessary to address this problem or this teaching whatever precisely it is.

So how does that affect the way we read chapter 3? Chapter 3 is devoted to the church's selection of individuals to fulfill two different roles that is elders and deacons. So first of all Paul addresses the issue of elders and tells his readers that it's a worthy and noble task to be an elder but here are the qualifications. He lists several qualifications that an elder must fulfill in order to be chosen to function as an elder in the church. Then he goes on and does the same thing for deacons. Now once again when we think about this text in light of its setting is Paul trying to give us instructions on what is required of elders and how to choose them or is Paul more interested in instructing Timothy on how to combat and deal with this false teaching. If it's the latter, then I would not expect that Timothy or Paul will tell us everything there is to know about what elders and deacons are and what they're supposed to do and how to choose them etc. etc.

That's exactly what you find. Interestingly, when you read 1 Timothy 3 you find precious little about what elders and deacons actually did in the first century church. You find everything about their character and especially an emphasis on their ability to teach. Why is that? Because my summary of 1 Timothy chapter 3 is the reason Paul addresses this issue is because perhaps the best chance for the church to combat this false teaching is if they have leaders that are qualified especially able to teach sound doctrine that will be the best way for the church to be able to combat the false teaching. So Paul says virtually nothing about what elders and deacons do. From the words elders and deacons itself and a little bit of the description you do get a sense that the primary function of the elders is the primary oversight of the church and particularly teaching. Whereas as for the deacons it's a lot less clear. Are they some subordinate group under the elders? It doesn't
seem so but Paul doesn't tell us. The idea of a deacon is more subservient but does that mean that they only perform physical tasks?

I grew up in a church situation where the elders were in charge of the spiritual leadership of the church and the deacons for the physical upkeep. That's fine, but that's not necessarily found in 1 Timothy. Again that's because Paul is not telling us about what deacons and elders do, he assumes that the church knew what they did. He's mainly concerned that the church in Ephesus has the kind of elders and deacons that will allow them to withstand this false teaching. So he lists these qualifications because those kinds of leaders will best be able to resist the false teaching that it faced. He doesn't tell us about how to choose them, he doesn't tell us about how many elders and deacons there should be or if they should be on a rotating basis or whether they should be on for three years and all of that is fine. It's just that Paul is silent on much of what elders and deacons do precisely and how they would've functioned in the church. Again if you read 1 Timothy carefully it is clear that the elders did have the primary function that probably we would associate with the senior pastor in our church today of the primary oversight, care and teaching responsibilities within the church. But again outside of that he doesn't say a lot about exactly what they do so there's probably some wiggle room in our denominations today as far as exactly what the elders and deacons do and how they function at times.

Alright, so does everyone see that it makes a big difference how we read when we understand the background, how we read text like that. Some have even suggested that this false teaching, this deviant teaching whatever it was had already affected some of the church leadership. Some of those who were propagating this deviant false teaching had actually infiltrated or become leaders in the church. Now by giving these lists of qualifications this would be Paul's way of weeding them out and making sure that they did not get into the leadership. That's possible as well. But again when you read the text we need to be aware of as much of what Paul doesn't say because he's not asking the question here's what elders and deacons do and how they function and here's who should be elders and deacons and here's the criteria for choosing them and here's how long they
should serve etc. etc. He's asking one question how can the church stand against the false teaching by making sure that they have leaders who are qualified that will best be able to withstand it.

So again in conclusion, 1 Timothy then is not meant to be a manual for how to run the church. Not that we can't learn something about how the church should be organized or function or what should take place what the church should do. But Paul's not primarily answering that question, though we could wish he did. But, again, Paul's main concern as it was in Colossians, as it was in Galatians, is to address a teaching that he sees now is a threat to the church, this time the church in Ephesus. Now he writes a letter to Timothy who is now to take it to the Ephesian church. Timothy is the person Paul has most likely appointed to take care of the situation, this problem in the church. Now Paul writes a letter for the primary purpose of enabling Timothy and the Ephesian church to deal with this teaching that is in danger of affecting the church. It seems to me, all the instructions can be seen as kind of reaching that end of enabling the church to deal with the teaching, and a number of the each of the chapters reflect problems that have arisen because of this teaching affecting the church.

Alright, any questions on 1 Timothy? Again, I did not want to linger too long on 1 Timothy but we looked at a couple of passages and just a slight bit of detail, just again to show you what's entailed in interpreting a text in light of the broader context that may have influenced it. We saw that with 1 Corinthians often your ability to reconstruct what most likely was the issue being addressed can have a profound effect on how you read certain sections of the New Testament.

Alright, well let's reach into the early church's mailbox and pull out another letter and we’ll look at another letter to Timothy and this is the second letter to Timothy. As we said, as you read it the thing that becomes ultimately clear is this is Paul's very last letter. Paul is very clear that he is now facing execution and his death is very close. So, for example, in the second Timothy, particularly chapter 4 in verse 6, he says, “For as for me I am already being poured out as a libation or drink offering and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight. I have finished the race. I’ve kept the faith. From
now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous judge will give me on that day, and not only to me, but also to all who have long for his appearing.” So Paul clearly thinks that he's at the end and we’ll look at what does that mean about the way we read 2 Timothy. First of all again why did Paul write as I just summarized Paul is now coming to the end of his life. He is in prison in Rome and about to be executed. What he does now he writes to pass the torch, we might say, on to Timothy. He wants to ensure that the Pauline legacy and the Pauline gospel continues. That this gospel that we have focused on in books like Romans and Galatians etc. now Paul wants to ensure that that will get passed on. So he writes to Timothy in the wake of his own execution and upcoming death, now he writes to Timothy to carry on the tradition, and passes on the torch to him.

The letter of 2 Timothy also in some respects resembles a fairly common type of writing just before, during, and slightly after the first century, known as a testament, similar to a last will and testament. You can read English translations of these testaments from the ancient world. It was basically a writing that was the last words of a dying hero and someone famous who was generally on their death bed. It would be their parting instructions to their disciples or to their family or children to offer ethical instructions but also at times eschatological type instructions as far as what was going to take place in the future. Almost the kind of thing we at times read in the book of Revelation or something like that. But 2 Timothy very closely resembles that kind of literature and in one sense could be understood as a testament in epistolary or in letter form. So this is Paul's last will and testament it's the last words of the dying hero except Paul's not in his death bed he’s on the execution block or his life is about to be taken because of his witness for Jesus Christ. But again the key is those verses I just read starting in chapter 4 verse 6, “Again, as for me, I am already being poured out as a libation and the time for my departure is come.” So a testament writing clearly anticipates the departure and the death of the hero but then would again pass on the parting and the final instruction to those who were gathered around. In this case, it's Timothy that receives the final departing instruction of Paul.
So, 2 Timothy could be seen as Paul's last will and testament, the parting words of a dying hero. If I were then in light of that situation and background and purpose, to pick a theme for 2 Timothy it would be that Paul's instructing Timothy to contend for the faith. That the faith that the gospel, he now passes on to Timothy the torch. He now passes on calling for Timothy to contend for that and to fight for that and uses a variety of metaphors and the gospel to get Timothy to preserve that gospel in both his life and his teaching as Paul is about to depart from the scene. That's all I want to say about 2 Timothy. Again just to give you flavor of why it was written and what is going on.

What about the last one, the book of Titus, which is the shortest of the three and again Paul's letters arranged largely in order of length so Titus is not the last letter that was written, and Philemon certainly wasn't, but because of their length they occurred towards the end of the collection of Paul's letters. But Titus is an interesting book and when you read Titus the first thing you realize is that much of the similarities with 1 Timothy. Which is why I just want to breeze through Titus quickly, but there are a couple of distinctive things about the book that I do want to focus on when it comes to Titus. So first of all, what is Titus's role? Again like 1 and 2 Timothy the book of Titus is named not after the church but after the individual to which it is written. These pastoral epistles are quite interesting in that they may reflect a different strategy on Paul's part where now remember most of the other books we saw were with within the pre-scripted introduction of the epistle were addressed to a specific church, or churches, except for perhaps Ephesians which is probably addressed to Christians and churches more generally in Asia Minor and the Greco-Roman empire. But most of Paul's letters are addressed to churches by name but it's interesting that with 1st and 2nd Timothy and Titus, Paul does not address a specific church but addresses a person Timothy or Titus who is responsible for that church and responsible for communicating that information to the church. The other exception was obviously Philemon but that's Paul much more interested in a rather specific problem between the relationship of Philemon and Onesimus though it was meant to be heard by the broader church. But it's kind of interesting Paul seems to be following a different strategy here rather than just addressing the church directly, he now
addresses a particular person that he has appointed over that church and that person that is responsible for conveying the instructions to the church. The same is true with Titus. Titus, then, much like Timothy was probably left by Paul with the church in Crete to deal with a very similar situation that is whatever the nature of the false or deviant teaching that Paul was addressing in 1 Timothy something similar may have been going on in the epistle of Titus. But again when we read Titus clearly Paul is addressing the problem or an issue that the church is facing and now he's left Titus there to deal with it and now he writes a letter of instruction as to how Titus is to deal with this problem of false teaching that has infiltrated the church which is on the island of Crete. Does everyone know where Crete is? Let me jump ahead here just a moment. You’ve seen this map. Again, this is the island of Crete right here and again you see on his final journey to Rome that ends Acts 28 you see that Paul was visited the island of Crete. But this is Crete where a church had been established and now Paul has sent Titus to the island of Crete to deal with the situation again of some false teaching infecting the church. Now Paul writes to Titus to help him deal with it. The other thing too is most likely I wanted to say something more about this with 2 Timothy but most likely 1 and 2 Timothy at least and perhaps Titus were written probably sometime after the events of Acts chapter 28. Acts chapter 28 ends with Paul in Rome and says nothing else and that was probably Luke's literary strategy, remember Luke was trying to demonstrate how the gospel began in fulfillment of Isaiah's promise of restoration and that the spread of the gospel and the people of God to lesser and lesser Jewish territories. In Acts chapter 1 verse 8 Luke envisioned that the gospel would eventually reach, the fulfillment of Isaiah, to the ends of the earth. So in Acts chapter 28 once the gospel gets to Rome Luke ends his narrative. But most likely the imprisonment that Paul is suffering under in 2 Timothy is the imprisonment that is going to lead to his death. It is a different one than the one that we read about in Acts chapter 28. Again this is based on the book of Acts. So Acts ends with this journey with this red line that Paul ends up in Rome and that’s where it ends. Most likely Paul would have been released from prison sometime after the events of Acts chapter 28 and would've been involved in other activities. Probably then he would've written 1 Timothy
and Titus and then would've ended up in prison again for the last time and then he would've written the book of 2 Timothy. Now there have been other suggestions as to how 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus fit into Acts but that's one of the most widely accepted ones at least for Christian scholars and students of the New Testament. So, that's where the island of Crete is.

A subversive letter, one of the interesting things about Titus is it appears at times to subvert a number of ideas or beliefs or traditions or part of the reputation of the island of Crete. For example, that the island of Crete had actually become almost proverbial, well-known for immorality and for, fast and loose living. Some have described it as a modern-day or would've been a first century Las Vegas or something like that. That's where people went to live wildly and do whatever. We also have a lot of literature on Crete which seems to be synonymous with someone who lied and told lies. Crete was interestingly the one of the fabled, or as tradition has it, was the birthplace and the burial place of the god Zeus. Do you wonder why? They have a tradition where the god Zeus was buried in Crete. But Crete was not known for telling the truth and fact that the phrase you often find commentaries quoting is, “all Cretans are liars.” It was a phrase that some would use to summarize what Crete was known for.

So interestingly, do you know what we read in Titus? Notice how Paul opens his letter, he says, “Paul servant of God and apostle of Christ Jesus for the sake of the of the faith of God's elect and the knowledge of truth that is in accordance with godliness in the hope of eternal life that God who never lies.” Now Paul hasn’t said that elsewhere so you wonder if perhaps Paul is emphasizing that because as a direct contrast with Crete. Crete is known for lying and now Paul says, “but now I address you as the one who speaks on God's behalf the God who never lies but who keeps his promise.” So that’s what I mean you find other instances of that throughout Titus where Paul apparently subverts typical cultural values or things that or lifestyle things that Crete is known for in antiquity. Or another one in chapter 2:11 to 14 Paul says Titus, “for the grace of God has appeared bringing salvation to all training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled upright, godly while we wait for the
blessed hope and manifestation of the glory of our great God and savior Jesus Christ.” So again you wonder if some of that language is not meant to be subversive of the kind of lifestyle that those in Crete would've lived. Instead Paul proposes something more subversive, more a lifestyle that is radical in comparison to what would've been typical in Cretan culture. So there's other examples of that throughout Titus where Paul may again be writing a subversive type of letter subverting and undermining typical Cretan values, Cretan mythology or Cretan teachings and lifestyle choices.

So then what is the purpose, what then is the overall purpose of Titus? Paul seems to write Titus again to instruct Titus to be the individual just as he left Timothy in Ephesus now he leaves Titus in Crete to deal with the teaching that has infiltrated the church. Paul instructs Titus regarding the church's life in a pagan world. He writes a letter to subvert pagan culture by engendering trust in God who never lies. By encouraging them to live a life of true virtue. So he writes he’s instructing Timothy or I'm sorry Titus in regard to how the church is to live its life out in the context of the pagan environment and he does so by directing their attention to or engendering their faith in the God who does not lie and in pursuing a lifestyle of true virtue. As an alternative to the kind of lifestyle that the Cretan culture would've taught. There's a lot more to say by way of detail but Titus is one of those books that we’re going to sail over rather quickly and when we get to Hebrews we will slow down quite a bit on the book of Hebrews, but I want to wrap up our discussion of Paul's letters, by in a sense synthesizing them together and to paint in very broad brush strokes what would be the dominant themes that you emphasize from all of Paul's letters. What are some of the things we've seen over and over again or what are some of the dominant themes that have played a crucial role in Paul's thinking and teaching? These are my suggestions and again you may think of other ones. I think one of them owes itself to a student in the past that suggested this I can’t remember which one off the top of my head but anyways I'm open to expanding this.

But as I have looked at the letters and put them together the things that I see occurring over and over again, running like a thread through his letters or playing a
crucial role would be first of all, Paul emphasizes over and over again that justification or salvation is by grace through faith apart from works of the law and that works are, however, still a necessary corollary to a life transformed by the Holy Spirit. So it's not that works are optional or don't play any role at all or play a subsidiary or secondary role and it's just that Paul argues clearly that justification one’s salvation or standing before God is not achieved by the works of the law or any other works but comes by faith in Jesus Christ but that inevitably and as it is a corollary that the good works accompany that, which Paul makes clear are the result of the new covenant Holy Spirit who transforms the lives of God's people.

Another dominant theme is Paul also emphasizes several times that both Jew and Gentile can now become God’s people equally and they can do so with no connection to the Mosaic law. In other words, the Mosaic law plays no role in determining who belongs to the people of God. In addition the promises of Abraham now belong to everyone who has faith in Jesus Christ. So remember these two things go together in the first century most Jews would've answered these questions first of all: what does it mean to belong to the people of God? It means to live life as a Jew that means submitting to the law of Moses, living under the law of Moses for males--that meant being circumcised, for everyone that meant observing the Sabbath and observing food laws. Those things that clearly marked one off as the people of God from Gentiles. So basically they answer the question what does it mean to be the people of God and they answered that nationally or ethnically by adopting the Jewish way of life. The corollary was being able to trace oneself back to the starting point Abraham. Who are the true children of Abraham? Remember back in Genesis 12 where God promised Abraham that he would become a great nation and in God would bless him and ultimately all the nations of the earth would be blessed. So how does one participate in that blessing? How does one participate in the promises made to Abraham? By physically being Abraham's children. So that's why Paul spends so much time with Abraham because that's what the blessings of salvation in justification and the new covenant are tied to. They’re tied to being Abraham's children but the question is: Who are the true children of Abraham? Paul makes it clear that it's
not those who belong to Abraham physically and ethnically but those who have faith in Jesus Christ are now the true children of Abraham. So because now if that’s true that Jew and Gentile equally belong to the true people of God, they equally possess the promises of salvation, they are equally justified and stand equally before God then who are the true people of God is based solely on faith in Jesus Christ. The way Paul does that is Paul argues Jesus Christ is the true seed of Abraham. Jesus Christ is the true promise and descendent of Abraham, and if that's true then the defining factor to belong to the people of God is no longer ethnic identity or bound up with obeying the law of Moses. Now it's bound up with faith in Jesus Christ, which is why Jesus is the only criteria then one can see why Jew and Gentile equally can participate in the blessings of salvation that come through Abraham.

Another one I find that although it seldom gets emphasized is that God's grace and power are made manifest through suffering and that God's people are called upon to suffer. Notice especially in a book like 2 Corinthians. Notice how many times Paul emphasizes suffering as the badge of his apostleship. Even in the midst of those who would point to their social status and their rhetorical flourish in their speech. Paul consistently appeals to his suffering as the sign of his apostleship and, very eloquently in 2 Corinthians, actually emphasizes a theme that begins back in the Old Testament, that is, God's power and grace are particularly made manifest in the midst of and through human suffering.

Another one God's people have overcome sin and death through their being united to Jesus Christ in his death and resurrection. Though sin is still a present reality that must constantly be dealt with. So this reflects that “already but not yet” the indicative/imperative tension that we’ve seen from Paul's letters. That is Paul is absolutely convinced and can make rather absolute statements such as you've died to sin and you've already been raised to newness of life. So how can you go on living in sin any longer? He can make absolute statements like that, yet then turn around and qualify himself and say that you still need to put sin to death. Sin is still a reality that the Christians that the God’s people struggle with. That part of this “already but not yet” tension that Paul is convinced
we've already overcome sin, sin has already been dealt with, we've already been released from the power and the sphere controlled and dominated by sin and death. We’ve been released to that by being united to Christ’s death and resurrection. That’s the already yet the reality is that transfer has not yet happened exhaustively and completely, that's the “not yet.” Therefore Paul still must give commands to put sin to death, do not let sin reign in your mortal bodies, and live present yourselves to God as living. That's the “not yet” aspect that must be realized through the commands and the imperatives that Paul gives. But it's important to realize that the form the first part provides the motivation but also the enablement for the second one. That is only reason that one can overcome and deal with sin is both motivated by, but also enabled by and even made possible by the first one. That the only way you can overcome sin is because Paul is convinced we've already died to sin by being united to Christ. The only way that he can command us to offer ourselves as living, to offer ourselves to God, because we have already been united with Christ in his resurrection. So the indicative is necessary not just as a motivation but it is the very enablement for accomplishing the imperative in Paul’s thoughts. We've already died to Christ, we've already been, remember the slides I had with the circles, we've already been freed from the realm in the sphere that is controlled and dominated by sin and death. We’ve been transferred into a new realm controlled by and dominated by righteousness and life in God’s Holy Spirit. Yet that transfer in one sense is not yet final and complete and that's the not yet part that makes the imperative necessary.

Finally an understanding of a life shaped by Christ and the gospel are the best way to combat error and false teaching. I want you to notice both of these it's not just intellectual. When we think of combating false teachers we usually think in terms intellectually that they believe something wrongly, but Paul was also interested in the resulting and corresponding lifestyle that that incorrect belief may engender. So over and over when Paul, for example, instructs the Colossians on how to deal the false teaching that faces them this mystical type of Judaism, he doesn't just go after their misbelief; he also goes after the fundamentally deceptive lifestyle or deception that engenders the kind of lifestyle they should live. So it's both correct belief and understanding of the gospel
but also the ethical implications of the gospel as well that will best enable the church to combat error and false teaching.

I think that's my last one before we get into Hebrews. I think if I were to add one more, I guess I would say that the last one that I would add is Paul's concern for community, that is the church. Another way of saying it is for Paul salvation has corporate as well as individual implications. That is Paul is clear that our justification results in belonging to a new community that transcends social distinctions. It is actually a demonstration that God's plan to reconcile the entire world is already underway. So the church is kind of a signpost, the church is the first installment, the church is the agent of the reconciliation of all things that God one day will enact through Jesus Christ. So Paul is concerned with the unity of, and the community of the church. Paul knows of no such thing as a Christian who is an individual a Christian by themselves. They inevitably belong to the body of Christ to a community and therefore it is interesting when you start reading one of Paul's letters what gets him so ticked off is anything that threatens the unity of the church. So that would be the last one I think. I would add this that the salvation is not just individual it also has communal dimensions and Paul is fundamentally concerned for the unity of this body, the church, as a community. There's a lot of other things to say about that but I think that just a cursory reading of Paul's letters makes that very clear.

Alright, anybody think of anything else you would add to this list. We have to have seven, don’t we? How many did we have? I have six so we need to think of another one. We can’t end on six, you have to have 7 when you’re talking about the Bible. No, just kidding.

Alright now I realize the weather is real nice here, so I’m going to let you go six or seven minutes early. Have a good weekend!