

# Important issues in the non-pauline churches essay



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Even though many Christians are not aware of the problems, there are issues in the non-Pauline churches because the scriptures point out several and the author address them. This paper will focus on those issues found in the non-Pauline letters which were written to the churches of that day. Then those issues will be compared to the issues which are found in the Pauline letters. Many of these issues are somewhat similar to the same problems which are found in the churches of today.

In addressing one of the issues in the book of Hebrews, The late Dr. Walter Martin, “ quipped in his usual tongue-in-cheek manner that the Book of Hebrews was written by a Hebrew to other Hebrews telling the Hebrews to stop acting like Hebrews” (Got Questions Ministries, 2013 p. 1). This may sound funny, but it makes an important point, which is more likely to be remembered by the reader. The focal point of this writing is directed at those Hebrews who had started up the rituals and rites of Judaism because of the persecution which had come against them (Got Questions Ministries, 2013).

No doubt the persecution was strong, and many times it seems that Christians (especially young Christians) seek to fall back into some of their old ways, and even more so if it brings any relief to them. At a closer look, one can find there are five major warnings given to these Hebrews, first is the risk of neglect found in Hebrews 2: 1-4 (Got Questions Ministries, 2013). Then there is the risk of unbelief in Hebrews 3: 7-4: 13, and the risk of spiritual immaturity in Hebrews 5: 11-6: 20 (Got Questions Ministries, 2013).

Moreover there is the peril of not enduring until the end in Hebrews 10: 26-39, and the worse hazard of all, the peril of refusing God found in Hebrews

12: 25-29 (Got Questions Ministries, 2013). Any one of these would be bad enough but to receive five strong warnings could only mean those Hebrews had allowed themselves to be bewitched through a false doctrine, just like the one at the church at Galicia which he wrote to. The writer also gave a comparison of the Levitical priesthood and the priesthood of Christ, and how much greater was the spiritual than that of the natural in Hebrews 7.

Furthermore, the writer of Hebrews encourages this group of believers through the testimonies of those who overcame great hardships and difficult situations through faith, found in Hebrews 11 (Got Questions Ministries, 2013). These faith testimonies showed that the power of the promises of God is real, and the fact is anyone can make it with God on their side no matter what comes against you (Romans 8: 28). The writer told them of the new covenant because the first was old and decayeth away in Hebrews 8.

One can see that all of these issues in the book of Hebrews are very similar to those epistles which were written Paul. Even though the language is a little different, the concept is the same. We can see the same thing taking place in the doctrine of Christ while he was ministering, and it is highly evident in the book of Revelation, where Jesus is writing to the churches. Next in the book of James, he announces himself as the writer, and this is where the issue begins because we do not know which James wrote this letter, however most scholars do not believe that it was the brother of Jesus (Bright, 2013).

Additionally, he wanted his readers to know and walk in the abundance of life and the goodness of the heart, instead of walking in faithless orthodoxy

and dead works (Bright, 2013). This is seen in his writings and in chapter 3: 18 he states, “ Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works”. In Romans and Galatians, Paul speaks about being dead to the law and alive to Christ. Now we come to Peter’s writings, which have been said by scholars that it was not written by Peter.

There is closeness to the books of Romans and Ephesians, which show that these letters to Asia Minor (present-day Turkey) relied on the contents of Paul’s writings (Wallace, 2013). The saints were under great persecutions by the Roman Empire, and there seems to be a measure of doubt that Christianity was where the true “ grace of God” is found (1 Peter 5; 12). Peter does a wonderful job of encouraging the saints through his discussion on salvation, and also gives commandments that will help the saints to live and walk in the fullness of this great salvation (1 Peter 1: 3-12).

This certainly matches up with the book of Ephesians where Paul spoke on salvation, “ For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God” (Ephesians 2: 8). In addition, Peter’s second writing was a warning against false teachers, he speaks of their coming in (2 Peter 2: 1-3), their judgment in (2 Peter 2: 3-9), and what they would act like found in (2 Peter 2: 10-22) (Bible Study Tools, 2013).

Peter addressed these issues of false teachers by telling the saints to stay faithful to the Word of God, the truth of the scriptures turn away those who twisted the scriptures (2 Peter 1, 3). He also encouraged them by telling them of a new heaven and earth and that Christ’s return was soon (2 Peter

3: 10-13). This goes right along with Paul's writings in First and Second Timothy where Paul warned Timothy about false teachers " heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears" (2 Timothy 4: 13).

It is clear, that John is the writer of the book and he focused in on going back to their fundamentals of the faith in a fatherly but loving tone, while dispelling the risk of Gnosticism, which later becomes a greater issue going into the second century (Grace to You, 2011). As one studies this book it is clear to see that John was warning the saints against this teaching because it claims Jesus to be a great teacher but denies the truth about his atonement (Christian Apologetics & Research Ministry, n. d. ).

John's letter corresponds to that of Paul's letters to Titus and Corinth where he said there are several vain talkers and deceivers (Titus 1: 10).

Consequently i n 2nd John, he warns of the danger of ' many deceivers" that are now come into the world, which believe and teach that Jesus did not come in the flesh, he goes to say that they are of the antichrist (2 John 7). However, he addresses the issue by encouraging the lady and her children to continue in the truth, to keep his commandments, and to walk in love which is the greatest commandment (2 John 1-5).

Paul speaking the church at Rome clarifies this by stating, " Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh" Romans 1: 3). The same thing is being spread today, and the devil wants to destroy people's faith by deceiving them into believing a lie.

Moreover in 3rd John, he is writing about Diotrephes, who had put an end to the hospitality which was being shown to other preachers, and had even

made them leave the church (3 John 5-10). This issue caused John to write to Gaius saying “ Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good.

He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God” (3 John 11). He encourages Gaius by telling him that he loves him and wishes him to prosper and be in health, and speaks of him walking in the truth (3 John 1-3). This letter resembles Paul’s writings a little because Paul had to deal with some very unruly people in his day. Finally we get to Jude, he wrote his letter because of the issue of false teachers which lead people astray, and he warns the saints about turning away from Christ (Got Questions Ministries, 2013).

He addresses these issues by admonishing the saints to give attention to the common salvation and content to the faith (Jude 3). This book is short but powerful and in many ways resembles Ephesians when speaking about salvation and somewhat in Romans when it discusses faith. In conclusion, this paper discussed the major issues found in the non-Pauline books and used several scriptures along with resources to point out these problems. These non-Pauline issues were compared to those of the Pauline books and found that many of those same issues are in the church today.