

## Is there a difference between Jesus and Paul in the transmission of the Gospel to the Gentiles?

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Big subject! But briefly, there was something about Paul's ministry that clearly infuriated his fellow Jews (and don't forget there was something about Jesus' message that also infuriated the Jewish hierarchy to the point where they plotted for his crucifixion by the Romans, and which initially had also infuriated Paul himself leading him to persecute violently those Jews who had become followers of "the Way").

Was it the same message by Jesus and the converted Paul that drew the same response? I think so.

One of the things that infuriated his hometown crowd in Nazareth was that Jesus held up as examples two *Gentiles* to demonstrate what God was doing through his Messianic ministry ... one a foreign woman and one a leprous enemy-general ([Lk 4:14-30](#)).

It's also interesting that the two people in the gospel stories who were commended by Jesus for their "*great faith*" were two *Gentiles* ... [the Syro-Phoenician mother](#) and [the Roman centurion](#).

The behaviour of the Syro-Phoenician woman infuriated even Jesus' disciples ... but she prevailed by pleading that even the little dogs get the crumbs from the master's table ... surely a message calculated to bring the ire of the privileged Jewish establishment.

This should not have caused such jealousy and hostility, because the prophets had repeatedly said God's plan was to bless the nations through an obedient Israel ([Gen. 12:2-3; Exod. 19:4-6; Is.42:1,6-7; 49:6; Ps.18:49; 45:17; 57:9; 96:3, 9-10; 108:3](#), etc. etc.)

The apostle Paul was the one who expounded this message clearly to the nations. In essence, he said, anybody can enter a saving relationship with God through Christ without first needing to

be related to the physical Israel and her institutions. This placed Gentiles and Jews on equal footing before God.

Paul, like his Master, was controversial because any man or woman could stand accepted before God without having first to observe the ceremonial Law of Moses. This for Judaism was the height of apostasy! This for Paul was the "mystery" that had not been seen before Messiah Jesus, but was now openly revealed to the world ([Rom. 15: 8-12; 16:25-26](#)).

So I see no contradiction between Jesus and Paul. But remember when it comes to the Gospel of the Kingdom, Jesus comes before Paul, being the "author and perfecter of [the] Faith" ([Heb. 12:2](#)).

After all, it was Paul who heard the Gospel in the preaching of Jesus ([Heb. 2: 3](#))! Thus, Christianity is founded upon the teaching and person of Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God. And Paul faithfully passed on the [Gospel of the Kingdom](#) which he defines as the [Gospel of the grace of God](#) ([Acts 20:24-25](#)).

We thus hear Jesus in Paul!