

## Comparison between Pauline and Johannine theology

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### Part I: General

References: Burge, *The Anointed Community*; Vos, *The Pauline Eschatology*; Ridderbos, *Paul: Outline of His Theology*; Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*

	Synoptics	John	Paul
Eschatology	<b>Realized</b>	<b>Realized</b> <b>Vertical dualism</b>	<b>Future Eschatological dualism</b>
Primary loci of tension	<b>The kingdom</b>	<b>Eternal life (newness, esp. in Revelation)</b>	<b>Justification</b>
Emphasis of Christology	<b>Earthly story</b>	<b>His humanity As Messiah</b> <b>Christ as the model</b>	<b>His divinity</b> <b>As Lord</b> <b>Christ as our reality</b>
Christ mysticism		<b>"Abide in Christ",</b>	<b>"being in Christ"</b>
Christian life		<b>Realized unbroken personal fellowship</b>	<b>Primarily eschatological aspect</b>

#### 1. Dualism: Vertical and Horizontal

##### A. John: Realized eschatology, Vertical dualism

John, more than the Synoptics, emphasized the realized aspect of life in Christ. His structure was the vertical dualism. Nevertheless, he did not deny or ignore the future aspect.

##### B. Paul: Future aspect, Eschatological dualism

Paul, more than anybody, emphasized the eschatological aspect of the work of Christ. His structure was the eschatological dualism. Yet, there is the realized aspect in the ideas of "first fruits," "down-payment," "being in Christ," and "the old has passed away, behold, the new has come" (1 Cor 5:17).

##### C. Both say that Jesus inaugurated a new era.

#### 2. Primary loci of tension (Already/Not yet)

##### A. Paul: Justification (Rom 3-5); also:

1) For Christ: Resurrection (Christ is the "first fruits") and reign.

2) For those in Christ: Redemption, the blessings of the kingdom (including unity, fellowship), and new life in the Spirit [esp. being "dead" to sin/the old man]

Indicative-->Imperative

3) For the wicked: Wrath of God, perishing, and death.

B. Both John and Paul speak of flesh ("world") and spirit.

### 3. Christ mysticism

Both have an element of mysticism.

A. John

"Abide" in Christ (vine and branches): Unbroken personal fellowship.

B. Paul

"Being in Christ" (head and body/members): Primarily eschatological.

### 4. Christology

A. Common

1) *Λογος*

a. Personal pre-existence of the *Λογος*

a) John: Jn 1:1 ("in the beginning" is before Gen 1:1).

b) Paul: Phil 2:6 (He "existed in the form of God.")

b. Agent of creation

a) John: Jn 1:3 ("all things came into being by Him." )

b) Paul: 1 Cor 8:6 (Christ, "by whom are all things")

2) Christ's reign

Both acknowledge that Christ's reign is not earthly, nor are the powers involved in bestowing or resisting His reign.

a. John: He refused any earthly kingdom (6:15), and said His rule came from a higher order, not worldly powers (18:31).

b. Paul: Reign is mostly eschatological. First, spiritual powers must be subjected (1 Cor 15:24-5).

## B. Different Emphasis

John

Paul

Jesus' humanity Divinity(equality with God in Col., Eph.)

Jesus as Messiah as Lord (easier for Gentiles to understand)

## 5. Christian life

### A. Faith

#### 1) Both speak of abiding:

a. John: A mutual abiding between believer and Christ, comparable to Father and Son.

b. Paul: "In Christ"

Indicative --> Imperative

#### 2) Emphasis

a. John: More realized unbroken personal fellowship.

b. Paul: Eschatological aspect.

### B. Church

#### 1) Both call for unity in Christ.

a. John

a) Analogy of children/Father and vine/branches.

b) Disunity is unbecoming (Jn 17:21).

b. Paul

a) Analogy of body/head (Paul's analogy of olive tree/branches speaks of the new Israel.)

b) Those who promote strife are anathema, and doomed (1 Cor 3:17).

## 6. Anthropology: The soul and spirit of man

A. ψυχη (Ladd says the views are complementary.)

1) Jesus:

Death of the body and destruction of the soul can be distinguished (Mt 10:28).

2) John

In two cases, he implies the soul is capable of continued existence after dissolution of the body (Rev 6:9; 20:4).

3) Paul

It means "life" or sometimes "person." It is not separable from body. Thus, it cannot survive the death of the body. [Though he does distinguish "we" from the "house" where we live in 2 Cor 5:2 and "I" from the "flesh" in Phil 1:22]

[My opinion: Paul's use of the term may not be consistent. We have to be careful interpreting every occurrence with the same meaning.]

B. Spirit

Both would probably agree that God is spirit (Jn 4:24) and man is spirit (in his inner dimension; Rom 8:10), thus the point of contact for worship is the spirit.

7. Pneumatology: Common ideas but in different metaphor

A. Role in Salvation

Both stress God's initiative in salvation.

1) John: New birth

Being born from above, new life is a gift from God.

2) Paul: Adoption

One is baptized into Christ, adopted (the Spirit gives life).

B. Gifts of the Spirit

Both say that love is the most important.

C. Enlightenment

Both say that the Spirit enlightens. Only by the Spirit, can one understand spiritual things.

#### D. Work of Jesus

For both, the Spirit carries on the work of Jesus.

1) John: The Spirit is "another" Paraclete.

2) Paul: The Spirit gives the knowledge and power to live the Christian life.  
[My comment: Sanctification]

## Part II: Eschatology

### 1. Perspective, Genre, Audience

	John	Paul
Perspective	<b>More individualistic</b>	<b>More collective, concerned with the corporate church</b>
Main concern	<b>Ramification of Christ for the individual</b>	<b>--&gt;Ecclesiology</b>
Timing	<b>('as if') Before the death and resurrection</b>	<b>After</b>
Resurrection	<b>Climax</b>	<b>Starting point. Build upon it.</b>
Miracles	<b>7 signs as proof</b>	<b>Plays down signs as proof. Emphasizes reason, faith, and election.</b>
O.T./Judaism	<b>Continuity of the New Covenant</b>	<b>Uniqueness of the New Covenant</b>
Terms	<b>Two ages</b>	<b>Two Adams</b>
Topics	<b>The Day (of the Lord) Sacrifice (the Lamb), atonement, reconciliation</b>	<b>Parousia/apocalypse/epiphany Propitiation, justification, Christian baptism, Ecclesiology, Theodicy, Eschatology</b>
Genre	<b>Gospel</b>	<b>Didactic occasional epistles.</b>
Audience	<b>Restricted to making his own points. Historical</b>	<b>Making his points by constructing arguments</b>
Use of "Christ"	<b>Jews</b>	<b>Gentiles</b>
	<b>Messiah/Christ mainly as title</b>	<b>"Lord" mainly as title. Christ as a name.</b>

### 2. Eschatological Coming of Christ: Both

#### A. John

He will prepare a place for us and then come to get us (14:3).

Burge notes that "the fourth evangelist's one contact with the parousia (14:1-3) is in transition and is reinterpreted." (Burge, 147). On the other hand, he mentions that John does not ignore the future consummation, a resurrection and judgment on the 'last day' (Jn 5:28-9; 6:39-40, 44, 54; 12:48).

#### B. Paul

We will be reunited with Christ (1 Thes 4:13-18; Jn 14:3 may be "the word of the Lord" that Paul appeals to; Ladd)

### 3. Coming of the kingdom in stages: Both

#### A. John

##### 1) Widely separated?

a. Argument: In Rev 20, the "millennium"

b. Negative: Voss argues convincingly that Paul does not support a millennium, nor does any other biblical writer (227ff.).

##### 2) Not separated? Realized Eschatology

a. Burge

a) John runs the whole glorification (death, resurrection, and ascension) of Christ into one "hour."

b) The parousia is already realized in the Spirit (148-9).

c) Thus, the church age is itself eschatological. "Through the presence of the Spirit, the effects of the Last Day are with us." (116). This is what Jesus meant when He said 'I will come.' (139)

b. Other critical scholars: Completely realized eschatology.

a) R. H. Charles, C. H. Dodd

b) Bultmann: Existential

c) J. A. T. Robinson: The resurrection inaugurates the parousia.

c. Arguments against:

The future consummation, a resurrection and judgment on the 'last day' (Jn 5:28-9; 6:39-40, 44, 54; 12:48). Eschatological, not yet realized.

##### 3) Tension of already/not yet

a. Already: We have life now.

b. Not Yet: We will have life on "the last day."

a) Jn 12:25 "...he who hates his life in this world shall keep it to life eternal."

b) Jn 5:28-9 "...all in the tombs will hear His voice and come forth, the good to a resurrection of life, the evil to a resurrection of judgment.."

c) Jn 6:39-40 "...everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him, may have eternal life and I Myself will raise him up on the last day."

c. Both

Thus, there is a current enjoyment of life, but there is also a life of a different sort, e.g., "eternal life," "a resurrection of life" that will be granted on "the last day."

B. Paul

1) The triumph of Christ in stages (1 Cor 15:23-26)

a. First resurrection: of Christ (inaugurated the new age)

b. Parousia and resurrection of the saints

c. End: Destruction of every rule and power. Put all enemies under His feet, destroy death (cf. Rev 20, 21).

However, these last two stages may have virtually no interval between them.

2) The blessings of the life 'in Christ': Indicative/Imperative (Ladd)

a. Believers: A Temple of the Spirit --> Be filled with the Spirit.

b. Flesh

The flesh of the body is sanctified, but the "flesh," as unregenerate human nature, must be put to death.

a) Fact

You have crucified the flesh (Gal 5:24) and put off the old nature (Col 3:9).

b) Imperative

It must be appropriated. Consider yourself dead (Rom 6:11), and put to death the deeds of the body (Rom 8:13), i.e., walk in the Spirit (Gal 5:16).

c. Present life: The objective must be appropriated (Ladd, Ridderbos).

d. Consummation: It will be consummated at the parousia.

C. Both say the consummation will bring the full manifestation of what is now realized in part.

#### 4. Antichrist: Both

A. John: 1 John, and "the Beast" in Rev 13

B. Paul: 2 Thessalonians "the lawless one"

#### 5. Assurance

For both, the beginning of the process is the assurance of its consummation.

A. John

1) The realization of the spiritual reality is the assurance of its consummation.

2) Obedience (belief)--> The realized new abundant life, which becomes eternal life in the Age to come.

a. Realized: This is the emphasis in John. The believer has already received it .

b. Jesus' Purpose: To bring this life.

c. Jesus: The only way

Jesus is the living bread/water, which gives this life. He said, "I am the life."

d. Fullness

It is nothing less than the life of the age to come, including the resurrection of the body.

d. Part of Jesus' relation to His Father

a) God: The source of life

b) Son: He entrusted it to His Son.

3) Eschatological life > Realized life

There is something else involved beyond what is realized; the eschatological life is the full manifestation of the realized life.

4) Synoptics vs John

a. Synoptics: The kingdom has invaded this age.

b. John: The eternal life has invaded this age. Thus, it is the same teaching with a different idiom.

## B. Paul

### 1) Primary Focus: Objective

What Christ has done to open the way. "Firstfruits," "Firstborn".

a. In the justification of Christ, lies the certainty and the root of the Christian's resurrection." (Vos, 151)

b. He is the one in which the re-creation has already become a reality in this dispensation. He opened the way for those who belong to Him (Ridderbos).

### 2) Objective seal:

The Spirit as "down payment" (earnest) is the objective "seal" guaranteeing the believer's election.

### 3) Forensic

The forensic eschatological salvation has been pronounced in advance.

a. This enables one to obey the command to live in newness of life.

b. But it takes effect at the final judgment.