

Study Questions for Furnish,
The Moral Teaching of Paul, Chapter 1
The Sacred Cow and the White Elephant

1. Who dubbed Paul “*the second founder of Christianity*,” and what did he mean by this?
2. Do scholars still think Paul was the “second founder of Christianity”?
3. What does the term “**Sacred Cow**” mean, and how does Furnish apply this term to attitudes about Paul’s ethical teachings?
4. What is a “**White Elephant**”? How does Furnish apply this idea to attitudes about Paul’s ethical teachings?

Furnish gives a brief treatment of **Second Timothy 3:16** on pages 14–15. This issue will be discussed in more detail in class. You should find your class notes helpful in answering questions 5–6 below.

5. What is meant by “inspired” (*theopneustos*, θεόπνευστος) in 2 Timothy 3:16?
6. Why is the Greek word *pneuma* (πνεύμα) relevant to the discussion of inspiration in 2 Timothy 3:16? This word has more than one meaning. What are its main meanings? (Compare John 3:1-10.)
7. How should the recognition that our time, culture, and geographical location are very different from those of Paul and the churches he served influence the way we read his letters?
8. What does Furnish mean by “*the law of varying relevancy*” (p. 17)?
9. What influential German scholar argued that Paul (like early Christians more generally) expected the end of the world to come quickly, so he saw no need to offer any really new ethical teaching, but merely repeated what Christianity had inherited from Judaism?
10. Who argued that Paul was a mystic, that his *theology* is based on the notion of the believer’s mystical death and resurrection with Christ, and despite his clear expectation of the immanent end of the world, his *ethics* also derive from this experience of being “in Christ”? According to this theologian, Paul’s ethical advice derives from a key element of Paul’s theology, but exists *in spite of* his eschatology.
11. Does Furnish share the view of these theologians that Paul’s ethical advice is unrelated to his eschatology? Why or why not?

12. Explain the eschatology expressed in **1 Thessalonians 4–5** and tell how this eschatology influences Paul’s advice to the congregation.
13. How is Paul’s view of the Holy Spirit related to the Jewish notion of “first fruits” and the business image of a “down payment” or “earnest money”?
14. What, according to Paul, is the power that sustains the New Age inaugurated by Christ?
15. What is the relationship, in Paul’s thinking, between the Holy Spirit and the power that sustains the New Age?