

Study Questions on Roetzel, Chapter 3:  
Traditions Behind the Letters

1. What does the term *tradition* mean when used by biblical scholars?
2. Paul's statements in Galatians 1:11—12 are sometimes taken to mean that he avoided using previously existing traditions, yet his letters are filled with traditional elements (such as in 1 Corinthians 15:3—4). How should we understand the point of Paul's comments in Galatians 1:11—12?
3. What does the term *kerygma* mean?
4. C.H. Dodd identified a basic outline of doctrine that Paul shared with the rest of early Christianity. Roetzel lists six elements found in that basic body of doctrine. What are those six elements, and what does each one mean?
5. What does the term *Eucharist* mean?
6. The oldest known report of the eucharistic liturgy is found in one of Paul's letters. Where is that report found?
7. Remnants of early Christian hymns can be found in several of Paul's letters. Where is the hymn found in the letter to the **Philippians**? Would you recognize that hymn if you saw it on the exam?
8. What passage from **1 Corinthians** sounds like it could be modeled on an early Christian hymn? (Chapter 3 of Roetzel's book does not discuss this passage. Just think about what we have read in class. What poetic passage serves Paul's interest in addressing the central problem at Corinth?)
9. What factors help explain why Paul seldom quotes the words of Jesus?
10. What specific facts about Jesus' life would we know if the Gospels did not exist and we had to depend totally on Paul's letters for our knowledge of what Jesus said and did?
11. While Paul seldom quotes Jesus' words and infrequently mentions anything Jesus did, he does emphasize strongly three events, two from the earthly ministry of Jesus and one still to come in the future. What are these three events?
12. Paul's letters contain a great deal of ethical instruction (*paraenesis*). Are these instructions original to Paul? If not, where did he get them?
13. Does Roetzel think we should read the lists of virtues and vices in Paul's letters as lists of things he knew were taking place in the congregation to which he was writing?

14. Why did Paul emphasize words like “always,” “constantly,” etc. in 1 Thessalonians 5:16—18?
15. Roetzel identifies four types of paraenetic tradition. What are these four types? Would you recognize an example of each one?