

Rel 108 Life and Letters of Paul
Instructor: Kathy Barrett Dawson
Summer 2008

Discussion Question for Response #1 to be posted by 9:00 PM on Wednesday, July 16th.

In the assigned reading for class on Wednesday, July 16th, Campbell makes the following statements:

Paul does not equate the 'church' of Christ-following Jews and gentiles with Israel. To do so would imply a disregard of the 'rest' and a disregard for the differentiation still remaining between Jew and gentile even in Christ. The 'new Israel' is both a post-Pauline and an un-Pauline concept. To claim therefore that the 'Christian' is the true or real Jew is not only usurping another's name and inheritance, but flies in the face of all proper ethnic, religious and moral understanding. To claim that the 'church' is the new Israel is now easily recognized as imperialistic displacement theology. But it is even more astounding to claim that Christ-followers are the true Jews – this is to go further in the same direction. In the contemporary world, one of the increasingly common crimes is to gain access to a person's credit card and thus to usurp their good name, to take over the identity and credit of another person. It is quite similar for Christ-following Jews or gentiles to take over the name of the Jew, claiming there is no one else who truly answers to this description, name and identity better than they.¹

From our lectures, discussions, and assigned readings so far this term, what is your response to Campbell's interpretation of Paul's view of Jews, Gentiles, and Israel in Romans? Be sure to reference some specific points from Paul's letters to support your position.

¹William S. Campbell, *Paul and the Creation of Christian Identity* (New York: Continuum, 2008), 132.