

But Now...

Introduction

A favorite expression of the Apostle Paul was “but now” ([νῦν δὲ](#) or [νυνὶ δὲ](#)). Paul used this expression to mark a dramatic contrast to what had been before but had now changed. Through this expression the great apostle communicated the wonderful truths vital to one who has believed his gospel (1 Corinthians 15.1-4). Whenever we encounter the phrase it is a signpost that notes “before” and “after” reality. The “before” was our state before Christ’s work on the cross and God’s revelation of these truths to Paul. The “after” is the new state of things as the result of Christ’s work and His revelation to Paul.

We learn these doctrines and truths from Paul. Jesus did not reveal them in His earthly ministry and Peter and the Eleven were ignorant of them until Paul revealed them (2 Peter 3.14-16). How did Paul learn these truths? Paul received the “but now” truths directly from the risen Christ (Galatians 1.1, 11-12; Ephesians 3.3).

The “But Nows”

But Now...	Comment
Romans 3:21 But now (Νυνὶ δὲ) apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,	Prior to Paul, salvation required a Jew to exercise faith and keep the Law. Paul taught salvation by faith alone (1 Corinthians 15.1-4), not by faith and Law.

<p>Romans 6:22 But now (νυνὶ δέ) having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life.</p>	<p>Before Christ, the entire human race was “shut up” (συγκλείω) in disobedience (Romans 11.32 cf. Galatians 3.23). Christ’s work freed the believer from sin and death.</p>
<p>Romans 7.6 But now (νυνὶ δὲ) we have been released from the Law, having died to that by which we were bound, so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter.</p>	<p>The Mosaic Law operated for 1,500 years. It revealed sin with its resulting death (Ezekiel 18.20 cf. Romans 6.23). Anyone who believes the gospel (1 Corinthians 15.1-4) is freed from sin and death.</p>
<p>Romans 11.30 For just as you once were disobedient to God, but now (νῦν δὲ) have been shown mercy because of their disobedience,</p>	<p>Gentiles have obtained mercy, not through Israel’s obedience, which was God’s covenantal plan, but through Israel’s disobedience. God’s mercy and grace are unfathomable.</p>
<p>Romans 16.25-26 Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, but now (δὲ νῦν) is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith;</p>	<p>Paul’s gospel (1 Corinthians 15.1-4) was unknown until the risen Christ revealed it to him. Peter and the Eleven knew nothing of it for it was kept “secret” (μυστήριον). From Paul’s gospel we learn salvation is by faith alone—believing Christ died for our sins and rose from the dead. No Law, no works, no baptism, no joining a church, etc. It is Faith + 0. This is grace! This is the glory of God!</p>

<p>1 Corinthians 5.11 But (vũv δè) actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he is an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler—not even to eat with such a one.</p>	<p>Believers saved by faith alone have a responsibility to live holy lives to God (Romans 12.1-2) and exercise high standards. Believers must judge one another so our lives are seen as different by the world.</p>
<p>1 Corinthians 7.14 For the unbelieving husband is sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified through her believing husband; for otherwise your children are unclean, but now (vũv δè) they are holy.</p>	<p>Christ’s work for the believer creates a sanctifying environment in a family. Paul encouraged marriage between a believer and unbeliever to continue if possible but warned against unequal yoking of the two (2 Corinthians 6.14).</p>
<p>1 Corinthians 12:18 But now (vuvì δè) God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired.</p>	<p>The body of Christ, the Church (Ephesians 1.22-23; Colossians 1.18), was a truth the risen Christ revealed to Paul alone.</p>
<p>1 Corinthians 12:20 But now (vũv δè) there are many members, but one body.</p>	<p>Each person who believes the gospel becomes a member of Christ’s body, the Church (1 Corinthians 12.13).</p>
<p>1 Corinthians 13:13 But now (vuvì δè) faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love.</p>	<p>Temporary gifts of prophecy, tongues, and knowledge ended with the completion of Paul’s revelations or “secrets.” Faith, hope, and love continue.</p>

<p>1 Corinthians 15:20 But now (Νυνὶ δὲ) Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep.</p>	<p>The resurrection of the body is the final stage of salvation and is the hope of believers. Christ was the first to experience resurrection.</p>
<p>Galatians 4:9 But now (νῦν δὲ) that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how is it that you turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again?</p>	<p>Paul's plea to Christians was to continue in the purity of grace and not turn to the Mosaic Law, i.e., "weak and worthless elemental things." How many churches today reject grace and are enslaved to Law!</p>
<p>Ephesians 2:13 But now (νυνὶ δὲ) in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.</p>	<p>Every human being is born "in Adam" (1 Corinthians 15.22) spiritually dead. Christ's blood paid the price of sin and death and reconciled all to God.</p>
<p>Ephesians 5:8 for you were formerly darkness, but now (νῦν δὲ) you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light</p>	<p>Before salvation we were blind and without hope. After salvation the believer can see and becomes a light. We should walk worthily of his new life.</p>
<p>Colossians 1.22 yet (νυνὶ δὲ) He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach</p>	<p>Christ's work has reconciled, (ἀποκατάλλάσσω), brought back into harmony) the believer to God. The result is the believer is blameless in God's sight.</p>

<p>Colossians 1.26 <i>that is</i>, the mystery which has been hidden from the <i>past</i> ages and generations, but has now (νῦν δὲ) been manifested to His saints,</p>	<p>The word translated “mystery” (μυστήριον) means a “secret,” something previously unknown. Paul revealed the “secret” of Christ’s gospel, body of Christ, and indwelling Spirit (Colossians 1.23-27)</p>
<p>Colossians 3.8 But now (νυνὶ δὲ) you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, <i>and</i> abusive speech from your mouth.</p>	<p>The believer in Christ has become a new person because of the work of Christ. Our lives should match this reality.</p>
<p>2 Timothy 1:10 but now (δὲ νῦν) has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel,</p>	<p>Death reigned until Christ (Romans 5.21). Christ conquered death by His death and resurrection and has given eternal life to all who will believe the gospel (1 Corinthians 15.1-4).</p>

Paul wrote the above passages to Gentile churches. Though now a minority view (and almost completely abandoned by professional scholars) I am convinced Paul wrote Hebrews. Below are “but now” passages (which provide internal evidence of Paul’s authorship of Hebrews) in which the Apostle to the Gentiles addressed his Jewish brethren. The theme of Hebrews is “better.” Paul argued Christ is superior to all that went before and all that pointed to Him. These “but now” passages demonstrate that since Christ is superior, no excuse exists to go back to Judaism and the Mosaic Law. Christ had fulfilled the Old Testament covenantal types.

But now...	Comment
------------	---------

<p>Hebrews 2:8 You have put all things in subjection under His feet.” For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him. But now (νῦν δὲ) we do not yet see all things subjected to him.</p>	<p>Christ has conquered sin and death and is seated at the right hand of His Father’s throne. In a future day Christ will occupy His own throne to rule as David’s greater Son; all will be subject to Him.</p>
<p>Hebrews 8:6 But now (νῦν[ὶ] δὲ) He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises.</p>	<p>Christ is mediator of the new covenant which replaced the “old” Mosaic covenant. Through this covenant Israel will finally enjoy God’s covenantal promises and blessings.</p>
<p>Hebrews 9:26 Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now (νῦν δὲ) once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.</p>	<p>The Levitical sacrifices operated under the “old” Mosaic covenant. They were copies of reality (Christ) and were offered continually to “cover” sin. Christ’s sacrifice finally and eternally solved the problem of sin and death.</p>
<p>Hebrews 11.16 But as it is (νῦν δὲ), they desire a better <i>country</i>, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them.</p>	<p>Israel’s “heavenly” country is not heaven. Rather, its source was heavenly, i.e., established by God. Israel will achieve God’s promises and blessings when Christ reigns from Jerusalem.</p>

Hebrews 12:26 And His voice shook the earth then, but now (vũv δè) He has promised, saying, " YET ONCE MORE I WILL SHAKE NOT ONLY THE EARTH, BUT ALSO THE HEAVEN."	Israel faced the crisis of accepting or rejecting their Messiah when Christ was on earth. Now, however, He speaks from heaven. No escape is possible.
--	---

©2011 Don Samdahl. Anyone is free to reproduce this material and distribute it, but it may not be sold.

Updated, September 18, 2011