

# Paul's Middle Letters

- Series: Mastering the Scriptures
- Location: Paul's Middle Letters
- Last week and this: connection between what we *believe* and what we *do*
- Last week: living worthily of the calling (axíōs)
- Today: continuing in the tradition

What's It  
All About?



HEAVEN HELL?

But how?

*Il Belieue*





WHAT  
ABOUT  
WORKS?

“We usually think of the Christian message mainly as a set of beliefs, and miss the New Testament’s emphasis on the body of teaching about the Christian way of life. Jesus made it a central part of His ministry to instruct His disciples in the life God intended men and women to live.”

Kevin Perrotta, from *First Principles* Series 1, Book 1, Session 3, 1.3 p. 31



“For Paul the reception of the gospel of ‘Christ Jesus the Lord’ is not merely to provide an intellectual consent to a set of propositions. ... A reminder of the tradition is always followed by a proper response that includes *both* a belief system *and* a behavioral pattern.” Pao, Colossians and Philemon, 155



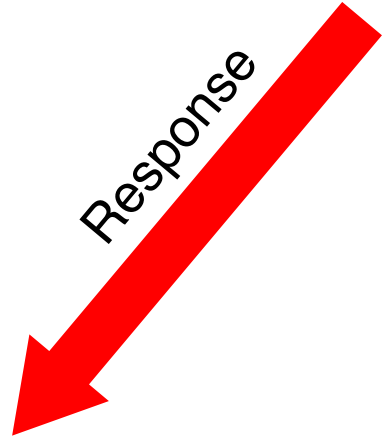
**EXTRA! EXTRA!**  
**READ ALL ABOUT IT!**

**GOOD  
NEWS!!**

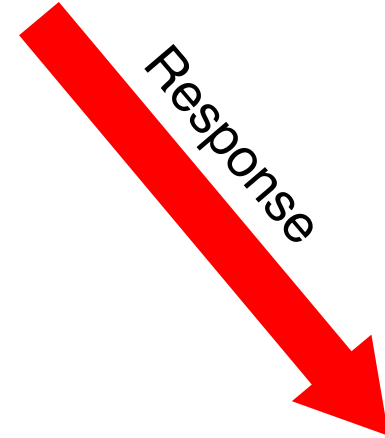
workers struggled to keep pace  
my that faces inflationary

and Lando Dea...

Good news requires  
a response



Belief  
system



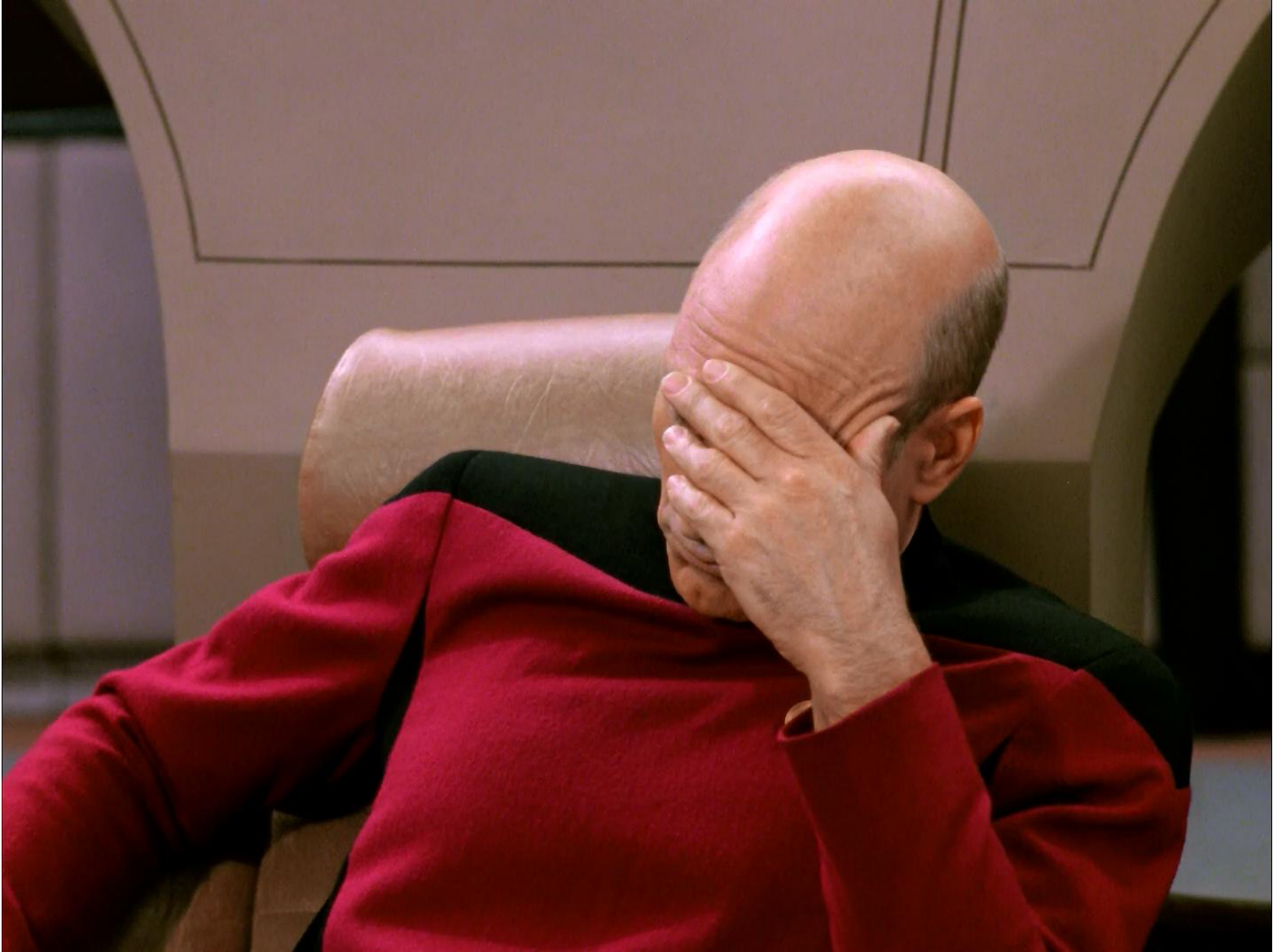
Behavioral  
pattern

# Discuss

- What is missing from the “getting saved” version of Christianity?
- How does the “getting saved” view disconnect what we *believe* and what *do*? What are some of the effects of that?
- If Christianity is the story of the good news about Jesus and how we respond that, how does that change your thinking about belief and behavior?

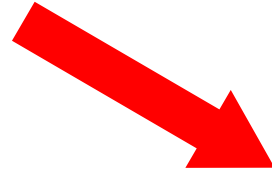
Co 2.6-8: “So then, as you have received the messiah Jesus the Lord, pursue your way of life in him. Be rooted and built up in him, firmly established in your faith, as you have been taught, abounding in thanksgiving. See to it that no one carries you away captive through philosophy and empty illusion, according to human tradition, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.”





## Section 1:

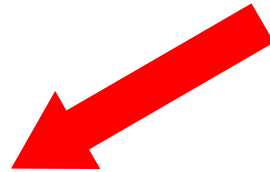
1.1-2.5 lays out a bunch of information about who Jesus is, what he did, what that accomplished, of all the things that are true because of Jesus



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## Section 2:

2.6-23 deals with error, challenging its effects in light of who Jesus is and what he accomplished





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**SO WHAT?**

**PRESS ON!**

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# Moralistic Therapeutic Deism\*

- A god exists who created and ordered the world and watches over human life on earth
- God wants people to be good, nice, and fair to each other, as taught in the Bible and by most world religions
- The central goal of life is to be happy and to feel good about oneself
- God does not need to be particularly involved in one's life except when God is needed to resolve a problem
- Good people go to heaven when they die

\* Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers, 2005, by Christian Smith and Melinda Lundquist Denton









“Let Christ—**and no other! for he is Lord**—establish your values, guide your thinking, direct your conduct.” Douglas J. Moo, The Letters to the Colossians and to Philemon, 179

“You have begun the Christian life by a commitment to Christ Jesus as Lord, having confessed him as such. ... Now make good that profession and shape your life by living under this lordship, **which excludes all lesser rival loyalties.**” Ralph P. Martin, Colossians, 73

# Discuss

- What “lesser loyalties” vie for our allegiance? How might that carry us away captive?
- What deceitful philosophies seem prevalent in American Christianity?
- What does an ongoing commitment to the apostolic tradition actually look like?
- How can we spur one another on in this area?