St. Paul Study Questions
Hum 110, Reed College; Prof. Laura Leibman

Frend, "Paul and the First Expansion 30-65"
From what discipline is this article (history, philosophy, literature, theology, religion, anthropology, sociology, some combination of the above)? How does this shape the author's questions, style, and answers? Pretend that you are an academic from another field: make a list of the types of questions you would ask about Paul. What sorts of evidence would you look for as you answered your questions? What type of tone or style might you adopt? Mark passages that would be central to your argument.

Romans
Letter as Genre. Read St. Paul's Epistle (Letter) to the Romans. What about this piece of writing makes it "letter like" (i.e. what are the hallmarks of the genre)? What is the tone, relationship to audience, mood, presentation of self, type of language (elevated, metaphoric)? What do you make of Paul's choice of genre? What are the implications for understanding Christian theology as Paul formulates it with respect to the letter form?

Letter to the Romans as Christian salvation. Chart the plot of Christian salvation as Paul understands it. Who are the major characters and what role does each play? In the book of Exodus the plot is as follows:

BONDAGE	==>	SALVATION	==>	LAW	==>	COMMUNITY	==>	PROMISED LAND
(slavery in Egypt		the Exodus		Sinai		Wanderings in the wilderness		Conquest of Palestine)

Is the plot of Christian salvation according to Paul significantly different from the plot of Jewish salvation?

Paul as Cross-Cultural proselytizer. St. Paul has been a crucial figure in American Christianity because he provided a role model for Christian missionaries who wanted to convert American Indians. In this formulation, white settlers were the "Jews" and Indians were the "Romans." If you were an American Missionary and you wanted to model your relationship to the local Indians on St. Paul, how would you behave to the Indians? What would you try to convince them? If you were an Indian, why might Paul provide an appealing understanding of the relationship between Indians and whites? What does Paul say about the Jews/whites? What does he say about the relevance of Christianity for you, a nonJew/white? (Similarly, how might Paul says be appealing to the Romans themselves?)

The Self and the Other. We have discussed nationalism a fair amount this year. What is the criteria for being chosen by God according to Paul? How does change the boundaries of the chosen community? How does Paul define the self in relation to cultural others? You might want to compare Paul's letter to the *Germania* and to the discussion of "goyim" (nations) in the Torah.

Acts 9-19
Acts tells of the movement of the church into Rome. Who are the antagonists of the spread of the gospel? How are they characterized? What sort of political or cultural statements does Paul make through their opposition to his mission? Acts 9.1-30 recounts of the conversion of Paul. How do the language and motifs of this conversion echo earlier encounters with the divine? Does it differ in any striking ways?

BIBLIOGRAPHY
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Robertson, David. *The Bible as Literature: A Workbook* Part II. Self Published 1988.