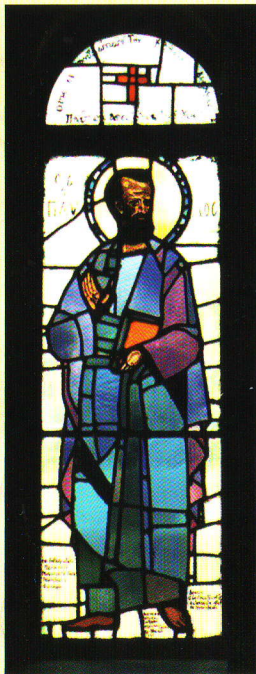


The LIFE of the APOSTLE PAUL

Shipwrecked.
Attacked by murderous mobs.
Beaten. Starved. Imprisoned.
Betrayed by friends...

All to serve the one thing
he sought to destroy...
...Christianity.



Stained glass window
in Philippi

Who was Paul?

Paul was an arch-enemy of Christianity, who amazingly became the greatest Christian missionary of all time. He authored more books of the Bible than anyone else and is called the "Apostle to the Gentiles."

Background

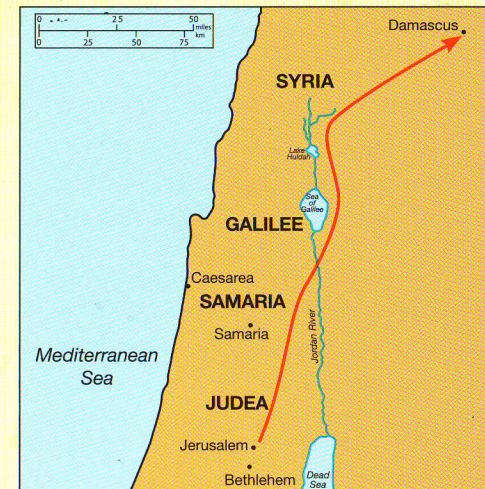
Paul came from a well-respected family in Asia Minor (Turkey today) where his father was an official. He excelled in his studies and became a devout Pharisee. As a young man Paul—whose Jewish name was Saul—was sent to Jerusalem to study under the great teacher Gamaliel. He hated Christians and participated in the first execution of a Christian leader, a man named Stephen. Paul was determined to murder all those who followed Jesus, not just in Jerusalem, but elsewhere (Acts 7:54–8:3).

What was a Pharisee?

The Pharisees were a group of Jewish religious leaders who believed a person must keep every one of the traditions of Judaism, as well as the biblical commandments. The Pharisees were respected, but were legalistic. Jesus condemned them for being self-righteous and hypocritical (Matthew 23). Pharisees plotted to kill Jesus because of his popularity and claim to be God.

How did Paul become a Christian?

Paul asked the chief priest in Jerusalem to give him authorization to arrest any follower of Jesus in Damascus (about 100 miles away). On his way from Judea to Damascus, a light from heaven blinded him. He fell to the ground and a voice said, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" He answered, "Who are you?" The voice said, "I am Jesus, the one you are persecuting. Get up! Go into the city, and you will be told what to do." Paul was



told to go to a house and wait for a Christian man named Ananias to come restore his sight (Acts 9:1-12).

What did other Christians think?

The Lord spoke to Ananias, and Ananias was afraid. He knew Paul's reputation, but went to the house anyway. The Lord said that Paul was chosen to take the Lord's name to Gentiles, their kings, and to the Jews. Ananias placed his hands on Paul and his sight was restored. Paul was filled with the Holy Spirit and was baptized. He started speaking in synagogues and convincing people that Jesus was the Messiah. People were amazed and confused. The believers back in Jerusalem refused to believe he had changed until one of their leaders, Barnabas, vouched for him (Acts 9:13-28).

What did the Pharisees think?

Because the Lord, had spoken to him, Paul kept preaching in the synagogues in Damascus, saying that Jesus was the Son of God. He gave proofs from the

Persecuted for Jesus Christ



Stoned and left for dead



Beaten with rods
three times



Whipped with 39
lashes five times



Attacked by angry mob



Death threats

"Everyone who
wants to live a
godly life in
Christ Jesus will
be persecuted..."

—2 Timothy 3:12

AD 5 Dates are approximate

AD 30

AD 35

AD 40

- Born an Israelite, from the tribe of Benjamin, a Roman citizen in Tarsus of Cilicia, given the Hebrew name of Saul (Acts 7:58; 22:25-29). AD 5

- Receives the best of Roman education in Tarsus; studies under the Jewish scholar Gamaliel. AD 10-30

- Persecution of Christians. AD 30-35

-1-

- Watches with approval the stoning of Stephen (Acts 7:57-60). AD 32 or 33

- Paul's conversion (Acts 9:1-19). AD 37

- Begins to preach about Christ in the synagogues (Acts 9:20-25). AD 37

- Goes to Jerusalem, but the Christian leaders are suspicious of him. (Acts 9:26-29; Galatians 1:18-19).

- When the Christians hear about a plot to kill him, they send him to Syria and Cilicia (Acts 9:30; Galatians 1:21-24).

- Spends three years in Arabia, then returns to Damascus (Galatians 1:17; Acts 9:23). AD 37-40

-2-

Scriptures to show that Jesus was the fulfillment of the Bible prophecies. To the Jews, this was blasphemy and they were outraged. They plotted to kill Paul as he walked out of the city gates. Paul learned of the plot. His friends put him in a basket and lowered him down the city wall to escape (Acts 9:20-25).

Life as a Fugitive?

Instead of hiding out, Paul went to Jerusalem and boldly preached in the synagogues. He tried to convince people about Jesus. He preached fearlessly and debated at every opportunity. He received death threats and the Christians brought him out of Jerusalem. He went back home to Tarsus (Acts 9:28-30).

Is Jesus for the Jews Only?

During the early years of Christianity, most of the converts were Jewish. Jesus' disciples preached only to Jews. Yet as Jewish people scattered throughout the Roman Empire, they told their neighbors about Jesus. Many of these Gentiles (non-Jews) became followers of Jesus too (Acts 11:19-21).

Barnabas Finds Paul

Barnabas went to Tarsus and together he and Paul preached to non-Jewish people. At the city of Antioch, these believers were first called Christians. A famine hit Jerusalem and the Christians wanted to send relief to their fellow believers. They sent Barnabas and Paul back to Jerusalem with gifts. When their mission was accomplished, Barnabas and Paul, along with a young man named John Mark, headed back north to start a missionary journey throughout Asia Minor (Acts 11:22-30).



Paul's First Missionary Journey AD 47-49

Acts 13:1-14:28

Travelers: Paul, Barnabas, John Mark
Main route: Cyprus and Turkey
Cities/places: (1400 miles)

- 1. Antioch in Syria:** The Holy Spirit sets apart Paul and Barnabas for the missionary ministry. John Mark goes along as their helper.
- 2. Sailed from Seleucia to Salamis and Paphos (on Cyprus):** Paul confronts a sorcerer named Elymas and blinds him. (From this point the Bible calls him Paul, rather than Saul.)
- 3. Perga in Pamphylia:** John Mark deserts the group and returns to Jerusalem.

4. Antioch of Pisidia (Turkey today): Paul preaches his longest recorded sermon, and many respond. Jewish leaders drive them out of the city. The Lord calls Paul to focus his ministry on Gentiles. The Gentiles are glad and many become believers.



Early Cave Church in Antioch

- 5. Iconium:** More plots force them to flee.
- 6. Lystra:** When Paul heals a lame man, the townspeople think he and Barnabas are Greek gods. Jews from Antioch stir up the crowd, and Paul is stoned and left for dead.
- 7. Derbe:** Paul preaches and many disciples are added to the church.
- 8. Lystra, Iconium, Antioch of Pisidia, Pamphylia, Perga, Attalia:** On the return trip, Paul and Barnabas appoint elders in the churches they had planted.
- 9. Antioch (Syria):** Paul remains there for a while, reporting what God had done. Paul writes Galatians.
- 10. Jerusalem, via Phoenicia and Samaria:** In AD 49, Paul and Barnabas report to the leaders of the Jerusalem church. This meeting is known as the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:1-35).

Paul's Second Missionary Journey AD 49-51

Acts 15:36-18:22

Travelers: Paul, Silas, Timothy, Priscilla and Aquilla, Luke

Main route: Syria, Turkey, Greece, Jerusalem

Cities/places: (2800 miles)

1. Antioch in Syria: Paul and Barnabas decide to visit the churches again, but disagree about who should go with them. Paul doesn't want to take John Mark because he left them on their first trip. Barnabas takes John Mark with him to Cyprus; Paul takes Silas.

2. Syria and Cilicia: Paul and Silas take a letter from the Jerusalem church for the churches in this region.



Diana (Artemis), the goddess of Ephesus

3. Derbe, Lystra, Iconium: While visiting these churches, Timothy joins them.

4. Troas: While in this seaport, Paul has a vision of a man from Macedonia calling him to come help them. Acts 16:10 uses the word "we," indicating that Luke was with Paul.

AD 45

• First Missionary Journey AD 47-49

- Barnabas takes Paul to Syrian Antioch, where they minister for a year (Acts 11:25, 26). AD 46

- When a prophet predicts a famine will hit Jerusalem, the Christians collect contributions and send them to Jerusalem with Barnabas and Paul (Acts 11:27-30; 12:25). AD 47

AD 50

• Second Missionary Journey AD 49-51

- Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:1-35) AD 49
- Galatians letter written AD 49

- Appears before Gallio AD 51

- 1 & 2 Thessalonians written AD 51

• Third Missionary Journey AD 52-57

- In Ephesus AD 53-55

- 1 & 2 Corinthians

AD 55



9. Corinth: Paul meets Aquila and Priscilla, who join him. People try to get Paul arrested, but the authorities refuse. He writes 1 and 2 Thessalonians here.

10. Cenchrea: He gets his hair cut because he had taken a vow (Acts 18:18). No more details are given.

11. Ephesus: Paul leaves Priscilla and Aquila here.

12. Caesarea in Syria, Jerusalem, Antioch in Syria: After visiting these churches, Paul returns to his home base of Antioch.

When Bad Things Happen to Good People

Paul's Thorn in the Flesh

The Apostle Paul endured great hardships to serve the Lord (2 Corinthians 11:23-29). Yet something tormented Paul and was an incredible burden for him. Paul referred to this burden as "a thorn in the flesh" (2 Corinthians 12:7).

No one knows exactly what this "thorn" represented. Some suggest that Paul had a chronic physical weakness such as an eye problem (Galatians 4:15), a speech problem (2 Corinthians 10:10), or a disease. Others suggest that Paul was continuously battling addiction, temptation, or regret for past sins (Romans 7:14-25; see also Numbers 33:55; Joshua 23:13; Judges 2:3).

Letters Written by Paul and their Message

Letter Key Verse	To	Where Written	When Written	Theme
Galatians 5:22, 23	Church at Galatia	Antioch in Syria	AD 49	Free in Christ Through Faith
1 Thessalonians 5:16-23	Church at Thessalonica	Corinth	AD 51	Letter to New Christians
2 Thessalonians 3:4-6	Church at Thessalonica	Corinth	AD 51	Persevere Until Christ Returns
1 Corinthians 13:4, 5	Church at Corinth	Ephesus	AD 56	Addresses Problems in the Church
2 Corinthians 12:9	Church at Corinth	Macedonia	AD 56	Paul's Authority Against False Teachers
Romans 12:1, 2a	Church at Rome	Corinth	AD 57	Salvation: Righteousness from God
Ephesians 2:8, 9	Church at Ephesus	Rome	AD 60/61	The Church and Body of Christ
Colossians 2:9, 10	Church at Colossae	Rome	AD 60/61	Christ Is Everything
Philemon 17-19	Philemon, a friend at Colossae	Rome	AD 60/61	Brothers in Christ
Philippians 2:14, 15	Church at Philippi	Rome	AD 62	Joy at All Times
1 Timothy 4:12, 13	Timothy, leader of Church at Ephesus	Macedonia	AD 62/63	Caring for the Church
Titus 3:4-7	Titus, leader of Church in Crete	Corinth	AD 63	Living in Faith
2 Timothy 3:15-17	Timothy, leader of Church at Ephesus	Rome	AD 67	Paul's Last Words

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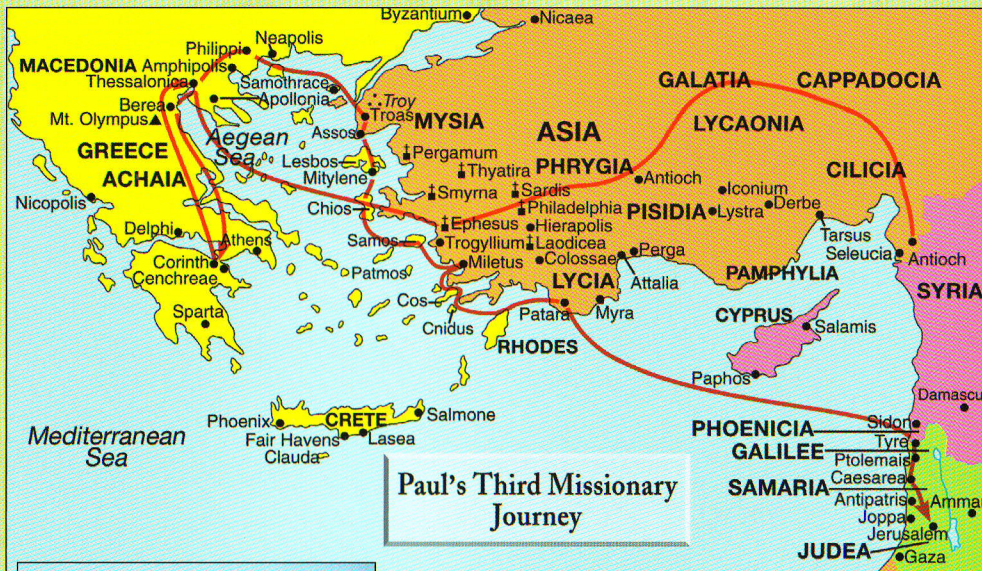
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Corinth. Paul wrote to the Corinthian Christians while he was in Ephesus.

Paul's Third Missionary Journey AD 52-57 Acts 18:23-21:16

Travelers: Paul, Timothy, Luke, others

Main route: Turkey, Greece, Lebanon, Israel

Cities/places: (2700 miles)

1. Region of Galatia and Phrygia: Paul decides to visit the churches again.

2. Ephesus: Paul stays here two years. He writes 1 Corinthians. So many people convert that the silversmiths who manufacture idols start a riot.

3. Macedonia and Greece (Achaia): Paul writes 2 Corinthians and Romans.

4. Philippi (Macedonia) and Troas: While Paul is preaching, a young man falls asleep, falls from a third-story window, and dies. Paul revives him.

5. Assos, Mitylene (near Chios), Samos, Miletus: Elders from Ephesus meet the ship at Miletus; Paul tells them he expects to be imprisoned in Jerusalem.

6. Cos, Rhodes, Patara, Tyre: Disciples warn Paul not to go to Jerusalem.

7. Ptolemais and Caesarea: A prophet predicts that Paul will be imprisoned and handed over to the Gentiles.

8. Jerusalem: The missionaries report to the church leaders, who urge Paul to participate in a purification ritual at the temple to counteract rumors that Christianity is anti-Jewish.



Columns in the open air market where Paul preached in Ephesus

Paul's Journey to Rome AD 57-62, Acts 21:17-28:31

Travelers: Paul, Roman guards, Luke, others

Main route: Israel, Lebanon, Turkey, Crete, Malta, Sicily, Italy

Cities/places: (2250 miles)

1. Jerusalem (Acts 21:27-22:30): The Roman commander arrests Paul to save him from a Jewish mob. When the commander learns of a death threat against Paul, he orders an armed escort to take him to Caesarea.

2. Antipatris and Caesarea (Acts 23:23-26:32): Paul is tried before Felix, the governor of Judea. Felix



The Colosseum in Rome was built four years after Paul's death

leaves Paul in prison for two years, and he is tried again before Festus, who was appointed governor after Felix. The Jews try to get Paul transferred to Jerusalem where

they plan to have him killed. Paul demands his right as a Roman citizen and appeals his case to Caesar. King Agrippa visits Festus, and Paul appears before him as well.

3. Sidon: The centurion in charge of Paul lets him visit with friends here. Then Paul boarded a ship, and set sail for Italy.

4. Myra, Cnidus, Fair Havens (Crete): Paul recommends that the ship stay in safe harbor, but the centurion orders the ship to sail on.

5. Claudia and the Island of Malta (shipwrecked): After a two-week storm, the ship is wrecked near the island of Malta. Everyone on the ship makes it to shore after the shipwreck. While putting wood on a campfire, Paul is bitten by a venomous snake, but it does not harm him.

6. Syracuse (Sicily), Rhegium, Puteoli: Paul stays with believers for seven days.

7. Appii Forum, Three Taverns: Paul is met by Christians from Rome.

8. Rome: Paul remains under house arrest for two years, where he writes Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, and Philipians.



Paul's Other Journeys

AD 62-68

Paul was released after two years of house arrest and traveled again.

Cities/places: (order unknown)

Macedonia (1 Timothy 1:3)

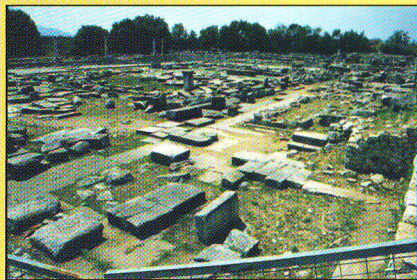
Troas and Miletus (2 Timothy 4:13, 20)

Crete (Titus 1:5)

Planned to go to Spain (Rom.15:28)

Nicopolis (Titus 3:12)

Back to Rome: Execution



Ruins of the forum in Philippi where Paul preached

God's Strength and Paul's Personality

Paul was a strong, driven person, even before he became a Christian; yet when the Lord chose him to preach the Gospel throughout the world, Paul knew he could not rely on his own power to face the angry mobs, the miles of travel, and the other hardships.

Paul prayed for strength, courage, and boldness. He prayed that people would listen to the Lord's message and be saved. He asked the Lord for safety and for more opportunities to tell about Jesus Christ. Paul asked others to join in the struggle by praying for him. He was grateful for their faithful love and support. He knew that he was weak and needed God's power (Acts 9:15, 2 Corinthians 12:9, Ephesians 6:20, Philippians 1:19).

"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

—Philippians 4:13

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing."

—2 Timothy 4:7-8

Key Teachings

Sin: The universal human condition; no one can claim perfection (Romans 3:9-23).

Law: It shows us our sin, but can't save us (Romans 3:20, 27, 28; Galatians 3:1-14, 21, 22).

Righteousness: We can't make ourselves good enough to be accepted by God; we must be given His righteousness (Romans 3:21-26; 8:3, 4; Philippians 3:9; Galatians 5:5, 6).

Mercy: God doesn't give us the punishment we deserve (Romans 9:18).

Grace: God freely gives us the divine favor we don't deserve (Ephesians 2:1-10).

Covenant: God has made a new agreement with us, declaring that we are His people. The old covenant was written on tablets of stone; the new one is written by the Spirit on our hearts (Jeremiah 31:33, 34; 1 Corinthians 11:25; 2 Corinthians 3:6-18).

Justification: God declares us righteous in His sight. We are justified by grace through faith (Romans 3:28-30; 5:1, 2).

Sanctification: The Holy Spirit works within us to make us more like Christ (Romans 8:29; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 1 Thessalonians 3:13).

Trinity: Paul refers to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Though the word Trinity isn't in the Bible, Paul's words helped confirm this Christian doctrine (2 Corinthians 13:14; Galatians 4:6; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6; Romans 8:9-11).

Holy Spirit: We are to live by the power of God's Spirit (Romans 8:1-17; Galatians 5:16-26; 2 Corinthians 5:5).

Messiah: Jesus fulfills Old Testament prophecies (Galatians 4:4, 5).

Lordship of Christ: Jesus is Lord of all (Romans 10:9-17; 1 Corinthians 12:3; Philippians 2:9-11; Colossians 1:15-20).

"In Christ": Paul's description of our relationship to Jesus. He uses it over 80 times.

Crucifixion: We are saved by Jesus' death on the cross, because He is the only perfect One who could die in our place to take the punishment for our sins (Romans 5:8, 15; 1 Corinthians 1:22-25; 2 Corinthians 5:14, 19; Colossians 1:21, 22).

Love: Love is more important than other traits (1 Corinthians 13).

Resurrection: Jesus was raised from the dead and exalted by God. Because He rose and went to the Father, we shall rise also (1 Corinthians 15).

Return of Christ: This future event gives us hope to face today (1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17; 1 Corinthians 15:20-28; Romans 8:18-21).

Gentiles (non-Jews): No longer excluded from the people of God (Ephesians 2:11-22; Romans 3:29).

Jews: Not abandoned by God, in spite of their unbelief (Romans 11:25-32).

Spiritual gifts: The Holy Spirit has given us gifts to use in Christ's service (Romans 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 12; Ephesians 4:11-13).

Church: God has created a unique community of people who worship Him, love each other, and witness to the world (Ephesians 2:11-22; 4:1-6; Galatians 3:26-28; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 1 Timothy 3:15).

Church leaders: God has equipped them to help us in our spiritual development. Paul spells out the requirements leaders must meet (1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:6-9; Ephesians 4:11-13).

Marriage and singleness: Paul says singles can focus on serving God; marriage is a calling. The main point is that whether we are married or single, we are to be committed to Christ (1 Cor. 7).

Family life: Our families are to reflect our loving relationship to God (Ephesians 5:22-6:4; Colossians 3:18-21).

Masters and slaves: They are equal before God (Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:22-4:1).

Husbands and wives: Christian marriages should exhibit submission and love (Ephesians 5:21-33; Colossians 3:18, 19).

Parents and children: Parents are to treat their children with gentleness and respect; children are to honor and obey their parents (Ephesians 6:1-4; Colossians 3:20, 21).

Prayer: Paul teaches about prayer and describes his own prayers (Ephesians 1:15-19; 3:14-21; 6:19, 20; Philippians 1:3-6; 4:6; Colossians 1:3-14; 4:2-4; 1 Thessalonians 1:2, 3; 5:17; 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12; 2 Timothy 1:3; Philemon 4).

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no-one can boast."

—Ephesians 2:8