

I. **Introduction.** Possibly no one man made as much affect upon Church History as the Apostle Paul.

II. **Personal history of Paul.**

A. Paul was a native of Tarsus, a city of Cilicia. Read

Acts 21:39 ³⁹*But Paul said, I am a man which am a Jew of Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean [ordinary] city: and, I beseech thee, suffer me to speak unto the people.*

Acts 22:3 ³*I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day.*

B. Paul was of pure Jewish descent of the tribe of Benjamin. Read Philippians 3:5 ⁴*Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: ⁵**circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee;** ⁶*concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.**

1. Of his mother, there is no mention and all that we know of his father was that he was a Pharisee. Acts 23:6 ⁶*But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question.*

2. From his father, Paul inherited his Roman citizenship. Acts 22:28 ²⁷*Then the chief captain came, and said unto him, Tell me, art thou a Roman? He said, Yea. ²⁸**And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom. And Paul said, But I was free born.** ²⁹*Then straightway they departed from him which should have examined him: and the chief captain also was afraid, after he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him.**

- C. The date of his birth is unknown. It is generally accepted that Paul's birth was approximately 2 years after Christ.
- D. According to the tradition of the Jews, all boys were to learn a trade. Paul learned tentmaking.
- E. At about 13 years of age, Paul was sent to Jerusalem to pursue his learning of the ways of the Jews.
1. He became a student of Gamaliel. Acts 22:3 ³*I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day.* ⁴*And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women.*
 2. Paul was raised and trained as a strict Pharisee.
- F. In the New Testament, our first glimpse of Paul is in his connection with the martyrdom of Stephen. Read Acts 8:1-3 ¹*And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judæa and Samaria, except the apostles.* ²*And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him.* ³*As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison.*
- G. After the death of Stephen Paul continued his persecution of the Christians.
- III. The conversion of Paul.** Read Acts 9:1-19 ¹*And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, ²and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.* ³*And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: ⁴and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, **Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?** ⁵And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, **I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.** [A 'prick' is a goad was a sharp instrument used to herd cattle. The proverb "It hurts you to kick against the goads" means "You are only hurting yourself by fighting me"] ⁶*And he**

trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, *Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.* ⁷And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man. ⁸And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. ⁹And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink. ¹⁰And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. ¹¹And the Lord said unto him, *Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth,* ¹²*and hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight.* ¹³Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: ¹⁴and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name. ¹⁵But the Lord said unto him, *Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: ¹⁶for I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.* ¹⁷And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. ¹⁸And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized. ¹⁹And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus.

- A. As Paul neared Damascus on a mission of persecution, Jesus Himself appeared to Paul.
- B. After accepting Jesus Christ as Lord, Paul was gloriously saved.

IV. The work of Paul.

- A. After his conversion, Paul continued to Damascus where he received baptism at the hands of Ananias. Acts 9:17-19 (read above)
 - 1. Immediately, Paul began to preach in Damascus. Acts 9:20-25 ²⁰*And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.* ²¹*But all that heard him were amazed, and said; Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests?* ²²*But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ.* ²³*And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill*

him: ²⁴but their laying await was known of Saul. And they watched the gates day and night to kill him. ²⁵Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket.

2. The Jews now turned on Paul and tried to kill him. The persecutor had now become the persecuted.
- B. Three years in Arabia. Paul seemed to have spent these three years there. Paul seems to have spent these three years there receiving from God the message he was to bring to the world. Read Galatians 1:16-18 ¹⁶to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: ¹⁷neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. ¹⁸Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days.
- C. After his conversions, Paul conducted his first visit to Jerusalem. Acts 9:26-29 ²⁶And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. ²⁷But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. ²⁸And he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem. ²⁹And he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians: but they went about to slay him. ³⁰Which when the brethren knew, they brought him down to Cæsarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus.
1. Barnabas vouches for Paul to the apostles.
 2. Paul then returned to Tarsus.
 3. For maybe 7-8years, there is no record of the activities of Paul.

V. Paul at Antioch.

- A. After 7-8 years of silence, Barnabas seeks out Paul and brings Paul to Antioch.
- B. Paul and Barnabus are sent forth by the church at Antioch as missionaries.

VI. Paul's missionary journeys.

- A. The greater part of the activities of Paul are accomplished in three great missionary journeys.
1. On his 1st missionary tour, Paul was accompanied by Barnabas. Acts 13:2-3
¹Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. ²As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. ³And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.
 - a) The date of their departure was sometime between 45-50A.D.
 - b) The lasted perhaps 2 years
 - c) On this journey, Paul visited such places as Cyprus, Paphos, Perga, Antioch in Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe.
 - d) After his return from his 1st mission, Paul took part in the Council at Jerusalem. Acts 15
 2. On his 2nd missionary journey, Paul took along Silas. Acts 15:36-41 *³⁶And some days after Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do. ³⁷And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark. ³⁸But Paul thought not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work. ³⁹And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other: and so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus; ⁴⁰and Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God. ⁴¹And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.*
 - a) This 2nd journey took Paul 3+ years to complete.
 - b) On this 2nd journey, Paul visited such places as Macedonia, Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, and Corinth.

3. For his 3rd journey, Paul was accompanied by Timothy and others. Acts 18:23
²³And after he had spent some time there, he departed, and went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples.
- a) This trip took 4-5 years.
 - b) On this trip, Paul visited Ephesus, Troas, Macedonia, and Greece before returning to Jerusalem.

VII. Upon his return to Jerusalem, Paul was arrested. Acts 21:27-32 *²⁷And when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews which were of Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him, ²⁸crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man, that teacheth all men every where against the people, and the law, and this place: and further brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place. ²⁹(For they had seen before with him in the city Trophimus an Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.) ³⁰And all the city was moved, and the people ran together: and they took Paul, and drew him out of the temple: and forthwith the doors were shut. ³¹And as they went about to kill him, tidings came unto the chief captain of the band, that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. ³²Who immediately took soldiers and centurions, and ran down unto them: and when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they left beating of Paul.*

- A. Paul appeals to his Roman citizenship and is taken to Rome for his trial before Ceasar. Acts 22:25-28 *²⁵And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned? ²⁶When the centurion heard that, he went and told the chief captain, saying, Take heed what thou doest: for this man is a Roman. ²⁷Then the chief captain came, and said unto him, Tell me, art thou a Roman? He said, Yea. ²⁸And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom. And Paul said, But I was free born.*
- B. Paul was taken to Rome as a prisoner but even in that capacity, had a wonderful ministry.
- C. History tells us that Paul was beheaded in Rome about 67 - 68 A.D.