

LESSON 1

How Did Paul Become a Changed Man?

PAUL'S FORMER LIFE

Read Acts 9:1-2, 22:3-5, 26:9-11 and then compare Rom. 1:1-7. Describe Paul's life before and after his conversion. _____

Was Paul a religious man before his conversion? (Consider Acts 22:3) _____ Was Paul a religious man after his conversion? _____ What was the difference in Paul's religion? _____

THE REST OF THE STORY

Read Acts 9:3-15, 22:4-11, 26:12-20. What caused Paul's life to change so dramatically? _____

Consider Acts 26:14. Who did the Lord claim that Saul/Paul was persecuting? _____ How do you understand this? _____

What does it mean to "kick against the goads?" _____

How might this analogy be applied today? _____

A CHANGED LIFE

We refer to this event as "Paul's conversion." What is conversion? _____

Do dramatic conversions still occur? Why or why not? _____

How do you think Paul's experience with the risen Christ prepared him for his apostolic ministry? _____

How did Paul learn the gospel? (Read Gal. 1:11-24) _____

LESSON 2

Paul, the missionary, & the Church at Rome

THE BACKGROUND OF PAUL'S LETTER TO THE ROMANS

Read Acts 11:19-26; 13:1-3. Who founded the Church at Antioch? _____

_____ What was Paul's relationship with that Church? _____

Paul actually made three missionary journeys that preceded his final trip to Rome. After consulting a Bible Atlas, list the regions Paul visited on his journeys.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Paul's epistle to the Romans was written from Corinth (simply called "Greece" in Acts 20:2) at the end of his 3rd missionary journey. It was most likely written around AD 58.

Read Rom. 1:1-5, 11:13; Gal. 1:14-16, 2:8. How did Paul view his "calling" and ministry? _____

_____ Read Rom. 1:9-13, 15:23-29. What were Paul's intentions for his own ministry? _____

PAUL'S TRIP TO ROME

Read Acts 27:1-28:31. Under what conditions was Paul sent to Rome? _____

Was the weather favorable for sailing? _____

Paul knew that, in spite of the storm, both he and his companions would be safe. How did he know this? (See 27:21-26) _____

_____ What happened to the ship? _____

_____ The soldiers wanted to kill all the prisoners rather than let them escape. How was Paul's life spared? (See 27:42-43) _____

_____ Read 28:1-6. How was Paul's life spared a second time? _____

How was Paul able to minister in Rome? (See 28:30-31)

Clement of Rome, one of the early church fathers, wrote that both Paul and Peter were martyred in Rome during the persecution of the Church under the Emperor Nero. This tradition has been generally accepted by church historians. It would seem, then, that Paul was never able to fulfill his desire to preach the gospel in Spain.

MAN'S PLAN AND GOD'S HAND

Read and consider Prov. 16:2-4, 9, 19:21; Ps. 33:10-11; Eph. 1:11-12. How do Paul's intentions and desires and the circumstances of his life demonstrate God's sovereign direction? _____

How does this apply to the events and circumstances of our own lives? (Consider Rom. 8:28) _____

LESSON 3

Do We Have to Find God?

THE PRESENT SITUATION

Read Rom. 1:16-19. In vs. 16, Paul says that he is not ashamed of the gospel. Why not? _____

_____ What does the word "gospel" mean? _____

It would seem that God is revealing two things to mankind. What are they? (vs. 17, 18)

What does vs. 19 teach us about the availability of the knowledge of God? _____

By what means does this passage teach us that God reveals Himself? _____ What can men know about God by this means? _____

Notice in vs. 19 that God's revelation is not difficult to perceive; He has made it "plain." Also, in vs. 20, it says that God's power and divine nature are "clearly seen." If this is the case, why do so many people seem not to know God? (Consider vv. 18, 22) _____

Read 1:28-32. What are the results of man's foolishness?

OPENING OUR EYES & GUARDING OUR MINDS

Read Psalm 1. What is the warning found in this Psalm? _____

What is the promise in this Psalm? _____

What is the standard by which we know what is true and what is not? (Jn. 17:17) _____

Read Isa. 29:13-14 and 1 Cor. 1:18-25. What is true wisdom? _____

GOD'S REVELATION

God has not hidden Himself from men. Sin, however, has distorted man's perception of God's revelation. Still, God's revelation is available to all who

have "ears to hear." Revelation is described as having three distinct forms:

General Revelation - _____

Special Revelation - _____

Personal Revelation - _____

LESSON 4

Sin: is it a universal problem?

WHAT IS SIN?

Read Rom. 1:18. God's wrath is being poured out upon the "godlessness" and the "wickedness" of men.

What do these terms mean?

Godlessness = _____

Wickedness = _____

We have no problem acknowledging that there are those among us who are "godless" and "wicked" sinners. The question is, does this description apply to ALL mankind? Read 1 Jn. 3:4. What does John teach us that sin is? _____ Whose law is violated when a person sins? _____ Read James 2:10. What makes a person a lawbreaker? _____

The Greek word which means "to sin" also means "to fail to hit" or "to miss the target." The use of this word implies two things: first, there is a standard which is established and is unchanging; and second, that our actions are measured against that standard. Imagine an archer

taking aim at a target some distance away. His objective is to hit the bullseye. There are all sorts of ways that he can miss the target; he can miss it by an inch or by a mile!

Even a near miss is still a miss. That's the way sin is.

Some miss the target by an inch and some by a mile, but in any case we know that the neither best archer nor the best person hits the bullseye every time. Read the following passages and comment on each.

Ps. 14:2-3 _____

Isa. 53:6 _____

Eccl. 7:20 _____

Rom. 3:23 _____

Gal. 3:21-22 _____

1 Jn. 1:8-9 _____

LESSON 5

Justice and Grace: a divine balance

THE GIFT OF GOD'S FAVOR

Read Rom. 6:23. This passage speaks of the "wages of sin." What is a wage? _____
_____ It also speaks of the "gift of God." What is a gift? _____
_____ What are we taught that sin produces? _____
_____ What is God's gift? _____
_____ Notice that this gift is given to those who are "in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Some versions of the English Bible use the phrase "free gift" in this passage even though it seems a bit redundant. The root of the Greek word used here is the same as that of the word usually translated "grace." The clear implication is that this gift of God is neither earned nor deserved. No one can claim to have earned God's favor by anything that he has done. Read Eph. 2:4-9. What is the basis of our salvation? (vs. 4) _____
_____ What is the purpose of our salvation? (vs. 7) _____
_____ Is this salvation available apart from Christ Jesus? (vv. 5, 6, 7, & 10) _____ Are good works involved? Why or why not? (Consider vs. 9). _____
_____ Define "grace." _____

WHAT ABOUT JUSTICE?

Justice requires that the penalty for sin be paid in full. Since we have "all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God," how can we be treated as righteous? Wouldn't a just God require everybody to pay the same penalty? Consider Rom. 3:21-26. What is the basis of our justification? (vv 24-25) _____
_____ Define "justification." _____

Read Rom. 4:4-5. How important is our "faith?" _____
_____ Define "faith." _____

God has not ignored sin in justifying the sinner. He has made a way by which the penalty for our sin could be paid in the death of Jesus. John was right when he said of Jesus, "behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." Read Isa. 53:4-6 and 1 Peter 1:18-21. God's "free gift" of eternal life is given freely, but the gift was by no means free. It was purchased for us with the suffering and death of Jesus!

LESSON 6

Are My "Good Works" good enough?

ARE WE REALLY THAT BAD?

Many theologians speak and write about the "total depravity" of man. Does someone who believes this think that everything that everybody does is evil all the time? The answer is no. Man still bears the reflection (image) of his creator and is, therefore, capable of doing what is good in his own sight. Most people are "good people." This innate goodness, though is not pure. It is always tainted with sinful and selfish motives. This is why Prov. 14:12 teaches us that even ways that *seem* right to man ultimately lead to death. Read what Isa. wrote about a man's "good works." (Isa. 64:6) To what does Isaiah compare a man's righteous acts? _____
As you can see, it is necessary to distinguish between those works which are pleasing to God and those which seem right only to ourselves.

SALVATION DOESN'T COME THROUGH GOOD WORKS

Read Rom. 5:6-11. Verse 6 uses two adjectives to describe our condition when Christ died for us. What are they? _____
What does Christ's death on the cross in our behalf demonstrate? _____
_____ Before we can fully grasp the significance of god's grace, we must

accept the absolutely lost condition of man. What does "powerless" mean? _____
_____ What does "ungodly" mean? _____
_____ In verse 10 it says that we were "enemies of God." Paul makes it clear in this passage that he is not talking about people who are "a little off the track," but who are diligently seeking to do God's will. He has drawn a picture of man in open rebellion to God. And a pretty bleak picture it is! The good news is that He loved us too much to leave us in that condition. Though we in no way deserved it, Christ came to die for us; so that we might receive reconciliation through Him.

Read Eph. 2:1-10. In these verses Paul reiterates both the fallen condition of man--he says that we were "dead" in transgressions--and the immeasurable love of God--He made us "alive" with Christ. Verses 8-9 teach us that it is by _____ that we are saved through _____. It is not by _____. If we somehow earned eternal life then we would have something to brag about. As it is, all we can boast about is what Christ has done.

"GOOD WORKS" ARE POSSIBLE BECAUSE OF SALVATION

There are some who teach that, "works have no place in the Christian life." What does vs. 10 tell us about good works? _____

Christians must understand that their actions are important. We are God's people and we are called to live in a worthy manner. While good works are part of the Christian life, we must never trust in our good works. We must take care to keep the horse in front of the cart, so to speak. Consider the following verses:

Heb. 11:6 - What comes first, faith or good works?

Php. 1:4-6 - Who began the "good work" in us?

Php. 2:12-13 – If our good works spring from our salvation, whose purpose do they serve?

Jn. 3:20-21 What does the "light" reveal about the believer's works? _____

Matt. 5:16 What is the result of a believer's good works? _____

**WE DON'T BELONG TO CHRIST
BECAUSE OF OUR GOOD WORKS,
WE CAN DO GOOD WORKS
BECAUSE WE BELONG TO CHRIST!**

LESSON 7

How Did Jesus Atone for my Sin?

WHAT IS "ATONEMENT" ANYWAY?

Read Rom. 3:25-26, 6:3-11. The meaning of the word "atonement" is easy to remember if you think of it as "at-one-ment." Atonement is the means by which two parties, that are at odds or are estranged from one another, are brought together. It means about the same thing as "reconciliation." Atonement is necessary because sin has made a separation between God and man. God, in the person of Jesus Christ, stepped into human history to atone for our sinfulness and to reconcile man to Himself.

WHAT IS REQUIRED FOR SIN TO BE FORGIVEN?

Even though it seems harsh to us, sin carries the death penalty. From the very beginning God warned Adam that disobedience would result in death. (See. Gen. 2:17). When Paul wrote to the Romans, "the wages of sin is death," he wasn't putting forth a new idea. Read Heb. 9:22. What does the writer of Hebrews teach us that forgiveness of sin requires? _____

This idea is graphically represented in the Old Testament. The law required that a young bull be slaughtered before the Lord. A portion of its blood was to be put on the horns of the altar and the remainder was to be

poured out (Lev. 4:13-18). Read Lev. 17:11. How does God explain this? _____

Consider Heb. 10:1-4. Why is the blood of bulls and goats an inadequate atonement for men's sin? _____

Why do you think the law required such sacrifices if they were neither sufficient for atonement nor pleasing to God? _____

JESUS, THE LAMB OF GOD

Read Rom. 5:8-11. Jesus is able to pay the penalty for our sin for two reasons:

- 1) He lived a life of perfect obedience to the will of God the Father.
- 2) Though He did not deserve death, He willingly gave Himself up to death on the cross for our sakes.

*Jesus Christ lived the life we cannot live
and paid the price we dare not pay!*

Read the following passages and write a short comment on each:

- Matt. 26:28 _____
1 Jn. 2:1-2 _____
1 Pet. 1:18-19 _____
Rev. 1:5-6 _____

LESSON 8

Can We Ever be Free from Sin?

Read Rom 6:11-14. In 6:11 Paul tells us that we should consider ourselves dead to _____ and alive to _____ in Christ Jesus. Through our faith in Christ we have been rescued from the dominion of sin and have been delivered into the kingdom of righteousness. God the Father never sees our sinfulness because the products of our sinful nature are covered by the righteousness of Christ. This relationship could be said to represent our "position" in Christ. Our position is one thing, our experience is another!

Read 6:15. Isn't that a natural question? If our sin is hidden from God by Christ's righteousness, then we can sin and sin and sin and it won't make any difference, right? WRONG! For two reasons:

- 1) While the *penalty* for sin has been paid and we have been pardoned through faith in Jesus, the *consequences* of sin remain.
- 2) We have been redeemed (i.e., purchased) by the precious blood of Jesus. We belong to Him and not to ourselves.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF SIN

Read Gal. 6:7-8. It would be a pretty foolish thing to try to "put one over on God." what does one reap if

he sows to please his sinful nature? _____

_____ What does one reap if he sows to please the Spirit? _____.

In a practical sense, we know that if we do wrong, there will be a price to pay. This is the principle of "sowing and reaping." Can you think of any wrong choices you have made in your life that are still yielding their consequences? Give an example. _____

SET FREE TO SERVE

Go back to Romans Chapter 6 and read vv. 16-18. What does Paul say we become when we offer ourselves to a master? _____ To what two things can we be enslaved? _____ or _____. We don't relate very well to the 1st century idea of slavery. It seems quite strange to us that Paul would refer to himself as a slave of Christ (Rom. 1:1, Titus 1:1). In what sense can Christ be thought of as a "slave owner?" (consider 1 Cor. 6:19b-20, 1 Pet 1:18-19). _____

Even though many of our English Bibles have softened the meaning of the Greek word to "servant" rather than "slave," this point remains--we belong to Christ and we are to serve Him faithfully.

THE WAR BETWEEN FLESH AND SPIRIT

Read Rom. 7:14-25. What Paul is describing here is the ongoing struggle between our position in Christ and our experience in this world. In this passage, sin is personified--sin seems to have a mind and a power of its own. Read James 1:13-15. What, according to James, is the source of the temptation that leads to sin? _____

Paul ends the Rom. 7 passage with a final word of hope (See vs. 25). It is God's purpose and plan that we should be victorious in our struggle; even though it takes a lifetime. Read and consider Php. 1:4-6, and 1 Thess. 5:23.

LESSON 9

How Can I Live a Life that Pleases God?

Read Rom 8:5-16. This passage contains several contrasts which have the purpose of teaching us the difference between the Christian life and a life apart from a relationship with Christ. In vs. 5, we see that if one lives according to the sinful nature he has his mind fixed on what the _____ desires. If he lives according to the Spirit, he has his mind fixed on what the _____ desires.

It is easier to understand what Paul means by "flesh" ("sinful nature" in NIV) and "Spirit" if we recall the conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus (John 3:1-8). What does Jesus tell Nicodemus is necessary if one is to see and enter the kingdom of God? (vv. 3 & 5) _____

Everyone has a "natural birth." Those who belong to God have a "spiritual birth" as well; they are "born from above." Read Rom. 8:9. The last sentence of this verse is a negative statement. Rewrite it as a positive statement.

A person apart from Christ can only be described as "willful" and "selfish." Even though that is an unpleasant and politically incorrect statement, we must face the facts.

An unregenerate person knows nothing but his own will and, therefore, goes wherever that will leads him. The person who has been born by the Spirit, on the other hand, can know the will of God and be directed by it. In Rom. 8:6 Paul says that while the natural mind is fixed on death, the mind controlled by the Spirit is fixed on life. The Spirit brings peace with God while the flesh is at war with God. How has knowing Christ changed the way you think about things? _____

Read Gal. 5:16-17, 25. What is the result of living by the Spirit? _____

In Gal. 5:19-21 Paul describes a life under the control of the sinful nature. In the verses that follow (vv. 22-23) he lists the qualities that the Spirit will produce. List those qualities below:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

The word that is translated "live" in the NIV in vs. 16 actually means, "walk." Compare vs. 16 with vs. 25. Christians must allow the Holy Spirit to lead them step-by-step. It is common for Christians to turn to God in times of crisis. This passage, though, along with others like it, teach us that we are to look to God moment by moment.

Read each of the following passages. What benefit does each promise to one who "walks according to the Spirit?"

Prov. 16:9 _____

Prov. 20:24 _____

Ps. 37:23-24 _____

Ps. 119:35 _____

Ps. 119:133 _____

Ps. 121:1-8 _____

When Paul writes, "walk according to the Spirit," he is talking about the Holy Spirit--the third person of the Trinity. What other names or titles are given to the Holy Spirit?

Rom. 8:9, 14; 1 Cor. 2:11, 14 _____

Rom. 8:9; 1 Pet. 1:11 _____

Rom. 1:4 _____

Rom. 8:2 _____

Rom. 8:15 _____

Heb. 9:14 _____

Zech 2:10, Heb. 10:29 _____

1 Pet. 4:14 _____

Lk. 4:18, 2 Cor. 3:17 _____

The Holy Spirit works in the believer's life in several ways:

- It is the Holy Spirit who convinces us of sin and who enables us to trust Christ for salvation. (Jn. 16:7-8)
- The abiding presence of the Spirit in our lives is the guarantee of God's promise of our redemption. (1 Cor. 3:16; Eph. 1:13-14; Rom 8:16)
- The Holy Spirit is our teacher; He provides us with illumination and understanding of God's word. (Jn. 16:13-14)
- The Holy Spirit provides both the power and the wisdom necessary to minister effectively to the needs of others. (Rom. 8:26; 2 Cor. 3:6)
- The Holy Spirit communicates the will of God to our spirits and inspires obedience. (Ez. 36:27)

How can I live a life that is pleasing to God? God has answered this very question for us. Read Mic. 6:8. What three things does God desire?

It is not possible to walk with God without first being willing to let God Himself determine your destination, your route and your itinerary!

LESSON 10

Is Jesus Really "Lord" of my Life?

Read Rom 10:9-13. What two things are required for a person to be saved? _____
_____ and _____

"Salvation depends upon an outward profession matched by an inner conviction" (L. C. Allen).

When the Bible uses the word "heart" it is not usually referring to the internal organ which pumps our blood. It is talking about the innermost part of a person--the true self. In most cases "heart" is synonymous with "mind." See how the word is used in the following verses: 1 Sam. 16:7; Gen. 6:5; Prov. 2:10; Ps 119:34-36. To "believe in your heart," then, must mean to believe to your very core; to risk your whole "self" on your faith.

The word "confess" is a legal term. It means "to agree with or to proclaim the truth of something." A confession is a "binding and public declaration which settles a relationship with legal force." The Greek word that Paul used in this passage (which is translated "confess" or "acknowledge" in our English Bibles) was also used by Jesus in Matt. 10:32-33. It is easy to see in this passage how one's "confession of faith" binds the relationship.

Theologians sometimes speak of the "offices" of Christ; those being *Prophet, Priest, and King*. When we declare "Jesus is my Lord," we are acknowledging His kingship; we are yielding to His sovereign authority. We are saying that we no longer belong to the "dominion of darkness" but have been brought into the "Kingdom of light" (See Col. 1:12-14 and 1 Pet. 2:9). It is interesting to note that, at the time of the writing of the Roman epistle, many Christian believers were martyred for this simple confession. It was required of all persons in the Roman Empire to proclaim, "Caesar is Lord." To refuse or to name another as lord meant persecution or death!

What does Christ, as our King, do for us?

CHRIST, OUR PROVIDER

Our Lord is concerned with the welfare of His people. We can look to Him as the source of all that we need in this life and the next. Read Matt. 6:25-33. Believers are not to be anxious about the necessities of life. What are believers to seek after? _____

CHRIST, OUR DEFENDER

Our Lord protects us from harm and He restrains and defeats our enemies. Read Ps. 18:2-3. What words are used in this Psalm to describe God? _____

_____ Read Deut. 20:1-4. We may not be in a battle against an army of flesh and blood, but we are surely

in a war in the spiritual realm (See Eph. 6:12). It is for this battle that Christ has provided us with His armor to wear. (Eph. 6:13-18). Remember: *"The battle belongs to the Lord."*

CHRIST, OUR ADVOCATE

Our King always stands ready to intercede for the elect. He is our Advocate as well as our Redeemer. Read 1 Jn. 2:1; Heb. 7:24-25. If Christ is our advocate, who can bring a challenge? We might echo the words of Paul, *"if God be for us, who can be against us?"* (Rom. 8:31).

What does Christ, as our King, require of us?

Read Matt. 7:21-23. Is it enough to say "Lord, Lord?" _____ What further is required? _____
_____ All true servants of the King must submit to His rule and authority, to do otherwise is treason! We can claim Jesus as Lord only if we are willing to serve Him.

Christ's rule is presently invisible and imperfect. Many neither claim Him as King, nor bow the knee to His authority. In the age to come that rule will become both visible and perfect. Then every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord" (Php. 2:9-10). In that day He will be known by all to be "King of kings and Lord of lords" (Rev. 19:16).

LESSON II

A "Living" What?

Read Rom. 12:1-2. How does Paul urge his readers to think of themselves in vs. 1? _____
_____ How does God view this offering? _____ and _____. Why do you think that Paul calls this a "reasonable" act of worship? (Consider 1 Cor. 6:19-20; 1 Pet. 2:4-5).

What Paul is describing here is a life surrendered to God. If we are to be "living sacrifices," we have to live our lives according to God's will and by his power. We have to put aside our agendas along with our egos! We are not to be conformed to _____
_____ We are to be transformed by _____
_____ This is the way that we can prove (i.e., "put to the test") God's will. What three words does Paul use to describe God's will in vs. 2? _____
_____ The only way that we can "test" or "prove" God's will is to *apply* it to our lives and *see what happens*.

Paul calls upon us to present ourselves in an active, not in a passive, sense. We are to present ourselves to God

LESSON 12

Something Worth Looking Forward To

UNITY OF MIND AND SPIRIT

Read Rom. 15:5-6. These verses are Paul's prayer for the believers in Rome. He desired, above all else, that God would grant them a Spirit of unity. What did he expect would be the result? _____

Compare this passage with the following: 1 Cor. 1:10; 2 Cor. 13:11; Eph. 4:2-3; 1 Pet. 3:8. Read Jn. 17:20-23. On the night He was betrayed, Jesus went to the garden to pray for His disciples. What is Jesus' request? _____

What does He give as the purpose? _____

Even though it is clearly Christ's desire that His people be united in mind and spirit, the church seems to lack unity. Though we should desire the unity of the body, we must recognize that unity is not achieved through programs or persuasion. True unity is wrought by the Spirit of God. Read and compare Rom. 15:1 and 1 Jn. 3:16. It is a perfect fellowship (the unity for which Christ prayed) that is the final destiny of the church. Read Rev. 7:9-10.

*We have hope in the midst of a
hopeless world.*

AN OVERFLOWING HOPE

Read Rom. 15:13. Paul calls God the "God of hope." What is "hope?" _____

Each of the following verses identifies a different aspect of the Christian's "hope." list each.

Col. 1:22-23 _____

1 Thess. 4:13-14 _____

Titus 1:1-3 _____

1 Jn. 3:2-3 _____

Titus 2:11-14 _____

Paul's prayer is that his readers would "overflow with hope" by the power of the Holy Spirit. Read 1 Pet. 3:15. We should be always ready to give and answer for the _____ that we have.

If you belong to Christ you have been set free from bondage to sin and death; you have the promise of resurrection and eternal life in the presence of Christ, your Redeemer. These great promises are not for you alone, however. Even as we have been reconciled to God, we have been given the ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:18-19).