

## *Life and Ministry of Paul*

The Scriptural biography of Paul the apostle, the great missionary to the Gentile world, is found only in the book of Acts. Its author, Luke, the writer of the Gospel of Luke, was a trusted companion of Paul, and much of Acts is an eyewitness account. The record of the life and work of this great figure is condensed into eighteen short chapters (9–28). It is supplemented and enriched by Paul's own writings, which recount certain events in his life and give the reader further insight into his motives, aspirations, and quality of thought—his striving for perfection, his absorbing love for Christ Jesus, and the ripening development of his conception of Christianity as a universal religion. These two sources give us a clear view of the scope of his work. They are of vital interest to the followers of Christ, preserving as they do for the Church in all ages his dynamic life, words, and doctrines. Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus marked the dawn of a new day for Christianity and proved to be the greatest event of early Christian history.

The world of Paul, a Jew, was Graeco-Roman. He was the first effective spokesman through whom the gospel was addressed to this Gentile world. Reverence for Roman and Greek gods was waning; the human heart was crying out for more satisfying wisdom than superstition and human intellect could provide. Classic Greek culture had long since passed; Roman power was dedicated to world conquest and materialism; and the Jews, who had waited centuries for the Messiah, failed to know him when he came. An indelible imprint was soon to be made upon these three civilizations by this first and greatest of Christian missionaries—a Jew yet a Roman citizen, raised in a strongly Greek environment, fluent in the Greek tongue as well as in Aramaic and Hebrew. Paul was familiar with these cultures, and with understanding and resolute purpose he presented the gospel of Jesus Christ to their diverse nationalities.

## Early Life

Paul was born probably between 1 and 5 A.D., in Tarsus, capital of the Roman province of Cilicia in Asia Minor. Tarsus—in Paul’s words, “no mean city”—was an important commercial center on the great east-west trade route that ran through the narrow pass in the Taurus Mountains from western Asia Minor to Syria and the Far East. It was also a cosmopolitan university city, a distinguished seat of Greek learning and philosophy.

His Hebrew name was Saul (he is so called in the Biblical record until his first missionary journey), his Roman cognomen Paulus, “the little one.” He was of the tribe of Benjamin, the only tribe of the twelve besides Judah that remained faithful to the house of David. His family was of the Dispersion—faithful Jewish religionists who for political or economic reasons had left Palestine to settle in Tarsus about 171 B.C. but whose affections were still passionately centered in their homeland. We have no information concerning his mother and know only that his father was a Pharisee and a Roman citizen, thus presumably a man of position and wealth (Acts 23:6). The privilege of Roman citizenship descended to Paul from his father; how it came to him is not known; it could have been purchased or granted for a service to some influential Roman. (This citizenship later proved of inestimable value, affording Paul the protection of Roman civil law as he journeyed throughout the Roman Empire as an apostle to the Gentiles. It saved him from flogging by Roman soldiers in Jerusalem and afforded justice when Festus, Roman governor of Judaea, would have put Paul at the mercy of the Sanhedrin.)

Every Jewish boy learned a trade; for young Saul it was tentmaking, a trade he later practiced in Thessalonica, in Corinth, and in Ephesus to support himself and his fellow missionaries (I Th. 2:9; Acts 18:3; 20:34).

Although his early boyhood was spent in a city celebrated for its Greek learning, Saul’s education was thoroughly Hebraic, probably obtained in a synagogue school. His family sent him to Jerusalem, most likely at the age of thirteen, to study to become a rabbi. He received his rabbinical training under Gamaliel, one of Judaism’s most distinguished teachers of the Law. (This was the Gamaliel who counseled forbearance when the Sanhedrin would have killed Peter and the other apostles for preaching that Jesus was the Messiah.) Paul himself says he was taught “according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers.”

He proved a brilliant student, well versed in Mosaic Law, the Prophets, and the Writings and pro-

ficient in their exposition (Gal. 1:14). Like all Hellenistic Jews he used the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament, but he was also familiar with the original Hebrew. Apparently unaffected by Gamaliel’s liberalism, the young Saul became a violently intolerant religionist, intent on maintaining Judaic traditions and living as the strictest of Pharisees (Acts 26:5).

It appears that after Saul had completed his rabbinical studies in his twenties, he returned to Tarsus for a period; there is no indication in any of his writings that he ever saw Jesus or was present in Palestine during Jesus’ public ministry.

When Saul returned to Jerusalem, Christianity had taken root in Palestine and the Church, through the preaching of the apostles, had become an entity in Jerusalem. From Peter’s first preaching on the Day of Pentecost, the number of adherents to the sect of the Nazarenes (as Christians were first called) grew phenomenally (see, for example, Acts 2:41,47; 4:4). The Sanhedrin found itself powerless to silence the apostles’ preaching or to prevent their healing. As Christianity flourished, additional teachers came to the fore, Stephen the powerful evangelist among them (see p. 378). Stephen carried the gospel into the Jerusalem synagogues of foreign colonists, where it met heated opposition from the Pharisees. Saul, being a Greek-speaking Jew, undoubtedly heard Stephen preach in the Cilician synagogue the startling Christian claims of Jesus’ Messiahship. As a zealous and able champion of the Pharisaic party, whose supreme duty it was to guard the sanctity of Judaism against all encroachments, Saul may well have taken part in bitter debates with Stephen.

**A**cts 7:58–8:4 It is in the violent scene of Stephen’s murder at Jerusalem that Saul—as a passive persecutor of the infant Church—entered apostolic history (see p. 379). He stood in the inner circle of the angry mob that surrounded Stephen and guarded the clothes of those who stoned him: “When the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed,” he later said, “I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him” (Acts 22:20).

Yet even at the moment he was approving this cruelty, Saul could not help hearing Stephen’s prayer, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit,” and his cry, “Lord, lay not this sin to their charge” (compare Lu. 23:34). These prayers burned themselves indelibly on his mind; although Paul never mentions them they may have been the first “prick” to goad his conscience (compare Acts 9:5). “We cannot dissociate the martyrdom of Stephen from the conversion of Paul. The spectacle of so much constancy, so much faith, so



much love, could not be lost. It is hardly too much to say with Augustine, that 'the Church owes Paul to the prayer of Stephen.'"<sup>1</sup>

Stephen's martyrdom opened the floodgates of animosity against the rising sect, and a great persecution of Christians followed—one in which Saul with blind ardor now took a prominent part. With the tacit approval of the Sanhedrin he "made havock of the church"—he beat Christians in the synagogues; in fury he entered house after house in which suspected Christians were hiding and dragged men and women off to prison, and at their trials gave testimony that led to their deaths. Many fled from Jerusalem into Judaea and Samaria, but he hunted them out and "punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them . . . persecuted them even unto strange cities" (Acts 26:9–11).

But out of the Church's suffering came that very extension of Christianity its enemies tried to prevent, for those who fled from Jerusalem into Judaea and Samaria, and even beyond Palestine, preached the gospel wherever they went, and it took root quickly. In time Philip the Evangelist, Peter, and John firmly established Christianity in Samaria, Ashdod (Azotus), and the cities of the Sharon plain—Caesarea, Joppa, and Lydda (see p. 379).

**Acts 9:1–30 Saul's Conversion.** Saul did not restrict his fanatic cruelties to Jerusalem. Intent on the destruction of Christians everywhere, he decided to go to Damascus, capital of Syria, 130 miles to the northeast. He asked the high priest for letters of introduction to Damascan synagogues—documents that would give him authority to arrest any man or woman of the new faith he might find there and to bring them chained to Jerusalem for trial. Saul was probably at least thirty when he undertook this journey—such authority would not have been delegated to a younger man.

During this journey took place Saul's conversion, the great turning point of his life. By divine intervention Saul was turned from the mad course he was pursuing and set right. The word convert means "turn," "turn back." One of the earliest dates given for his conversion is 33/34 A.D., at least three years after the ascension of Jesus. (The event is described three times in Acts.)

As he journeyed there suddenly shone around him and his party a light from heaven. They all fell to the earth, and Saul heard a voice saying "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" "Who art thou, Lord?" he questioned. "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." Using the metaphor of a recalcitrant animal injuring itself against an oxgoad—the long pole with

a sharp point used to prod oxen while plowing—the Jesus of his vision continued, "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." In astonishment and fear Saul asked, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" His surrender to Christ was immediate and complete. The Lord said, "Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." Saul's companions were speechless; they heard the voice, but saw no one. Saul "arose from the earth"; when he opened his eyes he could see nothing, and his companions led him to Damascus.

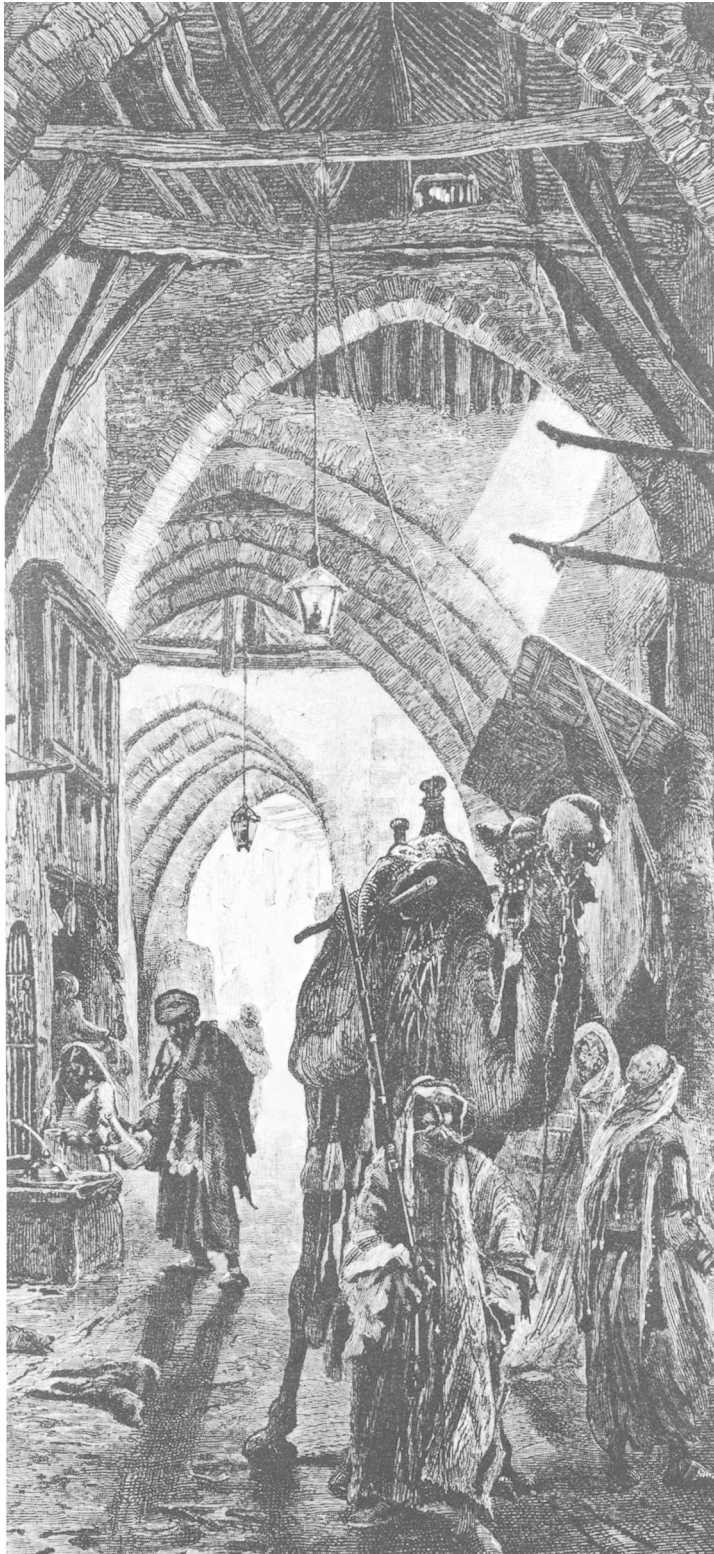
The revelation of Christ to Saul had come as a blinding vision of light. The full force of his misguided zeal smote him. In an anguish of remorse he fasted and prayed: "He was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink." His penitence was deep, piercing, regenerative: "The recollections of his early years, the passages of the ancient Scriptures which he had never understood,—the thought of his own cruelty and violence,—the memory of the last looks of Stephen,—all these crowded into his mind, and made the three days equal to long years of repentance."<sup>2</sup>

At the end of that time the Lord appeared in a vision to a Damascus Christian named Ananias, commanding him to go to the house of one Judas in the street called Straight; there he would find Saul at prayer and expecting him, for Saul in a vision had seen Ananias coming in and laying his hand upon him that he might receive his sight. When Ananias protested the danger of exposing himself to this enemy of Christianity (Saul's reputation had preceded him), he was told that Saul was now "a chosen vessel" to bear the gospel to both the Gentiles and the Jews. Finding Saul, Ananias laid his hands on him and 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." Saul immediately received his sight: "there fell from his eyes as it had been scales"; and he "arose, and was baptized." He had experienced the new birth of which Jesus had spoken to Nicodemus, and his nature was transformed.

From the beginning Saul had acted sincerely, fully convinced that by his violent defense of Judaism he was championing God's plan of salvation. "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth" (Acts 26:9). But now he knew he had been fighting against God's Anointed. He realized the enormity of his sin in persecuting Christians and was humbled by the mercy of God, who had forgiven him so much. He perceived he was being saved neither because of his Jewish ancestry nor as a righteous Pharisee, but—although a sinner—as a man precious in God's sight. In Saul's conversion is seen the gospel of Jesus Christ in action, God's gift of grace and redemption.

Later in his life Paul revealed more of the facts regarding this extraordinary occurrence. Before King

“The street called Straight” runs westward from the East Gate of Damascus. In 1881 when this engraving was printed, it was also called “the Sultan’s Highway” by Mohammedans. Picture Collection, New York Public Library.



Agrippa he disclosed that on the road to Damascus the risen Christ had given him his commission: “I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me” (Acts 26:16–18). In an address to the Jews of Jerusalem Paul disclosed that Ananias had confirmed this commission: “The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard” (Acts 22:14,15).

This journey to Damascus, which so revolutionized Saul’s personal life, altered the course of history; the destructive zeal of his loyalty to Judaism was now transformed into constructive service for Christ. This single conversion opened wide Christ’s redemptive gospel to the Gentile world.

Saul’s call was explicit: he was to be the apostle to the Gentiles. His eyes had been opened; now he was to open their eyes. Thus would Jesus’ prophecy be advanced: “Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd” (Jn. 10:16). Paul subsequently fulfilled his commission to the Gentiles with singular success, carrying Christ’s gospel to Asia Minor, Greece, and even to imperial Rome.

Later, when his apostolic authority was challenged by dissenting voices in the churches, he frequently felt obliged to defend his calling: “Am I not an apostle? . . . have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?” (I Cor. 9:1); “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God” (Col. 1:1); “an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father . . . )” (Gal. 1:1); “Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle” (Rom. 1:1).

Saul was called by Jesus Christ after the Ascension. In his writings Paul rarely omitted the title *Christ* when referring to Jesus; most of his references were to “Jesus Christ,” “the Lord Jesus Christ,” and “Christ Jesus.” When he carried his gospel to the Gentiles, he who knew Christ was acquainting the Gentile with Christ, “not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” (see II Cor. 5:16).

Luke records that Saul, in the first glow of his new vision, “straightway . . . preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God” (Acts 9:20). Paul himself, however, reports in his Epistle to the Galatians that almost at once he went into Arabia,

there to remain for “a season”—perhaps some part of three years (Gal. 1:15–18). This was a significant period of Saul’s life, passed over without comment by Luke, but it was natural that this intellectual should seek solitude and meditation fully to understand the transforming experience that had come to him.

It is difficult to conceive of any change more total, any rift of difference more deep, than that which separated Saul the persecutor from Paul the Apostle; and we are sure that—like Moses, like Elijah, like our Lord Himself, like almost every great soul in ancient or modern times to whom has been entrusted the task of swaying the destinies by moulding the convictions of mankind . . . he would need a quiet period in which to elaborate his thoughts, to still the tumult of his emotions, to commune in secrecy and in silence with his own soul. It was necessary for him to understand the Scriptures; to co-ordinate his old with his new beliefs.<sup>3</sup>

The same clear understanding Jesus had imparted to his apostles when he “opened” the Scriptures to them after Resurrection was imparted by revelation to Saul in the quiet of the desert of Arabia (Gal. 1:11,12). Living with the regenerating change within himself and adjusting all earlier rabbinical beliefs and Scriptural knowledge to the revelation granted him, Saul gave profound thought to the relation of Jesus to the Old Testament Law and to the Messianic prophecies. He yielded to the truth that Jesus was the fulfillment of the Messianic promises and reached the unshakable conviction that Jesus was the incarnate Son of God. From this point on Saul embraced Christianity without reservation.

Upon his return from Arabia he preached with marked success in the synagogues of Damascus. He grew in influence among the Christian disciples and routed all the arguments of the Jews by his proofs that Jesus was “very Christ.” His brilliant rabbinical and Pharisaic learning was now employed to expound the teachings he had once branded heretical. Soon he was faced with the bitter hostility of the Jews whose cause he had ceased to advocate; their antagonism reached such a pitch that, watching day and night at the gates of the city, they plotted to kill him. But Saul’s friends helped him escape from Damascus by lowering him in a large basket by night through a window in the city wall (II Cor. 11:32,33).

So Saul came again to Jerusalem—now as a captive of Christ and armed with a new and glorious commission. He attempted to join the Christian disciples, but they all were afraid of him, doubting he was really a believer. Barnabas, an early convert who had contributed his possessions to the new Christian community (Acts 4:36,37), took Saul to the apostles and apprised them of Saul’s conversion and of his fearless preaching of Christ at Damascus. Saul stayed

with Peter fifteen days but saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord’s brother (Gal. 1:18,19).

Having been accepted as one of the brethren, Saul boldly preached Christ and argued with the Greek-speaking Jews. “Here was a man of education and ability, whose convictions became so strong that he willingly—nay gladly—forfeited the good will of all his old friends, forfeited his social position and all of his worldly prospects, by espousing the cause and the name of the Christ.”<sup>4</sup> His preaching aroused controversy and resistance among his former compatriots, who now regarded him as a renegade and an enemy. Praying in the Temple, he was accorded another vision of Jesus Christ, who declared to him again his wider mission: “Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me” (Acts 22:18). He remonstrated, feeling sure that the testimony of one who had completely reversed his position would be convincing, but the command came again, “Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles” (Acts 22:21).

Saul’s field of labor was not to be Jerusalem or Palestine. And when the Hellenistic Jews tried to kill him, solicitous Christian brethren in the Jerusalem church sent him far away to his native city of Tarsus.

Saul now needed to be seasoned for the enormous task before him. Though Acts records nothing of his missionary activities during the next seven years, we learn from Galatians that he began at once to preach to the Gentiles in nearby Cilicia and Syria, and that favorable word of the zealous labors of this former persecutor of Christ had spread to the churches of Judaea (Gal. 1:21–24).

Cut off from the supervision of the apostles and the parent church in Jerusalem, Saul was significantly left free during these formative years of his ministry to clarify “by the Spirit” the gospel as it was being revealed to him. His preaching took form through practical experience and was strengthened through spiritual revelation and conviction. As he addressed himself to the Gentiles, who had little or no knowledge of Mosaic Law or of Jesus, he developed the Christian principles of redemption and salvation he was later to expound with such effectiveness.

Saul apparently underwent many physical and mental hardships during this Cilician and Syrian period, some of which probably took place before Luke met him; Luke makes no reference to them. Five times he was beaten with thirty-nine stripes by the Jews,\* three times he was scourged by the Romans, three times he experienced shipwreck; repeatedly in city and village he was in danger from his own

\*Mosaic Law stipulated, “Forty stripes he may give him, and not exceed” (Deut. 25:3); but customarily only thirty-nine were administered in order to remain within the Law.



unbelieving countrymen as well as from the heathen; often he endured hunger and thirst, exposure and cold (II Cor. 11:24–27).

During these years of Saul's preaching in southeast Asia Minor the apostles were keeping guard over the churches of Palestine. They had confined their ministry to the Jews, but the conversion of the Roman centurion Cornelius (Acts 10), which took place during this period, startled the church in Jerusalem into a recognition that the Gentiles also were to be partakers of Christ's grace.

**A**cts 11:19–30 Following Stephen's martyrdom many of the Christian Jews driven from Jerusalem by Saul's persecution traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, Cyrene in northern Africa, and Antioch in Syria. It was natural that some of these fugitives should be drawn to their Jewish countrymen already settled in these foreign lands and that they should proclaim the gospel to them. But when others who were Greek-speaking Jews reached Antioch, they began to preach to the Greeks also. As a result great numbers of Greek converts were won. This innovation of addressing uncircumcised Gentiles was an important advance in the spread of Christianity and led to the founding of the first Gentile church.

Antioch lay 300 miles north of Jerusalem. The city had been founded about 300 B.C. by Alexander's general Seleucus I Nicator and named in honor of his father Antiochus; with the Roman conquest it had become the capital of the province of Syria and the third largest city of the Roman Empire, with a population of over 500,000 of various nationalities, including a flourishing Jewish colony. Its seaport of Seleucia 20 miles to the west gave it access to Mediterranean commerce, while its caravan routes brought trade from Arabia and Mesopotamia. Here the Jews enjoyed equal civil and commercial privileges with the Syrian, Greek, and Roman population. Antioch was a notoriously vice-riddled city, but it was destined to become the second capital of Christianity during the apostolic era.

The church in Jerusalem sent the Greek-speaking Jew Barnabas to Antioch to investigate the new practice of preaching to Gentiles. Barnabas was well qualified for the task: "he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith" who later received the title of apostle (Acts 14:14). Seeing that God's grace was attendant on the new movement, he rejoiced in this fellowship of Jew and non-Jew, and gave the Antiochan church encouragement and guidance. However, as Barnabas observed its rapid growth he saw the need for another minister. Himself a broad-minded Jew of the Dispersion, he desired the aid of a helper who had a sympathetic spirit toward Gentiles, one of

wider culture and unprejudiced viewpoint than might be found among his colleagues in the Jerusalem church. Remembering the convert Saul whom he had championed in Jerusalem (Acts 9:27), word of whose preaching in Syria and Cilicia had reached the churches of Judaea, and recalling Saul's zeal and courage, he went to Tarsus to find him and brought him to Antioch. Together they labored for a full year (44–45 A.D.), and their work was crowned with great success. So frequently was the Greek word *Christos* heard in the city's streets that the name *Christian* was conferred on the followers of the new faith.

About this time certain Christian teachers came to Antioch from Jerusalem, among them the prophet Agabus. His prediction of an imminent famine in Judaea caused the Antiochan church to send its co-pastors, Barnabas and Saul, on the 300-mile journey to the Holy City with contributions for their brethren. Arriving in Jerusalem on their errand of mercy, they found this church had suffered greater calamity than that of famine—the martyrdom of the apostle James and the imprisonment of Peter by Herod Agrippa I (Acts 12). But Peter had been spared through the prayers of the church, and with the death of Herod in August 44, political persecution ceased for a time.

**A**cts 12:25 Barnabas and Saul returned to Antioch, probably in 46 A.D. They brought with them John Mark (Mk. 14:51?), a relative of Barnabas and son of a prominent Christian woman, Mary, in whose house the Jerusalem church had gathered to pray for Peter's release from prison.





## First Missionary Journey

47–48 A.D.

Started from Syrian Antioch to Seleucia  
Salamis, Paphos (on Cyprus)  
Perga (in district of Pamphylia, Asia Minor)  
Antioch (in district of Pisidia)  
Iconium, Lystra, Derbe (in district of Lycaonia)  
Returned to Lystra, Iconium, Antioch, Perga  
Attalia (in Pamphylia)  
Syrian Antioch

**A**cts 13 Not long after Saul's trip to Jerusalem—his second as a Christian—the church in Antioch was directed by the Holy Ghost, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." So the two apostles, supported by the prayers of the church and "sent forth by the Holy Ghost," departed for Asia Minor to promulgate the gospel. This missionary journey into the country west and north of Cilicia marked the widening scope of the early Church. In route it was a circuit—they started from Antioch in Syria and returned to Antioch in Syria. Saul considered this Gentile city, so happily situated at the crossroads to the West, eminently fitted to be his headquarters. From its mixed Christian community sprang foreign missions, for while Jerusalem was the center of the Christian movement under the apostles, it was too circumscribed by centuries of Judaism to serve as the center of a universal faith.

In 47 Barnabas and Saul sailed from Seleucia, the port of Antioch, to the seaport of Salamis on the island of Cyprus, 60 miles off the coast of Syria, taking Mark with them. They began their preaching in the synagogues, for many Jews of the Dispersion had made their homes on Cyprus. (They would find synagogues in almost every city and village throughout

On the island of Cyprus Saul's name was changed to Paul. These pillars are remnants of a temple to Zeus at the upper end of the forum in Salamis, a city on the east coast of Cyprus, visited by Paul and Barnabas. Religious News Service Photo.

the Roman Empire.) Traveling 100 miles westward across the island, they arrived at Paphos, the capital, where they met the Roman proconsul Sergius Paulus, who had in his retinue a sorcerer, a Jewish exorcist and false prophet called Elymas. The proconsul was eager to hear the gospel, but Elymas opposed Saul, trying to keep the Roman from listening.

This opening incident revealed what lay before Saul repeatedly—perversion versus conversion—and Saul faced it down. Saul looked piercingly at Elymas and said, "O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? . . . the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season." Immediately Elymas was struck with blindness. (Luke does not record what took place at the end of that "season.") Sergius Paulus, witnessing this astonishing event, was converted.

With this incident Saul's name was changed to Paul. The change in his name is significant. From the outset of his mission to the Roman Empire he was known by his Roman name, and with this experience at Paphos he appears to have assumed leadership of the group. "As 'Abram' was changed into 'Abraham,' when God promised that he should be the 'father of many nations'; as 'Simon' was changed into 'Peter,' when it was said, 'On this rock I will build my church';—so 'Saul' is changed into 'Paul,' at the moment of his first great victory among the Heathen."<sup>5</sup>

Leaving Cyprus, Paul and his companions sailed north to Attalia on the mainland of Asia Minor, up the Cestrus River seven miles to the inland city of Perga in the Roman district of Pamphylia. Here Mark suddenly left them to return to Jerusalem. Paul considered Mark's departure a desertion of their cause (Acts 15:38).

The two apostles journeyed north toward Antioch in Pisidia; toiling through the rugged mountain passes of the Taurus they emerged on the great central plateau of Asia Minor. This Antioch, also founded by Seleucus Nicator, was a flourishing city situated on the great trade route running east to Syria and west to Ephesus on the Aegean Sea; it was the center of Roman civil and military authority for the surrounding territory. Here Paul found a colony of friendly Jews and was invited to preach at their synagogue service. Luke carefully records the substance of this speech, the first detailed account of Paul's preaching to prospective converts. Paul proclaimed, as had Peter, that Jesus was the suffering and glorified Messiah

promised in the Scriptures; he rehearsed the history of Israel, the promise of a Savior through the seed of David, the fulfillment of that promise in Jesus, the condemnation and crucifixion of Jesus by his own nation, and Jesus' glorious resurrection from the dead. He closed his sermon with the assertion: "Be it known . . . that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." This he followed with a strong warning against unbelief, couched in the words of Habakkuk, that however startling his message might be, yet if they disbelieved as their fathers had disbelieved the prophecy of Chaldean destruction, they would perish (Hab. 1:5).

After the meeting had broken up, the devout Gentile proselytes of the congregation begged Paul to preach the Word again on the following Sabbath; many in the synagogue talked further with the apostles, who urged them to put their trust in God's grace. The next Sabbath almost the whole city gathered to listen. So great was the crowd that the leaders of the synagogue, angry and envious, interrupted him again and again with contradictions and abusive taunts. This was a crisis. Seeing the Jews' rejection of his message of a free salvation and determined that the Gentiles should hear, Paul made the courageous decision to appeal directly to the receptive Gentiles in the audience. His rebuke to his resistant countrymen was strong: "It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." The Gentiles listened readily and accepted the gospel, and many became Christians.

Soon all the region adjacent to Antioch had heard of Christ, but the apostles' Jewish detractors, fervid in their defense of what they felt to be their exclusive heritage, fought the new teaching, stirred up the influential men and women of the city, and drove Paul and Barnabas out. Shaking the dust of Antioch from their feet as a testimony against their adversaries (Lu. 9:5), they set out for Iconium, while the infant church they had left behind, filled with joy, stood firm.

**A**cts 14 Iconium, 80 miles southeast on the same trade route as Pisidian Antioch, was the prosperous capital of the district of Lycaonia. Here the same thing happened: Paul and Barnabas made many Jewish and Greek converts, but again they were confronted by the animosity of the religious leaders within the Jewish community. However, they remained here a long time, preaching and attesting to the power of the gospel by many miracles. But the city was ultimately divided into

two factions, those who sided with the apostles and those who held with the Jews; and when hostile Jews and Greeks both banded together to stone them, the two fled to Lystra, 18 miles to the south.

In Lystra Paul effected a miracle similar to that performed by Peter (Acts 3:1–10). A man crippled from birth, "who never had walked," sat in the audience and heard Paul speak. "He had faith to be healed," and Paul, perceiving this, commanded: "Stand upright on thy feet." And the man both "leaped and walked." The people at once thought Barnabas and Paul were gods, calling Barnabas Jupiter, and Paul Mercury, because he was the principal speaker. The priest of the temple of Jupiter brought oxen and garlands, intending to offer sacrifice. When the apostles realized the interpretation that had been placed upon the healing, they ripped their clothes (a characteristic Jewish sign of grief and abhorrence) and rushed out into the crowd, exclaiming, "Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men . . . and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God." Their agitated appeal barely checked this act of idolatry.

The Jews of Antioch and Iconium, not content with driving the apostles from their own cities, came to Lystra and poisoned public opinion against them. Here Paul suffered physical violence; he was stoned and dragged out of the city apparently dead. But the disciples rallied to his side and he revived. He "arose" and went into the city, and the next day left with Barnabas for Derbe.

At Derbe, 30 miles southeast of Lystra, they preached again and won many believers. Then, disregarding the danger that threatened at the hands of their enemies, they retraced their steps to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch to strengthen and sustain the faith of the new converts. Paul and Barnabas ordained elders in each church—the first known organizational measure taken by Paul—and encouraged its members to withstand persecution: "We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God."

Passing once more through Pisidia and Pamphylia to Perga, Paul and Barnabas sailed from Attalia and returned to Antioch in Syria. They had been away about eighteen months and had traveled some 1500 miles by land and sea. These faithful missionaries called the church together and "rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles."

**A**cts 15:1–35 **The Council of Jerusalem (49/50 A.D.).** About a year and a half after Paul and Barnabas had returned to Syrian Antioch the Church faced dissension from within. A question arose so serious that the future of Christianity as a universal faith weighed upon it: Were

Gentile converts to be forced under the yoke of Mosaic legalism in order to become Christians?

From the first, the two apostles had laid down no requirements for Gentile conformity to Mosaic Law, nor had they demanded that Gentiles be circumcised; and in the Antioch church Jews and Gentiles dwelt side by side in an unusual degree of fellowship, the Jews having set aside to some extent their ingrained habits of social segregation from peoples of other nations. But this unity was disrupted by Judaic Christians who came up from Jerusalem and asserted that salvation was not possible without the prescribed circumcision.

Paul and Barnabas at once took issue with this doctrine because it tended to put Christianity under the bondage of Judaism and denied salvation through faith in Christ. Circumcision had been observed by the Hebrews from the time of Abraham as a symbol of purity and as a token of God's covenant (Gen. 17:10–14). Baptism by water had been inaugurated by John the Baptist; baptism by the Spirit had come with Jesus. To Paul, therefore, circumcision was no longer a sign of the covenant; the higher figure of baptism had superseded it: "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature" (Gal. 6:15; see Col. 2:11,12).

There was so much argument that the church sent Paul, Barnabas, and Titus (one of Paul's uncircumcised Greek converts) to Jerusalem to confer with the Twelve and the elders of the parent church in an effort to settle this vital matter. In the course of their journey they visited the churches in Phoenicia and Samaria, telling them of the Gentiles' eager reception of Christianity. In Jerusalem they reported to the apostles and the church concerning the success of their preaching to the Gentiles, together with the controversial question to which it had given rise. Some of the Pharisaic sect stood up in the assembly and agreed with the Judaizers' point of view, insisting on the necessity of circumcising Gentile converts and also demanding the keeping of the Mosaic practices of segregation, fasting, abstention from unclean meats, and the like. Although this controversy had started as an attack on Paul's procedure among the Gentiles, it brought to the fore for future ages the far larger question of liberty versus literalistic bondage to the Law. It was a question too big for immediate decision; a meeting was called in order that the subject might be thoroughly debated.

But before the council convened Paul took pains to meet privately with the leaders of the Jerusalem church in an atmosphere free of bias or emotional pressures to explain and defend more fully the gospel he preached. Only from his letter to the Galatians do we learn of this private conference and read from his own hand how prayerfully he prepared for it and how

assiduously and with what strength and independence of thought he contended for the safeguarding of Gentile Christians (Gal. 2:1–5). "I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain."

Although pressure was brought to bear to circumcise Titus, he would not allow it, for to sanction this practice would have been to lose the liberty that the Christian gains in Christ. Paul refused to compromise even for a moment what later developed in his writings as cardinal doctrines of the gospel—the doctrines of grace and justification by faith in Jesus Christ. He was not awed by the prominence of the leaders of the Jerusalem church, nor was he swayed from his convictions because of them. He neither knew nor cared what their exact office was—God was not impressed with a man's status—and he found that they added nothing new to his gospel (Gal. 2:6).

At the open conference that followed, the rightness of Paul's position was conceded by James, Peter, and John. When they saw that "he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in [Paul] toward the Gentiles," he was accorded equal standing with Peter and the other apostles, and his and Barnabas' mission to the Gentiles was fully acknowledged by the Jerusalem church (Gal. 2:7–9).

Peter upheld and endorsed Paul's stand, reminding the assembly of the lesson God had taught them by the conversion of Cornelius and his friends—that non-Jews whose hearts were ready were given the gift of the Holy Ghost even as were they and that there was no difference between the Jew and the Gentile, for God had purified the hearts of the Gentiles by faith. Rhetorically he questioned those who were holding out for the rite of circumcision: "Why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they." Then the assembly listened attentively while Barnabas and Paul recounted the experiences of their missionary journey to Asia Minor and the miracles God had wrought among the Gentiles.

James, head of the church, confirmed Peter's position, showing it to be in harmony with Amos' prophecy relating to the inclusion of the Gentiles in the Messianic blessing (see Amos 9:11,12). He then gave for the Church the authoritative and historic decision that removed Christianity from the category of a Jewish sect to its true status as a universal religion. It exempted Gentiles from the burden of Mosaic Law but at the same time laid down for them

four prohibitions against practices particularly abhorrent to the Jews: eating food that had been offered to idols, sexual immorality, eating the flesh of strangled animals, and drinking blood.

Letters were drawn up containing the council's decision, with an affectionate commendation of Barnabas and Paul and the acknowledgment that they were men who had hazarded their lives to spread the gospel. These letters were written for the churches of Syria and Cilicia. The Jerusalem church sent Judas Barsabas and Silas, enlightened Christian teachers, back to Antioch with Barnabas and Paul to confirm this decree orally.

The troubled Antioch church eagerly assembled to meet its returning delegates and the Jerusalem emissaries, and was overjoyed to hear that the principle of salvation by faith had been upheld. Judas soon returned to Jerusalem, but Silas, drawn by the vision of a wider ministry that included the Gentiles, chose to remain in Antioch.

Paul, in fact, by the intensity of his convictions, the enlightenment of his understanding, the singleness of his purpose, had made himself completely master of the situation. He had come to the very forefront in the guidance of the Church. The future of Christianity rested with the Gentiles, and to the Gentiles the acts and writings of Paul were to be of greater importance than those of all the other Apostles. His Apostolate had been decisively recognised. He had met Peter and John, and even the awe-inspiring brother of the Lord, in conference, and found himself so completely their equal in the gifts of the Holy Ghost, that it was impossible for them to resist his credentials. He had greatly enlarged their horizon, and they had added nothing to him. He had returned from Jerusalem more than ever conscious of himself, conscious of his own power, clear in his future purposes. He

inspired into the Church of Antioch his own convictions with a force which no one could resist.<sup>6</sup>

Although the council had settled the question of freedom from Mosaic legalism for Gentile Christians and established the equality of Jewish and Gentile members within the Church, the continued observance of the Law by Jewish Christians was taken for granted. It was natural therefore that some Judaic beliefs should still constitute a social barrier which kept the Jew from mingling freely with his Gentile brethren. The exclusiveness practiced by generations of Jews could not be so easily or quickly eradicated, and sometimes complications arose. One such occasion occurred later when Peter visited Antioch (the exact date is not known) and for a while ate with Gentile believers; but when certain Jews came from the Jerusalem church, Peter temporized. Afraid of being censured, he withdrew from the company of the Gentiles. Peter's behavior fell far short of the spirit of the gospel and of the stand he had professed at the council, and because his example influenced Barnabas and others to segregate themselves also, Paul again rose to the defense of the principle of Christian freedom and openly rebuked his fellow apostle. Paul wrote of this experience: "When Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed . . . I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles . . . why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?" (Gal. 2:11,14).

Despite this strong rebuke Peter held Paul in deep respect and affection; in his Second Epistle he referred to him as "our beloved brother Paul" (II Pet. 3:15).





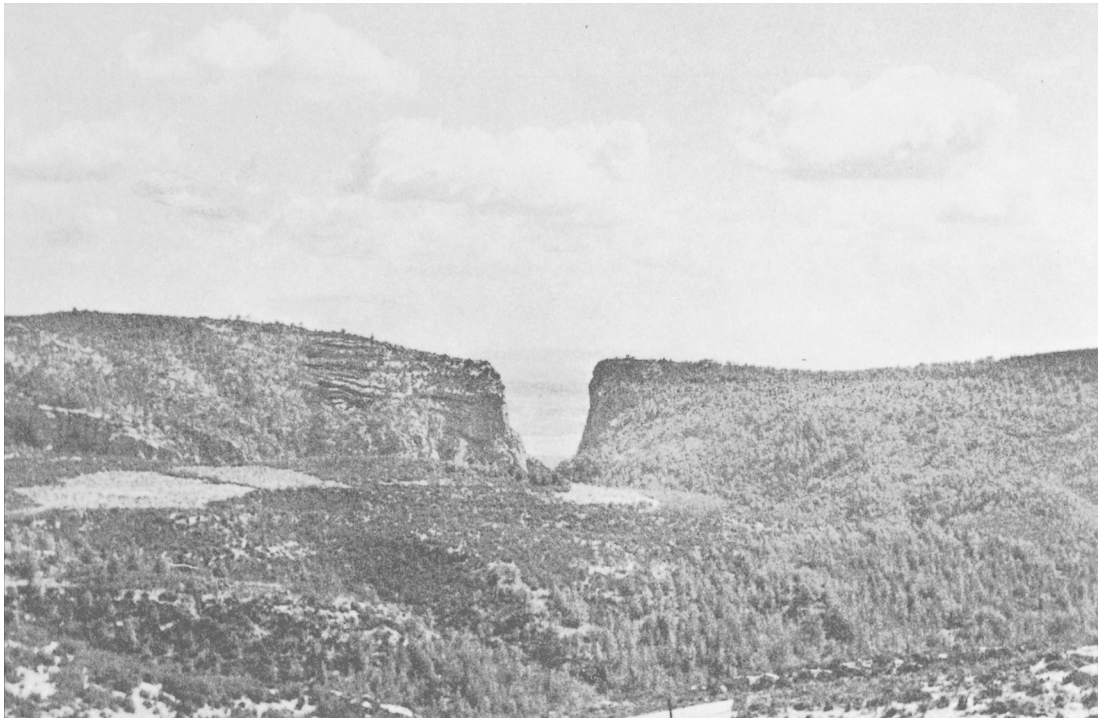
## Second Missionary Journey

51–54 A.D.

Started from Syrian Antioch through Cilicia  
 Derbe, Lystra  
 Regions of Phrygia and Galatia  
 Troas (seaport in province of Mysia)  
 Neapolis (seaport of Macedonia)  
 Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea (in Macedonia)  
 Athens, Corinth (in Achaia)  
 From Cenchrea to Ephesus (in province of Asia)  
 Caesarea, Jerusalem (in Palestine)  
 Returned to Syrian Antioch

**A**cts 15:36–41 Paul was now free to contemplate another journey. The mother church in Jerusalem had acknowledged and approved his authority as an apostle to the Gentiles. Therefore in 51 A.D., at the age of about forty-seven, he turned his attention to the infant churches he had founded in Asia Minor, and proposed to Barnabas that they visit each one to check on their well-being. Barnabas wanted to take Mark as their companion, but Paul objected—Mark had left them early on the first journey. Because his love for Christ came first, Paul would allow nothing—not even a strong personal relationship—to impede his mission.

The most resolute courage, indeed, was required for the work to which St. Paul was now publicly pledged. He would not associate with himself in that work one who had already



The Cilician Gates, a series of sharp defiles in the Taurus Mountains, used by Paul on his missionary journeys. Through this pass ran an ancient trade route from the Euphrates to the uplands of Asia Minor. Courtesy of the Oriental Institute, University of Chicago.

shown a want of constancy. This was the occasion of what must have been a most painful difference between him and his comrade in the faith and in past perils, Barnabas (Acts 15:35–40).<sup>7</sup>

The disagreement was so sharp that the two friends separated. Barnabas and Mark sailed to Cyprus; Paul chose Silas to accompany him on this second missionary journey. Silas (Silvanus) was already a man of seasoned Christian character and was, like Paul, a Roman citizen (Acts 16:37). Luke makes no further mention of Barnabas and Mark. Only from Paul's letters do we learn of the continuing missionary work of Barnabas (I Cor. 9:6); later, when Mark had reached greater Christian maturity, Paul found his help of comfort and value (Col. 4:10,11; II Tim. 4:11).

Paul's second journey, like his first, was a circuit; he started from Antioch in Syria and returned there three years later. Led by the Spirit, his work expanded greatly in scope and importance as he crossed Asia Minor and carried the gospel into southeast Europe. This time he and Silas went overland, first through the already-evangelized territory of Syria and Cilicia (Gal. 1:21–23), then on across the Taurus mountain chain to visit the churches of Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch in Pisidia, founded on his first journey three years earlier.

**Acts 16** Only one incident is told of Paul's stay in Lystra—his meeting with young Timotheus, who, with his mother, had apparently been converted on the apostle's first visit. In the interim Timotheus (Timothy) had proved himself a disciple of blameless character, already held in high regard by the churches of Lystra and Iconium. Seeing in him great promise, Paul wished to take him along, and the brethren of Lystra readily concurred. So with the laying on of hands by Paul and the elders Timothy

was ordained (I Tim. 4:14; II Tim. 1:6; see p. 378).

Because Timothy was half Jew (his father was a Greek), Paul had him submit to circumcision before their departure. Although he had fought determinedly for the principle of Gentile freedom from circumcision, Paul kept the Law in this instance in tolerance of the Jewish viewpoint so that no door be shut against his effort to reach his countrymen. Christianity did not interfere with Jewish customs, and inasmuch as this young man was not a pure Gentile, as was Titus, this was not so much a religious question as a social and racial one. Paul himself occasionally observed certain Jewish customs such as the keeping of vows (Acts 18:18; 21:23–26), though he did not deem them essential to salvation (see I Cor. 9:19–23).

Timothy became Paul's faithful helper on this journey and later his chief companion on the third journey. Through the ensuing years Timothy was to be entrusted with missions of the highest importance, and Paul's letters show the esteem and affection in which he held him: "my own son in the faith" (I Tim. 1:2); "Timothy, my dearly beloved son" (II Tim. 1:2).

All along the way Paul, Silas, and Timothy delivered the letters containing the decision reached at the council in Jerusalem, and thus the unity of the churches was strengthened and membership increased daily. The three spent many weeks proclaiming the gospel in the regions of Phrygia and Galatia. Galatia was originally a north-central Asia Minor region inhabited largely by descendants of Gauls of northern Italy and France who had invaded this territory early in the third century B.C. In Paul's day Galatia was a large Roman province that included not only this region, having the cities of Ancyra, Pessinus, and Tavium, but also portions of the districts of Phrygia, Lycaonia, and Pisidia. Whether the churches of Galatia were founded at this time is not clear from Luke's account (Acts



The ruins of Philippi, Greece, where Paul preached his first sermon to the Gentiles. Here Lydia, a wealthy woman of Thyatira, became the first Christian convert in Europe and the first Christian community in Europe was organized. Religious News Service Photo.



16:6), but it is probable they were.\*

Traveling westward, they were forbidden by the Holy Ghost to preach in the province of Asia to the west or in the province of Bithynia to the north—so they continued on to the Mysian port of Troas (near the site of ancient Troy) on the Aegean Sea. Thus Paul, divinely directed, was prevented from further preaching at this time in Asia Minor and led toward another field of labor.

At Troas Paul had a vision of a Macedonian who entreated “Come over into Macedonia, and help us.” He responded at once to this summons to bring the gospel to the continent of Europe. He stood on the threshold of enlarged opportunity; ahead of him was not merely a short journey across the Aegean, but also a decisive step into the Western world, the seat of highly advanced Hellenic culture and the home of Roman justice, the most enlightened law of the day.

After the vision they made every effort to get passage on a ship to Macedonia, convinced that the Lord had called them to preach the gospel there. At this point in the record Luke introduces himself as a member of Paul’s company (Acts 16:10). Luke was almost certainly a Gentile—according to Eusebius he was a native of Syrian Antioch, and Paul’s grouping of Luke’s name in his letters with those of other Gentile fellow laborers heightens the implication that this new disciple was a Gentile (Col. 4:12–14). We also learn that Luke was a doctor; Paul called him “the beloved physician.” His two books, the Gospel of Luke and the Acts

\*Galatians 4:13 indicates that Paul had made two visits to the Galatians before he wrote to them on his third journey. Its phrase “at the first” (literally “at the former time”) has led some scholars to interpret it as meaning the visits made on his second and third journeys (Acts 16:6; 18:23); others feel it refers to the visits made on his first and second journeys (Acts 13:14–14:24; 16:6).

of the Apostles, show him to have been a man of education and a skilled reporter of marked literary ability. He became an intimate friend of Paul and his faithful biographer for the next eleven years.

Sailing from Troas across the northern tip of the Aegean, the little group landed at Neapolis in Macedonia, the region north of Greece in the present Balkan Peninsula. They journeyed inland to the nearby city of Philippi, an important Roman colony on the great Via Egnatia from Rome to Asia. There was no synagogue in Philippi, so on the first Sabbath they went to a meeting place outside the city gate near a river where Jews and converts to Judaism often met for prayer. There Paul addressed the gathering, in this case one wholly of women. Among his hearers was Lydia, formerly of Thyatira in Asia Minor, a dealer in cloth—a “seller of purple”—who became Paul’s first European convert. Already a proselyte to the Jewish faith, Lydia was instantly receptive to the gospel, and with her whole household, family and slaves alike, was baptized into the Christian faith. She extended to Paul and his companions the hospitality of her home, which upon her insistence they accepted.

On another occasion as they went again to the place of public prayer a young slave girl “possessed with a spirit of divination {clairvoyance},” who brought her owners much profit by fortune-telling, followed them, crying out, “These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation.” She had persisted in this for many days; on this day Paul rebuked the spirit, “I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.” And the spirit of divination “came out” the same hour. Her masters, furious because she was now useless as a source of income, seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the forum before the Roman praetors, and, capitalizing on anti-Jewish prejudice,

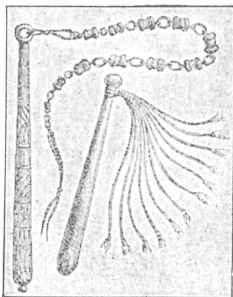
charged that these Jews were troubling the city, teaching customs which they, as Roman citizens, could not lawfully accept or practice.

When a crowd joined in the accusation, the magistrates ordered that Paul and Silas be stripped and publicly flogged; then the two were handed over to a jailer who threw them into a dark inner prison and fastened their feet in stocks. But nothing could quench the spirit and courage of these dedicated disciples. They prayed; their faith and joy, transcending physical suffering and prison chains, rose in hymns of praise to God at the midnight hour. The other prisoners listened with surprise to such a sound in a Roman dungeon and the heaviness of their own hearts was lightened. Almost simultaneously "there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed."

The keeper, wakened suddenly from sleep, saw with terror that the prison doors were open and he drew his sword to kill himself. If the prisoners had escaped, under Roman law he would face inevitable death. But Paul shouted: "Do thyself no harm: for we are all here." In gratitude and relief, sensing the goodness of these men and the presence of a higher power, the jailer called for a light and fell trembling at the feet of the apostles. Bringing them out of the dungeon, he asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ," they replied, "and thou shalt be saved, and thy house," explaining to him the grace of Christ.

The jailer had been callous and indifferent to the physical plight of his prisoners before; now his heart was flooded with compassion and he hastened to wash their wounds; then he and his household were baptized. Treating them as guests, he brought Paul and Silas into his house and fed them, rejoicing in his newfound faith.

Nor was this all. In the morning the magistrates reversed their hasty decision and sent officers to release Paul and Silas. Paul refused to be dismissed in this offhand manner, however. He demanded justice. After such public indignity and insult it was important that their innocence be made known. Their rights as Roman citizens had been flagrantly violated: the forbidden scourge had been applied to their persons



Roman scourges. *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia.*

and they had suffered imprisonment without any kind of trial. The praetors themselves must come and free them. The magistrates were alarmed when they heard Paul's charge, realizing they had committed one of the greatest of crimes under Roman law, thus placing their own lives in jeopardy. They hurried to the jail to beg the two to leave. The wrong having been openly acknowledged, Paul and Silas consented to go, but before departing from Philippi they reported the comforting news of their release to Lydia and the others. The remarkable circumstances of these prison events, together with the apostles' forbearance toward the magistrates, did much to advance the cause of Christianity in Philippi. "Thus it was that a woman, a girl and a man became the nucleus of the first church in Europe, and the bringing of the Gospel to Europe was begun in a prison experience."<sup>8</sup>

**Acts 17** Paul and Silas traveled on through Amphipolis and Apollonia to Thessalonica, which lay about a hundred miles southwest on the Via Egnatia, but Timothy and Luke apparently remained at Philippi to continue working in the new church.

Thessalonica (now Salonika) was the capital of Macedonia, a wealthy seaport on the Thermaic Gulf and a "free city" under the autonomous rule of local officials called politarchs. Its importance made it a highly favorable center for the dissemination of the gospel. Despite the treatment he and Silas had received at Philippi, Paul at once began to preach of Christ (I Th. 2:2). On three successive Sabbaths he went to the synagogue and attempted to reason with the Jews, pointing out from Scripture that their promised Messiah was one who must suffer, die, and rise again, and that Jesus was this Messiah. During these three weeks his forceful preaching won a large number of converts, both men and women, some from among the Jews and many from among the Greeks.

But again, as on the first journey, opposition arose. The devout of the synagogue felt impelled to safeguard their religious beliefs. Jealous Jews gathered some of the unprincipled idlers of the market place, started a riot, and stormed the house of Jason, in which Paul and his friend were lodging. When the apostles could not be found, the angry crowd seized Jason and some of the brethren, brought them before the politarchs, charging, "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also; Whom Jason hath received: and these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus." But the officials demanded only a bail bond from Jason and the others and let them go.

Because Paul and Silas were still in great danger, the new disciples sent them off secretly that night to Berea, 50 miles to the southwest. But the church





The rocky plateau of the ancient Acropolis (the "Upper City") overlooks modern Athens. The Parthenon (center), temple of the virgin goddess Athena, and the elegant Erechtheum, on its left, date from the 5th century B.C. In the background, Lycabettus Hill rises almost 1000 feet high. Greek National Tourist Office.

which had been founded in Thessalonica took root and flourished, so much so that within a few months of his departure Paul wrote of them: "Ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia. For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing" (I Th. 1:7,8).

In the populous Macedonian city of Berea Paul and Silas continued their ministry, and Timothy soon joined them. The Jews of the Berean synagogue were more open-minded than those of Thessalonica; they accepted the gospel "with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." When Paul's enemies in Thessalonica learned he was preaching God's message in Berea they pursued him, and incited a riot there. Paul was again forced to flee. Christian friends at once sent Paul to the Aegean seacoast. To insure his safety the men who accompa-

nied him went with him by ship all the way to Athens, a sea journey of more than 300 miles. They returned to Berea with Paul's urgent message that Silas and Timothy, whom he had left behind to aid new converts, should rejoin him as quickly as possible.

While Paul waited in Athens he surveyed his surroundings with interest; this was his first visit to the celebrated metropolis of Achaia (southern Greece). In the fifth century B.C. the Athenian city-state had attained eminence as a great democracy and as the center of Greek philosophy and art; Pericles, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, among others, had given it lasting glory. Even under Roman government in Paul's day Athens remained the cultural and intellectual center of the Empire.

The name Athens came from that of the warlike goddess Athena (Minerva) whose magnificent temple, the Parthenon, dominated the city's fortified citadel, the craggy hill of the Acropolis. Athena was con-

sidered not only the protector of her people but also the patron deity of the arts. The Acropolis, covered with temples and statues of gods and heroes, was a museum of architectural and sculptural splendor, approached from the west through the magnificent marble gateway of the Propylaea. Close to the Parthenon stood the Erechtheum or temple of King Erechtheus, the Temple of Zeus, and the Temple of the Wingless Victory. Images of wood, stone, marble, bronze adorned every public building and lined the streets; every Greek god in Olympus found a place in the city's *agora* (market place or public square). The Greek traveler Pausanias reported that there were more gods in Athens than in all the rest of Greece put together. The worship of these many gods testified to the religious sentiment of the Athenians—to a paganism diametrically opposed to the spirit of Christianity.

Paul, a Jew whose former religion forbade the representation of the human body in any form, was not impressed with the city's art and sculpture; rather his soul was shocked and horrified to see the city completely given over to idolatry. Following his usual practice, he preached in the synagogue, but he also debated daily with Greek philosophers of the city's *agora*. Some of them, desiring to hear more of his novel ideas, invited him to Areopagus, the city court of Athens, to question: "May we know what this new doctrine . . . is? For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears: we would know therefore what these things [Jesus and the resurrection] mean." (Luke tersely describes the intellectual temper of Athens: "For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing.")

At Mars' Hill (Areopagus) Paul gave his now-famous discourse concerning the one true God. He was aware that he was addressing Gentile intellectuals, some Epicureans, others Stoics. The Epicureans were a sect of philosophers, followers of the school of Epicurus of Samos (341–270 B.C.), whose philosophy was popular in Asia Minor, Rome, and the Athens of Paul's day. Epicurus taught that happiness (pleasure) was the chief aim of existence, to be attained by prudence, honor, and justice. This happiness was to be found in a tranquil mind and a body free from pain. He sought to reach a state of thought unaffected by the changes and vicissitudes of life. Politics, business, and knowledge were eschewed as distractions to serenity of mind. Men lived in a universe formed and governed by the chance organization of atoms; there was no future life or immortality, for at the close of physical existence the soul and body would dissolve. In Epicurus' philosophy the gods played no part in the lives of men, being relegated to a sphere of their own outside the world. His doctrines freed men from the fear of death and from a superstitious fear of the

gods. The more noble of Epicurus' followers held to the higher ethics of his teachings, while the less refined reduced them to materialism and sensualism.

The Stoics were a sect of philosophers whose school had been founded in Athens by Zeno in 308 B.C. While the Epicureans denied the existence of a divine Being, the Stoics were pantheistic, seeing a divine Being in all nature, a nature pervaded and ordered by the animating spirit of reason. To them virtue was the supreme good, the chief aim of existence, to be obtained by conforming to the laws of nature. They were therefore under the necessity of submitting willingly to evil as well as to good. The soul was held to be corporeal, and at death would be burned or absorbed in God. By the exercise of reason and an austere morality, the wise man should be free from passions and unaffected by joy or grief, pleasure or pain. "He therefore lives a consistent, harmonious life, in conformity with the perfect order of the universe. He discovers this order by knowledge or wisdom. But the Stoics also defined this ideal as a system of particular duties, such as purity in one's self, love toward all men, and reverence toward God. In Stoic ethics, Greek philosophy reached the climax of its moral teaching."<sup>9</sup> In practice, however, the Stoics tended toward inordinate pride and egotism, and their pantheistic worship was inimical to the Gospel.

Mindful of these two philosophies, Paul spoke with exquisite tact and courtesy as he skillfully refuted the foundations of their hypotheses. He set the doctrine of a divine Creator and His creation against the atheistic theory that the world was formed by a chance organization of the atoms of matter, and the truth of the one God against the belief in many gods. And though he stood surrounded by heathen shrines of unexcelled beauty, he declared that this infinite God could not be worshiped materially.

"Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious [Phillips: in all respects an extremely religious people]. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth . . . For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets\* have said, For we are also his offspring. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold,

\*Aratus and Cleanthes, Greek Stoics of third century B.C.

The Areopagus, or Mars' Hill, where Paul addressed the men of Athens. Picture Collection, New York Public Library.



or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."

The Athenians gave Paul close attention until he spoke of the resurrection of the dead. He always testified of Jesus' resurrection, and each time it met with strong disbelief. The response at Mars' Hill was no exception. Some of these intellectuals scoffed at such an incredible idea; others said they would like to hear him at greater length. Paul himself was a man of the highest intellectual capacities, but he condemned intellectualism as an end in itself, without spiritual impetus. Later he wrote the Corinthians that while Christ's crucifixion was a "stumbling block" to the Jews, it was "foolishness" to the Greeks (I Cor. 1:22, 23).

A few of his listeners were won over to Christianity, among them Dionysius, a member of the court of Areopagus, and Damaris, an Athenian woman. When he saw that on the whole the Athenians gave little credence to the truth of resurrection, Paul departed from Athens. Philippi, Thessalonica, Corinth, and Ephesus became great centers for the extension of Christianity; Athens, steeped in philosophic materialism, remained alien to the theology of Christianity, and Paul never returned there so far as is known.

Before Paul left Athens Timothy (and probably Silas) arrived from Berea with word that the Thessalonian converts needed help to withstand the persecution they were suffering at the hands of their own countrymen (I Th. 2:14); so although he felt great need of Timothy's presence and support, Paul's

anxiety impelled him to send Timothy and Silas back to Thessalonica to comfort and strengthen the new church (I Th. 3:1-5).

**A**cts 18:1-22 Paul traveled on to Corinth, the Roman capital of Achaia, 40 miles west of Athens on the narrow isthmus joining the Peloponnesian peninsula with the mainland of Greece. Corinth had two deep-water ports: Cenchrea nine miles to the east on the Saronic Gulf, with access to the Aegean, and Lechaemum to the west on the Corinthian Gulf, leading into the Adriatic; its vast maritime trade had made it immensely wealthy. Greeks, Romans, large settlements of Jews, and resident strangers from many lands made up its cosmopolitan population. It was adorned with many splendid buildings, including the stadium of the great Isthmian games, the great Agora, and the notorious temple of Aphrodite with its thousand courtesans. Immorality and licentious extravagance were rife in this highly sophisticated city, yet Paul was to remain here for a year and a half and find it fertile ground for the message of Christianity.

Paul found lodging in the home of Aquila and Priscilla, a Jewish couple who had been expelled from Rome by the anti-Semitic edict of Claudius in 49 A.D. It is not known whether they had already heard of Christianity in Rome (according to the Roman historian Suetonius, the emperor's edict had resulted from agitation among the Jews over Christian teachings) or whether they were introduced to it in Corinth, but these two became Paul's staunch helpers. A warm friendship sprang up among them, a joy to the apostle the rest of his life. Paul supported himself by his own labor, that no shadow be cast on his motive or mission; since his hosts were also tentmakers, he



worked with them. His own words tell us how conscientiously he and his companions toiled at their trade: "Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you" (II Th. 3:8; compare II Cor. 11:9).

Every Sabbath Paul spoke in the Corinthian synagogue, winning over many Jews and Greeks to Christianity. His whole bearing and manner of approach to his subject were in marked contrast to those at Athens; he still felt the sting of Athenian indifference. Profiting by that discouraging experience, he refrained from all reference to Greek philosophies and confined himself wholly to the simple, unadorned message of the cross. Later he wrote to the Corinthians: "I . . . came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified . . . . And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power . . . ." (I Cor. 2:1-4; compare 1:17, 18).

Silas and Timothy now rejoined Paul at Corinth. Timothy brought good news of the steadfastness of the Thessalonian church under persecution (I Th. 3:6, 7). He reported, however, that some members were troubled about certain gospel teachings, especially those relating to the Second Coming of Christ and the resurrection of the dead. Some were anxious about the fate of loved ones who had died since conversion. The prevalent Greek beliefs of that day held no hope of immortality; death was the end. Though living converts now had the hope of resurrection in Christ, what share would those who had died have in the glory of the Second Advent?

Although Paul longed keenly to see the Thessalonian brethren to comfort them in person, it was not safe for him to make the journey because of the animosity still directed against him by his Jewish adversaries in Macedonia (I Th. 2:17,18). The apostle poured out in writing what he would have said could he have come personally, marking the beginning of a new form of activity that was to hold great significance for the future development of the Church. His two letters to the Thessalonians are the first expositions of Christian theology we now possess. These show how, at first hand, Paul taught the gospel to the Gentiles some twenty years after Ascension.

In the first letter are seen the great doctrinal truths of election (1:4), the Trinity (1:1, 5), the power of the Holy Ghost (1:5), conversion (1:9), the walk of the Christian (2:12; 4:1), sanctification (4:3,7; 5:22, 23), love (4:9), resurrection (4:14-18), the Day of the Lord (5:1-3), Christ's Second Coming (1:10; 2:19; 3:13; 4:13-17; 5:23). The doctrine of Christ's Coming, the Coming Jesus himself had foretold (Mt. 24:27-31),

is particularly developed in this Pauline epistle.

### *First Epistle to the Thessalonians.*

☛ Chapter 1 conveys the joy of Paul, Silas, and Timothy in the Thessalonians' conversion and allegiance to Christ, and commends them to all believers in Macedonia and Achaia as shining examples of faith.

☛ Chapter 2 reminds the Thessalonians of the manner in which the gospel was imparted to them—courageously, truthfully, affectionately, laboriously—and of their acceptance of it as the Word of God. Paul praises them for their fortitude under persecution, and longs to come to them.

☛ Chapter 3 explains his reason for sending Timothy, expresses again his joy at Timothy's good report of their faith and love, and gives his earnest prayer for their spiritual growth that they might be perfect in holiness before God at the Coming of Jesus Christ.

☛ Chapter 4:1-12 gives practical exhortations for the Christian's sanctification: moral purity, brotherly love, honest labor.

In ☛ Chapters 4:13-5:11 the apostle takes up the subject of Christ's Second Coming to enlighten his readers concerning the state of believers who have died. They could have hope for their loved ones now gone, for with that Coming would be resurrection, first for "the dead in Christ," then for living believers, all to be "caught up together" to be with Christ forever. The time of Christ's coming in judgment—"the day of the Lord"—is unknown, but it will be sudden; being children of light, believers should be vigilant and spiritually prepared for the salvation to which God has appointed them.

☛ Chapter 5:12-28 gives further practical admonitions relating to their present Christian life as they await the hope of Christ's Coming. The letter closes with a farewell prayer and benediction.

Paul was now deeply involved in his ministry in Corinth. "Pressed in the spirit," he continually preached that Jesus was the promised Messiah. The malevolence of the Jews that had driven him from city to city now flared against him here, and when some in the synagogue went so far as to declare Jesus was accursed—"anathema" (RV I Cor. 12:3)—Paul gave up his attempts to reach them. He shook his clothes to indicate he was through: "Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean [Weymouth, not responsible] from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles." From this time on he preached in the house of Justus, a



Corinthian whose house adjoined the synagogue, and many Corinthians became Christians. Among the converts were the chief ruler of the synagogue, Crispus, with his family; Stephanas with his household; and Gaius, all of them baptized by Paul himself (I Cor. 1:14,16; 16:15). The little church grew, although it was harassed continually by clashes with unbelieving Jews.

In a night vision Paul was encouraged by the voice of Christ: "Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city." So trusting divine direction, he remained in Corinth.

Tidings had reached the apostle that the message in his first letter to the Thessalonians concerning Christ's Coming had been misunderstood. In view of his vivid description of that Coming, some believed it to be imminent. So he wrote again to correct this mistaken idea and detail certain circumstances which were to occur prior to that event, reminding them that this he had told them before.

### *Second Epistle to the Thessalonians*

☛ Chapter 1 conveys Paul's joy and gratitude for the marked growth in faith of the Thessalonian church and for their endurance under persecution and trial. He sees in their suffering a token that God, who recompenses tribulation, will avenge His people at Christ's Coming. Paul prays that its members be accounted worthy of their calling.

☛ Chapter 2 warns them not to be deceived by any pretended revelation or by a message purported to be from him that Christ's Coming is immediate, explaining that the "day of Christ [RV day of the Lord]" is not yet here, for certain signs must precede that event. There will first be "a falling away [RSV rebellion]" that "that man of sin" who would exalt himself above God and usurp His place and power may be revealed (see Is. 14:12-14). Did they not remember that he had told them this when he was with them?

The rebellion is, strictly speaking, within the church, but the outcome affects the world outside; and evil becomes blatant and dominant in the whole of the inhabited world. This apostasy was one feature of the picture of the future which Paul had drawn for the Thessalonians.

The man of lawlessness is the very embodiment of this evil (cf. John 8:44; the devil "is a liar and the father of lies").<sup>10</sup>

This "mystery of iniquity [RV lawlessness]," Paul points out, is already at work in secret,

but when the deceiving satanic nature of the Lawless One, under restraint at present, is fully understood, Christ will come in power and glory to destroy "that Wicked." The followers of the man of sin are doomed, while the followers of Christ are chosen to salvation. Therefore the Thessalonians are to be steadfast in the gospel truths they had been taught.

☛ Chapter 3 asks for their prayers that God's message may spread rapidly and its glory be displayed. Paul urges that they wait patiently for Christ's Coming and continue in well-doing. In strong language he reproves the disorderly and idle members of the church, reminding them of the example he and his fellow apostles had set for them. His apostolic benediction.

At the end of eighteen months of increasingly successful preaching in Corinth the animosity of the Jews there erupted in violence and civil action against Paul. His Jewish adversaries rose in a body, seized him, and dragged him before Gallio, the Roman proconsul of Achaia, with the charge "This fellow persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law." But before Paul could speak a word in his own behalf Gallio refused even to hear the case, recognizing it as a quibble over Jewish theology, not an infringement of Roman law. The Greek bystanders, encouraged by Gallio's contemptuous snub of the accusers, turned on Sosthenes, head of the synagogue, and beat him in the presence of Gallio, but "Gallio cared for none of those things." This impartial Roman justice—in direct contrast to that Paul had received at Philippi—afforded him and the Corinthian church a measure of protection. Paul continued his evangelistic work unmolested for a while longer and the church spread into the surrounding region (Acts 18:18; Rom. 16:1).

In the spring of 54 A.D. Paul sailed from Cenchrea for Jerusalem, having made a vow he hoped to consummate on a coming feast day (perhaps Pentecost). Aquila and Priscilla, probably with others not named, accompanied him to Ephesus, a voyage eastward of eight to ten days across the Aegean Sea. Ephesus was on the west coast of the province of Asia, a province Paul had earlier bypassed under the direction of the Spirit. While his ship lay in harbor Paul preached briefly to his countrymen in the synagogue; when its members urged him to remain, he promised: "I will return again unto you, if God will." Then he sailed for Palestine, leaving Aquila and Priscilla in Ephesus to nurture the seed he had planted.

Paul landed at Caesarea in the summer of 54, traveled to Jerusalem (his fourth visit) and "saluted the church." From there he returned to Syrian Antioch. He had given three years to this second journey and traveled some 3500 miles by land and sea.



## Third Missionary Journey

54–58 A.D.

Started from Syrian Antioch  
 Galatia and Phrygia  
 Ephesus, Troas  
 Macedonia, Illyricum, Corinth  
 Returned through Macedonia to Philippi  
 Troas, Assos (in Mysia)  
 Mitylene (on Lesbos), island of Samos  
 Trogyllium, Miletus (Asian seaports)  
 Islands of Coos and Rhodes  
 Patara (in province of Lycia)  
 Tyre, Ptolemais (Phoenician seaports)  
 Caesarea, Jerusalem

**A**cts 18:23–28 Paul did not remain long in Syrian Antioch after the close of the second missionary journey. There was much still to be done. The apostle was now about fifty; his abilities were at their height and he was eager to pour out the spiritual riches of the gospel to the Gentile world. Leaving Antioch for the last time in the early autumn of 54, he began his third and longest missionary journey (a map distance of some 4000 to 4500 miles). His companions when he set out are not known, but it is quite probable that Timothy was with him, and possibly Titus. Silas' name disappears from Luke's record. A ministry in Ephesus was Paul's first objective since he had promised the Ephesian synagogue he would return. He went directly to Tarsus, 412 miles from Antioch; from there he took an inland route across Asia Minor to Ephesus. This enabled him to revisit on the way the churches of Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch and to make a circuit through

Galatia and Phrygia to revisit the churches he had founded there on his second journey (see p. 398).

To gather contributions for the relief of the Christian poor in Judaea was Paul's second objective, and in Galatia he instituted for this purpose the organizational step of a weekly collection on the first day of the week (I Cor. 16:1-3). The churches of the Christian world later adopted this practice for their own maintenance and for charitable work.

While Paul was overseeing the Galatian and Phrygian churches, the Church gained an eloquent evangelist in the person of Apollos, a cultured Alexandrian Jew who came to Ephesus proclaiming the Messianic hope as taught by John the Baptist. Apollos preached repentance and baptism by water but was apparently ignorant of the baptism of the Holy Ghost. When Aquila and Priscilla heard him in the synagogue, they took him to their home and more fully explained "the way"—a term that had come into use as a designation for Christianity. (The repeated appearance of Priscilla's name in Luke's record underlines the fact that women were already taking active part in church work.) Apollos became a powerful exponent of the gospel. With the encouragement of the Ephesian brethren he extended his mission to Achaia and gave much help to Achaian Christians, convincing many by strong arguments and Scriptural proof that Jesus was the promised Messiah. Paul later found him a valuable co-worker: "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase" (I Cor. 3:6; 16:12; Tit. 3:13).

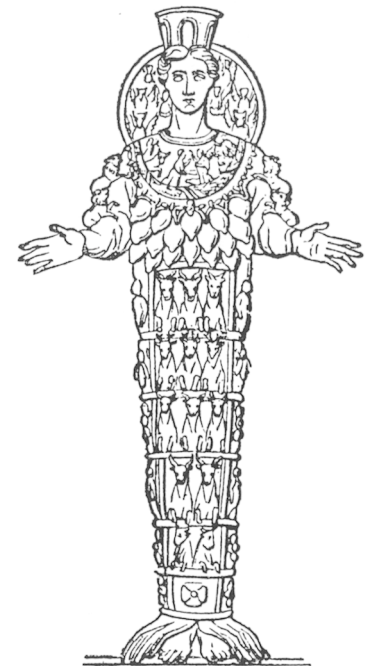
**A**cts 19 Having completed the tremendous task of overseeing the churches of inner Asia Minor, Paul pushed on to Ephesus. He saw here in this Greek capital of Ionia, now the capital of the large province the Romans called Asia (the western region of modern Turkey), a potential center for the diffusion of Christianity. It was to prove one of the most important scenes of his labors. Ephesus was a celebrated metropolis situated at the mouth of the Cayster River, three miles inland from the Aegean. It had grown enormously wealthy as a result of the heavy trade which flowed into it from the interior of Asia Minor, from the north-south coastal roads, and from the sea lanes of the Mediterranean and the Aegean. Among its heterogeneous population of Asiatics, Ionian Greeks, Romans, and foreign traders was a large Jewish community. Ephesus was Hellenic in culture yet Oriental in religion: a city of astrology, incantations, sorcery, amulets, exorcisms, and every sort of magical imposture. Its principal religious cult was the worship of the Asiatic goddess Diana, whose magnificent temple stood at the head of the harbor. Licentiousness and vice were rampant in the city, and legalized prostitution flourished in the courts of Diana's temple.

The Diana of the Ephesians was neither the Greek goddess Artemis nor the Roman Diana (chaste goddess of the hunt), but a many-breasted Asiatic fertility goddess worshiped by the peoples of Asia Minor long before the development of Greek culture. "Originally a representative of the 'Earth-Goddess' type (familiar to the Aryans and to Mediterranean primitive religions), she was the great Asiatic nursing mother, the patroness of the sexual instinct, and the mother and nurse of gods, men, animals, and plants."<sup>11</sup> Diana's image, believed to have fallen from heaven (possibly a meteorite [Acts 19:35]), was enshrined in her temple. The temple of Paul's time, the fifth built on this site, was more massive than the Athenian Parthenon, and its 127 sixty-foot columns were lavishly carved and painted. For more than two centuries the wealth of Asia Minor had been poured into its building. (Its predecessor, destroyed by fire in 356 B.C., was considered one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.)

Almost immediately upon his arrival in Ephesus Paul met twelve disciples of John the Baptist, strangers to the Christian community, who, like Apollos, were ignorant of baptism in the name of Jesus and of the inspiration of the Holy Spirit that accompanied it. But when Paul explained that John's baptism was one of repentance to prepare men for Christ, for John had preached that men were to believe on Jesus who was to come after him, they readily accepted baptism. When Paul laid his hands on them they were filled with spiritual inspiration.

Paul began his work in the synagogue, teaching there for three months, using argument and persuasion

A drawing of the statue of Diana of the Ephesians. The statue may be seen at the center rear of the photograph on page 413 showing the reconstruction of the temple to Diana at Ephesus. *Popular and Critical Bible Encyclopedia.*







Great theater at Pergamum. Turkish Tourism and Information Office.

to convince the congregation of the truths of the gospel. As in the past, there eventually arose angry resistance on the part of some, and when disbelievers spoke disparagingly of the new faith Paul openly separated himself and his converts from the synagogue and moved to the lecture hall of Tyrannus (probably a Greek teacher of philosophy). Here for two years Paul daily reasoned and instructed the Jews and Greeks and also went from house to house to explain the good news. He tells how earnestly he ministered to the Ephesians: “Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews: And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you” (Acts 20:18–20).

His fame soon spread “so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.” Churches were formed in the adjacent cities of Colossae, Hierapolis, and Laodicea through the efforts of Paul, Timothy, and the new converts Epaphras, Archippus, Appia, and Philemon. (Possibly to this period can also be attributed establishment of the churches of Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, and Philadelphia, mentioned in Revelation 1:11.)

God was glorified not only in Paul’s preaching but also in his works of healing in the name of Jesus. So great was the people’s faith in his ability to heal

that they brought handkerchiefs and garments for him to touch and carried them to the sick, “and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.”

One of the prevalent evils Christianity encountered in Ephesus was that of exorcism—the driving out of demons from the human body by means of magic formulas, incantations, or repetition of certain names.

To get control over a demon, it was necessary to know its name (cp. Mark 5:9) or to invoke the name of a superior power or spirit. Josephus (*Ant.* VIII. ii.5) relates how an exorcist, named Eleazar, when expelling a demon in the presence of Vespasian, invoked the name of Solomon. The great magical Papyrus of the third century, in the Bibliotheque Nationale of Paris, gives spells in which the names of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and of Jesus, God of the Hebrews, are used.<sup>12</sup>

When itinerant Jews who practiced exorcism for profit saw the amazing miracles which followed Paul’s utterance of the name Jesus they attempted to imitate him. The seven sons of the priest Sceva tried to drive an evil spirit out of a man with the incantation “We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth.” But the man answered, “Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?” and, turning on them, overpowered them, so that the seven fled “naked and wounded.”

This exposé of the profane use of Jesus’ name

discredited the practice of exorcism in Ephesus. Many who had used magical arts gave them up, brought their books of magic and publicly burned them—the total worth almost 50,000 pieces of silver (\$10,000).

Their books, i.e., documents inscribed with magical spells and charms: Such “Ephesian letters,” as they were called, were famous the world over, and were credited with sovereign efficacy in averting ill luck.<sup>13</sup>

It was a striking victory for Christianity and for Paul. Luke records the rapid growth of the Church simply: “So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.”

While the gospel was triumphing in Ephesus Paul received disheartening word that some of the Christians in Corinth had lapsed into the immorality for which this Greek city was notorious, without rebuke from their fellow Christians.\* This caused him much anxiety; this church, from which he had been absent for nearly three years, occupied a special place in his affection. (He had spent more than a year and a half in Corinth on his preceding journey both founding and working in this church, and it was one of major importance in Europe.) As its founder, Paul felt compelled to write its members to separate themselves from the world and be obedient to Christian principles, “not to company with fornicators.” This letter has been lost, but Paul refers to it in a later one (I Cor. 5:9).

The message was received with poor grace. A few of the Corinthians misunderstood; they took him too literally and cut themselves off from contact with the outside world. Others continued their association with those of immoral or wicked conduct—both within and without the church—even eating with such persons either in private or at the communal

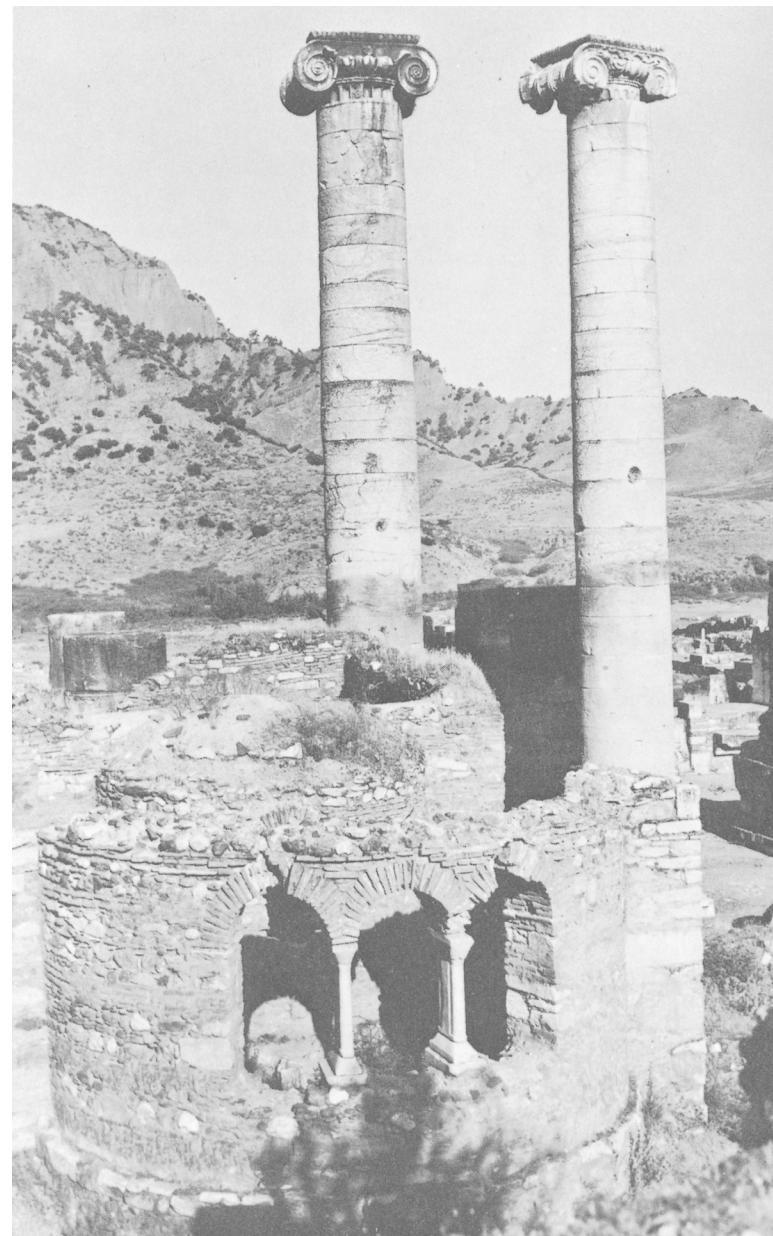
\*Here we begin to see the first of the many serious church problems with which Paul had to deal as an apostle to the Gentiles:

- Christian ethics
- Christian fellowship and unity
- Factions
- Insubordination to apostolic authority
- Worldliness
- Asceticism
- Judaism and its relation to converts
- Circumcision
- Segregation
- Resurrection of the dead
- Day of Christ
- Personal ambitions
- False teachers
- False gospels, Greek philosophies, Gnosticism
- Idolatry
- Non-essentials
- Fear of suffering and persecution
- Proper use of spiritual gifts
- Social question of slavery
- Civil obedience
- Place of women in the Church
- Marriage, and its sanctity
- Duties of a pastor

meal (I Cor. 5:9–11; 8:9,10). Paul was somewhat cheered, however, by the arrival of three Corinthian friends (Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus) who by their faithfulness refreshed his spirit in an otherwise painful situation (I Cor. 16:17,18).

Another serious disorder in the Corinthian church was brought to Paul’s attention—the rise of factions in the congregation (I Cor. 1:11). The members had divided themselves into four parties, each asserting allegiance to a favorite teacher: some to Paul, some to Apollos, others to Cephas (Peter), still others to Christ. Paul at once saw the danger—attachment to personalities would adulterate Christ’s gospel. He sent Timothy and Erastus (possibly the same prominent official mentioned in Romans 16:23) as his emissaries overland through Macedonia to Corinth to remind this

Ruins of the Temple of Diana at Sardis (Turkey). Turkish Tourism and Information Office.





church, as its founder, of his example as a Christian teacher and of his methods of teaching, that this spirit of disruption might be healed (I Cor. 4:17).

Shortly after their departure Paul sent Titus and a companion to Corinth by sea with a letter, our First Corinthians (II Cor. 12:18). Titus' mission on this trip was not only to carry Paul's directives and aid in harmonizing the church, but evidently also to organize weekly collections for the poor of Jerusalem (I Cor. 16:1,2; II Cor. 8:6). By his apostolic persuasion and discipline Paul hoped to win that church back to loyalty to Christ before Timothy arrived there (I Cor. 16:10,11). Though the tone of the letter was occasionally severe, it was strongly loving: "I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you. For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me" (I Cor. 4:14–16).

### *First Epistle to the Corinthians*

☛ Chapters 1–4 are concerned with the divisive party spirit rending the Corinthian church.

☛ Chapter 1 makes an appeal for unity, rebukes partisan divisions and the following of human leaders. Paul reminds the Corinthians that they were baptized in Christ's name and saved through his crucifixion. Should they be putting other names before Christ's? He reproves those who would boast of a worldly wisdom, showing that the cross of Christ alone is the power and wisdom of God; they should glory in God alone. In ☛ Chapter 2 Paul further reminds his readers that he had come to them with but one thought—to let them be persuaded of the gospel message. He had not employed any eloquence of his own or worldly wisdom but had relied on the truths of the Spirit and the power of God to convince them, for he desired their faith to rest in that power. Among mature Christians he does speak wisdom, not a wisdom of this world but a wisdom of God that before had been hidden in mystery. Christians do know the blessings that God gives those who love Him—these have been revealed to them by the Spirit of God—and these things he speaks of in spiritual terms, "comparing spiritual things [truths] with spiritual." One who has "the mind of Christ" can discern these things. In ☛ Chapter 3 he points out that because of their spiritual immaturity he had given them only the milk of the Word, nor does he yet find them strong enough to partake of the solid food of the truth. Does not their carnal-mindedness, manifest in envying, strife, and divisions, show them to be

spiritually immature? Ministers of the Word such as he and Apollos are only instruments of God to advance His Church. Jesus Christ is the one foundation, and Christians should take heed to build their lives thereon, for their work will be tried by fire. What they build is the temple of God and is to be kept undefiled. Let no one deceive himself and boast in human wisdom or in human teachers—"for all things are yours; Wheth-er Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; And ye are Christ's and Christ is God's." ☛ Chapter 4 asks the Corinthians to consider what a teacher really is—a steward of the truths of God. As to the merits of Apollos and himself, Paul does not judge; God is the judge. He and Apollos furnish true examples of stewardship. With keen irony Paul rebukes the smug superiority of the Corinthians—the satisfaction in their human teachers and their "fancied spiritual attainments in knowledge"—contrasting it with the suffering and slander he and his fellow apostles are undergoing. As its founding father he lovingly entreats this church to follow his example; he is sending Timothy to remind them of his Christian conduct as a teacher. He promises to come shortly and warns that, if necessary, he will exercise his apostolic authority.

☛ Chapter 5 rebukes the church for not exercising disciplinary measures in a case of gross immorality by one of its members—an instance that had not even disturbed its conscience—and demands the excommunication of the guilty person for his own good and that of the church. (Paul had already warned in a previous letter to have no association with immoral or sinful persons.) He now clarifies this point: he had not meant that they utterly forego contacts with such persons, for then they would be compelled to go wholly out of the world, but that they are not to "keep company" or even eat with any believer who has given himself over to fornication, covetousness, idolatry, drunkenness, reviling, or extortion. The church must purge itself.

☛ Chapter 6 reprimands church members for the serious fault of litigating their quarrels with one another in secular courts before unbelievers instead of settling their disputes before an arbitrator chosen from among their own ranks. A deeper fault is pointed out—they should not have lawsuits with one another at all. It is better to suffer wrong than to wrong another. Did they not know that the unrighteous—fornicators, idolators, adulterers, perverts, thieves, drunkards, extortioners—would not inherit the kingdom of God? Such had been some of them, but through

baptism they had been sanctified and cleansed of these errors and were now endeavoring to live pure lives. Enlarging on the subject of sanctification, Paul quotes a saying current among some of them: “[Ye say], all things are lawful unto me.” The Corinthians apparently felt that though they no longer ate food consecrated to idols they were free to indulge the appetite. Paul refutes this view as one merely leading to another form of idolatry. He acknowledges that, granting all things are lawful to him (compare I Cor. 8:4), they are nevertheless not good for him, and he refuses to let himself be brought under their influence. He explains that the body is holy—it does not exist for gratification but for the service of Christ. The Corinthians are warned not to sin against their bodies, for their bodies are “members of Christ” and “temples” of the Spirit.

✿ **Chapter 7** answers the Corinthians’ apparent question on marriage, giving the apostle’s views on marriage and celibacy, the duties of husband and wife, and his advice to both married and unmarried. Paul upholds marriage as an honorable estate, not a sin, regarding it as a necessity for mankind as a moral safeguard against fornication. He advises marriage as a general rule, to be mutually observed in love, but he recommends celibacy, which leaves a person freer of the cares of the world that one “may attend upon the Lord without distraction” (I Cor. 7; Eph. 5:22–33). To those married to unbelievers he recommends that they stay together if possible; if they cannot, let the unbelieving partner go in peace. As he counsels that the Christians force no break in the marriage relationship because of their calling to serve Christ, so he urges Christians not to rupture any other part of the social fabric of their lives—whether they be circumcised, uncircumcised, slave, married, unmarried—but that they continue in their present state, loving God and doing His will where they are.

✿ **Chapters 8:1–11:1** answer the question of the propriety of eating meats that had been offered to idols. Those who have one God know that an idol is nothing. They know, too, that such meats in themselves can make men neither better nor worse. Nevertheless seasoned Christians should not put temptation in the way of a brother in the faith who does not have this knowledge and maturity, for if that one sees them eating in an idol’s temple, will he not be influenced to do the same even though his conscience tells him he is sinning? Through a lack of wisdom and self-discipline they may cause a weaker brother—one “for whom Christ died”—to

perish. When they so sin against the brethren they sin against Christ. He points to the self-disciplined athlete of the Greek games to illustrate the abstinence required of Christians who are running the race of faith to gain not a perishable wreath but an “incorruptible” crown. Paul so runs, keeping his body in subjection. The Corinthians are warned against false confidence: were not some of their forefathers (all of them “baptized unto Moses” and nourished with spiritual meat and drink) tempted to idolatry and discontent, and as a result severely punished? He entreats his Corinthian friends to abstain from sacrificial feasts to idols. Do not the “cup” Christians bless and the “bread” Christians break mean communion with Christ? To eat the meats Gentiles offer to idols is wholly incompatible with their partaking of the Eucharist—“Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord’s table, and of the table of devils” (I Cor. 10:21; compare Mt. 6:24). Therefore, whatever they eat or drink or do let it be for the glory of God and the edification of others. “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.”

✿ **Chapter 11:2–34** corrects those disorders in church worship that have come to Paul’s attention. He rebukes the practice of women worshiping with unveiled heads at church services and of men worshiping with covered heads. Supporting his view by a general principle of subordination of woman to man and of man to Christ, he lays down a rule that women should cover their heads in church and that men should uncover theirs. (In Paul’s time respectable women did not appear publicly unveiled in either Greece or the East.) He also rebukes the dissensions in church meetings and the abuse of the Lord’s Supper, reminding them of the origin, significance, and sacredness of this meal.

✿ **In Chapter 12** he enlightens the Corinthian believers on the subject of “spiritual gifts.” First of all, let it be understood that no one inspired by the Spirit of God blasphemes Christ, and no one acknowledges Jesus as Lord unless he is influenced by the Spirit. From the one Spirit comes the rich variety of talents they possess—spiritual wisdom and knowledge, faith, power to heal and to work miracles, inspired utterances, discernment of good and evil (compare I Jn. 4:1), languages and the interpretations of languages. All is the work of the one Spirit. Therefore they should not undervalue their own gift or envy another’s. Every member with his special talent is as essential to the Church of Christ as each member of the body is to the whole human body.

“Just as the differences of powers and functions are a great advantage to the body, so the existence of different gifts benefits the Church. The position of each individual, his possession of this or that gift, has been ordered by God.”<sup>14</sup> “Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.” It is right, however, for one to desire the best gifts, for one’s spiritual growth and that of the Church. Having pointed out that envy, rivalry, and depreciation of others’ spiritual gifts would not help the follower of Christ to reach the goal of spiritual perfection, Paul says, “I [show] unto you a more excellent way,” and then he gives his glorious exposition on love (AV charity).

✠ **Chapter 13** has been called the New Testament psalm of love. It is a declaration of love in action. No gift, however excellent—neither prophecy, nor knowledge, nor faith—is anything without this pre-eminent grace. Paul describes this “way” which transcends all others (Moffatt’s translation): “Love is very patient, very kind. Love knows no jealousy; love makes no parade, gives itself no airs, is never rude, never selfish, never irritated, never resentful; love is never glad when others go wrong, love is gladdened by goodness, always slow to expose, always eager to believe the best, always hopeful, always patient. Love never disappears.” Love is everlasting; the gifts of prophecy, tongues, and knowledge are transitory, helpful now in our present state, but unneeded when at last we come into full communion with God.

In ✠ **Chapter 14** Paul urges church members first to cultivate this spirit of love, then to develop spiritual talents—particularly that of inspired preaching for the edification of the Church. (It appears that the Corinthian church prided itself in a gift of tongues which took the form of ecstatic utterances.) Paul did not forbid this phenomenon, but he did warn against its abuse. To speak in such a manner when there was no interpreter present would not edify the congregation. And let each speak one by one. Let women be silent. “Let all things be done decently and in order.”

In ✠ **Chapter 15** Paul abruptly changes to a new subject. Having heard that some in the church were denying the resurrection of the body, he repeats the truth he had preached to them before, that Christ had risen from the dead, substantiating this fact with the eyewitness testimony of the Twelve and of the five hundred who had seen Jesus after the Resurrection. To deny the resurrection of the dead, Paul points out, is to deny Christ’s resurrection, thereby making Christian faith useless—Christ’s rising

constitutes the pledge that all will rise. He discusses the manner of the resurrection and the nature of the resurrection body, using the analogy of seed and its fruit, showing the necessity for a transformation of the human nature to the spiritual, the laying aside of “the corruptible” for “the incorruptible,” that sin and death may be overcome (vvs. 35–55); see p. 448. He rejoices that this victory can be won through Christ and exhorts the Corinthians to be steadfast and firm in faith.

✠ **Chapter 16** concerns the collection for the Christian brethren at Jerusalem, Paul’s future plans to come to Corinth, his personal greetings and benediction.

About this time Paul appears to have made a second trip to Corinth, a short one by sea from Ephesus (not mentioned in Acts but implied in Second Corinthians 12:14; 13:1), one that left the apostle heavy-hearted. He appears, too, upon his return to Ephesus to have written the Corinthians another letter, severe in tone (II Cor. 2:3,4; 7:8), “out of much affliction and anguish of heart . . . with many tears,” denouncing the false teachers in the area around Corinth and strongly defending his apostleship. (This third letter has not survived; some scholars hold that the tenth to the thirteenth chapters of our Second Corinthians are a portion of it.)

The apostle had been in Ephesus nearly three years and had seen Christianity firmly established in the province of Asia. Luke now gives his readers a glimpse into Paul’s plan for the further evangelization of the Gentiles. He “purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome.” But there was still work to be done before he could leave: “I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost. For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries” (I Cor. 16:8,9).

Luke had made no mention of persecution in Ephesus up to this time other than the opposition that had forced Paul to move his seat of teaching from the synagogue to the school of Tyrannus. He does, however, record one trial Paul faced from Gentile enemies toward the end of his ministry in that city.

It will be remembered that the principal religious cult at Ephesus was the worship of Diana (see p. 407). An inevitable clash arose between this Diana-worship and Christianity. As the result of the depressing effect of Paul’s preaching on Diana-worship, an uprising broke out among certain Ephesians whose livelihood was the making of silver models of Diana’s great shrine. Demetrius, a silversmith, led the attack. He assembled his fellow craftsmen and harangued them:





Reconstruction of Temple of Diana, Ephesus. Drawings Collection Royal Institute of British Architects.

“Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth. Moreover ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands: So that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth.”

The assembly of artisans, infuriated by this affront to Diana and this threat to their profits, broke into a chant: “Great is Diana of the Ephesians”; others soon took up the cry. Rioting began. The growing crowd rushed into the city’s huge amphitheater (seating about 25,000), dragging with them Gaius and Aristarchus, two of Paul’s Macedonian traveling companions. Paul wanted to enter the arena and speak to the people but his friends restrained him. As the crowd milled around in confusion—some shouting one thing, some another—the Jews, fearing that they would be accused of instigating this disturbance, sent forward a Jew named Alexander to clear them of possible blame. But the Ephesians

drowned him out and for two hours shouted their praise of Diana.

Finally the recorder—the official responsible for law and order in the city—calmed the people, declaring that nothing could disturb the greatness of Diana, but adding that these preachers were not disreputable men who had broken any law: “Ye have brought hither these men . . . neither robbers of churches, nor yet blasphemers of your goddess. Wherefore if Demetrius, and the craftsmen . . . have a matter against any man, the law is open, and there are deputies.” With these words he dismissed the assembly.

Luke is silent about other dangers to which Paul was exposed during his long stay in Ephesus, but Paul did recall these perils vividly in writing to the Corinthians and the Romans and spoke of his antagonists as having been as ferocious as wild beasts so that he was in constant danger of death: “We would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life: But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in





Theater at Ephesus, 495 feet in diameter, capable of seating 25,000. Here occurred the riot led by Demetrius against Paul. A marble street 36 feet wide and 1735 feet long leads to the harbor, now silted up. Ewing Galloway.

God which raiseth the dead" (II Cor. 1:8,9; see I Cor. 15:30-32). Priscilla and Aquila are mentioned as having "laid down [RSV risked] their own necks" to save his life (Rom. 16:4).

**A**cts 20:1-3    Soon after the clash with Demetrius Paul parted warmly from his Christian friends, and in the early summer of 57 left Ephesus for Corinth. He traveled northward by way of Troas with Gaius and Aristarchus. He hoped

Titus would meet him there with some word of the Corinthians' response to his stern letter, but when Titus did not arrive he had no peace of mind, and so went on to Macedonia (II Cor. 2:12,13).

On his first journey through Macedonia five years earlier persecution had restricted his efforts to the cities of Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea. During his absence, however, the seed he had planted had taken firm root and now, meeting less resistance, Paul evangelized other cities of Macedonia, going as far

northwest as the Roman province of Illyricum on the Adriatic coast. This circuit alone was at least 400 miles. Only a glimpse of his labors and triumphs is given us in the brief passages of Acts 20:2 and Romans 15:19.

Sometime during this period Titus rejoined him, bringing a favorable report of the Corinthian church. When Paul learned of their repentance and of their love for him, his spirit was lightened considerably (II Cor. 7:6,7). His faith in this church vindicated, Paul wrote its members again, justifying once more his apostolic ministry in an effort to end any remaining disloyalty to Christ—a letter that reveals the depths of his love and concern. Titus and two other faithful workers carried his message back to Corinth (II Cor. 8:16–19).

### *Second Epistle to the Corinthians*

☛ **Chapters 1:1–2:13** open with an apostolic greeting which includes thanksgiving for divine comfort and deliverance from some terrible trouble he had experienced in Asia which had brought him close to death, so nearly so that he had lost all hope of surviving. He asks their prayers for his continued preservation. He explains the reason for his delay in coming to them: he would not come in a rebuking spirit. He could not feel sorry for the severity of the letter he had written because it had made them repent, and he now gladly forgives the penitent offender he had previously censured (I Cor. 5:3–5). Let them also forgive the offender lest he be lost to the church. He reveals his past anxiety, for when he had come to Troas and Titus did not arrive with a report regarding them he had left a successful ministry in that city to press on to Macedonia.

☛ **Chapters 2:14–6:10** relate the glory, joy, and sustaining inspiration of Paul's apostolic ministry. ☛ **Chapter 2:14–17** tells of his successful work in Macedonia after he had received Titus' good news of the repentance of the Corinthian church. ☛ **Chapters 3:1–4:6** answer the charges of Judaizing preachers who had impugned his doctrine and questioned Paul's credentials as an apostle. He declares he needs no letter of recommendation. The Corinthians are his best recommendation, indeed a letter of Christ, who through his labors have the Spirit of God written on their hearts, known and read by everyone. God has made him an able minister of the new covenant which is not a rigid written code (the letter which kills) but a spirit which is life-giving. He declares the ministry of condemnation (the Law of Moses) was glorious but asserts that the ministry of righteousness (the Gospel)

exceeds it in glory. He speaks plainly, not as Moses who "veiled from them [the Children of Israel] the fact that the glory [of the old covenant] fades in Christ" (Moffatt). The covering that is still on their hearts can only be taken away in Christ. When men turn to the Lord—to Spirit—the veil will be lifted. In the presence of Spirit is liberty. And "we all" with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of Spirit, are being transformed into the same image "from glory to glory." He is preaching this gospel openly and honestly; it is not his gospel but Christ's, and he is Christ's servant. In ☛ **Chapter 4:7–18** Paul asserts that this treasure, "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God" which comes through the life of Jesus, has been entrusted to him, a weak "earthen vessel," so all men may see that its power belongs to God. In his ministry he has been often hard pressed and suffered much, but divine power has sustained him and he ever holds to the glorious hope of resurrection. Therefore he is not discouraged; though these afflictions have weakened his body, his spirit has been constantly strengthened. His light and transitory suffering is winning for him a substantial and eternal glory. ☛ **Chapter 5:1–10** continues Paul's expectation of immortality as he declares his confident hope of a spiritual body—"a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." His desire is always "to be absent" from the temporal frame and "to be present with the Lord," that he might be acceptable to him, for all must appear before Christ's judgment seat. ☛ **Chapters 5:11–6:10** explain that because of this judgment that lies before all, he is laboring to persuade men, and love for Christ is his compelling motive. He is convinced that Jesus' death for all men made his death theirs, and this death was for the purpose of making the living live not to themselves but to the crucified and resurrected Christ. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." This ministry of reconciliation of men to God through Christ has been given to him. He and his fellow workers come as ambassadors in Christ's stead, in all things endeavoring to be exemplary ministers—in patient endurance of afflictions and hardship, watchful prayer, blameless character, with spiritual power promoting and defending the truth.

In ☛ **Chapters 6:11–7:1** Paul assures the Corinthians of his deep love for them and appeals for a similar affection from them. He has withheld nothing, but they have been restrained in their attitude toward him. He interrupts his appeal for mutual love to urge that they make no



close ties of any kind with unbelievers because this might lead to compromise with or complicity in evil—for what fellowship has righteousness with unrighteousness, and what communion has light with darkness, and what agreement has the temple of God with idols? Are they not “the temple of the living God?” As such, it is imperative that they fulfill the Scriptural requirement to separate themselves from “the unclean thing”—from everything that might tempt them to idolatry and immorality.

☛ **Chapter 7:2–16** continues the apostle’s plea for their love and reveals his intense relief and great joy at Titus’ good report of their godly sorrow, which has resulted in genuine repentance over past errors and disloyalties. “Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance . . . For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.”

☛ **Chapters 8–9** enjoin liberality in the Corinthians’ contributions for the Jerusalem church, teach the Christian grace of giving, and mention Titus’ new mission to Corinth to collect their gifts.

☛ In **Chapters 10–13** the tone becomes stern as Paul rebukes the Corinthians’ revolt against him and as he vigorously vindicates his apostleship. (Because of this sharp change from a warm, friendly relationship with the church and the thankful relief that all was well [chaps. 1–9], scholars believe that these remaining chapters are a portion of the “severe” third letter [see p. 412].) ☛ **Chapter 10** is a defense of Paul’s apostleship. In it he answers a slanderous charge that he is a coward when among them, but bold at a distance. In the meek and gentle spirit of Christ he begs them not to make it necessary for him to be stern when he comes, otherwise he is minded to speak plainly to those who believe him impelled by worldly motives. True he lives in the flesh, but he does not conduct his ministry on a merely human basis. In his warfare for Christ he does not use worldly weapons but spiritual weapons which are “mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds”—deceptive theories, imaginings, and any rampart raised against the knowledge of God. He fights to bring “into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.” They will find him bold to punish the disobedient. He

refuses to compare himself with boastful teachers who are trying to take over his ministry; he knows that Corinth is included in his sphere of labor. Therefore he claims the Corinthians as his converts; in fact he entertains the hope that they will work with him in spreading the gospel to regions beyond Corinth. In ☛ **Chapter 11** Paul gives a forced commendation of himself—his zeal, love, humility—because he is anxious lest some may still be drawn away from their “espousal” to Christ by Judaizing teachers. As a Hebrew and an Israelite he is the equal of such teachers; as a minister of Christ he is far their superior—the numerous sufferings and perils he has undergone for the gospel and his daily “care” of the churches bear him witness. If he must “boast [RV glory],” it will be of the labors and reproaches he has sustained for the name of Christ. ☛ **Chapter 12:1–18** continues his unwilling recommendation of himself in which he relates an exalting vision that transported him to the realm of heaven; it also confides the humiliating trial of a bodily infirmity that had brought him to a greater reliance on Christ’s grace. He rebukes the Corinthian church for compelling him to vindicate himself when so many signs of his apostleship are evident.

In ☛ **Chapters 12:19–13:14** Paul explains that his appeal has not been in his own defense but for their edification, for he fears that when he comes to them he will still find errors and vices which have not been corrected so that severe measures may be necessary. He exhorts them to examine themselves to see if they are true believers: he desires only their perfection. Farewell greeting and benediction.

Only the apostle’s affection for the Corinthian church and his desire to heal it had compelled him to confide the two heretofore untold personal experiences of chapter 12. His first confidence, a wonderful revelation of paradise which he had treasured silently for many years, is testimony to his own high attainment in communion with God: “I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven . . . How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Of such an one will I glory: yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities” (II Cor. 12:2–5). Dummelow paraphrases verses 2, 3, and 4:

(2) Fourteen years ago I experienced such a divine ecstasy that I knew not whether I was still in the flesh or whether I had been translated to another sphere. (3) I

repeat, I did not know in what state of being I was; (4) but I had a divine revelation which caused me unspeakable joy and taught me truths too deep for words to express.<sup>15</sup>

Paul's second confidence was of a different sort, a testimony to the power and grace of Christ. A bodily affliction had plagued him, or was possibly still plaguing him at times, but it had only served to keep him humble and to draw him closer to Christ, for in Christ he found strength for his weakness: "Lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me . . . . For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (II Cor. 12:7-9; compare Gal. 4:13,14).

Luke the physician never divulged the nature of this "thorn," nor did Paul. For years there had run through Paul's writings a recurrent note of sadness for his part in Stephen's martyrdom when he had stood by "consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him." Also there was continuing sorrow for his blind hatred and cruelty toward Christians before his conversion, indicated in his letter to the Galatians: "Ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it" (Gal. 1:13; see Acts 26:9, 10; I Tim. 1:13). The thorn in his flesh could well have had its roots in his regret and remorse. But this prick of conscience lessened as he found joy in selfless service and love of Christ and as he put the past behind him (Phil. 3:13,14). There are statements of Paul that imply a release: "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:2). "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13).

Toward the close of 57 A.D., after Paul and his companions had finished gathering the Macedonian donations for the Jerusalem church and completed the circuit into Illyricum, they came southward through Greece to Corinth (Acts 20:3). Luke records nothing of the Corinthians' reception of their mentor; the difficulties that had so troubled the church were apparently fully resolved, and Paul's subsequent letters never alluded to any further discipline of its membership. Words he later wrote to the Galatians with reference to the Law could well be applied to his silence on this subject: "If I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor" (Gal. 2:18). We learn from his letters, however, that he renewed many friendships there (see Rom. 16:21-23).

Paul wintered three months in Corinth. During this time he not only taught in the metropolitan church but probably also visited the neighboring churches of Achaia. He concerned himself as well with completing the collection of contributions for the Christians of Palestine that Achaian Christians had been laying aside for more than a year and that now constituted a considerable sum (I Cor. 16:2; II Cor. 8:10; 9:2). The outstanding literary achievements of this brief period were his Epistle to the Galatians (some scholars place the writing at Ephesus prior to this Corinthian visit) and his Epistle to the Romans, the first letters to expound the great doctrines of the Christian system.

The occasion of Paul's circular letter to the churches of Galatia (see p. 398) was the disturbing news that Judaizing teachers were undermining his apostolic authority by claiming his dependence on others for his knowledge of the Master, since he had not known Jesus the man, and leading the Galatians away from the gospel Paul had taught them. Despite the ruling of the Council of Jerusalem, these teachers were insisting on the keeping of Judaic law, particularly the rite of circumcision, as necessary to the attainment of salvation. This led to controversy and bickering within the church.

The purpose of the Epistle to the Galatians was to counteract the insidious influence that taught reliance on the Law for salvation rather than on Christ's grace, and to bring the Galatian churches back to loyal adherence to the true gospel. In this letter are developed the great Christian doctrines of grace and justification by faith. Other basic truths of the gospel are briefly alluded to: the working of the Spirit in the believer (3:2,3,5; 5:22-25), the incarnation (4:4); the crucifixion (6:12, 14).

### *Epistle to the Galatians*

✪ Chapters 1-2 affirm Paul's apostolic authority. He expresses his amazement that the Galatians have so soon turned away from the gospel of faith and grace he had taught them. He defends his gospel as having come to him not from men but by direct revelation from the risen Christ and asserts that at no time had he been dependent on the apostles for his apostolic training. In fact he had withdrawn to Arabia after his conversion, then returned to Damascus to preach; three years later he had visited Jerusalem briefly, seeing only Peter and James; after that he had preached in distant Syria and Cilicia, still free of supervision by the church in Jerusalem. He also cites the independent stand he had taken at the Council of Jerusalem for the freedom of Gentile believers from the bondage of the Law and the recognition

of his coordinate apostleship by the Twelve. Far from being a subordinate apostle, he had even rebuked Peter on one occasion for compromising Christian principles by withdrawing from the table of the Gentiles at Antioch to eat with the Jews. Turning to the subject of salvation, Paul points out the inconsistency of expecting to be justified by the works of the Law when justification can come only by faith in Christ. He declares his own renunciation of the dead works of the Law and his sole reliance upon the living Christ.

✿ **Chapter 3** explains Paul's doctrine of justification by faith (one of his clearest expositions of this subject, see p. 451). He appeals to the Galatians' own experience: what legitimate reason could they give for turning to the works of the Law for salvation? Had they not already received the gift of the Spirit by faith: even as Abraham believed God and was justified by his faith? Because they are the children of faith, they are the children of Abraham and are blessed with faithful Abraham—acceptable to God. Those depending on the works of the Law (legalism) for salvation come under the curse of that law (Deut. 27:26)—but Christ has redeemed men from this curse that all, Jew and Gentile, might be justified (accepted) through faith. Paul maintains that just as a covenant made between men cannot be annulled or added to once it has been confirmed, so God's covenant made with Abraham and his seed—Christ—cannot be abrogated through the Law which came four hundred and thirty years later. The Law, added because of transgressions, came through a mediator (Moses) and was the “schoolmaster” to bring men to Christ. Christians, having been baptized into Christ, are already the children of God and so heirs of the Abrahamic promise.

✿ **Chapter 4** continues the subject of justification by faith. Christ's redemptive work brings them as sons of God into their full heritage. The apostle makes a personal appeal to the Galatians to return to the gospel of faith. By the allegory of the bondwoman Hagar and her son Ishmael, born of the flesh, and the free woman Sarah (Abraham's wife) and her son Isaac, born by promise, he illustrates that Christ's followers are, figuratively, descendants of Sarah—accepted as sons and heirs. As Sarah was commanded to cast out the bondwoman and her son, so the Galatians are to turn away from the covenant of the Law that engenders bondage to the covenant of grace that makes free.

✿ **Chapter 5** contains Paul's exhortation to stand fast in the liberty that is in Christ Jesus and “be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.” If Christians accept circumcision—in other words, bind themselves to legalism as

essential to salvation—they become debtors to the whole Law, and Christ avails them nothing. It is by the Spirit, through faith, active in love, that Christians wait for the hope of righteousness. They had been doing well; what has hindered them from obeying the truth? They have been called to freedom; not for license but for serving one another in love, for the whole Law is fulfilled in the one precept “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” The backbiting and hatefulness they are manifesting toward each other will be their undoing. Instead, they are to be governed by Spirit; then they will not indulge the lusts of the flesh, since the flesh is the antithesis of the Spirit. He warns of the evils of the flesh and contrasts these with the virtues of the Spirit, against which there is no law, and concludes, “If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.”

In ✿ **Chapter 6** Paul adds practical admonitions that will lead to a better spirit of brotherhood in the church— forbearance and loving correction of a brother at fault; compassionate help of others burdened by care or sorrow, so fulfilling the law of Christ; meek practice of one's Christian faith that each may have rejoicing within himself. He warns the Galatians not to be deceived—if they sow to the flesh they will reap corruption; if they sow to the Spirit they will reap life everlasting. If they do not weary in doing good, they will surely reap life's harvest. They are to do good to all men at every opportunity, especially to the followers of Christ. All this he has written them in his own handwriting. In a final appeal Paul bluntly states that the men who are urging circumcision upon them do it to present an outward show of zeal, but their real object is to escape the persecution Christians face when they take a stand for Christ. These very men who are circumcised do not keep the Law of Moses; they only want to exult in their power over Christians. God forbid that he should exult in anything except the cross of his Lord Jesus Christ, which means that the world is crucified to him and he to the world. In Christ neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is of any use, but a transformed nature. From now on let no man trouble him concerning his apostleship; he has scars that mark him as the servant of Christ. Apostolic benediction.

A sense of responsibility for the Christianization of the non-Jewish world weighed heavily on Paul. Asia Minor, Macedonia, and Achaia had heard the gospel, but the vast territory of the Roman Empire to the

west still lay in almost total ignorance of Christ. He had long thought of a journey westward; he was now free to formulate his plans. He had planted the seed of Christianity in the great centers of Asia Minor and Greece; he now determined to evangelize Rome, the capital of the Western world. After the discharge of one remaining duty—the delivery of the contributions of the Macedonian and Achaian churches to the parent church in Jerusalem—he hoped to be on his way.

He would not be pioneering in the capital; a sturdy church whose faith was well known to Greek and Asian Christians already existed there (Rom. 1:8). This church in Rome had in all probability been founded by Jews and Jewish converts who had been in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:10) and who had become adherents of the new faith after hearing Peter preach. In Paul's day its membership was predominantly Gentile, due partly to Claudius' edict banishing the Jews from Rome for a period and partly to the Jews' continued refusal to open their minds to Christianity.

From Corinth Paul wrote of his longing to see them that he might impart to them "some spiritual gift" which would further establish their faith, mentioning that he had intended many a time to come but thus far had been deterred. He had proclaimed the gospel to the Greek-speaking races and others; now he was ready and eager to proclaim it to them (Rom. 1:11–15).

The apostle desired Roman Christians to have from his own hand, before his arrival, a clear statement of the principal truths of the gospel as they had been revealed to him. In the background was his continued concern over the tenacity of Jewish unbelief and his preoccupation with the theme of justification, which he had expounded in his Epistle to the Galatians. His letter to the Romans is his greatest doctrinal work, more a treatise than a letter, a systematic development of the cardinal doctrines of the Christian system—salvation by grace and justification by faith as they related to both Jew and Gentile, an explanation of Israel's partial blindness to the gospel, and a practical guide to Christian life and service.

The Epistle is a revelation of the spiritual riches of his own experience, as well as a masterly delineation of a universal ideal. His touch is never firmer, his grasp never stronger, than when he lays bare in swift heart-searching sentences the meaning, the joys, the hopes, and the responsibilities of the new life in Christ.<sup>16</sup>

Although Romans is chronologically the sixth of Paul's extant letters, the importance of its contents accorded it first place among the Pauline Epistles in New Testament canon.

### *Epistle to the Romans*

☛ **Chapter 1:1–17** gives Paul's introduction of himself to the Christians at Rome, relates his calling to preach, and conveys his burning desire to teach the gospel to them. His theme is the righteousness of God which comes to man by faith and leads to salvation. "The gospel of Christ . . . is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, the just [RV righteous] shall live by faith."

☛ **Chapters 1:18–3:20** deal with God's wrath against all sin and against the unrighteousness of men—who, having learned of His "eternal power and Godhead," refuse to give Him honor. All the world lies under the guilt of sin and needs God's saving grace. The Gentiles by their wickedness are guilty, having violated their conscience; the Jews also are guilty, having violated revealed (Scriptural) law. Each will be judged according to the law he obeys. Paul warns the Jews not to feel secure in God's favor simply because they possess the Law, for they have flagrantly disobeyed its moral precepts and dishonored God. Circumcision will count for nothing in their salvation unless it is of the heart. He answers certain Jewish objections that might be raised (3:1–8), but concludes that Jew and Gentile alike are guilty of sin, confirming this indictment from the Scriptures (Ps. 14:1–3; 5:9; 10:7; 36:1; Is. 59:7,8). Justification before God cannot come through the works of the Law.

In ☛ **Chapter 3:21–31** Paul returns to the theme of the righteousness that comes from God, obtainable through faith in His Son. Here he develops the doctrine of justification by faith: the forgiveness of sin through God's free, unmerited grace in the redemption (deliverance) that is found in Jesus Christ. By faith in Christ's propitiatory sacrifice the sins of the past are pardoned through God's forbearance, that God's righteousness might be demonstrated and He might be shown to be just and the justifier of those who believe in His Son. The one God saves all men alike through faith and not through the works of the Law. By this teaching is the Law made void? No, God's law is more fully established.

In ☛ **Chapters 4–5** Paul illustrates this doctrine of justification by faith by the example of Abraham, who was himself justified by faith because he believed in God and His promises. Righteousness was imputed to him before he

received circumcision; he and his seed became the heirs of God's promises through grace, not through the works of the Law. As such, Abraham is the "father" of all who seek righteousness by faith. In like manner is righteousness reckoned to those who believe in Him who raised Jesus from the dead. The next step in Paul's reasoning is logical, the natural happy effects of having been forgiven. Standing in a new relation to God, a state of grace to which Christ has given men access, believers have peace with God. They have a joyous hope of attaining divine perfection, an exultant faith that endures and triumphs in tribulation, and an assurance of God's love in that—while they were yet sinners—Jesus Christ died for their salvation. If men have been freed from guilt through his blood and reconciled to God, much more will they, being reconciled, be saved through union with the living Christ. Paul contrasts the sin of Adam with the grace of Jesus Christ. By Adam sin and death entered the world, "and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." But God's free gift of grace, manifested in Jesus Christ, far outweighs the sin, bringing redemption to all and bestowing a righteousness that leads to everlasting life.

☛ **Chapters 6–8** deal with the sanctification of the believer. "How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" ☛ **Chapter 6** declares that the Christian, now justified, enters into a new life in Christ, being baptized into Christ's death and resurrection. He crucifies the "old man" of sin, refuses obedience to sin, and becomes the servant of righteousness, manifesting holiness. In ☛ **Chapter 7** Paul shows the Jew that the believer, having died to sin, is free from the Law through union with Christ. The Law was good in that it exposed the awful nature of sin, but it was not adequate to save from the power of sin. In Paul's own spiritual conflict with sin he had found that the Law that forbade sin had instead stirred it within him. Only in Christ had he found deliverance from sin's thralldom. In ☛ **Chapter 8** he rejoices in the efficacy of divine grace, in the higher law of Spirit which releases men from the Law's condemnation and the power of sin—"the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." (The term *the Spirit*, used only once previously in Romans as *Holy Ghost* [5:5], appears nineteen times in this chapter.) Walking in this Spirit men are no longer in bondage to the flesh or to the carnal-mindedness that leads to death, but are risen to a new life and accepted as the sons of God. The Spirit itself, together with their spirit, bears testimony to the glorious truth

that they are the children of God, "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." All creation is earnestly awaiting the manifestation of the sons of God that the creation itself may be delivered from the law of decay. And even Christians, who have so much of the spirit of Christ within them, groan as they await the redemption of the body. They are sustained in this hope by the intercession of the Spirit itself, by God's foreordained purposes for His elect, and by the intercession of Christ. From the summit of inspiration Paul concludes his argument of justification by faith with the statement that there is nothing in this whole world—no suffering, or tribulation, or powers, or time, or space—that can separate men from the love of God and the love of Christ.

In ☛ **Chapters 9–11** Paul turns to a subject that has caused him much sorrow—the unbelief of his own nation that has been shutting them out from salvation. Their unbelief appears to exclude them from the elect. In these three chapters Paul reconciles God's covenant promises to Israel, His chosen, with His promises to the Gentiles; he explains that because of Israel's rejection of Christ, God's saving grace has been offered to the Gentiles, and when the Gentiles have come fully into the Church, Israel, no longer unbelieving, will also be brought in—"and so all Israel shall be saved." ☛ **Chapter 9** expresses the apostle's anguish over the rejection of Israel, for they are God's covenant people, to whom the promises came and from whom sprang the Messiah. This exclusion does not mean that God has broken His promises; rather, all through Israel's history God through His sovereign will and mercy has selected those best fitted to carry out the divine purpose. The prophet Hosea had foretold the calling of the Gentiles (Ho. 1:10; 2:23), and Isaiah had prophesied that only an elect remnant of Israel would be saved (Is. 10:22; 1:9). The Gentiles have attained righteousness and won acceptance because of their faith in Christ, while the Jews have not attained it and have been rejected because they sought it through the Law and not by faith. In ☛ **Chapter 10** Paul declares that his Jewish brethren, though zealous for God, have failed to understand the gift of righteousness which comes by faith, but have obstinately held to the Law, seeking a righteousness by their own merit. The simple and accessible way of faith is to acknowledge Jesus as Lord with one's tongue and believe Jesus' resurrection in one's heart. There is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for Christ is Lord of all and bestows the riches of his grace on all who seek him. Jesus' name is made known by preaching; indeed, it has been made known



everywhere. The Gentiles, though not the covenant people, have heard and believed. The Jews have had ample opportunity to hear the gospel message but have stubbornly refused to listen. In **Chapter 11** the apostle declares his conviction that Israel nevertheless will at last be saved and welcomed into the kingdom. God has not utterly cast off His people. A remnant that is not blind, of whom Paul is one, has attained to the “election of grace,” and Israel’s lapse has only given opportunity for the conversion of the Gentiles. Paul likens the Gentiles to a “wild olive tree” grafted onto the cultivated olive tree of Israel that they might partake of the covenant promises. The Gentiles are not to boast over the fall of Israel, for Israel is the “root” through which the knowledge of God has come. The Gentiles should not believe they are preferred above Israel—the latter lost their place through unbelief. The Gentiles stand where they are by faith, and God will also break them off if they do not remain faithful. In time, when Israel turns from unbelief, God will again graft them into the kingdom and “so all Israel shall be saved.” This section of the letter closes with a sudden burst of praise for God’s infinite wisdom and mercy.

**Chapters 12–13** are devoted to practical admonitions for the Christian in his relation to the Church and to the world. Having experienced the saving mercy of God, the Christian’s life must be consecrated as “a living sacrifice” to the service of God. In humility he must make use of whatever spiritual gifts he possesses and must manifest brotherly love and conduct both within and outside the Church. His duty to the state must be one of obedience to its rulers. Above all, love must be the motivating power of all his actions. Paul sums up his ethical teachings: “Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.”

**Chapters 14:1–15:13**, continuing the theme of Christian love, urge sympathetic forbearance toward those weaker in faith, a refraining from judgment and condemnation of those holding differing views. Why judge a brother when each shall stand before God’s judgment seat and give account of himself? Rather, resolve not to hinder another’s spiritual progress; let each one build up his weaker brother so that all “may with one mind and one mouth glorify God.” Paul urges Jew and Gentile alike to welcome each other in brotherhood, as Christ had welcomed them, and so advance the glory of God.

In **Chapters 15:14–16:27** Paul gives the reason for writing the Roman brethren—though he knows their hearts are already filled

with goodness and spiritual knowledge, he feels constrained as the God-appointed minister to the Gentiles to put them in mind of the truths of the gospel that they may be acceptable to God, a worthy offering, sanctified by the Holy Ghost. He asks for their prayers for the successful consummation of his forthcoming visit to Jerusalem and for his safe journey to Rome. He expresses his heartfelt love to the church and to his many friends there. Benediction and prayer.

This letter was entrusted to Phebe, a deaconess (RV) or dispenser of charity, of the church in Cenchrea, who safeguarded it during the hazardous sea voyage to Italy and delivered it to the church at Rome (Rom. 16:1,2).

**Acts 20:3–38** Having finished his mission to the Corinthian church, in the spring of 58 Paul planned to sail from Cenchrea to one of the ports of Palestine, then on to Jerusalem to deliver the churches’ contributions; but at the last moment he learned that the Jews were plotting to kill him after his ship left port. Their hatred against this leader of Christianity had been fanned by his presence. What he had written to the Galatians and to the Romans he was undoubtedly preaching in Corinth. To hear him assert that “blindness in part is happened to Israel” (Rom. 11:25); “no man is justified by the law in the sight of God” (Gal. 3:11); “neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision” (Gal. 5:6); “there is neither Jew nor Greek . . . for ye are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3:28)—to have the cherished Jewish heritage offered to the Gentiles and the Mosaic system of salvation relegated to an inferior position—were more than Paul’s adversaries could tolerate.

To protect his life Paul was forced to retrace his steps by land the long distance through Achaia and Macedonia, there to find a ship that would take him on his way to Jerusalem. Hundreds of miles were added to his homeward trip and many weeks to his time schedule, but this change in route afforded the churches of Macedonia a farewell meeting with him. He was accompanied by Timothy, Sopater of Berea, Trophimus and Tychicus of Roman Asia, Aristarchus and Secundus of Thessalonica, and Gaius of Derbe. Some of these were, no doubt, the elected treasurers entrusted with the Achaian contributions (I Cor. 16:3,4).

Luke and Paul were reunited at Philippi after nearly six years. Paul had left Luke there on his second journey, although he may have seen him several times as he passed through the city. These two remained in Philippi to celebrate the Passover while the others continued on to Troas in Asia Minor.

At the close of the feast Paul and Luke boarded ship; after five days' sail they landed at Troas and joined the others, remaining seven days. On the first day of the week, when the Troas church was gathered together to observe the communal feast which Jesus' last commandment had enjoined on his followers (Luke's first clear reference to the practice of meeting on the Lord's Day [compare I Cor. 16:2]), Paul discoursed till midnight in an upper room to the many who had come. In one of the windows sat a young man named Eutychus, and "as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft [upper story], and was taken up dead." Paul immediately went down to him, "embraced" him, and assured the others, "Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him." He returned to the upper room and with the brethren partook of the Eucharist, ate of a common meal, and continued to talk until daybreak. So he departed, and "they brought the young man alive, and were not a little comforted."

Paul chose to take the straight 20-mile Roman road to Assos, while his companions took ship around Cape Lectum and picked him up later. Thirty miles farther down the coast of Asia Minor they touched at Mitylene, capital of the Aegean island of Lesbos; two days later they put in at the island of Samos but stayed the night at Trogyllium, an anchorage on the mainland opposite Samos; the following day they reached the seaport of Miletus, some 30 miles south of Ephesus. From here Paul summoned the ranking members of the Ephesian church to come to Miletus, for he was anxious to reach Jerusalem in time for Pentecost. Certain that this was the last time they would meet, Paul gave a moving farewell. He appealed to them to keep in mind the integrity and faithfulness with which the gospel had been brought to them so that they might follow his example. He must now press on, even though further suffering for Christ's cause awaited him. "Now . . . I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus."

He entrusted the church to the care of its elders with a warning that they guard against false teachers from without and sectarian perverters from within. "I know that ye all . . . shall see my face no more. Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men [Phillips: my conscience is clear as far as any of you is concerned]. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God [compare Ezek. 3:17-21]. Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over

the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God . . . For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."

When he had finished speaking he knelt and prayed with them. They wept and embraced Paul, "sorrowing most of all . . . that they should see his face no more."

**Acts 21** The ship was waiting. When they had torn themselves away, Paul and his companions launched and, running before the wind, sailed south to the island of Coos, the following day 50 miles southeast to the island of Rhodes, and from Rhodes due east to Patara on the mainland in the province of Lycia. Changing ships, they sailed to Tyre in Phoenicia and, finding Christians there, remained with them for seven days while the ship unloaded its cargo. These brethren, foreseeing through spiritual intuition the dangers of Paul's forthcoming visit to Jerusalem, begged him not to go. However, when the ship was ready to leave, he sailed again, stopping for a day at Ptolemais (Accho), a Syrian seaport 30 miles south of Tyre, and the day following arrived at Caesarea in Palestine. Here he stayed in the home of Philip the Evangelist, one of the seven stewards appointed years before by the Twelve (see p. 379). During this visit Agabus, Paul's long-time friend, came from Judaea to see him. Agabus too foresaw the danger if Paul persisted in going on to Jerusalem. Taking Paul's sash and binding his own hands and feet to emphasize his warning, he predicted: "Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles."

This prophecy only tested Paul's courage and deepened his resolve. He was not unaware of the peril. While still at Corinth he had felt keen anxiety about this forthcoming visit; the Holy City would be filled with Jews from every land observing the Day of Pentecost, among them some who had shown bitter hatred of his teachings or who had repeatedly sought his life. His concern had been expressed in his earnest plea to the Christians in Rome to pray for his preservation: "I beseech you, brethren . . . that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me; That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judaea; and that my service which I have for



Miletus. Here the Apostle Paul gave his moving farewell address to the elders of the Ephesus church. Turkish Tourism and Information Office.

Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints; That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed" (Rom. 15:30-32).

Much as Jesus had steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem, so Paul set his face to meet whatever perils lay ahead for him. He silenced his friends with the question "What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." They acquiesced: "The will of the Lord be done."

After three days of traveling Paul and his company, now joined by friends from Caesarea, quietly entered Jerusalem, where they received a warm welcome from the Christian community. The next day he and the other delegates turned over to the mother church the donations of the Macedonian and Achaian

churches (Acts 24:17). Then Paul made a detailed formal report to James and the elders "what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry" during the past four years; and his listeners praised God for the victories that had been won for Christianity.

Even as the elders rejoiced they told Paul that dangerous elements of discord existed in the Jerusalem church. A Pharisaic faction was stirring up hatred against Paul, informing Jewish Christians (the thousands of Jews who believed but still adhered to Mosaic Law, not yet having attained the fullness of Christian faith) that he was teaching Jews of the Dispersion to abandon the rite of circumcision and other Mosaic customs. This claim was false in that

Paul had not detracted from the value of the Law to the Jew (compare Rom. 2:25; 3:1, 2), but it was true in the sense that he taught that faith and life in Christ alone saved a man. The assembly pointed out that Paul's presence in the city could not be hidden; his every appearance in public would attract a crowd of spectators, many violently hostile. To disarm the hatred, they proposed that Paul take charge of four men who were already under a Nazarite vow, accompany them to the Temple for the remaining week of their vow, and pay all the costs of their offerings. By this act of piety he would thus prove to Jewish Christians that he was not opposed to the Law. Assent violated no religious principle for him (I Cor. 9:19, 20), so he acceded to their request—a conciliatory gesture that proved almost disastrous to his future ministry. The crisis it precipitated delayed Paul's active service for several years and culminated in a journey to Rome in chains.

On Paul's seventh day in the Temple he was recognized by some of the Asian Jews. They seized him: "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" (they assumed he had brought his Ephesian friend Trophimus into the sanctuary). The crowd closed in around Paul and forced him out of the Temple; the doors were shut, and they began to beat him with intent to kill.

Word of the uproar almost immediately reached Claudius Lysias, commandant of the Roman cohort stationed in the Tower of Antonia. (This structure was a portion of the palace repaired by Nehemiah [Neh. 2:8; 7:2], the home of former Maccabean priest-kings, and the edifice rebuilt and renamed by Herod the Great in honor of Mark Antony. It was large enough to garrison a Roman cohort, which at full strength numbered a thousand, 760 foot soldiers and 240 cavalrymen. Occupying a strategic position at the northwest corner of the Temple area, the highest of its four turrets overlooked the Temple courts and any disturbance was visible at once to the sentries on duty.)

Lysias was alarmed. Only seven weeks earlier, during the Feast of Passover, an Egyptian pseudo-Messiah had led four thousand men in an uprising against Jerusalem; the Roman governor Felix had routed them but the Egyptian had escaped. Was this another insurrection? The commandant, with his officers and at least two hundred soldiers, rushed to the spot. The Jews reluctantly ceased beating their victim. Lysias took Paul prisoner, ordered him bound with two chains, and demanded to know who he was and what he had done. Some of the enraged crowd shouted one accusation, some another. Because of the turmoil Lysias commanded that the prisoner be taken

into the Fortress, and the Roman soldiers literally had to carry Paul to protect him from his countrymen who followed shouting for his death. When they reached the stone steps that led into the Fortress, Paul asked permission of the commandant to speak to the people. This was granted when Lysias found Paul was not the Egyptian insurrectionist he had feared.

**Acts 22** So Paul stood on the stairs and beckoned the crowd to come near, and when there was "a great silence" he spoke to them in Aramaic: "Hear ye my defence." They listened with close attention as Paul testified of his Jewish lineage, his training as a rabbi under the great Gamaliel, his zealous persecution of Christians, his conversion and call to apostleship, and the vision commissioning him to preach to the Gentiles. The racial and religious prejudices of his listeners were instantly inflamed by the word *Gentiles*. Infuriated that Paul had the temerity to declare heaven had shown equal favor to uncircumcised Gentiles—"heathen dogs" in the eyes of these sons of Abraham—they tossed off their outer cloaks (as at the stoning of Stephen), threw dust into the air, and screamed: "Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live." Only the presence of the Roman soldiers saved Paul from the death Stephen had suffered.

Lysias had understood neither Paul's Aramaic speech nor the reason for the crowd's violent reaction, so in accord with Roman custom he ordered that the prisoner be whipped to make him confess his crime. As the soldiers bared Paul's back and tied his hands behind him in readiness for the lash, he claimed his right as a Roman citizen to immunity from scourging: "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?" The centurion in charge hurriedly warned the commandant that his prisoner was a Roman. When Paul confirmed the fact to Lysias, the commandant responded, "With a great sum obtained I this freedom." Paul answered, "But I was free born." Lysias stopped the examination immediately, realizing he had committed a serious offense against Roman law. He kept Paul in custody to protect him, and the following day called the Sanhedrin into session to find out the charge against him.

**Acts 23** Paul was taken before the council. Strong in his Christian dignity and integrity, he testified, "I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day." The high priest Ananias gave him no opportunity to say more, but ordered that they strike him on the mouth—not merely a most degrading insult, but also an abuse of judicial power (Jn. 7:51). Paul instantly protested: "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall: for sittest



thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law?"

The Sanhedrin consisted of both Pharisees and Sadducees; and knowing the Pharisees taught the resurrection of the dead while the Sadducees rejected this doctrine, Paul astutely enlisted Pharisaic support: "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." In this one brief remark he pinpointed the reason for all the persecution he had experienced and for which he was even now on trial—the world's opposition to Christ as the true way to eternal life. His statement at once set the two parties against each other. The Pharisaic group rallied to his defense: "We find no evil in this man: but if a spirit or an angel hath spoken to him, let us not fight against God." The quarreling between the two factions became so violent that the Roman commandant feared Paul would be torn to pieces; he ordered his soldiers to take him from them by force and return him to the Fortress.

That night the Lord appeared to Paul in a vision and said, "Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome"—a promise from which he was to draw comfort during the following two years of imprisonment in Caesarea.

More than forty Jews, desperate and determined to put an end to this exponent of a gospel that undermined organized Judaism, swore that they would not eat or drink until they had killed Paul. They conspired with the chief priests of the Sanhedrin to gain access to Paul for questioning on the following day, but this conspiracy was uncovered by Paul's sister's son, who was living in Jerusalem and who reported it to his uncle. Paul in turn asked that his nephew be taken to Lysias, and when the commandant heard of the plot he counseled the youth to keep it secret.

Lysias acted swiftly to remove his controversial prisoner from Jerusalem. He commanded that a strong escort of 200 soldiers, 70 horsemen, and 200 spearmen be ready by nine o'clock that night; providing Paul with two spare horses, he sent him to Caesarea (65 miles away) to Felix, the Roman procurator of Judaea. The entire military guard accompanied Paul to Antipatris, about halfway to Caesarea; the foot soldiers then returned to Jerusalem and only the cavalry continued on with Paul. Lysias also wrote a letter to Felix in which he related the events of Paul's arrest, omitting mention of his own infraction of Roman law and claiming credit for saving the life of a Roman citizen. He stated he had taken the prisoner before the Jews' supreme court and found nothing deserving of death or imprisonment. "But when it was told me how that the Jews laid wait for the

man, I sent straightway to thee, and gave commandment to his accusers also to say before thee what they had against him."

Thus ended Paul's third missionary journey of at least 4000 miles and his fifth visit to Jerusalem after conversion.

**Acts 24 Imprisonment in Caesarea (58–60 A.D.)** Felix held Paul in Herod's judgment hall till his accusers arrived. After five days the high priest and the elders of the Sanhedrin reached Caesarea, bringing with them Tertullus, a well-trained orator. Tertullus presented the case against Paul, using every verbal weapon at his command. Ingratiatingly he addressed the procurator—"most noble Felix" complimenting him on his "very worthy deeds . . . done unto this nation by thy providence." He was apologetic: "That I be not further tedious unto thee, I pray thee that thou wouldest hear us of thy clemency a few words." He regretted that the Roman captain had taken Paul out of their jurisdiction: "We have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ring-leader of the sect of the Nazarenes: Who also hath gone about to profane the temple: whom we took, and would have judged according to our law."

Paul flatly denied the charges of sedition and profanation of the Temple: "They neither found me in the temple disputing with any man, neither raising up the people, neither in the synagogues, nor in the city: Neither can they prove the things whereof they now accuse me." He readily admitted he was a Nazarene—a Christian: "But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets: And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men."

Paul then laid bare the underlying complaint against him: "Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question by you this day." He was, in truth, on trial in defense of Christ's gospel. He who had been Christianity's ardent promulgator now became its great champion, and he was to continue to defend it fearlessly before the highest authorities of the Roman Empire.

Felix knew something of Christianity (Luke notes that he had "more perfect knowledge of that way"), so he was aware that the real charge against the prisoner related to religious differences with which Roman law had no concern. He realized it would be dangerous and certainly unjust to turn this man over to the fanatic Jewish hierarchy, yet he hesitated





Roman pillars mark the shore at Caesarea, the capital of Roman Judaea. This city was the principal port of Palestine in Paul's day. Here Paul was held prisoner for two years under Felix the governor, and from here he set sail for Rome. Israel Tourist Office.

through self-interest to offend these important personages. He deferred a decision on the ground that he wished to question Lysias more fully. Felix remanded Paul to the custody of a centurion, ordering that he be given a certain amount of liberty and that his friends be allowed to visit him.

Later the procurator, accompanied by his notorious Jewish wife Drusilla, sent for Paul to hear his explanation of Christianity. Felix, once a slave, freed by the Emperor Claudius, owed much in the way of duty to the sovereign state; but, according to the Roman historian Tacitus, his rule, far from showing a

comparable mercy, was one of corruption and cruelty. Thus when Paul spoke fearlessly to him about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment soon to come, Felix, remembering no doubt his many breaches of justice and the immorality of his private life, became alarmed and dismissed him: "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." Secretly hoping to receive a bribe from Paul, he talked with him frequently, but there never arrived the "convenient season" which might have brought him change of heart; his conscience never reached a penitent state.

Felix left Paul in prison for two full years. Three missionary journeys were behind the apostle. Thousands of Jews and Gentiles had been converted; the infant churches in Asia Minor, Macedonia, and Greece needed constant nourishment and guidance. During this period his time and thought must have been occupied with much prayer for the Church and meditation on its deeper meanings and mission. The fruit of his thought is reflected in the epistles later written from Rome.

Luke's last reference to himself was at the meeting with James in Jerusalem (Acts 21:18), but the details recorded of Paul's experiences in Jerusalem and Caesarea indicate that he was still nearby. It is quite probable that during the interval of Paul's imprisonment Luke sought out every available eyewitness to the life of Jesus and wrote his Gospel while awaiting his friend's release (see Lu. 1:1-3).

According to Josephus, at the end of the second year of Paul's imprisonment Felix was recalled to Rome by Nero to face charges of injustice brought against him by the Jews of Caesarea. He put Paul in chains before he left, hoping to curry favor with the Jews and thereby appease Jewish accusers at his own trial.

**Acts 25** Porcius Festus succeeded Felix as procurator; three days after assuming office he went to Jerusalem to acquaint himself with this troublesome city now under his jurisdiction. The high priest and other Jewish leaders immediately tried to push their case against Paul, asking that he be brought to Jerusalem for trial, still planning to kill him along the way. But Festus would not grant this favor while still so new in office and answered that he would hold the prisoner for trial in Caesarea.

As soon as Festus returned from Jerusalem Paul was arraigned before him. The Jewish leaders repeated their charges of heresy, sacrilege, and treason; once again Paul denied them: "Neither against the law of the Jews, neither against the temple, nor yet against Caesar, have I offended any thing at all." Festus saw that the Jewish charges were not political, as he had

expected, but religious. He had the authority to set Paul free, but like Pilate and Felix he was not morally strong enough to render a judgment free of self-interest. Instead, "willing to do the Jews a pleasure," he asked the prisoner, "Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these things before me?"

Paul refused. He knew the futility of finding justice or mercy in any trial before the hostile Sanhedrin, even under the procurator's protection, and he was fully aware of the peril of assassination. Festus was vacillating and Paul realized he would not gain his freedom under this new Roman official, so he exercised the one special privilege of Roman citizenship still left open to him—the right of recourse to Caesar: "I stand at Caesar's judgment seat, where I ought to be judged: to the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou very well knowest. For if I be an offender, or have committed any thing worthy of death, I refuse not to die: but if there be none of these things whereof these accuse me, no man may deliver me unto them. I appeal unto Caesar." This appeal automatically removed the matter from Festus' jurisdiction to that of Nero, the supreme tribunal at Rome. Festus could only answer, "Unto Caesar shalt thou go."

Soon afterward Herod Agrippa II, great-grandson of Herod the Great, and his sister Bernice made a courtesy call on the new governor. Agrippa had been a favorite of the Emperor Claudius and was a friend of Nero. This last of the Herods ruled the tetrarchy of Herod Philip and the adjacent territory east and north of Galilee. During the visit Festus brought up the perplexing subject of his prisoner with his eminent guest, reviewed the history of the case, and discussed its puzzling aspects. At the hearing there had been none of the expected civil charges, only accusations concerning the Jews' religion and Paul's words of "one Jesus," who was dead but whom the prisoner maintained was alive; so finding no evidence of sedition, he had suggested a Jewish trial at Jerusalem under his protection. The prisoner had refused, demanding instead to be tried by Caesar. Agrippa's interest was aroused: "I would also hear the man myself."

To please his royal guest Festus arranged a hearing for the next day. With great pomp Agrippa and Bernice appeared in the auditorium, accompanied by Roman tribunes and others of high rank in Caesarea. Paul was brought in chained, and Festus asked Agrippa to help him decide what accusation his letter to the Emperor should contain when he sent the prisoner to Rome.

**Acts 26** With Agrippa's permission Paul began his defense, making full and eloquent use of this rare opportunity not only to defend himself but also to proclaim the gospel to this king, the military commanders, and the civilians of



high rank of Caesarea (compare Acts 9:15). He addressed Agrippa as one who, being partly Jewish himself, had a knowledge of Jewish customs and had heard of the agitating question Christianity posed for the Jew: "I think myself happy, king Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews."

As in his speech to his own people at Jerusalem, now he attested his Jewish heritage, his life as a Pharisee, his hope for the promised Messiah whose fulfillment he saw in the risen Jesus, his early persecution of Christians, and the vision that led to his conversion and call to apostleship among the Gentiles.

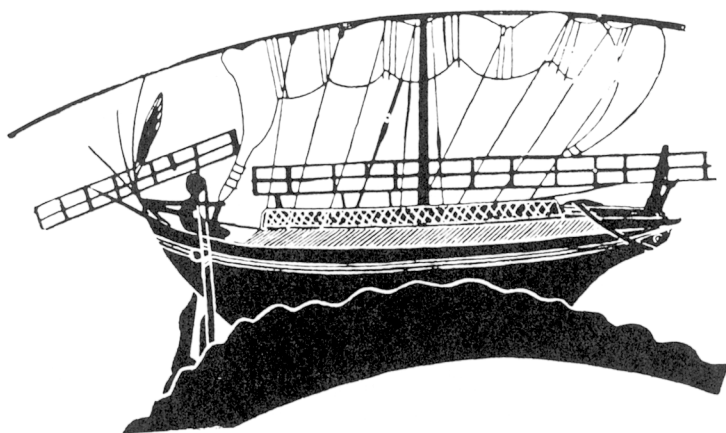
He testified also that he had been obedient to that vision and had labored in Damascus, Jerusalem, the coasts of Judaea, and finally among the Gentiles, but because he had taught repentance and salvation through Jesus his countrymen had seized him in the Temple and tried to kill him. These things had brought him to this day, but God's love and power had enabled him to endure: "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles."

Feeling that the prisoner's statements were becoming extravagant, the procurator broke in. "Paul,

thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad." Paul's reference to the resurrection of the dead, a doctrine intelligible to Agrippa the Jew, was wholly unintelligible to this sophisticated Roman. "I am not mad, most noble Festus," Paul replied courteously, "but speak forth the words of truth and soberness. For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner."

Paul's sincerity and conviction had held Agrippa's close attention from the start, and Paul felt his words had fallen on sympathetic ears. Turning again to the king, he entreated, "King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets?" And without awaiting an answer, he declared, "I know that thou believest." This drew from Agrippa the half-admission "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." In great earnestness and love the apostle responded and in his answer included all of his distinguished audience: "I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds." But Agrippa did not give assent; instead he rose. The hearing was ended.

Later Festus and Agrippa agreed privately that the prisoner was innocent. "This man," said Agrippa, "might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Caesar." On this note Paul's Caesarean imprisonment came to a close.



This Greek vase painting shows a merchant vessel running reefed in a gale. Merchant ships had no need to maneuver swiftly and could therefore afford to seek a favoring wind. Unlike the warships of the time, these ships—used peacefully for trade—had neither sharp beak nor oars. From Margaret B. Synge, *A Book of Discovery* (Putnam, 1920).

**PAUL'S JOURNEY  
TO ROME**  
(ca. 2500 miles)



## Voyage to Rome and Imprisonments

60–63 A.D.

From Caesarea  
Sidon (in Phoenicia)  
Myra (in province of Lycia)  
Fair Havens (on Crete)  
Island of Melita  
Syracuse (on Sicily)  
Rhegium, Puteoli (seaports of Italy)  
Rome

**Acts 27** Although Paul made his voyage to Rome as a prisoner of Nero, his work was far from finished. Christ's prophecy two

years before—"thou [must] bear witness also at Rome"—was soon to be fulfilled in a journey entailing some 2500 miles. Paul was now about fifty-seven years old; still hopeful and vigorous, he looked forward eagerly to the consummation of this promise. With other prisoners, Paul was placed in the custody of Julius, a centurion of an Augustan cohort (possibly part of the imperial guard or of a body of troops assigned to some special service for the Emperor). They set sail from Caesarea in late August of 60 A.D. Paul's friends Luke and Aristarchus sailed with him.

Luke's detailed eyewitness account of this journey is one of the most vivid and dramatic portions of his biography of Paul, and gives an authentic record of first-century navigation and seamanship. "Entering into a ship . . . we launched, meaning to sail by the coasts of Asia . . . And the next day we touched at Sidon [70 miles north of Caesarea]." Julius treated his



notable prisoner courteously and gave him freedom to visit Christian brethren at Sidon, a sign of the deference shown him throughout the long journey to Italy.

“We sailed under [the lee of] Cyprus, because the winds were contrary . . . over the sea of Cilicia and Pamphylia . . . to Myra, a city of Lycia. And there the centurion found a ship of Alexandria sailing into Italy; and he put us therein. And when we had sailed slowly many days . . . the wind not suffering us, we sailed under Crete . . . unto a place which is called The fair havens . . .” Here they remained too long—until early in October, when navigation of the open Mediterranean becomes dangerous. (Between November and March all shipping was suspended.) Faced with the possibility of spending the winter in this small unprotected Cretan harbor, some wanted to press on to the larger, safer port of Phenice, only a few hours’ sail to the west. Paul warned, “Sirs, I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives.” Neither the captain, the owner of the ship, nor the centurion Julius heeded his advice; when a light south wind rose they were deceived into thinking conditions were favorable, and so set sail.

They never reached Phenice. A sudden northeast storm became almost a typhoon. “And when the ship was caught, and could not bear up into the wind, we let her drive.” They sheltered briefly in the lee of the island of Clauda to the south of Crete, and the captain seized the opportunity to hoist aboard the small boat they had been towing and to undergird the ship by repeatedly passing stout ropes tightly around its hull. To avoid being driven south onto the dreaded sandbars of the Syrtis Major, a gulf on the African coast, the crew lowered the mainsail partially to steady the ship, left up the small storm sail, and let the ship drift to leeward before the gale.

Another day passed; now in danger of foundering, they began to lighten the ship. The third day they lightened the vessel still more, passengers and prisoners alike helping the crew cut away and throw overboard some of the ship’s gear. All seemed lost. They could not see the sky, and therefore could not take their position by the stars; the vessel was showing signs of heavy strain. The crew could do nothing. More days passed in fear, danger, and growing exhaustion. “When neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away.”

Paul alone did not despair. During a night of prayer God comforted him with the promise of a fulfilled destiny at Rome and the preservation of the lives of all on board. The following morning he gathered the men around him: “Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete,

and to have gained this harm and loss. And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man’s life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me. Howbeit we must be cast upon a certain island.”

About midnight on the fourteenth day of the storm, as they drifted helplessly in the central Mediterranean, the Sea of Adria below the Adriatic Sea, the crew took soundings and found they were nearing land. Fearful of running onto rocks, they “cast four anchors out of the stern, and wished for the day.” The crew then plotted to save their own lives. Under cover of darkness they let down the small boat into the sea under pretext of casting anchors out of the foreship. Paul, sensing this treachery that would have left the ship unmanned and helpless, quietly warned Julius and the soldiers, “Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved.” To prevent the crew’s escape the soldiers sprang into action and cut the ropes of the small boat, setting it adrift.

*In full assurance of ultimate safety, in virtue of a DIVINE pledge, to all in the ship, Paul speaks and acts throughout this whole scene in the exercise of a sound judgment as to the indispensable HUMAN conditions of safety; and as there is no trace of any feeling of inconsistency between these two things in his mind, so even the centurion, under whose orders the soldiers acted on Paul’s views, seems never to have felt perplexed by the twofold aspect, Divine and human, in which the same thing presented itself to the mind of Paul. Divine agency and human instrumentality are in all the events of life quite as much as here.<sup>17</sup>*

While the day was dawning Paul urged the drenched group aboard to renew their strength for the ordeal that lay ahead, for they had eaten no regular meal for days: “Take some meat: for this is for your health: for there shall not an hair fall from the head of any of you.” Then he took some bread, gave thanks, and began to eat. The others followed his example and were cheered. Bodies and spirits refreshed, they lightened the ship again, this time casting the cargo of wheat into the sea.

At daybreak they discovered a shoreline with a small inlet, and in this they grounded the ship. Its prow stuck fast in the mud while the stern, exposed to the violence of the waves, began to break up. The soldiers would have killed the prisoners to keep them from escaping but Julius stopped them. Instead he commanded that all who could swim make for the land, and the rest go ashore on loose pieces of



Two islets named St. Paul's Islands mark the entrance to St. Paul's Bay, Malta, the Melita of Bible times where Paul suffered shipwreck. Religious News Service Photo.

wreckage; and all 276 persons on board landed safely on the island of Melita (the Malta of today).

Paul was thus delivered from his fourth shipwreck. Even the tempest had not taken him seriously off course, but had carried him toward his desired destination, casting him onto a tiny dot of land to the south of Italy. He could well have rejoiced in the words of the Psalmist: "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." (See *An Example of Enduring Trust*, p. 547.)

**A**cts 28 The Maltese received the survivors with kindness and kindled a fire for their comfort. As Paul gathered a bundle of sticks and laid them on the fire, "there came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on his hand." When the

islanders saw the serpent strike, they superstitiously concluded he was a murderer whom justice was avenging; but instantly Paul shook it off into the fire "and felt no harm" (compare Mk. 16:18). They watched him for a long time, but when his body did not swell and he did not die suddenly they decided instead that he was a god (compare Acts 14:11).

The viper had come out of the heat; it had been shaken back into the heat from which it had come. All the venom of past persecution by Paul's enemies was typified in the attack of the serpent. Throughout his ministry his enemies had attempted to pervert, paralyze, and destroy the work he had been divinely called to do. At Damascus, Lystra, Thessalonica, Berea, Corinth, Ephesus, and Jerusalem assaults had been

made on his life; he had suffered repeated beatings and imprisonment; more than all else he had borne the poisonous attacks of malice and blasphemy against the gospel. Like the Master, the apostle had been subjected to a swelling tide of hatred. The Master had proved it all "of none effect," and Paul strove to do the same. His constant dwelling in Christ had in this instance at Malta given him immunity, and when he shook off the serpent he shook off, in figure, the hatred that had pursued him.

Publius, the "chief man" of Malta, lodged Paul and his companions hospitably for three days. (Malta was under the jurisdiction of the province of Sicily and *chief man* was the official title of the Maltese representative of the praetor of Sicily.) During his stay Paul healed Publius' father, sick of dysentery and fever. When others on the island heard of it, many who were diseased came and were healed. Although Paul's great work was that of preaching, teaching, and converting, he nevertheless fully obeyed the Master's command to heal. Luke makes general reference to the miracles that accompanied Paul's preaching (Acts 14:3; 19:11). Specifically, he had healed the crippled man at Lystra; cast the spirit of divination out of the slave girl of Philippi; raised Eutychus from the dead; rendered the viper's bite harmless. Paul fulfilled this vital part of his Christian ministry naturally and well (compare Mt. 10:8).

After three months, when navigation was again possible, Julius, his prisoner, and the rest of the company embarked on an Alexandrian wheat ship. After an 80-mile run they put in at Syracuse, the chief port of Sicily, for three days; touched for one day at Rhegium on the southwestern tip of Italy; and ended their sea journey at Puteoli, 180 miles farther north on the beautiful Bay of Naples. Here Paul was happy to find Christian brethren, and was invited to stay with them for seven days.

The apostle had left Palestine in the late summer of 60 A.D.; he began the last lap of his journey, the 130-mile trip to Rome, in the spring of 61. Traveling northward up the Italian peninsula, Paul and his party reached the Appian Way, the great Roman road running from Capua to the imperial city. Word of his arrival had reached the church in Rome. Two parties of Christian friends came down to welcome Paul, one meeting him at the Appii Forum (Market of Appius), 40 miles from Rome, the other awaiting him at a place called Three Taverns, 10 miles farther on. A surge of joy filled him at the warmth of their reception, "whom when Paul saw, he thanked God and took courage."

So it was with gratitude and fresh hope that this prisoner of Rome—in reality "a prisoner of Jesus

Christ"—traveled the last few miles to enter the magnificent capital of the world's greatest empire. Julius delivered his charges to the prefect or captain of the Emperor's bodyguard, the Praetorian Guard, who had custody of those awaiting trial before the Emperor.

#### First Imprisonment in Rome (61–63 A.D.)

Because Paul was of the class of prisoners whose offense was not flagrant—and possibly through the intervention of Julius—he was permitted to live in his own rented house. Nevertheless he was under close military guard, chained night and day to a Roman soldier, his right hand fastened to the soldier's left.

Without delay Paul began his work in Rome. Three days after his arrival he sent for the elders of the synagogues. When they came he explained his presence in the city and the reason for his humiliating bonds: though he had committed no crime against his nation or its customs he had been delivered a prisoner to the Romans, who would have released him, but in order to save his life from his Jewish enemies he had been forced to appeal to Caesar; he was here to defend himself, not to make accusations against his people; but the real cause for his chains was that he preached Jesus as the Messiah, the fulfillment of Israel's hope. They listened courteously, then assured him they had heard no derogatory reports about him and would indeed be interested to have him explain his views, for they had heard much criticism of the Christian sect everywhere.

On an appointed day a large number came to his lodging, and all day Paul talked with them, telling them of "the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets." The reaction of his audience was divided: some believed, some did not. To the non-believers he gave a strong parting rebuke as they left: "Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it."

Luke concludes his biography on a triumphant note: "Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him."



During these two years Paul maintained his correspondence. Only from his four prison epistles—Philemon, Colossians, Ephesians, Philippians—do we know something of his continued supervision of the distant churches he had founded. His friends and fellow laborers were a great comfort to him; they ran his errands, carried his messages, kept the lines of communication open. Among these were Timothy, Aristarchus, Mark (Marcus), Jesus (Justus), Luke, Epaphroditus of Philippi, Demas, Epaphras, Tychicus, Onesimus of Colossae, and the converts of Caesar's household.

He was careful to keep the churches informed of his welfare and plans, and was continually thankful for their concern for him. To the Colossians he wrote: "All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you" (Col. 4:7); to the Ephesians: "I have sent unto you [Tychicus] for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs" (Eph. 6:22).

The four letters written from Rome reveal Paul's ripening conception of the true Church, and give to the Church some of his most profound theological teachings. With great versatility and insight he dealt with Christian truths and their practical application.

The first of Paul's prison letters was personal, written to his friend Philemon, a wealthy citizen of Colossae in Phrygia whom with his household Paul had led into Christianity (Philem. 1:19) and in whose home the church met. Philemon's slave Onesimus had apparently robbed his owner and then run away to Rome. Here he had met Paul and been converted. Paul prevailed upon him to return to his master, giving Onesimus a letter of intercession designed to win him pardon. The situation was a delicate one. Master and slave, now Christians, stood in a new relationship to each other. Paul handled this matter with consummate tact. This eloquent letter exemplifies Christian love in action.

### *Epistle to Philemon*

With great courtesy and love Paul addresses Philemon, commending his Christian character and works which have given joy and refreshment to the apostle and to the Church. Paul informs Philemon he has gained a son and a helper in the slave Onesimus, whom he has converted to the faith. He longs to keep Onesimus with him in Rome, but this he cannot in conscience do without Philemon's willing consent. He could command his friend to do what is fitting, but as "Paul the aged . . . a prisoner of Jesus Christ" he chooses rather to entreat "for love's sake" that the slave be forgiven. He pleads that Onesimus be received not as a runaway servant but compassionately, "as a brother beloved," who, now

repentant and in Christ, should prove dearer and of greater service than previously.

Paul believed that Onesimus since his conversion had a new master in Christ, and that this entitled him to be considered on a plane of Christian brotherhood (v. 16). This indirect attack on Roman slavery asserted the principle of spiritual equality in Christ—a principle that eventually destroyed the system of slavery.<sup>18</sup>

Paul even pledges to pay the slave's debt, yet at the same time gently reminds Philemon of his own great debt to him for the saving of his soul. The whole tone of the letter shows that Paul confidently expects Philemon will do more than he has asked. It closes with his greeting and apostolic blessing.

The second of Paul's prison letters, the Epistle to the Colossians, was occasioned by the visit of his convert Epaphras, the probable founder of the Gentile church in Colossae. Epaphras brought to Rome encouraging word of the church's healthy state, but at the same time reported the rise among its members of certain teachings which threatened its spiritual life. The nature of this heresy is not specifically mentioned but it appears to have been a form of early Gnosticism—a philosophic-religious movement that fused Greek philosophy, Oriental mysticism, and Judaism. The Gnostics laid claim to an ancient wisdom in spiritual things, both speculative and elaborate, a belief that angels had a part in the work of creation, acting as intermediaries between God and the world of matter and as being instrumental in aiding men to obtain freedom from the clutch of matter. Gnosticism included a rigorous asceticism coupled with a strict observance of Judaic ordinances.

These philosophers combined the speculation of the Greek Pythagoras with Persian mysticism and Essenic Judaism. They held matter to be essentially evil. Hence the origin of the world was a grave problem since God was good. They conceived a series of intermediate agents or aeons to relieve God of the burden of the evil world. They at once had trouble with the person of Christ in their system when any of them accepted Christianity. They solved the matter by making Jesus one of the aeons. In morals they had two extremes. One went to license, the other to asceticism.<sup>19</sup>

Paul's message, carried by Tychicus, was a strong refutation of this heresy which assigned to Jesus a position of inferiority, and a clear explanation of Christ's true place in the Godhead and of his headship over the Church. Christ was pre-eminent, all that was needed for redemption.

### *Epistle to the Colossians*

Chapter 1:1–14 contains Paul's apostolic



greeting, his gratitude for the Colossians' faith, and his prayer for their continued spiritual progress. 🐾 **Chapter 1:15–23** develops the doctrine of the supremacy of Christ in the order of the universe, Christ's place in the Godhead, his pre-eminence in the Church, and his work of reconciliation.

“Who is the image of the invisible God”  
 “by him were all things created”  
 “he is before all things”  
 “by him all things consist”  
 “he is the head of the body, the church”  
 “the firstborn from the dead”

The remaining verses (24–29) of 🐾 **Chapter 1** remind the Colossians of the apostle's labors and sufferings on their behalf that they who are Gentiles might know the riches of the gospel and understand the mystery hidden from past generations: the truth of the indwelling Christ—“Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

🐾 **Chapter 2** shows Paul's earnest concern that the Colossian church continue constant in the faith and be on guard against enticing Greek and Asiatic philosophies and man-made tradition. In Christ only is “all the fulness of the Godhead bodily”; in him is their completeness; in him is “the circumcision made without hands” which puts off the sins of the flesh; “buried with him in baptism” they have resurrection through faith. Christ has given them life and forgiven their sins through his victorious atoning work on the cross. Therefore they need not Mosaic ordinances, or mediation of angels, or asceticism, for in Christ are they dead to “the rudiments of the world.”

🐾 **Chapters 3:1–4:6** urge those who have risen with Christ to set their affection on spiritual things and to live in union with him. Christian living requires complete regeneration of character, putting off the evil habits of “the old man” and putting on a new nature in the likeness of God (see pp. 454–457). In this “new man” racial, religious, and social distinctions do not exist, Christ being “all, and in all.” They are to appropriate such qualities of Christ as mercy, kindness, humility, meekness, forbearance, forgiveness, charity, peace, gratitude. Paul details the reciprocal duties of wives and husbands, children and fathers, servants and masters. He solicits their prayers for the furtherance of his preaching, and admonishes wisdom and graciousness in their dealings with the outside world.

🐾 **Chapter 4:7–18** commends Tychicus, the bearer of the letter, and Onesimus who accompanies him, and sends greetings from Paul's fellow workers. His own greeting and benediction.

When Tychicus carried Paul's letter to the Colossians he also took with him a companion letter which is called the Epistle to the Ephesians. Some early manuscripts omit the words *at Ephesus* from the first verse of this letter. Because of this and because Paul had instructed the church of Colossae and the church of Laodicea (11 miles distant) to share their letters (Col. 4:16), many scholars consider this a Laodicean letter, or a circular one to the churches of the East. It contains neither personal greetings to friends in the Ephesian church nor any reference to its local church life despite his long stay in Ephesus. The omission of these things would tend to confirm the view that he was writing to a larger audience. Ephesians is therefore Paul's most impersonal communication; its character is of a treatise or homily that develops the subject of the union of all believers in Christ, both Jew and Gentile.

Although Paul had first regarded the Church as a great organized society of believers, he had come to see it as far more. He understood, and presented in this epistle, the idea of Church in its spiritual fullness and glory. As the human body is one coordinated whole, so the Church is one body—“the body of Christ”—consisting of all who hold fast to Christ, its Head (see p. 459). He unfolded, as John did later, the grandeur and fullness of God's eternal purpose to redeem all humanity through His Son. These lofty concepts give us glimpses into the “most holy place” of Paul's consciousness.

### *Epistle to the Ephesians*

🐾 **Chapter 1:1–14** contains Paul's brief apostolic greeting, and immediately breaks forth into a burst of praise for God's spiritual blessings which have come to men through Jesus Christ: for God's eternal purpose and grace in fore-ordaining believers to His holiness and praise, for world-wide redemption through His Son, and for the sealing of the believer by the Holy Spirit until his full redemption is accomplished.

🐾 **Chapter 1:15–23** is Paul's prayer that Christians fully comprehend their calling, the rich glory of their inheritance, and the greatness of God's power toward them, seen in the working of His might in raising Christ from the dead and exalting him, giving him eternal dominion, and appointing him “head over all things to the church, Which is his body.”

🐾 **Chapter 2** declares the effects of God's love and grace through Christ, whereby men are saved from sin and quickened to spiritual life; and whereby the Gentiles have been brought into union with Christ along with the commonwealth

of Israel. Through his sacrifice on the cross Christ Jesus has “broken down the middle wall of partition” between Jew and Gentile, reconciling both to God and giving them access to the Father. All men therefore are fellow citizens of the kingdom and of the household of God and, “fitly framed together,” are built up into one living temple.

✠ **Chapter 3:1–13** expounds “the mystery,” hidden from past ages, that has been revealed to him—the Gentiles are to be saved and to be fellow heirs of God’s promise through Christ. To him has been given the stewardship of this mystery that the Gentiles might know the inexhaustible riches and fellowship of Christ. ✠ **Chapter 3:14–21** is the apostle’s earnest prayer that the Father mightily strengthen them in the inner man by His Spirit so that Christ may dwell in their hearts by faith; that they, firmly grounded in love, may be able to attain to a full comprehension of the Father’s love—in breadth, length, depth, height—and know the love of Christ; so they may be made complete.

✠ **Chapters 4–6** deal with the edifying—building up—of the Church into a perfect unity with Christ (see p. 460), and set forth the life and service of the Christian. They give a more complete exposition of essential precepts relating to Christian character and duties than Paul had heretofore written. ✠ **Chapter 4:1–16** urges believers to walk worthy of their great calling—in humility, meekness, patience, and forbearing love. They are to demonstrate spiritual unity and brotherhood, all having “one body . . . one Spirit . . . one hope . . . One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father.” Every individual gift of grace given through the munificence of Christ is to be used for the edifying and perfecting of God’s people, till all men reach the stature of the perfect man, till all reach spiritual maturity, till the whole Church grows up into a perfect union with Christ, its Head. ✠ **Chapters 4:17–6:9** exhort to Christlike living. Believers are to put off the old sinful manner of life and to put on the nature of Christ; to *walk* wisely as “children of light” in the way of truth which they have learned. Here Paul discusses the Spirit-motivated life and the duties of wives and husbands, children and fathers, servants and masters toward each other, of which the Church’s relationship to Christ and Christ’s relationship to his Church are prototypes. In ✠ **Chapter 6:10–24** Paul calls on his readers to strengthen themselves in the Lord: to put on the “whole armour of God” that they may be able to resist the wiles of the

devil, for they fight against the unseen forces of evil and spiritual wickedness. The believer must arm himself beforehand “to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand.” His armor is truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation; his weapons the Word of God and prayer. Paul asks for their prayers on his behalf. Apostolic benediction.

Among Paul’s friends was Epaphroditus of Philippi, who came to Rome to be of assistance and to bring financial aid from the Philippian church (Phil. 2:25). This church was the first the apostle had founded in Europe on his second missionary journey some ten years earlier, and it had always been warm and generous in its treatment of him (II Cor. 11:9; Phil. 4:15,16). While Epaphroditus was in the Roman capital, he fell sick and almost died. The Philippian congregation had heard of their messenger’s illness; and Paul, knowing their anxiety for Epaphroditus’ welfare and for his, sent him home, entrusting him with a comforting letter to the church.

Faithful from its inception, this church had earned the apostle’s deepest regard and heartfelt love; it was his “joy and crown,” having no grave defects of character, no disorders, no doctrinal errors to correct. To this beloved church he confided his innermost thoughts and further revealed his consuming love for Christ. This fourth prison epistle is Paul’s most affectionate letter. Although he had been in chains more than two years—and perhaps even at this moment was awaiting trial—its tone is joyous and triumphant.

### *Epistle to the Philippians*

✠ **Chapter 1** opens with Paul’s salutation to the whole assembly at Philippi, expresses his gratitude for their cooperation in spreading the gospel from the first day they heard it, and includes a prayer for their continued spiritual development. He rejoices that his Roman imprisonment, far from ending his work, has made the gospel known to the Emperor’s bodyguard stationed in the Praetorium of the palace and has stimulated its spread among the Roman people. He affirms that his sole object, whether he suffers, lives or dies, is to glorify Christ. He discloses an inner conflict: he longs to depart from this world to be with Christ, but feels it needful for their sakes that he remain with them. Therefore he is confident he will regain his freedom and continue his ministry. Whether or not he comes to them, let their lives be worthy of Christ’s gospel that he may know they are standing fast “in one spirit, with one mind.” Let

them never be terrified by their adversaries; their courage is a token of salvation, for they are privileged not only to believe in Christ but also to suffer for his sake.

✠ **Chapter 2** urges the Christian pattern of life—“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus”—and sets before his readers the Son’s self-immolating example of meekness and service. They are to labor earnestly to “work out” their own salvation, knowing that God “worketh in” them, causing them to love His gracious will and enabling them to do it. They are to do everything without grumbling and contention that they may be blameless, the sons of God, shining as lights in the midst of a perverse nation, holding before the world the Word of Life. Thus will he be able to rejoice that his work has not been in vain. Paul plans to send Timothy to them shortly, for he has no one like him who will be so genuinely concerned for their well-being. He speaks of his hope for a speedy release that he too may come to them. He feels it necessary to send Epaphroditus now, his faithful fellow worker and their messenger, who longs to return home because of their anxiety when they heard he had been sick. Indeed, he had been sick almost to the point of death, but God had had mercy on his friend—and on himself also, sparing him an added sorrow. One commentator has paraphrased verse 27: “When God was merciful unto Epaphroditus, God was merciful unto me.”

✠ **Chapter 3** warns the church to be on guard against the seducing Judaizers he scornfully calls dogs, evil workers, of the concision (mutilators of the flesh), and affirms that Christians represent the true circumcision, for they worship God in the spirit and have their joy in Christ Jesus. Paul declares that because of his own rigorous Jewish background he has had more cause than many to trust in legal righteousness, but renounced all he had gained through the Law, counting it worthless, that he might gain the righteousness of Christ. His whole life motive is to “win Christ . . . be found in him . . . know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings,” so he might attain resurrection. He does not claim to have attained this perfection but he continually presses toward the goal and urges all Christians to do the same. Since their “conversation” (RV citizenship; Cruden’s, behavior, or manner of life [3:20]) is in heaven, they are to watch for the Savior from heaven who will, in the exercise of his power, transform the fleshly body that it may be “fashioned like unto his glorious body” (compare Mk. 9:2).

✠ **Chapter 4** enjoins the church to steadfastness in Christ, to rejoicing, to prayer, to the continual meditation of true and good thoughts; they are to follow his example. Thus they will find “the peace of God, which passeth all understanding.” Paul thanks the Philippian church for its thoughtful provision for his needs and for its sympathy and service through the years. He confides, however, that for his part he has learned to be content whatever his state, knowing his sufficiency is in Christ. Apostolic greeting and benediction.

In these last four epistles Paul spoke often of his imprisonment, but he endured this affliction patiently and even gladly, seeing it as profitable to the spread of the gospel: “The prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles” (Eph. 3:1); “I am an ambassador in bonds” (Eph. 6:20); “Remember my bonds” (Col. 4:18). “I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel; So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace [of Caesar], and in all other places; And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. Some indeed preach Christ even [through motives] of envy and strife . . . and some also of good will . . . notwithstanding, every way . . . Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice . . .” (Phil. 1:12–18).

During this imprisonment he had faced his own Gethsemane, yielding up his will—his longing to leave the world—to Christ’s will that he remain to minister to the churches: “For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you” (Phil. 1:21–24).

Like the merchant of Jesus’ parable, Paul gave all for the pearl of great price: “I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ” (Phil. 3:8).

This man, who had written to the Corinthians “this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality,” ever held to the shining hope of transfiguration and resurrection: “For our conversation [RV citizenship] is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body [RV the body of our humiliation], that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working

whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself" (Phil. 3:20,21).

Paul constantly strove for a more perfect understanding of Christ: "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus . . . this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:12-14; compare I Cor. 13:12).

#### Further Journeying (63-67/68 A.D.)

History is silent regarding Paul's first trial in Rome before Nero, but there are indications within his three remaining letters, two to Timothy and one to Titus, that he was acquitted (*ca.* 63 A.D.), that he left the capital and continued his missionary labors for another four or five years (63-67?)\*. The testimony of Clement of Rome, Eusebius, Chrysostom, and Jerome bears this out. Scholars who accept these three epistles as genuinely Paul's feel they give Paul's own evidence of a further strenuous period of travel and of a second imprisonment in Rome, historical evidence that cannot be fitted into the record of Paul's life as it is recorded in the later chapters of Acts (20-28).\*\*

His preceding letters had indicated his desire to revisit Asia Minor and Macedonia upon his release (Philem. 1:22; compare Phil. 1:26; 2:24). Paul's exact movements and itinerary during this period between imprisonments cannot now be traced. He had apparently abandoned his earlier plan to go to Spain (Rom. 15:24,28), since there is no record of any visit; instead he traveled east. Accompanying him from time to time were trusted companions who assisted him and supported his zeal. Some he assigned to key positions in the churches as he felt his own work drawing to a close. We read that Paul visited Crete (Tit. 1:5), leaving Titus to oversee its churches. Another journey took the apostle to Asia Minor, where he stationed Timothy at Ephesus to strengthen the church (I Tim. 1:3). He left his friend Trophimus sick at Miletus (II Tim. 4:20); his cloak and his parchments were entrusted to Carpus at Troas (II Tim. 4:12). Paul proceeded to Macedonia, where his First Epistle to Timothy was written (I Tim. 1:3). Erastus he left at Corinth (II Tim. 4:20). He may have wintered at Nicopolis in Achaia in 67, for he wrote to Titus that such was his intention and that he would send for

Titus to come to him there (Tit. 3:12); or he may have been rearrested before this plan could be fulfilled.

In the doctrinal epistles (I and II Corinthians, Galatians, Romans) Paul had expounded the fundamental doctrines of Christianity; in the prison epistles (Philemon, Colossians, Ephesians, Philippians) he had shared his revelations of the Church both as a society among men and as the ideal and spiritual body of Christ; now, in his last letters (I Timothy, Titus, II Timothy)—the pastoral epistles—he dealt with the ecclesiastical organization of the churches and defined the work of a true pastor in the care of his flock.

In this closing period of his life Paul's great concerns were for the purity of church doctrine and for the conduct of church members. Unqualified teachers were beginning to make themselves heard. Instead of promoting the love that springs from a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith, these had turned to speculative discussions of Jewish genealogies and legends. The apostle's pastoral letters urged suppression of these errors and faithful adherence to wholesome teachings. They set out specific moral and spiritual qualifications for church officers, and prescribed rules for Christian conduct.

In 66/67 A.D. Paul wrote from Macedonia to his beloved Timothy in Ephesus (I Tim. 1:3). The great promise he had foreseen in this young disciple from their first meeting in Lystra had been fully justified. Timothy had been his companion on much of his second and third journeys, his trusted emissary to Corinth and the churches of Macedonia, and his comrade during a part of the Roman imprisonment. The riches of the apostle's thought were open to Timothy during these years of close association; it was his privilege to have had Paul's personal instruction and guidance, and to have been present when at least seven of the Pauline epistles were written (I and II Thessalonians, II Corinthians, Romans, Philippians, Philemon, Colossians).

Paul had left Timothy, now between thirty-five and forty, in charge of the Ephesian church. To supervise this important church, some of whose members were drifting away from the faith, was a formidable task. Paul's letter was timely, filled with the distilled wisdom of his years of experience. He gave Timothy apostolic guidance for the preservation of the gospel, guidelines for the appointment of church officers, specific rules for church discipline, and explicit instruction in Christian behavior. Interspersed with church matters were Paul's exhortations to Timothy himself that have, according to a nineteenth-century scholar, "ever since furnished a treasury of practical precepts for the Christian Church."

\*Second Timothy 4:16,17 were interpreted by early church fathers as referring to Paul's first defense before Nero and subsequent release. Later scholars believe they may refer to an earlier trial.

\*\*First and Second Timothy and Titus were early attributed to Paul, but modern scholarship questions his authorship on the grounds of historical difficulties, literary style, reference to increasing heresies, and advanced church organization.



*First Epistle to Timothy*

The keynote is “that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God” (3:15). 🌹 **Chapter 1** gives Paul’s apostolic greeting to Timothy and charges the young pastor to rebuke those who are teaching incorrect doctrine and quibbling interpretations of the Law. The Law is good if used lawfully, enacted not so much for a righteous man as for the restraint of evildoers. Recalling the enormity of his own sin, Paul rejoices that through God’s mercy and grace he has been forgiven and entrusted with Christ’s gospel, and sees himself as a pattern of Christ’s patient love to all believers. He exhorts Timothy to protect the purity of church doctrine, expressing confidence that Timothy will fulfill this trust in accordance with the prophecies made at his ordination, and will “war a good warfare” (compare I Tim. 4:14; II Tim. 1:6). He warns him not to wreck his faith by blasphemy as had Hymenaeus or by disobedience as had Alexander, associates the apostle had excommunicated (II Tim. 2:17,18; 4:14,15).

🌹 **Chapter 2** gives directions concerning prayer and concerning the conduct and place of women in public worship. Prayer is to be offered for all men, including those high in government, that the Church might have peace, and that all men might be brought to a knowledge of the truth, since there is but one God and one mediator, Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all. Prayer should be holy, offered in a spirit free of anger and dispute. Paul rules that women are to dress modestly and not embellish their persons with costly clothes and ornaments—their ornaments should be good works; in church they are to be silent and submissive, neither teaching in the congregation nor usurping the authority of the men (compare I Cor. 14:34,35; 11:2–15).

🌹 **Chapter 3** lists the qualifications of church officers. A bishop, an elder, must be blameless in character; the character of deacons must likewise be irreproachable. Paul states these requisites to guide Timothy in his dealings with church members, for “the church of the living God [is] the pillar and ground of the truth.” Here he exclaims in wonder at the “mystery of godliness” of this religion as manifested in the incarnate Christ.

🌹 **Chapter 4** reiterates Paul’s charge to Timothy to guard against false teachings of asceticism that do not promote spirituality and that are causing some to fall away from the faith—such teachings as prohibition of marriage and insistence on abstinence from certain kinds

of food. As a good minister it is Timothy’s duty to warn his congregation against these errors. General instructions of a personal nature follow: Timothy is to train himself in godliness, as godliness holds the promise of life now and of life to come; despite his youth he is to set an example of Christian excellence, applying himself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching, to meditation. Thus he will save himself and those who hear.

🌹 **Chapters 5–6** contain counsel on how to deal with various groups within the church: with the old and the young of both sexes; with widows and unmarried women; with elders, those meriting honor and those deserving reproof. Timothy is counseled to “lay hands suddenly on no man [ordain no one hastily].” Finally, he is advised as to the conduct of Christian slaves under both heathen and Christian masters. Paul cautions against false teachers who, in addition to their other wrong practices, are using religion as a means of gain. This admonition is followed by a warning against greed—“for the love of money is the root of all evil.” Again there is an appeal to Timothy to follow righteousness and godliness, to persevere in the “good fight of faith” to which he has been called, and to keep spotless the gospel which has been committed to him. Apostolic benediction.

Shortly after Paul had written to Timothy he wrote to Titus, who had been left in charge of the churches in Crete. How or when Christianity was brought to the island is not known—perhaps by Jews who had heard Peter’s sermon on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:11) or by Paul during his stay at Fair Havens (Acts 27:8,9). The Cretan churches were troubled by false teachers—Gnostic believers and Jewish converts who insisted on continued adherence to Jewish ordinances. In addition, the Cretans themselves had an unsavory reputation as liars and gluttons.

Titus, like Timothy, was a personal convert of Paul—termed by the apostle “mine own son after the common faith.” He was the young Greek delegate Paul had taken to the Council of Jerusalem years before (Gal. 2:1,3), Paul’s companion at Ephesus on the second missionary journey, and the co-worker entrusted with two important missions to Corinth (II Cor. 12:18; 8:6 and II Cor. 8:16–18). Paul always spoke of him with deep affection and high esteem (II Cor. 2:13; 8:22,23).

Paul’s letter gives Titus authority to appoint pastors in the local churches of Crete and furnishes him with valuable spiritual guidance much like that given to Timothy.

*Epistle to Titus*

✠ **Chapter 1** reminds Titus that he has been sent to Crete to “set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city.” Paul sets down the requisite qualifications for church officers: stewards of God must be blameless in character and possess a strong faith so they can encourage others with sound teaching and be equipped effectively to silence willful, conceited, deceitful teachers who are undermining the faith of whole families “for filthy lucre’s sake.”

✠ **Chapter 2** is Paul’s strong directive to instruct the various groups within the congregation—aged men and women, young men and women, servants, and believers in general—in Christian character and duties that are in accord with “sound doctrine.” All are to live “soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world” while awaiting the fulfillment of their hope of Christ’s return in glory.

✠ **Chapter 3** contains further exhortations. Titus is to remind believers to be obedient citizens of the state and to live in peace and brotherhood with those in the world around them. At one time they had been foolish, disobedient, hateful, sensuous, but God’s mercy and grace had saved them through the regenerative power of the Holy Ghost, and now they must be “careful to maintain good works.” Titus is warned to stand aloof from foolish and contentious discussions; to warn unteachable persons (heretics) twice, then have nothing more to do with them. Apostolic benediction.

**Second Imprisonment in Rome (67/68 A.D.)** In 64, during Paul’s absence from the Roman capital, Rome caught fire and more than half the city was destroyed. The debauched, half-mad Nero was rumored to have set the fire. Perhaps to divert suspicion from him, blame was laid on the Christians of Rome. According to Tacitus, thousands were martyred with great cruelty—crucified, burned as torches, torn by beasts. Christians were henceforth recognized as a distinct body, separate from both Jews and pagans. During the next few years the hatred and suspicion of the whole Empire was directed more or less against this sect, and any event that brought its members to the attention of the Roman authorities only served to heighten that suspicion.

It was inevitable that in time so eminent a leader as Paul should be seized and imprisoned again at Rome. The exact charge against him is not known. The conditions of his incarceration the second time were far more severe than the first; he was not only

chained night and day to a soldier but was also treated as a common criminal. Now nearing sixty-five, such treatment was a difficult trial for the apostle. He continued, however, to supervise the churches whenever and wherever possible, sending Crescens to Galatia; Titus to Dalmatia (the coastal region of Illyricum); Tychicus to Ephesus. Some of his Asian friends had fallen away. Amid this sense of desertion he had been greatly cheered by the visits of his Ephesian friend Onesiphorus, who had come to Rome and courageously and painstakingly searched him out. Of his close friends Luke alone was now with him to lighten his loneliness and alleviate the hardships of his environment. But he longed to see Timothy, and wrote him to come to Rome quickly.


This second letter, written at the close of nearly thirty-three years of labor for the Church, is the last of Paul’s correspondence the world now possesses. At the Last Supper Jesus had consoled his sorrowing disciples, enlarging their understanding; now Paul, knowing his martyrdom was imminent, comforted and strengthened Timothy—and through him Christians everywhere. He renewed his charge to this dear comrade, confident that Timothy would carry on the gospel message in full measure.


*Second Epistle to Timothy*

✠ **Chapter 1** conveys Paul’s deep affection for Timothy and his longing to see him. The young preacher is reminded of his spiritual capabilities and urged to persevere with a fresh courage and zeal in professing the faith, for the spirit that had been given him was one not of fear but “of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.” Paul calls on Timothy to suffer with him, willingly and without shame, the afflictions that come to a minister of the gospel, for their calling is holy and holds the hope of immortality. He charges him to safeguard the Christian truth committed to him, mentioning sadly the widespread disaffection and desertion of some of his own converts in the province of Asia, among them Phygellus and Hermogenes, but acknowledging gratefully the loyalty and aid of Onesiphorus of Ephesus, who had visited him in Rome.

In ✠ **Chapter 2** Paul charges Timothy to recruit trustworthy men for the ministry and commit to them what he has received that they may be able to teach others. As “a good soldier of Jesus Christ” Timothy must resolutely endure hardship and suffering. A soldier does not entangle himself with the world’s occupations so he may please his commanding officer. A man competing in athletic games does not win the

prize unless he obeys the rules. The husbandman has the right to the first share of his crop. Let him mark well these three illustrations he has given and God will give him understanding. Let him always remember that Jesus was raised from the dead; for this teaching he himself suffers imprisonment, chained as a criminal, but “the word of God is not bound.” He endures all these things for the sake of those called of God, that they may obtain salvation. He relies on the promise that those who die with Christ will live with him; that those who suffer with Christ will reign with him; that those who deny Christ, them will Christ deny; that even though men believe not, Christ “abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.” Timothy is admonished to be a sound workman, rightly handling the word of truth, shunning heretical doctrines. Thus he will be a vessel of honor fit for use in the household of God. Let him flee youthful lusts and aim for the virtues of righteousness, faith, love, and peace in the company of those having a like goal. Timothy is cautioned against participating in foolish discussions which only engender strife. Rather, a servant of the Lord must gently, patiently, meekly correct the errors of his opponents, hoping for their repentance.

In  **Chapter 3** Paul foretells “perilous times” of apostasy which will precede the Second Coming of Christ, when men will be lovers of self and indulge in the worst sort of evil, keeping up a form of religion but denying its power. Turn away from such persons. These reprobates resist the truth, but they cannot continue to do so with any more success than could the two Egyptian magicians (Jannes and Jambres, according to Jewish tradition) who resisted Moses in the plagues (Ex. 7:11). Paul reminds Timothy again of his gospel and of his own example of patience and love, and of the persecutions endured at Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra, yet God had delivered him from them all. All who live godly lives will know persecution. Paul urges Timothy to be faithful to the lessons he has learned from the Scriptures since childhood; in them is to be found a complete and sufficient guide to the man of God in all things relating to perfection.

 **Chapter 4** gives Paul’s final solemn charge to Timothy to be tirelessly zealous in his preaching of the gospel—“instant in season, out of season . . . endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry”—for times of apostasy lie ahead. His own ministry is finished and the time of his departure is near. Paul rests in the assurance that he

has fought a good fight and guarded the faith, and that “a crown of righteousness” is awaiting him, as it does all who are faithful. The apostle requests Timothy to come to Rome speedily and bring Mark with him, picking up on the way the cloak and parchments left at Troas. He informs Timothy that at his direction some of his fellow workers have gone into various fields of labor but speaks sorrowfully of others who have deserted him. In fact, he confides that no Christian friend had stood by him “at [his] first answer” (possibly a reference to a preliminary trial before the imperial court during his second imprisonment); nevertheless Christ had strengthened him so that he had been able to make a full proclamation of the gospel before all the Gentiles present. He closes on a triumphant note of absolute trust that Christ would “preserve [him] unto his heavenly kingdom.” Greetings and apostolic benediction.

### *Paul’s Martyrdom*

The Biblical record of Paul’s life ceases with this second letter to Timothy. It was the close of a career that had encompassed a phenomenal amount of travel for the time—of some 12,000 to 15,000 miles in the course of his missionary activities. According to the early church fathers Tertullian and Origen, this greatest of missionaries who did so much to mold Christian thought and articulate Christian doctrine died by the sword at Rome in 67 or 68 A.D., toward the end of Nero’s reign.

In Paul’s final letter to Timothy there shines through the strong character of this man who had “redeemed” the time. Though he had termed himself “Paul the aged,” there was no letting down in his zeal, no carelessness in modes of thought, no diminishing of devotion and love for the Church; only a mounting vision and an invincible faith. God, who had strengthened him when all men had deserted him, would rescue him from every evil and bring him into His heavenly realm. Jesus had stood unmoved by the humiliation of rejection; Paul was not ashamed of the humiliation of imprisonment. He was at peace, for he had long since been persuaded that *nothing* could separate him from the love of God.

In the shadow of martyrdom Paul held a strong and exalted conviction of immortality. Immortality to him was not something still to be accomplished, but a truth already manifest and available to all in the life of Christ. His good fight of faith had assured him “a crown of righteousness.”

## ***PARALLELS IN THE LIVES OF PAUL AND JESUS***

After conversion Paul dedicated himself to preaching and expounding the gospel of Christ. He sought to approximate the Master's love; thus the circumstances and experiences of his life parallel in many instances those of the life of Jesus.

The keynote of Paul's life is summed up in his own words: "For to me to live is Christ."

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### **JESUS**

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### **PAUL**

#### **Submission to the Father's Will**

"I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." Jn. 6:38

"Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Acts 9:6

#### **True Genealogy**

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth." Jn. 1:1,14

"As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God . . . Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Jn. 1:12,13

"Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father . . . )" Gal. 1:1

#### **Minister and Apostle**

"For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." Mk. 10:45

"I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle . . . a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity." I Tim. 2:7 (Acts 26:16)

#### **Universal Mission**

"A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." Lu. 2:32

"Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." Jn. 10:16

"He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel." Acts 9:15

"I [Christ] send thee [to the Gentiles], To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God . . . ." Acts 26:17,18



Season of Solitude

Jesus, after baptism, withdrew into the solitude of the wilderness of Judaea to face his temptation and the requirements of his mission. Mt. 4:1–11

Paul, after conversion, withdrew into the solitude of Arabia to reflect upon his conversion and his call to apostleship. Gal. 1:15–17

One Gospel

“Jesus . . . said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.” Jn. 7:16,17

“I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.” Gal. 1:11,12

Early Hostility of Enemies

“All they in the synagogue . . . rose up, and thrust him out of the city [Nazareth], and led him unto the brow of the hill . . . that they might cast him down headlong.” Lu. 4:28,29

“The Jews took counsel to kill him . . . . And they watched the gates [of Damascus] day and night to kill him.” Acts 9:23,24

The Effectual Working of God’s Power

“The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.” Jn. 14:10

“I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.” I Cor. 15:10

Transfiguration

“After six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them.” Mk. 9:2

“I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth); such an one caught up to the third heaven.” II Cor. 12:2–4

Preaching, Healing, Raising the Dead

“Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.” Mt. 9:35

“Long time . . . abode they [Paul and Barnabas] speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands.” Acts 14:3

Jesus raised the widow’s son Lu. 7:11–17

Paul raised from stoning Acts 14:19,20

He raised Jairus’ daughter Lu. 8:41–56

Paul raised Eutychus Acts 20:7–12

He raised Lazarus Jn. 11:1–45

### The Object of Envy

“The Pharisees . . . said . . . Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him.” Jn. 12:19

“He [Pilate] knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy.” Mk. 15:10

“When the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming.” Acts 13:45

### Accusation of Irreligious Conduct

The Pharisees charged: “This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day.” Jn. 9:16

“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.” Acts 21:28

### Humiliation and Persecution

“Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him.” Jn. 19:1

“Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote him with the palms of their hands . . .” Mt. 26:67

“Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned . . .” II Cor. 11:24, 25

“The high priest Ananias commanded them that stood by him to smite him on the mouth.” Acts 23:2

### Trial before Jewish Authorities

Before the high priest Caiaphas and Sanhedrin in Jerusalem Mt. 26:57–68

Before the high priest Ananias and Sanhedrin in Jerusalem Acts 22:30–23:10

### Trial before Roman Authorities

Before Pilate Jn. 18:28–19:16  
Before Herod Antipas Lu. 23:7–12  
Before Pilate Lu. 23:13–24

Before Felix Acts 24  
Before Porcius Festus Acts 25:1–12  
Before Herod Agrippa II Acts 25:23–26:32

### Accusation of Sedition and Treason

“We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King.” Lu. 23:2

“We have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes.” Acts 24:5

## JESUS

## PAUL

### Subject to Worldly Policy

“Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus . . . to be crucified.” Mk. 15:15

“Felix, willing to shew the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound.” Acts 24:27 (cf. 25:9)

### Accusation of Madness

“Many of them said, He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him?” Jn. 10:20

“Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad.” Acts 26:24

### Innocency

Pilate said, “I find in him no fault at all.” Jn. 18:38

Festus and Herod Agrippa said, “This man doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds.” Acts 26:31

### Willingness to Endure Suffering

“I lay down my life for the sheep.” Jn. 10:15

“I endure all things for the elect’s sakes . . . .” II Tim. 2:10

### Crucifixion and Martyrdom

“Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father . . . .” Jn. 13:1

“I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.” II Tim. 4:6

### Faithful Accomplishment of Mission

“I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.” Jn. 17:4

“I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.” II Tim. 4:7

### Expectation of Glorification

“Now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.” Jn. 17:5

“Now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known” I Cor. 13:12

“Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.” Mt. 26:64

“Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day . . . .” II Tim. 4:8