

# The Apostle Paul

## SERMON NOTES

Week 1 September 1, 2024

**"Blinded by the Light"**

Acts 8:1-3, 9:1-6, 9, 17-19, 21:39, 22:3, 26:9-11;  
Philippians 3:5; 2 Corinthians 5:17, 10:10;  
2 Peter 3:16; Galatians 1:14



### I. Paul's Background

- A. Paul was born in Tarsus, which is in modern day \_\_\_\_\_.
- B. Paul was Jewish, but he also grows up a Roman \_\_\_\_\_.
- C. Paul's parents were \_\_\_\_\_ makers and that is what Paul did to pay his way when he is preaching the gospel.
- D. At the age of 13, Paul went off to school to study under one of the leading \_\_\_\_\_ of his time.

### II. Sometimes Like a Man, Sometimes Like an Angel

- A. The 'Acts of Paul and Thecla' says that sometimes Paul seems like a man, sometimes Paul seems like an \_\_\_\_\_.
- B. There are times that God speaks through us and we become messengers of God and at the same time, there are places we see our mere \_\_\_\_\_.

### III. Saul the Persecutor

- A. Paul was blinded by his own \_\_\_\_\_.
- B. We see throughout the history of humankind people giving into their rage, ambition, \_\_\_\_\_, and darkness.
- C. We were created in the image of God; yet at the same time there is something broken in us and we can either give in to the \_\_\_\_\_ or to the darkness.

### IV. Paul's Conversion

- A. Paul wasn't converted after seeing the light, he was converted after \_\_\_\_\_ came, explained the way, and invited him to be baptized.
- B. It's not our superior intellectual arguments that win people to Christ, it is our capacity and willingness to \_\_\_\_\_.
- C. Invitation:
  - 1. If you have not said yes to Christ, say yes to him today.
  - 2. If you are already a Christian, pray "Lord, help me to love others well."

***Things I Would Like to Remember About This Message***

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# ASBURY DAILY STUDY GUIDE *September 2-7, 2024*

## INTRODUCTION

The Apostle Paul came on to the pages of history as someone who hated Christians and he became the ringleader in persecuting them. But then something happened: he encountered the resurrected Jesus and it changed everything. So what lessons can we learn from Paul's early years and his conversion for our own spiritual journey?

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### Monday: Acts 7:54-8:3, 9:1-2

In Saul's background and education, nearly every person he respected, from the high priest down, rejected Jesus and saw Christians as a threat to God's truth. No wonder he set out – and with great passion - to destroy a faith he saw as seriously wrong. Did your background and training make it easy or hard for you to believe in Jesus? How well are you able to understand and relate to people with backgrounds different from yours?

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### Tuesday: Acts 22:3-5, 26:4-11

Later, in Philippians 3:3-8, the apostle Paul, answering critics who implied that he wasn't "holy" enough, listed all his human credentials. He went on to say he had come to see his top-notch rabbinic education, his renown as a religious leader, and his respectability and status all as "sewer trash" compared to the value of knowing Jesus (Philippians 3:8, CEB). Of what achievements, degrees, or awards - if any - are you particularly proud? Would you rank knowing Jesus above them? Why or why not?

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### Wednesday: Acts 9:3-9, 26:12-18

Paul did not treat his meeting with Jesus on the road to Damascus as "just a vision" - an illusory, inward incident. He believed he'd met the risen Christ just as "really" as any other apostle (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:5-9). It was so significant that Paul told (and Luke reported) two additional versions of it (Acts 22:3-16; 26:9-18). What evidence or experiences have most strongly led you to share Paul's faith that Jesus is truly alive, and to order your life around that faith?

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### Thursday: Acts 9:10-18, 22:12-16

Acts 9 talked about Ananias bravely going to a man who had come to town to imprison him - maybe even kill him. When on trial, recorded in Acts 22, Paul remembered that Ananias was eager to get him baptized, despite his track record of violently opposing Christians. Has God ever called you to do something good that nevertheless scared you and called for some courage? If God called you to an "Ananias" mission today, how easy or hard do you believe it would be for you to respond?

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### Friday: Acts 9:20-25, 28-30, Galatians 1:11-12, 15-23, 2:1-2

Paul began to preach "right away" (Acts 9:20). Yet it took years (in Arabia, Tarsus, Damascus) to think through how his rabbinic Scripture learning fit with the stunning reality of meeting the risen Jesus before he could write masterworks like Galatians or Romans. Why is both the core Good News about Jesus and careful thought and study of how to apply that faith vital to your Christian walk?

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## MOVING FORWARD

Like the Apostle Paul, we were created in the image of God; still, there is something broken in us and we can either give into the light or to the darkness. Paul's conversion to the light, required Ananias' willingness to love. We need to remember that even today, it's not our superior intellectual arguments that win people to Christ; it is our capacity and willingness to love. So if you are a Jesus follower, pray "Lord, help me to love others well."

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*Answers to the sermon notes: IA) Turkey, B) citizen, C) tent, D) Rabbis. IIA) angel, IIB) humanity. IIIA) ambition, B) sin, C) light. IVA) Ananias, B) love.*