

Paul’s World was Forever Changed when he saw RISEN LORD JESUS Christ  
v. 8 “he appeared to me also”

Text: BOTH TRUTH of Resur & Paul’s TESTIMONY as Believer Risen Jesus  
Later we’ll hear Similar Testimonies about how Risen Jesus still Changing Lives  
My Prayer on this Easter Morning that YOU TOO will Encounter Risen JESUS

Apostle Paul Letter to Church in Corinth > 2<sup>nd</sup> half of Letter Answers Questions  
1 their Questions > Nature & Reality RESURRECTION of Jesus Christ > Ch 15

PAUL Born in Tarsus, capital of Cilicia, Asia Minor – modern day Turkey

Father was Roman – named Paul from birth / Jewish name Saul

Jewish influence – most formative / Pharisee / student of Gamaliel

Strong Opponent of Followers of Jesus > v. 9 “I persecuted the church of God”

Saul of Tarsus SO Angry about Jesus > VIOLENT RELIGIOUS Fundamentalist

Paul told KING AGRIPPA “I too was convinced that I ought to do all that was possible to oppose the name of Jesus of Nazareth. And that is just what I did in Jerusalem. On the authority of the chief priests I put many of the saints in prison, and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them.” Acts 26.9

## 1. A New Understanding of Jesus

Jesus NOT Messiah Paul expected: Sought Glorious King / Saw Gory Criminal

Jesus was Poor, Weak Man who Could Not Save Self from Executioner

“Though we once regarded Christ from a worldly point of view, we do so no longer”  
2 Corinthians 5.16

## PAUL GAVE THIS TESTIMONY BEFORE KING AGRIPPA

“I was going to Damascus...about noon, O king, as I was on the road, I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, blazing around me and my companions. We all fell to the ground, and I heard a voice...Then I asked, “Who are you Lord?” “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,” the Lord replied. Acts 26.13-19

Paul APPOINTED Apostle to the GENTILES by Risen Lord Jesus

Zealously and Courageously Preached GOSPEL around Mediterranean World

Contributed 13 Letters to NT > Filled with DEEP and PROFOUND Truths

Of ALL Paul Said & Thought > Clearly Knows ONE Thing FIRST Importance

v. 3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures

GOSPEL OF JESUS > Gospel FROM Jesus – GIVEN by REVELATION

v. 3 “Christ died for our sins”

100 years after Resurrection – DEBATE – btwn Xtian and Jew

Xtian: Justin famous Apologist // Jew: Trypho widely RESPECTED SCHOLAR

“We doubt whether the Messiah could possibly have been crucified in this dishonorable way. For in the law it says that a crucified man is cursed. On this point you will not be able to persuade me.” Trypho

Paul – FORMERLY A DEVOUT JEW – Once Made SAME CONCLUSION

Now NEW UNDERSTANDING – JESUS WAS CURSED BY GOD

“Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree” Galatians 3.13

JESUS WAS CURSED > NOT PERSONALLY > VICARIOUSLY – FOR US HE TOOK OUR CURSE – BORE OUR SINS – PAID OUR PENALTY

“May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ” Galatians 6.14

v. 4 “he was buried”

Very LIKELY in CLOSE PROXIMITY to the place CROSS was LOCATED  
EXACT SITE is UNCERTAIN > 2000 yrs of CHANGE > WARFARE, SIEGE  
ENEMIES Thought they were FINISHED with JESUS >> CORPSE Remained

...people sentenced to death forfeited their property and were forbidden burial  
Tacitus, Roman historian

NOBODY IMPORTANT was Crucified > No Victim Worthy of NEW Tomb  
700 Years EARLIER – Prophet ISAIAH saw these Events and PREDICTED:  
He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death Isaiah 53.9

GRAVE – Between 2 Guilty THIEVES – as Hung on Cross  
In DEATH – Placed in Expensive Tomb of Prominent Leader

v. 4 he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures

Paul DECLARES Resurrection of Jesus as Space and Time HISTORICAL Event  
“The resurrection of Jesus is the Gibraltar of Christian evidences” R.A. Torrey

Gifted Teacher – Miracle Worker – Followed with Interest & Curiosity  
EXECUTED > Looked like END MISERABLE FAILURE, FOLLOWERS RAN

Paul declares Bodily RESURRECTION OF JESUS FROM THE DEAD  
Challenges Greek-Thinking Corinthians who THOUGHT it was IMPOSSIBLE

Risen Jesus TOUCHED by Disciples – Walked on Road to Emmaus,  
Ate Broiled Fish on Lakeshore - Taught them for 40 days



*James* – probably Half-Brother of Jesus, now Leader of Jerusalem church  
 Denied him in Early Years – Convinced by Resurrection

*All the Apostles* – perhaps refers to Mt. of Ascension

ARMY of Witnesses = Importance of Resurrection / NOT Exhaustive List

Ex. Women were first Witnesses and Preachers of Resurrection

v. 8 Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.

*LAST OF ALL to me also -*

1. No More Appearances- not Joan of Arc, Muhammed, or Joseph Smith
2. Paul's Calling & Standing was EQUAL to All other Apostles

## 2. A New Understanding of Salvation

MUCH OF PAUL'S LIFE SPENT TRYING TO SAVE HIMSELF

v. 9 "I persecuted the church of God"

JESUS warned his Disciples "a time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering a service to God" John 16.2

Paul told KING AGRIPPA "I too was convinced that I ought to do all that was possible to oppose the name of Jesus of Nazareth. And that is just what I did in Jerusalem. On the authority of the chief priests I put many of the saints in prison, and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them." Acts 26.9

THIS ZEALOUS DEVOTION BASED ON RELIGIOUS CONVICTION

PARTICULARLY HIS COMMITMENT TO THE LAW OF GOD

As a PHARISEE – Paul had a HOPE of Resurrection

MANY Religions have HOPE of RESURRECTION

Millions of MUSLIMS given LIVES as Ultimate JIHAD  
Sincerely Expecting to ARRIVE Pleasure-filled PARADISE

MORMONS expect to become GODS in their Own Personal Heavens  
They and their MANY WIVES will Populate Own UNIVERSE

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES zealously Distribute TRACTS and TESTIFY  
Hoping they will be one of 144,000 of ISRAEL who are SEALED

Some look for NIRVANA becoming Absorbed in Cosmic Consciousness

All HOPING for Something GOOD beyond their GRAVES

HUGE DIFFERENCE between Resurrection Ideas of Christianity & All Else...

RISEN CHRIST! --- Claimed "Way, Truth, Life" – Then ROSE from DEAD  
Muhammed, Budda, every Other Religious Leader Still in GRAVE

If Christ is risen – then nothing else matters. And if Christ is not risen – then  
nothing else matters. Jaroslav Pelikan

When he MET the RISEN Jesus, Paul was CLEAR TRUTH about Resurrection

"I want you to know, brothers, that the gospel I preached is not something that  
man made up. I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I  
received it by revelation from Jesus Christ" Galatians 1.11,12

GOOD NEWS: Faith in Savior – Kept Law Perfectly – Died for its Penalty

vs. 1,2 the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you —unless you believed in vain.

HE DESCRIBES ALL HIS EFFORTS AT SELF-SALVATION adding:

“I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ – the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith”

Philippians 3.8,9

v. 2 the gospel...by which you are being saved

“By this gospel YOU ARE BEING SAVED” Continuous Action

JESUS DID NOT JUST SAVE FROM YESTERDAY’S SINS

BY FAITH HE HAS EVEN SAVED YOU FROM TOMORROWS SINS

SALVATION EXPERIENCE – BIGGER THAN ONE POINT IN TIME

Stretches from ETERNITY PAST – Chosen by God – unto ETERNITY

FUTURE – Dwell Forever in His Presence

PARADOX – GOD does EVERYTHING / DEMANDS EVERYTHING

vs. 1,2 the gospel...you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you —unless you believed in vain.

v. 1 RECEIVED / IN WHICH YOU STAND / v. 2 HOLD FAST

Words are Decisive Acts – Firm Commitment

More than just... *“raising hand with every head bowed and every eye closed”*

Paul HAD DEVOTED HIMSELF – False System, Empty Promise

NOW RECEIVED GOD’S SAVING TRUTH IN CHRIST at RISK of LIFE

v. 10 “I worked harder than all of them”

Call to Salvation = Call to Service

WHEN JESUS SAW the RABBI SAUL OF TARSUS  
HE SAW PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE GENTILES

### 3. A New Understanding of Himself

PERHAPS HARDEST CRISIS – try to Change Very Character / Identity

PREVIOUSLY – SAUL THE PHARISEE

LIFE BUILT ON SHARP DISTINCTION btwn Jew & Gentile

v. 1 “Now...brothers...”

Devout Jew – calls Gentile Corinthians BROTHERS – Risked his life for Them

1<sup>st</sup> WORD CHRISTIAN PAUL HEARD FROM another CHRISTIAN

Ananias said, “**Brother** Saul, the Lord – Jesus, who appeared to you...has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit” Acts 9.17

AS APOSTLE – Paul was often FRIENDLESS & MISUNDERSTOOD

Devoted Jew – hated by his own people whom he deeply loved

King Agrippa said your great learning is driving you insane

Apostle to Gentiles – Jewish Apostles sometimes PREJUDICED & JEALOUS

Intellectuals – Fool, Naked Man on Cross Save World!? Bodily Resurrection?!

Powerful Laughed at Weakness – Messiah Brutally MURDERED?

Missionary – SHARP DISAGREEMENT with Barnabas

Church Planter – Fought with Jewish Leaders & Government Officials



Preacher – Did not have the ELOQUENCE of APOLLOS

Letter Writer – Peter said “some things are hard to understand” 2 P 3.16

Prisoner – he was also preaching to the guards and soldiers

Physical Appearance – tradition says he was painfully ugly

CALLING TO APOSTLESHIP – BITTER PILL TO SWALLOW

v. 8 “abnormally born” – critics: Paul was Not Born Again – was Aborted

Word for a DEAD FETUS – Abortion or Miscarriage

BORN POST-MATURELY – long after the Other Apostles who knew Jesus

v. 9 “I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God”

Re: Spiritual Depression: Its Causes and Cure – Martyn Lloyd-Jones

Theme– REGRETS – Why NOT Curl Up on Couch w/ Carton of Ice Cream!

v. 10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.

CRITICAL JUNCTURE – How to respond to Problems

REAL PROBLEMS – NOT EMPTY ATTACKS – REAL GUILT

NOT an ICE CREAM Pity PARTY– Himself as the only Invited Guest

GREATNESS OF PAUL > knew Grace of God – not just Theory of Salvation

Grace of God – Living Experience / Life-Changing Reality / Solid Hope

vs. 9,10 “I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.

HONEST ADMISSION – I did it

HEART-FELT ACCEPTANCE – God forgave me

HUMBLE ANALYSIS – God enabled me

HEAVENLY ADVANCE – God gets glory, men are saved

Paul: “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life”  
1 Timothy 1.15,16

MAYBE WE NEED SPIRITUAL MRI – FULL BODY X-RAY

See how we’re limiting what God can do in us – Prejudices, Wrong Ideas,

FAILURE TO Receive HIS FORGIVENESS FOR PAST – MOVE ON

v. 10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.

Enabled by Grace v. 10a “I worked harder than all of them”

Exalted Grace v. 10b “not I, but the grace of God in me”

Luke Records Paul’s TESTIMONY 3 X’s in Acts chapters 9, 22, 26

Why TAKE so Much Parchment – Telling Story of Whole Church – 3 X’s

SIGNIFICANT Role of Paul – Apostle to GENTILES – Author 13 Letters NT

POWER of Personal TESTIMONY > Paul, Mine, Yours, Every Believer

Testimony is IRREFUTABLE – Cannot be DENIED – Happened to You!

Skeptics & Doubters Left with No ANSWER – You’re Standing Right Here!

I Pray this EASTER You MORE CONFIDENT than JOB said 4000 yrs ago  
For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth.  
Job 19.25

“I Know He is Risen!” / RISEN with Him by Faith / Seated in Heavenly Places

v. 11 Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

So GRACE of God continues to be Extended > Ends of Earth, End of the Age

Whether You or Me – Together We Preach – So Many will Believe & Be Saved

1 Corinthians 15:<sup>1</sup> Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, <sup>2</sup>and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you— unless you believed in vain. <sup>3</sup>For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup>that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, <sup>5</sup>and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. <sup>6</sup>Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. <sup>7</sup>Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. <sup>8</sup>Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. <sup>9</sup>For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. <sup>10</sup>But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. <sup>11</sup>Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.