

YOUTH



LEVEL 9

BIBLE

LESSONS



LESSON 3



The Life of Paul—Part 1

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# THE LIFE OF PAUL

## PART I

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**A**bout the second or third year A.D., a wealthy Jewish family living in the town of Tarsus, which was in the province of Cilicia (southern portion of Turkey today), gave birth to a boy they named Saul. Saul's father had obtained Roman citizenship, so Saul was a Roman citizen by birth (Acts 22:27-28). In the Roman world it was advantageous to be a Roman citizen.

Like most parents, Saul's mother and father wanted the best for their son. He showed unusual intelligence and was given the opportunity to study in the best schools. He learned to speak Aramaic, Hebrew, Greek and Latin. He was educated in the Greek philosophers and poets. But he showed the greatest interest in the Holy Scriptures. Sometime after Saul became a teenager, he was sent to Jerusalem to study the law of Moses. Saul, like his father, was a Pharisee (the largest sect of Judaism during his day). He was one of the most zealous of the young students being trained and was selected to study under Gamaliel, a well-known and respected teacher of the law (Acts 22:3).

In the late spring of A.D. 31 the people in Jerusalem saw the beginning of what they considered to be a whole new religious order. Jesus of Nazareth, whom some believed to be the prophesied Messiah, had just weeks before been put to death. The Jewish religious leaders

had trumped up false accusations and insisted that Jesus was guilty of crimes worthy of death. However, it was the Roman government that carried out the sentence — death by crucifixion.

It was on the day of Pentecost that the followers of Jesus began to attract a great deal of public attention. They called themselves the Church of God, but most of the Jews called them "Nazarenes," after Jesus of Nazareth. On that day of Pentecost in A.D. 31, 3,000 new converts were added to God's Church. Then, as the days went by, thousands more became part of the Church.

The "Nazarenes," under the human leadership of a Galilean fisherman named Peter, were causing a great deal of consternation among the popular religious leaders in Jerusalem.

Saul, the zealous young rabbinical student, thought the followers of Jesus were heretics. (Read Acts 8:3.) In his misguided zeal, Saul determined to stamp out what he thought to be a fanatical new and false religion. Its members deserved to be imprisoned, or stoned to death.

### SAUL'S CONVERSION

In Lesson One we read of Stephen, a deacon in the early Church who was stoned to death by the Jews. A leader in that persecution was this same Saul of Tarsus. In fact, our first introduction to Saul in the Bible is at the stoning of Stephen (Acts 7:58). He hardly seemed like the kind of man God would intend to use. But in many cases if the energies of a zealous person are channeled in the right direction instead of the wrong direction, he can be of great service to God.

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#### ABOUT OUR COVER . . .

Present day Damascus — ruins of the Eastern Gate.

Photo by P. Termes

So God called Saul.

Saul and his party were approaching the city of Damascus where they had authority from the high priest to arrest the followers of Jesus. Suddenly, out of a clear blue sky there was a blinding flash of light and a roaring clap of thunder! Saul fell to the ground, hiding his face from the light. The men with him covered their ears from the noise. To them it was simply noise, but Saul could hear a voice. Read Acts 9:7 and Acts 22:9. You'll find only Saul *understood* the voice. The others just heard a loud noise.

What did the voice say to Saul? Read Acts 9:4 and fill in the missing words: "Saul, Saul, \_\_\_\_\_ me?" Of course, Saul was shocked! He didn't know what was happening, Was he seeing a vision? Had he fallen into a trance? Was this his imagination? "Who . . . who are you?" stammered Saul. The answer is found in Acts 9:5. "I am \_\_\_\_\_: it is \_\_\_\_\_ for thee to \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_."

"Go to Damascus and I will tell you what to do," Christ told Saul (verse 6; Acts 22:10). And to paraphrase what Saul later said when he was on trial for his life and was asked about his conversion, "You would have obeyed the heavenly vision too, had it appeared to you!"

When Saul got up, he was totally blind! His companions were dumbfounded. They led him on into the city of Damascus where for three days he went without food and water. He remained blind the entire time (Acts 9:8-9).

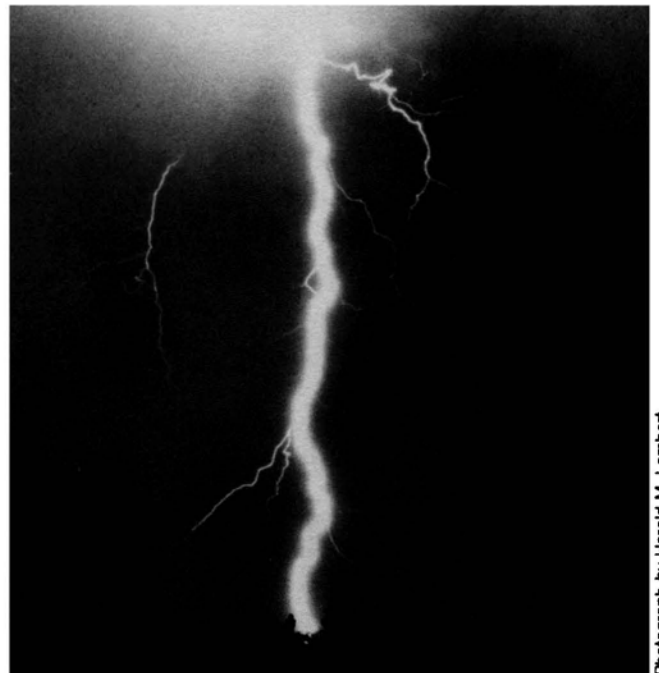
In the meantime God, through a vision, revealed his plan for Saul to a disciple in Damascus named Ananias. "Was this not the man who has persecuted the followers of Jesus from Jerusalem all the way to Damascus?" Ananias questioned. "And didn't he have authority to arrest us?"

"Yes," the voice of Christ replied, "but I have chosen Saul to bear my name to the Gentiles and to kings and the children of Israel" (Acts 9:10-15).

So Ananias went to where Saul was. He laid his hands on him and in prayer besought God to remove the blindness. Not only was Saul's blindness removed as quickly as it came upon him, but he also received the Holy Spirit (Acts 9:17). Thus Saul became one of the few in all human history to receive God's spirit *before* being baptized. God shows in the Bible we first must repent and then be baptized in order to receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38). So why did God give Saul the Holy Spirit before he was baptized?

Remember it was only three days before that Saul had come to Damascus to persecute the followers of Christ. Don't you think that God's ministers in these early years would have been reluctant to baptize Saul if he had come to them requesting baptism? They would have thought Saul was insincere and was really planning to put them in prison!

But Saul had truly repented. The voice of Christ had spoken to him. He was struck blind and spent three days fasting and praying. Saul desired to know what God wanted him to do. He was now ready to obey God's instructions to him.



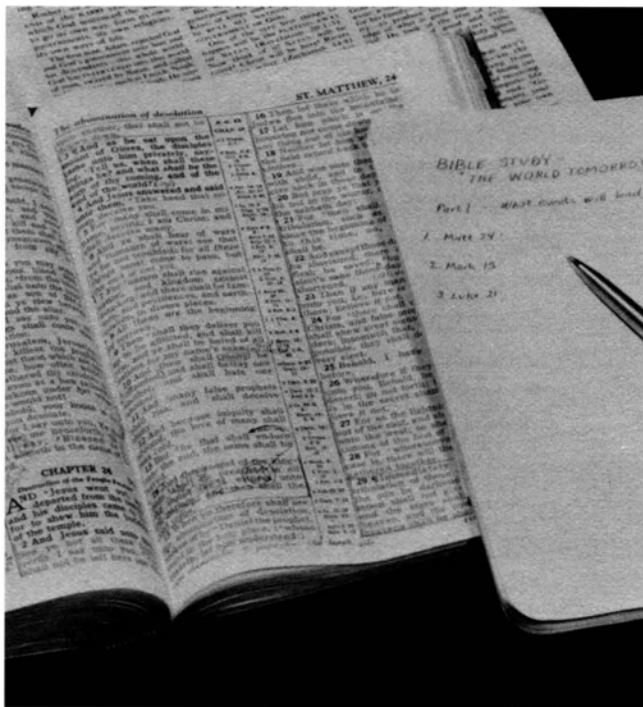
Saul fell to the ground as a bright light like a bolt of lightning flashed from the sky.

So God gave Saul the Holy Spirit before he was baptized. This was proof to the disciples in Damascus that he was truly called of God.

### PAUL'S TRAINING

Many do not realize that Saul (also known as Paul — Acts 13:9) did not become a minister right away. Although while in Damascus Paul did rehearse the story of his conversion and affirmed that Jesus Christ really was the Son of God (Acts 9:20-22), it was only after he had first received personal instruction from Jesus Christ that Paul became the apostle with a mission to go to the gentiles. (Notice that Paul's instruction not to ordain someone who was newly converted — I Timothy 3:6 — was given to Timothy years after Paul was struck down by Christ and converted.)

When reading through the ninth chapter of Acts it is easy to overlook a very important time element. Between verses 22 and 23 there is a gap of several years. We have to turn to the book of Galatians to pick up the story.



We can put together the story of Paul's life from the Bible by reading a little here and a little there.

You may already know that the Bible is not always written in a story-flow fashion. We have to read a little here and a little there (Isa. 28:9-10, 13). When we put the whole story of Paul's early life together out of various scriptures, we can know exactly what happened.

First, as we have already noted, Paul spent a few days in Damascus. We read in Galatians 1:17, "Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me, but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus." So for "many days" (Acts 9:23) Paul was in Arabia. How long was he in Arabia and why did he go there?

Let's put the story together. First, look at verse 16 of Galatians chapter 1. Speaking of the time of his conversion Paul said: "... immediately I conferred *not with flesh and blood.*" With whom then did Paul confer? If not flesh and blood (a human), then who or what? Spirit? Turn to I Corinthians 9:1 and 15:8. Whom did Paul say here that he had seen? \_\_\_\_\_ Now let's go back to Galatians chapter 1. This time notice verses 11 and 12. Who taught Paul the Gospel message that he later preached? \_\_\_\_\_. Finally, notice verse 18 of the same chapter. How long was it before Paul conferred with flesh and blood? \_\_\_\_\_

So we see that Paul went to Arabia and spent three years there, during which time he was taught the Gospel *by Jesus Christ!*

Paul already knew the Holy Scriptures well. Remember, formerly he was a zealous rabbinical student. He had *knowledge* of the Old Testament scriptures but he did not understand the spiritual intent of the law, nor did he understand the *Gospel* of Jesus Christ — the good news of the coming Kingdom of God. He had not known that Jesus was the prophesied Messiah. It took Christ's direct intervention in Paul's life on the way to Damascus to reveal this to him. What Paul needed was a true *understanding* of the Scriptures. Can you see

Y.E.S. Photo

how it is possible for many even in today's "Christian" world to have knowledge about the Bible — but not understand it? Paul was certainly an example of this.

Read through II Corinthians 12 and you will see that Paul had received "visions and revelations of the Lord" (verse 1). It is possible that the vision mentioned in verse 2 might have occurred during the three years in Arabia. Christ was calling Paul to be a special apostle. And so he did not learn the truth from other men as we do today. He was taught God's truth directly from Christ during the three years he spent in Arabia.

In our day God's apostle, Herbert W. Armstrong, was taught the truth not by any man, but through the written Word of God. First Mr. Armstrong studied the Bible to prove his wife was wrong about the Sabbath being on Saturday. But instead he saw it really *was* on the seventh day and that all the Sunday-keeping churches were wrong. With that admission, God saw that Mr. Armstrong would be willing to accept further truth from His inspired Word. And



Y.E.S. Photo

Like Paul, Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong did not learn God's Way of Life from any man.

for more than 50 years, Mr. Armstrong has sought the TRUTH OF GOD. He has desired SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING.

Christ has chosen Mr. Armstrong to be His apostle in this modern age. And just as the world in Paul's day was taught God's way of life from Paul and the many ministers Paul had trained, such as Timothy and Titus, so today you can learn God's way of life from Mr. Armstrong and the ministers of God's Church.

Now back to Paul.

After three years in Arabia, Paul returned to Damascus where he had been converted. Who were his main enemies in this city (Acts 9:23)? \_\_\_\_\_ They even plotted to kill him. But how did he escape (Acts 9:25)? \_\_\_\_\_

Fleeing Damascus, Paul left for Jerusalem where he stayed for about 15 days. It was there that he met Peter and also James, Christ's brother. James had not been converted during the human lifetime of Christ, but shortly after Christ's death, burial and resurrection he was converted. James had become a minister and was now the pastor of God's Church in Jerusalem.

Some five years had gone by since the Church began on the day of Pentecost in A.D. 31. The Church grew rapidly and much growth had occurred since Paul departed for Arabia more than three years before. Even though the Church was still persecuted, the Jews had not succeeded in stamping it out. More and more new converts continued to be added to the Church daily.

But in Jerusalem Paul was like a man without a country. He had persecuted the Church so severely that it was difficult for many members to accept him because they were afraid of him. They did not believe that he was now a disciple of Christ (Acts 9:26), even though he was now preaching Christ boldly in the synagogues. And of course the Jews totally rejected him since he had turned from being a

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Pharisee and had embraced what they thought to be a new “crackpot religion.” The Hellenistic Jews even wanted to kill him! (see verse 29.)

Paul tells what happened next in Acts 22:17-18. In a vision God told Paul to “make haste” and leave Jerusalem quickly. Reading on down to verse 21 we find God’s instructions to Paul: “I will send thee far hence [away] unto the Gentiles.”

But Paul was not yet ready to begin his full-time ministry. He proceeded to go back to Tarsus, his home town, at the urging of the brethren who were concerned for his safety (Acts 9:30). While Paul was at home, the Word of God literally leapt forward in Judea, throughout Galilee and in Samaria (Acts 9:30-31).

### **GENTILES FIRST CALLED THROUGH PETER**

While Paul was in Tarsus, God revealed a marvelous new truth to Peter. Up to this time almost every member of the Church of God had been Jewish by birth. The few who were not Jewish had previously been converts to Judaism before being called into God’s Church. The Jews called them proselytes. A proselyte is a person who has accepted a new religion, especially Judaism.

But God did not intend for His Church to be entirely Jewish. He intended that all men everywhere ultimately be given the opportunity to learn His truth. It was now God’s time for the gentiles to start learning the way to salvation. So in Acts 10 we read the story of a strange vision that Peter was given, which revealed to him that God was going to call the gentiles to repentance. At this time you should read through the entire 10th chapter of Acts and review Peter’s vision.

Remember the vision in which God told Paul that he would take the name of Christ to the gentiles? But the way had not yet been opened to preach to the gentile world.

Now through Peter, the chief apostle, God revealed that the door would be opened. When

Peter came out of the trance, he realized what God was showing him in the vision of unclean meats—not that all those forbidden meats were now good to eat, but that no *man* should be called unclean (verse 28).

You see, God has made the world of different races and nations. These races and nationalities should be preserved, but in Christ all are the same spiritually speaking (Gal. 3:28-29). God is now calling men from all nations to repentance and salvation (Rev. 7:9).

God was now ready to begin using Paul.

### **GOD BEGINS TO USE PAUL**

Recall that Paul had been converted in about A.D. 35. He spent three years in Arabia, which takes us up to about A.D. 38. He was in Damascus for a short time, then went to Jerusalem and back to his home town of Tarsus. It was now about A.D. 40 or 41. Perhaps Paul had been actively preaching in Tarsus, but we don’t know; it does not appear that he was a full-time minister at this time. So, at least seven or eight years after his conversion and more than four years after he had been taught by Christ in Arabia, it was time for Paul to begin his ministry—one of the most powerful ministries ever!

When God does something through men, Mr. Armstrong has often pointed out, it begins very small and must grow from there.

This era of the Church of God, the Philadelphian era (Rev. 3:7-13), began in the smallest possible way. But now it has grown to be a worldwide Work. Ambassador College began with only four students. Now it has hundreds of students and has received three national awards for being the most beautifully maintained campus in all the United States!

So Paul did not have a dramatic influence on the world right away. He did not “turn the world upside down” overnight. His ministry began in a very small way.

As we have seen, the New Testament Church was growing rapidly. A large number

of converts composed the Church at Antioch in Syria. Those at headquarters sent one of the leading ministers to care for the Church in Antioch. A tremendous impact was made—so much so that a name was given to the followers of Christ in Antioch. That name is what members of the Church have been called for more than 1,900 years. Do you know what that name is? \_\_\_\_\_ (Acts 11:26).

The leading minister sent up from Jerusalem was named Barnabas. There was so much to do he could not do it alone. So we find in Acts 11:25, “Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul.” They came back to Antioch and Paul then entered the full-time ministry.

In the New Testament Church there were also prophets (Acts 11:27). God revealed through one of these prophets that a great drought was coming throughout all the world (verse 28). The Roman historian Tacitus and other historians wrote of this great drought and resultant famine. It lasted off and on for more than 30 years. It was so bad during the siege of Jerusalem in A.D. 69-70 that thousands of people starved to death, according to the Jewish historian Josephus.

This famine was greater in some parts of the world than in others. Congregations would gather food where harvests were good and send it to congregations where the drought had taken a severe toll. Members of the Church of God drew closer together because of this hardship. The drought was especially bad in Jerusalem. Read through the last verses of Acts 11 where you find Barnabas and Paul going to Judea to take food supplies for drought relief.

While there they made arrangements to take a young man named John Mark back to Antioch. Mark was a nephew of Barnabas. Later, Mark wrote one of the books of the Bible, the biography of Christ’s life we call the gospel of Mark. But at this time he was just a young ministerial trainee.

You might have noticed we have been calling Paul by one of two names up to now.



Photo by Z. Kluger

**Paul and Barnabas took food supplies to Church members in Jerusalem where the drought was especially bad.**

Sometimes he was called Saul (the Jewish version of his name), and sometimes Paul (the Latin version of his name). From the time he was in Cyprus with Barnabas we always find him called Paul (Acts 13:9). Perhaps it was because the meaning of Paul is “little” and Paul always saw himself as little in the eyes of God. Nevertheless, Paul and Barnabas were called to the highest ranking office in the ministry, that of apostle. And the apostle Paul was called to be the leading apostle sent to the gentiles.

## **ROLE OF THE APOSTLES**

We learn from the Bible that there were 12 original apostles. (Remember, Matthias replaced Judas, who betrayed Christ.) But the Bible nowhere says there were only to be 12. In addition to the 12 original apostles, the brother of Christ named James was an apostle. He was primarily responsible for the Church in Jerusalem. It is possible that another brother of Christ, Jude, who wrote the small book by the same name in the New Testament, was also an apostle. And, of course, we find that Barnabas and Paul were also apostles. So we count 15 or

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more apostles in the early New Testament Church.

Each apostle had his own area of responsibility. Peter was called to be the leading apostle to God's people, Israel. At first he traveled throughout the Middle East preaching the Gospel to the Jews. The 12 original apostles were sent by Christ primarily to the lost tribes of the house of Israel (Matt. 10:5-6). Many of them were in Western Europe, some of them in the Baltic states, and perhaps some were already in the British Isles. Christ called the original apostles to direct the spreading of the Gospel throughout the world (Matt. 28:19-20), and He called as many additional apostles as were needed to fulfill the Great Commission.

Today, with modern communication systems, printing facilities and transportation, Christ has not needed to call 12 or 14 or 15 apostles. There is a need for only *one* apostle to direct the activities of the worldwide Work of God today and to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom to the world as a witness to all nations before the end of this age comes (Matt. 24:14).

With this in mind, let's see how Paul and Barnabas were called to be apostles. Read Acts 13:1-3. As the prophets and teachers fasted and prayed, God revealed to them that they should "\_\_\_\_\_ me Paul and Barnabas for \_\_\_\_\_ whereunto \_\_\_\_\_ them" (verse 3).

The title apostle is simply the title given a person whom God has selected for a special purpose—one *sent forth* with a message from God. Notice verse 4 of Acts 13, "So they, being *sent forth* by the Holy [Spirit]..." That is how we know they were apostles. They were ones "sent forth." The way for Paul to go to the gentiles had been opened with Peter's vision. It was time for the work Jesus Christ had called His servant Paul to do to really get under way.

Paul did not make "missionary journeys" as many people call them. He was not out trying

to convert the world. He was preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. In some cities where Paul preached there were many people whom God was calling and churches were established. In other cities practically none were called. So Paul's trips were *evangelistic* tours during which Christ's message was mightily preached!

### PAUL'S FIRST JOURNEY

Notice the map on page nine of this lesson. You'll want to trace Paul's first evangelistic tour on this map. This will help you become familiar with the geography of this area as well as make the lesson more interesting.

Paul began his journey in the city of Seleucia on the Mediterranean sea coast in the nation of Syria. Paul and Barnabas boarded a ship and set sail for Cypress. There they preached the Gospel at Salamis and then crossed the island to Paphos, where they had a most unusual encounter. A man named Barjesus opposed them. What kind of man was he (Acts 13:6)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. How did Paul deal with him (Verse 11)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

This miracle even caused the Roman proconsul of Cypress to believe.

Paul and Barnabas then boarded a boat and set sail from Paphos. They landed on the southern shore of the peninsula now called Asia Minor, where we find the modern nation Turkey. The province where they landed was called \_\_\_\_\_. (See verse 13; also look this up on your map.)

Soon after they arrived in Asia Minor young John Mark left the party to return to Jerusalem. Perhaps he was homesick. Or maybe he had a girlfriend back home. Perhaps he just couldn't understand what his uncle Barnabas and Paul were doing. The Bible doesn't really say what happened. But John Mark did leave, and Paul was unhappy about his "jumping ship."

This can be a very valuable lesson in human





Map by B. Wilson

Trace the route of Paul's first journey.

nature. All of God's ministers are human. Mark, the young ministerial assistant, was no exception. And even Paul and Barnabas were to have a disagreement over how to deal with this problem.

Later, Barnabas wanted to take John Mark with him on another trip. But Paul felt he could not work with John Mark and refused to take him. This disagreement led to a separation of Paul and Barnabas for a time, each going their separate ways. You can read about this part of the story in Acts 15:37-41.

Even though this incident took place, you should know that Paul did work with Mark later on (II Tim. 4:11). Mark became an evangelistic rank minister and Paul later said to Timothy: "Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry" (II Tim. 4:11). Paul was willing to let the youthful mistake of Mark be forgotten, though for a time it did cause some problems. We all have conflicts once in a while, but we must learn to forgive and forget so that we can be profitable to each other.

After John Mark left the group, Paul and Barnabas traveled north about 100 miles. This part of Asia Minor is rugged mountain terrain. They came to a town that had the same name as a city where they had previously been, Antioch. But this was a totally different Antioch than the one in Syria. This one was in Pisidia, a province of Asia Minor. Paul and Barnabas had a most unusual problem in preaching the Gospel in that city. They, of course, did not have modern media with which to preach the Gospel. There were no churches established. Let's see how they managed to preach the Gospel.

Remember Paul had studied under Gamaliel. So he took advantage of his training and education. He and Barnabas entered into a synagogue and sat down with the men of the congregation (Acts 13:14). Paul was then invited to speak. It was the custom for the leading men to give words of exhortation if they desired. Read through Paul's sermon in verses 16 to 41. Can you imagine how the Jewish leaders felt after that message? They probably wished they hadn't invited him to speak!

But the gentiles who heard him were very interested in what he had to say. In the Jewish synagogue there were a number of gentiles who had embraced the Jewish religion. They had to be circumcised, and they worshiped God as the Jews did. Do you remember what they were called? \_\_\_\_\_ (We talked about them on page six in this lesson.)

Let's notice some other interesting facts about Paul's visit to Antioch in Pisidia. On what day of the week did Paul and Barnabas preach (verse 14)? \_\_\_\_\_. The original Greek here indicates this Sabbath could have been the annual day of Pentecost. Whether it was Pentecost or the weekly Sabbath, the gentiles also kept this Sabbath. And they "besought" Paul that these words might be preached to them the next weekly Sabbath (verse 42).

During the days between, word must have

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quickly spread around town about these two men from Jerusalem. Read in verse 44 what happened the next Sabbath. How many people came to hear Paul and Barnabas?

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The Jewish leaders became very jealous over the success of Paul and Barnabas and refused to listen to them any further. Paul began to perceive more and more what his calling was. Notice what Paul and Barnabas said to the Jews in verse 46: "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."

God was calling many gentiles in that city, so the jealous Jews stirred up persecution and expelled Paul and Barnabas from the area (verse 50). So they moved on back to the east to three cities in the province of Lycaonia—Iconium, Lystra and Derbe.

Paul was learning that wherever he went his main source of persecution would be from the Jews. He must have recalled again and again how at one time he had been a persecutor of the Christians. Paul's whole ministry was plagued with persecutions from the Jews.

Paul and Barnabas stayed some little time in Iconium and preached the Word of God. And God, through them, performed many miracles (Acts 14:3). As a result, the city was divided. Many listened to the two apostles, but many others sided with the envious Jews. After a while a plan was formed to stone Paul and Barnabas (verse 5). So they had to flee to Lystra.

When they got to Lystra, they did just what they spent their entire ministry doing. What was that? Read it for yourself in verse 7. "And there they \_\_\_\_\_."

It is important to know that what Paul and Barnabas preached is the same message Peter preached. All of the apostles preached the same message—the message that is proclaimed to the world by God's Church today. And that is

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the very same message Jesus Christ preached. Turn to Mark 1:14. "Now after that John was put into prison, Jesus came into Galilee \_\_\_\_\_."

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You see, the true Gospel, which Jesus brought, was the Gospel of the coming Kingdom of God. This is the good news about Jesus Christ becoming KING over all the earth when He comes again. The Kingdom of God will rule over all nations on earth. And the saints, who will rise to meet Christ in the air at His coming, will rule with Him over the entire earth from Jerusalem for 1,000 years (Dan. 7:14, 18, 27; Rev. 5:10; 20:4).

The world tomorrow will truly be a utopia in which all people will practice the loving way of God, which is *giving*, versus the totally selfish way of today's world, which is *getting*. That's the true Gospel Jesus preached, Peter preached, Paul preached and that Herbert W. Armstrong is preaching to the world today.

So everywhere Paul went he spent his time preaching the *good news* of the coming Kingdom of God.

At Lystra there was a certain man who had been crippled all his life. Little did he realize he was about to be healed through Paul. But remember, Paul and Barnabas were preaching in a gentile world where pagan gods were being worshiped. The influence of Greek and Roman mythology was great.

After seeing the crippled man healed, what did many of the gentiles think (Acts 14:11-13)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Have you studied mythology in school? If so, you might know why they thought Barnabas was Jupiter and Paul was Mercury.

Barnabas was probably a dignified older man and apparently the more silent of the two apostles. So they called him Jupiter. Jupiter was the mythological father of the gods. He

was called Zeus by the Greeks, Jupiter by the Romans.

Mercury, whom the people identified with Paul, was the mythological son of Jupiter. He was the god of oratory, among many other titles the pagans ascribed to him. So you can see why they thought Paul was Mercury. Paul was the spokesman and had been the one who spoke out with a loud voice for the crippled man to be healed.

How did Paul and Barnabas react to being called gods and the people's effort to start worshipping them (Acts 14:14-18)? \_\_\_\_\_

How swiftly things can change! These pagans at one moment nearly worshiped Paul and Barnabas. But in a short time persecutors from Antioch and Iconium, where they had preached before, arrived in Lystra and stirred up a great controversy over these men of God. They persuaded the people that Paul and Barnabas were evil. What did they then persuade the people to do (Verse 19)? \_\_\_\_\_

After Paul was stoned by the people and left for dead, he miraculously stood up in the midst of the disciples (verse 20). Notice the courage Paul had in continuing to do the job God had given him! Lesser men would have gone back home. But not Paul! He was driven by an unswerving commitment and determination to accomplish the Work of God. Not even having been stoned and left for dead could discourage him!

So Paul and Barnabas left for Derbe. And what do you think they preached at Derbe? The same message they preached everywhere else! Even though they were persecuted, ridiculed and even stoned, they continued to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom of God.

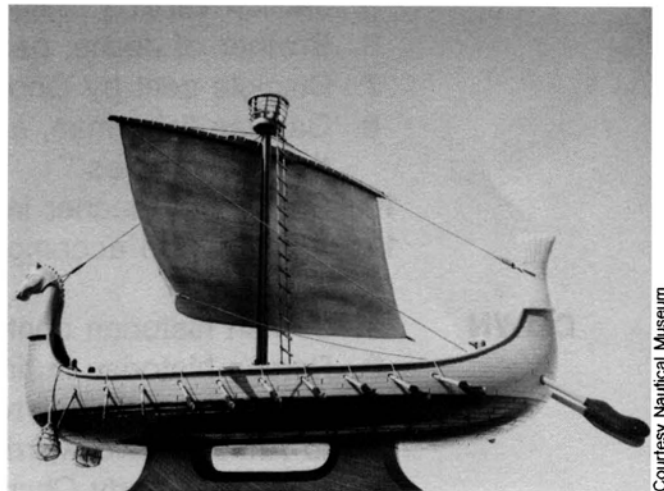
After preaching at Derbe what did the two apostles do? (Read Acts 14:21.) They went right back where they had been! They knew the

babes in Christ there needed strengthening. And they had learned a valuable lesson. What is that valuable lesson that also applies to us today (Acts 14:22)? \_\_\_\_\_

As they went back through the cities where they had been, they were inspired to ordain elders in each city. Paul knew that spiritual leadership was necessary to help the Church grow spiritually and stay together (Eph. 4:11-13). These new churches had many struggles, which we'll learn about in future lessons.

After reaching Antioch in Pisidia, Paul and Barnabas then returned to the southern coast of Asia Minor. There they caught a ship to Antioch in Syria, where they had begun their journey. This first trip took the better part of two years. But the foundation for preaching the Gospel for the next quarter of a century had been laid.

This first experience in the gentile world resulted in the need to answer certain questions. In the next lesson we see how the first major doctrinal controversy in the Church was handled. And we'll travel with Paul on his second long tour, which will take him to the continent of Europe for the first time.



A small-scale model of a sailing ship typical of the kind Paul used during his journeys.

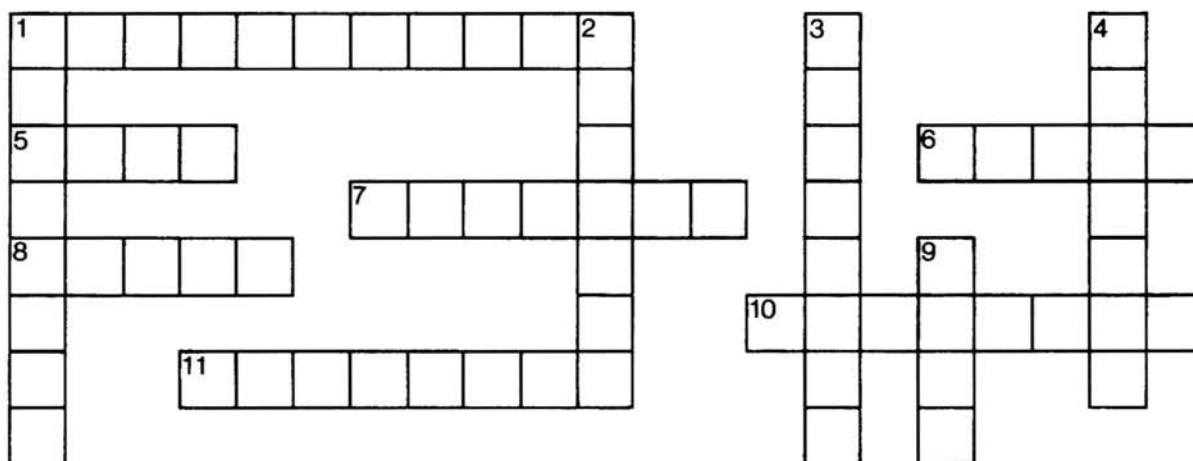
Courtesy Nautical Museum

**BIBLE MEMORY**

Romans 6:16

Galatians 2:20

# SAUL—PAUL



**ACROSS**

1. Paul's teacher while in Arabia (two words).
5. Jewish version of name Paul.
6. Brother of Jesus, pastor of Jerusalem Church.
7. Disciple sent by God to Saul, in Damascus to remove blindness.
8. Galilean fisherman, a disciple of Jesus, human leader of the "Nazarenes."
10. Saul's law teacher in Jerusalem.
11. Apostle who accompanied Paul on evangelistic tours.

**DOWN**

1. Jewish historian contemporary with Jesus.
2. Roman historian in time of early Church.
3. Ministerial trainee who accompanied Barnabas and Saul to Antioch (two words).
4. Deacon in early Church who was martyred.
9. Latin version of name Saul.