



## **Bible Lesson with Discussion Questions – continued**

Saul was a tent maker by profession. At the age of about 18 to 20, he went from Tarsus to Jerusalem. There he became a student of the famous teacher of Gamaliel, and already very early was recognized as a Scribe.

In Acts, Luke describes Saul's blind zeal in persecuting the Christian congregation in Jerusalem, his presence at the stoning of Deacon Stephen, his conversation to Christ, as well as his acceptance into the congregation at Jerusalem (Acts 8:1; 9:1-31; 22:3-21; 26:9-20).

Saul's conversion occurred in the year 34 or 35 AD. Thereafter, Saul was active for some years in Syria and Cilicia and stayed with the Syrian congregation at Antioch until about 45 AD where he and Barnabas were called as Apostles.

Between 45 and 49 AD, Saul, together with Barnabas, undertook a missionary journey to Cypress and Asia Minor. It took about two years. From then on, the Apostle only used his second name, Paul (Acts 13 and 14)

In the year 49 or 50 AD, he set out on this second missionary journey, which took three years and went through Asia Minor and Greece. On this journey he was accompanied at times by Silas, at times also by Luke. Paul visited the congregations, which had been established during his first journey. From Lystra onward, Timothy also accompanied him (Acts 15:36 to 18:22)

The third missionary journey took place between the years 51 and 58 AD to 52 and 59 AD. Again, he went to Asia Minor and Greece, accompanied at times by Timothy, and brother from Macedonia and Achaia. Also on this journey he met Luke (Acts 18:23 to 21:15).

In Acts 21 to 28, Luke reports about Apostle Paul's arrest and journey to Rome.

Little is known about the last years of Paul's life. In the last sentence of Acts, Luke reports that, for two years, Paul was able to go about his missionary work freely in Rome. No more details are known about the Apostle after this. His letter to Timothy and Titus suggests that he wanted to journey to additional Mediterranean countries. It is assumed that he was later executed in Rome.

### **Student Notes**

RI Students: Below is a set of notes for you to be familiar with before class starts. Please read through them and if any Bible verses are listed, be sure to read that as well.

#### **Paul's Life**

- Born in Cilicia around 10 AD.
- Parents belonged to the tribe of Benjamin
- Was a Roman citizen because his parents were Roman citizens.
- Paul had two names, Paul was his Latin name and Saul was his Hebrew name. Paul exclusively used the name "Paul" after his Christian conversion.
- Was a tent-maker until 18 to 20 years old.
- When he was about 18, he went to Jerusalem to be a student of Gamaliel a famous teacher of Jewish religious law (Mosaic Law)
- Eventually, Paul became a Pharisee. Pharisaism is a sect of the Jewish religion. These devout men were known for their strict adherence to Jewish law.
- Paul was zealous at persecuting the first Christians – he was present at the stoning of Deacon Stephen. (Acts 8:1-3)
- Paul was converted to Christianity after a remarkable encounter with Jesus (Acts 9:1-19).
  - Saul was on his way to Damascus to persecute more Christians when Jesus intervened.

## Bible Lesson with Discussion Questions – *continued*

### Paul's Ministry

- A few days after Paul was converted and baptized, he started to preach that Jesus is the Son of God. (Acts 9:20-22)
- Paul stayed around Jerusalem for 10-15 years. Then started travelling abroad on missionary journeys.
- Paul wrote many letters to the Christian congregations and his friends and fellow disciples. These works of inspiration and guidance are called epistles.

### Paul's Missionary Journeys

- Paul took a total of three missionary journeys. Look at the map at the following link: <http://www.christianityoasis.com/DailyBread/Acts/paulsjourneys.jpg>
- In total it took about ten years for Paul to take three missionary journeys. He was about 60 years old when he was done with the third journey.
- Many congregations were established through Paul and many believing souls experienced the teachings of the Lord Jesus.
- Paul's final journey took him to Rome where it is not known what happened to him. It is assumed that he was executed in Rome.

### Discussion Questions:

1. From the students notes, discuss the details of Saul/Paul's life. (*see notes*)
2. It seems that one of Paul's characteristics was that he was very zealous or passionate about what he believed. How did Paul use this both against and for Christianity? (*Discuss together....seeking clarity in their answers.*)
3. Read Acts 9: 13-15. What do you think the Lord saw in Saul/Paul? (*He was a Roman citizen which gave him extra rights in the Roman Empire and his zealousness would prove very valuable in the spreading of Christianity.*)
4. In previous lessons we discussed that the lack of technology did not allow the apostles to communicate very efficiently. What did Apostle Paul do to stay in contact with the congregations from his missionary journeys and his fellow disciples? (*Paul wrote epistles – letters of inspiration and instruction.*)
5. Open your bibles to the book after Acts. What is this book? (*Romans*) Every book of the Bible, except Revelations, from here to the end is called an epistle. (*The Pauline Epistles = 13 total: Romans, 1,2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1, 2 Thessalonians, 1,2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon*)
6. What do you think are some reasons that Paul would write all these letters? (*To express his love, to teach, to encourage, to rebuke (See: Galatians 1:1-9)*)
7. Have you ever heard or read a letter or message written by an Apostle today? (*Letters can be read by Apostles in every "Our Family" magazine, letters are sent to our houses at Thanksgiving or the New Year, the Chief Apostle writes a letter every month that is posted on the New Apostolic Church website.*)
8. Why do you think Apostles today still write us messages? (*The letters have longevity and can be read over and over for strength. The same message can be communicated to everyone who reads it.*)
9. Paul was so zealous or passionate that he was imprisoned several times. How many times was Paul in prison? (*Four times. He was imprisoned in the following cities: Phillippi, Caesarea, and Rome twice – 63 and 68 AD.*)

## **Bible Lesson with Discussion Questions – continued**

10. Do you know why Apostle Paul was imprisoned? *(Mainly for preaching the gospel. He was so zealous that he often incited others who did not want to hear what he had to say, nor did they want to hear that repentance can come through Jesus Christ. Romans and Greeks were polytheistic and did not believe in one God much less only Jesus Christ.)*
11. Why do you think that Apostle Paul would endure ordeals like prison and being shipwrecked? *(His love for Jesus and His people. He was whole-heartedly dedicated to this cause that he even put himself in danger.)*
12. Apostle Paul was completely committed to the Lord. How can we show our commitment to the Lord today? *(Remain faithful through all temptations, don't get caught up in things that are unimportant – stay focused, put Jesus at the center of our lives, use our talents to help along in God's work.)*

Note: The following site proved helpful and contains a timeline of Apostle Paul's life:  
<http://www.biblestudy.org/apostlepaul/main.html>

## **Application to Real Life**

### **"Lots of Stuff"**

See: [www.teensundayschool.com](http://www.teensundayschool.com) → Activities → "Lots of Stuff"

Prioritize your life and evaluate what is important with this questionnaire. Give each student a copy of the Activity handout to complete on their own. Then allow time for everyone to share their answers and thoughts with others in your class.

Discussion Questions:

1. Does spending time alone with God take a priority over everything else?
2. Are there any activities in your life that you are spending too much time on?
3. Isn't it ok to spend lots of time on things you really enjoy, if it isn't something bad?

### **Gifts of Ministry - Apostleship**

The gift of apostleship is the divine enablement to oversee the development of new serving opportunities and initiatives with spiritual clarity. In its simplest form, individuals with the gift of apostleship have a missionary or pioneering spirit and contribute development.

Throughout his ministry, Apostle Paul displayed the gift of apostleship. He was called to travel to many unknown places, to preach to the Gentiles, and to offer spiritual guidance to many new believers. Although he encountered many obstacles along the way, he exhibited what it meant to be a pioneer of faith in reaching many lands and peoples with the news of the Gospel.

Paul's missionary spirit helped to develop many of the early churches throughout Israel, Syria, Turkey, and Greece. He offered clarity on many spiritual subjects to the believers, such as being justified by faith, being a cheerful giver, and finding comfort in suffering.

## Memory Work Suggestions

5 minutes

1. Recite the memory verse.
2. Practice finding the memory verse and/or Bible text in their Bible!
3. Play a game to review an article of faith.
4. Allow a volunteer (child) to lead the class in an opening/closing prayer.

## Activity Ideas

Choose One Activity

### Lesson in Latin

Put the following on your white board or easel and ask the students if they know what it means: "Carpe diem". (It means seize the day).

#### Discussion Questions:

1. What does the phrase mean to you?
2. Do you think Paul lived this way?
3. How can you seize the day for Christ, even when life is difficult?

## Activity Ideas – *continued*

Remind the students that life is indeed hard and far from perfect, but God still cares, and He can ALWAYS be glorified despite the circumstances you find yourself in. No matter what our circumstances, we can commit as Paul did. God was glorified in Paul's life despite being in prison, because he was never alone. Again and again, people were encouraged by Paul and his passion and commitment to Christ, and they in turn encouraged Paul. We exist to help one another and to make the most of whatever life brings us.

### "Housecleaning"

See: [www.teensundayschool.com](http://www.teensundayschool.com) → Activities → "Housecleaning"

In order to be completely committed to the Lord we need to look at what is going on in our hearts and get rid of the stuff that does not belong.

Give each student a copy of the "Housecleaning" handout. Students will choose from one of the examples below to describe what their "house" is like now and where they would like to be a year from now. After making their selections, each member of the class will share with the others why they picked what they did, then answer a few general discussion questions.

#### Discussion Questions:

1. How would others who know you very well describe you?
2. If you are not yet where you want to be, how do you plan to get there?

We are asked to be “personal missionaries” which means that no matter where we go or what we do, we act, say, think, and do the things that Jesus would want us to do. How could you be more of a personal missionary? Write about it.

Take a moment and think about some of the distractions in your life – things that take away from your commitment to the Lord. Write down one or two and describe how you could overcome these.

**Homework Ideas**

- Read **Christ and His Congregation** (1 Corinthians 12:4-13; Colossians 1:18).
- Learn the Memory Verse:  
*“There are different kinds of gifts. But they are all given by the same Spirit.”*  
--1 Corinthians 12:4
- Learn the \_\_\_\_\_ Article of Faith
- What do you think your talents are? Make a list and bring it to class.



## “Housecleaning”

*For there to be room for Jesus in our life, we may need to do some housecleaning. Jesus wants to be the most important one to us, the Lord of our life. From the examples below, which one best describes your “house” as it is right now, and where would you like to be a year from now?*

### **Dump**

Full of tons of discarded waste, unsightly and smelly, of use to nobody and just waiting to be hauled away.

### **Junkyard**

Used and damaged goods, all over the place, but for the right price may be of some use to somebody, somewhere, someday.

### **Bedroom**

Everything is there, but where? Someday, when absolutely necessary everything will be clean and in its place with room to move.

### **Department Store**

Many nice looking things and plenty of specials but overstocked and usually overcrowded. A good sale will help a lot.

### **Museum**

Everything inside is neat and in order. There is no clutter and plenty of room, but a little cold and pretentious for some visitors.

### **Grocery Store**

Clean and bright with the fresh smell of tasty delights, filled with people of all kinds with a common purpose.

### **Kitchen**

Warm, comfortable, clean and filled with joy, small enough for intimacy but with just enough room for whoever desires to enter.

**“Lots of Stuff”**

ACTIVITY	LOW	HIGH
Going on-line to chat with friends or check e-mails	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Spending time to get a guy or girl notice you	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Working to get a car, or for money to buy gas and insurance	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Playing sports, practicing, or traveling around to compete	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Attending church youth functions, camps or outreach events	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Doing homework or studying for that exam	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Sitting in front of the television or surfing the Internet	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Listening to music or going to concerts	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Spending quality time alone with God	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



## Take Home Page: Apostle Paul

### Today I learned...

Today your child was reminded that God wants us to **commit ourselves to Him**. The children examined how a persecutor of Christ's congregation becomes an ardent defender and Apostle of Christ. They also talked about how Apostle Paul helped to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ with complete commitment, and how he comforted and taught the faithful through his written letters.

### Help me learn my memory verse...

*"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind,  
that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."*

*--Romans 12:2 (NKJV)*

### Ask me...

1. How would you describe Paul before He followed Jesus? After?
2. Would you still tell others about Jesus if you were persecuted and put in prison as Paul was? Why or why not?
3. Are you completely committed to the Lord? How do you know?

### Live Your Faith...

*If you could go anywhere in the world on a mission trip, where would you go? Talk together as a family and share your ideas and why you would choose that place. Then turn your attention to local places in your community where you could also serve together. Work together this week to investigate where you could invest your time as a family and make plans to spend time together serving in some way at that place in the next month.*