

Resurrection Life of Jesus Church

TEACHINGS FROM THE BOOK OF ACTS

RLJ-1035

JOHN S. TORELL

JUNE 25, 2006

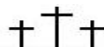
PART 1: THE APOSTLE PAUL

PERSONAL HISTORY

- The Apostle Paul's original name was Saul. Saul means "asked" and Paul means "little". He was from the city of Tarsus in the province of Cilicia which is now modern day Turkey on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea just northwest of Lebanon. The birth of Saul is estimated around 2 A.D., at this time the city of Tarsus was the capitol of Cilicia, and an important Roman city. For centuries it had been a huge trading center and it was to this city the prophet Jonah tried to flee around 800 B.C. **Jonah 1:1-3**
- We have no knowledge of Saul's mother, but we do know that his father was a Pharisee (conservative) from the tribe of Benjamin, and a Roman citizen. As a result, Saul was a Roman citizen from birth, something which carried much clout at that time. **Acts 21:39, 22:3; Philipians 3:5**
- As a young boy, Saul was educated in the trade of making tents, which was a sought after commodity in those days. As a teenager he was sent to Jerusalem, where he was enrolled in the rabbinic school of Gamaliel. **Acts 22:3**
- Saul would have been two years younger than Jesus, even though they were contemporaries; Saul never met Jesus in person before his crucifixion. We base this understanding on the following statements by Saul himself. **Galatians 1:11-12**
- We can draw the following conclusion: Saul must have heard of Jesus and His message but decided that Jesus was not worthy of abandoning the practice of Judaism.
- There is no record of that Saul was married, but we do know that he had a sister in Jerusalem, and that her son helped Saul when he was in prison. **Acts 23:16**

THE CONVERSION OF SAUL

- Saul must have been appointed chief prosecutor of the disciples of Jesus, which gave him legal authority to not only arrest them, but to torment them and put some of them to death. **Acts 9:1-2, 22:1-5**
- The Bible does not tell us how long he persecuted the believers in Christ but he must have run out of Christians to persecute in Jerusalem and was reaching out to synagogues in other nations, beginning with Damascus, Syria. It was here that Jesus stopped him. **Acts 9:3-9, 22:6-11**



- ❑ Jesus gave Saul a personal revelation but He was now going to use Ananias to minister to him. Remember this; God has given the ministry of the Gospel to man, not to angels. **Acts 1:4-8**
- ❑ Ananias faced a personal crisis because Saul was known as a ruthless and deadly persecutor who showed no mercy to the Christians. In the flesh, Ananias didn't know of Saul's encounter with Jesus. It could have easily been a trap, and the discussion between Ananias and the Lord brings that out. **Acts 9:10-16**
- ❑ Ananias' action shows us that he had faith in God and was in tune with the Holy Spirit. **Hebrews 11:1-6**
- ❑ Saul gives the following account of Ananias. **Acts 22:12-16**
- ❑ Luke gives the following account of this event. **Acts 9:17-18**

GOD ACTIVATED SAUL AT ONCE TO PREACH THE GOSPEL

- ❑ Saul was moved from the Kingdom of Satan into the Kingdom of God. **Colossians 1:10-16**
- ❑ He spent a number of days with the disciples in Damascus, learning more about Jesus. **Acts 9:19**
- ❑ With great boldness and risk to his life, the former Christian persecutor began preaching Christ to the Jewish people. **Acts 9:20-22**
- ❑ The honeymoon was over for Saul and the Jews treated him as a traitor. He was persecuted until he was beheaded in Rome some 30 years later. **Acts 9:23-25**

THE APOSTLES WERE AFRAID OF SAUL

- ❑ Saul had caused so much devastation to the Church of Jesus in Jerusalem that the Apostles believed that Saul was using a new tactic to infiltrate the Church and destroy it from the inside. After all, Judas was still fresh in their memory. **Acts 9:26; Matthew 26:14-15, 47-50;**
- ❑ Again, God used a man to vouch for the sincerity of Saul's new found faith and convinced the apostles that Saul was indeed born again. **verses 27-29**
- ❑ But there was no peace for Saul, he had to flee again, and this was going to be the story of his life until his death. **verse 30**

Do you have an ear to hear with?