

Paul – The great apostle and the lessons to learn from him - Part 1

Saul of Tarsus, better known as Paul the Apostle, is known to be an author of approximately 8-13 New Testament books. He was prisoner of Christ, and a mentor to many,

Before he officially became “Apostle Paul”, his name was Saul. He martyred Christians for living. **Acts 8:1 and 9:1-2** give an account of Saul’s role in Stephen’s death as well as his general mission to slaughter anyone who followed Christ. He was a legit persecutor of the saints – After his conversion, he did such amazing work in God’s kingdom. This shows that God can use anyone, regardless of their past. All it took was just one encounter with the King of kings for Saul’s life to be completely turned around.

To date, believers all over the world continues to benefit from the Holy Spirit-inspired letters he wrote centuries ago.

As I read through the epistles, I’m personally amazed at Paul’s character. I believe there are several lessons that we can all take from his life. Here are 10 lessons that really resonate with me.

1. Apostle Paul didn’t live to please man. (Galatians 1:8-12**)**

“Let God’s curse fall on anyone, including us or even an angel from heaven, who preaches a different kind of Good News than the one we preached to you. I say again what we have said before: If anyone preaches any other Good News than the one you welcomed, let that person be cursed.” Verses 11-12 read, “Dear brothers and sisters, I want you to understand that the gospel message I preach is not based on mere human reasoning. I received my message from no human source, and no one taught me. Instead, I received it by direct revelation from Jesus Christ.”

From the Scriptures reading above, we see that Apostle Paul very bluntly made it clear that he could care less what people thought of him. He never once sugar-coated the truth that God instructed him to preach. After I read **Galatians 1:10**, I wondered why I spent so much of my life worrying about what others thought about me. We need to live our lives like Apostle Paul, BEING GOD PLEASERS AND NOT MEN PLEASERS.

2. Apostle Paul was a humble man. ([1st Corinthians 9:27](#))

Despite Apostle Paul's many missionary trips and letters to various churches, Paul did not think of himself as immune to sin. He admitted that he did the things he hated and couldn't bring himself to do the things he actually wanted to do ([Romans 7:15](#)). He wasn't some high and mighty man above correction. 1st Corinthians chapter 9 in its entirety is evidence that he didn't think so highly of himself that he couldn't make sacrifices for the sake of the Gospel. It's not as if Paul didn't have good reason to boast. In fact, he had absolutely no lack when it came to qualifications; he was Roman citizen who was brought up Jewish, studying under one of the most notable rabbis, Gamaliel ([Acts 22:3](#)). Whether his audience was Jew, Gentile, saved, or un-saved, he literally had the ability to be all things to all people, wherever he went. Even still, he maintained a lowly and humble attitude.

3. Apostle Paul was selfless. ([Romans 9:3](#))

I'm becoming convinced that humility and selflessness go hand in hand. Paul cared so much about his Jewish brothers that if it was possible, he was willing to give up his own salvation if it meant they could have the opportunity to be saved. That is another level of selflessness! I don't know if I would say the same thing if I were in his position. Paul truly made John 15:13 come to life as he endured imprisonment, shipwreck, and beatings all for those who have not heard the Gospel.

4. Apostle Paul was focused on God's calling in his life. ([Philippians 1:20-22](#))

Paul lived for the propagation of the Gospel. He ate, slept, and breathed evangelism. He knew what he was placed on this earth to do and he went after it with full force. Nothing could distract him from the assignment that God gave him. Whenever he wrote to a church, he usually mentioned how he desired to come and visit them again in the future – even if he was writing from prison ([1st Thessalonians 2:17-18](#))! One doesn't need to read too many of his letters before realizing that Paul was a man who was completely and utterly yielded to God and His purpose.

Apostle Paul lived with eternity in mind. ([Philippians 3:14](#))

Eternity is a concept that many of us either shy away from or forget altogether. But Paul knew better than to believe that this earth is our home. He eagerly awaited Christ's return and so should we. As he said to the church at Corinth, "whether we

are in this body or away from it, our goal is to please him...we must all stand before Christ to be judged” (2nd Corinthians 5:9-10).

5. God can use ANYONE – (1 Corinthians 1:26-29)

Of all the people that God could have used to bring so many people to Him, he ironically used the man who had been killing Christians. God changed Paul's heart and used him for His glory. It's almost difficult for us to understand why God picked Paul of all people, but honestly that's what makes Paul so relatable to us.

Even though we aren't murdering other people, we still don't deserve the second, third, fourth, etc. chances that God willingly and gracefully gives us when we mess up. The fact of the matter is that God cares about *everyone*. If God can use someone like Paul to do that much good, then that should be encouragement to know that He can use anyone, including you!

God was more than willing to forgive Paul for the countless lives that he took and for all the bad things that he had done. God gave

The next time you feel unusable by God, reflect on 1 Corinthians 1:26-29 which says, “For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, or many noble; but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, so that no man may boast before God.” The Lord loves to use the weak, the simple, the unexpected, and the flawed. There’s a saying that goes, “God doesn’t call the equipped, He equips the called.” No matter who you are or how imperfect you feel, when it comes to accomplishing His will the Lord can and will use anyone or anything. And no matter our circumstances, that includes you and me!