

PREACHING JESUS, PLANTING CHURCHES Acts 14:19-28

Acts 20:24

But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God. (ESV)

The biography of Paul in thirteen points.

1. Paul was a Jew from the Roman city of Tarsus in modern day Turkey. He was a Roman Citizen but also a zealous Jew. His birth name was Saul.
2. He was a Pharisee trained by Gamaliel (Acts 22:3). Paul was highly intelligent and educated in both Jewish and Greek thought. His awareness of both cultures uniquely prepared Him for God's mission.
3. Paul spent his early life seeking to defend Judaism from Christianity, going as far as persecuting Christians and having them imprisoned and even killed.
4. Paul's life was absolutely turned upside down at his conversion on the Road to Damascus, where he was traveling to arrest Jewish Christians. He sees a light, hears Jesus speak, and is blinded. His sight is restored by a man named Ananias, who also baptizes Paul.
5. Paul spends the next thirteen years of his life in Damascus, Jerusalem, and Tarsus, and Antioch where he preaches, studies, and grows in his faith.
6. From approximately 45-58 AD, Paul embarks on three major "missionary journeys" that take him all over the known world to preach the Gospel and plant new churches.

In little more than ten years St Paul established the Church in four provinces of the Roman Empire: Galatia, Macedonia, Achaia and Asia. Before AD 47 there were no Churches in these provinces; in AD 57 St Paul could speak as if his work there was done. (Message of Acts, 235)

7. In each city, Paul begins by preaching in the Synagogue, often finding some of the "scattered", and then preaches in the secular marketplace of the town.
8. All along the way, Paul encounters hardships, persecutions, and even attempted murders. He is shipwrecked multiple times, and left for dead more than once, all for the name of Christ. His key instigators are Jews who oppose his message of grace.

Galatians 6:17-18

From now on let no one cause me trouble, for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen. (ESV)

9. At the end of each journey, Paul returns to many of the cities, helping to establish the churches, and appointing Elders, the key leaders in the church.

10. During his journeys, Paul writes several letters to churches and individuals. Thirteen of these letters make up a large part of the New Testament.

11. Paul makes a trip to Jerusalem in AD 58 where he is arrested, primarily to protect him from the Jewish crowd. Paul appeals to Caesar, meaning that as a Roman Citizen, he is appealing to the highest court. He is sent to Rome, and imprisoned in "house arrest" for two years. Several of his letters come at this time. The book of Acts ends during this imprisonment.

12. Paul is released and for two or three years continues his journeys, which may include places like Spain and Crete.

13. In AD 68 Paul is imprisoned and beheaded by Nero in Rome.

2 Timothy 4:6–8

For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. [8] Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing. (ESV)