

Paul was by his own terms a man of passion. Everything Paul did was with the utmost personal commitment and investment of personal energy.

He took his heritage very seriously. By the time of Christ, the Jews were divided into a broad spectrum of points of view. The Hellenists were more of a liberal faction of the Jewish point of view – so much so that many Hellenistic Jews had a problem with the original language and thus the LXX was borne out of Alexandria Egypt.<sup>1</sup> Paul, however, was a Hebraic Jew – and took great pride in that fact.<sup>2</sup> So there was a great diversity among the Jews. Yet another group of Jews were the Sadducees.<sup>3</sup> These Jews were mostly from the aristocratic Jews. They did not believe in spirits or in the resurrection (see endnote 3). From the Hebraic to the Hellenistic Jews to the Sadducees there was a great diversity in belief systems. On one occasion Paul used this to his advantage when he threw what he knew would become a “red herring” into his hearing before the High Priest (Read [Acts 23:1](#) ff).

It was this vivid tapestry of belief systems into which the primitive missionaries, including Paul was thrust. What better man than a man of great passion and total abandon to personal peril than Paul.

#### **Paul's call to missions.**

**<sup>14</sup> And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name. <sup>15</sup> But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: <sup>16</sup> For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.** Acts 9:14-16 (KJV), the Lord speaking to Anannias.

One could also read other passages in this chapter but this passage serves to show that the missionary calling for Paul was to go to the Gentiles – even world leaders and, of course, whenever possible to the Jews. This missionary charge could be given to such a man of passion – Saul of Tarsus A.K.A. Paul.

The challenge was no less greater than it is today because Christianity – the Gospel, if-you-please, is to be likened to laying siege to all the variety of humanistic viewpoints (read [2 Cor 10:1-6](#) read also ). All belief systems of this world are diametrically opposed to the word of God ([Eph 2:1ff](#)). Jesus warned the disciples that because they belong to Him, the world would hate them (read [John 15:18-20](#)).<sup>4</sup>

So it was that Saul the Murderer of Christians was to become Paul missionary of Christ. It is not the scope of this series to cover the missionary journeys of Paul but we must know that it was the fierce drive of the man Paul that took him through many perils and debilitating illness into the then far reaches of the Roman empire – even to kings with the message of Christ.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For a fascinating account of Paul before king Agrippa read [Acts 26](#).

### Paul the Discipier.

**<sup>6</sup> We were not looking for praise from men, not from you or anyone else. As apostles of Christ we could have been a burden to you, <sup>7</sup> but we were gentle among you, like a mother caring for her little children. <sup>8</sup> We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us. <sup>9</sup> Surely you remember, brothers, our toil and hardship; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you. <sup>10</sup> You are witnesses, and so is God, of how holy, righteous and blameless we were among you who believed. <sup>11</sup> For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, <sup>12</sup> encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory. 1 Thessalonians 2:6-12 (NIV).**

And more, Paul was the tender discipler of those who were the beloved in Christ.<sup>2</sup> Of course, Paul was not *the only* missionary, nor was he the only discipler from among the apostles – all of the apostles were, but the man who wrote the majority of the New Testament epistles was Paul – it was Paul, or rather the heart of Paul, that revealed on one hand the *fierce drive* of evangelism but on the other hand the *tenderness of a spiritual “dad”* who lovingly nurtured his beloved in Christ to a higher commitment to Christ and to a closer walk with Him. From this complex man we must learn an important lesson: we must not only be involved in spiritual obstetrics – evangelism” but we must also be involved in spiritual pediatrics – discipleship.<sup>3</sup> So we have much to learn of not only the epistles of Paul but of his heart. This we will do as the Lord permits.

### Paul, the Man, His Mission – the Lesson for Today.

**<sup>1</sup> I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; <sup>2</sup> Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. <sup>3</sup> For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; <sup>4</sup> And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. <sup>5</sup> But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. <sup>6</sup> For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. <sup>7</sup> I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:**

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<sup>2</sup> Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; Ephesians 5:1 (NASB95), Emphasis mine.

<sup>3</sup> A favorite expression of Dr. John Debrine of Songtime USA

**<sup>8</sup>Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. 2 Timothy 4:1-8.**

That is a long passage but I think it sums up Paul's life and mission. There are several points I wish to make from this lesson for us today.

- **From verse 1.** We should always consider our life, actions goals from the heavenly point of view. No matter what our plans, eventually we must stand before Christ at the bema seat and make an accounting with Him (read [1 Cor 3:11-14](#)).
- **From verse 2.** We should always be prepared to be at once, the evangelist, the loving friend who cares enough to point out an area on another's life that needs to be aligned with God's word. But most of all, we should be loving in our care to encourage other believers to a closer, more intimate walk with the Lord.
- **From verse 3, 4.** We should be on guard for error and trends in the evangelical church that take us away from Christ's, indeed, Paul's passion for accuracy and depth in God's word – make that doctrine.
- **From verse 5.** We should examine our own lives to assure that it aligns with God's word. We could do worse than to have a deep understanding of the man Paul and his letters to the church(es).
- **From verse 6, 7.** We should always understand that life here on earth should be viewed from the point of view of Redemptive History. Without it there really is no real purpose for us to even be here. As Dr. John Debrine frequently says, death is but a commencement exercise from this life to an eternal presence with the Lord.<sup>5</sup>
- **From verse 8.** We should be always looking for the Rapture of the church. We should be setting our priorities as though Christ were coming back in the next heartbeat and planning our lives, careers as though we had a lifetime of ministry. Understand that we might not be rewarded today for our biblical actions but that in the end, Christ will recognize and reward us for obeying and including Him in our lives.

Next lesson we start with the book of Romans. Assignment? Check out time it was written and the reason why (Hint – J. Vernon McGee has some good thoughts on this).  
Question – why the two names, Saul and Paul?

Endnotes.

1. "...In the 3rd century BC, most Jewish communities were located in the Hellenistic world, where Greek was the lingua franca. It is believed that the LXX was produced because many Jews outside of Judea needed a Greek version of the scripture for use during synagogue readings<sup>[15]</sup> <sup>[16]</sup> or for religious study.<sup>[17]</sup> Some theorise that Hellenistic Jews intended the septuagint as a contribution to Hellenistic culture.<sup>[4]</sup> Alexandria held the greatest diaspora Jewish community of the age and was also a great center of Greek letters. Alexandria is thus likely the site of LXX authorship, a notion supported by the legend of Ptolemy and the 72 scholars.<sup>[18]</sup> The Septuagint enjoyed widespread use in the Hellenistic Jewish diaspora and even in Jerusalem, which had become a rather cosmopolitan (and therefore Greek-speaking) town...." — From <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Septuagint>

2. Paul was "a Hebrew sprung from Hebrews." The expression is a remarkable one. It is used not to a Jewish audience, but to a Greek Church (*Philippians 3:5*), and it is similar to a familiar expression among the Greeks: "a priest sprung from priests" is a term commonly applied to members of the great sacerdotal families which play so important a part in the society of Asian cities. He was a Jew at least as much as he was a Tarsian and a Roman, as regards his early surroundings; and it is obvious that the Jewish side of his nature and education proved infinitely the most important, as his character developed.—St. Paul the Traveler and Roman Citizen.

3. Sadducees Sad'ducees (followers of Zadok), Matt 3:7; 16:1, 6, 11, 12; 22:23, 31; Mark 12:18; Luke 20:27; Acts 4:1; 5:17; 23:6, 7, 8 a religious party or school among the Jews at the time of Christ, who denied that the oral law was a revelation of God to the Israelites. and who deemed the written law alone to be obligatory on the nation, as of divine authority. Except on one occasion. Matt 16:1, 4, 6 Christ never assailed the Sadducees with the same bitter denunciations which he uttered against the Pharisees. The origin of their name is involved in great difficulties, but the most satisfactory conjecture is that the Sadducees or Zadokites were originally identical with the sons of Zadok, and constituted what may be termed a kind of sacerdotal aristocracy, this Zadok being the priest who declared in favor of Solomon when Abiathar took the part of Adonijah. 1 Kin 1:32-45 To these sons of Zadok were afterward attached all who for any reason reckoned themselves as belonging to the aristocrats; such, for example, as the families of the high priest, who had obtained consideration under the dynasty of Herod. These were for the most part judges, and individuals of the official and governing class. This explanation elucidates at once Acts 5:17 The leading tenet of the Sadducees was the negation of the leading tenet of their opponents. As the Pharisees asserted so the Sadducees denied, that the Israelites were in possession of an oral law transmitted to them by Moses, [PHARISEES] In opposition to the Pharisees, they maintained that the written law alone was obligatory on the nation, as of divine authority. The second distinguishing doctrine of the Sadducees was the denial of man's resurrection after death. In connection with the disbelief of a resurrection by the Sadducees, they likewise denied there was "angel or spirit," Acts 23:8 and also the

doctrines of future punishment and future rewards. —Smith's Bible Dictionary

4. I wish to quote from a previous lesson: *John 15:18* ***If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.*** We have an interesting series of conditional clauses in our passage. First, we have first class conditional: ***“If the world hate you...”*** This is a statement of reality. One could almost translate “Since the world...” but let’s stick with our understanding of the way conditional statements are handled in the original. It is a given, according to Jesus, that the world will hate the believer. The degree of enmity between the world and the believers in the world depends on how much they are exposed to Jesus through the disciple and His word as we will see momentarily. We can go even further back to the root of that hatred by looking at [verses 23, 24](#). Verse 24, by the way explains the miracles of Jesus - but I digress. The world, in its sin, hated the Father so it follows that if Jesus did the works of the Father, they would hate Him also. Nevertheless, Jesus did perform the miracles (called signs in some portions of the gospels) - the very thing the Jews demanded to establish spiritual truth - but they ultimately rejected these works as of the devil ([read Luke 11:14 - 16](#)). From a previous lesson: [Fellowship with Christ – Enmity with the World](#).

5. From a previous lesson found on my Bible study: [Redemption's View of Death.](#)

**Redemption's View of Death.**

It was fitting for the First Family who had plunged into sin to see Death not as one of punishment for one's sins but that of punishment of an innocent one atoning for their sins. This is an important precedence. Here are the two views of death:

- The sinner without Christ's view of death – destruction – eternity in hell, separated from God.
- The Redeemed's view of death – Christ's atoning death. Jesus Christ paid the price for the sins of the world. There is no need for any man to go to hell. God is not willing that *any* should perish but that all men come to repentance and have eternal life ([2 Peter 3:9](#)).

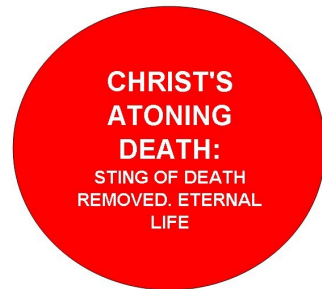
Let's look at the "gold standard" passage regarding the resurrection.

**<sup>51</sup> Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, <sup>52</sup> In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. <sup>53</sup> For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. <sup>54</sup> So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. <sup>55</sup> O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? <sup>56</sup> The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. <sup>57</sup> But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Corinthians 15:51-57 (KJV).**

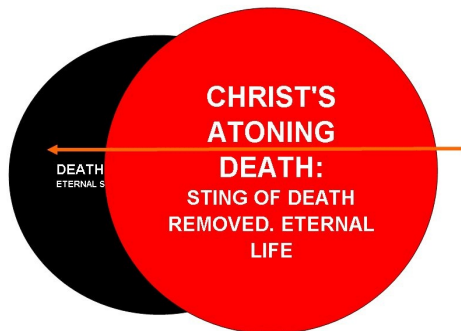
The redeemed do not view death as cessation of life but as a transition to heaven. John Debrine calls it a commencement – sort of like graduation from this life of sinful care to a life of eternal bliss. I'd like to illustrate it this way:



Death as viewed without Christ



Death as viewed by the Redeemed



Christ's atoning death eclipse's sinner's deserved death

This is the sinner's destiny without Christ. God could have assigned this judgement to the First Family but He did not. The sacrificial animal in [Genesis 3:21](#) prefigures Jesus Christ's finished work (atoning death) on the cross. There is no other escape from the result of Adam's original Sin.

This is the redeemed's view of death. Jesus Christ's death has completely paid the price for the sins of the world ([John 3:36](#)). Death for the redeemed is a transition from this life of care to eternal life with Jesus Christ.

This illustration may not adequately explain the effect of Christ's death. My illustration has the redeemed viewing Christ's Death as completely eclipsing the death that sinners without Christ will face. The main point here is that the sting – the fear of death is completely removed because the atoning death of Christ has redeemed those who believe on Him. See also [Heb 2:14, 15](#).