

# PAUL: APOSTLE TO THE GENTILES

## Lesson 1







**“When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, ‘Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life’” (Acts 11:18, NKJV)**

Paul is the author of the epistle to the Galatians. He introduced himself like this: “The Jewish people all know the way I have lived ever since I was a child, from the beginning of my life in my own country, and also in Jerusalem. They have known me for a long time and can testify, if they are willing, that I conformed to the strictest sect of our religion, living as a Pharisee.” (Acts 26:4-5 NIV).

Paul couldn't understand a crucified Messiah; that was an affront for him. Nevertheless, he let the Holy Spirit act in His life and met Jesus face to face.

Since that moment, he couldn't stop talking about the crucified Messiah that saved him to others.



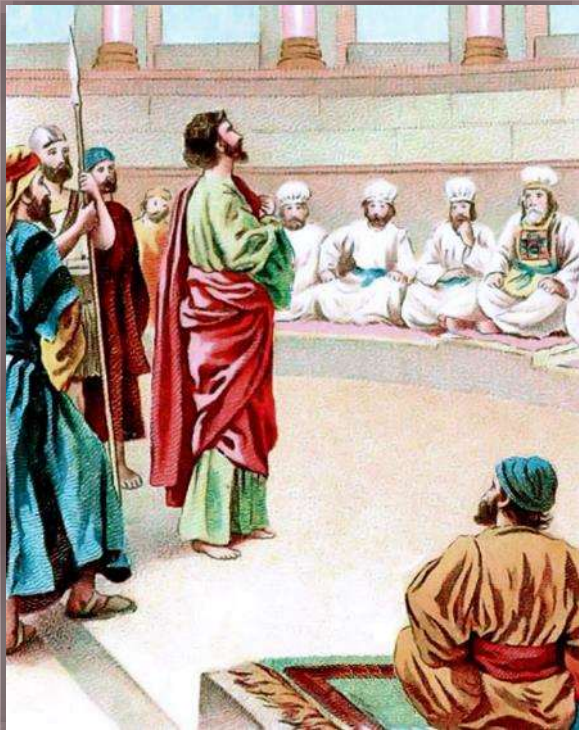
- 1) His persecution zeal.
- 2) His conversion.
- 3) His experience in Damascus.
- 4) His ministry to the Gentiles.
- 5) His conflict with the Church.



# HIS PERSECUTION ZEAL

**"Then there arose some from what is called the Synagogue of the Freedmen (Cyrenians, Alexandrians, and those from Cilicia and Asia), disputing with Stephen. And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spoke."  
(Acts 6:9-10)**

**The Jewish couldn't refute Stephen's message about Jesus the Messiah, so they—especially Paul—got irritated.**



**They couldn't confront Stephen with the truth, so they found fake witnesses who accused him of speaking badly of the Temple and the Law (Acts 6:11-14).**

**The young Saul supported the Sanhedrin's sentence. He witnessed Stephen's stoning and agreed (Acts 7:58; 8:1).**



# HIS CONVERSION

**"As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison." (Acts 8:3)**



**Saul persecuted the Church with diabolical rage—which he thought was religious zeal.**

**The word for “making havoc” in this text was used to describe the destructive behavior of some beasts (like a wild boar).**

**His mind persisted on destroying the heresy, but his conscience told him that Stephan was innocent and his reasoning was right.**

**Everything changed on his way to Damascus. Jesus appeared to him and showed him His grace. All the excuses in his head to reject the crucified Messiah were dissipated.**

**As he said, “I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision.” (Acts 26:19)**



# HIS EXPERIENCE IN DAMASCUS

"And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, 'Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.'" (Acts 9:17)

Saul stayed blind at Judas' home for three days. As Ananias said, Christians thought he was faking his blindness to take them by surprise.

Jesus showed Ananias that Saul was being sincere. After he recovered his sight, Ananias invited him to surrender his life to Jesus and to show it through baptism. (Acts 22:16)

Saul wanted to stop the Christian faith in Damascus, but He was converted to be a paladin for Christ instead, to spread the Gospel throughout the world.



# HIS MINISTRY TO THE GENTILES

**“But some of them were men from Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they had come to Antioch, spoke to the Hellenists, preaching the Lord Jesus.” (Acts 11:20)**

**Antioch was the third most important city in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century. Its 500,000 inhabitants came from all over the world.**

**The first missionary campaign among Gentiles took place there; it was very fruitful.**

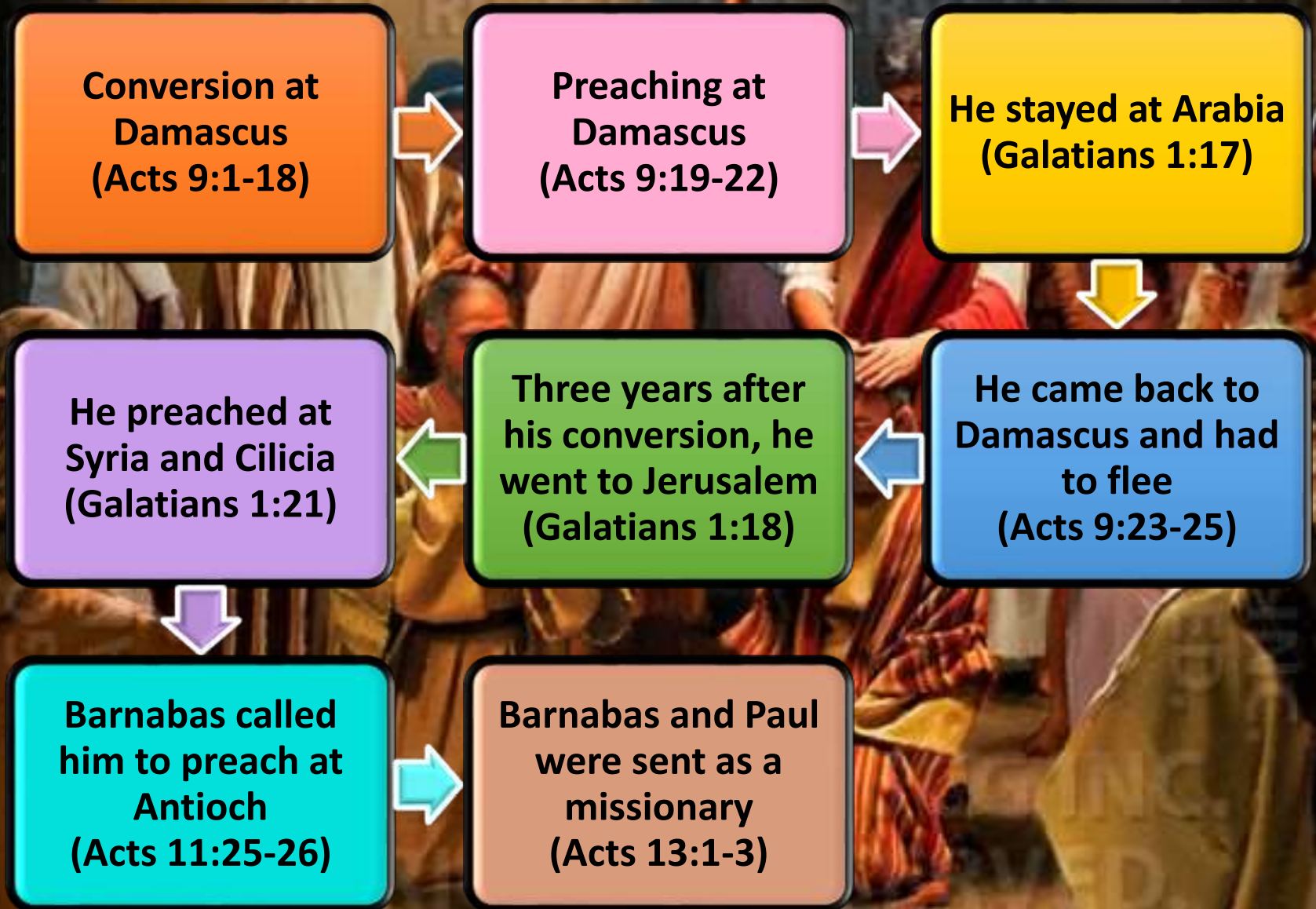


**When Christians in Jerusalem heard about that success, they sent Barnabas there. He saw the opportunities in that city and called Saul to come and help him.**

**When the Church was established and there were enough leaders to support it, the Holy Spirit called Saul to preach the Gospel to the Gentile people.**



# SAUL: FROM PERSECUTOR TO MISSIONARY





# HIS CONFLICT WITH THE CHURCH

**"And certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, 'Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.'" (Acts 15:1)**

**"Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing." (Galatians 5:2)**



**As Jesus said, the first non-Jewish Christians were the Samaritan that Philip preached to. Cornelius was the next one, then the crowd in Antioch.**

**At last, Saul spread the gospel to current Turkey. Little by little, the gospel was preached in all the known world.**

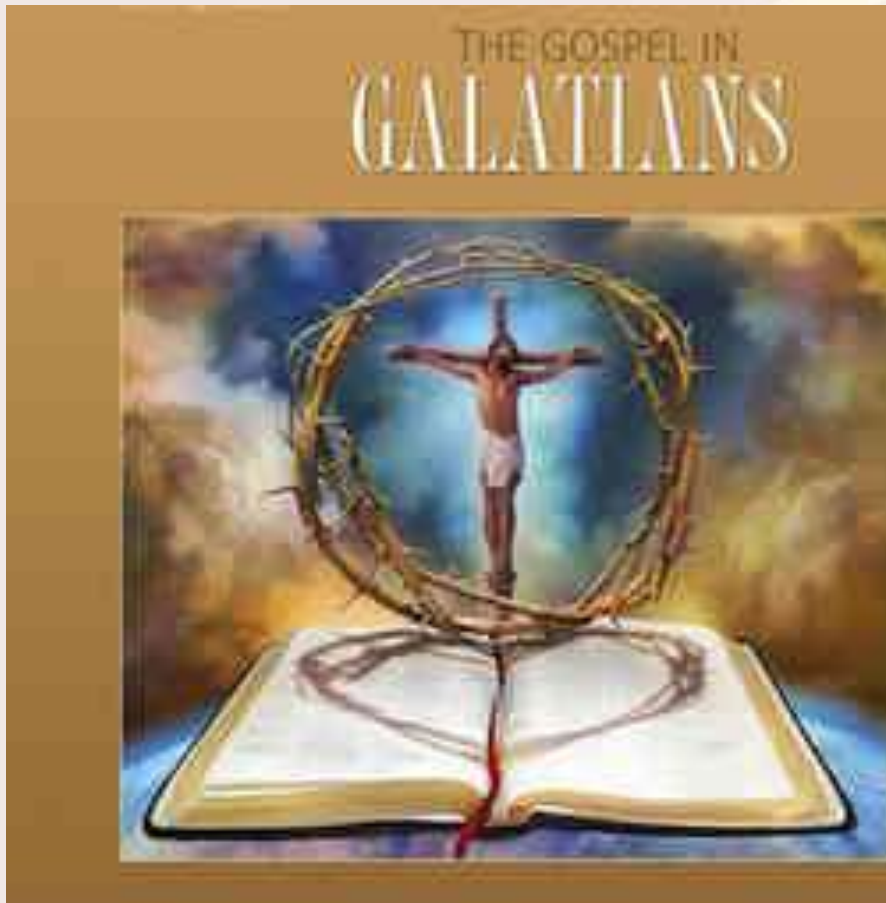
**But a question emerged: What should we do with the Gentiles? Should they be circumcised and keep the law of Moses? Is having faith in Jesus enough?**

**The council of Jerusalem (Acts 15) tried to clarify those questions. Nevertheless, the stubborn Pharisees kept preaching their own ideas.**

**That's the background of the letter to Galatians.**



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