

▼ **Study One: Galatians and Acts - Paul before his conversion**

▼ 1. Galatians 1:1 What does this verse mean?

- ▼ a. Imagine no Acts of the Apostles
  - i. the gospels end with the Ascension
  - ii. Who is Paul? Why does he call himself an apostle? What is a church?
  - iii. Why are there churches in the Roman Province of Galatia?
  - iv. The epistles are impossible to understand without the Acts
- ▼ b. Galatians - the 'seed plot of Romans'
  - Romans - the gospel according to Paul
  - Paul spoke of 'my gospel' (Rom 2:16; 16:25; 2Tim 2:8)
  - to understand 'Paul's Gospel' we must understand the man, his experience and his times

▼ 2. Who is Paul

- ▼ a. A Roman citizen
  - i. Acts 16:37; 22:25-30
  - ▼ ii. Roman citizenship could be bought or given in reward for service
    - (1) Paul was born a citizen so his father or grandfather must have become a Roman citizen
- ▼ b. a citizen of Tarsus in Cilicia
  - i. Acts 9:11; 21:39; 22:3
  - ii. an important town with a reputation for scholarship
  - iii. some think Paul was educated here but he may have left as a child - see below
- ▼ c. his early life
  - ▼ i. Acts 22:3
    - (1) a Jew
    - (2) born in Tarsus in Cilicia
    - ▼ (3) brought up in this city
      - (a) brought up: *anatrephō* 3x  
to nurse, as an infant, Acts 7:20; to bring up, educate, Acts 7:21; 22:3
      - (b) this might mean his mother raised him in Jerusalem
    - ▼ (4) *but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, taught according to the strictness of our fathers' law,*
      - (a) Gamaliel was the grandson of Hillel. Hillel was one of the most famous Jewish Rabbis. Gamaliel was known as Rabban (our teacher) which was a higher title than Rabbi (my teacher)
      - (b) a greatly honoured teacher from the liberal (gentler) wing of the Pharisee sect.
      - © Acts 5:34-40 gives an example of his position
  - ▼ ii. Acts 7:58
    - ▼ (1) a young man
      - (a) Gk: *neanias* - usually between 24-45 years old (see Acts 20:9)

- (b) unlikely to have been less than 30 years old
- ▼ iii. Php 3:4-6
- (1) a very orthodox Jew
  - (2) a Benjamite - like Israel's first legal king
  - (3) a Hebrew of the Hebrews. Not a Hellenist ( a Greek thinking & speaking Jew) but a Hebrew speaking Jew with a strict Hebrew mind-set
- ▼ (4) a Pharisee: the strictest sect in Judaism
- (a) not all Pharisees were hypocritical - Mt 23:3; Acts 26:5
  - (b) according to the strictest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee. (Acts 26:5 NKJV)
- ▼ already a member of the Sanhedrin?
- Acts 26:10 I gave my vote
  - Sanhedrin, 71 members with power of life and death
- ▼ had he met Christ?
- 2 Cor 5:16?
  - a contemporary of Christ.
- ▼ (5) Zealous - beyond his contemporaries [Gal 1:14]
- a high-flyer, destined to be one of Judaism's great leaders
  - a righteous man. blameless according to his own high standards
- ▼ his later life
- ▼ a passive persecutor
- ▼ Acts 8:1
- consenting [Gk: suneudokeō] - used of marriage partners consenting to remain together
  - perhaps still under the gentler influences of Gamaliel Acts 5:34-39
- ▼ an active persecutor
- ▼ Acts 8:3; 9:1,2; 26:10.11; 1Cor 15:9; Gal 1:13
- ▼ the words used to describe his behaviour
- made havoc - rampaged or outraged
  - slaughter - murder
  - persecute - harass or pursue
  - wasted - sac/raze to the ground
- ▼ 20th century comparison
- Paul was the 1st century equivalent of the leader of the Chairman Mao's Red Guards.
  - see OT zeal for God [cf Nu 25:6-13; Mal 2:5
  - fanatical, ruthless, relentless and utterly convinced that he was right