

Historical Facts to remember about Paul's Life

Paul's Personhood and Upbringing

Paul was probably born around A.D. 4 in the district of Cilicia in the city of Tarsus.

At his circumcision, he probably received both the name of Saul ("asked for") for his family and Paul ("little") for the world of trade and municipal life.

He was from the tribe of Benjamin

- Very interesting to note that he was a Benjaminite and possibly named after the first King.

He was a Hebrew of Hebrews- very dedicated to the traditions of his Fathers

He was a Pharisee and the son of a Pharisee

He studied under the feet of Gamaliel for 5-6 years

Every young Jew was taught a trade, usually that of his father's tradition. For generations, Paul's family was probably engaged in weaving dark, coarse cloth of goat's hair (Cilician cloth) suitable for making tents. Paul was a tent maker.

Paul was born a Roman Citizen. Possibly Paul's grandfather aided Pompey or Cicero, or his father paid money to the empire.

Roman citizenship gave a man standing and position throughout the empire.

His citizenship meant that he could not be beaten without trial

Paul's Writings

One-half of the New Testament is comprised of his letters

Twenty-one of 27 books are epistles; thirteen of these 21 bear Paul's name as author

Significance of Paul's Ministry

Paul was the greatest influence of Christianity's direction after the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Christianity is regarded mainly as a Western Religion because of Paul's influence in spreading the Gospel throughout the Roman Empire

Less than a century after its inception, Christianity became largely a Gentile Faith. Paul fulfilled the commission to evangelize the nations.

Paul had the greatest impact and influence on shaping Christian Theology and Doctrine

Paul's writings have been instrumental in igniting great revivals in Christian history
Augustine read Romans 13:31-14 and was converted to Christianity

Luther, while studying and lecturing on Romans at the University of Wittenberg, discovered "the just shall live by faith."

Wesley was converted while hearing Luther's preface to the Epistle of Romans read aloud

Paul's letters reflected a personal relationship between an individual and God

They were written to meet the specific needs of a particular locale and occasion

Aside from the salutation, Paul's letters can be divided into three parts: An introduction, The Doctrinal portion, and the Practical Oration.

Order and date of Epistles

Most of Paul's epistles were written before the gospels

First and Second Thessalonians are probably the oldest documents of the New Testament

Paul usually gave Oral Tradition before Written Canonization

The order of Paul's epistles, from Romans to Philemon, is determined by length; the letters to the churches come before the letters to individuals.

Paul wrote his letters as a mature Christian, 17 years after his conversion. The letters were written after the beginning of Paul's second missionary journey over a period of about 15 years.

Grouping of Epistles

1. Eschatological- 1 and 2 Thessalonians are epistles that emphasize the second coming of Christ and present Christ as judge. The epistles are didactic in style and written in Corinth around A.D. 50-51
2. Soteriological- Galatians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, and Romans were written in mid-fifties on Paul's third missionary journey. They are epistles of the cross, have an argumentative style and emphasizes salvation and presents Christ as the redeemer
3. Prison epistles- Philippians, Colossians, Ephesians, and Philemon were written while Paul was in prison at Rome from 60-62 A.D. They are contemplative in style, Christological in content, they magnify the person of Christ and are epistles of the throne. They also present Christ as exalted Lord.
4. Pastoral epistles- 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus were written to pastors to emphasize church. They are hortatory(exhorting) in style and ecclesiological and written around A.D. 66-67