

God and Man Through the Bible – Session 24

The Early Church and the Life of Paul

Introduction

The early church immediately began to face persecution. One of the leaders of this persecution was a Jewish leader named Saul. Saul became a believer and had his name changed to Paul. Paul began to travel extensively, sharing the gospel. In some places people believed and became followers of Jesus. In other places, Paul and his companions were persecuted.

Read [Acts 8:3](#); [Acts 9: 1,2](#); [Philippians 3: 4-6](#)

1. What was Saul originally like? How did he persecute Christians? If you were a Christian at that time, would you have been afraid of Paul? How do you think Christians would meet?

Read [Acts 26: 12-18](#)

2. What happened to Saul on the Road to Damascus? Do you think it is possible that a man this evil could become a Christian? Whose life would you like to see changed?

Read [Acts 9: 20](#)

3. After Paul became a follower of Jesus, what did he do next?

Read [Acts 9:22-25](#)

4. How did the Jewish leaders react to when Paul began preaching about Jesus? Why did the Jews react this way? Why do you think many world leaders try to control or persecute Christians?

Read [Acts 13:1-4](#)

5. What did the church leaders in Antioch decide to do? Why? Where did Paul go? Who went with him? What do you think was the “special work” that God had for Paul and Barnabas?

Read [Acts 13:44-50](#)

6. Paul was preaching in Antioch of Pisidia, which today is in Turkey. Did everyone believe what he was teaching? (verse 45). What did Paul and Barnabas tell the Jews who would not believe his message in verses 46 and 47? How did the Gentiles react? If we are not Jews, we are Gentiles. How does it make you feel to know that salvation is for everyone?

Read [Acts 16:22-24](#)

7. What happened to Paul and Silas in Philippi after they cured a demon-possessed slave girl?

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Read [Acts 16:25-32](#)

8. What happened around midnight and what was the jailer going to do? Why do you think that Paul and the other prisoners did not try to escape?

What was the jailer's question? What did Paul answer? Who became followers of Jesus that night? (29-32)

Read [2 Corinthians 11:25-27](#) then [2 Corinthians 4:16-18](#)

9. Describe some of the things that Paul suffered. Why do you think Paul and his companions never "gave up?" Do you think that there are still committed followers of Jesus like Paul today?

Discuss: Should Christians continue to share the gospel today? Why or why not? What should followers of Jesus do to try to avoid persecution? Should Christians try to avoid persecution?

For Further Reading:

[World Watch List](#)

[read some stories about modern day persecution](#) and

[The Ten Most Dangerous Places for Christians](#)