

INTRODUCTION TO PHILIPPIANS

Pastor
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Dec. 7, 2024

1. Saul of Tarsus, a Pharisee from the tribe of Benjamin, was confronted by the Lord Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus, where he believed in his messiah. (Acts 9:3-18) [AD 34-35]
2. Saul became a zealous evangelist for the gospel of Jesus Christ. (Acts 9:19-22)
3. Paul continued to use his name Saul for fourteen years after his conversion; at which time he began using the Gentile name, Paul. (Acts 13:9) [AD 46]
4. The apostle's new name, Paul, came from the Latin, meaning "little," and he became God's apostle to the Gentiles. (Acts 13:9; 18:6; Gal. 1:16; 2:2, 8; Eph. 3:8)
5. His evangelistic travels in the first century were extensive and included some four missionary journeys. (Acts 13:1-28:31---?) [AD 47-64]
6. During his second missionary journey he traveled from Antioch, Syria to Tarsus, his home, through Derbe, Lystra, and Iconium to Antioch Pisidia in Asia Minor, and then north through Galatia to Troas on the east coast of the Aegean Sea. (Acts 15:22-16:8) [AD49-50]
7. At Troas Paul received a vision of a certain man from Macedonia appealing to him to come over and help, apparently to preach the gospel. (Acts 16:5-10) [AD 51]
8. Paul then traveled north into Macedonia, first to Neapolis on the northern coast of the Aegean Sea, and then north about ten miles to Philippi. (Acts 16:11, 12) [AD 51]
9. Philippi was a Roman colony. (Acts 16:12) After the battle of Philippi in 42BC, some Roman soldiers were ordered by Anthony to reside there. In AD 30, Emperor Octavian ordered additional people in Italy to resettle in Philippi and in other conquered territories.
10. These new residents of Philippi were given full Roman citizenship and were exempt from taxation.
11. Through Paul's ministry in Philippi, a number of people came to faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior. Some of these were Lydia and her family. (Acts 16:13-15) Later, he was imprisoned there and miraculously released, leading to the conversion of the Philippian jailer and his whole family. (Acts 16:16-40) [AD 51]
12. These believers formed a church in Philippi which helped Paul financially during his subsequent missionary journeys, twice when Paul was in Thessalonica and once when he was at Corinth. (Phil. 4:15-19; cf. 2 Cor. 11:9)

13. The Apostle Paul is considered to be the author of this epistle, because he signed this and all his epistles, and he mentions his disciple, Timothy. (Acts 16:1; Phil. 1:1; Phil. 3:1-6)
14. Paul most likely wrote this epistle during his first Roman imprisonment. (Acts 28:14-31; Phil. 1:13, 20-30) Philippians is one of four so-called *prison epistles*. The others being: Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon.
15. When Paul was incarcerated in Rome, the Philippians sent Epaphroditus, possibly their pastor, to Rome to comfort Paul and to carry a contribution for him. (Phil. 4:18)
16. However, while in Rome, Epaphroditus became ill and nearly died. (Phil. 2:19, 25-30)
17. Fortunately, he recovered and was able to take Paul's epistle back to the Philippian Christians. (Phil. 2:25-30 again)
18. Paul's original reason for writing this epistle seems to have been to thank the Philippians for their generous financial support, especially while he was under house arrest in Rome.
19. In addition, Paul took this opportunity to address some of the problems in their church; namely, rivalries and personal ambitions among some of the saints. (Phil. 2:3, 4; 4:2)
20. Paul also addresses the infiltration of the Judaizers and those who were antinomian. (Phil. 3:18,19)
21. Although there are many exhortations and challenges in this epistle, the main theme is "living the Christian life."