

To the Teacher	1
The Spiritual Practice of Simplicity	14
Saul/Paul	15
Paul's Ministry and Writing Timeline	16
The Septuagint	25
Creeds and Affirmations of Faith	45
The Spiritual Practice of Communion	57
More Than a Contract	59
Jealous God	69
About Chapters and Verses	79
Jewish Feasts and Fasts	80
The Seder	91
The Spiritual Practice of Thankful Worship	104
The Promises to the Ancestors	105
Ebenezer	106
The Order of the Books of the New Testament	115
Demon	116
The Book of Revelation	135
Symbolic Numbers	136
Symbolic Colors	137

ENCOUNTER

Unit 1 So That You Can See	2
1 September 6 Seeing Jesus.....	5
2 September 13 Forgiven, Rescued, Restored	17
3 September 20 Life in the Spirit.....	27
4 September 27 Faith, Salvation, and Righteousness	36
Unit 2 Remember Who You Are	46
5 October 4 Our Mysterious but Approachable God.....	48
6 October 11 Choose Today.....	60
7 October 18 Food for Our Souls	70
8 October 25 One With Christ and One Another.....	81
Unit 3 In This Place	92
9 November 1 Sacred Spaces.....	95
10 November 8 Worship in the Synagogue	107
11 November 15 Worship as the Church	117
12 November 22 Worship at the Throne	126
13 November 29 Created, Loved, Known	138

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Meet the Writer

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September 6 | Lesson 1

Seeing Jesus

Focal Passage

Acts 9:1-20

Background Text

Acts 9:1-20; 22:3-18; 26:9-18

Purpose

To let go of anger that blocks our spiritual growth and wrecks our relationships in the church

Acts 9:1-20

¹Meanwhile, Saul was still spewing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest, ²seeking letters to the synagogues in Damascus. If he found persons who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, these letters would authorize him to take them as prisoners to Jerusalem. ³During the journey, as he approached Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven encircled him. ⁴He fell to the ground and heard a voice asking him, "Saul, Saul, why are you harassing me?"

⁵Saul asked, "Who are you, Lord?"

"I am Jesus, whom you are harassing," came the reply. ⁶"Now get up and enter the city. You will be told what you must do."

⁷Those traveling with him stood there speechless; they heard the voice but saw no one. ⁸After they picked Saul up from the ground, he opened his eyes but

he couldn't see. So they led him by the hand into Damascus. ⁹For three days he was blind and neither ate nor drank anything.

¹⁰In Damascus there was a certain disciple named Ananias. The Lord spoke to him in a vision, "Ananias!"

He answered, "Yes, Lord."

¹¹The Lord instructed him, "Go to Judas' house on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul. He is praying. ¹²In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias enter and put his hands on him to restore his sight."

¹³Ananias countered, "Lord, I have heard many reports about this man. People say he has done horrible things to your holy people in Jerusalem. ¹⁴He's here with authority from the chief priests to arrest everyone who calls on your name."

¹⁵The Lord replied, "Go! This man is the agent I have chosen to carry my name

before Gentiles, kings, and Israelites. ¹⁶I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name.”

¹⁷Ananias went to the house. He placed his hands on Saul and said, “Brother Saul, the Lord sent me—Jesus, who appeared to you on the way as you were coming here. He sent me so that you could see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” ¹⁸Instantly, flakes fell from Saul’s eyes and he could see again. He got up and was baptized. ¹⁹After eating, he regained his strength.

He stayed with the disciples in Damascus for several days. ²⁰Right away, he began to preach about Jesus in the synagogues. “He is God’s Son,” he declared.

Key Verse: “Ananias . . . placed his hands on Saul and said, ‘Brother Saul, the Lord sent me—Jesus, who appeared to you on the way as you were coming here. He sent me so that you could see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit’” (Acts 9:17).

Connect

As a pastor, I deal with all kinds of people. In one of my churches, the man who took care of our church facility did a fine job and cared deeply about his work. However, he had what we might call “anger issues.”

For some reason, he lost his temper one evening—as he often did. Out of control, he smashed his hand through a wall and had to have a cast put on his hand. He could not work effectively with the cast for almost six weeks. Eventually and sadly, he lost his job. To one

degree or another, most people have moments of anger. How do we keep it in check?

Recent films and television shows have dealt with anger management themes. Today’s Scripture from Acts 9 begins with the statement, “Saul was still spewing out murderous threats” (Acts 9:1). Perhaps this was another way to express that Saul’s anger was out of control. But as we will see by the end of our assigned text, God worked through one of Jesus’ disciples named Ananias and healed Saul of the anger that seemed to torment him.

I suppose we could say that Saul’s conversion is what changed his alleged anger into something more like zeal. Conversion has a way of changing people.

Near the end of the fourth century, Saint Augustine wrote about his own conversion to Christianity in *Confessions*. In his account, sometimes purported to be the first authentic autobiography in the West, Augustine heard the words “*tolle, lege, tolle, lege.*” This Latin phrase means “take up and read, take up and read.” So, according to Augustine, there in a Milan garden, he picked up the Bible, opened it, and read the first passage he saw. After reading Romans 13:13-14, Augustine wrote, “All shadows of doubt were dispelled.”

Here is the text Augustine read, as rendered in the Common English Bible: “Let’s behave appropriately as people who live in the day, not in partying and getting drunk, not in sleeping around and obscene behavior, not in fighting and obsession. Instead, dress yourself with the Lord Jesus Christ, and don’t plan to indulge your selfish desires.”

As it happens, perhaps the most legendary conversion story besides Augustine's is the one we have before us in this lesson. The word *repentance* comes from the Greek word *metanoia*, which simply means to "do an about-face," or "turn around." It also means "to change one's mind." In these senses then, *metanoia* is a precursor to conversion.

Augustine had lived a prodigal life, but as far as we know, he did not have anger issues. However, when he picked up the Bible in the garden, he started on a path of maturity, which, to that point in his life, had eluded him. But what consumed Saul was his disdain—or worse—for the early Christians.

Acts 8:3 says, "Saul began to wreak havoc against the church. Entering one house after another, he would drag off both men and women and throw them into prison." This text, to which we will return in a bit, signals that Saul displayed a passion bordering on anger in his pursuit of the church.

To one extent or another, Christians deal with management of emotions. The student book lesson helps us understand how to check some of our emotions that can get us into trouble, among them anger. Saul's story helps us see how God can aid us in "letting go of anger that blocks our spiritual growth."

Inspect

Acts 8:1-3. If we retreat a moment from today's assigned text, we read about Saul's first venture into hunting down Christians. After the stoning of Stephen in Acts 7, the text tells us, "The church in Jerusalem began to be subjected to vicious harassment" (Acts 8:1).

With the exception of the apostles, the persecutors scattered everyone in the church. In other words, the church was running for its life. In terms of the early church's story, this scattering "throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria" reminds us that from this point onward, the direction of the narrative action in Acts is not toward Jerusalem, but rather away from Jerusalem.

Most scholars believe Luke wrote the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles. In the Gospel, the story's action moves toward Jerusalem as we observe, for example, in Luke's statement: "As the time approached when Jesus was to be taken up into heaven, he determined to go to Jerusalem" (Luke 9:51). The NRSV translates the same verse as: "When the days drew near for [Jesus] to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem."

Thus, although the persecution of Christians in Acts 8 and 9 appears to have been evil, God used the occasions to spread the church far and wide. As Jesus moved toward Jerusalem to face his destiny in the Gospel of Luke, now the church moved away from Jerusalem in Acts to spread the gospel's good news (Acts 8:4).

Note that Acts begins in and around Jerusalem (1:4, 8, 12-13). But by the end of Acts, Luke tells us, "Paul lived in his own rented quarters for two full years and welcomed everyone who came to see him. Unhindered [in Rome] . . . he continued to preach God's kingdom" (28:30). We might compare the scattering of the persecuted church in Acts to a dandelion as the wind disseminates its seeds far and wide.

Acts 9:1-2. Here, Luke picked up his story about Saul continuing the persecution against Christians that began in Acts 8:1-3. Between these two “persecution texts,” Luke related Philip’s ministry in Samaria and Gaza.

Perhaps Luke inserted the story of Philip between accounts of Saul’s persecutions to alert readers that the Christian community had spread even as far as Damascus. This would account for the fact that “in Damascus there was a certain disciple named Ananias” (Acts 9:10). Eventually, the Spirit deposited Philip in Azotus, and he continued “preaching the good news in all the cities until he reached Caesarea” (8:40). Now we return to this story of Saul’s conversion.

From Saul’s modest introduction as one holding the coats of those who stoned Stephen (7:58), no doubt, some time had passed. Saul’s passion had evolved as he was “still spewing out murderous threats against the Lord’s disciples” (9:1).

Saul (later Paul) claimed his Hebrew heritage in one of his epistles. He wrote, “I was circumcised on the eighth day. I am from the people of Israel and the tribe of Benjamin. I am a Hebrew of the Hebrews. With respect to observing the Law, I’m a Pharisee. With respect to devotion to the faith, I harassed the church. With respect to righteousness under the Law, I’m blameless” (Philippians 3:5-6). Thus, Saul understood himself to be a faithful Jew. He persecuted these Jewish Christians because he believed them to be heretics with respect to the Jewish faith.

At this time, there was no definitive line of demarcation between the Jewish and the

Christian expressions of faith. As Gentiles converted to the Way in the advancing decades of the first century, the separation between the two faiths became sharper. Thus, in Saul’s mind, he was simply stamping out heresy.

We might ask why Saul went to the high priest. We all know that sometimes legal authorization covers malevolent deeds.

For example, some payday loan companies somehow have “computer troubles” when borrowers come in late on Friday afternoons to settle up after receiving their paychecks. They pay by cash, and the collector tells them that without the computer, no receipt can be issued. They must return on Monday morning to pay up. The catch is, of course, on Monday, they will owe substantially more interest than they would have paid on Friday afternoon. It is all perfectly legal—and perfectly unethical.

Saul, in seeking letters to the synagogues in Damascus, sought permission from the high priest, who had received sanction from the provisional local government, which, in turn, got its authority from Rome. All this seeking and granting of authority offered the appearance of preserving legitimacy.

With a letter of recommendation in hand, Saul could thereby place the alleged heretics into custody and transport them to Jerusalem. As a blanket description, Saul sought those men and women belonging to “the Way” (Acts 9:2). This is the first instance of this term *the Way* for the early Christians in Acts. Luke is in fact the only New Testament writer who named the church in this manner.

Verses 3-6. Luke next moves the readers with Saul on a journey toward Damascus. We

first read about this great city all the way back at the Bible's beginning.

Genesis 14:15 relates a story about Abram and Lot and mentions a site named "Hobah, north of Damascus." From this ancient citation, we can infer that Damascus is one of the oldest cities in the world's history. As the site of Saul's conversion, Damascus has fabled import for our Christian faith.

As Saul was on the way, Acts tells us, "Suddenly a light from heaven encircled him." The NRSV renders this description as "flashed around him." We readers immediately sense that something supernatural or out of the ordinary was happening. Saul fell to the ground, and we note how Luke fashions a scene in which the seemingly unconquerable Saul now turned into a virtually helpless victim on the road to Damascus. We could understand this encounter as a beginning of a "call story."

In Isaiah 6:8, the Lord speaks aloud to the prophet, asking, "Whom should I send, and who will go for us?" Also mirroring Hebrew Scriptures was a voice that called out to Saul in a double naming: "Saul, Saul, why are you harassing me?" (Acts 9:4). (For other examples of this double name-calling, see Abraham [Genesis 22:11], Jacob [Genesis 46:2], Moses [Exodus 3:4], and Samuel [1 Samuel 3:10].)

Despite the formal call here on the road, it is nonetheless true that Saul was a harasser or a persecutor (NRSV). But now, the one who was on the offensive against the Way, God now put on the defensive via the Lord Jesus.

Saul clearly knew that something highly extraordinary was happening but seems to have been puzzled by the light and the voice. So Saul

responded as he asked the voice, "Who are you, Lord?" (Acts 9:5). In this conversation, nothing could have been more explicit than the answer Saul received to his question.

As the circumstance in the dirt and on the road perplexed Saul, the response to his question came in blunt fashion: "I am Jesus, whom you are harassing" (verse 5). Jesus' answer made it clear that those of the Way, those whom Saul pursued, were not following a false prophet or a messiah, as Saul no doubt thought Jesus to be. No! By virtue of Jesus' disclosure to Saul by a voice from heaven and the light accompanying the voice, Jesus convinced Saul. At this point came a command: "Now get up and enter the city" (verse 6). Further instructions to follow.

Verses 7-9. Few people traveled alone in the first century because of danger from highway bandits. People then journeyed in groups for camaraderie and safety. This security detail accounts for those traveling companions who were with Saul. After Saul had the exchange with Jesus, Luke tells us that those "traveling with him stood there speechless." We can explain the companions' muteness by recalling that "they heard the voice but saw no one" (verse 7).

This circumstance rarely occurs in our Scripture, but does on occasion. For example, Moses told Israel, "You heard the sound of words, but you didn't see any form. There was only a voice" (Deuteronomy 4:12).

This story of Saul on the Damascus Road is so vital to the Acts narrative that Luke told it three times (Acts 9:3-8; 22:6-11; 26:13-19). Confounding to biblical scholars is that no two of these three accounts square in all details.

What is important for us to note is chiefly a thrice-told tale is worth our awareness.

Saul's traveling partners evidently picked him up and dusted him off. On his feet again, Saul grasped that he could not see. So his fellow travelers led the earlier impervious Saul by the hand as one would lead a child or a person with a handicapping condition, which Saul certainly now had become.

Luke's account brings this fact home to readers. Leading Saul toward Damascus, we learn that he began a three-day ordeal without his sight and without food or drink. A person cannot become much more helpless than this. Luke demonstrates how the mighty had fallen. Saul's weakness set the conditions for Paul later to communicate God's grace in Jesus Christ.

Verses 10-16. Luke now introduces readers to a new character: a disciple or a follower of Jesus named Ananias. Perhaps he represented the "disciples of the Way" residing in Damascus.

As in other places, God prepared Ananias for his work by way of a vision. Like the vision of Peter's in Acts 10, this vision, too, was a dialogue between the Lord and the vision's recipient. The Lord gave Ananias a task after he answered the Lord's call. Ananias was to proceed to "Judas' house on Straight Street" (verse 11). Once there, he was to ask for Saul, a man from Tarsus. Ananias, the Lord told him, would find the man praying.

It appears that, while at prayer, the Lord would send a vision to Saul. In a way, you could say that it was a vision about vision, for Ananias would lay hands on Saul to restore his vision. We remember that as the Lord called Ananias to heal Saul, Saul had

been blind and had not eaten for three days. Saul was in bad shape. Visions are frequent vehicles for divine messages sent to human agents, especially in Acts (10:3, 10; 11:5; 12:9; 16:9; 18:9).

While Ananias no doubt listened intently to the Lord, he still had issues with the divine instruction. As we read the text, Ananias seems to have argued with the Lord. This behavior reminds us of Yahweh's call of Moses at the burning bush (Exodus 3:11).

Frankly, Ananias had heard too much about Saul, what with Saul's inflicting "havoc against the church" (Acts 8:3) and "still spewing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples" (Acts 9:1). Perhaps Ananias knew that there was no one as dangerous as an angry person on a passionate mission. This certainly described Saul. Not only that, but Saul also had the backing of the religious authorities.

Ananias had a good point and a lot of evidence on his side of this argument. Despite Ananias's fear, God commanded him to embrace the direct summons to his task. After all, Ananias was not simply arguing from his own fear and anxiety. Ananias was debating God Almighty, and God had a purpose for this divine demand.

Similar to verse 11, the Lord told Ananias to go (verse 15), and this ended all debate. The Lord explained to Ananias the divine plan. Remarkably, this plan outlines the balance of Acts: "to carry my name before Gentiles, kings, and Israelites" (verse 15). Saul, as if to placate Ananias, would "suffer for the sake of my name" (verse 16).

Verses 17-20. The Damascus Road story closes with Ananias going to the house where

Saul was staying. As instructed in verses 11-12, Ananias laid hands on Saul.

Laying on of hands ensured two things, according to our text: First, Ananias's touch healed Saul. Second, the act beckoned the Holy Spirit. Another notable aspect of this story is that, earlier, Ananias called Saul "this man" (verse 13). By verse 17, Ananias now called him "Brother Saul."

The Way community, believers Saul earlier hunted down and arrested, now accepted Saul. It seems that Ananias now spoke tenderly to Saul, explaining how Jesus had worked in each of their lives to bring them to this moment. Ananias credited Jesus with the healing and the delivery of the Holy Spirit. As Ananias offered these details, "flakes fell from Saul's eyes" (verse 18). Saul could see again.

Arising, Saul not only saw, but the Damascus faith community baptized him. After eating, Saul "regained his strength" (verse 19). Saul now embarked on a new life. Saul from this point on, as chronicled in Acts, began his new life's work: preaching about Jesus, establishing and nurturing churches, and mentoring a generation of Christian leaders.

Those leaders are well-known to readers of the New Testament. They include, but are not limited to, Barnabas, Silas, John Mark, Luke the evangelist, and Timothy. (See Romans 16 for a more in-depth list of Paul's companions.)

By the end of Acts 9:20, Saul had now come full circle from persecutor of the Way to a brother in Jesus.

Reflect

Beginning

As you begin to prepare to teach or to lead your class through this or any lesson, there is one best way to begin: prayer. Ask God for insight, vision, and help in discerning the biblical texts you will study and then open for your class. Acknowledge that what you do, you do not do alone.

As Paul reminds us, "Rejoice always. Pray continually. Give thanks in every situation because this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).

Digging In

Except for a few verses at the beginning of Acts 8, Saul does not enter the Acts story with significance until Acts 9:1. Later, Paul dominates the Acts narrative.

To prepare to teach this lesson, read Acts 9:1-30 from several translations. Our printed text is from the CEB, but for a fuller understanding, you might also read from the NRSV, the Jerusalem Bible, and the NIV translations as well. These versions may offer broader perspectives on the beginning of Saul's story. Reading multiple versions also makes us more thoroughly familiar with the text we will help others read and understand.

You might also find a Bible dictionary, a Bible commentary, and other Bible study resources helpful in explaining important theological words and providing historical context. Here are several excellent resources:

The Common English Bible Dictionary (Common English Bible, 2011)

The Common English Bible Concise Concordance (Common English Bible, 2011)

The CEB Study Bible (Common English Bible, 2013)

The New Interpreter's Bible One-Volume Commentary (Abingdon Press, 2010)

Harper's Bible Dictionary (Harper San Francisco, 1985)

The Oxford Companion to the Bible (Oxford University Press, 1993)

Harper's Bible Commentary (HarperCollins, New York, 1988)

You may find these or similar books in your church's library. If not, then perhaps your pastor has one or more of them.

Be sure to take the time to read with care the student lesson. Dr. Aaron's student material for all the lessons this quarter is first-rate. He addresses many issues that will help inform good dialogue in your class.

Questions for the Quest

If you have the *Adult Bible Studies* DVD for Fall 2020, plan to show the first session now.

Call attention to the Purpose Statement for this lesson: To let go of anger that blocks our spiritual growth and wrecks our relationships in the church.

Read or summarize the opening four paragraphs of the lesson in the student book.

Next, provide Bibles, and ask two persons to read aloud Acts 9:1-20, each from a different translation, such as the NRSV, the Jerusalem Bible, and the NIV.

Discuss the text by asking class members to respond to these questions:

- *Why is anger such a pervasive problem in our society, even in the church?*
- *What part does an angry society play in the horrific acts of mass violence against innocent people?*
- *What kindled Saul's anger (verified by "Saul was still spewing out murderous threats," Acts 9:1)?*
- *What do Saul's intense responses to the early Christians tell us about his appetite for any of his perceived religious tasks or duties?*

Ask the class to list in order the things that happened to Saul that turned his life around. Encourage them to offer summary phrases, such as: a light appeared; fell to the ground; heard a voice, and so forth. Refer them to the printed biblical text and to "God's Intervention" and "Ananias's Ministry" in the student book. List their responses on a board or a chart, keeping them in the order in which they happened, until you have covered the sequence of events through Acts 9:20.

Then ask: *How would you describe the difference between the Saul we meet in verse 1 and the Saul we see in verse 20? What do you think happened to his apparent anger and malicious intents?*

Suggest that, although the church is a place of purported peace and harmony, righteous anger still exists. Ask: *Why is this the case? And why is it so fierce? Is it better to talk out situations that cause extreme anger or simply evade them?*

In your judgment, can Christians redirect or channel their anger for the good? How so and to what end?

How can we best stay related to those with whom we vehemently disagree?

Lead the class to talk about the Christian courage necessary to stay in a relationship with those with whom conflict seems certain and fixed. Is forgiveness the best Christian vocation or aptitude? Refer them to “God’s Healing” in the student book.

In the remaining time allotted to your class, it might be profitable to deliberate about two general areas of the Bible with respect to anger. First, you might ask the class to recall places in Scripture where someone used (righteous) anger in a just way.

As I studied this question in some depth, I noticed that the New Testament rarely speaks of anger in a positive way. In fact, “rarely” is a gross understatement. One of the few positive uses of anger we see considered is in Mark’s Gospel. In Mark 3:5, we read that Jesus “looked around at them with anger; he was grieved at their hardness of heart and said to the man,

‘Stretch out your hand.’ He stretched it out, and his hand was restored.” Thus, Jesus’ anger moved Jesus to heal the man with a withered hand.

Second, ask class members to suggest how they think Saul’s anger might have helped him as he evolved in ministry.

Close by asking the class for prayers of concern and prayers of joy. Give class members enough time to respond to the invitation to lift up prayer matters.

Then, lead the class to pray together the prayer at the end of the lesson in the student book: **We thank you, O God, for the change within Saul. Help us in our frustration over our inability to change things within ourselves that we find difficult to change. Show us the ways we use our anger for power and control. Give us insight into how to heal relationships. Give us the courage to look honestly at ourselves; in Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.**

The Spiritual Practice of Simplicity

“At its core, the spiritual practice of simplicity enables us to eliminate from our lives all the things—both material possessions and thoughts, habits, and attitudes—that distract us from God so that God has complete freedom to work in and through us. Simplicity brings freedom, balance, and perspective to our lives and enables us to align our priorities with the priorities of God. It reorients us and allows us to be open to the present moment. Developing the spiritual practice of simplicity is key to a healthy, vibrant relationship with God and others.”¹

There is a certain beauty in the spiritual practice of simplicity, the discipline to which our lessons during September points us. Much of what we will study in these lessons has its root meanings in law or in grace.

We often wish that our society’s laws would be clearer cut; perhaps we could say the same

for religious law, too. In legal matters, as in life matters, we covet simplicity. But, alas, there is always fine print in the law. Secular or religious—law is complicated. It seems fine print dominates. Oddly enough, fine print intends to remove interpretation. But the finer the print, the more we require explanation. Perhaps this is the beauty of living by the Spirit of the gospel and grace. We do not need the fine print, and we are free in Christ!

As you lead your class through these lessons this quarter, encourage them to hear these ancient biblical texts as “voices within the inner world of the heart, the soul,” voices that “awaken us to our relationship with our self, with others, with God, and finally, with creation. Simplicity is the gift which emerges within the larger sphere of relationship.”²

¹From *Holy Living: Simplicity*, by Wendy J. Miller (Abingdon, 2019); back cover.

²From *Holy Living: Simplicity*; page 9.

Saul/Paul

Saul was his Jewish name, one that recalls Israel's first king and hero of the tribe of Benjamin (cf. Acts 13:32; Phil 3:5). Paul (Lat. *Paulos*), his Roman name, associated him with the wider Mediterranean world and people like Sergius Paulus (a variant of *Paulos*), "an intelligent man" and Roman governor of Cyprus (Acts 13:7). He'll now be called Paul (as he is in all his NT letters) and begin to emerge as the leading missionary and principal character throughout the rest of Acts.

Saul/Paul's two names remind us of his background in two worlds. He (1) spoke both Aramaic and Greek (Acts 21:37–22:2; 26:14); (2) was born in the leading Greek city of Tarsus (Acts 21:39) and schooled in Jerusalem under the prominent Jewish teacher Gamaliel (see Acts 22:2-3; 26:4-5); . . . and (3) enjoyed Roman citizenship from birth. . . . This background suits him well for fulfilling the mission assigned by the risen Jesus "to carry my name before Gentiles, kings, and Israelites" (Acts 9:15).¹

¹From *The CEB Study Bible*, New Testament; page 243.

PAUL'S MINISTRY AND WRITING		
Event	Approximate Dates (CE)	Related Passages
Jesus' crucifixion	ca. 30	
Paul's call	ca. 34	Gal 1:15, 16
Paul's ministry in Arabia/Nabatea	34-37	Gal 1:17
Paul's escape from Damascus ruled by an ethnarch, presumably Aretas IV of Nabatea	37/38	2 Cor 11:32-33
First trip to Jerusalem (two-week stay)	37/38	Gal 1:18
Mission in Syria and Cilicia (Paul's home province)	38-47	Gal 1:21
Second trip to Jerusalem; council endorses Paul's Gentile mission	ca. 47 (between 46 and 48)	Gal 2:1-20
Edict of Claudius expelling Jews from Jerusalem	49	Acts 18:2
First mission in Europe (Phillippi, Thessalonica, and Achaia)	48-52	Acts 15:36-18:17
Ministry in Achaia, including Corinth	fall 50-summer 52	Acts 18:12-17
Paul wrote 1 Thessalonians	summer/fall 52	
Paul in Ephesus	fall 52-56	
Lost letter written to Corinth	52	1 Cor 5:9
Paul wrote 1 Corinthians	53	
Letter from Ephesus and Macedonia collected in fragmentary form in 2 Corinthians	54-57	
Paul wrote Galatians	ca. 55	
Imprisonment	late 55 into early 56	2 Cor 1:8-11
Philippian correspondence from prison, probably in Ephesus	ca. 56	
Philemon possibly written during imprisonment	ca. 56	
The "painful letter" to Corinth	ca. 56	2 Cor 2:3-4
Reconciling letter to Corinthians from Macedonia	fall 56	2 Cor 1:1-2:13; 7:5-16
Circular letter to churches in Achaia urging completion of offering	fall 56	2 Cor 9
Paul winters in Corinth preparing the offering and delegation for delivery to Jerusalem	56-57	
Paul departs with delegation for Jerusalem with offering for the "poor among God's people" and final visit to Jerusalem	spring 57	Rom 15:25-33
Arrest, imprisonment, and transfer to Rome	57-59	Acts 25:4-28:16
Execution	60-64	<i>Acts of Paul and Thecia</i> 11:1-7

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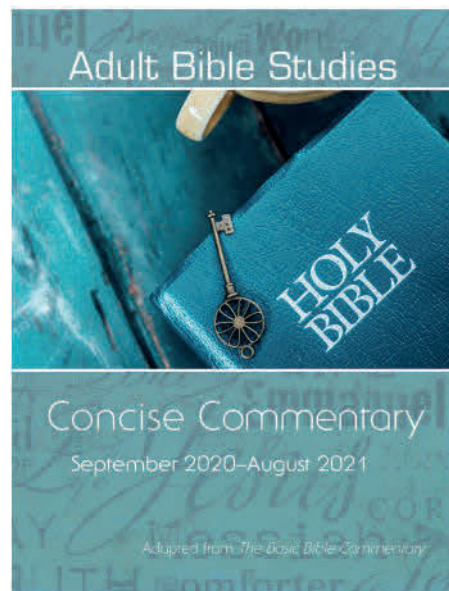
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