

## “Paul - What Paul did for Jesus”

Welcome and Opening Scripture (Ezekiel 2)

Hymn: MP 45 At your feet we fall mighty risen Lord

Bible Reading: Psalm 111 (p.613)

Prayer of adoration and praise.

Children’s talk Butterfly

Notices BBQ lunch, Eliana Jem child dedication next week.

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Main reading: Colossians 1:24-2:5 (p.1183)

Hymn: MP 476 Lord what love is this

Sermon Paul – “What Paul did for Jesus”

Hymn MP 162 From heaven you came helpless babe

Close -----

Listen to today’s sermon by clicking on the link at [www.knbc.org](http://www.knbc.org).

The audio file is [21\\_09\\_05.mp3](#).

*Welcome and pray*

Last week we looked at Acts 9 and Paul’s conversion. What the Lord did in him was dramatic, profound and permanent. We saw ‘what Jesus did in Paul’. Now this week we will see ‘what Paul did for Jesus’.

One flowed from the other. To briefly recap for those who weren’t here...

**How Paul was before, what happened, and then how he was afterwards.**

There were the three sections – repeat. (Acts 9:1-2, 3-19a, 19b-22)

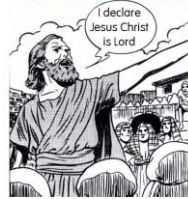
**Here with this conversion - we have the essence of every true conversion.**

- What we saw, was a stark contrast - a change as profound as the caterpillar which becomes the butterfly!

The change in Paul was not a make-over, or paint-over or wallpapering over. What happened on that road was to change the course of his life - and change his eternal destiny- forever.

There had to be a change of direction because before Paul **was breathing out murderous threats against the Lord’s disciples**. He was filled with hatred and

## Charged - What Paul now did for Jesus



hostility towards the things of God. He did not hide the fact but openly pursued God’s people to their death. He said “**I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man**, 1Ti 1:13 and goes on to describe himself as **the worst of sinners**. That in a nutshell is how he was before.

He professed to follow God, to be a God fearer but actually he hated God and refused to recognise Jesus as Lord of his life. So too are many today.

Then God intervened - He stops him in his tracks – literally. Bang!

On the road to Damascus Jesus met him, he confronted his wickedness, he humbled him, he broke him, - only to remake him – no longer as an instrument of evil - but an instrument of righteousness.

This change was not something Paul decided to do, it was not him turning over a new leaf, it was not his effort to now reform his ways and realign himself with Jesus, NO. it was a dramatic and undeniable working of Christ in his life. That is what true conversion is. It is a work of Jesus in you.

Professions of faith are not hard to find, they can even be solicited if you get the mood and lighting right. But a profound work of God in a person is what we look for - and pray for. When that happens its effect is clear.

- Book - Seven certain signs of true conversion

Paul had them. The Holy Spirit brought conviction, He removed Paul’s sin nailing it to the cross, Christ took it upon himself, and bore it away.

He was Born Again of God. Christ came to dwell in that life.

Paul became a new and different man, he had a changed nature.

- ‘Now I belong to Jesus’ - the chorus goes. ... the tune is a bit wishy washy
- Once I was lost in sin's degradation,  
Jesus came down to bring me salvation,  
Lifted me up from sorrow and shame, Now I belong to Him;
- Now I belong to Jesus, Jesus belongs to me,  
Not for the years of time alone, But for eternity.
- Joy floods my soul for Jesus has saved me,  
Freed me from sin that long had enslaved me  
His precious blood, He came to redeem, Now I belong to Him;

Paul had an immediate change of heart, change of mind, ∴ change in action.

- I accidentally put a blue cartridge in the black slot on my printer. Very soon everything became blue. (as you can see from the bulletin).
- ✚ Change the root in a plant - and you change its fruit. So in a person

That moment we read Paul **at once** x2 **began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God**. Immediately, the change was sudden, to show that it was miraculous. **All those who heard him were astonished and asked, "Isn't he the man who caused havoc in Jerusalem among those who call on this name? And hasn't he come here to take them as prisoners to the chief priests?" Yet Saul grew more and more powerful and baffled the Jews living in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Christ.** Acts 9:20-22

*He speaks out – not against Christ - but for Christ. Wow, what a turn-around! God has wrought a miracle. Has Jesus worked this miracle in you?*

Has Christ saved you? If the answer to that is YES then Jesus is your Lord.

✚ No-one has Jesus as Saviour - without having Jesus as Lord. x2 **CROSS**

That then is what Paul was like, what happened, and how Paul came to be.

**Paul was no longer his own he had been bought with a price.** Bought with the precious blood of Jesus who now calls you, and claims your life for Himself. Like any take over a change of ownership means a change of direction. There's a new boss, a new master.

■ Paul had been summoned to serve the master, this was not an invitation (like Uni) but his call up papers. The gospel invited but also commands Passport: 'Her Britannic Majesty's Secretary of State requests and requires

Ac 17:30 **God .... now commands all people everywhere to repent.** Once I was a slave and servant to sin, it was my cruel master. I was self-serving and followed my wants, passions and selfish desires. When Christ came to me I was set free from all that, He enabled me to repent so that I would be a slave to another.

A Christian is a slave or servant of Jesus. If Jesus is your Lord, then he is your boss, your master and you his servant.

*All this is demonstrated publically in water baptism.*

I died (going down) no more of me, - my ways, my pride, and my upsets, my plans and my wants are now dead and buried.

Coming up from the water speaks of my life now in Him, Jesus living in me. **Appointed to his service** He holds the reigns and now seeks to use me / you.

✚ Paul knew what he was to do, and he got on and did it. Last week we had what lead up to Baptism - now what happened from baptism.

At baptism you are nailing Christ's colours to the mast of your life.

A ship launched is the great public event. The name is given - she's sent off

Baptism is the public launch before others, of this new life of service.

Baptism is the public announcement of changing sides, a new allegiance.

At baptism you announce you are now in the Lord's army and will be for truth not against it, for righteousness not against it, For Christ's kingdom not against it. The key changeover within - is made public - in baptism.

Paul is quick of the blocks **at once** he **began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God**. How often the newly converted are the best at speaking out. The new discovery, the new experience, like a fire within me.

■ At the beginning of the WWII there was what is called the 'phoney war', not much happened and one wondered if it was all real

There should never be a gap between baptism and the start of serving.

When Jesus was baptised in the river Jordan it was followed immediately with the start of his ministry.

What does Mark say happened when Jesus came up out of the water? **At once the Spirit sent him out into the desert,**" Mr 1:12. There he went straight away to confront the enemy, Satan the tempter - and joined battle. There's no phoney war here, no months with little happening, no, it's straight into the fray.

*What was God's purpose in saving Paul?*

Before King Agrippa Paul recalls Jesus' words: **I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and as a witness of what you have seen of me and what I will show you. I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me. So then, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the vision from heaven.**

Acts 26: 17-19

✚ No he wasn't disobedient, Paul knew what he was to do, and he got on and did it. This was now his life's work and he knew it – how about you?

Do you know what Christ has called you to do - for him while on this earth?

In Acts 13:36 Paul says: "**when David had served God's purpose in his own generation, he fell asleep;** Let everyone of us do the same; serve God's purpose; and then you and I can be sure to awake to Glory and reward.

*Paul clearly saw himself as a servant of Christ and his gospel.*

The passage we read in Col 1;24-2:5 has Paul looking back from his prison cell in Rome. There had been decades of faithful ministry and service.

See what he has to say of the gospel v23 **I, Paul, have become a servant.**”

He is to serve v25 **I have become its servant by the commission God gave me**

Paul the servant, A servant is given a task, a job to do, his life is purposeful.

See Col 2:2 Paul says **My purpose is....** Can you say: **My purpose is....** Can you say – this is my life’s work. x2

- I know Jesus has called me to serve Him and the gospel and especially to visit people locally by going door to door, I know that. I am the Lord’s footman, I know what he wants me to do – and that is what I will do.

Paul knows his purpose is to take the gospel to the lost - to see disciples made - and that to serve will be to suffer. He knows there is a cost.

When you know there will be suffering you are less knocked by it. How easily we are knocked, so many little things send us reeling. Paul’s eyes are on Jesus the suffering Servant, and the church that will one day be glorious!

- **Now I rejoice in what was suffered for you** v24. This is not only outer suffering but inner. **I want you to know how much I am struggling for you.**

**To this end I labour, struggling - with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me.** Does reading Paul’s life make you sigh? Do you feel weary?

Paul went on at least three long missionary journeys, on top of that his travels took him to Rome and beyond. He wore out shoe leather, He walked many miles and sailed many miles. He tells the Christians in Corinth what serving Christ has meant. It is his CV, he recounts the cost of serving, it was a life of: **hard work, imprisonment, sever floggings, and repeated exposure to death. Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my own countrymen, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false brothers. I have laboured and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked. Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches. Who is weak, and I do not feel weak? Who is led into sin, and I do not inwardly burn?”** 2Co 11:21-29

There’s no regrets, no bitterness, in fact because serving Christ is a life of purpose, it is a life of Joy. Paul would exchange it for nothing else. What motivated him? He said the **love of Christ compels me**, x2

- ✚ After all that Jesus had done for him - we see what Paul did for Christ.

3a

Paul pressed on through all these trial because his Lord Jesus suffered before him. How different it is with so many professing to follow Christ today. It is hard for some to even walk out of the front door.

Does the **love of Christ compel me?** Does the **love of Christ compel you?**

If he has suffered for you, will you endure hardship and suffer for Him?

Does reading Paul’s life make you sigh? Do you say “I feel weary”?

Paul with the years behind him had every reason to feel worn out, but he testified that in his **I labour**, and **struggling** he did so with the energy that God gave him. - **with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me.**

How often do you think, “I will end up shattered” and when you go and do what you know you should do you end up feeling wonderfully uplifted.

- ✚ Whatever he has called you to do, he will give you the energy to do it.

*So how about us this morning?*

What Paul did for Jesus is what every Christian is called to do for Jesus.

He/we are to give the rest of our lives in Christ’s service and to be gospel carriers. It is God’s plan that those around are to know of this great mystery, that is peace with God through Jesus Christ. We are to make disciples which means to see converts grow strong in their Faith. Nothing has changed - if you follow Christ this morning then the same is for you and I.

- BCM sharing time – people coming to faith there were tears of Joy on Friday. But also we shared how Missionaries had been surrounded by angry threatening Muslims and several Police cars had to come.

Those who serve Christ and his kingdom will suffer, it is hard work but Oh what Joy there is...

There is a harvest field here in Kings Norton. Pray, take some Good Newspapers, put them in local waiting rooms or shops or letterboxes. Think and pray for those you know, what is the ‘next stage for them? Can I invite them to something will they receive some literature, some help, will they do a CE with you? Or someone else? Will your changed heart mean ready feet?

- Dave has asked for a BCM volunteer form so he can join in Tuesday Street outreach. You could join too. We have other volunteers who join.

**Will you pray - and see God make a way for you to fulfil your life’s work?**

Will you pray? “*Lord what would you have me do for this short time left?*”

If you don’t then be sure the devil will have something for you to do!

What can get in the way of me carrying out what God has called me to do?

3b

1. There are plenty of distractions and worldly pursuits, too much time in front of the TV. How much news do we need to have?
2. Some came to Jesus saying they would follow him - but first I need to do this and that then I will - he said "let the dead bury their dead", in other words let the world get on with what the world does – you come and follow me.
3. Is much of your time taken up with hobbies, interest, projects etc, is the DIY done to be good stewards in maintaining your property or have you slipped into the never ending train of improvements and enhancements?
4. Are you honouring your family responsibilities or is too much attention to family business.

**Paul at the end of his life of service is as clear as he was at the beginning**

Do you say: "I don't know what to do" - If you profess to follow Christ then show it in obeying the commission to make disciples of others. You will need ready feet to take the message - and a ready tongue to speak of Christ.

✚ **Keep the focus, keep your eyes on the road, keep to the path, keep your eyes on Jesus, fix your eyes on Jesus, track him, copy him, trust him.**

Christ is the standard to which souls must be gathered, this pointing work is entrusted to you, a charge you are to faithfully execute.

Just as the hymn writer Frances Ridley Havergal said:

*In full and glad surrender, I give myself to Thee,  
Thine utterly and only, And evermore to be  
O Son of God, who lov'st me, I will be Thine alone  
And all I have and am, Lord, Shall henceforth be Thine own  
And keep me always loyal, And true to Thee, my King.*

Spurgeon in character fashion warned Christians "Make sure you don't let your sword rust away in your scabbard and crawl into heaven like a coward.

Let me mention Jim Elliot. I mention him because I should mention him, and also I have just started the book of his life and martyrdom.

- The day of 2<sup>nd</sup> January 1956, was the day the 29-year-old Jim Elliot had waited for - for most of his life. He jumped out of bed, dressed as quickly as he could, and got ready for the short flight over the thick Ecuador jungle. Almost three years of jungle ministry and many hours of planning and praying had led Jim to this day. Within hours, he and four other missionaries would be setting up camp in the territory of a dangerous and uncivilized Indian tribe known then as the Aucas. Even though it was dangerous, Jim Elliot had no doubt God wanted him to tell the Aucas about Jesus.

- On 2<sup>nd</sup> February, 1952, Jim Elliot had waved goodbye to his parents and boarded a ship for the 18-day trip from California to Ecuador, S. America
- He learned Spanish and then the Shandia language of the Quichuas. Three years later many Quichuas had become faithful Christians. Jim now began to feel it was time to tell the Aucas about Jesus.
- The Aucas had killed anyone who came into contact with them. Jim and the four other Ecuador missionaries began to plan a way to show the Aucas they were friendly. They began dropping gifts to the Aucas. After many months the Aucas sent a gift back. Jim and the other missionaries felt the time had come to meet the Aucas face-to-face.
- The missionaries were flown in one-by-one and dropped off on the Auca beach. After a meal with a couple of Auca women they thought they had won their trust. But then suddenly there was a terrifying cry and a group of Auca warriors appeared with spears raised. Jim Elliot had a gun but they had all decided not to use it. Within seconds, the Auca warriors threw their spears, killing all the missionaries.
- News quickly spread around the world.
- Don't think Operation Auca ended there because it didn't. In less than two years Elisabeth Elliot moved in to live with the Auca's who had killed her husband. Many Aucas became Christians. They are now a friendly tribe. Missionaries live among the Aucas today.
- Elisabeth Elliot spoke and wrote many books spending her life spurring on other Christians to faithfully serve the Lord of heaven whatever the cost. During his life, Jim Elliot longed for more people to become missionaries. In his death, however, he probably inspired more people to go to other countries to share the love of Jesus than he ever could have in life.

Jim was the one who wrote in his diary on 28<sup>th</sup> October 1949, "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose."

- The chapter headings "I dare not stay at home, All things to all men, Expendable for God". The book's title "through the gates of Splendour Paul, once baptised, once changed, was charged and ready to go, charged with the task ahead, and charged up to do it, He was called to serve, he was saved to serve. So to for you and I if we are to follow Jesus to heaven. Will you get on to do what Christ had saved you to do?... then there will be great joy now – and then, as you too enter "through the gates of splendour" **END**