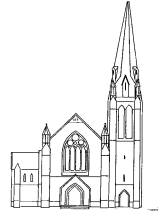




THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND NORTH PARISH CHURCH, GIRVAN Ayrshire.



**Interim Moderator - Dr James Anderson
Locum - Glenn Ronald**

March 2021 Newsletter

Dear friends, the Apostle Paul was born, as Saul, in around 4 BC at Tarsus, in Sicilia, which is modern Turkey. He died in around 62-64 AD, in Rome, during Emperor Nero's reign. He is generally considered to be one of the most important figures in Christianity, after Christ. Just as he had his many devotees, he also had his many critics. Peter and James were accorded more respect. Paul therefore had to fight hard to gain the respect he thought he deserved. Are we the same? The letters which he had written, contained in the New Testament, cemented his reputation as one of the most visionary leaders that the world had ever seen.

The New Testament contained 27 books, and 13 of these books were attributed to Paul. The Acts of the Apostles dealt with Paul's travels across the Mediterranean and his establishment of the church throughout the area. However only 7 of these 13 Letters are believed to be dictated by Paul himself. The other 6 Letters were written in Paul's name by his supporters who based their material on Paul's surviving Letters, and on Letters Paul had written which no longer exist. The material in Acts often conflict with the content of the Letters, and it is the genuine Letters which should assume priority.

As Paul was growing up he learned his tent-making skills. He continued making tents after his conversion to Christianity on the road to Damascus. The fact that he bothered to mention that he worked with his hands might have meant that he was not a common labourer. He wrote in Common Greek, or Koine, rather than literary Greek. This also points to the fact that he was not an aristocrat, unlike Philo of Alexandria.

Paul, for the first half of his life, was a serving Pharisee. One of the Pharisee's major beliefs was their adherence to life after death. For the Pharisee, the non-biblical "traditions" were as important as the Hebrew Bible. Paul, like all Pharisees, would have memorised the Bible. This would be much more preferable than carrying around many scrolls. His intellect was immediately apparent to all whom he met.

Paul spent the first part of his life persecuting Christians. The persecution was not necessarily linked to him being a Pharisee as the main persecutors of the Christians were the Sadducees. The principal Pharisee, Gamaliel, defended the Christians. The youthful Paul believed that converts to Christianity were not observing Jewish Law and were associating themselves with Gentiles. Paul would have resisted a crucified Messiah not because he rejected the prospect as such, but because he would not have believed Jesus should have been resurrected before the Day of Judgement.

Paul therefore travelled from Synagogue-to-Synagogue persecuting Jews that had converted to Christianity. Paul was travelling to Damascus where he had his

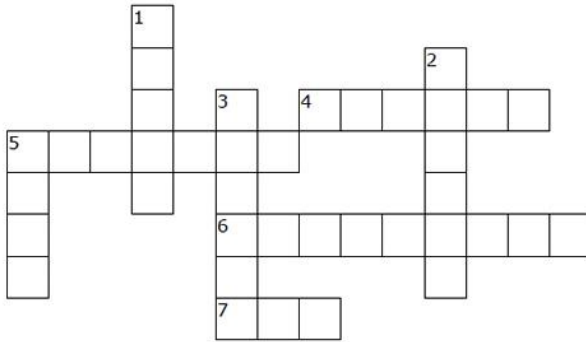
conversion experience. Paul was blinded by the shining light and heard the voice of God calling out of the light: "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me"? This momentous time convinced Paul that God had selected Jesus to be His Messiah. Paul then established many churches across the Mediterranean as a leader of "The Way". He attracted many followers to his cause, just as we should bring people to Christ.

Paul discovered that preaching to the Gentiles became a contentious issue to those who thought they should embrace Judaism before turning to Christianity. A deal was struck, and Peter became the Apostle to the Jews and Paul became the Apostle to the Gentiles. Each should not interfere with the other but that proved harder to achieve in practice when circumcision was expected from Gentile converts. When Paul returned to Jerusalem and brought a Gentile too far within the temple grounds, he was arrested, and from Clement of Alexandria's written work, Paul was executed in Rome. Nero used the great fire in Rome as an excuse to murder many Christians whom he supposedly believed were the instigators of this fire in 64 AD. It is said that Nero himself set the fire. For Paul, the Jews would be brought to Christ because of the successful Gentile Mission. This reversed the traditional view of the Jews being the chosen people who came to Christ before the Gentile people were converted.

Paul was a visionary leader whose work, fortunately for us, was copied and passed on to subsequent generations of believers. We should, like Paul, show that same tenacity as we bring people to Christ and as we endure suffering along the way. All are welcome to embrace the Christian faith: "There is no longer Jew nor Greek, there is no longer slave nor free, there is no longer male and female. For all of you are one in Christ Jesus". Everyone is welcome to embrace the Christian faith. Throughout this pandemic we have needed a faith to cling on to which would strengthen us in our times of weakness. This faith, and the new vaccines which are being successfully rolled out, have made such a difference to everyone's lives. It is this which gives us hope, in this season of Lent, as the resurrection dawn of Easter Sunday approaches.

Best wishes, Glenn.

Crossword Puzzle



ACROSS

4. The entire group of people who follow the teachings of Jesus
5. To tear down or ruin completely
6. To treat badly, especially because of religion
7. A false statement deliberately presented as being true

DOWN

1. A firm belief in God
2. To deliver a sermon
3. The good news concerning Christ, the Kingdom of God, and salvation
5. Periods of 24 hours

GOSPEL	CHURCH	FAITH	PERSECUTE
DAYS	DESTROY	PREACH	LIE



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Children's Worship Bulletin

The Transformer

Galatians 1:11-24

Word Search

U L W C H U R C H I W U D D S
 H F B N G R A C E M F E V K N
 F P B L D R N Y Q N V A H A I
 C E R D E R F D X I T R F K V
 F R O C S L W S E R Y C O G V
 F S T I T O I C O M U U U D T
 A E H I R R E P B Q T N E P F
 I C E X O R E M J L K L D N L
 T U R E Y R R P H E L V R F H
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 I E T X U G R F C S T U A F R
 P D U R C H R I S T Z E S U H
 A P O S T L E S C Z R F X W G
 T G Y V Y E G O S P E L L I E
 C F X O M N N Z P I A E F A N

LIE	JESUS	DESTROY	RECEIVED	CHRIST
APOSTLES	BROTHERS	CALLED	PERSECUTED	REPORT
GRACE	GOSPEL	CHURCH	PREACH	FAITH

Your Church Name Here
Anytown, USA

Decoder Puzzle

Each number represents a letter of the alphabet.
Substitute the correct letter for the numbers
to reveal the coded words.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
K	C	N	Y	T	D	H	B	F	Z	I	O	W	L	M	E	A	G	Q	S	X	U	P	R	J	V

- 18-24-17-2-16 _____
- 24-16-26-16-17-14 _____
- 23-24-17-11-20-16-6 _____
- 6-16-20-5-24-12-4 _____
- 2-17-14-14 _____
- 23-16-24-20-16-2-22-5-16-6 _____
- 9-17-11-5-7 _____
- 2-7-24-11-20-5 _____
- 2-7-22-24-2-7 _____
- 23-24-16-17-2-7 _____

DESTROY	GRACE	PRAISED	CHURCH	CALL
REVEAL	PERSECUTED	CHRIST	PREACH	FAITH



Coloring Page



Paul learned that Jesus is God's Son.

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