

## THE FAITH PAUL TRIED TO DESTROY

Text: Galatians 1:22-24

INTRO: In establishing the fact that his gospel had come by direct revelation of Jesus Christ rather than by hearing the teachings of those who had been disciples before him, Paul mentions the fact that he had been a Christian & a gospel preacher for several years before he had any extensive contact with the other apostles. He says that the congregations in Judea knew him by reputation long before they knew him face to face, vs. 22-23.

- A. They knew he had been a persecutor.
  - 1. They had probably heard about the death of Stephen, Acts 8:1.
  - 2. His reputation as a persecutor had preceded him to Damascus, Acts 9:13-14. so it is likely the Judean congregations had heard even more about it than those in Syria.
- B. They had heard about Paul's conversion--and that he now preached the faith he once resisted.

I. THE FAITH PAUL PREACHED. To know something about the faith Paul preached is to understand why many resisted it & sought to destroy it.

- A. He preached faith--not faiths, Eph. 4:5.
- B. The faith Paul preached is one & the same as the gospel--& there is only one true gospel.  
GALATIANS 1:6-9.
- C. The truth Paul preached must be believed. Faith is not optional.

They [will] all be condemned who [do] not believe the truth... (2 Thes 2:12).

- D. The gospel Paul preached must be obeyed. 2 Thess 1:8  
We have received grace & apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name. (Rom 1:5).

E. The faith Paul preached was a justifying faith when it was believed & obeyed.

II. PERSECUTION CANNOT DESTROY THE FAITH PAUL PREACHED.

A. Persecution, in fact, became an occasion for the spread of the faith, Acts 8:1, 4.

B. The faith or gospel Paul preached is an everlasting gospel. MT 24:35; Rev 14:6; 1 Pet 1:23-25

C. Persecution can, of course, weed out the insincere & the uncommitted, but it cannot destroy the faith of those who truly love God. READ ROMANS 8:35-38.

III. THO NO ONE CAN DESTROY THE FAITH PAUL PREACHED, WE CAN DEPRIVE OURSELVES OF ITS BENEFITS. In Paul's first letter to Timothy, he showed that men can:

A. Stray from the faith, 1:6; 6:10, 20-21.

B. Make shipwreck of the faith, 1:19-20.

C. Depart from the faith, 4:1.

D. Deny the faith, 5:8.

E. Cast off the faith, 5:12.

If & when we do these things, we will cease to be believers in the Biblical sense, we will no longer be obedient to the faith, & no longer justified by faith. To be justified by the faith Paul preached, a person must remain faithful.

IV. THO HE HAD ONCE TRIED TO DESTROY THE FAITH, PAUL CAME TO GLORIFY GOD IN THE FAITH & CAUSE OTHERS TO DO SO AS WELL, Gal. 1:24.

A. He stopped persecuting the church.

B. He began to share the faith with others.

CONCLUSION: Each of us has sometimes done things that have hindered the faith. We have wasted years that could have been used in God's service. We have recklessly spent dollars that could have been used in God's cause. We have allowed abilities to decrease that should have been made to increase in doing God's will. Remember, it is not persecution or hard times or physical infirmities that will ruin our souls. That is an inside job.

All the water in the world, however hard it tried  
Can never ever sink a ship unless it gets inside.  
All the evil in the world, the wickedness and sin  
Can never sink your soul's fair craft, unless you let it in.

La Porte, TX, November 13, 1983  
Exton, PA, April 21, 1985  
Exton, PA, April 7, 1991  
Shiloh, Mexia, TX, December 6, 1992  
Susquehanna, Marietta, PA, February 1, 1998