

The Lord's Day Morning

October 15, 1944

“Paul As a Christian”
Scripture Lesson – Acts 26:12-32
Text – Acts 26:19

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Introduction

1. All are agreed that Paul is probably the greatest Christian who has ever lived.
 - a. It would seem wise to me then that we should think of Paul as a Christian.

I. Think of what made Paul a Christian

1. Before his conversion
 - a. He was an influential person in religious and governmental realm of Jews
 1. He had studied under their leading teacher, Gamaliel
 2. He persecuted those who denied the efficacy of the Law
 3. Persecuted and put to death those who were followers of Christ
 - b. He was proud
 1. His Jewish ancestry
 2. His position ahead of any his own age
 3. His life
 - c. He was self-righteous
 1. He did not need any Savior
 2. He obeyed the Law and that was sufficient
2. He saw Christ on road to Damascus
 - a. He accepted Him as Savior
 - b. He lost that pride in self and family
 1. Boast only in cross of Christ
 - c. Lost self-righteousness
 1. I am chief of sinners
 2. Christ alone can save you or me
 3. Counted own righteousness of no value; wanted righteousness of Christ
3. He accepted Christ as Lord
 - a. What wilt Thou have me do
 - b. Acts 26:16-18
 1. Here was a great task
 - c. Yet at this time Paul could say verse 19 – have not been disobedient to heavenly vision
 1. In 2 Timothy 4:7 – Fought good fight, finished course, kept faith
 - d. Paul had followed Christ and done what He asked him to do

II. Submitted all to God

1. Philippians 4:4-8

2. Philippians 1:21 – For me to live is Christ
3. Acts 21:13 – Ready to die
 - a. Philippians 1:23-25 – wanted to die but would leave all to God
4. Paul did not go where he desired to go; he went where God commanded him to go
5. God can only lead submissive souls
 - a. Dr. Sweets telling of man who went to preach at a church occasionally. He had preached there once about a year before and when invited back he got a sermon to preach, but just as he began to preach he realized that he had preached that same sermon when he was there about a year before. So he paused and told the congregation that he was embarrassed; he had numbers of sermons he could have preached but that now he would have to go on with that one. After the service, a very prominent man in the community came forward and told him he desired to unite with the church. That when he was there a year before he had heard him preach and had desired to unite with the church, but had not done so and that for these months he had thought of hi and his sermon often and that when he saw in the paper he was going to preach he had come to hear him, and that God must have told him to preach that same sermon over again.

III. Lead by Holy Spirit

1. Because Paul submitted his life to God, he was led by the Holy Spirit.
 - a. Acts 16 – led Paul
 - b. Told to stay at Fair Havens
2. Paul could never have lived successfully without power of Holy Spirit.
3. God does not expect us to start out into life without supernatural guidance.
 - a. “Unguided Youth” (illustration #173) “Wings of the Spirit” (Hurlbutt)

“Five young college women, including my daughter, attending the national convention of their sorority in Glacier Park, were returning from a morning hike. One of them saw a signboard pointing up a mountain trail, with the words: ‘This way to Glacier, 3 ½ hours’ hike.’ She exclaimed, ‘Let’s take that hike tomorrow!’ The others chimed, ‘All right; we’re game.’

A reward of five thousand dollars was offered by the hotel to anyone who would climb to the top of Glacier Mountain; but the girls did not know this. Neither did they bother to inquire about the character of their intended undertaking, or what equipment was necessary. Nor did they ask for a guide. The next morning they just started out, gaily clad in knickers and silk hose, two of them shod only in high-heeled slippers. They were not burdened by lunch basket or extra clothing!

After what seemed the time necessary to reach the glacier, they came to a logging camp where they made inquiry. The loggers told them that they were hardly well started and advised them to go back. But they said, ‘No; we’ve started and we’re going up to it.’ After a long time they came to the cabin of a forest ranger and asked if the glacier was not near. ‘No,’ he replied; ‘you girls can never reach the glacier. You will soon be in snow and no one has been through to break the trail

this season. You must go back.’ But to his warnings they replied, ‘We’re going to the glacier, now we’ve got this far.’

On they went up the unbroken trail through the snow. Chilled to the bone and utterly spent, they finally threw themselves down in the snow to rest, at the brink of the glacier. Then one said, ‘Let’s go out on it, so we can say we have had that experience.’ But as they ventured on the snow-filmed ice, the thin crust cracked and they fled back as it gave way, exposing an icy torrent beneath. There was but a fraction of a second between them and death!

Then down the mountain, faint with hunger, numb with cold, and so fatigued that they could scarcely drag one foot after the other. Coffee from the forest ranger and hardtack biscuit from the loggers was all that kept them from sinking by the way. It was evening before they reached their hotel, too spent to eat, and turned into their beds. Three days later, two of them were still in bed; and they declared that they felt as if they had been drugged.

That is a picture of youth: full of courage and daring, eager to explore, ready for any adventure, strong to endure, determined to accomplish. But youth needs counsel, and a guide. Rightly directed, the qualities which those girls showed conquer continents and build civilizations. Undirected, these same qualities only wreck their possessors – and others.”

4. Results – made converts, established churches, wrote epistles.

IV. Dependent upon God

1. Bible and Paul
 - a. 1 Corinthians 15:10 – By grace of God I am what I am
 - b. 2 Corinthians 12:9-10 – In weakness am made strong
 - c. Paul knew God would help
2. We, too, must depend upon God
 - a. Trials
 1. God told Paul, “My grace is sufficient.”
 2. Paul could sing in jail
 - b. Work to be done
 1. God enabled Paul
 2. He will enable us
 - c. Temptations
 1. God would provide a way of escape

V. Looked for appearance of Christ

1. Much theological difference of opinion
 - a. But it is plain we are to watch for we do not know when He will appear
2. Paul looked for His coming
 - a. Lived daily so he would not be ashamed
3. We, too, should do that same thing

Conclusion

1. Should ask Lord what wilt Thou have me to do
 - a. Yield in submission to God
 - b. Then let Holy Spirit lead us
 - c. Depend upon God
 - d. Live moment by moment as if Christ would come
2. We, too, would be able to say
 - a. Have not been disobedient to the heavenly vision
 - b. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness.