

PLAN 4: God's redemptive work in the life of the Apostle Paul

25 days (roughly 15 minutes per day)

In this plan we will take a look at God's redemptive work in the life of 1 specific man, the Apostle Paul. Redemptive work means that God turned things around or "redeemed" Paul's life. This may be of benefit to newer readers that find themselves in need of a turnaround or some sort of change in life. The Apostle Paul actually started out with the name Saul, and during that time he was the greatest enemy of the Christian Church. He eventually went on to convert to Christianity and write roughly half of the New Testament. How did we get from one version of the man to the redeemed version? We'll take a deeper look by telling his story in order (starting from the crucifixion of Christ, for context, and then telling his story in order which would start with the book of Acts and end with his final Bible writing, Philemon, and there will be various verses after that to recap the journey).

Day 1: Luke 22-24 then read the following COMMENTARY on the text: These 3 chapters are designed to provide you with context. The Apostle Paul/Saul, who has NOT entered the story yet, was a Pharisee, and we see in these 3 chapters that it was the Pharisees, chief priests, elders and religious leaders that were the true force behind the crucifixion of Jesus. Paul/Saul carries on this legacy of hatred and sin until his eventual conversion to Christianity. So now you have the context of why Paul/Saul is so evil at the start (which we are about to see). We now turn to the book of Acts, the telling of events after Jesus is crucified and rises from the grave (this is where Paul/Saul enters the story).

Day 2: Acts 1-3

Day 3: Acts 4-7

Day 4: Acts 8-10

Day 5: Acts 11-13

Day 6: Acts 14-17

Day 7: Acts 18-20

Day 8: Acts 21-23

Day 9: Acts 24-26

Day 10: Acts 27-28, Romans 1-2

Day 11: Romans 3-7

Day 12: Romans 8-11

Day 13: Romans 12-16

Day 14: 1 Corinthians 1-6

Day 15: 1 Corinthians 7-12

Day 16: 1 Corinthians 13-16

Day 17: 2 Corinthians 1-7

Day 18: 2 Corinthians 8-13

Day 19: Galatians 1-6

Day 20: Ephesians 1-6

Day 21: Philippians 1-4

Day 22: Colossians 1-4, 1 Thessalonians 1-3

Day 23: 1 Thessalonians 4-5, 2 Thessalonians 1-3, 1 Timothy 1-4

Day 24: 1 Timothy 5-6, 2 Timothy 1-4

Day 25: Titus 1-3, Philemon, 2 Peter 3:10-18 then Acts 9:18/Philippians 3:12-14 then read the following COMMENTARY on the text: Before I say anything, yes, his name was changed from Saul to Paul. The death of Paul is not recorded in the Bible, which is why I included the passage 2 Peter 3:10-18. It reminds us that Jesus is coming back and we will have to give an account for the way that we live our everyday lives. It also makes clear in verse 15 that Paul wasn't just any writer, but a writer that was given wisdom from God - God chose Paul and Paul's writing was Biblical, and Peter wanted to clarify that (in verse 16 it even refers to Paul's writings as "Scriptures", so we know that we can trust everything that Paul wrote in the books that I will list in a few moments). The passage from Peter goes on to remind us that even those that are "secure" can still "fall" and that we must always grow in our faith - this will tie into what we talk about with Philippians 3:12-14. The Apostle Paul, known first as Saul, was a very religious man who knew the Bible (which at the time what they had was the Old Testament) very well. In the way he lived, though, he was far from God. He persecuted the Christian Church because he thought they were incorrect religiously. Eventually he had an encounter with Jesus and became not only a Christian but a strong Christian leader. The passage where this takes place is Acts 9:18, which describes "something like scales falling from his eyes." He was blinded by himself and by what he thought was a good religious way. You can't see the work of God when you're blinded - his encounter and ultimately relationship with/devotion to Christ set him free from

himself and from his sins (this is what it is to be "saved"). Paul went on to write the Bible books Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, and his final book Philemon, doing great work for the Lord. God worked redemption in the life of the biggest enemy of Christianity. It would basically be if God turned Satan into a priest. But God didn't choose Satan, he chose Saul, a human being, and in fact a religious man. The sinner God chose to highlight as in need of change wasn't the Devil, but a religious man. That's who needed redemption. Don't overlook this. It's why in Philippians 3:13-14, after having been converted to Christianity and written a few books of the Bible, Paul says "I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it (his goal for who he should be). But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus." - so even the redeemed man, the man who had come so far, even at that point Paul had room to improve and needed to "pressed on" and moved forward in pursuing it - we must do the same. Whether you're Saul, or Paul, or anything in between, there is room to grow in your life and faith, and you must. This story is an example of what the redemptive work of God looks like in our lives. Thanks for reading.