

# St Paul and the Church

click [blue underlined](#) links to view verse(s)

## RECAP OF THE CONVERSION OF PAUL

We first encounter Paul in the book of the Acts of the Apostles [Acts 7:58](#) , where he was known as Saul.

- He was born in Tarsus of Cilicia in Asia Minor. [Acts 21:39](#)
- He was a Jew and his family was of the line of Benjamin. [Romans 11:1](#)
- He grew up in Jerusalem and studied Jewish tradition under the elder Gamaliel. [Acts 22:3](#)
- He was a zealous Pharisee. [Acts 23:6](#) , [Galatians 1:14](#)
- He was fiercely opposed to “The Way”. [Acts 8:1,3](#) , [Acts 9:1-2](#)

BUT

- On the road to Damascus he encounters the risen Lord. [Acts 9:1-19](#)
- And affirms this, and his Apostolic authority, in his letter to the Corinthians. [1 Cor 9:1](#)

Following this encounter Paul’s life change dramatically. Rather than persecuting “the Way” Paul immediately began preaching the gospel. It was his life’s work. As “Apostle to the Gentiles” he travelled widely proclaiming the revelation he had received, even to the withstanding of Peter who had been with our Lord during His ministry.

So much was Paul convinced that he suffered a thorn in the flesh, incarceration, and remained faithful until death in Rome to share the gospel to all “who had ears to hear”.

Paul was a prolific contributor to the New Testament writings; his wisdom and epistles being affirmed by Peter [2 Peter 3:15-16](#).

To Paul was committed the doctrines of grace which were latent in the teachings of Jesus. Paul originates nothing, but unfolds everything, concerning the nature and purpose of the law; the ground and means of the believer’s justification, sanctification, and glory; the meaning of the death of Christ, and the position, walk, expectation, and service of the Christian. By him we learn that “we shall not all sleep” that “the dead in Christ shall rise first” and the living saints shall be “changed” and caught up to meet the Lord in the air at His return.

# St Paul and the Church

click [blue underlined](#) links to view verse(s)

Note: The word translated *church* in the New testament is *ecclesia* meaning assembly or congregation.

Almost exclusively through Paul we know that the church is not an organisation but an organism, the body of Christ; instinct with His life, and heavenly in calling, promise and destiny. Through him we know the nature, purpose and form of organisation of local churches, and the right conduct of such gatherings.

In our fellowship meeting this evening we can but scratch at the surface of Paul's teachings regarding the Church.

## DICUSSION THOUGHTS

### 1. What was Paul's

- Doctrine [1 Cor 3:16](#) , [1 Cor 12:12-27](#)
- Thoughts on Church organisation [1 Tim 3:1-13](#) , [Tit 1:5-9](#)
- Guidance on behaviour [1 Cor 14:33,40](#) , [Tit 2:1-12](#) , [Eph 6:1-9](#)
- The Lord's Supper [1 Cor 11:20-34](#)

### 2. Some believe Paul, in his writings, was a misogynist

- Do you agree?
- Consider [1 Cor 11:1-13](#) , [1 Cor 14:34-35](#) , [Rom 16:1-4](#)

### 3. The Church today has many denominations. At St Peter's we regularly pray: "And grant, that they who do confess thy holy Name may agree in the truth of thy holy Word, live in unity, and godly love."

- What would Paul make of the many denominations?
- Do the different denominations help or hinder our commission?
- Is there a visible Church and a true Church? [Sea of Faith](#)
- What do you think of the [ecumenical movement](#)?

### 4. Of the Church today as a whole, and ours at St Peter's in particular

- Are we considered in our local communities as just an entity synonymous with other "good" civic local groups, such as the WI?
- What should be the role of the Church with the State?
- As Christians what is our responsibility? [Rom 13:1-8](#) , [Tit 3:1](#) , [Acts 5:28-29](#)