

**A PROOF OF THE RESURRECTION:
THE CONVERSION OF SAUL OF TARSUS**

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **Galatians 1:11-24.**
- B. This is the first in a series of lessons about the resurrection of Jesus Christ and why we should believe in it.
- C. The other lessons are:
 - 1. The Swoon Theory/Proof from The Grave Clothes.
 - 2. If the Dead Are Not Raised?
 - 3. The Seven Signs of John.
 - 4. The Change at Pentecost.
- D. If we cannot prove the resurrection of Jesus, our Christianity is vain.

I. SAUL OF TARSUS.

- A. Saul was a fanatic:
 - 1. Saul was a persecutor of Christians and approved of their being stoned (Ac. 7:58-8:1).
 - 2. Saul not only did not approve of Christianity he wanted to rid the land of it (Ac. 8:2).
- B. Saul was a great persecutor of Christians;
 - 1. He obtained letters from the high priest to imprison Christians (Ac. 9:1,2).
EXAMPLE: Man's word is no good anymore, it must be in writing as witnessed by a faulty electric blanket.
 - 2. He would go as far as necessary to find those of the Way (Ac. 26:9-11).
- C. Saul was prejudiced:
 - 1. He was extremely jealous for his ancestral traditions (Gal. 1:11-14).
EXAMPLE: I don't want to argue with tradition, just show me in writing (the Bible) why you believe what you believe.
 - 2. He wanted to destroy "the faith" (Gal. 1:23).

II. PAUL THE APOSTLE.

- A. Paul is quite a different man after his conversion;
 - 1. He wants everyone to become a Christian (Ac. 26:28,29).
 - 2. He believes the gospel is the power of God to salvation (Rom. 1:16).
 - 3. He believes that Jesus was resurrected and was the Son of God (Rom. 1:4).
 - 4. Paul wants to know nothing except Jesus and Him crucified (1Cor. 2:2).
 - 5. Paul now considers his past as worthless as bird dung (Phil. 4:4-8).
- B. As writer of at least half of the NT, there is not a doubt that Saul has been truly converted to Christ, and is now Paul the apostle.
- C. Paul became a Christian on the road to Damascus (Ac. 9:3-19).

III. THE CRUX OF THE MATTER.

- A. With all of this evidence, we now ask the important question, "who converted Saul?"
- B. The following groups of people would NOT have done it:
 - 1. The Jews.
They were always against Christ, and still are today.
 - 2. The Christians.
No way, remember Saul was a fanatic, he could not be reasoned with.
 - 3. The Romans.
They were neutral on religion, tolerated many, not advocating any.

4. Greek, Gnostic, or Stoic philosophers.
They too did not believe in Jesus of Nazareth (Ac. 17:18,32).
5. Any other prominent group at that time.
Saul was steeped in his Jewish traditions, Gentiles would have no effect upon him.
- C. The only person who has the power, wisdom, and insight to convert Saul, was the one who did convert him--Jesus Christ.

IV. SAUL'S CONVERSION PROVES THE RESURRECTION.

- A. The conversion of the great Saul of Tarsus into the Christian, and apostle Paul proves the resurrection of Christ.
- B. Look at the following logical sequence:
 1. No human could convert Saul.
 2. Jesus died on Calvary's cross.
 3. Jesus is the only one who could convert Saul,
 4. Saul was converted (now the apostle Paul).
 5. Therefore, Jesus was (had to be) resurrected!
- C. Paul is a great stumbling block to the Jews (then and now). The question must be asked, "Why did Paul change?", "Why did he become a Christian?"
- D. The answer is that the resurrected Christ changed (converted) him.

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. One doesn't need to "park their brains" to become a Christian.
- B. With the evidence that we have, it is more plausible to believe in the resurrection than not to believe.
- C. Believe and obey Christ today.
- D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians; erring Xians.