



The Messenger

Messenger Project Newsletter

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Messenger Notes



Gary Bruno (with Lionel De Leon) records guitar.

Gary Bruno recorded phenomenal guitar tracks for *Merciful God* on our upcoming CD. You can learn more about Gary at his website, GaryBruno.com.

Lionel De Leon wrote a choir and piano arrangement for *The First Day*. It will be performed later this year by Huntington Beach's **Community Bible Church Choir**. The sheet-music is currently available at messengerproject.com in pdf format.

Dr. Peter Senkbeil, head of **Concordia University Drama Department**, offered valuable insight and suggestions for improving *The Word*, which has inspired Lionel to begin working on changes to the musical. The rewrite will eliminate the narrator and add more conversations with Jesus.

The silk screening equipment we picked up in Albuquerque wasn't in working order and may be antiquated beyond repair. Our t-shirt project is on indefinite hold.

Lionel sang *Love* with the worship team during the March 20th offering at Community Bible Church. His next performance will be April 24th.

The Apostle Paul

Our understanding of scripture is greatly due to the Apostle Paul, whose personal account and letters amount to one-third of New Testament literature. Our faith is strengthened by Paul's life and testimony. Paul was transformed from being Christ's most bitter enemy to his greatest theologian.



Paul was born "Saul" c. 3 A.D. at Tarsus, Cilicia (modern Turkey). He studied Hebrew scriptures and was educated as a Roman citizen in Greek language, history and culture. He was sent to the rabbinical school of Gamaliel in Jerusalem when he was ten years old. (Gamaliel is mentioned in both the Jewish Talmud and in Acts 5:24-40). As a Pharisee and rabbi, Saul persecuted Christians and witnessed the stoning death of Steven. Saul converted to Christianity when he was temporarily blinded on the road to Damascus (by our risen Lord, who renamed him Paul).

Paul was a tentmaker by trade and spent his converted years as an apostle (messenger) of the gospel (good news). Paul began his twelve-year ministry in Antioch at 44 A.D. and made three missionary journeys. Legend claims that Paul and Peter were martyred on the same day (at the same time?). Paul was beheaded in Rome (c. 65 A.D. under the reign of emperor Nero) at a place called Aquae Salviae, about two miles from the Basilica of San Paolo (which marks his burial place).

Catholics observe January 25th as the day of Paul's conversion and June 29th as the day of his death. Paul is called the patron saint of authors, evangelists, journalists, publishers, reporters, rope

makers, tentmakers, laymen and musicians. He protects against hailstorms and snake bites (according to Catholic tradition).

Here is a brief synopsis of the twelve books related to Paul. The book of **Acts** reveals historical facts about Paul's life and ministry.

In **Romans**, Paul teaches righteousness through faith, God's plan for Israel and Christian relationships. In **1 Corinthians**, Paul discusses division in the church, sexual immorality, lawsuits, marriage, rights, responsibilities, public worship, spiritual gifts and the resurrection of Jesus. **2**

Corinthians discusses Paul's ministry and instructs about generosity in giving. In

Galatians, Paul emphasizes his authority from God, legalism vs. grace and the gospel put into practice. Paul teaches in **Ephesians** about Christ and the church, conduct of believers and Christian warfare. **Philippians** contains Paul's circumstances, messengers, concerns, warnings and advice. It encourages us to imitate Christ's humility. In **Colossians**, Paul discusses Christ and the believer, and rules for holy living. **1 & 2**

Thessalonians explains Paul's ministry in the church, teaches about the Lord's return, reveals Paul's personal concerns/advice and explains the conditions for the Lord's return. **1 & 2 Timothy** contains Paul's instructions for the church (and Timothy), encouragement to be faithful and reveals the true way.

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Paul's conversion gives modern Christians assurance that the Bible is trustworthy. Why would a man who zealously persecuted Christians suddenly become Christianity's greatest theologian? Why would Paul give up his rabbinical position and social status for persecution, prison and death? There are only two possible answers: Paul was crazy or he was chosen by God. His passionate and informative letters, the rapid rise of the early church and the cohesiveness of scripture all testify that God's gift of salvation is true. Saul, a devout Jew, became Paul, an apostle to the Gentiles. Praise be to God!