

W466_Saul_that_is_called_Paul_2.mp3

[00:00:02] This is the recording made in the Chapel of the Open book and is the second part of number one of a series entitled Soul, who also is called Paul. The reason why we have to subdivide is that the subject was too big to be included in one session. So we are not getting less. You're getting more, as it were, by this very fact. When we think of the Apostle Paul, we must remember. That he was a Jew. And he had all the prejudices and all the background of a very religious Jew. Not only so. He said he was that the straightest sect of his religion, a Pharisee. Now, the Pharisees were a straight sect, and if he belonged to the straightest sect and was most advanced, you could see what Grace must have been manifested in breaking down that terrific. Self importance, the despising of others. You remember our savior who would never have spoken ill of anyone in his parable, he said. Two men went into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and one a publican. And fantasy lifted up his eyes and said, God, I thank thee. I am not, as other men asked. I fast twice in the week. I did tithes all I possess. And I'm not like this publican. But he said the publican Durst not lift up his eyes to heaven, but said, God, be merciful, be propitious to me, not merely a sitter. Sitter. He never bothered about the Pharisee. And our Savior's comment was, I tell you, that man went down to his house, justified rather than the other.

[00:02:13] What have we got from the lips of our savior himself? What a self-righteous Pharisee was like in his estimation. And the Apostle Paul has given you in the epistle to the Philippians, an outline of a character which you could hardly match in any known company of God's people. He was a Pharisee of the Pharisees. He was a Hebrew of the Hebrews. Touching the righteous requirements of the law blameless. And then. Came that terrific moment. I was stricken down on the road to Damascus. A changed from soul. The persecutor to Paul the Apostle, but that we must look at the moment the change of name. His own statement. If you'd like to turn to Acts 22. His own statement is, I suppose, what we should allow him to tell us himself. X 22 men, brethren and fathers. He was a bad he was addressing the Hebrews and he had ceased to be reckoned among them. He was now a marked bad and they would have taken his life if they could. But he still addressed them. Men, brethren and fathers hear ye my defence, which I make now unto you. When I heard that he spake in the Hebrew tongue. To them. They kept the more silence. And he. He was able to speak Hebrew. The Roman

God said to him, Canst thou speak Greek? And so God couldn't use these abilities. We mustn't despise them and say it's all a matter of the spirit.

[00:04:06] It is a matter of the spirit that we can do more. We can lay at his feet to be used by him, the better. So when they heard the Hebrew tongue spoken by this man, they listened. And this is what he said of himself. I am verily a man. Which I am a Jew. So he's making the statement still, I am a Jew. Born at Tarsus in Cilicia. Yet. There may have been a reason why he said yet, because I think I mentioned to you that Cilicia, which is pronounced with a K, not written with a soft C. There were three caves that were said to be terrible in their wickedness, and Cilicia was one of them. Cappadocia's another. He said, I was born at Tarsus. But he says, I was brought up in this city where? Jerusalem at the feet of Gamaliel. Now, Gabriel is mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles more than once, and he has a reputation outside the Bible of being a fair, just minded man. He intervenes in the acts of the apostles and said, Oh, we must give them a chance. Let them speak. And so this man, he was brought up as a rigid Pharisee, nevertheless had the influence upon him in his younger days of Gamaliel. God knows what he's doing with his servants and those who are being prepared for ultimate service. At the feet of Gamaliel and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers.

[00:05:53] That is it inside the law of Moses. It is inside the law of God. He was taught in the perfect manner of the law of the fathers. And by the time you know what the law of the fathers involves, you realize it was a rigmarole from morning till night and night to morning of all sorts of things to be observed until it became a terrific burden. And that's the fallacy of the Pharisees who undertook that attitude toward the Word of God. And was zealous toward God as he ordered his day. I think he said, I persecuted this way unto the death. And, you know, watched her and made him start that, don't you? If you're just let me finish reading this little bit, we'll turn and see you again. Binding the delivering unto prisons, both men and women and also the high priest Affair. we witness and all the estate of the elders for who also I receive letters unto the Brethren and went to Damascus to bring them which were there bound unto Jerusalem for to be punished. Then comes the great light. Then comes the. A quarry. Who art thou, Lord? Now this Hebrew of the Hebrews, this fallacy of the Pharisees would never have conceived of anyone in heaven speaking as the Lord but Jehovah, the God of Israel. He said, What

now, Lord? And the answer. I am Jesus. A decade from hidden. And that blinding light was also a parallel to the blinding light.

[00:07:46] That turn Saul the persecutor into Paul the Apostle. And so we have this earthen vessel. So wonderfully fitted for the work he had to do. He could sympathize and understand completely the attitude of his Jewish brethren. But we find that he was brought up at Tarsus in Cilicia, and Tarsus in Cilicia was a university city. And as I think I mentioned in our last last meeting, the statue of Sardanapalus was there. And around that statue was the quotation. Eat. Drink. Enjoy yourself. The rest is nothing. And you can understand how that appealed to him when he began to see the glory of the resurrection, for he almost quotes it in one Corinthians 15. If there be no resurrection, let's eat and drink for tomorrow, we die. So here we have this earthen vessel. And he so dominates the New Testament. So far as you and I are concerned, that we can't get away from him. And I don't think we should we should wish to be, because he definitely tells us that he himself is a pattern. And the words that he's given us are to be the form. And there is no difference between those two words. They are in English, of course, but he used the same word twice. You can translate it pattern twice or form twice, or you can leave it as it stands. But that is what God said, not what He said. That's what God intended.

[00:09:22] He should be a pattern and his message a pattern for us to follow. So the more we know about him, the better we should understand what our attitude should be. And we are certainly not idolizing Paul the man. We are thanking God for using that earthen vessel to give us such an example of what His grace can accomplish. The contrasting sect in Israel. Was the Sadducees. And of course, it's a great temptation to say, because they did not believe in the resurrection. They were sad, you see. But please don't say that's the meaning of the word. I ought not to have said it, did I? You find in the 23rd chapter of this same acts of the Apostles, a reference to the Sadducees. We might as well. We might as well see. Paul is before the council. He was a member of the council. And he got papers. You remember authority from the council. To go to Damascus and bring back those men and women who believe Christ. Now, he himself is before them and being judged. He said. Men and brethren. However, even in all good conscience before God, until this day, and I suppose he could say that he was a good, conscientious Pharisee. Now he says, I'm a good, conscientious Christian. Does me to say that it didn't matter whether you were one or the other. But he said, I did really act

up to and believe what I taught. And High Priest Ananias commanded them that stood by him to smite him on the mouth.

[00:11:08] That was the answer of the high priest. Then, said Paul, unto him, God shall smite thee, thou whitewashed wall. I'm almost glad. I go careful what I say. This is the one occasion where the Apostle manifested. He was a man of like, passions as ourselves. But he immediately corrected himself. He said, Oh, I ought not have said that about the high priest. Thou whitewashed wall. Sometimes we have to confess we've said things that we ought not to have said. And so here we have the apostle. Smitten by the high priest on the mouth. And for a moment manifesting that he was a man of flesh and blood, as you and I are. God shall smite thee, thou whitewashed wall so that the only occasion we get it. But I can sense, I think, and you can sense in some of the epistles of Paul. How keenly he felt certain things and how wonderful the grace of God was that used him in spite of it all. And then it says. Verse six. But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees. Now, you may say this was artful of him, but it was what you might expect. He's up before a council and this council had the power of life and death, and he saw that there were the Pharisees there. There were the Sadducees there. It was as though we had a meeting and one not work, the Tories and the other the Labour Party.

[00:12:51] So the one who was up before them, he gets them going at loggerheads. That's what he did. And when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he cried out into the council. Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee of the hope and resurrection of the dead. I am called in question. What about moment? He said that. There was a dissension because the Pharisees believed the resurrection and the Sadducees didn't. So now we're beginning to get somebody to carry through this man on the way in which the Lord raised him up, used him, and yet revealed that he was a man of like, passions to ourselves. And while we're not glad that anybody slips and makes mistakes, we're glad it's recorded so that we don't feel that a plaster of Paris Saint is the way in which we must conceive of these true saints of God. He speaks about the being a Pharisee. Well, unfortunately, we think of a fallacy. From one angle only. There are about 14 different types of fallacies mentioned by different writers at different times. They may have all been much of a muchness. I've only got seven here, but they may interest you if I just give you what has been gathered

from some of the writings of the very days of the Apostle. As to the different types, even among this one sect of Pharisees.

[00:14:28] There was the Jacobite fantasy. Now, he was a fantasy for self-interest. It wasn't that he cared very much about the laws that he was following and the ordinances and that, But for some reason or another, it was a self interest that made him a Pharisee. That's the way they tick that one off. And then there was another one whose name would have been Uriah Heep if he'd lived in England. Only, of course, Uriah Heep isn't Hebrew, and he was called a tumbling Pharisee because he was always parading his humility, always walking with a bowed head, always making it obvious that he was so unborn and his father and mother were all humble. You know the idea, don't you? That's another form of pride. Pride to be humble in the wrong sense. A Pharisee called the Tumbling Pharisee. And then there was another one. Who in order to demonstrate that he was so pure minded that when he was out in the street, he never looked at a woman? Oh, no. He always had blood on his forehead because he walked with bowed head and ran his head into a brick wall rather than look. It is all so arrant nonsense to us that when you come to think of it as the description of those who were the leaders of the people, the teachers of the people, the ones who knew the law and so on, you see how they needed the interposition of a Son of God and those apostles who were raised up by him to deliver them and us from such.

[00:16:03] I don't know whether I need review all these as the timid Pharisee or there's one I think that the Apostle Paul belonged to. The only way in which you can translate the title of this Pharisee is Tell Me another thing and I'll do it. Pharisee. All that. Well, that's what the Apostle Paul is all out, wasn't he? And can't you see that that characteristic of him was used by the Lord for the moment. He was a Christian. He was all out for the very truth. He persecuted and for the very Christ he had denied all out. So God knows his purposes. He knows the vessels he's going to use and he can prepare them beforehand without them being conscious of it. The. Training of the apostle is also of consequence to us as we gather from the scriptures. What would be the characteristic? The characteristic training of such a man at the age of five. Five years of old of age. He would be taught the Shiba. Now, there's one person in this congregation who knows what the Shiba is, but there is a possibility that you Gentiles are so ignorant. I'll have to tell you. The CIMA is the opening word of a verse in the Law of Moses. And it

means here that the name Samuel is heard of God. Cima is the word to hear. Cima hear O Israel. The Lord our God.

[00:17:52] His wife. At the age of five. At that sensitive age, the one thing that he would learn to repeat and to stand for was the unity of the Godhead. And of course, the unity of the Godhead is essential truth. But it could be used to deny the person of Christ as he did. They were so convinced that God was one that any attempt to speak about the Lord Jesus Christ as being divine, of course, was absolutely contrary to their upbringing. Next. Are we be together? I hope to have so that you can see them the way in which this clma, this passage from Deuteronomy chapter six is held in such importance because. If you can see at it in the Hebrew Bible, I'll have it to show you. The writers of the text have put large letters at the beginning and the end of that verse so that looking at it from a distance, you don't see, hear O Israel, the Lord, our God is one. You see the word editor, which means witness. They stress the fact by doing that in every Bible that I've ever looked at, there's one on the shelf there. If you look up Deuteronomy six and turn the page, even though you can't read it, you'll see the letters standing out in big. That was their great witness. The Lord, our God is one. So do you remember all this is behind Saul of Tarsus, the Pharisee who became Paul the apostle of Jesus Christ.

[00:19:36] I've just got a note here that the Pharisee originated in the days of Ezra. Should we just go back and pick that little piece up? Ezra. That's chapter 621. There's a chapter 621. Sorry, I'm taking the time. Oh, and the children of Israel, which were come again out of the captivity and all such as had separated themselves unto them from the filthiness of the heathen of the land to seek the Lord God of Israel. They did eat together. So here was a separated people. And that's the meaning of the word Pharisee. The word Pharisee is not a Greek word. It's an Aramaic word. And it means to separate. But it separated people. And it started then in chapter nine, verse one, where we have Ezra open, chapter nine, verse one. Now, when these things were done, the princes came to be saying, The people of Israel and the priests and the Levites have not separated themselves from the people of the land. So is again an emphasis on the need for separation. And once more, in chapter ten, verse 11 and 12. Now, therefore make confession unto the Lord God of your fathers and do his pleasure and separate yourselves from the people of the land. Now, that's where the word Pharisee comes from. And the idea of being separated. And it was a right one. But you see how sad it is for human nature because of human nature that the very right thing can become abused

and you can be so separate that you forget the other graces that should go with it and modify it.

[00:21:46] So that's just in passing. Now from from a child at the age of five. Saul of Tarsus would have had drilled into him the witness of his people. The Lord, our God is one. Then at the age of six, he would go to the Vineyard. But you say, Oh, that was early to go to the VR. But the vineyard was were they called the school? That's where he started learning in the school at the age of six. And by the time he reached the age of ten, he was able to recite what is called the oral law, the spoken law. And not only so, but he was acquainted with the Mishnah, which means the interpretation of that law. Next we meet together. I hope you will have in front of you evidences of this so that I won't attempt to explain it with so much easier when you can see the scripture yourself. And then we have at the age of 13, he became a son of the law, a son of the Lord. Now I'm just going to look at this. Can you see this little book? I wonder if you guess what it is. It's a prayer book and it's a Jewish prayer book. And I'm going to read. A. It's very small print. I'm going to read from the prayer that the Apostle Paul would have said at the age of 13 and said it practically every day of his life till he became a Christian.

[00:23:33] Now, listen to this. Blessed art thou, O Lord, our God, King of the universe, who hath not made me a heathen. That's the word Gentile. So there was one prayer. Lord said he was not made a Gentile. The next one. Blessed art thou O God, Lord, our God, King of the universe, who hath not made me a slave. And then the third one. Blessed Art thou Our God, King of the universe. Who hath not made me a woman? Are you Think of that effect upon a mind at the age of 13 onwards. Thanking God in the synagogue service that he was not made a woman. Can you think of the effect upon the whole of the people? But there's something more than that. Let me turn you to the epistle, to the Galatians. I bet you've anticipated it already. In the epistle to the Galatians. If you know what, Paul, if you know what Paul had been brought up to recite, you could almost understand that, he says. So where am I? I can't find the passage now. Where it says. And. 628. Oh, thank you. Yes. A7 Yes. Thank you very much. He says in verse 27, For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. Now, whatever you do when you read this, don't say there is neither. That's using the word there in a sense that we use it.

[00:25:23] No, he says, there, there in that place. Emphasize it there. Where in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek. There in Christ is neither bond nor free. There in Christ is neither male nor female. Don't you see? He says the very three things that he all his lifetime since the age of 13, had thanked God. I was not born a Gentile. I was not born a slave. I was not born a woman, he says. The whole thing is washed out in Christ. All what? Grace must have been at work in the heart of that man to have undone of, I say, a lifetime's sense of being different and separated. Set apart in this way. And the grace of God that can turn a persecutor into a preacher like he does. He does is the grace of God that Paul preaches and is presented to you as the only converting power. You remember in the Acts of the Apostles. The very next day, practically the very next chapter after he stricken down on the road to Damascus, he confounds the Jews by proving that Jesus is the Christ. Why? Well, he got everything at his finger ends. He knew the Bible of the Old Testament inside out. At the moment. He had his eyes opened to see there as proof. So we have the value of teaching our children the Word of God, whether they are believers or whether they are not. It's the way in which God uses His word, perhaps years afterwards.

[00:27:00] That may be the blessing that we are seeking for them. Now, there were 613 precepts of the law connected by a famous rabbi, Moses Maimonides. But I have a picture I want to show you before this series is over. And I'll reserve references to that so that you may have that before you at the same time. Now the question arises about Paul and marriage. He says that he had the authority and the power to lead about a wife like Peter. But we have no reference anytime, anywhere of a wife waiting for him at Tarsus or wherever it might be. And the idea usually is that he was an unmarried man. Well, now, if you know anything of the attitude of the Jewish law and if you know that Paul was a stickler for the Jewish law and he was also a member of the governing class of the Jewish law and you know it in the Jewish law that he had learned from a child. It says that if a man reaches and passes the age of 21 without being married, he is practically living in sin. How could the council entrust a man like that who was breaking the very law is supposed to be upholding? So you say. So what? Well, as far as I can interpret, he must have been a married man. Otherwise, he would never have been accepted as he was. But that he was a widower and he didn't marry the second time.

[00:28:47] And that's one of the reasons I think, why we can see that affection, that attachment. God gave him a son. He didn't give him a son in the ordinary, everyday

sense, but he gave him a son called Timothy. And sometimes Timothy. Was a burden on his heart. It is all to the good of the apostle Paul that he should not be just separated entirely from some of the affairs of this life. Now we look at the card that you have in front of you, and it refers to the time when the apostle name was changed. So shall we now turn back to the acts of the Apostles? 30 chapter? I think it is. It is in verse 13. Let's look at the beginning. Now, there were in the church that was at Antioch, certain prophets and teachers as Barnabas Simon, who was called Niger Lucius of Cyrene Manayan, which had been brought up with Herod the Tetrarch, and just wrote in as a sort of makeweight. And so he comes last and he said, and saw one of them is called Niger. One of them was brought up with Herod. And so now that's the one that the Lord chose, the last one. And as I ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me. Or the word that would come to the ears of a man whose very profession was a separated person, Pharisee. Pharisee is going to be separated.

[00:30:54] But this is a new separation. Can't you see how strongly that thought is in the apostle's mind? When he wrote in Galatians God who separated me from my mother's womb and call me by his grace that I should preach him among the Gentiles. Separated. Can you hear it? In Romans the first chapter, Paul separated unto the Gospel of God. Oh, yes, he said. Oh, yes. Once I was a separated person in the form of a Pharisee. Now I've been. And he played on the word. Now I've been aphorismi. That's the Greek word. Now I've been separated unto the Gospel of God. He took place separate me, Barnabas and Saul unto the work for the work Whereunto. I called him. And when they had fasted and prayed and laid hands on them, they sent him away. Well, now they travel and go by the direction of the Holy Spirit into Seleucia. From thence, I sailed to Cyprus and I came to Salamis. And in that island, there was a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew whose name was Bar Jesus. Bar is the word for son like Bartholomew. You remember when they brought our saviour pilot? Brought our saviour out? There was Barabbas and bar by means of some of his father. There were two of them. He was the son and his father, our saviour. He was the son of his father. A murderer. And they chose him. And so we have this. This Jew. Now, what was the attitude of this Jew? Verse seven, which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus.

[00:32:43] Is that striking a note with you friends? This man has never been called Paul yet in the writings of the Acts of the Apostles. He is Saul. Saul, always. But here's a man

who's a Roman governor whose name is Paul, and they've actually got coins in our museums that were struck with this man's name on it from this very island. He was a prudent man. And he called for Barnabas and Saul. He didn't call for Paul. He didn't have the name. At that moment who called for Barnabas and Saul and desired to hear the Word of God. Now, what was the attitude of Aelius? The sorcerer? He was stood there. Seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith. Now, this was the beginning of Paul's ministry in the Acts. What was the end of Paul's ministry in the acts? The antagonism of the Jewish people notwithstanding. And once again, the Gentile becomes the object of his ministry. Now, listen to this. Are seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith. Then Saul, now, for the first time in in history, we know he had the other name. Paul. We don't need to say that he was called Paul. Now for the first time. But this was in harmony with Jewish practice. I think I've mentioned before in this meeting, but I'll mention it again. I remember seeing a cartoon in punch many years ago.

[00:34:22] It was just a little backstreet that you might find in Whitechapel. A group of boys standing at the corner and a woman leaning out of the window of a house along the street. She says, I see. And one of the boys says to the other one, Bill, your mother wants you. He was Ike Isaac in the house, but out in the street without a boy, his Gentiles as well. He was Bill. Now, it was a custom that they should have a Hebrew name and a Gentile name. And now for the first time, you're told that Saul was also called Paul. And it's done on purpose to link him with the Gentile who believed and the Jew who was an apostate. Don't you see how it's all prophetic and working out in harmony with his calling? And soul. You also is called Paul, filled with the Holy Ghost. Set his eyes on him and said, Oh, full of all subtlety and all mischief. Thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? And now behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind. The blindness settled upon Israel in Acts 28, and here it is, settling upon this antagonist. The moment Paul comes into this right dominion as Paul. He can't say it's accidental. Can you? And look. Not seeing the sun for a season for blindness in part had happened unto Israel until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled and then all Israel shall be saved.

[00:36:08] So he wasn't going to be blinded forever, but for a season. And immediately fell on him. A mist in the darkness. And he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand. Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord. So there we have this man. When you look at Chapter ten of the

Acts of the Apostles. The reason I'm saying that is that. At the end of the Acts of the Apostles, it says, Let me just go to the last verse there and quoted Exactly. Preaching the Kingdom of God and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no man forbidding him. And if you look at Acts 10:47. Peters is get any banned, forbid water. Now, this is a Jew. Who remains a Jew. This is Peter the Apostle of the circumcision. He says he and forbid this man who was a Gentile. So you see, at the end of the acts, you know what The idea no man forbidding is. There was no possibility now of anybody standing up and forbidding the gospel to go to the Gentile even. It was overruled in this day. But you can see the attitude and you'll find that they called the apostle to account. And they said, you give a you give a little idea of what you've been doing.

[00:38:02] We hear you've you've eaten with the Gentiles so that you see, even after Pentecost, there was no idea that the Jew and the Gentile had merged into one. They were still very separate. Well, that gives us some little idea. Of the earthen vessel. Saul also is called Paul. Now, before we can leave this part of the story, there is much that I would like to go over with you in connection with the background of his teaching. And next time we meet together, I hope to be able to show you not need to speak about it. What we mean by the Masorah and the Masoretic texts what we mean by suspended letters, what we mean by all the things that they did to safeguard and interpret the Scriptures so that you shall have a little idea of the meticulous upbringing of this man of God that was used so much by Christ. For our blessing. There. I think I must leave it for the time being and pray that we've seen enough to justify our meeting together and that you will rejoice that the grace of God not only brought down this man low as he did, but he exalted him in another sense so that he becomes the apostle of the Gentiles. And you and I must continually thank God for the fact that Saul of Tarsus became Paul the humble servant of the Christ. That he. Persecuted in the form of his believers, but has now come to us, bringing us salvation and that beyond all dreams.