



VI Quarter 1 2019

Pauline Literature

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## Pauline Literature



Taught by Don Williams Ph.D.

Class starts 21<sup>st</sup> January

# VI Quarter 1 2019

## Pauline Literature

Background, Content and Theology of Paul's Letters.

Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians as well as 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus and Philemon.

Against the Greco-Roman and Jewish background.

Enabling you to make relevant application.

# VI Quarter 1 2019

## Pauline Literature

Why study Paul and his writings?

1. **Canon of Scripture:** Paul's letters are inspired by the H.S.

**1 Corinthians 2:12-13** (ESV)

<sup>12</sup> Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God.<sup>13</sup> And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.

**1 Thessalonians 2:13** (ESV)

<sup>13</sup> And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers.

# VI Quarter 1 2019

## Pauline Literature

Why study Paul and his writings?

2. Approximately one half of the NT was written by Paul (13 of 27 books).
3. Paul along with Peter dominates the earliest church history.

# VI Quarter 1 2019

## Pauline Literature

Paul is so significant a figure in the NT and in the church's history that he has sometimes been called the second founder of Christianity.

No question, Paul played a vital role in the growth and establishment of the church and in the interpretation and application of God's grace in Christ.

History has been changed because of him and his writings.

# VI Quarter 1 2019

## Pauline Literature

His impact on Church History bears the testimony of leaders from Augustine all the way till our time (Luther, Wesley, Barth, Machen and Hengel).

Hengel writes:

Because of our familiarity with Paul we often easily overlook what an extraordinary, indeed in a way unique, religious figure he was – the kind of person given to humanity perhaps only once in many centuries. He was of absolutely fundamental significance for the rise of Christianity.



# VI Quarter 1 2019

## Pauline Literature

Saul of Tarsus – an **unlikely** candidate  
(**But also God's amazing choice**)

Paul operated in **three worlds**:

1. The **Greek** (Hellenistic) World

“Born in Tarsus of Cilicia” (Acts 22:3)

2. The **Roman** World

3. The **Jewish** World



# VI Quarter 1 2019

## Pauline Literature

### 3. The **Jewish** World

“Brought up in this city” (Acts 22:3)

<sup>3</sup> “I am a Jew, born in Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city, educated at the feet of Gamaliel according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God as all of you are this day.

- Born in Tarsus but brought up in Jerusalem

# VI Quarter 1 2019

“Thoroughly trained in the law of our Fathers ... zealous for God” (Acts 22:3)

**Boasting in his Jewish credentials**

**Philippians 3:5-6 (ESV)**

<sup>5</sup> circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; <sup>6</sup> as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

# VI Quarter 1 2019



## Driven and competitive in Judaism (persecuting)

### Galatians 1:13-14 (ESV)

<sup>13</sup> For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I **persecuted** the church of God **violently** and **tried to destroy it**. <sup>14</sup> And I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers.

# VI Quarter 1 2019



## Driven and competitive in Judaism (persecuting)

### Acts 8:1-3 (ESV)

**8** And Saul approved of his execution.

And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. **2** Devout men buried Stephen and made great lamentation over him. **3** But Saul was ravaging the church, and entering house after house, he dragged off men and women and committed them to prison.

# VI Quarter 1 2019

“As I came near Damascus” (Acts 22:6)

Acts 9:3-9 (ESV)

<sup>3</sup> Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven shone around him. <sup>4</sup> And falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?” <sup>5</sup> And he said, “Who are you, Lord?” And he said, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. <sup>6</sup> But rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do.” <sup>7</sup> The men who were traveling with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one. <sup>8</sup> Saul rose from the ground, and although his eyes were opened, he saw nothing. So they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. <sup>9</sup> And for three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

# VI Quarter 1 2019

Pauline Literature

Saul of Tarsus – an unlikely candidate

Paul runs into the Risen Christ (literally).

From **Persecutor** to **Preacher**

Acts 9:15 (ESV)

<sup>15</sup> But the Lord said to him, “Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel.

Paul’s conversion was also a **call to ministry** (Acts 9:15; 22:15; 26:15-18; and Gal. 1:16).



# VI Quarter 1 2019

Pauline Literature

Saul of Tarsus – an unlikely candidate

His call was to **preach to the Gentiles** (Gal. 1:16; 1 Thess. 2:4; Rom. 1:1, 5; 15:15-16).

Paul was God's Apostle to the Gentiles, playing a unique role in the mission of the early church. He was at home in three worlds: Greek, Roman and Jewish. After his conversion, he found his home in the fourth: The Church of Jesus Christ.