



MESSAGE

STUDY GUIDE

GROUP MATERIAL

SONGS

Examining the text & our hearts:

Bible Reading: Acts 22:3-16; Phil. 3:5-9, 12; 2 Cor. 4:6

“No single event, apart from the Christ-event itself, has proved so determinant for the course of Christian history as the conversion and commissioning of Paul.” –F. F. Bruce

SUMMARY: Paul’s encounter with the risen Jesus on the Damascus road is *the* most crucial event in Christian history, second only to Christ’s death & resurrection. Luke—the ‘great storyteller’—narrates the dramatic story three times in Yet it’s easy to miss the real significance in the outward drama. Notably Paul himself never recounts the outward drama. His autobiographical references trace the inner repercussions of that seismic event. Paul had to rethink his fundamental values, priorities and goals. He didn’t simply add Jesus to his former way of life. Paul declares, “God revealed His Son *in me*” (not simply ‘to me’); that God “shined into our hearts” in new creation; that he saw the “supreme value of Christ,” which depreciated everything else. We don’t need the outward drama, yet the same inward transforming experiences can be ours.

Hugh Montefiore (1920-2005) [Compare this conversion account with that of Saul/Paul]

- Born into a well-known Sephardi [Jewish] family, Hugh Montefiore was brought up in a moderately strict Jewish home...High Holidays such as Rosh Hashana, Kippur Pesah etc., were celebrated. So were Bar-Mitzvahs. The main food taboos were observed. But the family...kept “biblical rather than rabbinical Laws.” Not that they were...Liberal Jews, but it was...a matter of “partial assimilation to English mores. We were distinct from non-Jews...but as an English family we did not distance ourselves too much from the English ethos, which was much a part of our inheritance as our Jewish culture.”
- Hugh Montefiore was a boarder at Rugby [private School]. There was only 2 Jewish boys at the school, [so] his father, at great expense, hired someone to go the Rugby every week-end to instruct the 2 boys in Jewish religious history & thought. At age 16 Hugh could read Hebrew (he’d done his Bar-Mitzvah) & was well versed in the Bible, the Mishna & the Talmud.

- Hugh Montefiore’s conversion was sudden & irrevocable. Suddenly, the course of his life changed when he had his conversion experience. *“In the morning, I was a Jew and by the evening I was a Christian.”* At the age of 16, while sitting idly in his study at Rugby [School], he saw an [vision]. A figure in white coming towards him uttering the words *“Follow me.”* Montefiore tells us ...the figure he saw was...Jesus & that his conversion was simple & immediate and he has never looked back.
- In his own words: “I was 16 years old at the time, & it happened...about 5 pm one dark wintry afternoon in 1936. I was sitting alone in my study in School House at Rugby School – all older boys had [study rooms] of their own...What happened then determined the whole future pattern of my life. I was...I remember, indulging in a rather pleasant adolescent gloom. I suddenly became aware of a figure in white whom I saw clearly in my mind’s eye...I heard the words *“Follow me”*. *Instinctively I knew that this was Jesus, heaven knows how: I knew nothing about him.* Put like that it sounds somewhat bare; in fact it was an indescribably rich event that filled me afterwards with overpowering joy. I could do no other than to follow those instructions. I found that I had become a Christian as a result of a totally unexpected & most unusual spiritual experience, (although that was not how I would have put it at the time). *I was aware of the living Christ, and because of that I was aware of God in a new way. People ask me why & when I decided to convert. I did not decide at all; it was decided for me.”*

1. Saul/Paul’s Damascus Road Encounter with the Risen Christ (Acts 22:3-1^[1])

- “I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia but brought up in this city [Jerusalem], educated at the feet of Gamaliel according to the strictness of our ancestral law. I was zealous for God... **4** I persecuted this Way to the death, arresting & putting both men and women in jail, **5** as both the high priest & the whole council of elders can testify about me. After I received letters from them...I traveled to Damascus to arrest those who were there & bring them to Jerusalem to be punished.” (Acts 22:3-5 CSB) **6** “As I was traveling & approaching Damascus, about noon an intense light from heaven suddenly flashed around me. **7** I fell to the ground & heard a voice saying to me, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?’ **8** “I answered, ‘Who are you, Lord?’ “He said to me, ‘I am Jesus of Nazareth, the one you are persecuting.’ **9** (...Those...with me saw the light, but... did not hear the voice of the One...speaking to me). **10** “I said, ‘What should I do, Lord?’ “The Lord told me, ‘Get up & go into Damascus & there you’ll be told everything that you’ve been assigned to do.’” (Acts 22:6-10 CSB) **11** “Since I couldn’t see because of the brightness [‘glory’] of the light, I was led by the hand by those...with me...into Damascus. **12** Someone named Ananias, a devout man...[with] a good reputation with all the Jews..., **13** came & stood by me & said, ‘Brother Saul, regain your sight.’ And in that very hour I looked up & saw him. **14** He said, ‘The God of our ancestors has appointed you to know his will, to see the Righteous One, & to hear the words from his mouth, **15** since you’ll be a witness for him to all people of what you’ve seen & heard. **16** Now, why are you delaying? Get up & be baptized, & wash away your sins, calling on his name’.” (Acts 22:11-16 CSB)

a. Saul/Paul’s Case—Not a ‘Classic Religious Conversion’

- “Paul’s conversion...doesn’t exhibit the symptoms of a classic religious conversion, [e.g.] sensory deprivation, over-stimulation, emotional crisis or cultural expectation...Saul shows no indication of a tormented conscience...in fact the opposite: [he declared women in jail, **5** as both the high priest & the whole council of elders can testify about me. After I received letters from them...I traveled to Damascus to arrest those who were there & bring them to Jerusalem to be punished.” (Acts 22:3-5 CSB) Entirely God’s Initiative—“Luke makes it clear that this *is entirely God’s initiative...*” –Barbara E. Organ

b. Paul’s conversion in Acts is not paradigmatic, or normative

- “Saul’s experience on Damascus road is portrayed as a way but *not the only way* recorded in Acts that a person can be brought into personal relationship with Jesus. Too often some have tried, with disastrous results, to make Saul’s encounter the norm for all conversions since Saul’s day.” [Ben Witherington, *Paul’s Narrative Thought World*, 224]

- “Paul’s conversion experience is never portrayed as paradigmatic for Christian experience with respect to the specific details narrated in... Nevertheless Paul does present his own conversion experience...as paradigmatic in terms of a radical reorientation of thought about Jesus & of life now lived ‘in Christ’ (Phil. 3:17).” [Richard Longenecker, *Studies in Paul*, p. 25]
- “Join in imitating me...” (Phil. 3:17) “...I urge you to imitate me.” (1 Cor. 4:16) “I beg you...Become as I am...” (Gal. 4:12)

2. Tensions between Luke’s Narrative & Paul’s Autobiography

a. Luke, the great storyteller’s, portrait of Paul in *Acts* vs. Paul in his own Letters

- “The author of...both [the] *Gospel* & the *Acts of the Apostles*. Luke is a *great storyteller* creating... magnificent scenes...[&] developing unforgettable parables...” [Brennan R. Hill, *Jesus the Christ*, 81]
- In writing *Acts*, “Luke evidently had a different agenda from that of Paul...So we should not be surprised by [divergences] between Luke’s portrayal of his great hero [Paul] & the self-portrayal of Paul himself in his letters.” [J. Dunn, *Beginning*, 85]
- “Serious tensions [exist] between *Acts* & Paul’s own statements. According to 1 Cor. 9:1; 15:8 Paul understands the Damascus event as [Christ’s resurrection appearance] an Easter Christophany. [But] for Luke [in his direct narrative (Acts 9)] Paul only saw a bright light & heard a voice, but saw no face & encountered no [supernatural] person.” [U. Schnelle, *Paul*, p. 94]
- “Why does Luke [in *Acts*] refuse the man of Tarsus [i.e., Paul] the title ‘Apostle,’ which plays...such a fundamental role in Paul’s self-understanding (Gal. 1:1; 1 Cor. 9:1; 15:9)?” [Daniel Marguerat, *Paul in Acts & Paul in His Letters*, p. 2]

b. Paul’s Person & Autobiography

- “Paul is not so vain and narcissistic that he simply wants his readers to be [enamored by his experiences].”—Jeffrey Weima
- “What we know about Paul comes from 2 NT sources [1.] his own letters, & [2.] *Acts of the Apostles*...if there is a conflict between the letters & *Acts* more weight is given to Paul’s letters & his autobiographical remarks than to *Acts*.”—Tatha Wiley
- The “contradiction between...Paul’s...Letters &...Acts is *most evident in the story of Saul/Paul’s conversion & call*...The apostle [Paul’s] *own testimonies must have priority over Luke*...” [Ben Witherington, *Paul’s Narrative Thought World*, p. 220]

c. Paul’s Reserve (2 Cor. 12:1ff) vs. Luke’s Dramatic Accounts (Acts 9, 22, 26)—the heavenly light, voice, blindness

- “In Paul’s own references to his conversion, there’s no mention of a trip to Damascus...to persecute [Jesus’] followers & no narrative [about] what took place on the way. *No light, no voice, no companions, no blindness*, & no Ananias to interpret the significance...But there’s certainly an impression [of] the dramatic shift depicted in Gal. 1:13-17 and Phil. 4:4-17...that Paul experienced...a change of commitment, values & identity that was sudden & unexpected.” [R. Longenecker, ...*Paul*, 9-10]
- “Paul does not recount in detail...the events of his conversion. The trip to Damascus is not mentioned [cf. Gal. 1:17] & *none of the miraculous events are noted (light, voice, blindness)* [in Paul’s own accounts]” [Richard Peace, *Conversion in the NT*, 34]

d. Saul/Paul objectively saw the Risen Christ (1 Cor. 9:1; 15:8)

- “A strong visionary & subjective element is not to be denied. The key factor...is that Paul experienced the encounter as a *seeing* of Jesus.” [James D. G. Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, p. 350]
- “...*Have I not seen Jesus our Lord?...*” (1 Cor. 9:1) “Last of all...he [Christ risen]...*appeared to me*” (1 Cor. 15:8)

e. Paul’s experience was also subjective, not just external/objective—“God...reveal[ed] his Son *in me*” (Gal. 1:15-16)

- “Objective as the revelation was, it was experienced inwardly as well as outwardly: it was granted, as Paul puts it, not merely ‘to me’ but ‘in me’.” [F. F. Bruce, *Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free*, p. 75]
- “Somewhere near Damascus...Paul had an experience that led to a radical reassessment of...Jesus and a thorough-going reconfiguration of his foundational convictions...*Paul understood this experience as an encounter with the risen Christ* (1 Cor. 9:1; 15:8-9)...Paul sees *no gap...between his experience*

& the interpretation...For him, the *subjective experience* {'reveal[ed] his Son in me...'} (Gal. 1:15-16) and the *objective reality* were a seamless reality." [John Muddiman, *Pauline Epistles*, 38]

- Paul "says God was pleased 'to reveal his Son *in me*' (Gal. 1:16)...The [*in me*]...is not meant [to]... indicat[e] that this was a 'private,' 'merely subjective,' or 'purely spiritual' appearance...Paul's other mentions...make it clear that *he saw* [the risen] *Jesus with his own physical eyes*, just as the other apostles had done [1 Cor. 9:1; 15:8]." [N. T. Wright, *Galatians*, pp. 78-79]

f. Paul's Revelation, Apostleship, & Gospel (1 Cor. 9:1; Gal. 1:1, 12, 16)

- "Paul...insist[ed] with unyielding emphasis...in *Galatians*, that he had received his commissioning directly...& his gospel directly 'through a revelation of Jesus Christ' (Gal. 1:1, 12, 16)...referring to his Damascus Road experience...His conviction was clear: the risen Lord commissioned [him as] an... apostle to the Gentiles...on the Damascus road." [J. Dunn, *Beginning from...*, pp. 352-3]

3. Dramatic Impact on Saul/Paul—causing a Radically Rethink (Gal. 1:15-16)

- 'Saul's *encounter with the risen Christ*...caused him to...immediately...*rethink fundamental theological tenets*'—Craig Blomberg "What caused Paul to reconfigure his biography, reverse his allegiances, and...proclaim...the good news in the face of deadly opposition...A '*ferocious force*' seized [Paul] & turned him inside out, upside down & spun him around...The encounter with the risen Jesus had an enormous impact on his continuing religious experience of God, his missionary drive and...his theological reflection about God, Israel, Torah [Law], & salvation. That grace-event killed Saul the Pharisee & birthed Paul the Apostle." [Michael Bird, *Introducing Paul*, 37] ['Saul' was his Hebrew name; 'Paul' his Greek name. No name-change at conversion]
- "The language of Paul emphasizes...discontinuity with the past...between 'formerly' & 'now.' This includes the way Paul formerly *evaluated Jesus* & the way he does so since his conversion. 'Even if we've known Christ from a worldly perspective ['according to the flesh' (Lit.)], yet now we no longer know him in this way.' (2 Cor. 5:16)." [Ben Witherington, *Paul's...Thought World*, 227]
- "Paul *did not simply add Jesus to his former way of life*. His encounter with Jesus changed his manner of devotion to God, his observance of the Law, & his understanding of how Gentiles could become part of the people of God."—David Capes
- Paul's "encounter with the risen Jesus had an enormous impact on his continuing religious experience of God, his missionary drive &...his theological reflection about God, Israel, Torah [Law], and salvation."—Michael Bird
- His "encounter with Christ on the road to Damascus...left Paul's world in a state of theological upheaval, cosmic reconfiguration & a dramatic reversal of convictions, not least in relation to Torah [Law] & Christ. Consequently, Jesus was not only the Messiah & Son of God, but...*Jesus, not Torah* [Law]...was the center of God's purposes; *it was Jesus, not Torah*, now to be identified as God's glory; allegiance to *Jesus, not Torah*, determined one's position before God...For him the encounter with the Resurrected One near Damascus set before him the question of *the Law or Christ* [as salvation] alternative[s]." [M. Bird, *Philippians*, p. 130]
- "Paul defines [his Damascus road encounter] as a revelatory confrontation with the resurrected/exalted Jesus which *conferred upon Paul his gospel*...& configured his relationship with his church & detractors...Paul's confrontation with the resurrected Jesus *wove his life into the very fabric of God's story*."—Carey Newman

4. Paul's Allusions to the Damascus Road Encounter (2 Cor. 4:6; Phil. 3:5-9)

a. Influence seen in Many of Paul's Letters

- "Paul refers to the Christophany many more times than often assumed. (1) In 1 Cor. 9:1 [*Haven't I seen Jesus our Lord?*] (2) [*Last of all...he...appeared to me*] (15:8)] with...(other) resurrection appearances in 1 Cor. 15:3-11, (3) The autobiographical statements in Gal. 1:11-17 & Phil. 3:2-15 highlight the Christophany as the turning point in Paul's religious life. (4) References to the Christophany permeate 1 Cor. 3:4-4:6 the comparison of the old & new covenants (5) In Rom. 10:2-4 Paul reads [Israel's] history...in light of his own conversion experience (6) 1 Cor. 6:16-17..." [Carey C. Newman, *Paul's Glory Christology*, p. 165]
- "*Christ's resurrection appearance*...made such a lasting impact on Paul's mind that it became the *central thrust of...his writings* ...Paul's *major ideas are colored by this earth-shaking event*...Significant

reflections of the Damascus road event are found throughout Paul's letters (Rom. 10; 1 Cor. 9, 15; 2 Cor. 4, 5; Gal 1, 3; Phil. 3; Eph. 3)." [G. K. Beale, *NT Biblical Theology*, p.]

- "Paul's conversion [generated] a radical 'change of mind'...with regard to...Jesus. A Christological revelation is clearly implied in Gal. 1:16 (God '*revealed his Son in me*')...Phil 3:7-8 certainly indicates a *complete transformation of life-center*...now focused in an all-absorbing way on Christ...[Plus further] reflection on his Damascus road experience (as 2 Cor. 4:4-6 implies)." [James D. G. Dunn, *New Perspective on Paul*, p. 352]

b. God 'Shone into our Hearts' for New Creation (2 Cor. 4:6)

- "But if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. ⁴ In their case, the god of this age has blinded the minds of the unbelievers to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. ⁵ For we are not proclaiming ourselves but Jesus Christ as Lord... ⁶ For God who said, '*Let light shine out of darkness*,'...*shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of God's glory in the face of Jesus Christ.*" (2 Cor. 4:3-6 CSB)
- "To this day...the same veil remains; it is not lifted, because it is set aside only in Christ. ¹⁵ ...Still today, whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their hearts, ¹⁶ but whenever a person turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. ¹⁷ Now the Lord is the Spirit, & where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. ¹⁸ We all, with unveiled faces, are looking as in a mirror at the glory of the Lord & are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory; this is from the Lord who is the Spirit." (2 Cor. 3:14-18 CSB)
- "*2 Cor. 3-4 relates to Paul's experience on the Damascus road. There's a personal element to the apostle's* For example, the mention of light (2 Cor. 4:6) may allude to Paul's own encounter with the overwhelming light of Christ's glory (Acts 9:3)...Blindness to the gospel (2 Cor. 4:4) is reminiscent of Paul's blindness and sight (Acts 9:8)...[So,] *the apostle's description of the new covenant & the glory of Christ stems from his personal experience on the Damascus road...*[Plus] the wording of 2 Cor. 4:6... *reminds us of Gal. 1:16.* The former [2 Cor. 4:6] states that God shines his light *into our hearts* & the latter [Gal. 1:16 asserts that] God revealed his Son *in Paul.*" [Abner Chou, *I Saw the Lord: Biblical Theology of Vision*, p. 155]
- "Paul *did not simply add Jesus to his former way of life.* His encounter with Jesus changed his manner of devotion to God, [etc]...He describes this change as a spiritual transformation that began when he saw '*...God's glory in the face of Jesus Christ*' (2 Cor. 4:6). As [Paul] *continued to behold the glory, the transformation continued.* One day...the change would be complete." [David B. Capes, *et. al.*, *Rediscovering Paul*, p. 73] "*At the Damascus revelation Paul realized that Christ had super-ceded the Torah [Law]...*[This] can be clearly seen in 2 Cor. 3:4-4:6...Paul realized this truth...when he saw the surpassing 'light of the glory of God in the face of Christ' who appeared to him while he [Paul] was trading the road to Damascus in blind obedience to the Torah. If the Torah [Law] as God's revelation had been formerly [viewed] by him as the light & to give light (refs.) Paul now saw the perfect revelation of God in the person of Christ which is the true divine light...(esp. 2 Cor. 4:6). This...passage indicates...that *at the Damascus revelation Paul realized that Christ had super-ceded the Torah [Law].*" [Seyoon Kim, *Origin of Paul's Gospel*, p. 128]
- "In 2 Cor. 3:4-4:6 Paul repeatedly echoes his Christophany...When the apostle reports that the light shined into his own heart, giving 'the light of the knowledge of God's glory in the face of Jesus Christ' (2 Cor. 4:6), Paul is interpreting his Christophany. Clearly, 2 Cor. 3:4-4:6 echoes Paul's Christophany... There are...strong connections between Gen. 1 & 2 Cor. 4...Genesis begins with the story of creation... Now, in and through Christophany, God has effected a second creation...Again light has conquered darkness...God in the Christophany unleashes his creative power once again, causing light to shine into Paul's heart.. Adam was the 1st man in the image of God. Paul's Christophany...reveal[s] Jesus as the image of God...The Christophany [is] a 2nd creative act of God." [Carey C. Newman, "*Christophany as a sign of 'the End'*," in David B. Capes (ed.) *Israel's God &...*, pp. 165-6]
- "Paul uses the provision of light in Gen. 1:3 to picture conversion as the dawning of the new creation amid this fallen world. *God's glory in the face of...Christ.* To know Christ's glory (2 Cor. 4:4) is to encounter the life-transforming glory of God. ESV
- Paul's "point is clear: just as God acted in creation whereby the darkness...was banished by the light, so now God shines 'the light of the gospel' into the hearts of those who receive Jesus as Savior. *This... a 'new creation'*...(2 Cor. 5:17)...Paul's purpose...is to highlight...*people turning to Christ...comes not from [human beings'] initiative, but only from God's' own new intervention* in human life...God creates the Christian believer by showing a person God's glory in Christ's face. Paul may even have his own

conversion experience on the Damascus road in the background.” [GK. Beale & DA. Carson, *Com...on NT Use of OT*, pp. 763-4]

c. Paul’s Damascus Rd. Encounter reflected in Phil. 3:5-9, 12

- I was ⁵ “circumcised the 8th day; of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; regarding the law, a Pharisee; ⁶ regarding zeal, persecuting the church; regarding the righteousness...in the law, blameless. ⁷ But everything that was a gain to me, I’ve considered to be a loss *because of Christ*. ⁸ More than that, I also consider everything to be a loss in view of the *surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord*. Because of him I’ve suffered the loss of all things and consider them as dung, so that I may gain Christ ⁹ & be found in him...because I’ve been taken hold of by Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 3:5-9, 12 CSB)
- “Saul’s experience on the *Damascus road triggered a massive & radical transformation* in Saul’s self-understanding, his understanding of what God required of him, his understanding of his ancestral faith & his understanding of the goals he now had to pursue. The language of 3:7-9...*attests such a transformation*.” [James Dunn, *Beginning at Jerusalem*, p. 361]
- “*Phil. 3:4-11 provides another description of the dramatic change...in Paul’s life because of the Damascus road experience...Although Paul never explicitly refers to his call & conversion in Phil. 3... most scholars include this text with Gal. 1:11-17 in...Paul’s call/conversion [since] it’s only in the light of that experience that [Phil. 3] makes sense.*” [Matera, *God’s Saving...*, p. 28]
- “Paul’s conversion [generated] a radical ‘change of mind’...with regard to...Jesus...*Phil 3:7-8 certainly indicates a complete transformation of life-center...now focused in an all-absorbing way on Christ.*” [James Dunn, *New Perspective on Paul*, p. 352]
- In Phil 3 “Paul narrates his life-story...his former life in Judaism (3:4-6)...[Then] Paul’s narrative took an unexpected turn [and re-]evaluation: what was ‘gain’ (3:6) Judaism, became ‘loss’ (3:7-8)...‘Christ’... became valuable. Why? Why the reappraisal? ‘*Because of Christ*’ (3:7)—more particularly ‘the *surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord*’ (3:8). [This last phrase is the] equivalent of ‘*through the apocalypse of Jesus Christ*’ (Gal. 1:12) and ‘*to reveal his Son in/to me*’ (Gal. 1:16)...[both are] references to the Christophany...” [C. C. Newman, “*Christophany...sign of ‘the End’*,” in D. Capes (ed.) *Israel’s God... 161-2*]
- “The Christophany...[is] the beginning of Paul’s (apostolic) life...[It’s] also *the end*. [Paul] can narrate his own life-story because his life has already reached the end or death/resurrection: in the Christophany *Paul died (to the old life)* & his...autobiography [is] *his experience of resurrection [life]* (Rom. 6:1-4)... Paul’s *own end is his beginning* & his beginning is his end...Paul’s autobiography presupposes that *he experienced the end, death/resurrection*, in the Christophany [on the Damascus Rd.]” [Carey C. Newman, “*Christophany as a sign of ‘the End’*,” in D. B. Capes (ed.) *Israel’s God & Rebecca’s Children*, pp. 163-164, 167]

QUESTIONS:

1. Read Luke’s account of Saul/Paul’s Damascus road experience in Acts 22:3-16.
 - a. Having read it together (without re-reading it) what are the main things you recall?
 - b. What are the main features, & key facts in this account? Are they outward or inward?
 - c. Compare your experience with Paul’s depicted in Acts 22; what’s similar, what’s different?
2. Now read Paul’s own autobiographical account in Phil. 3:5-12 of how he was “apprehended by Christ” (3:12b)
 - a. What are the main features of this account?
 - b. Compare & contrast Paul’s own account (Phil 3) with Luke’s narrative (Acts 22:3-16)
 - c. Compare your experience with Paul’s described in Phil. 3:5-12; what’s similar, what’s different?
3. Consider the following statement by John Barclay; “*Paul...offers a paradigm...Paul’s biography... model[s] the reorientation effected by an encounter with Christ...God’s ‘calling in grace’ has transformed his identity...He walks to a different drumbeat, on a path...oriented to ‘the truth of the [gospel]’*” In what ways does Paul ‘*offer a paradigm*,’ (provide a pattern to us) of the change due to encountering Christ? Discuss.

4. Read the application suggested by David Capes: “Like Paul many of us...talk about our ‘personal encounter with Jesus.’ But few [none?] of us actually have had an experience like Paul’s. Besides, do we see the same results in our lives that Paul saw in his? Can our own changes be described that dramatically? Paul gave up all things for Christ (Phil. 3:8). His perspective on everything changed. He put his resume in the trash bin...How much are our priorities rearranged? For you has ‘*everything become new*’ (2 Cor. 5:17)?” Discuss.