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**Paul: Who Was This Guy**? Hope Community Church – March 24, 2019

1. His father was a Pharisee (Acts 23:6).
2. He was an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin (Romans 11:1 / Philippians 3:5).
3. Some scholars think Saul was named after King Saul because he was also the lineage of Benjamin (1 Samuel 9:21) Paul was most likely his Greek name. He was called both names even after his conversion (Acts 13:9).

1. He appears to be quite proud of his hometown and background (Philippians 3:5-6 / Acts 22:3)

*“I am indeed a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, taught according to the strictness of our fathers’ law, and was zealous toward God as you all are today.”*

1. Tarsus was where Queen Cleopatra and Roman statesman, Marc Antony met approx. 50 years before Paul was born. Paul used the reputation of Tarsus when he addressed the Roman commander in Acts 21:39:

*“But Paul said, “I am a Jew from Tarsus, in Cilicia, a citizen of no ordinary city; … “*

1. He persecuted the church because they threatened everything he ever knew and was taught.

**When Jesus slammed Paul to the ground and blinded him for 3 days, his life was changed forever!**

1. Set apart for the Gospel

*Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God (Romans 1:1).*

1. He now serves the King of Kings

*No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier (2 Timothy 2:4).*

1. His body was no longer his own

*Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price (1 Corinthians 6:19)*

1. He no longer relied *only* on his intellect to persuade people

*And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in* ***demonstration of the Spirit and of power****, that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God (1 Corinthians 2:1-5)*

1. He was aware of the spirit world around him (Ephesians 6:11-13 – in the Amplified Bible).

*Put on the full armor of God [for His precepts are like the splendid armor of a heavily-armed soldier], so that you may be able to [successfully] stand up against all the schemes and the strategies and the deceits of the devil.****12****For our struggle is not against flesh and blood [contending only with physical opponents], but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this [present] darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly (supernatural) places.****13****Therefore, put on the complete armor of God, so that you will be able to [successfully] resist and stand your ground in the evil day [of danger], and having done everything [that the crisis demands], to stand firm [in your place, fully prepared, immovable, victorious].  Amplified Bible*

1. He learned to keep his eyes on Jesus (Hebrews 12:1-2)

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of [[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+12&version=AMP#fen-AMP-30214a)]witnesses [who by faith have testified to the truth of God’s absolute faithfulness], stripping off every unnecessary weight and the sin which so easily *and* cleverly entangles us, let us run with endurance *and* active persistence the race that is set before us, **2**[looking away from all that will distract us and] focusing our eyes on Jesus, who is the Author and Perfecter of faith [the first incentive for our belief and the One who brings our faith to maturity], who for the joy [of accomplishing the goal] set before Him endured the cross, [[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+12&version=AMP#fen-AMP-30215b)]disregarding the shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God [revealing His deity, His authority, and the completion of His work].

1. He found great joy in any and every situation

**MESSAGE:**

Philippians 4:10-23

10 But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at last your care for me has flourished again; though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity.

11 Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content:

12 I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.  
  
14 Nevertheless you have done well that you shared in my distress.

15 Now you Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me concerning giving and receiving but you only.

16 For even in Thessalonica you sent aid once and again for my necessities.

17 Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account.

18 Indeed I have all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things sent from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God.

19 And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

20 Now to our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.  
  
21 Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren who are with me greet you.

22 All the saints greet you, but especially those who are of Caesar’s household.  
  
23 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

**What can we apply to our lives from observing the transformation of Paul?**

1. You are set apart for the Gospel

How does that change your goals for how you spend this time on earth?

1. You now serve the King of Kings

What does “civilian affairs” mean to you (2 Timothy 2:4)?

*No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier. New King James Version*

*No soldier in active service gets entangled in the [ordinary business] affairs of civilian life; [he avoids them] so that he may please the one who enlisted him to serve. Amplified Bible*

1. Your body is no longer your own.

How do you take care of your body?

***If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are*** *(1 Corinthians 3:17).*

**24**[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+9%3A23-27&version=AMP#fen-AMP-28565a)]Do you not know that in a race all the runners run [their very best to win], but only one receives the prize? Run [your race] in such a way that you may seize the prize *and* make it yours! **25**Now every athlete who [goes into training and] competes in the games is disciplined *and* exercises self-control in all things. They do it to win a [[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+9%3A23-27&version=AMP#fen-AMP-28566b)]crown that withers, but we [do it to receive] an imperishable [crown that cannot wither]. **26**Therefore I do not run without a definite goal; I do not flail around like one beating the air [just shadow boxing]. **27**But [like a boxer] I strictly discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached [the gospel] to others, I myself will not somehow be disqualified [as unfit for service] (1 Cor. 9:24-27- Amplified Bible).

1. You don’t have to “talk people into” following Jesus. Learn to demonstrate.

Jesus said, “For I have not spoken on My own *authority;* but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak (John 12:49).

1. Are you aware of the spirit world in your daily life?
2. Throw off the things that entangle or distract you?
3. Do you find great joy in any and every situation?



Today’s Speaker: **Tom Denlinger** is the co-founder and Ministry Director of LightShine Ministries. He and his wife, **Ruth** and three young adult children (**Alex**, **Ryan** and **Chloe**) serve the LORD in different callings and want to encourage you in your calling in carrying the Holy Spirit as Jesus did.

[*www.lightshineministries.org*](http://www.lightshineministries.org)