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Paul the Apostle is considered one of the most influential icons of the Christian faith. His writings form a great part of the Bible’s New Testament. His writings have greatly impacted on the Christian thinking making him one of the most significant author and apostle in the Christian religion. Paul is described as a courageous soldier of Jesus who took the initiative of spreading the gospel through early Christian communities throughout the Roman Empire. In his missionary work, he transversed widely using Antioch (his home) as his foundation. Antioch was a major Christian center before even Paul started ministering. Saint Paul’s ministry journeys covered large geographical areas and took years to complete His first missionary journey took place between 46 and 48 AD as per historians. The second journey was from 49 to 52 AD and the third from 53 to 57 AD. Paul’s first journey focuses on the Island of Cyprus and the geographical region of Galatia. The second missionary journey focuses on Asia and Europe but dwelling much in the land of Corinth. The third journey centers on Paul’s movement in Ephesus which is in Asia. Down (2006)

Paul’s first journey is document in the book of Acts of Apostles written by Luke. The journey begins in his home town of Antioch in Syria. He travelled to Salamis with Barnabas and John Mark. They preached in Salamis mostly in Jewish synagogues. The trio then travelled to Paphos where they encountered a Jewish sorcerer whom Paul tried to minster to but was unable due to hostile opposition. The magician was struck blind miraculously. This feat saw the proconsul that the sorcerer worked for accepting Christianity and becoming a believer. Paul then sailed to Perga in Pamphylia. John Mark left Paul and Barnabas in order to return to Jesuralem. The duo, Paul and Barnabas then went to Pisdian in Antioch where on a Sabbath they were invited to speak in the synagogue. Paul used the opportunity to spread the gospel of Christ. His teachings proved unpopular with some quarters of influential Jews opposing him. This saw Paul announcing a change in his mission which would from then on focus on Gentiles.

The second journey saw Paul taking with him Silas through Syria and Cilicia. They went to Derbe and Lystra where they find Timothy. Timothy joins the evangelistic team travelling throughout Phrygia and Galatia. Paul then received a vision calling him to go Macedonia (Acts 16: 9-10) (Niswonger, 1992). At Philipi, they converted Lydia who had been possessed. This infuriated some Philipians. Silas and Paul were imprisoned but a miraculous earthquake freed them and also led to conversion of the jailor. Passing through Amphipolis and Appolonia, they came to Thessalonica where Paul preached for several weeks. Paul met Aquilla and Priscilla in Corinth whom he converted. They followed him to Ephesus and started a church. Paul then completed this mission by sailing from Caesarea to Antioch.

Apostle Paul began his third mission journey travelling in Galatia. Later he returned to Ephesus and stayed for almost three years performing miracles, casting out demons, and healing people. It is in this region that he wrote four letters to the church in Corinth rebuking their pagan behavior. Macedonia was his next destination. He then sailed to Troas where he raised a man from the dead. He went to Assos, then Mitylene, Chios, Samos, and Miletus. His final destination in this third missionary journey and was arrested. Imprisoned in Caesarea, Paul appealed to Caesar and was sent to Rome under military custody. Paul most likely wrote the book Romans, during this period.

It is believed that the book of Acts gets much of historical details right by many historians. The book of Acts though is faulted for portraying Paul as more of a miracle worker and a good orator. In the Epistles, Paul makes himself more of a letter writer than a speechmaker. The Paulian epistles largely written to churches offered an insight of his travels and complemented the book of Acts in many ways. They give in detail problems encountered in different churches in Rome by explaining how Christians should believe and live. The epistles try to give the theological aspect of the three missionary journeys of Paul as he dissects problems of faith in relation to specific churches in different geographical areas he transversed. It is believed that Paul at least wrote seven epistles- Romans, Corinthians (1st and 2nd), Galatians, Philippians, 1st Thessalonians and Philemon. They were circulated in churches to be read aloud. Niswonger (1992)

The epistles divulged information on the three journeys by explaining Paul’s actual activities in different areas with utmost clarity. They saw Paul encouraging new believers and also admonishing those who were shifting to paganism. The epistles offered a platform for young Christian community to internalize on the shift from the old Mosaic Law (Jewett, 1997). It is in these epistles Paul embraced Gentiles he met despite the Jewish law condemning it. He also, through the letters, solved issues leadership in churches by giving out guidelines of engagement of members.

## References

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