

**THE FUTURE OUTLOOK**

J. F. JOHNSON Editor & Publisher  
 MISS EMMA P. JOHNSON News Reporter  
 L. A. WISE Staff Photographer

Make all checks payable to and mail to:

**THE FUTURE OUTLOOK**

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## Can You Vote?

Registration books have been open for the Spring Primary election which will take place Saturday, May 2. Did you register? Are you planning to vote on Saturday?

Members of the N.A.A.C.P. Voting Campaign Committee went all-out during the last few weeks in seeking to get non-registered citizens on the books.

Many citizens have moved from their old precincts since the last election. Unless they have notified their registrar and had their names moved to their new precinct, they are not qualified to vote on Saturday.

If you can't vote on May 2, be sure to be a qualified voter in time to take part in the General Election in November.

College students as well as interested citizens can follow through with the house to house campaign for registering citizens and see that they vote in the November general election for the candidates of their choice.

The General Election consists of the Democrats and Republican government officials, namely, Senators, Congressmen, State House of Representatives, County Board of Commissioners, and Clerk of Court.

The non-registered citizens can qualify themselves to vote by making an appointment with their registrar in their precinct or go by the County Board of Elections office, 323 W. Market Street from 9:00 until 5:00 P.M.

Before a voter votes, he should go to the headquarters of the different political parties and talk with the officials and secure literature about the candidates and know their platforms before casting a vote.

It is customary when one is a member of the Democratic party to vote a straight Democratic ticket and if he is a member of the Republican party vote a straight Republican ticket, but it is perfectly legal to vote a "split ticket," wherein a voter picks men from both parties. Of course, this only true in a General Election. In a primary you can only help select the men who will represent "your party" in the General Election.

The citizens of Guilford County, especially the Negro, should exercise their franchise at the polls due to the fact that many Negroes are denied the right to vote in many of the southern states. In order to vote in some southern states, the Negro has to go through a long procedure of schooling, and will have to answer certain questions selected by the registrar taken from the constitution of the United States. If he is unable to answer the questions, he cannot vote.

Again, we urge our citizens to register and help others to qualify themselves to vote soon.

### POET'S CORNER

The Lord had a job for me,  
 But I had so much to do,  
 I said, "You get somebody else  
 Or wait till I get through."  
 I didn't know how the Lord came out,  
 But he seemed to get along;  
 But I felt kinda sneakin' like,  
 Cause I knowed I'd done Him wrong.  
 One day I needed the Lord  
 Needed Him right away,  
 And He never answered me at all,  
 But I could hear Him say,  
 Down in my accusing heart,  
 "Boy, I've got too much to do,  
 Or wait till I get through."

—Paul Laurence Dunbar

## This Week's Sunday School Lesson

### BEGINNING/ WHERE YOU ARE

Have you ever known a person who was completely changed? I remember a man who had been an alcoholic. He moved to a new community where no one knew his past. He was soon called on by the pastor and some laymen from a nearby church. He became active in the men's club and at the end of the year was elected its president. There was great joy in his home. Surrounded by new friends who believed in him and upheld by their expectations, he became a new man. He accepted baptism and for the first time in his life became a member of Christ's church.

Christianity has always claimed the power to transform lives. The greatest argument for Christian faith has always been bad men made good, drunks made sober, violent men made gentle, grasping men made generous, and hate-filled men made loving.

In this lesson we are to study such a changed man. His is perhaps the most famous and dramatic conversion in history. We speak of the apostle Paul, who changed from a zealous persecutor of the new faith to its most effective champion. How are we to understand this transformation? The purpose of this lesson is to explore this and related questions.

### SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

The Scripture for this lesson is Acts 9:1-31; 11:19-30; Galatians 1:11-17. Selected verses are printed below.

11 For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not man's gospel. 12 For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ. 13 For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it; 14 and I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers. 15 But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and had called me through his grace, 16 was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with flesh and blood, 17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned to Damascus.

Acts 11:19-26

19 Now those who were scattered because of the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to none except Jews. 20 But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who on coming to Antioch spoke to the Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus. 21 And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number that believed turned to the Lord. 22 News of this came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. 23 When he came and saw the

grace of God, he was glad; and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose; 24 for he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a large company was added to the Lord. 25 So Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul; 26 and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. For a whole year they met with the church, and taught a large company of people; and in Antioch the disciples were for the first time called Christians.

Memory Selection: Rise and stand upon your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you to serve and bear witness to the things in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you. —Acts 26:16

### EXPLORING THE QUESTIONS

Students of the Bible have always been fascinated by the story of Paul. Who was this young Jew who became Christianity's foremost missionary? What accounts for such a radical change in his character? What qualified him to be the Apostle to the Gentiles? What accounts for his remarkable ability to formulate the first written statements of the Christian faith, when he had not known Jesus during his earthly ministry?

Was Paul's conversion unique, or should we expect similar transformations today? Do Christians today expect Christ to change their lives? Should they?

Paul could boast that concerning the law he was blameless. (Philippians 3:6) Is it possible that morally upright people today, like Paul, need to experience conversion?

According to Acts 9:20, Paul began immediately after his baptism to make public witness to his new faith. For Paul this witness involved teaching and preaching. Is this form of witness required of every Christian or only of those with exceptional verbal gifts? What other forms of witness are possible?

In presenting the faith Paul had great success in the cities of the empire. Why could Paul reach the urban masses while we cannot?

### FINDING HELP WITH YOUR QUESTIONS

Let us begin by setting down what we can learn about Paul. (Saul was his Hebrew name; Paul, his Roman name.)

In several of his letters Paul speaks of himself as a Hebrew of the tribe of Benjamin and a Pharisee. He was born and raised in Tarsus, a Greek city on the coast of Asia Minor, and he was educated in the university there. At some point, his family had won Roman citizenship, a greatly prized honor.

As a young man Paul had gone to Jerusalem to study under the famous rabbi Gamaliel. Thus it was a brilliant and zealous young man who started to Damascus to arrest the Christians there.

Paul's Meeting With Christ In trying to understand the conversion of Paul, we must not forget Stephen. The victorious and forgiving way Ste-

phen met martyrdom, and the fearless deportment of other Christians Paul persecuted, must have made a deep impression on him. How could these simple people whom he thought to be so wrong face death and imprisonment so triumphantly?

Trying to understand what went on inside of Paul, William Barclay of the University of Glasgow has this to say:

"It was about 140 miles from Jerusalem to Damascus. The journey would be made on foot and would take about a week. Paul's only companions were the officers of the Sanhedrin, a kind of police force. Because he was a Pharisee, he could have nothing to do with them; so he walked alone; and as he walked he thought . . . The way went through Galilee, and Galilee brought this Jesus even more vividly to Paul's mind. The tension in his inner being tightened. . . . Just before Damascus the road climbed Mount Hermon, and down below lay Damascus. . . . That very region had one characteristic phenomenon. When the hot air of the plain met the cold air of the mountain range, violent electrical storms resulted. Just at that moment there came such a lightning storm, and out of the storm Christ spoke to Paul. And in that moment the long battle was over and Paul surrendered to Christ. . . . He who had intended to enter Damascus like an avenging fury was led by the hand into that city, blind and helpless as a child."

We may draw several conclusions from Paul's conversion.

1. Paul's dramatic experience is not the usual one. Much harm has been done by expecting everyone to have the Pauline type of Christian experience. However, it is equally important to remember that every Christian must come to some time of decision for Christ. The church is weak today because many of its members have just drifted into it without being aware that when they say Yes to Christ, they are saying No to the values of the world.

2. Conversion is not the end of our Christian experience. After his conversion Paul had instruction from Ananias and retired to Arabia for further study and reflection upon the Scriptures. He had to learn more about the life and teaching of Jesus from Peter and James in Jerusalem. Is the church weak today because many of its members have failed to grow? How many have neither studied nor grown in their understanding of the mind of Christ since childhood?

3. Conversion is not necessarily from gross sin to goodness. Paul was already a pious keeper of the moral law. But he needed conversion from confidence in his own goodness to faith in Christ. The church today has many members who rely solely on their own goodness. They are respectable folks, but they show little sign that they have experienced the love of God or know how to love their fellows.

4. To say that a man is converted is to say that he has a new center for his life. Where

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