

St Andrew's Whittlesey, St Mary's Whittlesey,
St Thomas' Pondersbridge and Holy Trinity Coates
Church of England Team Ministry:
www.wpcteam.org.uk

Sunday 28th 2020

The Collect for Sunday – Third Sunday after Trinity

Almighty God,
you have broken the tyranny of sin
and have sent the Spirit of your Son into our hearts
whereby we call you Father:
give us grace to dedicate our freedom to your service,
that we and all creation may be brought
to the glorious liberty of the children of God;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Amen

A Daily Prayer for our times

Father God, as people and nations of the world, help us to realise our dependence upon one another. We pray for healing among the sick, wisdom among our leaders, protection and effectiveness for health workers, and responsible behaviour by each of us as individuals. Most of all, Lord, we pray that you dispel our fears, for you 'did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline' (2 Tim 1:7). For Jesus's sake. Amen

A prayer for all those affected by coronavirus for daily use.

*Keep us, good Lord,
under the shadow of your mercy.
Sustain and support the anxious,
be with those who care for the sick,
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may find comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love
in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.*

+++++

Our regular services in church may have been suspended,
Our church buildings are opening gradually for private prayer.
We remain a church at home united in the Spirit.
Let us pray for each other.
Let us be good neighbours.
May God bless us all.

Our churches pastoral work continues.
Please contact us by phone if you need to or just what a chat.

TEAM RECTOR – REVD NIGEL WHITEHOUSE - 01733-203676.

Email - nigel.whitehouse@hotmail.com

ASSISTANT PARISH PRIEST – REVD MICHAEL JONES. 01733-203588

LICENSED LAY MINISTERS (READERS)

MR JOHN CHRISP – 01733 844336

MR ROGER BROWN – 01733 202884

To support you with your daily prayer and contact with the wider church
please make use of the following websites.

Church of England. <https://www.churchofengland.org/>

Prayer online. <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/church-online>

Diocese of Ely. <https://www.elydiocese.org/>

Ely Cathedral. <https://www.elycathedral.org/>

<https://www.elycathedral.org/worship-at-home>

Please make use of the daily cycle of readings.

Sunday 28th June – 3rd Sunday after Trinity – Green – 10.00am Morning Praise via Zoom

First reading Jeremiah 28:5-9. Second reading Romans 6:12-end. Gospel Matthew 10:40-end

Monday – Saturday

Monday	- Feast of Ss Peter and Paul, Apostles Morning Prayer –	Psalm 71, 113	Isaiah 49: 1-6	John 21: 15-22
Tuesday	- Morning Prayer -	Psalm 73	Judges 9: 1-21	Luke 15: 11-end
Wednesday	- Morning Prayer –	Psalm 77	Judges 9: 22-end	Luke 16: 1-18
Thursday	- Morning Prayer –	Psalm 78: 1-39	Judges 11: 1-11	Luke 16: 19-end
Friday	- Feast of St Thomas, Apostle Morning Prayer –	Psalm 92, 146	2 Samuel 15: 17-21	John 11: 1-16
Saturday	- Morning Prayer –	Psalm 76, 79	Judges 12: 1-7	Luke 17: 11-19

Sunday 5th July – 4th Sunday after Trinity – Green

Announcement about services in church will be made during the week

First reading Zechariah 9: 9 – 12. Second reading Romans 7: 15 – 25a.

Gospel Matthew 11. 16 – 19, 25 - end

Please remember in your prayers:

Those who are in residential homes, hospital or hospice & those known personally to us:
All NHS staff, care workers, emergency services, funeral directors and all key workers.

*Prayers are requested for Marie Rogers, Deborah Law, Terry Randells,
Emma Aindow Gregory, Lizzie Monk, Richard Willows, Joan Kefford, Cheryl Tyner,
Keith Simpson*

*The families and friends of those who have recently died:
Roy Lightfoot, Audrey Rose Warren, Revd Marina Kennard*

Anniversaries:

Holy Trinity: 4th Jesse Cyril Maddiss

St Andrew's: 29th Hubert (Dick) Turner, Alfred Hilliam, 1st July Dorothy Czekalski, 3rd Matthew Canham,
Annie Louise Wood

2020

ST ANDREW'S 100 CLUB DRAW WINNERS

March

1st Prize - £25

Mollie O'Brien

2nd Prize - £15

David Bailey

April

1st Prize - £25

David Jarvis

2nd Prize - £15

Neil Mason

May

1st Prize - £25

Gerald Turner

2nd Prize - £15

Lynda Pilsworth

June

1st Prize - £100

Sue Piergianni

2nd Prize - £50

Doris Timm

3rd Prize - £25

Ann Mason

4th Prize - £15

Joyce Rogers

Many Thanks to everyone who has maintained financial support during this period. If you normally donate through the collection plate I hope you have maintained this giving in preparation for return to regular worship. Your given is essential for maintaining our churches and their ministry. There have been bills to pay during the period of lock down. Fortunately our funds where is reasonable shape before lock down began. Some of you make your weekly donation through arrangements with the bank and this income has been coming in and we are all grateful to you all. If you have any questions please contact your churchwarden or Treasurer.

If you can offer help with cleaning of our churches and providing support for their reopening please let your churchwardens know.

ST.MARY'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PARISH CHURCH

CHURCHWARDENS

MRS SUE ILES-PALMER	- 01733 205282	sueiles-palmer@hotmail.co.uk
MR KEN PALMER	- 01733 205282	kenfogtravel@hotmail.co.uk

TREASURER

MR NICK STANBRIDGE	- 01733 204913	nicholas196@hotmail.com
---------------------------	-----------------------	--------------------------------

ST.ANDREW'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PARISH CHURCH

CHURCHWARDENS

MR DAVID MASON	- 01733 208215	annandave49@yahoo.co.uk
MRS SARAH WALKER	- 01733 204351	sarah.walker247@btinternet.com

TREASURER

MRS CHERYL JAKES	- 01733 359450	c.jakes1404@gmail.com
-------------------------	-----------------------	------------------------------

ST.THOMAS' CHURCH OF ENGLAND PARISH CHURCH

CHURCHWARDENS

MR PAUL TURNER	- 01733 844497	oldpumphouse@btinternet.com
MRS ROSEMARY WOODWARD	- 01733 844599	rosemarywoodward@maverickware.com

TREASURER

MR RICHARD BURGESS	- 01733 844208	burgesselizabeth59@gmail.com
---------------------------	-----------------------	-------------------------------------

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH OF ENGLAND PARISH CHURCH

CHURCHWARDENS

MRS ELIZABETH OLLENBITTLE	- 01733 841264
MR ALAN OLLENBITTLE	- 01733 841264

TREASURER

MRS SUSAN JONES	- 01733 203588	michael.jones123@sky.com
------------------------	-----------------------	---------------------------------



Over the past months we have been provided with hymns and organ voluntaries to accompany our home based worship. These have been provided by Christopher Brown. Above is a photograph of his mini-recording station. He has also sent a 'bonus' voluntary for this Sunday.

Chris many thanks from us all. God bless.

**Feeling anxious about
work or home life?
Need a listening ear?**



**Our helpline of friendly multifaith
Chaplains are available... whether you're
religious or not, whatever your faith or
belief - they are here to support you**

0800 246 5193

**Anonymous support: Mon-Fri 9am-5pm
(voicemail available for other times)**

www.cambsworkplacechaplaincy.org.uk

If you know of anyone who might benefit from this service, please pass on the details. Many thanks

St Thomas' Pondersbridge.
Feast of St Thomas' Apostle – July 3rd 2020



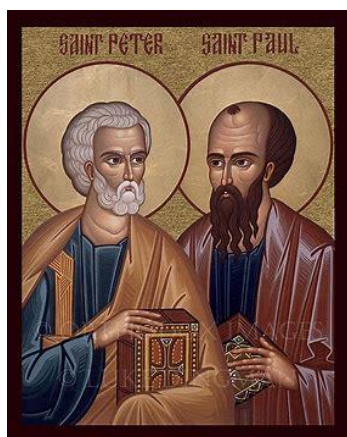
St. Thomas, (born, probably Galilee—died 53 CE, Madras, India; Western feast day December 21, feast day in Roman and Syrian Catholic churches July 3, in the Greek church October 6), one of the Twelve Apostles. His name in Aramaic (Te'oma) and Greek (Didymos) means “twin”; John 11:16 identifies him as “Thomas, called the Twin.” He is called Judas Thomas (i.e., Judas the Twin) by the Syrians.

Thomas's character is outlined in The Gospel According to John. His devotion to Jesus is clearly expressed in John 11:5–16: when Jesus planned to return to Judaea, the disciples warned him of the Jews' animosity (“now seeking to stone you”), to which Thomas soon replied, “Let us also go, that we

may die with him.” At the Last Supper (John 14:1–7) Thomas could not comprehend what Jesus meant when he said, “I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. And you know the way where I am going.” Thomas's question “How can we know the way?” caused Jesus to answer, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life.” Perhaps the best-known event in his life is the one from which the phrase “doubting Thomas” developed. In John 20:19–29 he was not among those disciples to whom the risen Christ first appeared, and, when they told the incredulous Thomas, he requested physical proof of the Resurrection, fulfilled when Christ

reappeared and specifically asked Thomas to touch his wounds. His sudden realization of truth (“My Lord and my God”) made Thomas the first person to explicitlyThomas’s subsequent history is uncertain. According to the 4th-century *Ecclesiastical History* of Bishop Eusebius of Caesarea, he evangelized Parthia (modern Khorāsān). Later Christian tradition says Thomas extended his apostolate into India, where he is recognized as the founder of the Church of the Syrian Malabar Christians, or Christians of St. Thomas. In the apocryphal *Acts of Thomas*, originally composed in Syriac, he allegedly visited the court of the Indo-Parthian king Gondopernes, who put him in charge of building a royal palace (he was reportedly a carpenter); he was imprisoned for spending on charity the money entrusted to him. The work records his martyrdom as having occurred under the king of Mylapore at Madras (now Chennai), where San Thomé Cathedral, his traditional burial place, is located. His relics, however, supposedly were taken to the West and finally enshrined at Ortona, Italy.

Source <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Saint-Thomas>



St. Peter the Apostle, original name **Simeon or **Simon**.**

Much can be learned about Peter from the New Testament—either explicitly from the statements made by and about Peter or indirectly from his actions and reactions as revealed in a number of episodes in which he figures prominently. He was at times vacillating and unsure, as in his relations with the church of Antioch when he at first ate with the Gentiles and later refused to do so (Letter of Paul to the Galatians 2:11–14). He could also be resolute (Acts of the Apostles 4:10; 5:1–10). Occasionally he is depicted as rash and hasty (Luke 22:33, etc.) or irritable and capable of great anger (John 18:10). Often he is pictured as gentle but firm and, as in his professions of love to Jesus, capable of great loyalty and love (John 21:15–17). The New Testament reports that Peter was unlearned in the sense that he was untrained in the Mosaic Law (Acts 4:13), and it is doubtful that he knew Greek. He apparently learned slowly and erred time and time again, but later, when entrusted with responsibility, he demonstrated that he was mature and capable.

The Gospels agree that Peter was called to be a disciple of Jesus at the beginning of his ministry, but when and where the event took place is recorded differently in the several Gospels. Luke (5:1–11) scarcely mentions James and John and omits Andrew while emphasizing the call of Peter. Matthew (4:18–22) and Mark (Gospel According to Mark 1:16–20) note the call of the four men and—with Luke—agree that the event took place at the Sea of Galilee. The Gospel According to John places the call in Judaea (1:28) and states that Andrew—who had been a follower of St. John the Baptist (1:35) and had heard John indicate that Jesus was the Lamb of God—left John and introduced Peter to “the Messiah,” who at that time gave him the name (or title) Cephas (i.e., Peter, or Rock).

The Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) are probably correct in recording that the call to Peter was extended in Galilee when Jesus first began his work in that area. The Gospel According

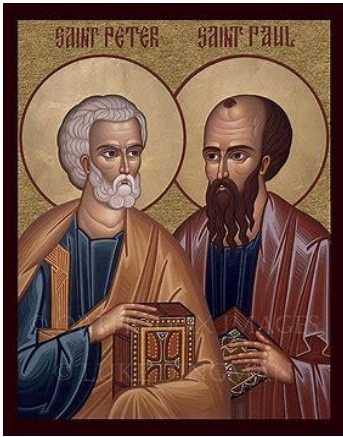
to John is here, as elsewhere, perhaps more theologically than historically motivated; the author of John wishes to stress that Peter recognized Jesus' messiahship from the beginning and that Jesus had seen Simon as the "rock" from their first meeting.

The Synoptic Gospels largely agree in the amount of emphasis each gives to the leadership of Peter among the Twelve Apostles, but there are differences also. For example, in one case Matthew and Luke note that Peter was the speaker in questioning Jesus about a parable, but Mark attributes these words to the group of disciples (Matthew 15:15; Luke 8:45; and Mark 7:17). With differing degrees of emphasis, the Synoptic Gospels agree that Peter served as spokesman, the outstanding member of the group, and enjoyed a certain precedence over the other disciples. Whenever the disciples are listed, Peter is invariably mentioned first (Matthew 10:2–4; Mark 3:16–19; Luke 6:14–16; Acts 1:13; compare only Galatians 2:9). Although it is not certain whether or not this priority is primarily due to reading back into the Gospel narrative Peter's importance in the apostolic church, his forceful personality was surely a factor.

Those not belonging to the immediate followers of Jesus also recognized the authority of Peter, such as when the collectors of the temple tax approached him for information (Matthew 17:24). Again, with characteristic quickness he sought a clarification from Jesus on behalf of the disciples concerning the meaning of a parable (Matthew 15:15) or of a saying (Matthew 18:21). As both an individual and a representative of the Twelve Apostles, he made a plea for personal preference in the kingdom of heaven as a reward for faithful service (Matthew 19:27, 28).

On several occasions, Peter alone is mentioned by name and others are indicated as merely accompanying him (Mark 1:36; Luke 8:45). Even when the three disciples closest to Jesus (the "pillars"—Peter, James, and John) figure in a particular incident, it is frequently Peter alone who is named. When the three are named, Peter's name invariably appears first (as in Matthew 17:1, 26:37). It was his home in Capernaum that Jesus visited when he cured Peter's mother-in-law (Matthew 8:14), and it was Peter's boat that Jesus used when he instructed the crowd (Luke 5:3). It was Peter who possessed remarkable insight and displayed his depth of faith in the confession of Christ as the Son of God (Matthew 16:15–18; Mark 8:29; Luke 9:20), and it was Peter who rebuked, and in turn was rebuked by, Jesus when the Master prophesied that he would suffer and die (Mark 8:32, 33). It was also Peter who manifested the momentary weakness of even the strongest when he denied his Lord (Matthew 26:69–75; Mark 14:66–72; Luke 22:54–61). Later, however, with greater maturity, Peter discovered strength and, as he was charged by Jesus (Luke 22:31, 32), effected the strengthening of others. Finally, Peter, who survived his denial, is permitted to be the first of the Apostles to see Jesus after the Resurrection (Luke 24:34).

In John's Gospel the prominence of Peter is challenged in the person of St. John the Apostle, the "Beloved Disciple." Though Peter receives mention in John 37 times (out of a total of 109 times in the four Gospels), one-third of the references are found in the appendix (chapter 21), and he appears in only nine incidents. The Gospel According to John attempts to show the close relationship between John and Jesus while still reserving to Peter the role of representative and spokesman. The fact that Peter is emphasized in John and charged by Jesus to "tend my sheep" and "feed my lambs" (John 21:15, 16) at the same time that the role of the disciples as a whole is being deemphasized attests to the prestige of Peter in the apostolic church. But throughout John's Gospel, Peter shares his prominence with John (13:24; 18:15; 19:26, 27, etc.). Among the purposes of chapter 21 in emphasizing Peter may well be an attempt to restore the disciple who denied his Lord to the position he enjoyed in the Synoptic Gospels.



St Paul

Paul was a Greek-speaking Jew from Asia Minor. His birthplace, Tarsus, was a major city in eastern Cilicia, a region that had been made part of the Roman province of Syria by the time of Paul's adulthood. Two of the main cities of Syria, Damascus and Antioch, played a prominent part in his life and letters. Although the exact date of his birth is unknown, he was active as a missionary in the 40s and 50s of the 1st century CE. From this it may be inferred that he was born about the same time as Jesus (c. 4 BCE) or a little later. He was converted to faith in Jesus Christ about 33 CE, and he died, probably in Rome, circa 62–64 CE.

In his childhood and youth, Paul learned how to “work with [his] own hands” (1 Corinthians 4:12). His trade, tent making, which he continued to practice after his conversion to Christianity, helps to explain important aspects of his apostleship. He could travel with a few leather-working tools and set up shop anywhere. It is doubtful that his family was wealthy or aristocratic, but, since he found it noteworthy that he sometimes worked with his own hands, it may be assumed that he was not a common labourer. His letters are written in Koine, or “common” Greek, rather than in the elegant literary Greek of his wealthy contemporary the Jewish philosopher Philo Judaeus of Alexandria, and this too argues against the view that Paul was an aristocrat. Moreover, he knew how to dictate, and he could write with his own hand in large letters (Galatians 6:11), though not in the small, neat letters of the professional scribe.

Until about the midpoint of his life, Paul was a member of the Pharisees, a religious party that emerged during the later Second Temple period. What little is known about Paul the Pharisee reflects the character of the Pharisaic movement. Pharisees believed in life after death, which was one of Paul's deepest convictions. They accepted nonbiblical “traditions” as being about as important as the written Bible; Paul refers to his expertise in “traditions” (Galatians 1:14). Pharisees were very careful students of the Hebrew Bible, and Paul was able to quote extensively from the Greek translation. (It was fairly easy for a bright, ambitious young boy to memorize the Bible, and it would have been very difficult and expensive for Paul as an adult to carry around dozens of bulky scrolls.) By his own account, Paul was the best Jew and the best Pharisee of his generation (Philippians 3:4–6; Galatians 1:13–14), though he claimed to be the least apostle of Christ (2 Corinthians 11:22–3; 1 Corinthians 15:9–10) and attributed his successes to the grace of God.

Paul spent much of the first half of his life persecuting the nascent Christian movement, an activity to which he refers several times. Paul's motivations are unknown, but they seem not to have been connected to his Pharisaism. The chief persecutors of the Christian movement in Jerusalem were the high priest and his associates, who were Sadducees (if they belonged to one of the parties), and Acts depicts the leading Pharisee, Gamaliel, as defending the Christians (Acts 5:34). It is possible that Paul believed that Jewish converts to the new movement were not sufficiently observant of the Jewish law, that Jewish converts mingled too freely with Gentile (non-Jewish) converts, thus associating themselves with idolatrous practices, or that the notion of a crucified messiah was objectionable. The young Paul certainly would have rejected the view that Jesus had been raised after his death—not because he doubted resurrection as such but because he would

not have believed that God chose to favour Jesus by raising him before the time of the Judgment of the world.

Whatever his reasons, Paul's persecutions probably involved traveling from synagogue to synagogue and urging the punishment of Jews who accepted Jesus as the messiah. Disobedient members of synagogues were punished by some form of ostracism or by light flogging, which Paul himself later suffered at least five times (2 Corinthians 11:24), though he does not say when or where. According to Acts, Paul began his persecutions in Jerusalem, a view at odds with his assertion that he did not know any of the Jerusalem followers of Christ until well after his own conversion (Galatians 1:4–17).

Paul was on his way to Damascus when he had a vision that changed his life: according to Galatians 1:16, God revealed his Son to him. More specifically, Paul states that he saw the Lord (1 Corinthians 9:1), though Acts claims that near Damascus he saw a blinding bright light. Following this revelation, which convinced Paul that God had indeed chosen Jesus to be the promised messiah, he went into Arabia—probably Coele-Syria, west of Damascus (Galatians 1:17). He then returned to Damascus, and three years later he went to Jerusalem to become acquainted with the leading apostles there. After this meeting he began his famous missions to the west, preaching first in his native Syria and Cilicia (Galatians 1:17–24). During the next 20 years or so (c. mid-30s to mid-50s), he established several churches in Asia Minor and at least three in Europe, including the church at Corinth.

During the course of his missions, Paul realized that his preaching to Gentiles was creating difficulties for the Christians in Jerusalem, who thought that Gentiles must become Jewish in order to join the Christian movement. To settle the issue, Paul returned to Jerusalem and struck a deal. It was agreed that Peter would be the principal apostle to Jews and Paul the principal apostle to Gentiles. Paul would not have to change his message, but he would take up a collection for the Jerusalem church, which was in need of financial support (Galatians 2:1–10; 2 Corinthians 8–9; Romans 15:16–17, 25–26), though Paul's Gentile churches were hardly well off. In Romans 15:16–17 Paul seems to interpret the "offering of the Gentiles" symbolically, suggesting that it is the prophesied Gentile pilgrimage to the Temple of Jerusalem, with their wealth in their hands (e.g., Isaiah 60:1–6). It is also obvious that Paul and the Jerusalem apostles made a political bargain not to interfere in each other's spheres. The "circumcision faction" of the Jerusalem apostles (Galatians 2:12–13), which argued that converts should undergo circumcision as a sign of accepting the covenant between God and Abraham, later broke this agreement by preaching to the Gentile converts both in Antioch (Galatians 2:12) and Galatia and insisting that they be circumcised, leading to some of Paul's strongest invective (Galatians 1:7–9; 3:1; 5:2–12; 6:12–13).

In the late 50s Paul returned to Jerusalem with the money he had raised and a few of his Gentile converts. There he was arrested for taking a Gentile too far into the Temple precincts, and, after a series of trials, he was sent to Rome. Later Christian tradition favours the view that he was executed there (1 Clement 5:1–7), perhaps as part of the executions of Christians ordered by the Roman emperor Nero following the great fire in the city in 64 CE.

Paul believed that his vision proved that Jesus lived in heaven, that Jesus was the Messiah and God's Son, and that he would soon return. Moreover, Paul thought that the purpose of this revelation was his own appointment to preach among the Gentiles (Galatians 1:16). By the time of his last extant letter, Romans, he could clearly describe his own place in God's plan. The Hebrew

prophets, he wrote, had predicted that in “days to come” God would restore the tribes of Israel and that the Gentiles would then turn to worship the one true God. Paul maintained that his place in this scheme was to win the Gentiles, both Greeks and “barbarians”—the common term for non-Greeks at the time (Romans 1:14). “Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I glorify my ministry in order to make my own people jealous, and thus save some of them” (Romans 11:13–14). In two other places in Romans 11—verses 25–26 (“the full number of the Gentiles [will] come in” and thus “all Israel will be saved”) and 30–31 (“by the mercy shown to you, they too may now receive mercy”)—Paul asserts that he would save some of Israel indirectly, through jealousy, and that Jews would be brought to Christ because of the successful Gentile mission. Thus, Paul’s view reversed the traditional understanding of God’s plan, according to which Israel would be restored before the Gentiles were converted. Whereas Peter, James, and John, the chief apostles to the circumcised (Galatians 2:6–10), had been relatively unsuccessful, God had led Paul through Asia Minor and Greece “in triumph” and had used him to spread “the fragrance that comes from knowing him [God]” (2 Corinthians 2:14). Since in Paul’s view God’s plan could not be frustrated, he concluded that it would work in reverse sequence—first the Gentiles, then the Jews.

Paul’s technique for winning Gentiles is uncertain, but one possibility is that he delivered lectures in public gathering places (Acts 17:17 ff.). There is, however, another possibility. Paul conceded that he was not an eloquent speaker (2 Corinthians 10:10; 11:6). Moreover, he had to spend much, possibly most, of his time working to support himself. As a tent maker, he worked with leather, and leatherwork is not noisy. While he worked, therefore, he could have talked, and once he was found to have something interesting to say, people would have dropped by from time to time to listen. It is very probable that Paul spread the gospel in this way.

Travels and letters

During the first two centuries of the Roman Empire, travel was safer than it would be again until the suppression of pirates in the 19th century. Paul and his companions sometimes traveled by ship, but much of the time they walked, probably beside a donkey carrying tools, clothes, and perhaps some scrolls. Occasionally they had plenty, but often they were hungry, ill-clad, and cold (Philippians 4:11–12; 2 Corinthians 11:27), and at times they had to rely on the charity of their converts.

Paul wanted to keep pressing west and therefore only occasionally had the opportunity to revisit his churches. He tried to keep up his converts’ spirits, answer their questions, and resolve their problems by letter and by sending one or more of his assistants (especially Timothy and Titus). Paul’s letters reveal a remarkable human being: dedicated, compassionate, emotional, sometimes harsh and angry, clever and quick-witted, supple in argumentation, and above all possessing a soaring, passionate commitment to God, Jesus Christ, and his own mission. Fortunately, after his death one of his followers collected some of the letters, edited them very slightly, and published them. They constitute one of history’s most remarkable personal contributions to religious thought and practice.

Despite Paul’s intemperate outburst in 1 Corinthians—“women should be silent in the churches” (14:34–36)—women played a large part in his missionary endeavour. Chloe was an important member of the church in Corinth (1 Corinthians 1:11), and Phoebe was a “deacon” and a “benefactor” of Paul and others (Romans 16:1–2). Romans 16 names eight other women active in

the Christian movement, including Junia (“prominent among the apostles”), Mary (“who has worked very hard among you”), and Julia. Women were frequently among the major supporters of new religious movements, and Christianity was no exception.

Although in his own view Paul was the true and authoritative apostle to the Gentiles, chosen for the task from his mother’s womb (Galatians 1:15–16; 2:7–8; Romans 11:13–14), he was only one of several missionaries spawned by the early Christian movement. Some of the other Christian workers must have been quite important; indeed, an unknown minister of Christ established the church at Rome before Paul arrived in the city. Paul treated some of these possible competitors—such as Prisca, Aquila, Junia, and Andronicus—in a very friendly manner (Romans 16: 3, 7), while he looked on others with suspicion or hostility. He was especially wary of Apollos, a Christian missionary known to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 3:1–22), and he vilified competitors in Corinth as false apostles and ministers of Satan (2 Corinthians 11). He called down God’s curse on competing preachers in Galatia (Galatians 1:6–9) and asserted that some of the Christians in Jerusalem were “false brothers” (Galatians 2:4; *compare* 2 Corinthians 11:26). Only in the latter two cases, however, is the nature of the disagreement known: Paul’s competitors opposed his admitting Gentiles to the Christian movement without requiring them to become Jewish. The polemical sections of Paul’s letters have been used in Christian controversies ever since.

Basic message

In the surviving letters, Paul often recalls what he said during his founding visits. He preached the death, resurrection, and lordship of Jesus Christ, and he proclaimed that faith in Jesus guarantees a share in his life. Writing to the Galatians, he reminded them “it was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly exhibited as crucified” (Galatians 3:1), and writing to the Corinthians he recalled that he had known nothing among them “except Jesus Christ, and him crucified” (1 Corinthians 2:2). According to Paul, Jesus’ death was not a defeat but was for the believers’ benefit. In accord with ancient sacrificial theology, Jesus’ death substituted for that of others and thereby freed believers from sin and guilt (Romans 3:23–25). A second interpretation of Christ’s death appears in Galatians and Romans: those who are baptized into Christ are baptized into his death, and thus they escape the power of sin (e.g., Romans 6). In the first case, Jesus died so that the believers’ sins will be purged. In the second, he died so that the believers may die with him and consequently live with him. These two ideas obviously coincide (*see below* Christology).

The resurrection of Christ was also of primary importance, as Paul revealed in his Letter to the Thessalonians, the earliest surviving account of conversion to the Christian movement. Written to Thessalonica in Macedonia possibly as early as 41 CE and no later than 51—thus no more than 20 years after Jesus’ death—the letter states (1 Thessalonians 1:9–10),

For the people of those regions report about us what kind of welcome we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath that is coming.

Since Jesus was raised and still lives, he could return to rescue believers at the time of the Final Judgment. The resurrection is connected to the third major emphasis, the promise of salvation to believers. Paul taught that those who died in Christ would be raised when he returned, while those still alive would be “caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air” (1 Thessalonians 4:14–18).

These and many other passages reveal the essence of the Christian message: (1) God sent his Son; (2) the Son was crucified and resurrected for the benefit of humanity; (3) the Son would soon return; and (4) those who belonged to the Son would live with him forever. Paul's gospel, like those of others, also included (5) the admonition to live by the highest moral standard: "May your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thessalonians 5:23).

Sourced from <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Saint-Paul-the-Apostle/>