

The Life of Paul – Week 5

7/26/26

God often prepares His people through opposition and hidden seasons of faithful obedience before leading them into greater ministry.

Paul's life reminds believers that obedience to Christ frequently brings spiritual resistance—not because God has abandoned His people, but because faithful obedience advances God's Kingdom.

Key Points:

1. There is a difference between spiritual opposition and the consequences of sinful choices. The pastor begins by distinguishing between:

- Opposition that comes because we are faithfully following Christ. Hardship created by our own sinful decisions.

Paul experienced persecution because he faithfully obeyed Christ after his conversion.

Key Scripture:

- Acts 9:29–30
- Matthew 5:10–12

Reflection:

- Am I experiencing difficulty because I am faithfully following Jesus? Are there areas where I need to take responsibility for my own choices?

2. Following Jesus often changes your relationships. The Hellenistic Jews who opposed Paul were likely the very people who had once known, served, and worshiped alongside him. His greatest opposition came from people who knew him before Christ transformed his life.

Consider: Following Jesus may:

- Change friendships. Create misunderstanding. Bring rejection. Require faithfulness despite opposition.

3. God provides protection while accomplishing His purpose. When believers learned of the plot against Paul, they took him to Caesarea before sending him safely to Tarsus.

God used: fellow believers, wise decisions favorable circumstances to preserve Paul's life for future ministry.

Reflection: How has God protected or redirected your life even when you did not recognize it at the time?

4. God's timeline is often different than ours. Paul's ministry timeline teaches patience.

Paul's Early Ministry:

- Conversion. Three years ministering in Damascus. Escape from Damascus. First visit to Jerusalem. Escape another murder plot. Six years serving quietly in Tarsus. Called by Barnabas to Antioch

Much of Paul's preparation happened before the ministry most Christians remember.

5. Hidden years are not wasted years. One of the central themes of the message is that God works powerfully during seasons when no one is watching.

The pastor compares Paul's hidden years with:

- Moses in the wilderness. David tending sheep. Jesus' years in Nazareth.

God often prepares His servants privately before using them publicly.

Reflection:

- Am I being faithful in ordinary responsibilities? Do I trust God even when my work goes unnoticed? How is God shaping my character today?

6. Faithfulness matters more than recognition. The Christian life is not measured by public platforms but by daily obedience. God values: consistent faithfulness, humble service, obedience without applause. Our hidden obedience is never hidden from God.

Important Truths to Remember:

- Obedience often invites opposition. God uses difficult seasons to strengthen His people. Preparation usually happens before promotion. Faithfulness in small things prepares us for greater responsibility.
- God never wastes seasons that seem ordinary.

Questions for Personal Reflection:

1. Where am I currently experiencing opposition?
2. Is God using this season to strengthen my faith?
3. Have I become discouraged because my life feels ordinary?
4. What does faithful obedience look like this week?
5. How can I trust God's timing instead of my own?

Application this week:

- Choose obedience even when it is difficult. Remain faithful in unseen acts of service. Encourage another believer who may be walking through a "Tarsus season." Pray for perseverance when facing opposition. Remember that God is preparing you even when you cannot yet see the outcome.

Weekly Challenge: "Be Dangerous to Darkness." Rather than asking, "What did I do wrong?"

Ask, **"What am I doing right that is making the kingdom of darkness oppose God's work?"** Then continue walking faithfully with Christ, trusting that every act of obedience matters and every hidden season is part of God's preparation.

Memory Verse: Galatians 1:23–24 *"They only heard the report: 'The man who formerly persecuted us is now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy.' And they praised God because of me."*



July Love Your Neighbor

**TRAUMA INFORMED
COMMUNITY
ALLIANCE
(TICA)**

Collecting Hygiene Items:

- shampoo
- deodorant
- toothpaste
- toothbrush
- soap
- hand sanitizer
- feminine products

Coming up:

- Men's Coffee in the Terrace
Thursday's @ 6am
- Italy Info mtg in the 123 building
7/27 @ 6pm
- Prayer & Praise
8/31 @ 6pm

DOWNLOAD THE CF APP



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Going Beyond
VIRTUAL EVENT
PRISCILLA SHIRER

Worship with Anthony Evans

Scan the QR Code to Register



Saturday, September 19th
9am-3:30pm

**PASTOR
TRACK**

**SIGN-UP ON
THE APP!**

**STARTS
AUGUST 3, 2026
4:30PM**