

Paul His gospel message. And we are to be followers of Paul as he followed Christ according to 1 CORINTHIANS 11:1; 1 CORINTHIANS 4:16; and PHILIPPIANS 3:17.

Concluding Thoughts

This then brings us to our concluding thoughts in this study on the life of the Apostle Paul. Now think about this for a moment, Paul's life as an Apostle didn't begin the day he was born, but rather the life of the Apostle Paul really began the day he saw on the road to Damascus the brightness of the Lord's glory, and heard Jesus voice saying unto him: *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* {ACTS 9:4; 22:7; 26:14.} Jesus said in JOHN 5:24 *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.* Saul of Tarsus, our Apostle Paul, at that instant called upon the name of the Lord now believing indeed that the Lord Jesus Christ was indeed raised from the dead, and was now speaking unto him. ROMANS 10:9 tells us: *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.* It was at this time when old Saul of Tarsus passed from death unto life, and was born again, and was told by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself in that same conversation that he would become the future Apostle Paul, though this transformation took about three to five years to complete. GALATIANS 1:15-24 explains this period of time in Paul's life like this: *But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, 16 To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: 17 Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. 18 Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. 19 But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother. 20 Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not. 21 Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia; 22 And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judaea which were in Christ: 23 But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed. 24 And they glorified God in me.*

Back up for a moment again to the day when Paul was born again on the road to Damascus. The glory of the brightness of the Lord's glory manifested to him on the road to Damascus left him blind for a season of three days. Paul was led by the hand of those who traveled with him unto Damascus, where he remained without sight, and wasn't able to eat or drink anything. All he could do was pray. Meanwhile the Lord Himself in a vision appeared unto Ananias of Damascus, and told this very devout man to go put his hands on Paul, then still known as Saul of Tarsus, and pray for him. After some convincing by the Lord, Ananias of Damascus did just that; he went and found where Saul of Tarsus was, and he *...putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost...* ACTS 9:17. Two things happened here to Saul of Tarsus, do you know what these two things were? One, he immediately received his sight (ACTS 9:18), and two, he was filled with the Holy Ghost, which in turn opened his spiritual eyes to begin see with the guidance of the Holy Ghost all truth, just as Jesus had told his disciples in JOHN 16:13-15. JOHN 16:13 *Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. 14 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. 15 All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.* Few, if any, had ever learned and followed the law like Saul of Tarsus. To the Jews in Jerusalem in ACTS 22:3 Paul said: *I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day.* In PHILIPPIANS 3:4-6 Paul wrote: *Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man*

thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: 5 Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; 6 Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

We just mentioned Ananias of Damascus, who was extremely instrumental in getting Saul of Tarsus off to a proper start on his life as a Christian, and future Apostle unto the Gentiles. We are not told in scripture how much time these two men, Ananias of Damascus and Saul of Tarsus, spent together. Perhaps their encounter with each other was brief, but I suspect it wasn't. Paul did stay in Damascus for a time before going to Arabia as noted above in GALATIANS 1:17, and ACTS 9:20 records that he *...straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God*. No doubt Ananias of Damascus attended this very same synagogue, and perhaps even introduced Saul of Tarsus to the attendees there in Damascus. When Paul again returned from Arabia, his destination was once again Damascus, and when he escaped Damascus perhaps Ananias of Damascus was among those who let Paul down the city wall in a basket as noted in ACTS 9:25, and 1 CORINTHIANS 11:32 & 33. So I suspect Ananias of Damascus spent hours with our Apostle Paul in the beginning of his Christian life.

One of the things that Ananias of Damascus made known to Paul was the details of the Lord appearing unto Ananias of Damascus himself, and telling him what Luke later wrote in ACTS 9:15 & 16 of how that *...the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake*. It wasn't Ananias of Damascus who would show our future Apostle Paul the great things he was to suffer for Jesus names sake, but it was our lovely Lord Himself who would reveal unto Paul the great things he must suffer as he embarked on this great journey of Christian life as our Apostle of the Gentiles. When Ananias of Damascus told Saul of Tarsus these words of Jesus they no doubt also recalled the words of scripture found written in ISAIAH 46. ISAIAH 46:9 *Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, 10 Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: 11 Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it*. So we see that Ananias of Damascus introduced Saul of Tarsus to a doctrine that would later be fully revealed unto Paul concerning suffering with Christ Jesus. Paul wrote many things concerning the doctrine of suffering in his epistles, that we also touched upon many times during this study of his life. For example Paul wrote in PHILIPPIANS 1:29 *For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;...* . Previously in ROMANS 8:17 & 18 Paul had written: *And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. 18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us*. Later in 2 TIMOTHY 2:12 Paul wrote to Timothy in his last letter: *If we suffer, (with Christ) we shall also reign with him:...* . So we see in these few scriptures that we have noted, and in studying the many more Paul wrote concerning suffering not mentioned here, that Paul expounded much concerning the doctrine of suffering with Christ. However we miss God's best if we do not have fellowship with Christ in these sufferings. This is what Paul wanted to know as he wrote in PHILIPPIANS 3:10 *...the fellowship of his sufferings,...* . It speaks to the intimacy of joint participation, and close communion with Christ that leads to *...being made conformable unto his death...* also spoken of in the last part of PHILIPPIANS 3:10.

Paul spent approximately thirty years as an Apostle venturing down his foreordained path of Christian life. And the great things he suffered on his Christian life's journey has been well chronicled in this study of the life of the Apostle Paul. Paul didn't waste his time focusing upon these foreordained suffering events in his life, but rather his focus remained upon things above,

having been shown by the Lord ...*how great things he must suffer for...* Jesus namesake. Again we repeat what we just read in ROMANS 8:18 where Paul wrote: *For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.* Along the way Paul wrote: 1 CORINTHIANS 4:16 *Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me.* Again in 1 CORINTHIANS 11:1 Paul once again emphasizes: *Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.* Later still Paul once again wrote in PHILIPPIANS 3:17 *Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.* Three verse prior to this Paul wrote once again where his focus was, and what is goal was: PHILIPPIANS 3:14 *I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.* That is also why Paul adds in PHILIPPIANS 3:17 *Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.* Again we repeat Paul's earlier statement found in PHILIPPIANS 1:29 *For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;...* . 2 TIMOTHY 2:12 Paul wrote to Timothy in his last letter: *If we suffer, (with Christ) we shall also reign with him:...* . If we truly want reign with Christ, which would mean having God's best, for His best is indeed found in Christ Jesus, then we must be willing ...*also to suffer for his sake...* . Peter wrote in 1 PETER 1:6 & 7 the following Holy Ghost inspired admonition: *Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: 7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.* Be assured if you follow Paul like he followed Christ that your faith will be tried, and tested. Also tried and tested were all of the Old Testament worthies of faith mentioned in HEBREWS 11. Peter then adds these Holy Ghost inspired words in 1 PETER 4:12 & 13 -- *Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: 13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.*

Approximately some thirty years after Paul was saved on the road to Damascus, he wrote to Timothy starting in 1 TIMOTHY 1:12 *And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; 13 Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy,...* . {I want to insert here Brother Hawkins definition of mercy, which he taught us at this years (2016) youth camp: mercy is evident when wrong doing is present.} ...*13 Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. 14 And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. 15 This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. 16 Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting. 17 Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.* Paul wrote similar words in his final days, which we find in 2 TIMOTHY 4:18 *And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

In between the day Paul got saved on the road to Damascus, and when he went home to glory shortly after writing 2 TIMOTHY, we have the incredible story of the life of Paul, and the gospel message he was given, which we are also to follow. It has taken us the better part of twelve years to study here in Sunday School some of the highlights of his life, and learn a little about the doctrines he was given to expound unto us of this church age. The Holy Ghost, who came upon Paul the day Ananias of Damascus laid hands on him, and prayed for him, also inspired our Apostle Paul to write one hundred chapters in the fourteen epistles he penned. We were given Paul's gospel message in this church age, one hundred chapters of instruction that completes, and fills up the word of God according to COLOSSIANS 1:25. One hundred is the number of COMPLETION, and fourteen the number of DELIVERANCE or SALVATION. Paul's gospel is our first class ticket to eternal

royalty if we will but let our guide, the Holy Ghost, open it unto us. The full overcomers of this church age are to diligently search the scriptures, are we not? *Search the scriptures...* JOHN 5:39 says, and we of this church age can magnify the scriptures under the magnifying glass of Paul's gospel. We wouldn't know the concept of being a full overcomer without the gospel record of the Apostle Paul. We wouldn't even begin to know what is the hope of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus if it wasn't for the gospel of the Apostle Paul. We wouldn't know what God's best is if it wasn't for the gospel of the Apostle Paul. If it wasn't for Paul's gospel we wouldn't be established, nor even know what that meant. We wouldn't know what a racecourse runner was except for Paul's gospel. We wouldn't know the great mysteries of scripture if it were not for Paul's gospel. We wouldn't really know anything about this present church age, this age of grace, if it weren't for Paul's gospel. The things that Paul wrote in his gospel were in the Apostle Peter's own words "...*hard to be understood...*" We will never be able to rule and reign with Christ Jesus without knowing Paul's gospel. This all means that the Bride of Christ will be made up of those who do know Paul's gospel. The Bride of Christ "*hath made herself ready*" according to REVELATION 19:7, and be assured she does so by knowing Paul's gospel, the word of truth given unto him to preach, and teach. To one of his most devoted understudies Paul wrote in 2 TIMOTHY 2:15 *Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.* As his understudies also are we not also to study Paul's gospel, the word of truth? The word "gospel" is found 104 times in scripture, 84 times in association with Paul, so we see the importance to us of this church age to know Paul's gospel. Three times Paul refers to his gospel as my gospel. (1) ROMANS 2:16 *In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.* (2) ROMANS 16:25 *Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,...* (3) 2 TIMOTHY 2:8 *Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel...* Further Paul went on to state: *For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect...* 1 CORINTHIANS 1:17. Paul made seven similar statements about preaching the gospel.

There is a long list of doctrines taught by Paul in his gospel record, which we have covered in this study. The doctrine of GRACE is emphasized in Paul's gospel. He learned on the road to Damascus: *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast...* EPHESIANS 2:8 & 9. Paul was the one who emphasized the importance of the gifts of the Holy Ghost, which Brother Hawkins taught at the 2005 youth camp. Where else do we learn the doctrine of the Bride of Christ? This is one of the many doctrines emphasized by the Apostle Paul. Along with this doctrine is the doctrine of ranks in the resurrection, the doctrine of being a full overcomer, and a New Testament worthy of faith, the doctrine of a race course runner, the doctrine of having God's best, the doctrine of the hope of His calling, the doctrine of the glory of His inheritance, and the doctrine of suffering with Christ Jesus. Paul's gospel teaches of seven mysteries not found in other scriptural records, which are: (1) the mystery of Israel's blindness, (ROMANS 11:25); (2) the hidden mystery, (ROMANS 16:25; 1 CORINTHIANS 2:7; COLOSSIANS 1:26, and EPHESIANS 1:9); (3) the mystery of translation, (1 CORINTHIANS 15:51-53 and 1 THESSALONIANS 4:15-17); (4) the great mystery of the bride, which unfortunately remains a great mystery in most churches today simply because they do not have the Holy Ghost to teach them the truth, and if they do they fail to see Paul's doctrine of ranks in the resurrection, (EPHESIANS 5:32); (5) the mystery of Godliness, (COLOSSIANS 2:2 and 1 TIMOTHY 3:16); (6) the mystery of iniquity, (2 THESSALONIANS 2:7); and (7) the mystery of faith, (1 TIMOTHY 3:9). Paul's doctrine was given him specifically for this church age, and was primarily given him to reach the Gentiles as noted in ACTS 26:16-18, which words were spoken to Paul by Jesus out of that blinding glorious light that appeared unto him on the road to Damascus the day Paul got saved. As we also noted in this study, it took the Apostle Paul over twenty years before

he could repeat the ninety-nine word life sentence Jesus told him on the road to Damascus, and Paul did so under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost in the presence of a governor, and a king! ACTS 26:16 *But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; 17 Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, 18 To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.* Paul's doctrine teaches about the two natures, and the two heads, (the first man Adam, and the second man Adam, which is Christ Jesus). Paul's gospel teaches about the natural man, the spiritual man, and the carnal man. Paul teaches about the mystical body of Christ. In this study on the life of the Apostle Paul we have written chapters on the Doctrine of Eternal Security, the Doctrine of the Holy Ghost, the Doctrine of Water Baptism, the Doctrine of the Laying on of Hands, the Doctrine of Prophecy, the Doctrine of Separation, the Doctrine of Deliverance, and the Doctrine of Resurrection, and all of these are Paul's doctrines.

We noted above that the doctrine of GRACE is emphasized in Paul's gospel. In 1 TIMOTHY 6:11 Paul wrote his son in the faith Timothy to *...follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.* Note here that GRACE is not listed. We are not to follow after grace, because grace is a gift of God. EPHESIANS 2:8 again tells us: *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God...* Later in EPHESIANS 3:7 we read: *Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.* Then in EPHESIANS 4:7 we find: *But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.* So we are not told to follow after GRACE because grace is a gift of God. In ROMANS 6:23 Paul writes: *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.* This is GRACE amplified, *...eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.* Here we also find another five-letter word that defines GRACE, and the GRACE of God to us, and that five-letter word is JESUS. (Of course we all know that JESUS is far more than a five letter word, and no disrespect toward JESUS is intended here, as will become evident as you read on.) GRACE then should point us to Jesus, and we cannot, and should not think of GRACE without thinking of Jesus. The Apostle John couldn't tell us who Jesus was without using the word GRACE either. The Apostle John wrote in JOHN 1 the following words about Jesus being the epitome of GRACE. In JOHN 1:14 we read: *And the Word (JESUS) was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.* Truth is a five-letter word also pointing to GRACE. Never before, and never since has anyone come into this world "*full of GRACE and truth.*" Yet we can all accept Jesus as our own personal Saviour, and have Him "*full of GRACE and truth*" dwelling within us. JOHN 1:17 further tells us this about Jesus: *For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.* The point of emphasis here is that GRACE and Jesus are words that depend upon each other. GRACE cannot exist without Jesus, and Jesus is GRACE, full of GRACE and truth. No wonder the Apostle Paul expressed his thankfulness for Jesus, and the GRACE of Jesus like this in 2 CORINTHIANS 9:15 *Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.* Note also in the following verses penned by Paul that we see GRACE and Jesus inseparable. ROMANS 3:24 *Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus...* EPHESIANS 2:4 *But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)* 6 *And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: 7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. 8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.* These are just a couple of many such portions of scriptures. The Apostle Paul too couldn't tell us who Jesus was without using the word GRACE either. On you own take the time to research the following: the Apostle Paul started his introductions, and ended all of his epistles

conclusions with the mention of Jesus, and with the mention of GRACE, again showing that these two five letter words go hand in hand. (The first mention of the name of Jesus in HEBREWS is in HEBREWS 2:9, where we also find the word GRACE mentioned in HEBREWS for the first time: HEBREWS 2:9 *But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.*) Paul wrote in EPHESIANS 3:8 *Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.* This is why we have done such a lengthy study on the life of Paul.

So how did the life of Paul end? Scholars having been trying to answer this question for centuries. Thus we find the answer to the question of how did the life of Paul end expressed in general terms, with no known record left of his actual execution, which is the commonly accepted method of his death. We know from 2 TIMOTHY 4:17 that Paul *...was delivered out of the mouth of the lion...* which was a sentence the majority of Christians received during the reign of Nero. We have previously noted in this study that a part of Paul's pedigree was that he was a free born Roman citizen, a fact found in Paul's own words recorded in ACTS 22:25-29. ACTS 22:25 *And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?* 26 *When the centurion heard that, he went and told the chief captain, saying, Take heed what thou doest: for this man is a Roman.* 27 *Then the chief captain came, and said unto him, Tell me, art thou a Roman? He said, Yea.* 28 *And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom. And Paul said, But I was free born.* 29 *Then straightway they departed from him which should have examined him: and the chief captain also was afraid, after he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him.* This Roman citizenship afforded Paul two "freedoms," which a non-Roman citizen didn't have: (1) a Roman citizen was not to be bound by the Romans, and (2) a Roman citizen was not to be beaten by the Romans. And as we noted above in 2 TIMOTHY 4:17 Paul was not sentenced to die by the mouth of the lion. However in the days after writing Timothy his second epistle, Paul was sentenced to death by Caesar's court.

W. J. Conybeare and J. S. Howson published probably the best book ever written about the life of the Apostle Paul, and they called their work *The Life and Epistles of St. Paul*, which was first published in 1856. They were English scholars who lived during the era when England ruled the high seas, thus they had unique insights to Paul's many sailing adventures, and shipwrecks. Their book with their insights have been referenced many times, and many places during this study on the life of Paul. As far as I am aware, no one had done as much research on the life of one man as these two English scholars, and they researched long and hard as to the means of Paul's death. Conybeare and Howson noted: "The privileges of Roman citizenship exempted St. Paul from the ignominious death of lingering torture, which had been lately inflicted on so many of his brethren. He was to die by decapitation." They go on to say: "It was not uncommon to send prisoners whose death might attract too much notice in Rome, to some distance from the city, under a military escort, for execution." Several who lived during the life of Paul, and within a couple hundred years afterwards, commonly agreed that the site of Paul's execution was outside the limits of Rome on the road to Ostia, the port of Rome. So we find our Apostle Paul given a military escort on his final journey here on earth. No doubt Paul continued testifying to them as they proceeded on this his final journey. It is quite possible that many of these same soldiers had already become Christians themselves because of Paul's prison ministry there in Rome. In PHILIPPIANS 4:22 Paul acknowledged that there were many of Caesar's own household who were Saints because of Paul's ministry, and perhaps some of these were Roman soldiers, some of whom were given the assignment to escort Paul on this journey. Conybeare and Howson also make note in their final pages that "the military mode of execution – decapitation by the sword – was more usual under Nero," (as the means for inflicting death to a Roman citizen).

Conybeare and Howson also give a time line of events in the life of Paul, and note that he was probably executed in May or early June of 68 A.D. A very short time after this, within days, and God only knows the time table for sure, Nero's prized personal guards, the Praetorian guards, many of whom Paul no doubt testified to; these same Praetorian guards got sick and tired of Nero's antics, and his persecuting innocent Christians; thus it became obvious to Nero himself that his overthrow was eminent, so Nero committed suicide on June 9, 68 A.D.

So we find two famous men who lived in the first century died within days of each other. One was a Caesar, the chief ruler of his day, who worshipped himself: the other an Apostle, who worshipped the Supreme Authority, God the Father through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Paul wrote Timothy in his first epistle to him the following: 2 TIMOTHY 2:1 *I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; 2 For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. 3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; 4 Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.* If Paul ever did get to talk to Nero during his appearances before Caesar's court, one of the things Paul would have made known unto him was the fact that Nero should repent and turn to God, just as Paul told king Agrippa in ACTS 26:20. It is recorded that some of Nero's last words were "what an artist the world loses in me," showing his focus continued to be upon himself. Paul's last words are not recorded in scripture, but we have recorded in his epistles where his focus was, and that being on the heavenly things above. Paul wrote in PHILIPPIANS 1:21 *For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.* Paul most recently had written Timothy in 2 TIMOTHY 4:8 *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.* Because Paul believed upon Jesus as his personal Saviour he has eternal life. {Study JOHN 3:15.} Since Nero didn't accept Christ as his Saviour, Nero has eternal judgment. {Study HEBREWS 6:2.} Nero died in sorrow. Paul died rejoicing in the Lord as he also encouraged us in his very first epistle: 1 THESSALONIANS 5:16 *Rejoice evermore.*

As noted above Paul in all of his epistles began his introductions, and ended all of his epistles conclusions with the mention of Jesus, and with the mention of GRACE, again showing that these two five letter words go hand in hand. Paul's final words to Timothy are found in 2 TIMOTHY 4:22 *The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen.* We will end this study with one of the Apostle Paul's most profound conclusions found in ROMANS 16. ROMANS 16:24 *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen. 25 Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, 26 But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith: 27 To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.*

Eulogy

We have no accurate record of a funeral service for our Apostle Paul. Some state that he was buried where he was executed, and others speculate that friends took up his corpse, and carried it for burial. At this point only the Lord knows for sure where our Apostle Paul was buried. The Apostle Paul's last will and testament is actually found recorded in our New Testament scripture, of ACTS, and Paul's own epistles.

Paul never wished to be eulogized beyond what is recorded of him in scripture. Whenever he used the words "I," "me," "my," and "we" in his writings, it was most often in close connection with a reference to God, and our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. For example in ROMANS 14:8 Paul