

How To Study the Bible

Part Eight: Character Bible Study (Biographical Study)

The Benefits of a Character Study

- 1.) The stories of a person's life provide _____ that are easy to _____
- 2.) Real people can _____ to real people
- 3.) Helps us to see how God _____ with people
- 4.) We can learn from the _____ and _____ of others

1 Corinthians 10:1-11

Steps for a Character Study

- 1.) List _____ that speak about the person you are studying
- 2.) Read the references and write _____ about what you discover
- 3.) _____ lessons learned

Practice Character Study

CHARACTER: Saul of Tarsus / Paul

STEP 1: List References

Acts 7:58; 8:1; 9:1-31; 13:1-3

Acts 13:4-14:28 – Paul's first missionary journey

Acts 16-18 – Paul's second missionary journey

Acts 18:23-21 – Paul's third missionary journey

Acts 21:39; 22:1-5

Acts 26:9-11

Romans 1:14-16

I Corinthians 2:1-5; 11:1; 14:18

II Corinthians 1:1; 11:24-27; 12:1-10

Ephesians 1:15-16

Philippians 1:12-14, 21; 3:1-14

Colossians 1:25

I Thessalonians 2:4-12

I Timothy 1:12-15

II Timothy 4:6-8

STEP 2: Read the references and write notes / biographical sketch

- Saul was from the city of Tarsus and studied under Gamaliel in the city of Jerusalem. He was a Pharisee and thoroughly trained in the law (*Acts 21:39; 22:1-3*).

- Saul was a persecutor of Christians, and in doing so, he thought he was pleasing God. He oversaw the arrest and murder of followers of Christ. He hunted them down like animals (*Acts 7:58; 8:1; 9:1-2; 26:9-11*). Saul first comes on the scene in the Bible at the killing of Stephen in Acts 7.

- Saul later considered himself the worst of all sinners (*I Timothy 1:12-15*).

- Saul was miraculously converted while on the road to Damascus. He encountered Jesus and was given instructions about what God was calling him to do with his life. God was going to send him to the Gentiles to proclaim the gospel (*Acts 9:1-19*).

- Saul was also called Paul (*Acts 13:9*).

- Paul was called of God as an apostle to take the message of the gospel to those who had never heard it. His travels can be summed up in three different journeys (*Acts 13 -21*).

- Paul was bold and unashamed about preaching the gospel, even though it meant he was arrested and persecuted on different occasions (*Romans 1:14-16; II Corinthians 11:24-27; 12:1-10; Philippians 1:12-14*).

- Paul was a spiritual father to many believers and modeled for them what it means to follow Christ faithfully. He had a love for the people he ministered to and prayed for them regularly (*I Corinthians 11:1; Ephesians 1:15-16*).

- Paul continuously desired to know Christ in a greater way. He did not settle for lower-level victories but desired to move on to all that God had for him (*Philippians 3:1-14*).
- Paul was faithful to his calling even up to the end of his life (*II Timothy 4:6-8*).

STEP 3: Summarize