**Paul’s Monuments**

*1 Timothy 1:12-17*

*Paul served as a monument to…*

1. The Danger of an Unlearned Conscience
2. Committed in Ignorance (**cf. 1 Timothy 1:13**).
* This was not an excuse for sin, nor did it make the sin any less grievous – **Luke 23:34** (*Jesus said they know not what they do*.)
	+ ***They knew what they were doing but did not know fully the consequences, and their hearts were darkened by their own obstinacy.***
	+ Paul wrote of the hidden mystery, ***“which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory” (1 Corinthians 2:8).***
1. Lived in good conscience (**cf. Acts 26:9-11** – Paul to King Agrippa)
* **Acts 26:4-8** – He did this because of his fervor for God.
	+ ***It is ironic that he was attempting to defeat the fruition of that for which he hoped.***
	+ **He looked for the messiah – the promises of God to the nation of Israel – yet persecuted those who accepted the Christ.**
* **Philippians 3:4-6** – Paul’s achievements as a Jew pointed toward his zeal.
	+ Circumcised precisely at the time the Law instructs.
	+ Could trace his lineage back to Israel – not a proselyte ***(“I am a Jew from Tarsus, in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean [insignificant] city” Acts 21:39***)
	+ Of the sect of Jews who observed the Law most strictly.
	+ His zeal was so overwhelming for Judaism that he persecuted those directly opposed – ***“they cast them out of the city and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man names Saul” Acts 7:58 – “Now Saul was consenting to [Stephen’s] death” Acts 8:1***.
1. The Conscience must be learned.
* **Proverbs 14:12** – The conscience alone cannot lead us successfully.
* **Psalm 119:11** – It must be trained by God’s word!
1. The Resurrection of Christ
2. Christ’s chosen vessel (**cf. Acts 9:15-16** – Jesus to Ananias after appearing to Paul.)
* His ministry was primarily to the Gentiles (those not Jews) – **Romans 11:13; Galatians 2:8**.
* **Acts 22:14-15** – Ananias to Paul (Paul recounts his conversion).
	+ **Jesus Instruction to Paul** – **Acts 26:15-18**
1. Required Paul to see Jesus (cf. **Acts 1:21-26** – An apostle of Christ had to have witnessed His resurrection, which Paul did.)
* **Acts 9:3-6** – The resurrected Christ appears to Paul as one who would be born out of due time – **1 Corinthians 15:3-8**
* **1 Corinthians 15:13-19 – It was imperative that Paul was a monument to Christ’s resurrection.**
1. The Power of the Gospel (his conversion and opposite effect on the church after)
2. Upon hearing Christ his countenance and character changed completely (**cf. Acts 9:8-9, 20** – signs of a penitent heart).
* **1 Corinthians 15:9-11** – Paul’s penitent heart lead to fierce action in ministering to the Lord’s work.
	+ **Even in his ministry he exchanged places from persecutor to persecuted, and suffered many things while laboring in the gospel** – **2 Corinthians 11:23-28**
1. This dramatic change Paul attributed to the gospel’s power (**cf. Romans 1:16; 1 Corinthians 1:18)**.
* It may be you have done terrible things. It may be you have lived a life contrary to Christ. You are not worthy, and neither was Paul. He attributed his ability to God’s grace – **1 Timothy 1:14**
	+ **His strength was in God’s grace – 2 Corinthians 12:8-9 (concerning thorn in flesh)**
	+ **He could do all things because of Christ! – Philippians 4:13**
* **The Gospel of Christ changed his life – Philippians 3:7-14**
	+ **It can change your life too!**

**Conclusion**

1. Paul serves as a wonderful example in many ways. These are a few.
2. We must be careful to follow the gospel, believing in the risen savior, and obeying always that which has the power to change our lives completely!