

The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. - 1 Timothy 1:15

I. SAUL—OUTSIDE OF CHRIST

- A Pharisee. A conservative nationalistic Jewish leader (of the school of Hillel) who believed in the Scriptures, the resurrection, and in obeying all the law of Moses. He believed in a coming Messiah (Matt. 23:2-3; Acts 22:1-5, 23:8; 26:4-8; Phil. 3:5).
- A blasphemer of the name of Jesus. He was an insolent and violent persecutor of the early Christians community (Acts 7:58, 8:1, 9:1; Gal. 1:11-17).
- “First” among sinners (Vs. 15; Rom. 7:15-25).

II. PAUL—IN CHRIST

- The recipient of mercy (Vs. 13).
- The recipient of grace, faith, and love in Christ (Vs. 14).
- The recipient of strength in Christ, who judged him faithful now, and appointed him to Christian service (Vs. 12).
- The example to us of Christ’s patience and mercy (Vs. 16).

III. THE INCARNATION AND ITS PURPOSE

- Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners (Vs. 15; Matt. 1:21).
- Via his incarnation, Jesus grants us:
 1. Mercy
 2. Grace
 3. Faith
 4. Love
 5. Strength
 6. Patience
 7. True judgment
 8. Eternal life

KNOW: The apostle Paul was once a blasphemer and insolent opponent of Jesus Christ. All that changed when Jesus met him. All that we once were can be changed too.

DO: Receive every gift that Christ has for you through the Incarnation.

Suggested Reading:

On the Incarnation by St. Athanasius of Alexandria
(Available in the LifePoint Adult Library)

What is the Incarnation: Basics of the Faith Series by William B. Evans
(Available in the LifePoint Adult Library)

For Children:

All About Christmas by Allison Mitchell
(Available in the LifePoint Children's Library)

**Questions/Discovery Points for
Life Groups/Families**

Please Read 1 Timothy 1:12-17

1. Why is the apostle Paul thankful here?
2. Who was he at one time in his life?
3. Who is he now?
4. We get three recountings of Saul/Paul's conversion in the book of Acts (9:1-19; 22:3-21; 26:12-17). Why all three, do you think?
5. What did Jesus do for Saul/Paul?
6. What has God done for you through the Incarnation of Christ? Who were you? Who are you now?