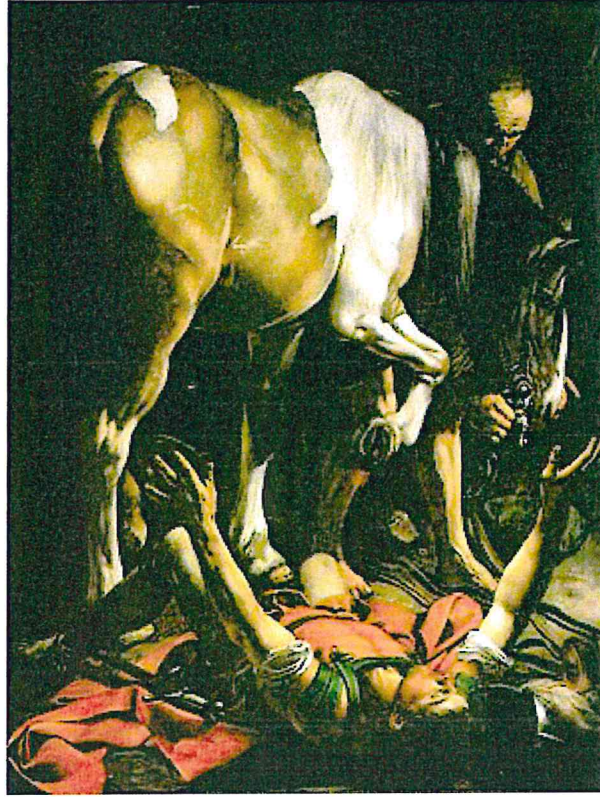


Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time

Sunday Forum – February 21, 2016

Paul and the Gentile Christian Church



Conversion of St. Paul on the Road to Damascus – Caravaggio (1601)

Opening Prayer – Conversion of St. Paul – *BCP*, pp. 238-239

O God, by the preaching of your apostle Paul you have caused the light of the Gospel to shine throughout the world: Grant, we pray, that we, having his wonderful conversion in remembrance, may show ourselves thankful to you by following his holy teaching; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Divisions in the Early Church (and Synagogues) by Background – Acts 6-8

Hellenists in Synagogue and Church

Synagogue of the Freedmen

Appointing of Deacons

Stephen

Martyrdom of Stephen and Paul's Cooperation

Paul's Conversion/Call – Chapter 9

What happened to Saul?

Concepts of conversion/call

Psychological – Guilt? Shame? – Romans 7:19

Spiritual – Caught up into third heaven (2 Corinthians 12)

Mystical – Merkabah vision/contemplation

Conversion – from one community to another

Mission to Gentiles and “Council” of Jerusalem

Paul’s sense of mission

Christ for all people – neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, you are all one in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:28)

Argument with Apostles in Jerusalem

James and Peter

“We should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God.” (Acts 15:19)

Peter’s “backsliding” – Galatians 2:11-13

Acts of the Apostles

Jesus Movement is called The Way – Luke’s name for the followers of Jesus

Jesus and all his original close followers were Jews

Should The Way be merely a new “denomination” within Judaism?

Pharisees

Sadducees

Essenes

Zealots/Sicarii

Am Ha’aretz

The Way

Open only to Jews, and thus be a new “denomination”?

Semi-Jews?

God-fearers

Proselytes

Or should The Way be open to all, without Gentiles needing to become Jews first?

Peter vs. Paul

Paul’s Lifeline Chronology – according to Acts – approximated dates

Paul studies with Rabbi Gamaliel in Jerusalem	early adulthood
Jesus’ death	c. 33 AD/CE
Saul’s persecution of Christians	c. 33-36
Paul’s conversion	c. 36
Paul’s years in Arabia	c. 36-39
Preaching in Damascus, Tarsus, Antioch	c. 39-45
Brings relief offering to Jerusalem, meets apostles	c. 46
First missionary journey: Cyprus and Galatia	c. 47-48
Council at Jerusalem/Confrontation with Peter	c. 49
Second missionary journey: Asia Minor and Greece	c. 49-52
Third missionary journey	c. 52-57
Arrest in Jerusalem; Trial before Festus; Sent to Rome	c. 57-60
Mission in Rome; Martyrdom during Nero’s persecution	c. 60-64