

PREFACE

"I enjoyed the worship today right from the singing of the doxology, Psalm 100. The opening Psalm 98:2, 'The Lord hath made known His salvation: His righteousness hath He openly shewed in the sight of the heathen.' I remember pastor once said this happened when Christ Yeshua was crucified on the cross. Suddenly, I felt the whole earth was filled with His glory. I enjoyed Zechariah Tan's chairman prayer. When pastor introduced Paul from the book of Acts, I sensed that the whole ambience in John Bunyan house was filled with euphoria. As I considered pastor's last statement that even if I know Christ Yeshua as the greatest prophet or one who has done the most miracles on earth, but fail to know Him as the Messiah and the Son of God, I would fall short of having salvation. This is what Paul has been trying to show to the Jews, even Who Christ is. I was brought to solemnly consider the message about the person of Paul and his special calling. Though Paul is the second most influential person in history besides our Lord Yeshua Christ, without pastor, I would not have been able to see the uniqueness of Paul's calling. I would only be carried away by the many incidents recorded in Acts. Thank God for raising up Paul to elaborate and crystallize what the Gospel is (Galatians 2:16). When pastor emphasised many times that salvation is by grace through Yeshua Christ and not by works, I felt pastor destroyed my confidence in works and caused me to trust in the grace of Christ Yeshua. The second thing that struck me is why Paul was so sure of his Gospel. I felt very convicted when pastor showed us from Galatians 1:16 that Paul received this Gospel by the revelation of Yeshua Christ and God revealed His Son in him. Pastor explained that this is different from the Damascus encounter when Christ Yeshua was revealed to him (Acts 9). Paul received both external and inward revelations. In a secondary sense, I felt it is the Holy Spirit Who has revealed the Gospel to our pastor and he is not taught of men. When pastor mentioned that history has it that Barnabas apostatised in the end, it jolted me. Of all people, Barnabas had the special privilege to witness Paul's preaching but he could not recognise who Paul is. Another character that impressed me is Luke: though seemingly far (physical proximity) from Paul, yet he was always there to record the acts of the Holy Spirit and the miracles wrought by Paul. In this worship, I felt a sense of thankfulness and indebtedness to God that the Gospel that our pastor preaches is the Gospel of Paul, which is the Gospel of the Holy Scriptures."

Adaiah Wong. "I enjoyed pastor's message very much today. Pastor showed me the relevance of the book of Acts with relation to the Gospels and the epistles. I marvelled at the way pastor turned the table. At first, it seemed that pastor gave a general introduction pertaining to the book of Acts. The book of Acts is about the Holy Ghost, about preachers but then finally, it is about the apostle Paul. To follow pastor's sermon was like watching a movie trailer. He showed me how Paul was introduced and brought to the forefront. At first, his name was Saul, then it was Paul and then he was the hero. It was fascinating to see how God had raised up Paul after the ascension of Yeshua Christ. God raised him up not only to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles but also to defend the Gospel. If Paul did not defend the Gospel so belligerently and tenaciously, we would not have the Gospel. Pastor brought us to see how Paul defined the Gospel. A man is not justified by works but by faith. I marvelled how pastor showed me that Paul was the thirteenth apostle; else if he was the twelfth apostle we may think that he is also the apostle to the circumcision. I enjoyed the way pastor explained the Gospel. The vehemence of his defence was not against the enemies without but more so from within. I am quite inspired by the response of Peter towards Paul, particularly in his last epistle. I am also thankful for the person of Luke. Luke was focusing on the person of Paul. Because of Luke we have this report concerning Paul the apostle. Thank God that Luke was not just a physician, a scribe or historian but also a man who was able to see everything that transpired spiritually. Today we have Paul as the model for all preachers and he is also a model pastor. Thank God for the person, ministry and life of Paul the apostle. Today, because of him, we have the Gospel given to us through pastor. Because of the measure of grace that is in our presiding pastor, he is able to fathom the person and ministry of Paul in a depth that hardly any can. Thank God for the acts of the Holy Ghost still existing today. It is appropriate to have our missionaries overseas to advance the Gospel of Yeshua Christ during this season. It was appropriate that Pauline gave the refreshment since we are talking of Paul and for Julia to join her in giving the refreshment since it was Pauline's sister who first brought Julia to our church."

Job S. The foregoing Sabbath vespers were in response to pastor's sermon, 'Acts Of The Apostles: The Ministry And Life Of Paul, The Thirteenth Apostle', Johor Baru, Malaysia; 14 November AD 2010