

## **A HIS PERSECUTION ZEAL.**

- ❖ The Jewish couldn't refute Stephen's message about Jesus the Messiah, so they—especially Paul—got irritated.
- ❖ They couldn't confront Stephen with the truth, so they found fake witnesses who accused him of speaking badly of the Temple and the Law (Acts 6:11-14).
- ❖ The young Saul supported the Sanhedrin's sentence. He witnessed Stephen's stoning and agreed (Acts 7:58; 8:1).

## **B HIS CONVERSION.**

- ❖ Saul persecuted the Church with diabolical rage—which he thought was religious zeal.
- ❖ His mind persisted on destroying the heresy, but his conscience told him that Stephan was innocent and his reasoning was right.
- ❖ Everything changed on his way to Damascus. Jesus appeared to him and showed him His grace. All the excuses in his head to reject the crucified Messiah were dissipated.

## **C HIS EXPERIENCE IN DAMASCUS.**

- ❖ Saul stayed blind at Judas' home for three days. As Ananias said, Christians thought he was faking his blindness to take them by surprise.
- ❖ Jesus showed Ananias that Saul was being sincere. After he recovered his sight, Ananias invited him to surrender his life to Jesus and to show it through baptism. (Acts 22:16)
- ❖ Saul wanted to stop the Christian faith in Damascus, but He was converted to be a paladin for Christ instead, to spread the Gospel throughout the world.

## **D HIS MINISTRY TO THE GENTILES.**

- ❖ The first missionary campaign among Gentiles took place in Antioch; it was very fruitful.
- ❖ When Christians in Jerusalem heard about that success, they sent Barnabas there. He saw the opportunities in that city and called Saul to come and help him.
- ❖ When the Church was established and there were enough leaders to support it, the Holy Spirit called Saul to preach the Gospel to the Gentile people.

## **E HIS CONFLICT WITH THE CHURCH.**

- ❖ Little by little, the Gospel was preached to non-Jewish people. The first time was in Samaria, then it spread throughout the whole known world.
- ❖ But a question emerged: What should we do with the Gentiles? Should they be circumcised and keep the law of Moses? Is having faith in Jesus enough?
- ❖ The council of Jerusalem (Acts 15) tried to clarify those questions. Nevertheless, the stubborn Pharisees kept preaching their own ideas.
- ❖ That's the background of the letter to Galatians.