

Final Years

To the Ends of the Earth

Foundation

Paul appears to have arrived in Rome about AD61 nearly 30 years after he came to faith and after more than 15 years of journeying. He was under arrest and at least part of the time chained to a soldier, but in a private house rather than a prison. It is thought that in this time he wrote the letters to Philemon, the Colossians, the Ephesians and the Philippians. (The early Christians who said Paul also wrote the letter to the Hebrews mostly said he wrote it during this time.)

We learn from Philemon that a runaway slave called Onesimus had come to faith in Jesus whilst in Rome and had been persuaded to return to his former master, Theophilus, in Colossae. But Paul had found Onesimus useful and hoped the slave would be freed and sent back to Rome to help Paul in the work. We learn of others who were with Paul for a time or were sent with the letters including Mark and Luke who wrote two of the gospels.

“he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel.” (Acts 9.15)

It seems that Paul was then released and spent 2 or 3 more years travelling to visit some of the churches he had helped establish. We learn from Paul’s letters just how concerned he was for the churches and how he wanted them to stand firm in their faith and to live in a way that was pleasing to God. But, in many places, there were problems and Paul wrote his letters, or sent others, or visited himself, in order to set things straight. He also helped train younger people like Timothy and Titus to take over as he was getting older and in danger of death.

PLACES PAUL VISITED



From the Crossway ESV Grow Bible given, by the church, to all junior children at St James School Chorley.

Given all the troubles we read about in the Bible it is amazing that the church survived at all. But, of course, they were not Paul’s churches, they ere Christ’s and Paul was just a servant of Christ sent by Him to spread the light.

Paul was now well known to the Jews and Romans. On returning to Rome in AD66 he was arrested again and wrote possibly his final letter, 2 Timothy. It is said that Paul was executed in Rome at the command of the Emperor Nero. Since seeing the light of Christ on the road to Damascus Paul had spent his life trying to spread that light to others and through Him God did amazing things and through his letters people today still come to see the light of Christ.

(Traditionally it was said that Paul wrote 1 Timothy and Titus on the final journey and 2 Timothy after being arrested again. He mentions setting out for Macedonia and visiting Ephesus, Crete, Miletus and Troas. Some, if not all, of these places were visited during the final journey. It is also possible visited Spain but the earliest assumed reference to this is not clear.)

God still calls people to spread the message about Jesus to others, and some, like Paul, are sent far and wide to do so.

