

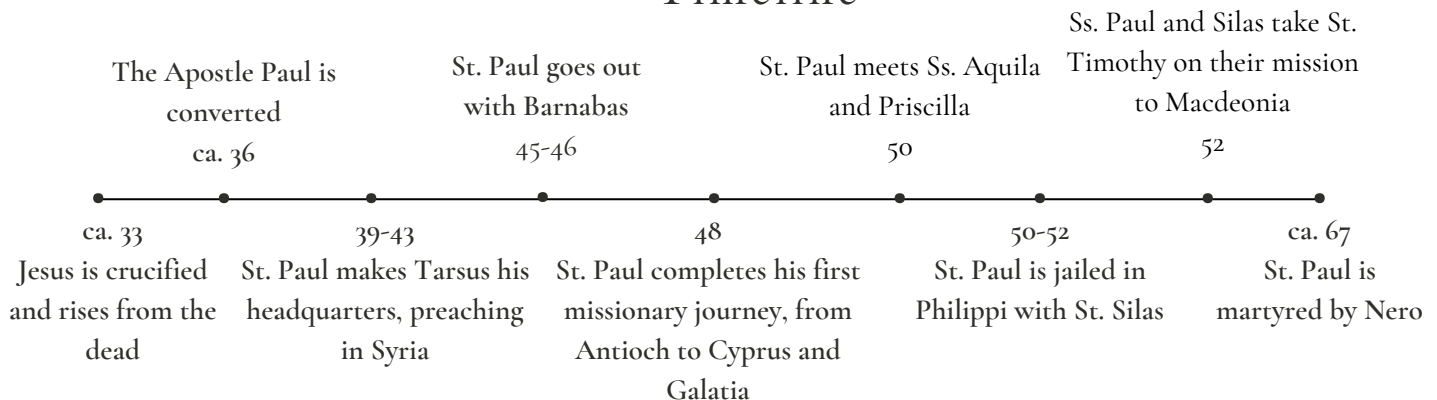


History

The Acts of the Apostles and other Pauline epistles provide readers with a picture of the various companions of Paul, telling us about those who assisted him in his work and furthered his ministry. A very prolific preacher and evangelist, Paul is thought to have traveled close to 1,000 miles across the Roman Empire and Asia Minor in his lifetime, spreading the Gospel. Throughout his travels he met all sorts of people, similar and different to him: from these acquaintances, God provided him with many coworkers and assistants who supported his ministry throughout his life. In taking a closer look at these relationships, it is evident that his connections with others ran quite deep and that

the apostle truly saw them as his fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. While there is no mention of Paul's family in the Bible, these friends of Paul came and went throughout his life, working with him in specific times and for specific purposes. It surely was not easy being Paul's friend, assistant, and traveling companion. Scripture depicts the difficulties that Paul faced and the many enemies who sought his destruction. Yet these friends stood by his side and risked their own life for the Word of God. These acquaintances, friends, and companions of Paul instruct us today about how the early Church functioned and came to be. Even so, it can be difficult to keep these characters straight and understand their relationship to St. Paul.

Timeline



Leading Characters



ST. BARNABAS

Barnabas was closely connected with St. Paul during his early ministry, working alongside him to preach the good news all over Asia Minor. After success in Antioch and a return to Jerusalem, they added John Mark to their duo. However, this addition did not fare well and caused tension between Barnabas and Paul. Eventually, disagreements between the two of them split them up, and they continued on with their mission work separately. Barnabas took John Mark with him on his travels, and Paul took Silas as his companion.

ST. SILAS

After St. Barnabas and St. Paul departed from one another, St. Silas enters the picture, accompanying the apostle in his second missionary journey. We first learn of Silas in Acts, where we learn about the two men's adventures, including them being jailed together. After they got out, they continued to travel with one another, with Silas later becoming a scribe for St. Peter. Tradition also tells us he became the first bishop of Corinth.



SS. AQUILA & PRISCILLA

These two saints are a husband-and-wife pair, hailing from Rome but living in Corinth, where they encountered St. Paul. They welcomed him into their home and supported his ministry, becoming good friends of the apostle. Some of this camaraderie surely came from the fact that they were tentmakers and connected with Paul regarding this vocation. In Acts we learn that they accompany Paul in his travels, too, helping establish a church in their home of Ephesus. They are seen as an example of hospitality and enduring friendship to Paul.

ST. TIMOTHY

This associate of St. Paul is the one mentioned most often in Paul's own letters. Timothy joins Paul in the timeframe in which he is already working with Silas. Together the two colleagues of St. Paul joined him in Corinth before Timothy is sent to Macedonia, perhaps to prepare for Paul's intended journey there. Later, St. Paul made Timothy the bishop of Ephesus. While both Paul and Timothy suffered imprisonment on their missionary journeys, they stayed in close correspondence with each other throughout their lives., cementing their strong connection.



Sources

Catherine Kroeger. "The Neglected History of Women in the Early Church." Christian History Institute.

Eusebius of Caesarea. *Church History*. ca. 341 AD.
https://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/03d/0265-0339,_Eusebius_Caesariensis,_Church_History,_EN.pdf

IMAGES:

The Conversion of St. Paul, Jacopo Tintoretto, Italy, 1544.

St. Barnabas from the [Welcome Collection](#)

Paul and Silas in Prison, Joseph Mulder, Netherlands, 1720-28.

Saint Aquila and Saint Priscilla from The Calendar of Saints, Jacques Callot, France, ca. 1600.

St. Timothy from The Calendar of Saints, Jacques Callot, France, ca. 1600.