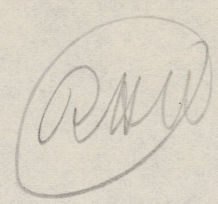


CHAPEL, October 3, 1933

-- President Wright



Scripture lesson: 17 verses from the eighth chapter of the Book of Acts

Saul's nickname was Paul. Paul means small, and Saul was small of stature, so that is probably the reason for his being called Paul. He was a Jew. His father was a Roman citizen and he was born into citizenship in the Roman government. He was born in the city of Tarsus which at one time was controlled by the Assyrians, later by the Greeks, and at the time of which we are studying, by the Roman government. There was a University in Tarsus and in all probability Paul went to that University. He was evidently being trained to become a Rabbi. After he had completed what was in his day the equivalent of a college course he went to Jerusalem and was a special student of the most famous teacher of his time, Gamaliel. Paul was a Pharisee. Pharisees believed in conforming to the letter of the law. There were Pharisees, Saducees, and Herodians among the Jews. These might be called the three types of religion, or political parties. Paul was a Pharisee and believed in interpreting the law most rigidly and conforming to the letter. He was a Pharisee of the Pharisees, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, and lived in keeping with his religion. Then came this new man into the life of the Jews, teaching a religion of love, and finding fault with a number of things the Jews were doing, who taught that it was the spirit of a thing that counts. They tried Him, found Him guilty, and crucified Him. Paul looked upon Him purely as a man. This man claimed to be the Messiah-- the word Christ means that. Paul didn't believe at all in His teachings, and persecuted all the people who followed Him. He was conscientious in it, did it because he thought he ought to. A committee of seven was appointed and Stephen was made head of this committee. Stephen was tried for some things he had taught about Jesus and found guilty, and was stoned to death. He prayed to Jehovah that this thing be not held against those who did it. Paul held the clothes of those who stoned Stephen, and what Stephen said made an impression on him. He refers to

it later in life. Paul had taken pleasure in persecuting those who followed the teachings of Christ and had been most active in their persecution. Later, he was converted and was just as diligent in spreading the gospel of Christ and just as devout a Christian as he had been a Pharisee. He was high tempered, impulsive, but conscientious.