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## Prominent People of the Bible

### *Paul*



*“Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst. But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his unlimited patience as an example for those who would believe on him and receive eternal life.” (1 Timothy 1:15-16)*

“What chance do I have of getting to heaven?”

“How could God love someone like me?”

“What I’ve done in my life is too big...too bad...too horrible for Jesus to forgive.”

How easy it is to beat ourselves up with thoughts of despair like these! The apostle Paul understood these feelings. The man who ended his life as one of the greatest Christian missionaries did not start out that way. Opposed to Christ in his early life, he tried desperately to stop Christianity from growing. He described himself at that time as a “blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man” (1 Timothy 1:13). Can you imagine standing before God and admitting that you did everything possible to stop the growth of his kingdom, including killing those who believed and preached in Jesus’ name? If we would deem anyone unworthy of being part of God’s kingdom, it would be Paul.

However, Paul’s story culminates in God’s grace, his undeserved love. Paul himself set the amazing truth of God before us: “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst.” Jesus came into this world to forgive and save even this violent, blaspheming persecutor. Why did God do this? First, because he loved Paul and wanted Paul to live with him eternally in heaven. But God also did this to give us an example of the depth of his love for all people. In demonstrating his patient love to Paul, God wants us to be confident that no matter what we’ve done, all of our sin is fully and freely forgiven in Jesus our Savior.

Jesus came into this world to save sinners—not just some sinners, but all sinners—and that’s exactly what he did with his life, death and resurrection. Like Paul, God wants us in his family. He wants us to know his love and to live eternally with him in heaven. We can put to rest our thoughts and feelings about all the things we do and say and think that offend God. In Jesus, all our sins have been forgiven and removed from God’s sight forever. God’s amazing love is for sinners—like you and me!



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#### **Graphic for Paul: *Shackles***

Paul endured imprisonment for the sake of the gospel message which he proclaimed.

**More information is located online at [WhatAboutJesus.com](http://WhatAboutJesus.com). Look for the *What About ... Prominent People* link.**