

# A Paul Chronology

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All dates are estimates, though every attempt has been made to match them with scripture, historical records, and archaeology. The difficulty is illustrated in that there are almost as many Paul chronologies as Paul authors. The framework for a Paul chronology is based on events which can be fixed to some extent in the Roman and thus our calendar, with other dates determined based on internal evidences from Acts and Paul's letters (which sometimes have contradictory information and often are not designed to be exact, hence the challenge of creating a table such as this. All dates below are C.E.

- The death of Aretas IV, king of Nabatea, 39-40 (2 Corinthians 11:32-33; Acts 9:23-25). Aretas ruled over Damascus from 38-40, dating Paul's stay there to that time.
- The death of Herod Agrippa I (Acts 12:20-23), March 44.
- The expulsion of the Jews from Rome by Claudius, 49 (Acts 18:2). Paul mentioned this as he arrived in Corinth, because Aquila and Priscilla recently came from there.
- Gallio's proconsulship in Achaia, beginning in June 51 (Acts 18:12). Paul was brought before Gallio shortly after the new proconsul's arrival (probably in July 51 C.E.), which is dated through Roman records.
- The procuratorship of Festus in Judea, in about May 59 (Acts 24:27). Some argue for an earlier date (56) and some as late as 60, but late spring 59 seems to be a reasonable consensus.
- Ananias the high priest (Acts 23:2; 24:1) took office in 47, was charged with crimes in 52 but released, and remained high priest until replaced by Ishmael, appointed by Festus in 59 as one of his first acts.

C.E.	Reference	Event/Letter	Notes
1		Birth	We don't know his age but this seems reasonable given all the factors.
15-20	Acts 22:3	Schooled in Jerusalem	Would likely have been as a young teenager but dates completely unknown.
32	Acts 7:54-60	Stephen martyred	This was followed by Saul persecuting the Jerusalem saints and then going on the road to bring back those who had fled.
<i>Conversion and early travels</i>			
32-33	Acts 9:1-9	Saul saw Jesus	On the road to Damascus
32-33	Acts 9:19-22	Ministered in <b>Damascus</b>	See also Acts 22:10
33-35	Galatians 1:16-17	Trip to <b>Arabia</b>	"Arabia" is the Nabatean kingdom, today's Jordan.
35	Galatians 1:17-18	Continued stay in Damascus	Could have been three years, according to Galatians.
35	Acts 9:23-25; 2 Corinthians 11:32-33	Escaped Damascus under threat of persecution	We know of one stoning and one beating, but the rest mentioned in 2 Corinthians are unknown in Acts or other sources.
35	Acts 9:26-29; Galatians 1:18-19	First <b>Jerusalem</b> visit, met Peter and James	Spent 15 days being tutored by those who knew Christ from which he knew many teachings and stories used later, as shown in his speeches in Acts and 1 Corinthians.
35	Acts 22:17-21	Vision in the temple	

C.E.	Reference	Event/Letter	Notes
35-46	Acts 9:30; Galatians 1:21-24	Left for <b>Caesarea</b> and <b>Tarsus</b> ; stayed in Tarsus several years	As directed by the “brethren”—the leaders of the Church. Perhaps he was sent home to be with his family (parents, siblings, wife, and children) and teach them.
35	2 Corinthians 11:25	Shipwrecked?	2 Corinthians says three times he was shipwrecked, but there is no account in Acts to match. Might this be the first time?
35-46	2 Corinthians 12:2-4	At Tarsus?	Vision of heaven.
Mar 38		<i>Tiberius died; Caligula changed frontier policy</i>	
41		<i>Claudius began his rule</i>	
44	Acts 12:21-23	<i>Death of James and Herod Agrippa</i>	Agrippa died in March 44.
46	Acts 11:25-26	Barnabas brought Saul to labor in <b>Antioch</b>	Remembering Saul fondly from their time in Jerusalem, Barnabas brought him to help with the situation in Antioch.
46	Acts 11:27-30	Second <b>Jerusalem</b> visit to take famine relief from Antioch church	Famine was 46-47 according to Roman records.
46-47	Acts 12:24-25	Barnabas and Saul returned to and continued to serve in <b>Antioch</b>	
47	Gal 2:1-10	Third Jerusalem visit to meet privately with church leaders	
<b><i>First missionary journey</i></b>			
Spring 47	Acts 13:1-3	Call to serve with Barnabas	
47	Acts 13:4-5	Passed through <b>Seleucia</b> to <b>Salamis</b> , Cyprus	Salamis was a salt-mining center.
47	Acts 13:6-12	Journey to <b>Paphos</b> and conversion of the <b>Proconsul</b>	Saul became Paul here and apparently became the leader of the group (at least takes the lead in speaking).
47	Acts 13:13	Went to <b>Perga</b> in Pamphylia	Sailed to Attalia, port on the Cestus river seven miles from Perga, then up river to city.
47	Acts 13:13	John Mark returned to Jerusalem	See Acts 15:37-38 where Paul didn’t want to take John Mark with him after this desertion; but also Colossians 4:10 and 2 Timothy 4:11 where he recommends him, showing they made things right. The source of the disagreement is unknown but perhaps due to John Mark’s unwillingness to take the gospel to the Gentiles or travel further than first planned.
47	2 Corinthians 12:7; Galatians 4:13-14	Paul was ill	Perhaps malaria or some illness; perhaps this refers to his stoning (below); or perhaps just to his <i>asthénéia</i> or human frailty, in preaching a perfect gospel.
47	Acts 13:14-51	Paul and Barnabas went to <b>Pisidia</b> , preached to the Jews and was rejected	See 2 Corinthians 11:26.

<b>C.E.</b>	<b>Reference</b>	<b>Event/Letter</b>	<b>Notes</b>
47	Acts 13:51-14:6	Travel to <b>Iconium</b>	
47	Acts 14:6-18	Preached in <b>Lystra</b> ; Paul healed a cripple and he and Barnabas were mistaken for Zeus and Hermes	Perhaps this is when Timothy's mother and grandmother, Lois and Eunice, were converted (Acts 16:1-3; 2 Timothy 1:5, 3:15).
47	Acts 14:19-20	Paul stoned and left for dead but lived	Was he raised from the dead or just close to death? Notice he left the next day—either way it was miraculous.
47	Acts 14:20-21	Went to <b>Derbe</b> and converted many	Greek says, "made many disciples"; one was likely Gaius (see Acts 20:4).
47-48	Acts 14:21-28; 2 Timothy 3:10-11	Revisited converts and returned to <b>Antioch</b>	Returned to Antioch in fall of 48.
48	Galatians 2:1-10	Paul, Barnabas, and Titus visit Jerusalem to tell about their efforts among the Gentiles	The date is uncertain but having this immediately after the first mission makes sense as they would be anxious to report it. Then Peter came north to see for himself, but the confrontation with him and Paul led to the need for the Jerusalem conference (in my reconstruction).
48	Galatians 2:11-14	Peter came to Antioch and was rebuked by Paul	Peter first ate with the Gentiles, then withdrew and ate with the Jews when some came from Jerusalem, perhaps attempting to appease both groups. Some put this after the Jerusalem conference of Acts 15 but Peter's actions make more sense before, when the issue was not yet settled.
<b><i>Jerusalem Conference</i></b>			
Spring 49	Acts 15:1-29	Fourth <b>Jerusalem</b> visit	Paul and Barnabas spoke but Peter led and James endorsed.
49	Acts 15:30-35	Return to <b>Antioch</b>	Paul, Barnabas, Silas, and Judas made the trip; only Judas returned to Jerusalem.
<b><i>Second missionary journey</i></b>			
Summer 49	Acts 15:36-41	Paul and Barnabas split; Paul and Silas started in <b>Syria</b> and <b>Cilicia</b> .	John Mark was Barnabas' kinsman but Paul didn't want him to go because of what had happened at Pamphylia, so they split up and Paul went with Silas. Tradition is that Barnabas labored many years in Cyprus and was burned at the stake near Salamis, with Mark burying his body in a cave. Paul and Barnabas may have disagreed here but see his later favorable comment in 1 Corinthians 9:6.
49	Acts 16:1-8	Went to <b>Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, Phrygia, Galatia, Mysia, and Troas</b>	Related the Jerusalem Council decision everywhere they went, revisited churches Paul had established earlier; at Lystra he picked up Timothy and had him circumcised; Luke likely joined them at Troas ("we" chapters begin).
49	Acts 16:9-11	Vision and call to Macedonia	Leaving Troas the party sailed to Samothrace and then Neapolis, port city of Philippi.

C.E.	Reference	Event/Letter	Notes
49	Acts 16:12-40	Arrived and preached in <b>Philippi</b> ; cast out evil spirit and was put in prison	Met and converted Lydia; when Paul and Silas healed a possessed girl, a man who thus lost his income had them arrested; freed by an earthquake but not leaving, they converted the jailer.
49	Acts 17:1-15	Journey to <b>Thessalonica</b> (through <b>Amphipolis</b> and <b>Apollonia</b> ) and <b>Berea</b>	After being persecuted in Thessalonica, Paul and Silas slipped away at night to Berea; Luke stayed behind (end of “we” passages); persecution followed in Berea and Paul left for Athens, Silas and Timothy staying behind for a time; Silas went to Philippi (see Philippians 4:15) and Timothy to Thessalonica (see 1 Thessalonians 3:1-2).
49	Acts 17:16-34	Paul in <b>Athens</b>	Alone in Athens; speech about Unknown God; converted some, including Stephanas of Corinth who was likely visiting Athens (1 Corinthians 16:15-17) and perhaps led Paul to Corinth next.
49		<i>Claudius expelled Jews from Rome</i>	
50-51	Acts 18:1-17	Arrived and labored in <b>Corinth</b>	Arrived early (Jan?) 50 and stayed 18-19 months; met Aquila and Priscilla from Rome; Silas and Timothy joined him; perhaps attended Isthmian games (see 1 Corinthians 9:24).
50		<i>1 Thessalonians</i>	Early 50 from Corinth, prompted by Timothy’s return from Thessalonica.
51	Act 18:12-17	Paul before Gallio	Gallio arrived likely Jun 51 with Paul was brought before him probably July 51.
51-53		<i>2 Thessalonians</i>	Early 51 from Corinth or later from Ephesus, to clarify issues relating to the second coming.
52-53	Acts 18:18-23	Passed through <b>Ephesus</b> , <b>Caesarea</b> , and <b>Jerusalem</b> (fifth visit) to <b>Antioch</b>	Perhaps Paul shaved his head after recovering from illness (see Romans 16:1-2); the feast was Feast of Tabernacles; after a quick trip to Jerusalem to report, he returned to Antioch.
<i>Third missionary journey</i>			
54		<i>Nero made emperor</i>	
54	Acts 18:23	Revisited <b>Galatia</b> , <b>Phrygia</b>	Started in familiar territory.
54-57	Acts 18:24-19:20	Labored in <b>Ephesus</b>	Rejoined Aquila and Priscilla in Fall 51 and worked as a tentmaker (Acts 20:33-35; 1 Corinthians 4:11-12); gave Holy Ghost to disciples; miracles; rivals failed using name of Jesus; fought wild beasts (1 Corinthians 15:32, metaphorical?); feared for his life (2 Corinthians 1:8); received beatings and prison sentences (2 Corinthians 11:23); stayed just over two years.
54		<i>Previous letter to Corinthians</i>	1 Corinthians 5:9
54		Quick trip to <b>Corinth</b> ? then back to Ephesus	2 Corinthians 12:14 and 13:1 mention a <i>third</i> visit but Acts only talks about two.
Early 55		<i>1 Corinthians</i>	Shortly before or after Passover (1 Cor 5:7-8).

<b>C.E.</b>	<b>Reference</b>	<b>Event/Letter</b>	<b>Notes</b>
56	Acts 19:21-22; 2 Corinthians 1:16, 10:16; Romans 15:24, 28	Planned trip to Macedonia, Achaia, Jerusalem, then Rome and Spain (but plans later changed and he went to Corinth first)	Timothy and Erastus sent to Macedonia; 1 Corinthians 16:10-11 indicates that Timothy may have already left.
57	Acts 19:23-41	Merchants of Diana in Ephesus persecuted disciples	Losing their livelihood, the merchants brought them before the chief magistrate; see 2 Corinthians 1:8-10.
57	Acts 20:1; Romans 15:19- 20	Visited <b>Corinth</b> then <b>Macedonia</b>	2 Corinthians 1:16; 2:1; Philippi (summer) where Luke and Titus joined him (2 Corinthians 7:5-7; 8:1-5); wrote another letter to Corinth? (2 Corinthians 2:3-11).
Late 57	2 Corinthians 2:12-13	Visited Troas but returned to Macedonia to find Titus	He had to walk (no ships after 11 Nov); found Titus (2 Corinthians 7:5-7)
57		<b>2 Corinthians</b>	Winter 57 in Macedonia, probably Philippi, with Timothy.
57-58	Acts 20:2	Went to <b>Corinth</b>	Arrived Dec 57; spent 3 months; third visit to Corinth (2 Corinthians 12:14, 13:1); stayed with Gaius (Romans 16:23).
57		<b>Galatians</b>	Much debate about this time and location and even the intended audience; I prefer this date because of Galatian's affinity with Romans and 2 Corinthians, and Galatians probably was first because the topics are more fully developed in Romans.
58		<b>Romans</b>	Early 58 from Corinth.
58	Acts 20:3-6	Back to <b>Macedonia</b> , then <b>Troas</b> (23 Apr 58)	Planned to sail to Syria but to foil a plot against him, instead sent some ahead while he moved north through Macedonia with Luke (2 Corinthians 9:1-5), then to Troas after Passover (2 Corinthians 2:12-13) where they rejoined the rest of the party.
58	Acts 20:7-38	Preached in <b>Asia</b>	4 May 58 (based on calculations from 20:6-7), raised Eutychus from death in Troas; had Ephesian brethren come to Miletus to see him.
58	Acts 21:1-17	From Miletus to Caesarea and Jerusalem	Heading to Jerusalem (see Romans 15:25) to deliver his collections for the poor, he was told along the way by many of the trouble that awaited him; traveled by foot, boat, and probably horseback.
58	Acts 21:18- 23:11	Sixth <b>Jerusalem</b> visit, late May 58	Met with Church leaders and reported; joined others in purification rituals (to appease Jewish converts) during Pentecost but was recognized in the temple by angry Jews and 'rescued' by Roman soldiers; Paul spoke to the mob but angered them more; he avoided scourging because of Roman citizenship; addressed the Sanhedrin; the Lord said he would go to Rome.

### ***Journey to Rome***

<b>C.E.</b>	<b>Reference</b>	<b>Event/Letter</b>	<b>Notes</b>
58-59	Acts 23:12-24:27	In <b>Caesarea</b> with <b>Felix</b>	A plot to kill Paul was uncovered, and Lysias sent him to Caesarea and Felix who called for the Jews to come so he may hear the case; wanting a bribe, Felix left Paul in custody for two years.
58		<i>Ephesians</i>	From Caesarea(?), to members at Ephesus, Asia, though audience is disputed (may have been to a larger audience in Asia indicated by the impersonal nature of the letter).
58		<i>Colossians</i>	From Caesarea(?), to members at Colossae, west-central Asia Minor.
58		<i>Philemon</i>	From Caesarea(?), to Philemon, a wealthy Christian in Colossae.
59	Acts 25:1-26:32	Before <b>Festus</b> and <b>Agrippa</b>	May 59 Festus replaced Felix as governor; asked Paul to stand trial in Jerusalem, but Paul appealed to Rome; Paul testified to Agrippa II.
59-60	Acts 27:1-28:16	Journey to <b>Rome</b>	They left Caesarea Aug 59, the voyage had difficulties, ended up at Fair Havens (Crete) in Oct (the fast=Day of Atonement or 9 Oct 59); they ran into a storm and shipwrecked at Malta (Paul's fourth, 2 Corinthians 11:25), stayed for three months; Paul bitten by a snake but didn't die; he healed many on the island; picked up by another ship, they finally arrived at Rome.
60-62	Acts 28:17-31	Paul in Rome	Paul stayed two years in a rented house under constant guard awaiting his trial.
60		<i>Philippians</i>	From Rome, to members at Philippi, Macedonia, gratefully written after they sent Ephaphroditus with a gift of support (Philippians 2:25-27; 4:14-18).
61		<i>Hebrews?</i>	"The Hebrews," perhaps those who helped Paul during his imprisonment in Caesarea?
<b>Later ministry</b>			
62-67	Clement of Rome	<b>Mediterranean</b> ministry, including journey to <b>Spain</b> (62-64)	Probably first went to the Ephesus area (1 Timothy 1:3) including Miletus (2 Timothy 4:20), and then Macedonia (Philippians 1:26, 2:24; Philemon 1:22) and probably Corinth (2 Timothy 4:20), wintered in Nicopolos (Titus 3:12); also visited Crete (Titus 1:5) and Troas (2 Timothy 4:13) during this time.
64		<i>Burning of Rome, blame placed on Christians by Nero</i>	
65		<i>1 Timothy</i>	To Timothy directing the Church in Macedonia.
65		<i>Titus</i>	To Titus directing the Church in Crete.
Winter 65-66		<b>Nicopolis</b>	Titus 3:12
66		Arrested in <b>Troas</b> ; taken to <b>Rome</b>	2 Timothy 4:13; fear caused many to desert Paul (2 Timothy 4:10-11, 16); he was in bonds (2 Timothy 1:16, 2:9) but was visited by friends (2 Timothy 1:16-17, 4:21).



C.E.	Reference	Event/Letter	Notes
Winter 66		<i>2 Timothy</i>	To Timothy requesting he come to Rome.
Late 67 or early 68	Eusebius (Hist. Eccl. ii. 22, 2)	Martyred after second arrest in Rome	2 Timothy 4:6-8; Eusebius: “After he had made his defense, the Apostle was sent again on the ministry of preaching, and a second time having come to the same city [Rome], he suffered martyrdom”; Jerome says it was in the 14th year of Nero’s reign, or between 13 Oct 67 and 9 Jun 68.
68		<i>Suicide of Nero</i>	9 Jun 68

**Paul’s visions and revelations** (Anderson, *Understanding Paul*, 30)

Year	Source	Who or what seen	Purpose
33	Acts 9, 22, 26	Christ near Damascus	Paul’s conversion
36	Acts 22:17-21	Christ in Jerusalem temple	Direction to leave Jerusalem for Gentile areas
43	2 Cor. 12:1-4	“Third heaven” and “paradise”	Comfort in persecutions; perhaps confirmation of call to apostleship
49	Acts 16:9-10	Man from Macedonia	Direction to preach in northern Greece
50	Acts 18:9-10	Christ at Corinth	Direction to remain in southern Greece
58	Acts 23:11	Christ in Jerusalem fortress	Comfort in prison; direction for Roman visit
60	Acts 27:23-24	An angel of God	Promise of safety in shipwreck; preparation to stand before Caesar

For more information on Pauline chronology, see:

Anderson, Richard Lloyd, *Understanding Paul (Revised Edition)*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2007, 383-392.

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