

Paul
March 11, 1998
Lenten Character Portrayal

(Walk in discussing the letter. The secretary should be seated and wait to read when Paul asks him to at the beginning of the skit.)

“I, Paul, a servant of our Lord Jesus Christ, send greetings to the church of God in Chippewa Falls. Your faithfulness has become an example to churches throughout Wisconsin.

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I am appealing to you my brothers and sisters in order that you might know the truth about me, and in so doing grow in your love of God and willingness to serve Him.

I have heard from visitors to your city that many of the believers don't feel worthy to be a disciple of our Lord. Many feel that because of their sinfulness, God has no use for them as witnesses of the Gospel. I have even hear it said that some parents even doubt that they are qualified to teach the good news about Jesus to their children!

I am writing to you to tell you how amazing God's grace and forgiveness is. My own life is a good example.”

(Stop reading now, and pretend to write as Paul continues to tell his story of sin and forgiveness. Follow the outline and prompt Paul for the next point when asked.)

Outline of rest of letter:

Comparison of childhood of John the Baptist, Jesus, and Paul

Paul's growing up in Tarsus

Paul studied to become a Rabbi under Gamaliel in School of Hillel

Rabbi in Tarsus and then in Jerusalem

Death of Jesus, who claimed to be the Messiah

Paul's role in persecuting those who claimed Jesus had risen from the dead

Paul's role in the stoning of Stephen and continued persecution

Paul's volunteering to go to Damascus to round up Christians in a new church there

Paul's conversion

Paul's continued traveling - to start churches rather than destroy them

Paul's letter writing to these churches to help them continue to grow

(Secretary should make room for Paul to get at the writing table and finish the letter in his own hand.)

Paul concludes by walking over to the writing desk, and finishing the letter in Paul's own hand. Paul reads it as he writes it. *(On a separate sheet)*

Paul's Concluding Oral Remarks

You can read all about me and my congregations in your New Testament. You have a collection of my letters in there.

So now you too see why I can so boldly thank God for your witness. None of you can say to God that you are too old, young, sinful, ignorant, or busy to be God's witness.

If God could turn my life around and use me to live and teach the good news that the crucified Jesus is the Savior of the world - God is certainly eager and able to do the same for you.

(Walk over to the table, and ask secretary to move so that you can conclude the letter with your own hand. Read the following closing to the letter as you write it.)

Note well that I, Paul, am writing this final greeting in my own hand.

While we eagerly await Christ's return in glory, I wish you happiness. Help one another. Be united. Live in peace. Teach your children. And may the God of love who forgives sinners like you and me, be with you all.

(Walk back out of the sanctuary, carrying the manuscript, and talking about future plans.)

Opening Remarks
Paul
Lenten Character Portrayal

Tonight, we are invited to witness one of the most important events in the history of the early church. We will get to listen to Paul, as he writes one of his letters.

As was the custom then, letters were dictated to a secretary, who faithfully wrote all that he heard. Occasionally, the author would write in his own hand the concluding paragraph, if he wanted to really drive home a point.

Paul wrote at least 14 letters, and probably more. Some have been lost. Each began and ended in similar fashion to the letter you will hear tonight.

As you listen, keep in mind the key word, “**sinned**” from our theme passage for Lent, which is taken from Romans, one of Paul’s own letters!