

Paul vs Acts
Who was Paul, really? And why was he believed?

In addition to the Paul of history (see his letters) we have a mythologized Paul (from the later Book of Acts)

Paul on Paul Letter to the Galatians (mid 50's)	Book of Acts on Paul (90's or later) Acts 9:1-30. This account is repeated: 22:4-16; 26:9-18	Questions
<p>Origin For I want you to know that the gospel that was proclaimed by me is not of human origin; for I did not receive it from a human source, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.</p> <p>Prior Persecution of Jesus' followers You have heard, no doubt, of my earlier life in Judaism. I was violently persecuting the church of God and was trying to destroy it...</p> <p>Experience near Damascus; then to Arabia for 3 years But when God...was pleased to reveal his Son to me so that I might proclaim him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with any human being, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were already apostles before me, but I went away at once into Arabia, and afterwards I returned to Damascus.</p>	<p>Prior Persecution of Jesus' followers Meanwhile Saul (=Paul), still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to The Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.</p> <p>Experience near Damascus Now as he was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" He asked, "Who are you, Lord?" The reply came, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But get up and enter the city and you will be told what you are to do." The men who were travelling with him stood speechless because they heard the voice but saw no one. Saul got up from the ground and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; so they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. For 3 days he was without sight and neither ate nor drank.</p> <p>Now there was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." He answered, "Here I am, Lord." The Lord said to him, "Get up and go to the street called Straight and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul. At this moment he is praying, and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight. But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints in Jerusalem; and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who invoke your name." But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is an instrument whom I have chosen to bring my name before Gentiles and kings and before the people of Israel; I myself will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name." So Ananias went and entered the house. He laid his hands on Saul and said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on your way here, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes and his sight was restored. Then he got up and was baptized, and, after taking some food, he regained his strength.</p>	<p>Has it ever been a crime to be a messianic Jew?</p> <p>Why go to Damascus when there were messianic Jews in Jerusalem?</p> <p>Why would the high priest send anyone to Damascus? And why Paul, what were his credentials to act as a bounty hunter?</p> <p>What happens to Paul's companions (the other thugs)? Where do they go?</p> <p>So how come in Acts Paul goes immediately up to Jerusalem when he says he went to Arabia for 3 years?</p> <p>Paul sent to the Gentiles</p>

<p>Contact with Jesus Movement Members: after 3 years; then after 14 years Then after 3 years I did go up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas (Peter) and stayed with him 15 days; but I did not see any other apostle except James the Lord’s brother...</p> <p>Then, after 14 years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along with me.</p>	<p>Experience in Damascus For several days he was with the disciples in Damascus, and immediately he began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues, saying, “He is the Son of God.” All who heard him were amazed and said, “Is not this the man who made havoc in Jerusalem among those who invoked this name? And has he not come here for the purpose of bringing them bound before the chief priests?” Saul became increasingly more powerful and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Messiah.</p> <p>After some time had passed, the Jews plotted to kill him, but their plot became known to Saul. They were watching the gates day and night so that they might kill him; but his disciples took him by night and let him down through an opening in the wall, lowering him in a basket.</p> <p>After Damascus, goes to Jerusalem When he had come to Jerusalem, he attempted to join the disciples; and they were all afraid of him, for they did not believe that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him, brought him to the apostles, and described for them how on the road he had seen the Lord, who had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had spoken boldly in the name of Jesus.</p> <p>Experience in Jerusalem So he went in and out among them in Jerusalem, speaking boldly in the name of the Lord. He spoke and argued with the Hellenists [that is, Greek-speaking Jews]; but they were attempting to kill him. When the believers learned of it, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus.</p>	<p>“the Jews” vs Paul [this is theme of the Bk of Acts] Why does Paul arouse opposition and Ananias doesn’t? Paul already has disciples?</p> <p>Why isn’t Paul arrested by the High Priest for failing to carry out his mandate?</p> <p>Again Paul arouses opposition in a way that local messianic Jews do not. Why is that?</p>
<p>The Paul of history</p>	<p>The Mythologized Paul – the hero who confronts Judaism</p>	<p>The story in Acts just doesn’t add up</p>