Spirituality
Pencil Preaching





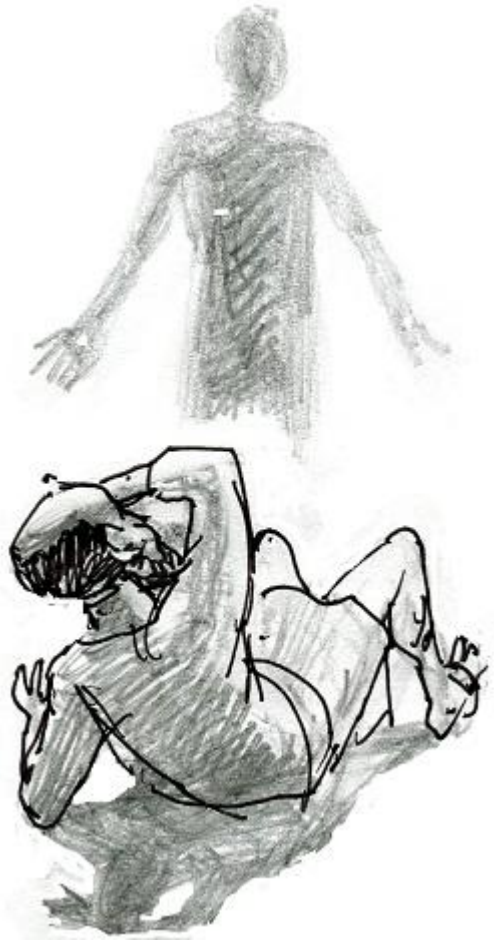
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“Who are you, sir?” (Acts 22:8).

The Conversion of St. Paul

Acts 22:3-16 or Acts 9:1-22; Mark 16:15-18

The conversion of St. Paul is important not only for our understanding of Paul but also for an understanding of our own Christian discipleship. Paul’s encounter with the crucified and risen Jesus defined his life from that moment on. The purpose of his existence and the key to his human maturity and divine destiny was union with the dying and rising of Jesus the Christ.

Paul called this experience of union with Jesus the “Paschal Mystery,” our share in the new Passover from sin and death to new life accomplished by Jesus. By living in Christ and for Christ, Paul was being transformed, dying to his former self in order to rise to his authentic self, a new creation in Christ.

By baptism every Christian takes up this same pattern of dying to self in order to live with Christ. By sharing the Eucharist, we nourish this new life as members of the body of Christ. What Jesus accomplished once and for all is now extended in time and space as the redemption of the world, humanity and all of creation.

Paul’s ministry was about sharing this mystery through his preaching and the establishment of faith communities across Asia Minor, with a special appeal to the Gentiles. What was prefigured by the first covenant under the Law for the Jews was now a new covenant of Grace offered universally. Membership in Christ and transformation through the Paschal Mystery are the ultimate purpose of our lives and the goal of history.

We celebrate the conversion of St. Paul to remind ourselves that life in Christ is meant to be the conscious, deliberate focus of our lives. The heart of our discipleship is to fulfill Paul’s prayer, “I no longer live, but Christ lives in me” (Gal 2:20).

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