

**MODEL UNIT
BAND B
LEVEL 3**

PAUL, LUTHER AND THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

LIFE CONCEPT: GOD GATHERS PEOPLE INTO THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

YEAR:SUGGESTED DURATION: 5 weeks (135 minutes per week)

DATE OF USE: FAITH STATEMENTS: ① ② ③

UNIT-SPECIFIC GOALS (highlighted)

1. THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH IS THE COMMUNITY OF BELIEVERS CREATED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT

- 1a investigate the Christian church as a community of believers
- 1b identify the structures and roles within a local church community
- 1c examine the benefits of belonging to a local Christian church

2. GOD HAS GATHERED HIS PEOPLE TOGETHER THROUGHOUT HISTORY

- 2a become familiar with the life and work of Martin Luther
- 2b explore the impact Luther's work had on the Christian church

3. LUTHERANS IN AUSTRALIA WORK TOGETHER IN MINISTRY AND MISSION

- 3a identify ways Lutherans in Australia carry out their mission and ministry
- 3b investigate the work of an organisation of the Lutheran church in Australia

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

ASSESSABLE STUDENT OUTCOMES

Record the impact Jesus had on the life of Paul and through Paul on the early Christian church. (1a)

Recall and illustrate important events in the life of Martin Luther. (2a)

Record the impact Jesus had on Martin Luther and on the church as the result of Luther's work. (1a,2a,2b)

Explain and illustrate the Apostles' Creed. (1a,2b)

Describe ways people in the Christian church show love and tell others about Jesus. (3a)

ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

⇒ work sample

⇒ observation, work sample

⇒ observation, work samples

⇒ work sample

⇒ report

UNIT SUMMARY

Students examine the importance of Jesus to the life and work of Paul and the early Christian church and to the life and work of Martin Luther and the Christian church through history. They research what Christians believe, using the Apostles' Creed in Luther's *Small Catechism* as a resource. They identify ways people in the Christian church show love and tell others about Jesus as a response to the Bible's message about Jesus.

UNIT NOTES

A large section of this unit relates to the life and work of Martin Luther. This can provide relevant teaching material leading up to the time when Lutherans celebrate the Reformation.

INTRODUCTION

1. IMPORTANT PEOPLE

Students make a list of people who are important to them. They record reasons why the people they chose are important and the impact they have on their life.

Teacher shares information about an important person or people in the community, state, nation or world. Use information from sources such as newspapers, television documentaries (ABC TV schools program *Australians*), books, electronic media. Students produce a profile of an important person which describes why this person is important and the impact the person has on other people.

DEVELOPMENT

2. PAUL'S STORY

The students research the life and activities of Paul, an important person in the early church. They identify the importance of Jesus to Paul, and through Paul to the early Christian church.

A. Before Damascus

Students investigate the activities of Paul before his Damascus experience, using Teacher Resource Sheet (TRS) B3/1 or reading Acts 7:54–8:3.

Students list and illustrate the things Paul believed to be true and how this affected the way he lived.

B. After Damascus

Students read part 2 of Paul's story, using TRS B3/2 or Acts 9:1–31 to find out what happened to Paul on the way to Damascus and the impact of this event on his life. Students discuss and record:

- What happened to Paul to change what he believed?
- What did Paul believe now?
- How did knowing Jesus change Paul's life?

Discuss the impact Paul's actions had on the church, eg

- starting new churches

- including non-Jews in the church
- telling people about the importance of Jesus to their own lives and to the church through his preaching and the letters he wrote.

Students summarise the events which took place in Paul's life and the impact Jesus had on him. Choose one of the following activities:

- Write two character profiles of Paul, one before his Damascus experience and one after he met Jesus.
- Write a story from the perspective of Ananias. Describe his views of Paul before Paul changed, his feelings about having to visit and heal Paul, the changes he noticed in Paul and the reasons for the change.

3. MARTIN LUTHER'S STORY

The students research the life and activities of Martin Luther, an important person in the history of the Christian church. They identify the importance of Jesus to Luther, and through Luther to the Christian church.

A. Luther's early years

Ask students to share any information they know about Martin Luther.

Investigate Luther's early life by reading TRS B3/3 or the early chapters of books about Luther, such as *Martin Luther Hero of the Reformation*.

Students discuss and list what Luther believed about God in his early years and illustrate how this affected what he thought about himself and his actions.

B. Luther's later years

Use TRS B3/4 or continue reading a book about Luther's life to investigate the change which took place in his life when he discovered the Bible's message of God's love and acceptance through Jesus.

Students discuss and record the events which changed Luther's beliefs. Identify what he now believed about God and how this affected his actions.

Discuss the impact Luther's actions had on the church, eg

- translating the Bible into the language of the people
- writing books and songs to help people understand the Bible's message about God's love and acceptance through Jesus
- attempting to rid the church of wrong beliefs and practices by emphasising the Bible's message about God's love and acceptance through Jesus

- the largest Protestant church in the world is named after Luther.

Students individually or in small groups focus on the important work of Martin Luther by completing **one** of the following activities:

- Make a written or visual presentation which highlights the similarities in the lives of Paul and Luther, eg what they believed about God, the ways they tried to make themselves acceptable to God, the impact of Jesus, the changes the 'good news' about Jesus brought to themselves and the church.
- Make a *Martin Luther, this is your life* presentation.
- Write and present an 'interview with Martin'.
- Write and present a drama about the life and work of Luther.
- Create a series of collector cards with captions which illustrate events in the life of Luther.
- Make an illustrated time line of events in Luther's life.
- Read Romans 5:1. Make a poster or banner based on the verse. Illustrate or describe what this meant for Luther and for all Christians. OR Write a letter to a friend telling them what this Bible passage means to you and how it affects your life.
- Make a 'comic strip' of the life of Luther.
- Use a Bible concordance to find at least five Bible verses which tell of God's grace and forgiveness. Make a collage, banner or poster of these verses.

4. WHAT THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH BELIEVES

Provide students with a copy of the Apostles' Creed. Tell students that Christians hundreds of years ago wrote this statement which summarises what Christians believe about God. This statement or creed is used in the Christian church today.

Provide students with copies of Luther's *Small Catechism*. If they are unfamiliar with the book, give them time to browse through it. Tell students that Luther wrote the catechism as a result of his desire for all people to understand important things about God. Students find the Apostle's Creed in Luther's *Small Catechism*. Tell students that for each part of the Apostles' Creed, Luther explained what this meant for Christians.

Divide the class into three groups and allocate each group a part of the creed. Each group records their part of the creed and explains in their own words what it means. They use

Luther's explanation of their part of the creed as a starting point, eg

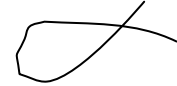
First part of the creed: *Christians believe that God made the world and cares for it. He gives food, clothes, shelter and a family.*

Groups can decide how they will present this information, eg visual display, book, charts, poem, song.

Optional Activity

Show students the fish symbol associated with the early Christian church which is still used by some Christians today.

Explain that the Greek word for fish ICHTHUS can show what Christians believe, using the acronym. The letters of this word are the first letters of the Greek words:



I	Jesus
C	Christ
H	of God
T	the Son
H	Saviour

Students discuss reasons Christians in the early church would need to use a secret symbol. (Remind students of Paul's work before he became a Christian.)

Students make an acrostic for JESUS or CHRISTIAN which summarises what Christians believe. This could also include a symbol. Display these acronyms and symbols in the class and use them in parent newsletters or in worship times in place of the creed.

RESPONSE

5. THE CHURCH'S RESPONSE TO JESUS

Ask students to recall what was most important to Paul and Luther and what is most important to the Christian church. Students read Paul's summary in 1 Corinthians 15:1–4.

Students read 1 John 4:14,19 to identify the Christian church's response to the Bible's message about God's love through Jesus. Students find out what showing love and 'telling others about Jesus' looks like in

- a supporting congregation of the school
- an organisation of the Lutheran Church of Australia
- the school.

Students present this information as an oral or visual report.

YOU WILL NEED

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> non-fiction resources about important people, eg <i>Australians</i> ABC TV school program (five-minute documentaries that present biographical accounts of important Australians)<input type="checkbox"/> photocopies of TRS B3/1, B3/2, B3/3, B3/4 for the students | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Luther's <i>Small Catechism</i><input type="checkbox"/> fish symbol associated with the early Christian church<input type="checkbox"/> Bibles<input type="checkbox"/> additional information about the life of Martin Luther |
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INTEGRATING INTO OTHER CURRICULUM AREAS

ENGLISH: *Everyday Texts:* Develop discussion and problem-solving skills. Develop strategies for gathering, recording and reporting data. *Literature:* Write character portraits or plays featuring settings, characters and dialogues. Explain and justify own opinions about texts. Find and cite elements of a text to support a point of view.

SOCIETY AND ENVIRONMENT: *Investigation, Communication, Participation:* Formulate questions, reflect on knowledge and understanding. Identify information sources. Gather, organise and interpret information using diagrams. Identify similar data. Draw conclusions. Identify, analyse and clarify values. Consider audience in presentation. Cooperation skills.

from the National Statements and Profiles

UNIT EVALUATION

Which activities worked well in this unit?

Which resources were useful in the implementation of this unit?

How did I respond to the range of students' knowledge about the life and work of the apostle Paul and Martin Luther?

How did I respond to the range of students' attitudes towards the importance of Jesus to the Christian church?

What would I do differently if I was teaching this unit again?

How will I use and build on knowledge, understandings, skills, attitudes, and values students have developed in this unit?

THE LIFE OF PAUL

PART 1

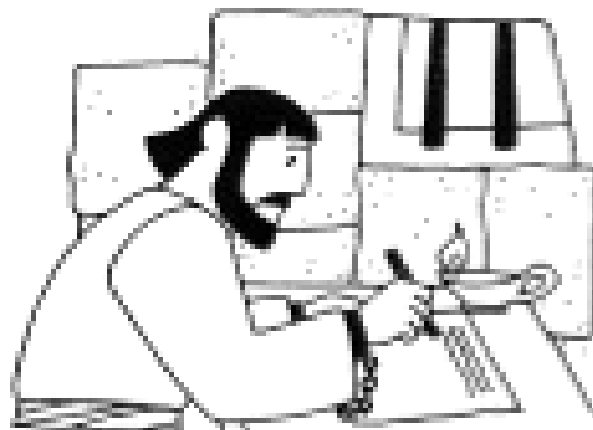
My name is Paul but I used to be called Saul. I come from the city of Tarsus. I am a Jew and also a Roman citizen.

I had a very important role as a leader of the Jewish people. I belonged to a group of people called the Pharisees. We believed that keeping God's law was the most important thing in the world. We believed this is what God wanted us to do. People were most impressed by the way we kept the law. We prayed more than anyone else and could recite every word of the Jewish Bible from cover to cover. We were so concerned that people might break the law that we made up lots of new laws to make sure that they didn't. It was essential for us to tell people when they were breaking the law.

The person we absolutely detested was Jesus from Nazareth. He was such a troublemaker to us! He taught that God was all about love and not about keeping the law. What was worse, he called himself God's Son! Thankfully, we got rid of him by having him crucified.

To our great annoyance, however, the followers of Jesus continued to 'carry on' healing people, helping people and teaching people about Jesus and about God's love for everyone. We stopped many of these people by throwing them into jail. There was one follower of Jesus, Stephen, who was particularly active. We set up some people to make up lies about Stephen and bring him to our court. Stephen claimed that we were trying to get rid of people who were teaching the truth about God and that we were not acting like God's chosen people. Well, enough was enough! We dragged him outside the city and threw rocks at him until he died. I held the robes of the people throwing the stones so they could put a greater effort into it.

Yes, I saw it as my role to hunt out these believers in Jesus and to get rid of them! I had to destroy this group of stirrers!



THE LIFE OF PAUL

PART 2

We were systematically getting rid of Jesus' followers in Jerusalem, but many of them escaped to Damascus in Syria and were continuing to talk about Jesus. I got permission to pursue these people, arrest them and bring them back to jail in Jerusalem. Of course, the Jewish leaders in Syria were only too happy for me to do this.

On the way to Damascus something happened to me which changed my life forever. A brilliant light shone from the sky onto me. It was so bright that it knocked me to the ground! I heard a voice that said: 'Saul, Saul, why are you so cruel to me?' I couldn't see anyone because of the amazing light, so I asked: 'Who are you?' I got the shock of my life! The voice replied: 'I am Jesus. I am the one you are cruel to. Now get up and go to the city and you will be told what to do'. The men who were travelling with me were speechless. They had also heard the voice but hadn't seen anyone.

As I staggered to my feet, still trying to come to terms with what had happened, I couldn't see a thing. I was supposed to march through Damascus dragging the followers of Jesus in chains, and here I was being led into the city by the hand!

I was taken to a house belonging to a man called Judas. For three days I couldn't eat or drink anything. I just prayed to Jesus to help me to understand what had happened and to forgive me for the terrible things I had done to him and his people. After three days a man named Ananias came to this house and spoke to me. He told me that he had been sent by Jesus, the same Jesus who had spoken to me on the road. He put his hands on me and I was able to see again.

Ananias baptised me and I knew that Jesus was with me in a very special way. Jesus showed me that what God had done for me was far more important than what I thought I was doing for God.

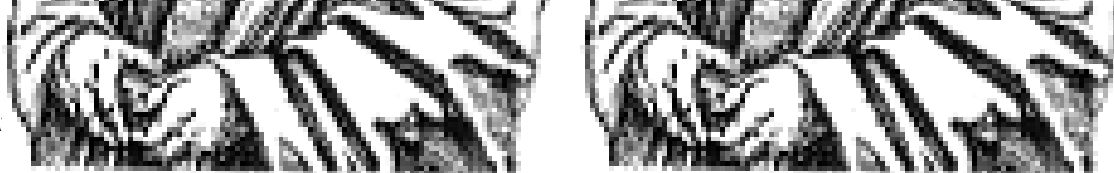
I surprised quite a few people in Damascus then! I went straight to the synagogues and began telling everyone that Jesus is the Son of God and that he loves all of us. We don't have to do anything to make God love us. Jesus did it all. He died for the sins of all people — even the terrible things I had done to hurt Jesus and his followers. This was when my name changed from Saul to Paul.

It wasn't all smooth sailing. My old friends the Jewish leaders were angry with me for telling them that they were wrong. They even wanted to kill me. I often landed in prison because I wouldn't stop talking about Jesus.

The followers of Jesus also took some convincing that I was not trying to trick them. Barnabas (his name means 'encourager') was able to convince the others that I really had met Jesus and I now believed in him as my Saviour.

I was no longer making trouble for Christians. I travelled far beyond Jerusalem and Damascus and helped to start Christian churches in many places. Even though I continued to visit these places, I couldn't be with the people all the time. I kept in touch with them by writing letters to them, telling them that 'because of our Lord Jesus Christ we live at peace with God' (Romans 5:1b) and helping them with their problems or questions.

You can find out more about how the good news of Jesus changed my life by reading the book of Acts and my letters in the New Testament of the Bible.



THE LIFE OF MARTIN LUTHER

PART 2

While I was working at the university, something happened to me which changed my life forever. I was asked to become the professor of biblical studies. I was not that excited about this position, as it meant that I had to read the Bible. The only Bible I had ever seen was a huge book, not written in the language I spoke, but in Latin.

But did I get a shock! Once I started reading this amazing book, I just couldn't stop. I got to know Jesus as a real person and discovered that his words were full of love. I read passages such as 'God is love', 'Your sins are forgiven', 'Whoever believes in Jesus will have eternal life'. I had a totally new picture of God! I read Romans 5:1:

'By faith we have been made acceptable to God. And now, because of our Lord Jesus Christ we live at peace with God.'

It all became clear. God was not angry with me, he loved me and forgave me. I was free. This was the most exciting news I had ever heard! Unfortunately, there were many people in the church who did not want me to spread this good news around.

At this time, a monk called Tetzel was telling people that if they paid money for certificates called indulgences, the church would guarantee that their sins were forgiven. The money was being used to build a huge church in Rome.

I was outraged! I had to tell the people that we do not get forgiveness

by paying money to the priests, but that forgiveness is given freely by God to everyone who believes in Jesus. I ended up writing ninety-five statements or 'theses' about Jesus, forgiveness, the Bible and the church in order that people could see what the church was doing wrong. Before too long these statements which I had nailed to the church door had been printed and distributed all over Germany.

Some church leaders became very angry with what I was saying and wanted to kill me. But I was not afraid to tell the truth about Jesus. Some of my friends, however, were so worried about my safety that they 'kidnapped' me and kept me safe in a castle.

I didn't waste my time feeling angry, worried or scared. I spent much of my time in the castle translating the New Testament of the Bible into German, so that all people in my country — not just those few who could read Greek or Latin — could read the good news about Jesus.

Eventually, I returned home. I continued to teach, preach and write books and songs to help people to hear and understand the truth about Jesus. I also translated more of the Bible into German.

My work was often difficult and dangerous because many leaders of the church did not want people to know about God's amazing love for all people. But I felt so free and happy knowing that God loves me, and accepts me and forgives me.

GOD GATHERS PEOPLE INTO THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH