

## *An Alternative Way to Change the World*

### I. To Change the World

#### In the Fullness of Time

#### A. Ambitions, Power & Fame

First century BC, Rome was a republic. The Senate, was elected by Roman citizens. But the senators were fighting for power between themselves. **Order had given way to anarchy. Might was right.**

Julius Caesar governor of Spain, return to Rome. Crassus, Pompey , he eventually became governor of Gaul. This gave him the wealth and an army, His abilities as a general brought him power and respect.

January 49 BC, Crossed the Rubicon, and he invaded Italy. Defeated his enemies and **seized power for himself.**

After just **two years, he was murdered** by senators who were fed up with his autocratic style. Rome was again threatened with chaos.

#### **4 months later, a super comet crossed the sky!**

Marc Antony emerged as leader, but **Octavian** (Julius' nephew) soon joined him.

An ambitious man from an average family, this was Augustus' big chance. With his ally, Marc Antony, he fought and killed Caesar's old enemies. Victorious, he divided the spoils:, **Octavian** took Rome and Antony got Egypt.

Antony was quickly seduced by Egypt's queen, Cleopatra. Augustus suspected that the two wanted Rome for themselves. Before they could threaten him, Augustus attacked.

#### **Run like an Egyptian**

The **Battle of Actium** was a huge victory. Around three-quarters of the Egyptian fleet were destroyed and both Antony and Cleopatra committed suicide before they could be captured.

In Rome, given the title, **Augustus** was a hero. In 31 BC, he became Rome's first emperor.

## B. The Humility of God

**Phil 2:3** Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. **4** Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. **5 Have this mind among yourselves**, which **is yours** in Christ Jesus,

**6** who, though **he was in the form of God**, did not count **equality with God** a thing to be grasped, **7** but **emptied himself**, by taking the **form of a servant**, being born in the likeness of men. **8** And being **found in human form**, he **humbled himself by** becoming **obedient** to the point of death, even **death on a cross**.

**9** Therefore God has **highly exalted him** and bestowed on him the **name that is above every name**, **10** so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, **11** and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

## II. The Letter Kills but the Spirit Gives Life

### A. Burning Zeal meets Overflowing Love

**Acts 9:1** But **Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples** of the Lord, went to the high priest **2** and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.

**Gal 1.13** For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how **I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it.** **14** And I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so **extremely zealous** was I **for the traditions** of my fathers....

**1 Cor 15:9** For I am the **least of the apostles, unworthy** to be called an apostle, because **I persecuted the church of God.**

**Phil 3.6** as to **zeal, a persecutor of the church;**

**Acts 9:3** Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven shone around him. **4** And falling to the ground, he **heard a voice** saying to him, "Saul, Saul, **why are you persecuting me?"** **5** And he said, "**Who** are you, Lord?" And he said, "**I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.** **6** But rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do."

**Encounter with a man whom he knew had been put to death,** and whom he **considered a messianic pretender,** is now confronting him, is **very much alive!**

If he is **alive,** then he is **Israel's Messiah.** He is **King of the Jews,** and **Lord of all the World!**

**Jesus is Lord and Caesar is not!**

**Everything inside Saul is crumbling!** This is radical!

**1 Tim 1:13** though **formerly I was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent.** But I received mercy because **I had**

acted ignorantly in unbelief, 14 and **the grace of our Lord overflowed for me** with the **faith and love** that are in Christ Jesus.

**Saul becomes Paul** and continues to change the world!

Gal 1.1 Paul, **an apostle**—not from men nor through man, but **through Jesus Christ and God the Father**, who raised him from the dead— 2 and all the brothers who are with me, To the churches of Galatia: 3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, 4 who **gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age**, according to the will of our God and Father, 5 to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

**Paul becomes the Gift, the Offering**

2 Tim 4:6 For **I am** already **being poured out as a drink offering**, and the time of my departure has come. 7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

### III. The Son of Man came to Give Life

#### A. A Gift that Sets Free

Matt 20:26 It shall not be so among you. But **whoever would be great among you must be your servant**, 27 and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, 28 even as the **Son of Man came** not to be served but to **serve**, and to **give** his life as a **ransom for many**."

Luke 19:7 And when they saw it, **they all grumbled**, "He has gone in to be **the guest of a man who is a sinner**." ...10 For the **Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost**."

#### B. We Become the Gift

**Eph 5:1** Therefore **be imitators of God**, as beloved children. **2** And **walk in love**, as Christ loved us and **gave himself** up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

### III. Participation in His Gift

#### A. Participation & Proclamation

**1 Cor 10:16** The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a **participation in the blood** of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a **participation in the body** of Christ? **17** Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.

**1 Cor 11:23** For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, **24** and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." **25** In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." **26** For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you **proclaim** the Lord's death until he comes.

#### A. Gifts and Lasting Impact

We change the world by what we give, not what we take.

As you've sought the Lord, you now pour out, to enlarge what He is doing in and through us.

**Acts 10:1** At **Caesarea** there was a man named **Cornelius**, a centurion of what was known as the Italian Cohort, **2** a devout man who feared God with all his household, **gave alms generously** to the people, and prayed continually to God. **3** About the ninth hour of the day he saw clearly in a

vision an angel of God come in and say to him, "Cornelius." 4 And he stared at him in terror and said, "What is it, Lord?" And he said to him, "Your **prayers** and your **alms** have ascended as **a memorial** before God.

Is it possible that in eternity, Cornelius will have had more lasting impact on civilization than Julius or Augustus?

This is our worship! It leaves a lasting impact.

### III. Hope is Revolutionary. The Key of David

### IV. OVERFLOWING HOPE - next week a FAITH offering.

#### A. Balcony & Classrooms - enlarging for the Hope Center! Place for Encounter.

**Rom 15.13 NIV** May the God of hope **fill** you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the **power of the Holy Spirit.**