

**“Paul, Apostle of Christ” starring Jim Caviezel, James Faulkner, Oliver Martinez, 2018, PG-13, 108 minutes**

### **Major themes:**

- Forgiveness
- Suffering
- Love
- Persecution
- Courage
- Faith
- Doubt
- Seeking truth
- Healing
- Remorse
- Testimony

### **Major characters:**

- Paul
- Luke
- Mauritius Gallus, prefect of Mamertine Prison
- Irenica, Mauritius’s wife
- Priscilla
- Aquila
- Tarquin

## Movie Nights for Thinkers and Seekers

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### Background info:

- Filming took place in Malta, an island nation in the Mediterranean Sea.
- In this film Jim Cavaziel played a Biblical character for the second time. The first time was when he portrayed Jesus of Nazareth in Mel Gibson's *"The Passion of the Christ."*
- When Luke leads the community of Christians in saying the Lord's Prayer, they recite the version in Matthew's Gospel (Matthew 6:9-13), rather than the less familiar one in Luke's Gospel (Luke 11:2-4).
- Saul of Tarsus and Paul the Apostle refer to the same person. It has been popularly assumed that Saul's name was changed when he became a follower of Jesus Christ, but that is not the case. In Acts 13:9, Saul is called "*Paul*" for the first time on the island of Cyprus—much later than the time of his conversion. The author (Luke) indicates that the names were interchangeable.
- The Feasts of Saints Peter and Paul is a liturgical feast in honor of the martyrdom in Rome of the apostles St. Peter and St. Paul, which is observed on June 29<sup>th</sup>.
- This film has two taglines: "*Where Sin Abounds . . . Grace Abounds More*" and "*Their Faith Challenged an Empire.*"

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### Scriptures:

Philippians 1:21 (NIV) – *“For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.”*

2 Corinthians 12:7-10 (The Message) – *“Because of the extravagance of those revelations, and so I wouldn’t get a big head, I was given the gift of a handicap to keep me in constant touch with my limitations. Satan’s angel did his best to get me down; what he in fact did was push me to my knees. No danger then of walking around high and mighty! At first I didn’t think of it as a gift, and begged God to remove it. Three times I did that, and then he told me,*

*My grace is enough; it’s all you need.*

*My strength comes into its own in your weakness.*

*Once I heard that, I was glad to let it happen. I quit focusing on the handicap and began appreciating the gift. It was a case of Christ’s strength moving in on my weakness. Now I take limitations in stride, and with good cheer, these limitations that cut me down to size—abuse, accidents, opposition, bad breaks. I just let Christ take over! And so the weaker I get, the stronger I become.”*

John 13:34-35 (ESV) – *“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”*

2 Corinthians 4:7-11 (NLT) – *“We now have this light shining in our hearts, but we ourselves are like fragile clay jars containing this great treasure. This makes it clear that our great power is from God, not from ourselves. We are pressed on every side by troubles, but we are not crushed. We are perplexed, but not driven to despair. We are hunted down, but never abandoned by God. We get knocked down, but we are not destroyed. Through suffering, our bodies continue to share in the death of Jesus so that the life of Jesus may also be seen in our bodies. Yes, we live under constant danger of death because we serve Jesus, so that the life of Jesus will be evident in our dying bodies.”*

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### Discussion points:

1. Paul did not promise the Roman prison warden that his daughter would be healed if "*The Greek*" (Luke) prayed for her. What are some things we are tempted to promise people that go beyond what we can promise?
2. How do you feel about the statement made by one character that Christ wants us to care for the world, not rule it?
3. Who do you look forward to seeing in heaven?
4. What aspects of Christianity in our culture today would Paul recognize? What do you think he would have trouble with?
5. Was there anything in this film that shocked or surprised you? What is something practical and good that you can do with that emotional response?
6. What are the most difficult challenges that faithful Christ-followers in our culture and generation face?
7. What spiritual insight did you glean from this film?
8. In this film, Paul said, "*I have many regrets; I have made many mistakes. But everything I've done, I've done for Christ.*" Discuss.