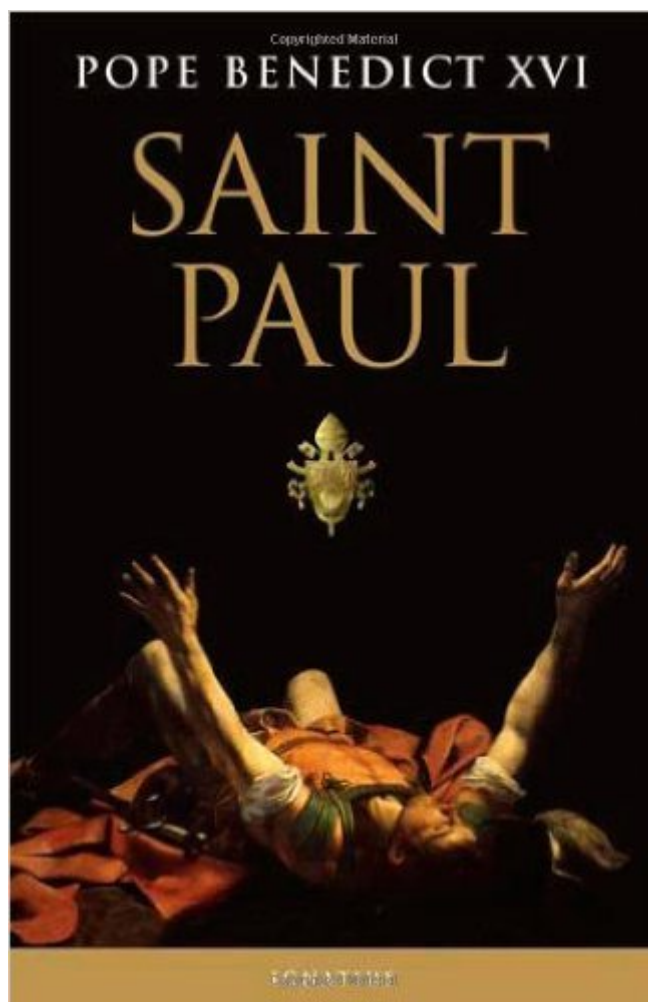


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Saint Paul



Synopsis

St. Paul is one of the most important figures in Christian history. As Saul of Tarsus he vigorously persecuted Christianity, even collaborating in the death of Christianity's first martyr, Stephen. His encounter with the resurrected Jesus on the road to Damascus changed Paul's life, the Christian Church, and world history. More than anyone else in the early Church, Paul saw the universal nature of the Christian message. He became the Apostle to the Gentiles and the Teacher of the Nations. As the human author of half of the New Testament, Paul is a figure who cannot be overlooked by anyone who wants to understand Jesus Christ and Christianity. In this book, Pope Benedict XVI, a profound spiritual leader in his own right and a first-rate theologian and Bible commentator, explores the legacy of Paul. Pope Benedict follows the course of the Apostle's life, including his missionary journeys and his relationship with the other apostles of Jesus such as St. Peter and St. James, and Paul's martyrdom in Rome. Benedict also examines such questions as: Did Paul know Jesus during his earthly life and how much of Jesus' teaching and ministry did he know of? Did Paul distort the teachings of Jesus? What role did Jesus' death and resurrection play in Paul's teaching? What are we to make of Paul's teaching about the end of the world? What does Paul's teaching say about the differences between Catholic and Protestant Christians over salvation and the roles of faith and works in the Christian life? How have modern Catholic and Protestant scholars come together in their understanding of Paul? What does Paul have to teach us today about living a spiritual life? These and other important issues are addressed in this masterful, inspirational, and highly-readable presentation of St. Paul and his writings by one of today's great spiritual teachers, Pope Benedict XVI. The Apostle Paul, an outstanding and almost inimitable yet stimulating figure, stands before us as an example of total dedication to the Lord and to his Church, as well as of great openness to humanity and its cultures. Pope Benedict XVI

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Customer Reviews

The Pope continues the teaching he began in earlier audiences that have been turned into books, like *The Fathers* and *The Apostles*. This sketch of *The Apostle* is a loving, insightful meditation on Paul's conversion and teaching. One of the left-handed compliments in vogue in the secular world is to label Paul as the "founder of the Church." Beware of people who propagate this myth; they'll use the bible as a reliable, historical source when they wish to document Paul's travels - and travel he did - he truly was the apostle to the Gentiles, and evangelized much of the Mediterranean. Yet these same people suddenly adopt a skeptical approach to the bible when you try to point out that Paul actually met Christ on the road to Damascus, or the years he spent in learning the teaching of Christ from the twelve in Jerusalem. The goal of such people is to separate Christ from his Church, to say that the Church is a human creation and not the mystical body of the Son of God. Pope Benedict carefully and lovingly presents Paul as very much a pillar of Christ's Church, but not its founder. Pope Benedict also explains Paul's message of justification by faith, pointing out the places of agreement with Protestants, but also very gently distinguishing the place of charity (manifested in works) as the ultimate fruit of faith. Faith without works is indeed a dead faith.

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