**Question: "Did Paul ever meet Jesus in person?"**

**Excerpted from [notes / footnotes added]:** <https://www.gotquestions.org/Jesus-and-Paul.html?_e_pi_=7%2CPAGE_ID10%2C3425994484>

**Answer:**The subject of Jesus Christ and His saving work were at the forefront of the apostle Paul’s ministry. “Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!” he said ([1 Corinthians 9:16](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Cor%209.16)). This great apostle consistently focused his evangelistic efforts on convincing people that Jesus was the promised Messiah of Israel as well as the risen Lord and Savior of the Gentiles. The unique identity of Jesus was at the center of Paul’s theology.

But had Paul ever met Jesus during Christ’s three-and-a-half year public ministry? Had the future apostle ever seen or heard Jesus in person? While we lack any direct evidence, there are several considerations that may favor the idea that Paul had possibly seen Jesus prior to the crucifixion.

First, Paul had been a resident of Jerusalem as a child ([Acts 22:3](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%2022.3)) and was also there years later to approve of Stephen’s stoning ([Acts 8:1](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%208.1)). The presence of Paul’s nephew in Jerusalem after Paul’s conversion ([Acts 23:16](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%2023.16)) suggests that Paul and his family had resided there for some time. Jesus was known to have visited Jerusalem ([Mark 11:11](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Mark%2011.11); [John 2:13](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/John%202.13); [5:1](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/John%205.1))[[1]](#footnote-1). It is quite possible that Paul could have seen Jesus or heard Him speak during one of Jesus’ several trips there.

Second, Paul’s devotion to the Law would have provided him motivation to be present in Jerusalem during Passover—a time where both he and Jesus would have been in close proximity[[2]](#footnote-2).

Third, as a Pharisee, Paul would have been keenly interested in the teaching of a popular, if unconventional, rabbi. As Paul told Herod Agrippa, the things Jesus did were “not done in a corner” ([Acts 26:26](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%2026.26)).

Fourth, in one of Paul’s epistles, the apostle hints that he may have had a pre-conversion acquaintance with Jesus ([2 Corinthians 5:16](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Cor%205.16)), although his statement is far from conclusive.

1. The gospel of John records all of Jesus’ visits to Jerusalem for the Passover (see chart above), plus Jesus’ observance of Hanukkah (John 10:22, 23). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)