

THE APOSTLE PAUL

MYSTERY, MYTH, AND MATRIX

SCTR 152



- Who was the Apostle Paul? Why is he a mysterious figure?
- Why is he considered the first Christian theologian?
- Was he as controversial in his own era as he is now?
- What were his views on women, marriage, and sexuality?
- Is the apocalyptic world view of **THE MATRIX** derived from Paul's theology?

Even from the perspective of the earliest Christians, the Apostle Paul and his writings were mysterious and obscure. As Paul traveled throughout the Mediterranean, he proclaimed a message about Jesus that was composed *ad hoc*, composed out of the diverse myths of the cultures he visited. In many ways, Paul's portrait of Jesus was a collage of images collected from the well-traveled highways to the darkest corners of the Mediterranean world. In this course, we will travel with Paul, examine the letters he composed, and try to make sense of this complex matrix of thought that was the result of his mixed and mysterious messages.

Primary Texts:

Daniel Boyarin, *A Radical Jew: Paul and the Politics of Identity*

Beverly Roberts Gaventa, *Our Mother Saint Paul*

Wayne Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul*