

Paul's Mission Board Application

Dear Mission Board,

Understanding that you are always looking for good workers, I should like to apply for a position. I am an ex-missionary and have just completed three tours on different continents over a span of a couple dozen years. I'm over 50 years of age. No family. I speak several languages.

Some say I'm a good organizer and leader. I've had many opportunities to get churches started although I have to admit I haven't stayed long in any one spot. The longest I've stayed in one place is 3 years. In some places I've waited to leave town until after the work was quite complete, but I left others after a very short but fruitful evangelistic work had been done.

It is true that sometimes I left the work because I'd caused a riot or disturbance. At least once they let me out of jail only under the condition that I would leave their city that day. I've never been arrested for doing anything illegal, mostly it's just because of being a disruption. More for causing commotion with other religious groups. I've not gotten along well with their leaders. Some have threatened me and other groups attacked me physically. Once my enemies actually stoned me.

My health is not always good, although I get a great deal done, and quickly. Sadly although I've traveled with over 20 different Church-planter friends, only a few have stuck with me up 'til now.

More than a dozen of the churches I've begun have been small but were in several large cities. I can send you a more complete resume of my work.

Sincerely, Saul-Paul

To: Mister Saul-Paul, independent semi-retired missionary
From: Uttermost Part Mission Board

We recently received your application for service under our mission board. It caused us to research your background further. It is our policy to be as frank and open as possible with all applicants. We are surprised you have ever found a place to serve:

- Poor health, too thin, poor sleep habits, eye troubles
- Under-supported by sound churches, part-time secular work
- Jail record, both Caesarea as well as Rome, and taken into custody a couple more times
- Record as having "turned the world upside down." Unable to get along with the business community in several cities.
- Death threats how many times?
- Over-the-wall episode being chased out by fellow Jews from Damascus, then banished by fellow Christians from Jerusalem.
- Flogged, stoned, beaten, shipwrecked, starved, expelled, ostracized, and evidently much too bold.
- Making enemies with both religious Jews and Gentiles as well as pagan philosophers
- What about 3 years in the desert?
- Visions. We don't accept that as legitimate protocol.

As a self-proclaimed author you seem rather harsh. The Corinthian church tells us you sent a letter condemning 14 things they were doing wrong hardly noticing anything they were doing well. You have found fault in almost every church letter you wrote to churches you had planted: doctrine, culture, teaching, marriage, generosity, leadership, neglecting widows, etc. You seem to revel in contentions and are fairly bossy.

You've also earned a record for long-winded sermons. . . yes, of course we've heard of Eutychus.

It hurts me to tell you this, Brother Paul, but in all our years of hearing from applicants to our mission board, we have never heard from anyone so unprepared for the mission field as you. Our suggestion is to find a good church and sit in the back row to learn humility. Then go get some experience in serving others.

Most sincerely, Dr. Flavius, Chairman of the Uttermost Part Mission Board