

MONMOUTHSHIRE Free Press

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Dear Friends,

Margaret and I were discussing only the other day how many miles we must have spent driving to Denmark and back since September 2014 when the Harwich to Esbjerg ferry route stopped after 140 years of service? And I estimate that with one trip in 2014, and two trips each year between 2015 and 2018 and with just under 800 miles to travel each way each time, we are looking at something like 14,400 miles (and that is *not* counting the mileage clocked up – though admittedly a lot less each time - when the more direct ferry link did exist and we still journeyed to and fro every year for 40 years). It makes the mind boggle.

Imagine my surprise therefore when I read somewhere that the apostle Paul managed around 10,000 miles over 30 years on his many missionary journeys, to places as wide spread as Ephesus, Philippi, Corinth and Athens, to mention but a few – not forgetting Malta where he shipwrecked! Just think for a moment how restricted he was compared to now with means of transport, how longer the ships would have taken and how much walking would have been involved to get from port to port.

You know, I feel almost ashamed at my own calculations in comparison! My destination was always the same, the route did not change, there were no diversions, the people we met and whose company we enjoyed so much over the years, Mother's especially, were much the same, and I am afraid I did not do much if any evangelizing on my travels (I was enjoying myself too much).

So, yes, Paul deserves our respect. His journeys involved arrest and torture, many imprisonments, and still he managed to spread the gospel, the Good News, to all the known world without all the modern commodities including high speed cars we have at hand today. In AD 313 Christianity was formally and universally accepted by Emperor Constantine and only 10 years later it had become the official religion of the Roman Empire. The rest, as they say, is history.

Rev Preben Andersen