

## A Practical Study of

### GALATIANS: You Were Running Well

#### "Freedom vs. Legalism: The Truth Shall Set You Free"

#### Study #2 – Galatians 1:10-24

#### UNTIL: You Forgot What God Was Doing in Your Life

Key verses: Galatians 1:11-12

For I am making known to you, brethren, the message which was preached by me, that it is not after man. For neither did I receive it from man nor was I taught it but through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

#### TEXT:

v. 10 For am I now seeking the favor of men or of God or am I seeking to please men? If I still were pleasing men, a bondservant of Christ I would not be.

v. 11 For I am making known to you, brethren, the message which was preached by me, that it is not after man.

v. 12 For neither did I receive it from man nor was I taught it but through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

v. 13 For you heard of my manner of life formerly in Judaism that beyond measure I was persecuting the church of God and I was bringing destruction upon it.

v. 14 And I was blazing a pioneer path (advancing) in Judaism beyond many of my own age in my race being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers.

v. 15 But when it was the good pleasure of the one who set me apart from my mother's womb and called me through His grace to reveal His Son in me.

v. 16 In order that I might proclaim Him among the Gentiles, at once I consulted (communicated) not with flesh and blood.

v. 17 Neither went I up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia and again returned to Damascus.

v. 18 Then, after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to become acquainted with Cephas and I remained with him fifteen days.

v. 19 But another of the apostles I did not see except James the brother of our Lord.

v. 20 But the things which I am writing to you, behold in the sight of God, I am not lying.

v. 21 Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia.

v. 22 And I was still unknown by face to the assemblies of Judea which are in Christ.

v. 23 Indeed they were only hearing from time to time that the one who used to persecute us at one time now is proclaiming the faith which at one time he was ravaging.

v. 24 And they were glorifying God [for that which they found] in me.

**INTRODUCTION:**

(Cactus Tracks & Cowboy Philosophy by Baxter Black) New York, NY: Crown Publishers. Copyright - Baxter Black, 1997.

**JUST FRIENDS**

*I can't remember his number.  
     I don't call him often enough.  
 His birthday always escapes me  
     'cause I don't keep up with that stuff.*

*And I'm lucky if I see him  
     even once or twice a year  
 But I'm really not complainin'  
     'cause we're still close, we're just not near.*

*I recognize his daughter's voice.  
     I remember when she was born.  
 Hell, I was there when he got married!  
     I held the ring his wife has worn*

*For all these years, his darlin'.  
     Ya know, she hasn't changed a bit.  
 And him and me? We're markin' time  
     by the bad habits that we quit.*

*Together we're ambidextrous!  
     Although we're really not a pair  
 We've got each other covered  
     and, between us, a full head of hair!*

*We're part of each other's gristle,  
     an inveterate as bone.  
 It's nice how life can fix it  
     so you don't have to go it alone.*

*As I sit here blowin' smoke rings  
     from the pipe dreams that we've had,  
 I'm wonderin' if I've told him  
     how many times it's made me glad.*

*Just to know he's out there somewhere,  
     like a dollar in my shoe,  
 And how much it would please me  
     if he felt the same way, too.*

*When I add up all my assets,  
     he's one thing I can't appraise.  
 What's a promise or a handshake  
     or a phone call worth these days?*

*It's a credit with no limit,  
     it's a debt that never ends  
 And I'll owe him till forever  
     'cause you can't be more than friends.*

pp. 55-56

(Lookin' At Life by Joe Kreger) St. Louis, MO: Doane Agricultural Services.  
 Copyright – Joe Kreger, 1997, second printing 2000.

### Old Friends

If you lose health and reputation,  
 and your prosperity suddenly ends,  
 you're still among the blessed  
 if you have a few old friends.

The value of an old friend  
 Is somethin' you can't measure,  
 but long-term friendships are among  
 the greatest kinds of treasure.

Old friends always support you.  
 They're kinda like wagonwheel spokes.  
 Old friends still have a chuckle  
 when you tell your tired old jokes.

Old friends aren't qualified  
 by position and success.  
 Old friends are those who've proved themselves  
 by long-term faithfulness.

Casual friendships are easy found,  
 but, eventually, they go soft.  
 With old friends, you pick right up  
 at the last place you left off.

When you visit with your old friends,  
 you let your guard down and unwind.  
 They might be prone to tease you,  
 but their teasin's always kind.

Old friends tell you like it is,  
 not just what you want to hear.  
 They've seen you when you were smilin'  
 and when you shed a tear.

You don't have to impress your old friends.  
 You don't have to be a star.  
 Old friends are those who take you  
 the way you really are.

pp. 44-45

(Cow Pies & Candle Lights by G. T. Burton) Benton, Arkansas: G. T. Burton.  
Copyright - G. T. Burton, 1996.

### A FRIEND

Tho' paths of life begin and end,  
or climb an endless stair.  
A friend will always understand,  
and share the load you bear.  
And tho' the complex toil of life  
exceeds the human thought,  
And logic fails to comprehend  
the problems life has brought.  
A friend will stand forever firm,  
and by his stand declare:  
"I may not understand at all,  
but friend, I truly care".

p. 3

## Don't Forget

One of my favorite Far Side cartoons is captioned “Superman in his later years.” It shows the elderly Man of Steel perched on a window ledge, ready to leap, as he looks back and says, “Now where was I going?”

Forgetfulness happens to us all, and while our occasional lapses may be amusing or annoying, a lack of memory toward God can be disastrous. . . .

*Lest I forget Gethsemane,  
Lest I forget Thine agony,  
Lest I forget Thy love for me,  
Lead me to Calvary. —Hussey*  
**Never let the abundance of God's gifts  
cause you to forget the Giver.**

(From *Our Daily Bread*, Tuesday, March 9, 2010)



(Game Day Decisions: Devotions for Athletes by Elliot Johnson) Grand Island, NE: Cross Training Publishing. Copyright – Cross Training Publishing, 2000.

THE OPENING ROUND of the 1500-meter race in the 1972 Munich Olympics featured a showdown between defending champions Kip Keino of Kenya and Jim Ryun of the USA. Though Ryun had come out of retirement, the fourth heat proved to be the end of his amateur career. Boxed in 550 meters from the finish, Ryun tried to squeeze between two runners, rather than pass on the outside. Suddenly Vitus Ashaba of Uganda moved right into the path of Ryun, causing the American to trip on his heel and fall to the track. Ryun landed on the curb with a bruised hip, scraped knee, sprained ankle and a contusion to his Adam's apple. Despite the cheers from a sympathetic crowd, Ryun had lost too much valuable time and couldn't catch up. "All I know is everything was going well and I felt good, and the next thing I knew I was trying to figure out what happened," he said.

p. 31

(A Year With Jesus: Daily Readings and Meditations by Eugene H. Peterson) San Francisco, CA: HarperCollins. Copyright– Eugene H. Peterson, 2006.

*I know, Lord, that it is pride that wants to assert absolute independence and be free from all obligations. I would like never to have to ask anybody for anything, not even you. Forgive my self-righteousness and clothe me in your righteousness. Amen.*

p. 313

In our study of the epistle of Paul to the Galatians, we are scrutinizing:

the **MAN**,

his **MESSAGE**, and

his **MINISTRY** in the early part of this epistle.

As we come to this second study—"YOU WERE RUNNING WELL UNTIL: YOU FORGOT WHAT GOD WAS DOING IN YOUR LIFE"—we need to remember that Paul's position as an apostle, his message, and his ministry to the Gentiles were all being attacked by the Judaizers.

Galatians/Lecture Notes/Study#2 – Galatians 1:10-24.doc

It is no different with us Christians because Satan will attack our position in Christ, or the message we have responded to, or the service for Him that we are doing. In the midst of all this, we are faced with a very real danger. And that is the danger of forgetting our experience that we have had with Christ. Remembering what He has done for us and what His Word has to say can often be our greatest means of defense in these kinds of circumstances.

It was **JONAH** who said from the belly of the fish in:

John 2:7 (NIV)

“When my life was ebbing away,  
I remembered you, Lord,  
and my prayer rose to you,  
to your holy temple.

It was the **PRODIGAL SON** in:

Luke 15:17 (DAV)

But when he came to his senses he said, ‘How many employees of my father are getting more than enough bread, and I am perishing here with hunger!’

Jude 17 (NASB)

But you, beloved, ought to remember the words that were spoken beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Revelation 3:3 (DAV)

Be remembering, therefore, in what way you have received and heard; and be guarding it, and have a change of mind. If, therefore, you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come upon you.

1 Thessalonians 2:18 (DAV)

Because of this we desired to come to you, indeed, I Paul, not only once but twice, but Satan hindered us.

Paul is recounting his **PERSONAL EXPERIENCE IN THE LORD** as a defense for:

**HIS MOTIVATION,**

**HIS MESSAGE,** and

**HIS MINISTRY** among the Gentiles.

Paul wants them to see what happened to him and how his life was changed, never to be the same as a result of coming to know Jesus Christ personally.

Ephesians 2:12-13 (DAV)

because you were at that time separated from Christ, having been excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, not having hope, and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who were once far away have been brought near in the blood of Christ.

In these verses that now come under consideration, we are now going to be moving:

from the **MESSAGE** to the **MESSENGER,**

from the **MESSAGE** to the **MAN.**

I think it is important as we work through these verses that we also remember that God sometimes runs lessons back by us because it is so easy to forget. Or we have forgotten to implement what He has asked us to do.

Baxter says:

Look, then, through the first two chapters of Galatians—the part where we have personal narrative. *Why* does Paul give this account of his movements? The usual idea is that he is here defending his apostleship: but if we are to be strictly exact, that rather misses the real purpose here. Read the chapters carefully again: Paul is here proving the genuineness, the *authenticity* of the *Gospel* which he preached.

He begins by saying that his apostleship was neither from nor through man, but of God (i. 1). His Gospel was “not after men,” for he had neither received it nor been taught it of men—it had come by direct Divine revelation (verses 11, 12). And after he had received this direct revelation and commission he had “conferred *not* with flesh and blood” (verse 16). He certainly could not have got his Gospel second-hand from the other apostles (as his detractors were apparently alleging), for he had not gone up to Jerusalem at that time to see them (verse 17); and even when later, after the expiry of three years, he *had* gone up on a short visit, he had seen only Peter and James (verse 19). And, even after that, he had remained *still* unknown by face to the churches in Judæa (verses 22, 23). So there can be no doubt as to Paul’s purpose here. It is to show that the Gospel which he preached was *genuine as to its origin*.

pp. 144-145

Bickel & Jantz say:

If God has called you, do not spend time  
Looking over your shoulder to see  
Who is following you.

—*Corrie ten Boom*

***God Has Given You  
a Life Mission***

After laying his cards on the table—the Galatians have been deceived by false teachers, causing them to follow a perverted gospel of works—Paul begins to make his case for the true gospel of grace. Beginning in this section, and continuing through the end of Galatians 2, Paul lays out the first two or three proofs for the true gospel: *Paul has apostolic authority, and the gospel he preached to the Galatians was not from man but from God.*

To do this, he gives a synopsis of his own conversion story, reminding his readers that he was an intense persecutor of the Christian church before God saved and called him through a special revelation of Jesus Christ. Paul then gives a chronology of the years after his conversion and call, making it clear that he didn't have contact with the Jerusalem church and its leaders for the first three years of his Christian life. He wants to make sure his Galatian readers know that his authority came directly from Jesus.

The dramatic story of Paul's conversion is not meant to be a template for your own conversion experience. Most Christians can't claim a special revelation from Christ as Paul did. But like Paul, you have a unique and God-given mission in life, and it's something God planned for you long ago.  
p. 34

De Haan says:

While gracious and tender in his dealings, there was only one thing Paul would not tolerate. That one thing was tampering with the grace of God. On the matter of salvation by grace without the deeds of the law, he would give no quarter. He was stubbornly firm in his preaching that a man is saved and kept, justified and sanctified by grace—plus nothing. This tender apostle, therefore, could be the very essence of severity toward the false legalistic teachers who had upset the Galatian Christians by the false teaching that they were saved by grace, and then kept by works.  
p. 48

### Ironside says:

The apostle Paul in this section is obliged to defend his apostleship. There is something pitiable about that. He had come to these Galatians when they were heathen, when they were idolaters, and had been God's messenger to them. Through him they had been brought to the Lord Jesus Christ. But they had fallen under the influence of false teachers, and now looked down upon the man who had led them to Christ; they despised his ministry and felt they were far better informed than he. This is not the only time in the history of the Church that such things have happened. Often we see young converts happy and radiant in the knowledge of sins forgiven, until under the influence of false teachers they look with contempt upon those who presented the gospel to them.

pp. 42-43

### MacArthur says:

One of the primary objectives of the Judaizers who were stirring up so much controversy and confusion in the Galatian churches was to discredit Paul's apostolic authority. They knew they could not successfully undermine his teaching of God's gracious gospel until they undermined his divine authority in the eyes of the church members. In order to accomplish that end, they spread the idea that Paul was not a legitimate apostle but was self-appointed and that his motivation was to elevate himself and build up a personal following. They accused him of putting aside the Mosaic ceremonies, standards, and practices in order to make the gospel more appealing to Gentiles by removing its Jewish associations. He also made the gospel easier for Jews to accept, they argued, because he removed the demanding requirements of traditional Judaism to which all loyal Jews subscribed.

p. 20

MacArthur says:

It must have wounded Paul deeply to learn that many believers in Galatia had been persuaded by those false teachers to question his motives and to doubt his authority and the truth of his gospel. But he did not make his defense on the reflex of feeling but on the basis of fact. He did not make an emotional appeal for renewed personal loyalty to himself but rather presented clear evidence that contradicted the accusations being made against him. His concern was not for his own popularity or personal success but God's truth. His defense of his apostleship was for the purpose of defending his authority and the integrity of the gospel he had faithfully proclaimed in the Galatian churches and everywhere else he went.  
p. 21

MacArthur says:

In Galatians 1:10-12 Paul presents some general credentials of his apostleship and message, and in verses 13-24 he unfolds autobiographical credentials that include preconversion, conversion, and postconversion proofs of his legitimacy.  
p. 21

Let's pick up the text now in **STUDY #2** and see what the Lord has for us.

v. 10 For am I now seeking the favor of men or of God or am I seeking to please men? If I still were pleasing men, a bonds slave of Christ I would not be.

The NET Bible translates verse 10:

Am I now trying to gain the approval of people, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a slave of Christ!

Peterson paraphrases verse 10:

Do you think I speak this strongly in order to manipulate crowds? Or curry favor with God? Or get popular applause? If my goal was popularity, I wouldn't bother being Christ's slave.

*The Bible Knowledge Commentary* says:

Apparently the Judaizers had charged Paul with teaching freedom from the Law in order to curry the Gentiles' favor. But the tone of this letter, specifically the harsh language Paul had just used, was hardly calculated **to win the approval of men**. Men-pleasers simply do not hurl *anathemas* against those who proclaim false gospels. Indeed, if the apostle had wanted **to please men**, he would have remained a zealous Pharisee and promoter of the Law rather than becoming **a servant of Christ**. Elsewhere Paul affirmed his purpose to please God, not men . . .

Here in verse 10 we have **PAUL'S PERSONAL MOTIVATION**. It is expressed by **TWO QUESTIONS**:

1. **"AM I NOW SEEKING THE FAVOR OF MEN, OR OF GOD?"**  
and
2. **"AM I SEEKING TO PLEASE MEN?"**



And the **ANSWER** is contained in the last statement of the verse:

**“IF I STILL WERE PLEASING MEN, A BONDSLAVE OF CHRIST I WOULD NOT BE.”**

His opponents had insinuated that Paul had dropped all the legal requirements of salvation to please men and to cater to the laxity of human nature. The truth of the matter, however, was that many of the Judaizers taught circumcision and the law to keep from being persecuted.

Luther points out:

To this day you will find many who seek to please men in order that they may live in peace and security. They teach whatever is agreeable to men, no matter whether it is contrary to God’s Word or their own conscience.  
p. 34

There was a time in Paul’s experience when he was trying to please both men and God by the life that he lived as a Pharisee. Now his only concern is to be a faithful bonds slave of Jesus Christ.

You have to make a **CHOICE** who you are going to please in your life.

**YOU CANNOT PLEASE MEN AND BE A BONDSLAVE OF CHRIST.**

1 Thessalonians 2:3-4, 10 (DAV)

For our exhortation was not out of error, neither out of impure motive nor in deceit; but even as we have been found worthy by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we are speaking, not as pleasing men but God, who is examining our hearts. You are witnesses, and [so is] God, as to how devoutly and uprightly and blamelessly we proved ourselves among you who are believing;

Paul's personal motivation is that he might seek the favor of God and God alone, and that he might be seeking only to please Him who has called him.

2 Timothy 2:3-4 (DAV)

Suffer hardships with me as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No one engaging in military service is allowing himself to become entangled in civilian pursuits in order that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier.

Paul says, in essence, if I was seeking the favor of men and I was trying to please men with what I said:

**"A BONDSLAVE OF CHRIST I WOULD NOT BE."**

It is quite obvious after what he has said in the previous verses that he is not still trying to **"PLEASE MEN."**

Matthew 6:24 (DAV)

No one is able to be serving two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and he will treat with contempt the other. You are not able to be rendering a slave's obedience to God and to a passion for accumulating wealth.

2 Timothy 2:15 (DAV)

Make every effort to present yourself to God, approved, as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, guiding the word of truth along a straight path.

Paul's motivation is **TWO-FOLD**. He wants to:

1. **FINISH THE RACE** and
2. **HEAR "WELL DONE THOU GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT."**

Ever since the Damascus road experience, Paul has been a different man with a life that has a singleness of purpose. That purpose is to please God.

One of the hardest things on kids today is the pressure to please.

They have got to work on the **HORIZONTAL LEVEL** in pleasing their:

**PEERS,**

**PARENTS,** and

**PASTOR.**

Then on the **VERTICAL** they have the stress of being in a situation where they are wanting to:

**PLEASE GOD.**

It would be good to settle this once and for all and make it **TOP PRIORITY** in one's life to **PLEASE GOD FIRST** and then everything else will fall into place.

(Leadership, Greatness and Servanthood by Philip Greenslade) Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House. Copyright – Philip Greenslade, 1984.

Servanthood enlarges, not shrinks, our horizons, as the original words suggest.

- 'diakonos' is a servant viewed in relation to his work, so stressing his activity.
  - 'doulos' is a servant in relation to his master; underlining his accountability.
  - 'huperetes' is a servant in relation to his superior, thus emphasising the authority he is under.
  - 'leitourgos' is a servant in relation to the organisation that employs him, so highlighting the administration he is part of.
- p. 3

'You've not made much out of all these years' said an affluent merchant to an impoverished fellow Devonian who had voyaged with Drake to the new World. 'Maybe not', was the reply, 'but I've been with the greatest captain who's ever sailed the seas'.

p. 5

In one of his books, that sensitive Methodist preacher of an earlier era, A. E. Whitham muses on the possibility of there being a museum in heaven, exhibiting tokens of spiritual leadership. It's an intriguing thought. In such a museum would surely be Moses's staff and Aaron's rod—the one that budded. Alongside these, among many others, we might reasonably expect to find the inkpot that Luther threw at the devil, John Wesley's saddle and stirrups, not to mention praying Hyde's knee patches and Billy Graham's airline tickets. But two items would surely be conspicuous by their absence. The towel and basin would not be there; for the good reason that they are still in use!

p. 5

(Slaves, Citizens, Sons: Legal Metaphors in the Epistles by Francis Lyall)  
Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. Copyright – Francis Lyall, 1984.

Be that as it may, it is nonetheless clear that for Paul, “the slave of Christ,” all his goods, time, ambitions, and purposes were subject to the determination of Christ. Paul was no different from the ordinary slave: he was at his Master’s disposal. He was also *only* at his Master’s disposal. Just as a man can serve only one master (Matt. 6:24; Luke 16:13), so he was responsible only to his Master (Rom. 14:4)—a liberating thought for those dogged by the opinions of others.

p. 38

(Who You Are When No One’s Looking: Choosing Consistency, Resisting Compromise by Bill Hybels) Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press.  
Copyright – Bill Hybels, 1987.

“True personal fulfillment never comes through self-gratification.”  
Instead, it comes through sacrifice.

p. 92

What does it take to do the will of the Father? It takes *courage* to join a family that is misunderstood by the world. It takes *discipline* to accomplish the tasks God has set out for his children. It takes *vision* to overcome inevitable problems and to see what God is doing in the lives of his children. It takes *endurance* to stick with your brothers and sisters when it would be so much easier to go your own way. Above all, it takes *love* to hold God’s family together and to reach out and invite others to join it—tender, tough, sacrificial, radical love.

p. 111

(The Writing Life by Annie Dillard) Grand Rapids: Harper & Row. Copyright – Annie Dillard, 1989.

One bad winter in the Arctic, and not too long ago, an Algonquin woman and her baby were left alone after everyone else in their winter camp had starved. Ernest Thompson Seton tells it. The woman walked from the camp where everyone had died, and found at a lake a cache. The cache contained one small fishhook. It was simple to rig a line, but she had no bait, and no hope of bait. The baby cried. She took a knife and cut a strip from her own thigh. She fished with the worm of her own flesh and caught a jackfish; she fed the child and herself. Of course she saved the fish gut for bait. She lived alone at the lake, on fish, until spring, when she walked out again and found people. Seton's informant had seen the scar on her thigh.  
pp. 12-13

John 13:3-5 (DAV)

Jesus, knowing that all things the Father gave into His hands, and that from God He had come forth and was going back to God, He is rising from supper and is laying aside His outer garments; and having taken a towel, He tied it around himself. Then He is pouring water into the basin, and began to be washing the feet of the disciples and to be wiping then off with the towel which He had tied around himself.

Anders says:

**1:10.** Paul's critics accused him of preaching "easy believism" because he did not include the law as grounds for salvation and Christian maturity. They claimed Paul watered down the gospel, by omitting the law, to increase his popularity among the Gentiles. Through two rhetorical questions, Paul adamantly denies the charge and states clearly that his motive is to please only God. He was concerned with preserving truth not increasing his **approval** ratings. To please people is to desert Christ. You must choose: serve people's fickle pleasures or serve the faithful Christ.  
p. 7

Barclay says:

Paul denied that he was trying to ingratiate himself with men. It was not men he was serving; it was God. It made no difference to him what men said or thought about him; his master was God. And then he brought forward the unanswerable argument. “If,” he says, “I were trying to curry favour with men I would not be the slave of Christ.” What is in his mind is this—the slave was branded with his master’s name and sign stamped on him with a red-hot branding iron. Paul bore on his body the marks of his campaigns, the marks of his sufferings, the brand of the slavery of Christ. “If,” he said, “I were out to curry favour with men would I have these scars on me? If all I wanted was to stand well with men would I have these marks on my body?” The very fact that he was marked as he was the final proof that his one aim was to serve Christ and not to please men.  
pp. 10-11

Barker & Kohlenberger say:

10 Before Paul moves to state his first important thesis (vv. 11-12), he makes a brief transition. He had been accused of being a people-pleaser by his enemies, who no doubt also implied that he was such at the expense of the truth (cf. 2Co 10; Gal 6:12). Would his enemies dare to say this now, Paul asks, after he has written so sharply? Do people-pleasers pronounce *anathemas* against those who teach false gospels?  
p. 710

Barker & Kohlenberger say:

The incongruity of charging Paul with being a people-pleaser is strengthened by the following sentence, in which Paul mentions being “a servant of Christ.” Jesus had said, “No one can serve two masters” (Mt 6:24). Thus, when faced with the necessity of making a choice, Paul would choose to stand with Christ, not with other people. The choice of the word “servant” (lit., “slave”; GK 1528) is interesting because this letter is about freedom. It is an early indication of the paradoxical teaching that real freedom is to be found in bondage—bondage to Christ.  
p. 710

### Bartlett says:

Paul is saying in effect that, while in the past, before he knew Jesus, he may have trimmed his sails to the breeze of popular acclaim, he now has but one aim in life, and this is to please Christ to whom he owes complete and undivided allegiance. We who bear the name of Jesus need to learn that the surest way to lose the favor of the Lord is to seek the favor of the world. Whom we seek to please shows who pleases us. The more Christ pleases, the more earnestly shall we seek to please Him in all we say and do and think (Col. 3:17). The deeper and sweeter our communion with Jesus, the more repellent is any suggestion of compromise with sin or conformity to a world that is at enmity with God.

*"If I pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ."* Men will never be transformed by the gospel that is cut to the style of the time or the tastes of the crowd. Steer clear of a diluted gospel that flatters rather than flattens the pride of men. Souls that want to be flattered need to be flattened. Let us not think to advance the cause of Christ by whittling down the truth. When tempted to tone down our message to the whims of men, let us tune up our message to the Word of Christ.  
pp. 20-21

### Calvin says:

Having extolled so confidently his own preaching, he now shows that this was no idle or empty boat. He supports his assertion by two arguments. The first is, that he was not prompted by ambition, or flattery, or any similar passion, to accommodate himself to the views of men. The second and far stronger argument is, that he was not the author of the gospel, but delivered faithfully what he had received from God.  
p. 35

### Calvin says:

He declares for himself, that he had freely renounced the estimation of men, in order to devote himself entirely to the service of Christ; and, in this respect, he contrasts his present position with that which he occupied at a former period of life.  
p. 36



De Haan says:

Paul asks them, Do you think I am trying to please men or God? I could avoid all this persecution if I, like you, would bring a popular message of works and merit and righteousness, but I would prove myself to be a false teacher. Paul had received his message direct from Heaven, and knew he was right. It was a new message, not fully set forth until now.  
p. 49

Eadie says:

. . . “For do I now conciliate men or God?” or, “Now, is it men I am conciliating, or God?”  
p. 29

Eadie says:

. . . “For am I, at the moment of uttering such an anathema against perverters of the gospel, making friends of men or of God?” What but faithfulness to my divine commission can prompt me to it? It was no human passion, no personal animosity, no envious or jealous emotion at being superseded in the affections of the Galatian churches: it was simply duty done in compliance with the ruling motive of his soul, and to enjoy and secure the divine complacency.  
p. 30

Eadie says further:

. . . “If still men I were pleasing, Christ’s servant I should not be.”  
p. 31

Fergusson says:

7. A faithful servant of Jesus Christ will prize his acceptance with Christ, his being approved of him, and the testimony of a good conscience for fidelity in his service, more than all the favour, countenance, applause, or any advantage flowing from these, which he can receive from men; and before he hazard the loss of the former, he will rather a thousand times embrace with gladness the most certain loss of the latter: for Paul maketh this an argument why he did not seek to please men; because that hereby he should lose the approbation of Christ, "For, if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ."

p. 19

Gaebelein says:

In his testimony and service he was not a man-pleaser, "for if I were pleasing men, I should not be the servant of Christ." He did not seek the applause of men and of the world. If he accommodated himself to men, seeking to please them, he would not be Christ's servant.

p. 206

Hendriksen says:

10. Paul has used forceful language. That gives him an opportunity to answer a charge of the opponents. He writes: **There! Is it the favor of men that I am now seeking to win or of God? Or is it men whom I am seeking to please?** Here one detects an echo of the opponents' accusations and insinuations, on this order: "Paul is trying to win human, rather than divine, favor. He tries to please everybody, so that everybody may follow him. Among his own people he preaches circumcision (Gal. 5:11; cf. Acts 16:3), for he knows that they believe in it. But he withholds this rite from the Gentiles because they welcome exemption from it."

Paul answers: "Would a popularity-seeker hurl anathemas at people? Is it not clear that it is not men's but God's approval in which I am interested, and that I am seeking to please my Lord?"

p. 43

Hogg & Vine say:

**or am I seeking to please men?**—the answer expected is in the negative; in full it would run, ‘No, not to please men, but to please God’.  
p. 34

Lenski says:

In this instance . . . cannot mean “for” (our versions) as either stating a reason or offering an explanation. The insertion of “now,” which repeats the “now” of v. 9, restricts us to the thought of what Paul is doing with these startling verdicts. It is as plain as day that he is neither seeking the approval of men nor trying to curry favor with men. . . . is but the confirmatory adverb which is here used in a question in order to point to what the previous statements make decidedly plain and thus make the question more urgent and the desired answer more inevitable (Zahn).

Like a flash the questions reveal the charges the Judaizers had launched against Paul in order to discredit him and his gospel.  
p. 43

Lenski says:

This refutation of the slander spread among the Galatians may well open their eyes to the character of the Judaizers and to the base means with which they work. What the Galatians have found Paul to be before, they will also find him now, a man without fear or favor, with his eye on God and on Christ alone.  
p. 44

Lovett says:

**APPROVAL.** Paul explains his repeated anathemas (curses) against the false teachers. The Judaizers charged he was nothing more than a crowd-pleaser, using the Gospel as a gimmick to attract a following. (Philosophers did that in those days.) On the basis of what he has just written he couldn't be called a man-pleaser. Such words do not conciliate men, they rile them. Then Paul adds, there is no way to preach what men want to hear and be the servant of Christ. When the Gospel is altered to match the desires of men it can no longer change them. The preaching of the pure Gospel is popular only with those who want to be God-pleasers. If Paul wanted to be a man-pleaser, he would have chosen a different career years before. Being a bond-slave of Christ is hardly the course one takes if he wants the approval of men. Men follow others of great stature, not slaves.  
p. 17

Luther says:

With the same vehemence Paul continues: "You Galatians ought to be able to tell from my preaching and from the many afflictions which I have endured, whether I serve men or God. Everybody can see that my preaching has stirred up persecution against me everywhere, and has earned for me the cruel hatred of my own people, in fact the hatred of all men. This should convince you that by my preaching I do not seek the favor and praise of men, but the glory of God."  
p. 33

MacArthur says:

Paul had become a willing slave of Christ, which cost him a great deal of suffering from others (6:17). Such personal sacrifice is exactly opposite the goal of pleasing men (6:12).  
p. 1659

MacArthur says further:

Obviously, Paul's pronouncing a curse on men (v. 9) does not fit with the accusations of the Judaizers against him. Rather, it unquestionably seeks to honor God, whose truth was being perverted.

p. 22

MacArthur says:

He had surrendered his life entirely to the lordship of Jesus Christ, and that surrender had cost him dearly in human terms. At the end of this epistle Paul reminds his readers, "For I bear on my body the brand-marks of Jesus" (6:17). Some of those marks he had received in Galatia, where, in the city of Lystra, he was once left for dead after being stoned (Acts 14:19). Suffering at the hands of people who were not pleased with him was a common occurrence for him and was the price of honoring God.

p. 22

McGee says:

By nature man responds to legalism. He thinks he doesn't need a Savior. All he needs is a helper. Oh, my friend, we are sinking for the third time! We need somebody to *save* us. Those who preach law are popular. Not long ago I listened to a local Southern California preacher on television. From a technical and professional standpoint he has one of the finest programs. In his message he talked about Jesus coming into the world. He spoke of Christ's death and resurrection. But he failed to mention that the people to whom he was speaking were sinners and needed a Savior. He neglected to inform his audience that Jesus died for them and they needed to trust Him to be saved. Rather, he talked about commitment. He invited folk to commit their lives to Christ. Let us be honest, friend. Christ does not want your old life and He does not want mine. We have nothing to commit to Him. He wants to do something through us today. Oh, if only we could learn that!

p. 154

McGee says:

God is not even asking you to live the Christian life. In fact, you cannot live it. God is asking that He might live the Christian life through you. The Epistle to the Galatians teaches this. But first of all we must come to Christ as sinners and be saved. Out churches are filled today with people who are not saved. Do you know why? They have never come to Christ and received Him as Savior. They feel like they have something to commit to Him. You have *nothing* to commit to Him, my friend. He wants to commit something to you. He is the One who died, and He is on the giving end. "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:23). It is just as simple as that. Have you accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior? This is the important thing.  
p. 155

Patrick & Lowth say:

*(But this you cannot reasonably suspect concerning me,) For do I now (in the execution of my apostleship) persuade (obey, or seek to please) men, or God? or do I seek to please men? (no sure,) for if I yet pleased men (if I made that my business), I should not be the servant of Christ (in that work of the gospel which creates me so much hazard from them).*  
pp. 724-5

Patrick & Lowth say:

*... I should not be the servant of Christ.] That is, say the Greek commentators, I should not have left Judaism to embrace Christianity; i.e. I should not have quitted honour, friends, and kindred, for dangers, persecutions, and dishonours, which I continually suffer for the cause of Christ.*  
p. 725

Radmacher, Allen & House say:

To **please men** was neither Paul's motivation nor the source of his authority (v. 1). Paul continually sought the approval of God. He did not base his decisions on the opinions of other people. Instead he single-mindedly aimed at pleasing God (Phil. 3:14). As an apostle Paul was a leader, but he was always **a bondservant of Christ**.  
p. 1517

Ridderbos says:

The rhetorical question is apparently asked in response to the proffered charge that Paul had been trying to play up to the people in order to gain effect. Considering the nature of the opposition, we conclude the charge was made against Paul in the matter of his maintaining Gentile freedom from the Jewish law over against the militant Judaizers. In this circumstance then his opponents could find a pretense ready at hand for charging that Paul was playing up to the popular wish to "let down the bars" of responsible conduct. Over against this Paul puts the question whether they would care to charge this against him *now* also, that is, now that he has in the preceding verses spoken as he has. There he certainly was not using language nicely calculated to give offense to no one. The question, consequently, is not without its irony.  
p. 55

Vos says:

Paul now moves into the next major section of the epistle, in which he defends his right to preach the gospel of grace and Christian liberty. He must clearly vindicate his apostleship before he can vindicate his message. Immediately he is on the defensive: “Am I now persuading men rather than God?” (1:10). Probably he was accused of sacrificing the truth of God or of softening truths unwelcome to men so he might win them over his way of thinking. This would apply especially to dropping the requirement of keeping the law by Gentile believers in an effort to gain their support—accommodating the gospel to the heathen. Paul admits that there was a time when he sought to please men (“if I yet pleased men”) before his conversion. But now “I should not be Christ’s slave if I yet pleased men.” If he pleased men he would still curry favor with the Jews by persecuting Christians. He would be cutting corners doctrinally to avoid persecution. In reality he was concerned with pleasing God only.

pp. 28-29

Wuest says:

I am marvelling that in such a manner suddenly you are becoming of another mind and deserting from Him who called you in the sphere of Christ’s grace to a message of good news diametrically opposed to the gospel, which message is not an alternative gospel. Only, there are certain ones who are troubling your minds and are desiring to pervert the gospel of Christ. In fact, even if we or a messenger from heaven should preach a gospel to you which goes beyond that which we preached to you as good news, let him be accursed. Even as we have said on a previous occasion, indeed, now again I am saying, If, as is the case, anyone preaches a gospel to you which goes beyond that which you took so eagerly and hospitably to your hearts, let him be accursed. For, am I at this present moment seeking to win the favor of men rather than the approval of God? Or, am I making it my business to be constantly pleasing men? If I still were pleasing men, in that case Christ’s bondsman I would not be.

p. 201



Wuest says:

Paul feels that the curse which he had just repeated twice over, might strike his readers as unduly harsh and severe. By the use of the word *for*, he introduces an explanatory justification of his stern language. He says that he would not have uttered the statement had he been concerned in influencing men in *his* favor rather than in *God's*.  
p. 42

Wuest says:

*For, am I at this present moment seeking to win the favor of men rather than the approval of God? Or, am I making it my business to be constantly pleasing men? If I still were pleasing men, in that case, Christ's bonds slave I would not be.*  
p. 43

v. 11 For I am making known to you, brethren, the message which was preached by me, that it is not after man.

The NET Bible translates verse 11:

Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel I preached is not of human origin.

Peterson paraphrases verse 11:

Know this—I am most emphatic here, friends—this great Message I delivered to you is not mere human optimism.

*The Bible Knowledge Commentary* titles this next section and then says:

**Personal: A Defense of Paul's Authority (1:11-2:21).**

Paul then took up in more detail the challenge to his authority as an apostle. Was he a self-appointed impostor? Arguing autobiographically, Paul declared that (a) he was an apostle before he met the other apostles; (b) when he did meet them he was received as an equal; (c) and he even found it necessary to rebuke Peter, the reputed chief apostle.

A. *He was independent of the apostles (1:11-24).*

1. THESIS: PAUL'S GOSPEL WAS A REVELATION (1:11-12).

**1:11-12.** First, Paul certified that **the gospel** did not originate with **man**. Man-made religions emphasize human merit and the necessity of human works for salvation. Paul's message did not. Second, the apostle declared that he **did not receive** the gospel from any human source.

In verse 10 the **MOTIVATION** for Paul's ministry is:

**"[He is] a bonds slave of Christ."**

The **MESSAGE** which he preaches according to verse 11 was:

**NEGATIVELY—"NOT AFTER MAN."**

Back in verse 1 the Apostle Paul **DEFENDS HIS POSITION** as a **"man."**

In verse 10 he presents his personal **MOTIVATION** and that is to **PLEASE GOD.**

Now in verses 11 & 12 he deals with the **MESSAGE** which he preaches—How he got his **"MESSAGE."**

Paul, in speaking of this message which he preached in Galatia, refers to it as not being **"AFTER MAN."**

He received the **DIVINE REVELATION** through **INSPIRATION.**

It is not a message which has originated with man.

**(Systematic Theology: Volume I by Lewis Sperry Chafer. Dallas, TX: Dallas Seminary Press. Copyright – Lewis Sperry Chafer, 1947.**

The Bible . . . is not such a book as man would write if he *could*, or could write if he *would*.

p. 22

Anders titles verses 11 & 12 and then says:

### **The True Source of the Gospel (vv. 11-12)**

**SUPPORTING IDEA:** *Paul's gospel of grace is true because it came directly from God.*

p. 7

Anders says:

**1:11.** The Judaizers knew that if they could undermine Paul's apostolic authority they could defeat his message of liberty. So Paul now defends his apostleship and message. The Judaizers said Paul perverted the gospel by omitting the Law of Moses; in reality, the Judaizers perverted the gospel by adding legalism. Paul now presents the first reason the Galatians should listen to him and not the false teachers: the gospel is not man-made (compare v. 1). No human mind apart from God's revelation would dream up a plan of salvation wholly dependent on God's grace and the death of his Son.

p. 7

Barker & Kohlenberger say:

The verb introducing this verse means "to make clear," "to certify" (GK 1192), and has the effect of suggesting that a somewhat formal statement will follow, as indeed it does.

p. 710

Bartlett says:

"Certified" is a word of magic potency. We buy with confidence food and drug products bearing this label. There are times when, as in the purchase of a home, for example, an ordinary check will not be accepted in payment; it must be certified. And yet how easily men and women who pride themselves upon their shrewdness in business matters are taken in by all sorts of fantastic isms and vagaries in the realm of religion. With eternal destiny hanging in the balance, it is assuredly the most arrant folly to accept a so-called gospel which is not divinely accredited.

p. 23

Eadie says:

For in form, quality, and contents, it was not human or manlike; it was Godlike in its truths, and in their connection and symmetry. It was God's style of purpose and thought—in no sense man's, and all about it, in disclosure and result, in adaptation and destiny, proves it to be “after” Him whose “ways are not our ways.”  
pp. 34-35

Lange says:

. . . In the address he has omitted the customary appellations: saints, beloved of God, etc.; after the first rebuke, however, he now adds, as the mollifying ointment, the name of “brethren.” What we cannot always do in unimpaired love, may yet be done at times of hope.  
p. 30

Lenski says:

With perfect calmness Paul presents the detailed facts regarding the manner in which he received his gospel. One only question is to be answered: “What are the facts?” They and they alone are decisive. Paul presents them to the Galatians whom he clearly distinguishes from the Judaistic teachers.  
pp. 46-47

Lightfoot says:

‘I assure you, brethren, the Gospel you were taught by me is not of human devising. I did not myself receive it from man, but from Jesus Christ. I did not learn it, as one learns a lesson, by painful study. It flashed upon me, as a revelation from Jesus Christ.’  
p. 79

Lucado says:

False teachers had infiltrated the Galatian church, attempting to add legalistic requirements to the simple gospel. Paul reiterated the truth of salvation—that it is only by faith in Christ alone—by sharing the story of his own miraculous conversion.

p. 12

Luther says:

This passage constitutes Paul's chief defense against the accusations of his opponents. He maintains under oath that he received his Gospel not from men, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

p. 35

MacArthur says:

The gospel Paul preached was not human in origin or it would have been like all other human religion, permeated with works righteousness born of man's pride and Satan's deception . . .

p. 1659

MacArthur says:

**I would have you know** is from *gnōrizō*, a strong Greek verb that means to make known with certainty, to certify. It was often used, as here, to introduce an important and emphatic statement that immediately followed. In vernacular English the phrase could be rendered, "Let me make it perfectly clear." "The gospel I preach," he said, "is not human either in nature or in authority. I did not invent it or alter it, nor did any other **man**. Its message is completely divine in origin, without any mixture of human wisdom whatever." That is why Paul's gospel is the standard by which all false human theories of salvation are measured and condemned.

p. 23

Radmacher, Allen & House say:

There was no human creativity flavoring the **gospel** Paul **preached**. Paul knew it only because he **received** it by special **revelation** from **Jesus Christ** at his conversion (Acts 26:12-18).

p. 1517

Ridderbos says:

The words, *For I make known to you, brethren*, suggest something remarkable and impressive. They indicate that the readers do not yet know, or no longer know, the truth that is to follow, although they might well have known and reflected on it.

pp. 56-57

Wiersbe says:

In Galatians 1:11-12, Paul stated his theme: His message and ministry were of divine origin. He did not invent the gospel, nor did he receive it from men; but he received the gospel from Jesus Christ. Both his message and his apostolic ministry were divinely given. Therefore, anybody who added anything to Paul's gospel was in danger of divine judgment, because that gospel was given by Jesus Christ from heaven (1 Cor. 15:1-11).

p. 32

Wuest says:

*Is not after man.* Paul's use of the present tense shows the permanence and unchangeableness of his gospel of grace.

p. 44

**v. 12 For neither did I receive it from man nor was I taught it but through a revelation of Jesus Christ.**

The NET Bible translates verse 12:

For I did not receive it or learn it from any human source; instead I received it by a revelation of Jesus Christ.

Peterson paraphrases verse 12:

I didn't receive it through the traditions, and I wasn't taught it in some school. I got it straight from God, received the Message directly from Jesus Christ.

*The Bible Knowledge Commentary* says:

Though he heard Stephen preach and had personal contacts with Ananias and Barnabas, he was not indebted to them for his knowledge of spiritual truth. Third, Paul affirmed he did not receive the gospel he preached by means of some course of instruction. Even though that was the way the Galatians received the gospel (as Paul had instructed them), the apostle on the other hand **received it by revelation from Jesus Christ**. This was the highest authority. How then could the Galatians question his authority and message? And how did they dare deviate from this divinely revealed truth?



In verse 12 we have the **NEGATIVE** and the **POSITIVE**:

Back in verse 11 he stated—**NEGATIVELY**:

“the message which was preached . . . is not after man.”

Then there are **TWO REASONS** here in verse 12 for that statement:

1. **“FOR NEITHER DID I RECEIVE IT FROM MAN”**
2. **“NOR WAS I TAUGHT IT.”**

**“BUT”—in CONTRAST:**

**POSITIVELY—“I [RECEIVED IT] THROUGH A REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST.”**

#### Revelation 1:1 (DAV)

A revelation of Jesus Christ, which God (the Father) gave to Him to point out to His bondservants, the things which must shortly take place; and He made them known, having sent them by His angel to His bondservant John;

Since the **DIVINE REVELATION IS COMPLETE**, there are **NO NEW REVELATIONS** that are given. God has spoken in these last days through His Son.

#### Revelation 22:18-19 (DAV)

It is I who am testifying to everyone who is hearing the words of the prophecy of this book; if anyone adds to them, God shall add to him the plagues which have been written in this book. And if anyone shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his portion from the tree of life and out of the holy city, which have been written in this book.

Hebrews 1:1-2 (DAV)

In many ways and in many portions, God, in former times having spoken to the fathers by means of the prophets, in the last of these days spoke to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds (ages),

In **SUMMARY** of the verse then, the Apostle Paul uses the **NEGATIVE** and the **POSITIVE** approach.

**NEGATIVELY**—we can see **THREE THINGS**:

1. The message which he preached is “not after man,”
2. “NEITHER DID [HE] RECEIVE IT FROM MAN,” and
3. “NOR WAS [HE] TAUGHT IT [BY MAN].”

From a **POSITIVE** point of view:

“the message which was preached by [him is] . . . **THROUGH A REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST.**”

Everything Paul was, or had to say, or did came “**THROUGH . . . JESUS CHRIST.**” His:

**CHARACTER,**

**CONVERSATION,** and

**CONDUCT**

were all a result of Christ living in him.

In Galatians 1:1 we noted that he was:

“an apostle . . . through Jesus Christ.”

Here we note that his:

“message was . . . THROUGH A REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST.”

In Galatians 2:2 we will note that his going to Jerusalem was through a revelation as well.

His:

WITNESS,

WORDS, and

WORKS

are all “THROUGH . . . JESUS CHRIST.”

Ephesians 3:7-8 (DAV)

of which I became a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God which was given to me according to the manifestation of His power. To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the fathomless riches of Christ.

Paul was no longer trying to please men and the message he spoke “was not after man.”

The validity of the message which he spoke as to whether or not it was truth would be by the results of this message in changing lives.

One of the greatest **ARGUMENTS IN DEFENSE OF CHRISTIANITY** and the message of the cross is the **CHANGED LIVES** of those who respond to the Lord Jesus Christ.

You can argue:

**CAUSE** and **EFFECT**,

**SOVEREIGNTY** and **FREE WILL**,

**SIN** and **SUFFERING**,

**INSPIRATION** and **AUTHORITY**

until you are blue in the face. The greatest argument of all for Christianity is the life that has been changed through a relationship to the Lord Jesus. The Apostle Paul is a great illustration of this as he is going to share with us in the remainder of this study.

Whereas:

in verse 1 we have seen the **MAN BECOME AN APOSTLE** through Jesus Christ,

in verse 10 his personal **MOTIVATION** is to please God,

in verses 11 & 12 the **"MESSAGE"** which he preaches came **"through a revelation of Jesus Christ,"** and now

we consider his **MANNER OF LIFE** as an evidence of the divine working behind the **"message which was preached."**

The **EVIDENCE** of a **SOVEREIGN WORK** is:

a man changed through a relationship with Jesus Christ.

1 Thessalonians 1:5 (DAV)

because our gospel came to you not only in word but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; even as you are knowing what sort of men we showed ourselves to be among you for your sakes.

The **BIG QUESTION** we now ask is:

**DOES IT REALLY WORK?**

**DOES A RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST REALLY CHANGE MY LIFE?**

Barclay says:

It was Paul's contention that the gospel he preached to men was no carried story and no second-hand tale; it had come to him direct from God. That was a big claim to make; a claim which demanded some kind of proof. And for proof Paul had the courage to point to himself. He pointed to the radical change in his own life. (i) *He had been a fanatic for the law.* The law had been his life; it had been the one object of his study to know it; it had been the one effort of his life to keep it. And now the one dominant centre of his life is *grace*. This man, who had with passionate intensity tried to earn God's favour and approval, was now content in humble faith to take what God had offered. He had ceased forever to glory in what he could do for himself; and had begun forever to glory in what God had done for him. (ii) *He had been the arch-persecutor of the Church.* He had devastated the Church. The word he uses is the word for utterly sacking a city; he had tried to make a scorched earth of the Church; and now his one aim and object, for which he was prepared to spend himself even to death, was to spread that same Church over all the world. Every effect must have an adequate cause. When a man is proceeding headlong in one direction and suddenly turns and proceeds headlong in precisely the opposite direction; when a man suddenly reverses all his values so that his life turns upside down, there must be some adequate explanation. For Paul the explanation was the direct intervention of God. God had laid His hand on Paul's shoulder and had arrested him in mid-career. "That," said Paul, "is the kind of effect which only God could produce."

p. 12

Barker & Kohlenberger say:

Paul has written that his Gospel did not have its source in a human being. But how could he prove this to the Galatian churches? The answer is by appeal to his personal history. Hence, in the remainder of the chapter Paul shows that the conditions of his life before his conversion, at his conversion, and within a reasonable period after his conversion were not such that he could have received the Gospel from others, particularly the Jerusalem apostles.  
p. 711

De Haan says:

The Gospel Paul preached was a new revelation from Heaven. He presumably received it during his three years of schooling in Arabia after his conversion. Here Paul was caught up into Paradise and received revelations from God, much of which he was not even permitted to utter. These truths could not be found in the Old Testament Scriptures, for then it would not have been a revelation. Neither did Paul receive his message of grace from the apostles, for they themselves did not know it fully. It was a special revelation, a new thing, not known before.  
p. 51

Gutzke says:

Paul emphasized that when he was preaching the gospel among them, the message he brought was not the kind of message that human beings would organize and bring. When anyone gets up to talk he is sure to have ideas; and the question for the listener is, Where did he get his ideas? Sometimes a man gets ideas out of his own heart; sometimes he gets an idea out of what he reads; and sometimes he gets an idea out of the revelation from God through His Word. When Paul said, "I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man," he meant he did not get it from any human source.  
p. 23

Harrison says:

If the Christian faith is not a revelation of God it is merely another religion; possibly the best, but still one of the many, on the human level, subject to man's alterations and altercations.

The Judaizers of Paul's day wanted to make the Christian faith a revised version of the Jews' religion, subject to its legal regulations and requirements. Then it would be *their* religion; they could keep it within the realm of their own reasonings. Their successors of our day are doing the same.

What the Christian faith needs is a return to its birthright—an authoritative revelation. Take it, or leave it alone!  
p. 31

Henry says:

One thing peculiar in the character of an apostle was that he had been called to, and instructed for, this office immediately by Christ himself. He had his knowledge of the gospel, as well as his authority to preach it, directly from the Lord Jesus.

p. 1839

Hogg & Vine say:

Since the revelation was from the Lord risen and ascended, the order of the name and title is in harmony with the context.

p. 37

Jamieson, Fausset & Brown say:

**12.** Translate, "For *not even* did I *myself* (any more than the other apostles) receive it from man, *nor* was I taught it (by man)." "Received it," implies the absence of labor in acquiring it. "Taught it," implies the labor of learning. **by the revelation of Jesus Christ**—Translate, "by revelation of [i.e., from] Jesus Christ." By His revealing it to me.

p. 1259

**Lenski says:**

These opening statements present the whole matter in a nutshell. No human agency of any kind was employed in transmitting the gospel to Paul, to equip him for preaching it as an apostle who was on a par with the Twelve. The means employed was direct, immediate revelation by no less a person than Jesus Christ himself, the same Jesus Christ who equipped the Twelve in the same way.  
p. 47

**MacArthur says:**

This was in contrast to the Judaizers, who received this religious instruction from rabbinic tradition. Most Jews did not study the actual Scriptures; instead, they used human interpretations of Scripture as their religious authority and guide. Many of their traditions not only were not taught in Scripture but also contradicted it . . .  
p. 1659

**Machen says:**

In this verse Paul is enunciating the thesis which he proceeds to prove in the first great division of the Epistle, running through to the end of the second chapter. His proof of the thesis may be divided into three parts. "In the first place," he says, "before my conversion I certainly did not receive my gospel from the original apostles, because I was then an active persecutor of the Church; and even after I was converted (suddenly and without human intermediation, by a sovereign act of God) I had in the early period no extensive contact with the apostles and so could not have become their disciple (Gal. 1:13-24). In the second place, when I did finally hold a conference with the pillars of the Jerusalem Church, they themselves recognized that the gospel had already been given to me by God and that they had nothing to add (Gal. 2:1-10). In the third place, so independent was I of the original apostles that on one occasion I could even withstand the chief of them to his face, though my objection was altogether to his practice and not at all to his gospel, which was the same gospel of divine grace as that which I myself preached" (Gal. 2:11-21).  
p. 59



McGee says:

Paul did not receive his apostleship by going to school. Neither did he receive it by being ordained or by hands being laid on his head. Paul's apostleship and gospel came directly by a revelation (*apokalupsis*) of Jesus Christ. The Book of Revelation, sometimes called the Apocalypse, is from the same word. The gospel is a revelation as much as is the Book of Revelation. The gospel was unveiled to the apostle Paul. He did not become an apostle through Peter, James, or John. He was an apostle by the direct call of Jesus Christ.  
p. 155

Pinnock says:

Having gotten that off his chest, Paul now begins to develop a historical argument in order to prove that he received his gospel from Christ and not from men. He addresses the Galatians as his brethren, indicating that while he criticizes their doctrine he loves them personally and still thinks them to be Christians. He is aware of the charge circulating from the false teachers that he was dependent for his message and ministry on the Jerusalem church. It was necessary to replace the fables with the facts. "I certify"—a declaration of unusual solemnity—"that the gospel which was preached by me was not man's gospel." He did not receive it in the way in which Jewish beliefs and practices were handed down. It was not something learned at school by rote and repetition under the instruction of notable teachers. And it certainly was not the invention of his own religious genius. "It came through a revelation of Jesus Christ." He was not educated into the kingdom of God. On the Damascus road God unveiled for him what was previously hidden and secret. At last Paul saw the true significance of Jesus, that He was the Messiah of Old Testament promise.  
p. 23

Ridderbos says:

The apostle now begins speaking about his own past, in order the better to demonstrate the nature of the gospel and of his own apostolic qualifications and independence. The historical data are not to be thought of as a sort of partial autobiography, but rather from the objective point of view of the issue at stake in this discussion.  
p. 58

Vos says:

This revelation apparently began with the vision on the Damascus Road and continued during the three years of seclusion in Arabia . . .

p. 30

Wuest says:

For, as for myself, neither did I receive it directly from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation given me by Jesus Christ.

p. 201

**THE EVIDENCE OF A SOVEREIGN WORK IS A MAN CHANGED THROUGH A RELATIONSHIP.**

(Signs of Life: Back to the Basics of Authentic Christianity by David Jeremiah) Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson. Copyright– David Jeremiah, 2007.

Consider, for instance, this piece of advice from William Law (1686-1761): “If anyone would tell you the shortest, surest way to all happiness and all perfection, he must tell you to make it a rule to yourself to thank and praise God for everything that happens to you. For it is certain that whatever seeming calamity happens to you, if you thank and praise God for it, you turn it into a blessing.”<sup>6</sup>

6. Roy B. Zuck, *The Speaker’s Quote Book: Over 4,500 Illustrations and Quotations for All Occasions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1997), 380.

p. 201

v. 13 For you heard of my manner of life formerly in Judaism that beyond measure I was persecuting the church of God and I was bringing destruction upon it.

The NET Bible translates verse 13:

For you have heard of my former way of life in Judaism, how I was savagely persecuting the church of God and trying to destroy it.

Peterson paraphrases verse 13:

I'm sure that you've heard the story of my earlier life when I lived in the Jewish way. In those days I went all out in persecuting God's church. I was systematically destroying it.

*The Bible Knowledge Commentary* titles verses 13 & 14:

EVENTS BEFORE PAUL'S CONVERSION

*The Bible Knowledge Commentary* then says:

By appealing to his personal history Paul established beyond any doubt that he did not learn his gospel from men. Beginning with his preconversion life, he showed that his only relationship to the church was that of a fanatic persecutor of it.

Whereas we have witnessed:

his **MOTIVATION** in verse 10,

his **MESSAGE** in verses 11 & 12, now we consider

his **MANNER OF LIFE** in verses 13 & following.

Paul told the Corinthians in:

2 Corinthians 5:17 (DAV)

Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old things passed away; behold new things have come.

He now verifies that statement from his own personal experience by sharing with us what he was before he met Christ on the Damascus road.

Here **PAUL TURNS TO HIS PAST** to recall how he once was. In coming to know Christ, this often helps us to appreciate what God has done in us and for us.

Acts 7:58 (DAV)

And having thrown him outside of the city, they began stoning him, and the witnesses put aside their outer garments at the feet of a young man named Saul.

Acts 8:1-3 (DAV)

Then on that day a great persecution arose against the church in Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. And some devout men buried Stephen, and made loud lamentation over him. But Saul kept on ravaging the church, entering house after house, dragging off both men and women, handing them over to prison.

Acts 9:1-2 (DAV)

Now Saul still breathing threat and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest, and asked from him letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, both men and women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.

No one among the Christians would question Saul's zeal with regard to his persecution of the church. He not only was persecuting, but he was also bringing destruction upon the church of God.

Paul found himself in his former days of Judaism consumed with a cause. That cause was crushing Christianity.

Anders titles this next section and then says:

**The Truth of the Gospel Presented (vv. 13-24)**

**SUPPORTING IDEA:** *Paul's gospel of grace is true because it dramatically changed his life.*

p. 8

Barker & Kohlenberger say:

The Judaism Paul practiced was an all-inclusive way of life, consuming his entire existence before his conversion. This brief reference to his former life is augmented by his lengthier descriptions elsewhere (see comments on Php 3:4-6). "You have heard" suggests that these facts were known to the Galatians long before any question had been raised about Paul's teaching.

p. 711

Bickel & Jantz say:

### Paul's Conversion, Call, and Hidden Years (1:13-17)

What Paul does next is a great example for the rest of us to follow. When someone questions the things we are saying about Jesus, we need to do what Paul does here and tell our story, specifically how Jesus *converted* us from our former life and *called* us to Himself.  
p. 36

Gutzke says:

When he says “beyond measure” he means “beyond all reason”; he was unreasonable in the things he did.  
p. 24

Hendriksen says:

**. . . For you have heard of my former manner of life when I practiced the Jewish religion.** Yes, the Galatians have heard, probably both from Paul himself and from others, about the manner in which he had conducted himself when his life was still being regulated by the principles which governed the lives of the Jews, unconverted to Christ.  
p. 50

Hogg & Vine say:

**beyond measure**—*kata hyperbolē*, a phrase Paul uses in 2 Cor. 1. 8 of the afflictions which he suffered at the hands of others, illustrating the principle that “whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap,” 6.7, below. He uses it also of the glory that awaits those who suffer for the Lord’s sake, 2 Cor. 4. 17, and of the sinfulness of sin, Rom. 7. 13, and of the superiority of love to all “gifts” or forms of service, however desirable, 1 Cor. 12. 31.  
p. 38

### Lightfoot says:

'My early education is a proof that I did not receive the Gospel from man. I was brought up in a rigid school of ritualism, directly opposed to the liberty of the Gospel. I was from age and temper a staunch adherent of the principles of that school. Acting upon them, I relentlessly persecuted the Christian brotherhood. No human agency therefore could have brought about the change. It required a direct interposition from God.'

pp. 80-81

### Luther says:

This passage does not contain doctrine. Paul adduces his own case for an example. "I have," says he, "at one time defended the traditions of the Pharisees more fiercely than any of your false apostles. Now, if the righteousness of the Law had been worth anything I would never have forsaken it. So carefully did I live up to the Law that I excelled many of my companions. So zealous was I in defense of the Law that I wasted the church of God."

p. 38

### MacArthur says:

From the three periods of his spiritual life—preconversion, conversion, and postconversion—Paul shows how certain events before he was saved, when he was saved, and after he was saved all prove his message was received from God.

p. 25

### McGee says:

Paul says, "For ye have heard of my conversation," that is, you have heard of my manner of life. Paul now calls the religion in which he was brought up the "Jews' religion." Paul was saved, not *in* Judaism, not *by* Judaism, but *from* Judaism.

p. 155

### Vos says:

Then the apostle goes on to show why his former life could not be a preparation for present ministry by way of a declaration of what he used to do. "Persecuted," "wasted," and "profited" are all in the Greek imperfect tense, indicating the long continuance of this mode of life. He kept on earnestly pursuing the church and kept on wasting it. Violent in his opposition to believers in Jerusalem (9:13), he was even responsible for the death of some (26:11). But his persecuting efforts extended to other towns besides Jerusalem, and Paul was on the way to Damascus to persecute believers there when God met him and changed his whole pattern of life (26:12-18).  
pp. 30-31

### Wuest says:

Paul's argument in this verse is that his early education is a proof that he did not receive the gospel from man. He was brought up in a rigid school of ritualism directly opposed to the liberty of the gospel. He was a staunch adherent of the principles of that school, and as such, relentlessly persecuted the Christian Church. No human agency could therefore have brought about the change. It required the direct interposition of God.  
p. 46



(The Barbarian Way: Soul Cravings by Erwin Raphael McManus) Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson. Copyright— Erwin Raphael McManus, 2005.

Would anyone actually choose to be a slave to ritual and legalism when he could have relationship and love? The answer, unfortunately, is yes. The reason religion works is that we believe in conditional love and doubt the existence of unconditional love.

I have no doubt that there are many of us who have run into religious leaders, church leaders, those who would speak on behalf of God and have held God hostage. It was our responsibility to raise the ransom to release his love. There are way too many people being duped into believing that if they give enough money, they will unlock and receive all that God has been withholding from them.

Some of us have come to our senses and realized we've been taken.

Whatever kind of love you can purchase, it isn't the love your soul longs for. If you have to buy love, it's not even worth the price. I know that many of us look to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John for our spiritual wisdom, but in this case John, Paul, George, and Ringo got it right—*can't buy me love*. p. (Entry #10)

(Abba's Child: The Cry of the Heart for Intimate Belonging by Brennan Manning) Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress. Copyright - Brennan Manning, 1994.

The words of Jesus, "What I want is mercy, not sacrifice" are addressed to men and women of religion across the boundaries of time. Eugene Kennedy commented, "Whoever in history has put the law, the regulation, the tradition ahead of the suffering person stands in the same field of grain [as the Pharisees] smugly making the same accusation against the innocent."

How many lives have been ruined in the name of narrow-minded, intolerant religiosity!  
p. 84

(My Utmost For His Highest by Oswald Chambers) Grand Rapids, MI:  
Discovery House. Copyright– Oswald Chambers Publications  
Association, 1992.

Have you been wondering why you are going through certain circumstances? In fact, it is not that *you* have to go through them. It is because of your relationship with the Son of God who comes, through the providential will of His Father, into your life. You must allow *Him* to have His way with you, staying in perfect oneness with Him.

The life of your Lord is to become your vital, simple life, and the way He worked and lived among people while here on earth must be the way He works and lives in you.  
(August 7)

v. 14 And I was blazing a pioneer path (advancing) in Judaism beyond many of my own age in my race being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers.

The NET Bible translates verse 14:

I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my nation, and was extremely zealous for the traditions of my ancestors.

Peterson paraphrases verse 14:

I was so enthusiastic about the traditions of my ancestors that I advanced head and shoulders above my peers in my career.

There are some pretty **DRAMATIC HOT WORDS** in verses 13 & 14:

“I was **PERSECUTING** the church of God,”

“I was **BRINGING DESTRUCTION** upon it,” and

“I **WAS BLAZING A PIONEER PATH.**”

The word “**(ADVANCING) IN JUDAISM**” could be translated:

**STRIKING FORWARD.**

He was doing this with such **INTENSE PASSION** that he was going:

**“BEYOND MANY OF MY OWN AGE IN MY RACE BEING MORE EXCEEDINGLY ZEALOUS FOR THE TRADITIONS OF MY FATHERS.”**

Where in verse 13 we are focusing on the **PRACTICAL**:

Paul is consumed with persecuting and **“BRINGING DESTRUCTION”** upon the church of God.

In verse 14, we look at the **PERSONAL**:

[Paul says] **“I WAS BLAZING A PIONEER PATH (ADVANCING) IN JUDAISM BEYOND MANY OF MY OWN AGE IN MY RACE.”**

Whereas in verse 13 you could see by his **ACTIONS** that he was:

**OPPOSED TO THE PROGRAM OF THE CHURCH.**

In verse 14 we see that in his **PERSONAL LIFE** he was:

very zealous in following the **TRADITION OF HIS FATHERS IN JUDAISM.**

Philippians 3:5-6 (DAV)

circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; according to the Law, a Pharisee; according to zeal, persecuting the church; according to righteousness which is in the Law, become blameless.

In verses 13 & 14 he has described the **PAST** and then something happens.

*The Bible Knowledge Commentary* says:

Standing before Herod Agrippa II, Paul summarized his frenzied oppression of Christians (cf. Acts 26:9-11). Coupled with this was the fact that he was also zealous to advance as a Pharisee **in Judaism**. He felt driven to excel over other **Jews** his **own age**. He loved the Law and was **zealous for the traditions of his fathers**. He no doubt spent much time studying the Law of Moses and the accompanying Rabbinical traditions. Thus who could accuse Paul of not being acquainted with the teachings of Judaism when he knew them better than the Judaizers?

### Anders says:

Not only did he persecute the church, Rabbi Saul advanced up the Jewish ranks. As a Pharisee, he had been one of the strictest Jews of his day (Phil. 3:4-6), stricter than even these legalistic teachers who now opposed the gospel of grace. Paul knew well the legalism that the false teachers were teaching the Galatians. Prior to his conversion he had been such a loyal legalist that he even tried to destroy Christianity (Acts 7).  
p. 8

### Bartlett says:

In using the expression, “the traditions of my fathers,” the apostle had reference, not to the Mosaic law as found in the Pentateuch, but to the hedge of more than six hundred human commandments which the old rabbis had built around the law for purposes, as they thought, of protection. Paul’s violence against the Christians was so excessive largely because in his mind the growth of the Church would sound the death knell of the Pharisaism to which he was so fanatically devoted.  
p. 26

### Gutzke says:

He was what could be called a zealous, eager, anxious, dedicated Jew. And, of course, he was wrong. Just being sincere isn’t enough. A person can be dedicated to his purpose and be entirely wrong, simply because he can be dedicated to something that is of his own mind.  
p. 24

Hendriksen says:

**. . . and I advanced in the Jewish religion more than many of my contemporaries among my people, and was a more ardent enthusiast for the traditions of my fathers.** Paul here pictures himself in his pre-conversion state as a dedicated enthusiast (cf. Phil. 3:6), filled with Pharisaic zeal. In fact, in the original the word “enthusiast” is literally “zealot.” Elsewhere Paul describes himself as persecuting “this Way unto death” (Acts 22:4), and as being “exceedingly mad” against the saints (Acts 26:11). Luke writes that Saul of Tarsus “was breathing murderous threats against the disciples of the Lord” (Acts 9:1).

This is not surprising, for, as he tells us here in Gal. 1:14, he had been “chopping ahead” *in the Jewish religion*, “hewing out a path” as a pioneer who is cutting his way through a forest, destroying every obstacle in order to advance.

p. 51

Hogg & Vine say:

The tense of the three words Paul uses is “continuous”, lit., “was persecuting”, “was making havock”, “was advancing”, indicating that each was being actively pursued, but that none were brought to completion.

p. 39

Lenski says:

By “my ancestral traditions” Paul refers to the traditions of the Pharisees, that whole hedge of 613 human commandments which the rabbis had built around the law, and which the Pharisees made it the business of their party to maintain at all costs. Here we should recall all the virulent clashes of Jesus with the Pharisees, for instance, the climax in Matt. 23:13, etc. Paul’s violence against the Christians was so excessive because the church meant the death of Pharisaism. A converted Jew and Pharisee might live in the old Jewish way and freely choose to observe parts of the Mosaic law; but he would certainly give up the traditions of the elders as being mere useless and dangerous “commandments of men.” These very traditions were the apple of Paul’s eye; for them he wished to tear the church of God to pieces.

pp. 53-54

Lightfoot says:

. . . ‘*of the traditions handed down from my fathers.*’ It is doubtful whether the law of Moses is included in this expression.  
p. 82

Lovett says:

**Fanaticism.** Paul argues that his past proves the miraculous nature of his call. He was raised in rigid ritualism, just the opposite of the liberty of the Gospel. By virtue of his training and temperament he was the fierce enemy of Christianity. He threw himself into the task of persecuting the churches with consuming fanaticism. Paul stood to lose everything by forsaking Judaism. Only a miracle could have made him equally zealous for Christ. No human agency could produce such a change. It took an act of God, a supernatural revelation of Christ Himself to transform this fanatical Jew into an apostle. With these words, he informs the Galatians his anti-jewish feelings do not stem from ignorance of Judaism, but from an all too intimate acquaintance with it. The “traditions” are not the Mosaic code, but the 600 or so Pharisaic traditions which had become engrafted on the Law.  
pp. 18-19

MacArthur says:

The Greek word for *advanced* means “to chop ahead,” much like one would blaze a trail through a forest. Paul blazed his path in Judaism (cf. Phil. 3:5, 6), and because he saw Jewish Christians as obstacles to its advancement, he worked to cut them down. ***exceedingly zealous***. Paul demonstrated this by the extent to which he pursued and persecuted Christians . . .  
p. 1659

MacArthur says:

**Ancestral traditions** refers to the body of oral teachings about the Old Testament law that came to have equal authority with the law. Commonly known as the Halakah, this collection of Torah interpretations became a fence around God's revealed law and all but hid it from view. Over a period of several hundred years it had expanded into a mammoth accumulation of religious, moral, legal, practical, and ceremonial regulations that defied comprehension, much less total compliance. It contained such vast amounts of minutiae that even the most learned rabbinical scholars could not master it either by interpretation or in behavior. Yet the more complex and burdensome it became, the more zealously Jewish legalists revered and propagated it.  
p. 27

Patrick & Lowth say:

. . . *Of the traditions of my fathers.*] He being a Pharisee, and speaking of the traditions not of the law, but of the fathers, seems to mean the oral traditions that sect so highly magnified, even above the law and the prophets (see note on Mark vii. 3, Acts xxvii. 17). Now there is reason to believe, that a man so exceeding zealous for the religion of the Jews, and so full of hatred to that of Christians would not have renounced a religion he had so great a reverence for, to embrace that he was so incensed against, without some more than human motive.  
p. 725

Ridderbos says:

He passed his contemporaries by, as though in competition with them. His zeal converged particularly upon *the tradition of (his) fathers*. This *tradition* refers to the so-called *halacha*, the compilation of ethical and other rules which took their point of departure from the Torah, and, by all sorts of addition and casuistical glossing, finally constituted a regimen for the whole of life . . .  
p. 61



Vos says:

“Traditions of my fathers” here refers not to the national law and customs of Israel but to the oral law or traditions, especially as held by the Pharisees. Saul’s family held membership in one of the strictest of the Pharisaical sects.  
p. 31

Wiersbe says:

He was persecuting the church and profiting and progressing in the Jewish religion. Everything was going his way, and he was rapidly being recognized as a spiritual leader in Israel.  
p. 32

Wuest says:

*Being more exceedingly zealous of the tradition of my fathers.* The word *traditions* is from *paradosis* which means literally “to give from the presence of,” thus “to give personally.” It signifies an act of transmission or that which is transmitted. In the New Testament it is used in the latter sense, without indicating the method of transmission or implying any lapse of time such as is usually associated with the English word *tradition*. The use of the word *fathers* makes it clear that Paul is not referring here to the Mosaic law, but to the instruction received from previous generations. This point is very important. Had Paul lived in his unsaved state in the thought world of the Mosaic economy instead of having his thinking dominated by the Pharisaic traditions, his act of receiving Christ as Saviour would have had some reasonable background, for the Mosaic institutions pointed to a need for Christ and also to the Christ who was needed, the moral law serving the first purpose, the Levitical sacrifices, the second. But Paul is at pains to show his Galatian converts that his salvation and his appointment to the apostleship broke completely with all his background and all his traditions.  
p. 48

(Axiom: Powerful Leadership Proverbs by Bill Hybels) Grand Rapids, MI:  
Zondervan. Copyright– Bill Hybels, 2008.

*Admitting your mistakes says something profound about your basic integrity as a leader.*

p. 211

*Leaders in every arena possess an internal quality-control mechanism, a longing for excellence that won't let them off the hook.*

p. 206

(Lone Survivor: The Eyewitness Account of Operation Redwing and the Lost Heroes of Seal Team 10 by Marcus Luttrell with Patrick Robinson)  
New York, NY: Back Bay Books / Little, Brown & Company.  
Copyright– Marcus Luttrell, 2007.

Remember the philosophy of the U.S. Navy SEALs: “I will never quit . . . My Nation expects me to be physically harder and mentally stronger than my enemies. If knocked down, I will get back up, every time. I will draw on every remaining ounce of strength to protect my teammates . . . I am never out of the fight.”

p. 235

Hearing of the traditions reminds me of **TRADITION** in “Fiddler on the Roof” when Tevye sings:

**TRADITION**

“Fiddler on the Roof”

[TEVYE]

Tradition, tradition! Tradition!  
Tradition, tradition! Tradition!

[TEVYE & PAPAS]

Who, day and night, must scramble for a living,  
Feed a wife and children, say his daily prayers?  
And who has the right, as master of the house,  
To have the final word at home?

The Papa, the Papa! Tradition.  
The Papa, the Papa! Tradition.

[GOLDE & MAMAS]

Who must know the way to make a proper home,  
A quiet home, a kosher home?  
Who must raise the family and run the home,  
So Papa’s free to read the holy books?

The Mama, the Mama! Tradition!  
The Mama, the Mama! Tradition!

[SONS]

At three, I started Hebrew school. At ten, I learned a trade.  
I hear they’ve picked a bride for me. I hope she’s pretty.

The son, the son! Tradition!  
The son, the son! Tradition!

[DAUGHTERS]

And who does Mama teach to mend and tend and fix,  
Preparing me to marry whoever Papa picks?

The daughter, the daughter! Tradition!  
The daughter, the daughter! Tradition!

...

<http://www.stlyrics.com/lyrics/fiddlerontheroof/tradition.htm>

v.15 But when it was the good pleasure of the one who set me apart from my mother's womb and called me through His grace to reveal His Son in me.

The NET Bible translates verse 15:

But when the one who set me apart from birth and called me by his grace was pleased

Peterson paraphrases verse 15:

Even then God had designs on me. Why, when I was still in my mother's womb he chose and called me out of sheer generosity!

In verse 15 there are **THREE KEY ACTIONS** that are a part and parcel of the apostle's conversion:

1. **"SET ME APART,"**
2. **"CALLED ME THROUGH HIS GRACE,"** and
3. **"TO REVEAL HIS SON IN ME."**

There will be a **FOURTH** and **FINAL** one in the next verse.

*The Bible Knowledge Commentary* titles verse 15 and the first part of verse 16 and then says:

EVENTS AT PAUL'S CONVERSION (1:15-16A).

**1:15-16a.** The contrast with the preceding (vv. 13-14) is striking and is occasioned by God's intervention in the life of Saul of Tarsus: **But . . . God.** Nowhere is this intervention more graphically described than in Acts 9. Here Paul simply enumerated three things God did for him. First, God **set him apart from birth.** Paul knew that God had providentially set him apart from birth and that all his life to this point was a preparation for his ministry as a proclaimer of the gospel of God's grace. Second, God **called Paul by His grace.** This is a reference to the time of Paul's salvation. He responded to God's efficacious call and received Jesus Christ as Savior. In Romans (8:30) Paul gave the sequence of God's work in salvation: "Those He predestined, He also called; those He called, He also justified; those He justified, He also glorified." Third, God **was pleased to reveal His Son in Paul.** Blinded as he had been to the deity of Jesus Christ and thinking that the Nazarene was a fraud, God gave Paul an outward vision of Christ on the Damascus Road and later an inner revelation concerning the full significance of the person and work of the Savior.

The word **"BUT"** forms the **CONTRAST** to what has been talked about in the previous two verses:

**"For you heard of my manner of life formerly."**

Now he shares what happened. This is his **CONVERSION.**

Acts 9:3-8 (DAV)

And it came about as he was proceeding on his journey, he was drawing near to Damascus. And suddenly there flashed around him a light out of heaven. And having fallen upon the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" And he said: "Who are you, Lord?" And He said: "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. But arise and go into the city, and it shall be told you what you must do." And the men who were traveling with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one. And Saul arose from the ground, but having opened his eyes, he was seeing nothing. And leading him by the hand, they brought him into Damascus.

That which:

he **PERSECUTED**, he now **CHERISHES**,

he **HATED**, he now **LOVES**,

he **ABHORRED**, he now **ADORES**.

**Psalm 76:10** (NIV)

Surely your wrath against men brings you praise,  
and the survivors of your wrath are restrained.

With the word **"BUT"** in verse 15, everything is changed:

**"WHEN IT WAS THE GOOD PLEASURE OF THE ONE WHO SET  
ME APART FROM MY MOTHER'S WOMB."**

**GOD'S FOREKNOWLEDGE** of Paul and his ministry reminds us of:

**Jeremiah 1:5** (NIV)

"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born  
I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations."

God the Father **"SET [HIM] APART FROM [HIS] MOTHER'S WOMB"** and  
Jesus Christ:

**REDEEMED** him,

**MADE** him an apostle, and

**GAVE** him a message and a ministry.

Romans 1:1 (DAV)

Paul, a bonds slave of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, having been set apart for the gospel of God,

Romans 8:29-30 (DAV)

Because whom He foreknew, He also decided upon beforehand those who were to be like his Son in appearance to the end, that He might by the first-born among many brethren. Now those whom He decided upon beforehand, these He also called; and those whom He called, these He also justified; and those whom He justified, these He also glorified.

Ephesians 1:4 (DAV)

Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him.

There are **FOUR THINGS** that stand out in verses 15 & 16. Paul is:

1. **CHOSEN,**
2. **CALLED,**
3. **CHANGED,** and
4. **CHARGED.**

1. He is **CHOSEN** by the fact that he is **"SET . . . APART FROM [HIS] MOTHER'S WOMB."**
2. He is **CALLED** through the **DAMASCUS ROAD** experience.
3. He is **CHANGED** to **REVEAL CHRIST IN HIM.**
4. He is **CHARGED** with a ministry to **"PROCLAIM HIM [CHRIST] AMONG THE GENTILES."**

**PAUL IS CHOSEN** by the fact that he is:

1. **“SET . . . APART FROM [HIS] MOTHER’S WOMB.”**
2. **“CALLED . . . THROUGH HIS GRACE.”**

The **RESPONSE** to this calling in Acts 9 was his **CONVERSION**. Wooed by the voice of the Spirit to respond to God’s provision for man’s sin in the love-gift of His Son, Jesus Christ, Paul responds to the call.

This calling was **“THROUGH HIS GRACE.”** It was not something **HE HAD TO DO** but something **HE WANTED TO DO** because of his love and desire for a relationship.

John 16:8-11 (DAV)

And having come, that One will convict the world concerning sin and concerning righteousness and concerning judgment; concerning sin, because they are not believing in me; and concerning righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you are no longer seeing me; and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.

**Barker & Kohlenberger say:**

No one with such a personality and with such zealous persecution of the church is about to be converted by another person or by human testimony. Only God himself could accomplish such a conversion. This is precisely what happened to Paul. Thus, Paul begins to speak of his conversion, stressing that God did it entirely apart from any human agent.  
p. 711



Bickel & Jantz say:

Then “something happened”—something so dramatic and earth-shattering that the only explanation is supernatural. Paul describes it in a simple sequence (1:15-16):

- God chose and called him even before he was born;
- God showed grace to him; and
- God revealed His Son to him.

p. 37

Dunnam says:

A key to understanding Paul’s letters is his conviction that it is not he who legitimates his gospel (“It is true because I say it; it is mine”), but it is the gospel that legitimates Paul (“I am an apostle because the gospel is true”). Paul did not separate the experience of coming to faith from knowing himself to be called by God to be an apostle to the Gentiles. His conversion and his call coincided (vv. 15–16).

Can we identify with that? Can we locate religious experiences in which the presence of God not only changed us, confronted us, challenged us, but out of which also came a call? The truth is that *in our acceptance of the revelation of Christ as our forgiving Savior is also the call to be His servants*. That call can be as explicit for us as Paul’s call to be an apostle to the Gentiles. We dare not forget the call!

p. 23

Fergusson says:

4. The Lord, by his working in us, and particular acts of providence towards us, is often making way for some hid design and purpose of his about us, which for the time we are ignorant of, but when it appeareth by the event, a wonderful contexture of providences making way for it, and tending to it, is also manifested with it: thus, “The Lord had separated Paul from the mother’s womb, to preach the gospel among the Gentiles;” whereby is meant, that God was, without Paul’s knowledge, preparing him for that office, by his providence about him from his very birth, as, that he was born of such parents, with such a bodily temper, fitted, as it would appear, to endure much travel and hardships, that he was educated at the feet Gamaliel, that he was a Pharisee, instructed in all human and divine learning according to the law, &c.

Galatians/Lecture Notes/Study#2 – Galatians 1:10-24.doc



Harrison says:

Paul's repeated "but" carries the antithesis of a crisis experience. No trends here; no groping for something better. He knows himself taken out of the column of self-effort (v. 3) and flesh-confidence to the column of God's beneficiaries in the bestowment of His righteousness.  
p. 32

Henry says:

There was something peculiar in the case of Paul, both in the suddenness and in the greatness of the change wrought in him, and also in the manner wherein it was effected. He had Christ *revealed in him*. It will but little avail us to have Christ revealed to us if he is not also revealed in us. It pleased God *to reveal his Son in him* that he should preach him among the heathen.  
p. 1839

Hogg & Vine say:

**But when**—up to this point in Paul's life all had been of man and by man; now God intervened, and everything was changed. The reference to his conversion, however, is quite incidental here; his purpose is to describe the course he pursued thereafter. Hence the connection is "when . . . immediately".

**it was the good pleasure of God**,—*eudokeō*, see *Thessalonians*, p. 61. These words are to be connected directly with "to reveal His Son in me". The intervention of God in the life of Paul was neither sought nor deserved by him; his salvation, alike in its purpose and in its accomplishment, was God.  
p. 40

Hogg & Vine say:

**and called me**—‘point’ tense, referring to what occurred on the Damascus road, Acts 9. 1-9.

**through his grace**,—cp. v. 6; this sums up in one comprehensive word, *a*, the motive of God in His own good pleasure, *b*, the purposive act of God in setting Paul apart before his birth, and, *c*, his actual call of God in time. And as in his case so also in that of every one partaking of the salvation provided in the gospel, ‘grace reigns’.

p. 41

Jamieson, Fausset & Brown say:

... “set me apart”: in the purposes of His electing love (cf. Acts 9:15; 22:14), in order to show in me *His “pleasure,”* which is the farthest point that any can reach in inquiring the causes of his salvation.

p. 1260

Jamieson, Fausset & Brown say:

**called me**—on the way to Damascus (Acts 9). **16. reveal his Son in me**—within me, in my inmost soul, by the Holy Spirit (ch. 2:20). Cf. II Corinthians 4:6, “shined in our hearts.”

p. 1260

Lange says:

... Behold the Fatherly Providence of God, who careth for us and marks out the course of our life from our mother’s womb. Think not that God hath passed thee over, and that thou must care for thyself. Fear God and trust Him, for what He has designed for us from our mother’s womb will be sure to come, and no one shall divert it from us.

p. 30

Lange says:

The grace of God, as free (without any merit of ours) as it is mighty in working—it can change the hearts so fully, that the man throws himself into the directly opposite course.—It is God, who defines our life's course: therefore, courage!—All depends on this, that the Son of God be revealed in us.

p. 31

Lightfoot says:

'Then came my conversion. It was the work of God's grace. It was foreordained, before I had any separate existence. It was not therefore due to any merits of my own, it did not spring from any principles of my own. The revelation of His Son in me, the call to preach to the Gentiles, were acts of His good pleasure. Thus converted, I took no counsel of human advisers. I did not betake myself to the elder Apostles, as I might naturally have done. I secluded myself in Arabia, and, when I emerged from my retirement, instead of going to Jerusalem, I returned to Damascus.'

p. 82

Lucado says:

It's often said, "The Lord works in mysterious ways." How true. Start with the gospel of grace. The enemies of God being offered unconditional pardon and adoption into the royal family of God? Heaven's most glorious riches lavished on the least deserving? It all reads like a fairy tale. And it gets even wilder. God announces his intention to partner with the likes of us so others can experience his love and grace. He could use angels or employ some other supernatural means. Instead he uses us. And what do we do? Mostly we stumble and fall and fail. Yet the Lord never gives up on us and never aborts his plan. He works in us and through us, despite us. The villains become the heroes. What a mystery! What a miracle! What a God we serve!

p. 19

**Luther says:**

“By the favor of God I, a wicked and cursed wretch, a blasphemer, persecutor, and rebel, was spared. Not content to spare me, God granted unto me the knowledge of His salvation, His Spirit, His Son, the office of an apostle, everlasting life.” Paul speaking.

God not only pardoned our iniquities, but in addition overwhelmed us with blessings and spiritual gifts. Many, however, are ungrateful. Worse, by opening again a window to the devil many begin to loathe God’s Word, and end by perverting the Gospel.

p. 40

**Luther says:**

“Did God call me on account of my holy life? Or on account of my pharisaical religion? Or on account of my prayers, fastings, and works? Never. Well, then, it is certain God did not call me on account of my blasphemies, persecutions, oppressions. What prompted Him to call me? His grace alone.”

p. 41

**MacArthur says:**

No human explanation or influence could account for the 180 degree turnaround in Saul’s life. He had been like a runaway freight train that crushes everything in its path. He had lost control of his life and was without restraint. His legalistic zeal had put him on a headlong course of destruction from which no natural force short of death could have deterred him. His apostolic calling could only have been supernatural and sovereign, completely apart from human testimony or persuasion (though he may have heard much truth from the Christians he captured).

pp. 27-28

McGee says:

The phrase “but when it pleased God,” in verse 15, means that Paul was called according to the will of God. The word *heathen* in verse 16 refers to Gentiles. Paul conferred not with flesh and blood—he didn’t get it from any man. Paul received the gospel directly from Jesus Christ.  
p. 155

Pinnock says:

In view of his former life in Judaism, the glorious conversion Paul experienced can be attributed only to the powerful grace of God. God acted to same him. Paul had been bent on destroying the church when God broke in and changed his entire life. Part of the testimony of every believer is thanksgiving for the grace of God that went before and quickened in him just as the right moment a desire for the things of God. God never ceases to seek us out despite all our sinful efforts to evade His love. He is one from whom literally nothing can separate us except our refusal of His grace. God’s calling is not irresistible. A man must respond to it. Later Paul would tell Agrippa, “I did not disobey the heavenly vision” (Acts 26:19).  
p. 24

Ridderbos says:

This demonstrates the complete independence of his apostleship and constitutes an unimpeachable refutation of his opponents, who were obviously trying to discredit him as a sort of “second-hand” apostle.  
p. 62

Ridderbos says further:

The emphasis falls on the sovereignty of the divine grace manifested to Paul.  
p. 62

Simpson says:

That is about the most we can say for our part. “By the grace of God I am what I am,” was the testimony of Paul, and the epitaph on the monument of William Carey may well take us all in:

A worthless, weak, and helpless worm,  
On Thy kind arms I fall.  
Be Thou my perfect righteousness,  
My Saviour and my All.”

p. 12

Wiersbe says:

Of course, there is a wrong kind of individualism that destroys instead of fulfills; but in a society accustomed to interchanging parts, it is good to meet a man like Paul, who dared to be himself in the will of God. But his freedom in Christ was a threat to those who found safety in conformity.

Paul’s enemies pointed to his nonconformity as proof that his message and ministry were not really of God. “He claims to be an apostle,” they argued, “but he does not stand in the apostolic tradition.” It is this misrepresentation that Paul answered in this section of Galatians. His nonconformity was divinely deliberate. God had chosen to reveal Himself in a different way to Paul.

p. 31

Wiersbe says:

But if the amazing change in Paul was not caused by the Jews or the church, *then who caused it?* It had to have come from God!

No matter how you look at it, the conversion of Paul was a spiritual miracle. It was humanly impossible for Rabbi Saul to become the apostle Paul apart from the miracle of God’s grace.

p. 33



Wuest says:

When Paul wrote, “When it pleased God . . . to reveal His Son in me that I might preach Him among the heathen” (1:14, 15), did he mean “reveal Him through me as I preached,” or “reveal Him to me in my inner being?” The answer is found in the Greek word translated “reveal,” . . . which means “to uncover something which had been previously hidden.” Our Lord had already been preached at the time Paul began His ministry and therefore was not hidden. Paul meant “to reveal His Son to Paul by an inward revelation.” The expanded translation offers “to give me an inward revelation of His Son.” pp. 197-8

(The Purpose of Christmas by Rick Warren) New York, NY: Simon & Schuster. Copyright– Rick Warren, 2008.

There is nothing you can do that will make God stop loving you. You could try, but you’d fail — because God’s love for you is based on his character, not your conduct. It’s based on who he is, not what you’ve done. The Bible says, “*Christ’s love is greater than anyone can ever know, but I pray that you will be able to know that love.*”<sup>6</sup>

6. Ephesians 3:19 NCV  
p. 23

(Fénelon: Selected Writings – The Classics of Western Spirituality Edited and translated by Chad Helms) Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press. Copyright – Chad Helms, 2006.

The pilgrim, after many dangers, sufferings, and exhaustion, arrives on the summit of a mountain and sees in the distance the city that is his home; it is the end of his journey and of all his pains. At first, he is seized by joy; he believes that he is already at the gates of that city and that only a bit of road is left for him—a straight shot. But, as he advances, the road seems longer and he finds difficulties that he had not foreseen at first sight. He now finds it necessary to descend the mountain by the precipices into the deep valleys where he loses sight of that city that he believed was almost within his grasp. It is now necessary for him to climb rugged rocks again. It is only by means of such pains and dangers that he arrives finally in that city that he had first believed to be so near to him and straight ahead.

It is the same with totally selfless love. At first sight it looks so easily attained. We think we have it already. We imagine that we are there already. At least, we see only a short distance between us and it—a straight shot. But the farther along we go toward this love, the more we feel that the road is long and painful. Nothing is more dangerous than to delude ourselves with this beautiful idea and to believe ourselves already practicing what we are not. He who would speculate about having achieved this love would tremble right to the marrow of his bones if God were to put him to the tests by which this love becomes purified and is achieved in Christian souls.  
p. 295

(The Me I Want to Be: Becoming God's Best Version of You by John Ortberg)  
Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. Copyright— John Ortberg, 2010.

Many people find Jesus pretty handy to have in the passenger's seat when they require his services.

*Jesus, I have a health problem, and I need your help.  
Something hard is going on at work, and I'd like it to be different.  
I'm feeling anxious, and I want you to give me peace of mind.  
I'm feeling sad, and I'd like a little hope.  
I'm facing death, and I want to make sure I'm going to heaven.*

But these people are not so sure they want Jesus driving, because if Jesus is behind the wheel, they are not in control anymore. If he is driving, they are not in charge of their wallet anymore. They no longer can simply say, "I'll give sometimes when I feel generous, but I reserve the right to keep what I want." Now it is Jesus' money.

When I let Jesus drive, I am no longer in charge of my ego. I no longer have the right to satisfy every self-centered ambition. Now it is his life. I am not in charge of my mouth anymore. I don't get to gossip, flatter, cajole, condemn, lie, curse, rage, cheat, intimidate, manipulate, exaggerate, or prevaricate anymore. Now it is not my mouth—it is his mouth.  
p. 61

Jesus does not come to rearrange the outside of our life the way we want. He comes to rearrange the inside of our life the way God wants.  
p. 62

But what about these?

*"You need to surrender. You are sinful, stubborn, and stiff-necked. You are self-centered and self-promoting, your own desires are very often self-serving, your ability to perceive your own sin is blinded by self-deception, you need to bend the knee, you need to submit your heart, you need to confess your sin, you need to surrender.*

*Surrender is a hard word.*

*I will name one person who I know for sure doesn't like to hear that: Me.*

p. 63

(A Year With Jesus: Daily Readings and Meditations by Eugene H. Peterson)  
San Francisco, CA: HarperCollins. Copyright– Eugene H. Peterson,  
2006.

*I want cleansing, dear Christ, quite as much as that leper. But in your way;  
what you will. I want my life to be shaped not by my demands, but by the sure  
but mysterious movement of your grace. Amen.*  
p. 91

(Choosing Gratitude: Your Journey to Joy by Nancy Leigh DeMoss with  
Lawrence Kimbrough) Chicago, IL: Moody. Copyright– Nancy Leigh  
DeMoss, 2009.

The thing we're after now is how to take what we know and make it what we  
live, how to make gratitude more than a perfunctory duty to be fulfilled.

I say we start by *making it our goal to have a heart that's as grateful  
toward God as the abounding grace He has poured into our life.*

That ought to keep us grateful for a long, long time. Grateful to God.  
p. 35

(199 Treasures of Wisdom on Talking with God compiled from the writings of  
Andrew Murray) Uhrichsville, OH: Barbour. Copyright– Barbour  
Publishing, Inc., 2007.

Nothing can hinder God's holy union with my heart except the decision of my  
heart to turn away from Him.  
(Quote 111)

(A Year With Jesus: Daily Readings and Meditations by Eugene H. Peterson)  
San Francisco, CA: HarperCollins. Copyright– Eugene H. Peterson,  
2006.

*I offer you my adoration and my obedience, Lord Jesus. By your life I discover  
redemption; in your words I find direction; through your resurrection I enjoy  
eternal life. All praise to your great name! Amen.*  
p. 256

(Days of Grace Through the Year by Lewis B. Smedes) Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press. Copyright– InterVarsity Press, 2007.

In one of the meditations you'll find here, Smedes writes, "the flagship word of the gospel is *grace*. No wonder, for *grace* is shorthand for God wishing us well."

p. 7

**v. 16 In order that I might proclaim Him among the Gentiles, at once I consulted (communicated) not with flesh and blood.**

The NET Bible translates verse 16:

to reveal his Son in me so that I could preach him among the Gentiles,  
I did not go to ask advice from any human being,

Peterson paraphrases verse 16:

Now he has intervened and revealed his Son to me so that I might joyfully tell non-Jews about him. Immediately after my calling—without consulting anyone around me

*The Bible Knowledge Commentary* says:

The purpose of this revelation was that Paul **might preach Him among the Gentiles**. The Book of Acts gives full account of Paul's ministry to the non-Jewish world on his missionary journeys. He became known as the apostle to the Gentiles . . . Thus Paul emphasized that both his conversion and his commission owed nothing to man but were of God. How else could such a transformation—from persecutor to preacher—be explained?

*The Bible Knowledge Commentary* titles verses 16-24 and then says:

EVENTS AFTER PAUL'S CONVERSION

**1:16b-17.** Paul had emphasized that he did not receive his message from men before or at the time of his conversion. Now he affirmed that he was free from human influences afterward as well. Though Paul met other Christians after his conversion he did not **consult** them on doctrine.

The little phrase “IN ORDER THAT” that begins verse 16 reveals to us the PURPOSE behind him:

being “set . . . apart,”

“called,” and

the “[revealing] of His Son [in him]” from verse 15.

It is with the PURPOSE:

“IN ORDER THAT I MIGHT PROCLAIM HIM AMONG THE GENTILES.”

There are FOUR KEY THOUGHTS here in this process of CONVERSION:

1. “set . . . apart from my mother’s womb,”
2. “[to be] called. . . through His grace,”
3. “to reveal His Son in me,” and

all for the PURPOSE:

4. “I MIGHT PROCLAIM HIM AMONG THE GENTILES.”

Whereas in verse 15 he is:

CHOSEN,

CALLED, and

CHANGED.

In verse 16 he is:

CHARGED.

He not only chose the apostle by setting him apart and be calling him by His Spirit to conversion “through His grace,” but at that very moment of conversion he began a good work to bring about a change. That change is:

“to reveal His Son in me.”

This is the His **PURPOSE** for each of us.

Galatians 4:19 (DAV)

My little children, of whom again I am experiencing the pains of birth until which time Christ should be formed in you.

Philippians 1:6 (DAV)

Being sure of this very thing, that He who began in you a good work will bring it to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

It is not us trying to live for Christ as a Christian but it is Christ revealing and living His life through us. All that He asks of us is our **AVAILABILITY**.

Colossians 2:9-10 (DAV)

Because in Him there is dwelling all the fullness of the divine nature bodily. And you are in Him, having been filled full [in Him] who is the head of every ruler and authority;

When we recognize in a clear statement like this the purpose of the Father for each of us, it enables us to cooperate with His purpose by being **SUBMISSIVE** and **OBEDIENT** to the work of His Spirit in our lives with the express purpose of revealing His Son in us.



(Help Lord My Whole Life Hurts by Carole Mayhall) Colorado Springs, CO:  
NavPress. Copyright – Carole Mayhall, 1988.

The story is told of an overweight woman who went to a diet center. After weighing her, the director took her to a mirror and on the mirror outlined her figure in the proportions he wanted her to be. Weeks of intense dieting and exercise followed, and weekly (and no doubt weakly!) she would stand in front of that mirror, discouraged because her ample proportions wouldn't fit within the confines of the silhouette. So with renewed determination, she dieted and exercised until one day, standing before that mirror, she was conformed to its image. We will never be conformed to the image of Christ totally until we reach glory. But He is in the business of helping us shape up.  
p. 154

(Evidence for Joy: Unlocking the Secrets of Being Loved, Accepted and Secure by Josh McDowell and Dale Bellis)

With his characteristic wit, C.S. Lewis says regarding the process of our change into Christlikeness: "And that is what Christianity is all about. This world is a great sculptor's shop. We are the statues and there is a rumor going round the shop that some of us are some day going to come to life."  
p. 174

(The Master Plan of Discipleship by Robert E. Coleman)

It was obvious to all. Theophilus of Antioch, writing in the second century, noted:

They practice continence, observe monogamy, guard chastity, and wipe out injustice, destroying sin with its root. With them justice is lived out, laws are kept, and faith is witnessed to by deeds. . . . They consider truth supreme. Grace protects them. Peace shields them. The Holy Word leads them. Wisdom teaches them. Life is decisive. God is their King.

pp. 131-32

The next phrase in verse 16 gives us the **PURPOSE** behind all of these previous works on God's part:

**"IN ORDER THAT I MIGHT PROCLAIM HIM AMONG THE GENTILES."**

Paul is:

**CHOSEN,**

**CALLED,**

**CHANGED,** and now

**CHARGED** to a mission.

He is going to be carrying the Gospel to the Gentile world.

Paul is:

**CHOSEN,**

**CALLED,** and

**CHANGED** for a purpose.

That **PURPOSE** is to **CHARGE** him with taking the message to the Gentiles.

The ministry and service with which the Apostle Paul was charged was to proclaim Christ among the Gentiles.

The Scriptures make it quiet clear that God has gifted each of us as we come into His family so that we might have a ministry in the lives of others. For the Apostle Paul, it is a ministry to the Gentiles. Here we have a Jew talking to the Gentiles about the Person of Christ.

(Born to Reproduce by Dawson Trotman) Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress.  
Copyright – NavPress, 1986.

A person is born again when he receives Jesus Christ. “But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God . . . Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God” (John 1:12, 13)—the new birth. It is God’s plan that these new babes in Christ grow. All provision is made for their growth into maturity, and then they are to multiply—not only the rich or the educated, but all alike. Every person who is born into God’s family is to multiply.

In the physical realm when your children have children, you become a grandparent. Your parents are then great-grandparents, and theirs are great-great-grandparents. And so it should be in the spiritual.  
p. 13

Are you producing? If not, why not? Is it because of a lack of communion with Christ, your Lord, that closeness of fellowship which is part of the great plan? Or is it some sin in your life, an unconfessed something, that has stopped the flow? Or is it that you are still a babe? “For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again . . .” (Hebrews 5:12).  
p. 19

I believe that is why Satan puts all his efforts into getting the Christian busy, busy, busy, but not producing.

Men, where is your man? Women, where is your woman? Where is the one whom you led to Christ and who is now going on with Him?  
p. 24

Where is your man? Where is your woman? Where is your boy? Where is your girl? Every one of us, no matter what age we are, should get busy memorizing Scripture. In one Sunday school class a woman 72 years of age and another who was 78 finished The Navigators Topical Memory System. They then had something to give.

Load your heart with this precious Seed. You will find that God will direct you to those whom you can lead to Christ. There are many hearts ready for the Gospel now.  
p. 35

(Welcome to the Family by Stephen Brown) Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1990.

What do you think would have happened if after Jesus gave the Great Commission Peter had raised his hand and said, “Lord, I’m only a fisherman. Don’t you think we should establish a seminary before we go out making disciples? We just don’t know enough.” If that had happened, if that had been the attitude of any of the disciples, the Christian faith would never have gotten off the ground. If that is your attitude, you won’t either.  
pp. 121-22

(Honest to God? Becoming an Authentic Christian by Bill Hybles) Grand Rapids: Zondervan Books. Copyright - Bill Hybels, 1990.

There are many unbelievers who know exactly what they need to do to become a Christian. The one thing they lack is someone like you to soften their heart through your acts of service. Be that person for them!  
p. 132

Paul **CONCLUDES** verse 16 by saying:

**“AT ONCE I CONSULTED (COMMUNICATED) NOT WITH FLESH AND BLOOD.”**

**NEGATIVELY**—he did not consult **“WITH FLESH AND BLOOD.”**

This was as a result of being:

**CHOSEN,**

**CALLED,**

**CHANGED,** and

**CHARGED.**

I think it will help us to remember that in Acts 9 Saul of Tarsus, after he had gotten the proper papers, was taking a 130-mile trip northeast of Jerusalem to Damascus to ferret out Christians. He was on the outskirts of Damascus when he saw the great light.

In order that he might make a complete defense of this being of divine origin from the beginning to the end, he states **NEGATIVELY** in verse 16:

**“I CONSULTED (COMMUNICATED) NOT WITH FLESH AND BLOOD.”**

In other words, he did not go consult and communicate with any other human being about what had happened in his life.

**Barker & Kohlenberger say:**

There are three things Paul says God did for him. (1) God set him apart “from birth.” Paul’s words parallel Jeremiah’s description of his own calling (Jer 1:5) and may consciously reflect it. Paul emphasizes God’s grace in electing him to salvation and to the apostleship. (2) God called Paul “by his grace.” This is a reference to his conversion, the moment in which Paul became aware of God’s work in him. (3) God “reveal[ed] his Son in [Paul]” (v. 16). This phrase probably refers to the sudden realization of what God had done in Paul’s life by placing the life of the Lord Jesus Christ within Paul. God did this in order that he might become the apostle to the Gentiles. p. 712

**De Haan says:**

This was something brand new. Up until now the message of God had been to one nation, Israel. The only way a Gentile could be saved was by becoming a Jew. He must become a proselyte, submit to the rite of circumcision and keep the Law of Moses. And now Paul comes with this message of free grace. Salvation is now extended to all. The Gentiles can be saved by grace without circumcision, without the law, without becoming Jews. No wonder it caused a stir of opposition. p. 52

Gaebelein says:

On the road to Damascus the God who had separated him called him by His grace, and the Son of God in His glory was revealed to him as well as in him, so that He might preach Him to the Gentiles.

p. 207

MacArthur says:

Not only was Christ revealed *to* Paul on the Damascus Road, but *in* him as God gave him the life, light, and faith to believe in Him.

p. 1659

v. 17 Neither went I up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia and again returned to Damascus.

The NET Bible translates verse 17:

nor did I go up to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before me, but right away I departed to Arabia, and then returned to Damascus.

Peterson paraphrases verse 17:

and without going up to Jerusalem to confer with those who were apostles long before I was—I got away to Arabia. Later I returned to Damascus,

*The Bible Knowledge Commentary* says:

If he had been uncertain about the gospel, he could readily have gone **to Jerusalem** for a seminar with the **apostles**, but he did not. Rather he **went immediately into Arabia**. It is doubtful that he went there to evangelize but rather to be away from men and alone with the Lord for personal study, meditation, and to receive further revelation. This zealous student of the Law now pondered the meaning of his conversion and looked for the things concerning Christ in the Old Testament . . . The product of these days in Arabia was the Christian theology that Paul explained in his epistle to the Romans.

The point of Paul's declaration is clear. He formed his theology not by consulting with others, but independently as he sought God's guidance.

There are **TWO THINGS** that he did not do. **NEGATIVELY**:

1. Back in verse 16 he says:

**“I consulted (communicated) not with flesh and blood.”**

2. Now in verse 17 he adds:

**“NEITHER WENT I UP TO JERUSALEM TO THOSE WHO WERE APOSTLES BEFORE ME.”**

But **POSITIVELY** he says:

1. **“I WENT AWAY INTO ARABIA”** and
2. **“AGAIN RETURNED TO DAMASCUS.”**

**“ARABIA”** was probably about 50 to 75 miles east of Damascus.

I am sure he had some **PALM SPRINGS RETREAT** in the desert where he spent time alone with the Lord, as John did when he was exiled on the Isle of Patmos.

We do not know exactly how long he spent in Arabia, although he tells us in verse 18 that he remains in Damascus and Arabia for a period of three years total.

I think during this time that he was away in Arabia, he was getting things together with the Lord and beginning to understand the Lord’s plan and purpose for his life in Jesus Christ.



Many of God's greatest saints and men He used did post-graduate work on the backside of the desert alone with God:

**MOSES** was on the backside of the desert herding sheep in order that he might be taught how to lead people.

**ELIJAH**, because of his fear of Jezebel, leaves and runs for his life. When he came to Beersheba and Judah, he left his servant there will he himself went a day's journey into the desert.

**1 Samuel 26:2** (NIV)

So Saul went down to the Desert of Ziph, with his three thousand chosen men of Israel, to search there for David.

**CHRIST** Himself was 40 days and nights in the wilderness when He was tempted by the devil.

His speaking to us prepares us for speaking to men.

Paul had to have some time to think out the tremendous things that had happened to him. He wanted to speak to God before he spoke to men.

After this time away in Arabia, alone with the Lord, he returned again 50 to 75 miles west back to Damascus, the place where it all started.

I am sure the remainder of the time in Damascus was spent in fellowshiping with Ananias in the Lord and proclaiming Christ.

Acts 9:20-25 (DAV)

And immediately in the synagogues he began proclaiming Jesus, that “He is the Son of God.” And all those hearing were continuing to be amazed, and were saying: “Is not this man he who made havoc among those who in Jerusalem are calling upon this name, and who has come here for this purpose in order that having bound them he might bring them before the chief priests?” And Saul kept increasing in strength and confounding the Jews who lived at Damascus, proving that this very person is the Christ. Now when many days had elapsed, the Jews plotted together to do away with him. But their plot became known to Saul. And they were also watching the gates both day and night so that they might put him to death; but his disciples took him by night, and let him down through an opening in the wall, having lowered him in a basket.

## Barclay says:

(i) First, he went away to *Arabia*. He went away to be alone. He did that for two reasons. First, he had to think out this tremendous thing that had happened to him. Second, he had to speak with God before he spoke to men. He had to be sure of himself and sure of God. There are so few who will take the time to face themselves and to face God. And how can a man face the temptations, the stresses and strains of life unless he has thought things out and thought them through, unless he is sure?

p. 14

## Bartlett says:

. . . he went into Arabia. How long he remained there we have no way of knowing, but it must have been at least a year. There can, however, be little question as to the purpose of this retreat. Following the revolutionary upset in his way of thinking and his whole outlook upon life, brought about by his conversion on the Damascus road, Paul felt himself in desperate need of a protracted period of seclusion for prayer and meditation. He required uninterrupted leisure for formulating and organizing the materials of the message he was commissioned to carry to the Gentiles.

p. 29

De Haan says:

Paul, in these verses, goes to great pains to show that his message was not from man. He did not receive it from the apostles, but directly from Heaven. After his conversion, instead of going for instruction to Jerusalem and the apostles, he went into Arabia, for three years of fundamental training. Here he received the revelation of the grace of God to the Gentiles. It was not the message of the apostles to Israel, but a new revelation of the mystery of the Body of Christ as composed of both Jew and Gentile. At the close of Paul's three years in Arabia he returned to Damascus. It was only after these three years in Arabia that Paul met Peter and James. He was with them only two weeks, but they could not add anything to what Paul had received.

p. 56

Dunnam says:

It is only from this letter that we know Paul went to Arabia. He doesn't tell us why he went or how long he stayed. It is reasonable to conjecture that however clearly the call of God had come, Paul felt a need for reflection and preparation to enter into his apostleship. Separating himself from human contact, he left the city and its distractions and sought the quietness of the desert. He needed to be alone, *to be sure of himself*—to confirm that this was no flash-in-the-pan experience, no emotional upheaval without deep meaning. A time for extended prayer, meditation, and reflection was even more imperative because of his former security and self-confidence in his Judaism. What was happening to him could not be a mere addition to his old religion. This was new wine that would require a new wineskin.

Not only did he need to be sure of himself, he needed *to be sure of God*. To take the time to face ourselves and to face God is essential for all, but evaded by most. We often symbolize being alone with ourselves and with God, in order to face ourselves and God openly and honestly, as spending time in the desert.

pp. 26-27

### Ironside says:

Have you ever noticed how many of God's beloved servants had their finishing courses in the university of the wilderness? When God wanted to fit Moses to be the leader of His people He sent him to the wilderness. He had gone through all the Egyptian schools, and thought he was ready to be the deliverer of God's people. When he left the university of Egypt he may have said, "Now I am ready to undertake my great lifework." But, immediately, he started killing Egyptians and hiding them in the sand, and God says, "You are not ready yet, Moses; you want a post-graduate course." He was forty years learning the wisdom of Egypt, and forty years forgetting it and learning the wisdom of God, and finally, when he received his post-graduate degree he was sent of God to deliver His people.

Elijah had his time in the wilderness. David had his time there. Oh, those years in the wilderness when hunted by King Saul like a partridge on the mountainside. They were used to help fit him for his great work. And then think of our blessed Lord Himself! He was baptized in the Jordan, presenting Himself there in accordance with the Word of God as the One who was to go to the cross to fulfil all righteousness on behalf of needy sinners, and the Holy Spirit like a dove descended upon Him. He then went into the wilderness for forty days, and prayed and fasted in view of the great ministry upon which He was to enter. Then He passed through that serious temptation of Satan, emerging triumphant, and went forth to preach the gospel of the kingdom.  
pp. 52-53

### Lange says:

Ver. 17 sq. RIEGER:—God foresaw all that would afterwards be brought against Paul, therefore He so ordered his ways that men could not say: he received his authority from the chief Apostles at Jerusalem; nor yet on the other side: he does not presume to go to Jerusalem; he joins himself with no one. God's good Spirit always brings us out into a plain way.

Even the apparently slight, accidental circumstances of our lives stand under God's direction; if we know it not at the time, yet afterwards we do.  
p. 31

**Luther says:**

Here Paul relates that immediately upon being called by God to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, he went into Arabia without consulting a single person. "When it had pleased God," he writes. "I did not deserve it. I had been an enemy of Christ. I had blasphemed His Gospel. I had shed innocent blood. In the midst of my frenzy I was called. Why? On account of my outrageous cruelty? Indeed not. My gracious God who shows mercy unto whom He will, pardoned all mine iniquities. He bestowed His grace upon me, and called me for an apostle."

p. 39

**Machen says:**

Paul may have engaged in preaching activity in Arabia; but we are inclined to think that the time which he spent there was predominantly a time of meditation and prayer, and of the study of the Old Testament Scriptures (which never ceased to be for Paul the authoritative Word of God) in the light of the wonderful new revelation that he had received from Christ.

p. 73

**Pinnock says:**

What Paul did in "Arabia" is a matter for conjecture. No doubt it was a time of reflection on the messiahship of Jesus and what that meant for a child of the Old Testament.

p. 25

**Ridderbos says:**

However, by now withdrawing into Arabia, a thinly inhabited terrain, extending from the Euphrates in the west far to the north, he immediately turned away from all human influence in order to reflect in solitude on the matter of his calling, and on the turn which his life was now taking.

p. 65

(The Best of A. W. Tozer by A. W. Tozer, compiled by Warren W. Wiersbe)  
Camp Hill, PA: Wing Spread Publishers. Copyright– Zur Ltd., 1978,  
2000.

If you would follow on to know the Lord, come at once to the open Bible expecting it to speak to you. Do not come with the notion that it is a *thing* which you may push around at your convenience. It is more than a thing, it is a voice, a word, the very Word of the living God.

*Lord, teach me to listen. The times are noisy and my ears are weary with the thousand raucous sounds which continuously assault them. Give me the spirit of the boy Samuel when he said to Thee, "Speak, for Thy servant heareth." Let me hear Thee speaking in my heart. Let me get used to the sound of Thy voice, that its tones may be familiar when the sounds of earth die away and the only sound will be the music of Thy speaking voice. Amen.*  
pp. 26-27

### **Missions: A Willingness to Be Lonely**

The unoccupied fields of the world await those who are willing to be lonely for the sake of Christ.

—Samuel Zwemer, U.S. missionary (1867-1952)

*Samuel Zwemer, The Unoccupied Mission Fields of Africa and Asia*

© 2010 PreachingToday.com & Christianity Today International

(PreachingToday.com)

v. 18 Then, after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to become acquainted with Cephas and I remained with him fifteen days.

The NET Bible translates verse 18:

Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas and get information from him, and I stayed with him fifteen days.

Peterson paraphrases verse 18:

but it was three years before I went up to Jerusalem to compare stories with Peter. I was there only fifteen days—but what days they were!

*The Bible Knowledge Commentary* says:

Paul then reinforced his previous argument by asserting that he waited **three years** after his conversion to go **to Jerusalem**, time that was spent in Arabia and Damascus . . . Would he have waited that long if he had needed theological instruction from the disciples? When he did go, it was **to get acquainted with Peter**, that is, it was a personal visit lasting only **15 days**. Paul then left because of a plot against his life (cf. Acts 9:29). Meanwhile Paul had had a meaningful time coming to know the noted apostle, but there is no suggestion that Peter gave him theological instruction or apostolic endorsement for his ministry.

After Paul had been let down through the window in the wall in a basket under the cover of darkness, he began his 130-mile trip southwest to Jerusalem to spend 15 days with Peter.

I will always remember one of my students who said, “If I had 3 years to get it together without interruptions, I would be pretty good too.”

The little word **“THEN”** which occurs here in verse 18, then in verse 21 and then again in Galatians 2:1 helps us to follow Paul’s argument as he recounts his post-conversion activity.



God foresaw all that was going to happen to the apostle in the coming days and directed his life even in the smallest of circumstances.

The apostle tells us that **“AFTER THREE YEARS”** of residing in Damascus, he decided to make the trip to Jerusalem.

The **PURPOSE** for going to Jerusalem was to:

**“BECOME [BETTER] ACQUAINTED WITH CEPHAS [OR PETER].”**

He says that he **“REMAINED WITH HIM FIFTEEN DAYS.”**

What a **TWO-WEEK RETREAT** this must have been like in Jerusalem as these two men, the great apostle to the Jews and the great apostle to the Gentiles, talked together about what the Lord had been doing in Paul's life.

Here was the **CHIEF PERSECUTOR** of the Gospel and the **CHIEF PROPAGATOR**, meeting together and sharing with regard to their oneness in Jesus Christ.

Barker & Kohlenberger say:

Why did Paul go to meet Peter? No doubt they talked about Christ, and Paul used the occasion to enrich his already firm grasp of the Gospel by the stories Peter could tell of the life and actual teachings of Jesus. Paul undoubtedly valued knowing these things. But the wording of the text in Galatians suggests that Paul's main purpose for this trip was to “get acquainted” . . .

p. 712



v. 19 But another of the apostles I did not see except James the brother of our Lord.

Don't you just love the phrase:

**"OUR LORD."**

It dramatically tells us that Paul certainly has come to know Jesus Christ as Savior. He meets one of the men who was part of the earthly family of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ.

The NET Bible translates verse 19:

But I saw none of the other apostles except James the Lord's brother.

Peterson paraphrases verse 19:

Except for our Master's brother James, I saw no other apostles.

*The Bible Knowledge Commentary* says:

Of the rest of the apostles Paul met only **James, the Lord's brother**, a leader in the church in Jerusalem (cf. Acts 12:17).

It is interesting to note that in the recorded resurrection appearances these are the **SAME TWO INDIVIDUALS** with whom our Lord had private sessions. It was this James who also wrote the epistle of James.

During the time that Paul was in the city of Jerusalem, he spent most of his time with Peter, but while he was there he says he did get some time with James who was the leading figure in the church in Jerusalem.

I can imagine that the apostle is concerned about getting prayer support for his ministry from this great man of prayer.

The James that we are talking about here is **NOT THE JAMES FROM AMONG THE TWELVE.**

There are **THREE MEN** with the name James that we need to keep separate:

1. **JAMES, THE SON OF ZEBEDEE**—he was the brother of John the apostle, and was one of the twelve. He is called one of the “Sons of Thunder.” He was also on the executive committee along with Peter and John.
2. **JAMES, THE SON OF ALPHEUS**—he was also the brother of Matthew and one of the twelve.
3. **JAMES, THE BROTHER OF OUR LORD**—he is assumed by man to be the oldest child of the union of Mary and Joseph. He had the nickname of “camel knees” because so much time was spent on them in prayer. He truly was a powerful prayer warrior and leader in the early church. He is the one who is also responsible for writing the epistle of James. What a fragrant man of God James must have been.

Radmacher, Allen & House say:

The apparent reference to **James, the Lord’s brother**, as being one of **the other apostles** indicated that the word *apostles* was not always restricted to “the Twelve” (Matt. 10:1-4; 1 Cor. 15:5). This sequence of 1 Cor. 15:7-9 where **James**, Paul, and “all the apostles” are listed as having seen the resurrected Christ, implies that Paul may have accepted **James** as possessing at least partly parallel apostolic qualifications to his own . . .  
p. 1518

v. 20 But the things which I am writing to you, behold in the sight of God,  
I am not lying.

I AM TELLING THE TRUTH, THE WHOLE TRUTH, AND NOTHING BUT  
THE TRUTH SO HELP ME GOD!

The NET Bible translates verse 20:

I assure you that, before God, I am not lying about what I am writing  
to you!

Peterson paraphrases verse 20:

(I'm telling you the absolute truth in this.)

*The Bible Knowledge Commentary* says:

To stress the truth of what he had just said—no doubt in the face of a Judaizer's charge that he had misrepresented his relationship to the apostles—Paul put himself on oath, calling God to be his witness that he was telling the truth.

Here the apostle speaks his **OATH**. It is an oath in the sight of God, calling God to witness that he has a clear conscience in what he is recounting here following his conversion:

**“BEHOLD IN THE SIGHT OF GOD, I AM NOT LYING.”**

Acts 24:16 (DAV)

In view of this, I also am doing my best to be having a conscience  
which does not cause offense to God and to men at all times.

Paul is making a detailed sketch here of his activity after conversion to show that the Judaizers are wrong in their accusations. He feels so strongly about this that he finds it necessary to take an oath before God that he is not lying in what he is saying.

What really matters in the end is **NOT WHAT MEN SAY WE ARE** but **WHAT GOD KNOWS WE ARE.**

2 Corinthians 1:23 (DAV)

But I am calling God as witness to my soul, that sparing you I came no more to Corinth.

Anders says:

**1:20.** The heat of the argument with his opponents becomes apparent here. Paul swears an oath in the presence of God.  
p. 9

Bickel & Jantz say:

Paul even takes an oath—"I declare before God that what I am writing to you is not a lie"—to reinforce his point. Paul wants to absolutely contradict the false reports from the false teachers that he has received his gospel and his authority to preach from the apostles in Jerusalem.  
p. 40

De Haan says:

Paul affirms his stand with an oath, and calls God to witness the divine authority of his words. But while the Jews at Jerusalem opposed and rejected Paul, the Gentile believers rejoiced.  
pp. 56-57

Eadie says:

. . . “but as to the things which I am writing to you,”—the reference being to the assertions just made—his visit to Jerusalem, and his brief residence with Peter, and that during that fortnight he saw only him and the Lord’s brother.  
p. 52

Fergusson says:

The apostle, having to do with adversaries, and some also amongst the seduced Galatians, who gave not much credit to his word, asserteth the truth of all he hath said, and is to say, in matter of fact, through the whole epistle, and confirmeth it by an oath, where, according to the use of Scripture elsewhere, he expresseth but one principal part of an oath, to wit, a confession of God’s presence and power to witness and judge the truth, and includeth the other parts, such as our invocation of God to bear witness that we speak the truth, 2 Cor. i. 23; and imprecation, that God would be a judge to take revenge upon us if we lie, . . .  
p. 25

Hendriksen says:

Since the apostle is well aware of the fact that his own representation of the facts is going to be challenged by the enemies, he adds: **Now take note: with respect to the things which I am writing to you, in the presence of God (I affirm) that I am not lying.** Here *he solemnly affirms*, with an appeal to God’s own presence and omniscience, that what he says is true.  
p. 62

Hendriksen says:

A good rule for each person to follow is, therefore, this one:

“When you think, when you speak, when you read, when you write,  
When you sing, when you walk, when you seek for delight,—  
To be kept from all wrong both at home and abroad,  
Live always as under the eye of your God.”

(First lines of a poem  
of anonymous authorship)

p. 63

Lange says:

God is a witness of the truth, and a righteous judge of all lies. Can you in all that you say, call on God as the witness of its truth? In all cases this ought to be possible, although it is seldom needful or proper.

p. 31

Lenski says:

This solemn assurance is called forth by the insinuations and falsifications of the Judaizers who used all that they had heard about Paul in order to discredit him. Some of the Galatians might ask: “Is that really all there was to that visit in Jerusalem?” Paul gives the most solemn answer as if he were before God’s own judgment seat. He is writing them the facts, the entire truth without a falsehood.

p. 62

Lovett says:

**LIE NOT.** The Judaizers had no doubt told the Galatians Paul spent a long time with Peter and received all he knew from him. Paul swears his visit was no longer than 15 days, and that he saw no one save Peter and James. Paul wanted to see Peter, the apostle to the Jews. Why? Peter told him of the passion, betrayal, trials, agony of the garden, and the horror of the cross, the resurrection events, the forty days, the ascension and the baptism of fire in the upper room. Paul told of his Damascus road experience and the things which happened in the desert as he fellowshiped with the risen Lord. The two men must have wept and prayed much together.

p. 21

Lucado says:

## INSPIRATION

Though God's people often forgot their God, God didn't forget them. He kept his word . . .

God didn't give up. He never gives up.

When Joseph was dropped into a pit by his own brothers, God didn't give up.

When Moses said, "Here I am, send Aaron." God didn't give up.

When the delivered Israelites wanted Egyptian slavery instead of milk and honey, God didn't give up.

When Aaron was making a false god at the very moment Moses was with the true God, God didn't give up.

When only two of the ten spies thought the Creator was powerful enough to deliver the created, God didn't give up.

When Samson whispered to Delilah, when Saul roared after David, when David schemed against Uriah, God didn't give up.

When God's word lay forgotten and man's idols stood glistening, God didn't give up.

When the children of Israel were taken into captivity, God didn't give up.

He could have given up. He could have turned his back. He could have walked away from the wretched mess, but he didn't.

He didn't give up.

When he became flesh and was the victim of an assassination attempt before he was two years old, he didn't give up.

When the people from his own hometown tried to push him over a cliff, he didn't give up.

When his brothers ridiculed him, he didn't give up.



When he was accused of blaspheming God by people who didn't fear God, he didn't give up.

When Peter worshiped him at the supper and cursed him at the fire, he didn't give up.

When people spat in his face, he didn't spit back. When the bystanders slapped him, he didn't slap them. When a whip ripped his sides, he didn't turn and command the awaiting angels to stuff that whip down that soldier's throat.

And when human hands fastened the divine hands to a cross with spikes, it wasn't the soldiers who held the hands of Jesus steady. It was God who held them steady. (From *Six Hours One Friday* by Max Lucado)  
pp. 15-16

Luther says:

Was it necessary for Paul to go under oath? Yes. Paul is reporting personal history. How else would the churches believe him? The false apostles might say, "Who knows whether Paul is telling the truth?" Paul, the elect vessel of God, was held in so little esteem by his own Galatians to whom he had preached Christ that it was necessary for him to swear an oath that he spoke the truth. If this happened to Paul, what business have we to complain when people doubt our words, or hold us in little regard, we who cannot begin to compare ourselves with the Apostle?  
p. 43

MacArthur says:

To give his readers the greatest possible confidence in what he was **writing**, Paul made a common Jewish vow: **I assure you before God that I am not lying**. That statement, along with many others, contradicts the claims of liberal interpreters that Paul was a sincere and highly capable leader but that many of his teachings reflect only his personal ideas and preferences. If that were so, he would either have been terribly self-deluded or else a shameless liar. He was either an authoritative and completely reliable spokesman for God or he was a sham.  
p. 31

Ridderbos says:

In this verse Paul confirms everything he has said with an oath. After all, nothing less is at stake than the validity and independence of his apostleship. And he defends these against the attacks made against him by an appeal to the highest Judge.

p. 69

Vos says:

In verse 20 the apostle calls the Galatians to witness that he is telling the truth. The nature of the appeal shows the intensity of his desire either to maintain independence of human teachers or to answer malicious attacks hurled against him. Probably both were necessary.

p. 35

Wuest says:

The strength of Paul's language is explained by the insidious falsehoods of the Judaizers regarding his supposed dependence upon the Twelve. The logical inference is that they had circulated statements to the effect that Paul had spent much time at Jerusalem with the apostles there. He denies this charge most vehemently.

Translation. *But the things which I am writing to you, behold, before the face of God, I am not lying.*

p. 54

(The Essential Wooden: A Lifetime of Lessons on Leaders and Leadership by John Wooden & Steve Jamison) New York, NY: McGraw-Hill. Copyright– John Wooden & Steve Jamison, 2007.

My father was a remarkable person. In large part self-schooled (just like Abe Lincoln), he was drawn to the classics in literature and poetry. He had keen intelligence, common sense, and resilient physical and emotional strength. Dad possessed a near-photographic memory. I still smile when I remember him sitting in the kitchen working on a crossword puzzle—in ink. Rarely did he make a mistake.

He also had a practical kind of wisdom. For example, he constantly reminded his four young sons to abide by what he called his “two sets of three”—simple directives for good behavior: His first set dealt with integrity:

1. Never lie.
2. Never cheat.
3. Never steal.

Dad’s second set of three was advice on how to behave when things don’t work out right:

1. Don’t whine.
2. Don’t complain.
3. Don’t make excuses.

pp. 6-7

(A Year With Jesus: Daily Readings and Meditations by Eugene H. Peterson) San Francisco, CA: HarperCollins. Copyright– Eugene H. Peterson, 2006.

*God, your spirit searches the depths in me: discovers sin, whets an appetite for righteousness, prompts obedience, kindles faith. Search me deeply; know me thoroughly, in Jesus. Amen.*

p. 234

(Lectures to My Students by C. H. Spurgeon) Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust. Copyright– Unknown, 2008.

We must remember that we are very much looked at. Men hardly have the impudence to break the law in the open sight of their fellows, yet in such publicity we live and move. We are watched by a thousand eagle eyes; let us so act that we shall never need to care if all heaven, and earth, and hell, swelled the list of spectators. Our public position is a great gain if we are enabled to exhibit the fruits of the Spirit in our lives; take heed, brethren, that you throw not away the advantage.

p. 17

### **The Clocks**

A man died and went to heaven.

As he stood in front of St. Peter at the Pearly Gates, he saw a huge wall of clocks.

The man asked, “What are all those clocks?” St. Peter answered, “Those are Lie-Clocks. Everyone on earth has a lie-clock. Each time you tell a lie, the hands on your clock will move.”

“Oh,” said the man, “whose clock is that?”

St. Peter responded, “That’s Mother Teresa’s clock. The hands have never moved, indicating that she never told a lie.”

That’s incredible,” said the man. “And whose clock is that?” St. Peter responded, “That’s Abraham Lincoln’s clock. The hands have moved twice, telling us that Abe told only two lies in his life.”

“Where’s Obama’s clock?” asked the man.

“Obama’s clock is in Jesus’ office. He’s using it as a ceiling fan.”

(Received via email from Linda Graves August 10, 2009)

(Faith & Doubt by John Ortberg) Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. Copyright—John Ortberg, 2008.

Some of you will even try to flirt with the officer to avoid getting the ticket. Someone in my own marriage—not I—has actually done such a thing.  
p. 109

(The Me I Want to Be: Becoming God's Best Version of You by John Ortberg) Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. Copyright—John Ortberg, 2010.

True confession: Have you ever spoken about someone, in their absence, with words you would not have used if they were present? Mark Twain was once riding a train home from Maine after three weeks of highly successful fishing—even though the state's fishing season was closed. He bragged about his huge but illegal catch to the only other passenger in the club car. The passenger grew increasingly glum during Twain's story. When Twain finally asked him who he was, the stranger explained he was the state game warden.

“Who are you?” the warden asked.

“To tell the truth,” Twain said, “I'm the biggest liar in the whole United States.”  
p. 133

**v. 21 Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia.**

The NET Bible translates verse 21:

Afterward I went to the regions of Syria and Cilicia.

Peterson paraphrases verse 21:

Then I began my ministry in the regions of Syria and Cilicia.

*The Bible Knowledge Commentary* says:

After his abbreviated visit in Jerusalem Paul worked for an extended time in **Syria and Cilicia, . . .**

Acts 9:28-30 (DAV)

And he was with them going in and going out in Jerusalem, speaking out boldly in the name of the Lord. And he was talking and arguing with the Jews who had adopted Greek culture, but they were attempting to put him to death. But when the brethren learned of it, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him away to Tarsus.

He ministered in the city of Jerusalem for a period of time and then, when the other disciples saved his life, they took him 60 miles northwest to the seaport town of Caesarea where he took the 300-mile trip north by boat to Tarsus, his hometown in Cilicia.

Acts 11:23-26 (DAV)

Who, having come and having seen the grace of God, rejoiced and was encouraging them all with purpose of heart to keep on remaining true to the Lord; for he was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith; and there were added to the Lord many people. Then he left for Tarsus to search for Saul. And when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. And it came about that for a whole year they were gathered together with the church and taught many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.

Barnabas was dispatched north to Antioch for the ministry there. Knowing that Paul was in Tarsus, he made the 120-mile trip northwest to get Saul and made the 120-mile trip southeast back to Antioch with Paul to begin working there in this very fruitful field of ministry.

Have you ever noticed that the Apostle Paul went to the hardest places?

From **ARABIA** he went to **DAMASCUS** where he was headed before he met the Lord.

Then he goes to **JERUSALEM** where the center of Judaism is located.

Then from there he goes **HOME (TARSUS)**, which also would be very difficult.

He reminds me of a missionary candidate who was being interviewed by a board to go to the foreign field. The question was posed to him “Where do you feel called?” And he, the candidate, simply replied that he did not feel called to any particular place. He only hoped that whatever assignment would be given him might be the toughest one that they had.

(A Year With Jesus: Daily Readings and Meditations by Eugene H. Peterson)  
 San Francisco, CA: HarperCollins. Copyright– Eugene H. Peterson,  
 2006.

### He Did . . .

When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

MATTHEW 1:24-25

It is one thing to have dreams, another thing to act on them. Joseph both dreamed and acted—a perfect model of obedience. He affirmed the action of the Holy Spirit in his closest personal relationship, he refrained from interfering in the divine process, and he did what he was told.

Why is Joseph important in your life?

*When I observe the action of this mature, free man, Lord—the reckless involvement, the disciplined restraint, the plain obedience, and all of it woven together in one coherent righteous action—I know that I, too, can live in daring obedience before you. Amen.*

p. 9



(The Red Sea Rules: Ten God-Given Strategies for Difficult Times by Robert J. Morgan) Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson. Copyright– Robert J. Morgan, 2001.

Dale Carnegie began his famous book *How to Stop Worrying and Start Living*, published in the 1940's, by describing a medical student who was profoundly anxious about the future—graduating from school, establishing a practice, making a living. He was working himself into a nervous breakdown. Then one spring day in 1871 he read twenty-one words from the writings of Thomas Carlyle that changed his thinking. The young man later became the most famous physician of his era. He organized the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine and became Regius Professor of Medicine at Oxford. He was knighted by the king of England, and he became the subject of numerous biographies.

His name was Sir William Osler, and these are the words he read: “Our main business is not to see what lies dimly at a distance, but to do what lies clearly at hand.”<sup>7</sup>

Jesus taught us in the Sermon on the Mount: “So, don’t be anxious about tomorrow. God will take care of your tomorrow too. Live one day at a time” (Matt. 6:34 TLB).

7. Dale Carnegie, *How to Stop Worrying and Start Living* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1948), 1.  
p. 63

(365 Days of Hope: Encouragement for Those Facing Loss, Pain, and Disappointment by Joni Eareckson Tada and Dave & Jan Dravecky)  
Federal Way, WA: World Vision. Copyright– Joni Eareckson Tada, Dave Dravecky, and Jan Dravecky, 2005.

Where's my cloud? Wouldn't it be easier to follow God if we had something like that big cloud to lead us? The good news is that we do! The God who inhabited that cloud now inhabits me! Because Jesus is my Savior, God's Spirit lives within me.

Wherever God dwells and reigns, there is peace, joy, and wisdom—the overflow of his character. When God's peace evaporates and his joy disappears, I know it's time to "check my position" with him. Have I been going off on my own? Have I been calling my own shots? Have I been depending on my own strength, my own abilities? No wonder I feel so empty! That's about the time I need to push for an immediate change in leadership. I need to wait on him, just like the Israelites waited for that cloud. I need to lay down my plans and hand over the reins of control so he can lead once again . . . and I can follow.

*Dave Dravecky*

(January 25)

v. 22 And I was still unknown by face to the assemblies of Judea which are in Christ.

The NET Bible translates verse 22:

But I was personally unknown to the churches of Judea that are in Christ.

Peterson paraphrases verse 22:

After all that time and activity I was still unknown by face among the Christian churches in Judea.

*The Bible Knowledge Commentary* explains the problem of Paul being personally “UNKNOWN”:

After his abbreviated visit in Jerusalem Paul worked for an extended time in **Syria and Cilicia**, which is why he **was personally unknown to the churches of Judea** (cf. Acts 9:30; 11:25). He was not commissioned for this ministry by the apostles, and because of the distance between him and Jerusalem he could not have been under their authority or subject to their oversight.

Acts 9:26-27 (DAV)

And when he had come to Jerusalem, he was trying to associate with the disciples and all were fearing him, not believing that he was a disciple. But Barnabas taking an interest in him brought him to the apostles and described to them how on the road he saw the Lord, and that He spoke to him, and how in Damascus he spoke out boldly in the name of Jesus.

Although on this particular encounter in Jerusalem the apostle was able to move about freely with Barnabas' recommendation, many of the churches in the outlying areas never had an opportunity to get to know Paul because he was soon taken north to Caesarea and sent back to Tarsus.

Paul is saying that he has had no contact with these churches in and around Jerusalem who are in Christ. He was “UNKNOWN [TO THEM] BY FACE.” But, of course, they had heard of him by reputation from the reports that were received.

Dunnam says:

The closing verses of this first chapter provide a key to an understanding of Paul's ardent commitment, his freedom, and his total commitment to the centrality of Christ. A prepositional phrase is the key to his thought: “*in Christ*.” Whereas normally this phrase designates the experience of an individual, here Paul uses it in relation to the church—“*the churches of Judea which were in Christ*.” This mystical quality of the fellowship makes the church more than a human institution. When the fellowship is in and with Christ, the church is the body of Christ, a divine institution against which the gates of hell cannot prevail.  
pp. 28-29

## Missing the Journey for the Destination

We find it difficult to maintain a commitment to both this world and the next, to this life and the next.

A friend of mine uses the analogy of a busload of tourists en route to the Grand Canyon. On the long journey across the wheat fields of Kansas and through the glorious mountains of Colorado, the travelers inexplicably keep the shades down. Intent on the ultimate destination, they never even bother to look outside.

As a result, they spend their time arguing over such matters as who has the best seat and who's taking too much time in the bathroom.

The church can resemble such a bus, says my friend. We should remember that the Bible has far more to say about how to live during the journey than about the ultimate destination.

Some people of faith tend to be either/or. . . .

[But] the world does not need either/or people . . . . Rather, we need both/and Christians, people devoted to God's creatures and God's children as well as to God, and as committed to this life as to the afterlife, to this city as to the heavenly city.

*Philip Yancey, "On the Grand Canyon Bus," Christianity Today (September 2008), p. 102*

© 2010 PreachingToday.com & Christianity Today International

(PreachingToday.com)

(Collected Verse of Edgar A. Guest by Edgar A. Guest) Chicago, IL:  
Contemporary Books, Inc. Copyright - Contemporary Books, Inc., 1934.

### ***Success***

I hold no dream of fortune vast,  
Nor seek undying fame.  
I do not ask when life is past  
That many know my name.

I may not own the skill to rise  
To glory's topmost height,  
Nor win a place among the wise,  
But I can keep the right.

And I can live my life on earth  
Contented to the end,  
If but a few shall know my worth  
And proudly call me friend.  
p. 196

(Found: God's Will: Find the Direction and Purpose God Wants for Your Life  
by John MacArthur) Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook. Copyright—  
John MacArthur, 1977.

The more you study the Word of God, the more it saturates your mind and life. Someone is reported to have asked a concert violinist in New York's Carnegie Hall how she became so skilled. She said that it was by "planned neglect." She planned to neglect everything that was not related to her goal.  
p. 30

v. 23 Indeed they were only hearing from time to time that the one who used to persecute us at one time now is proclaiming the faith which at one time he was ravaging.

The NET Bible translates verse 23:

They were only hearing, "The one who once persecuted us is now proclaiming the good news of the faith he once tried to destroy."

Peterson paraphrases verse 23:

There was only this report: "That man who once persecuted us is now preaching the very message he used to try to destroy."

*The Bible Knowledge Commentary* says:

The churches in Judea by this time had almost forgotten Paul. The only **report** they had recently **heard** was that this one who had once **persecuted** the church was **now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy**. This would of course include the doctrine of justification by faith apart from circumcision or works.

They were getting reports about the tremendous transformation in Paul's life. At one time persecutor—now proclaiming that which he was persecuting. Evidence of his conversion was the change in his total life and ministry. He makes a complete about-face and is heading in a new direction.

Philemon 4-5 (DAV)

I am thanking my God always, remembering you on the occasions of my prayers, hearing of your love and faith which you are having towards the Lord Jesus and unto all the saints;

The **FINAL WORD** in verse 23 is:

**“RAVAGING.”**

When you **GO BACK** to verses 13 & 14 you end up with **FOUR VERY COLORFUL WORDS** to describe Paul’s preconversion days:

1. **“persecuting,”**
2. **“bringing destruction,”**
3. **“blazing a pioneer path,”** and
4. **“RAVAGING”** or destroying.

(Grace Notes: Daily Readings with a Fellow Pilgrim by Philip Yancey) Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. Copyright– Someone Cares Charitable Trust, 2009.

I pray that some day I will attain something like the holy simplicity these nuns embody. In the morning I ask for the grace to live for God alone, and yet when the phone rings with a message that strokes my ego, or when I open a letter from an irate reader, I find myself slipping back—no, tumbling back—to a self-consciousness in which other people, or circumstances, determine my worth and my serenity. I sense my need for transformation and keep going only because that sense is the one sure basis for potential change.

*Reaching for the Invisible God (83-84)*

p. 206

(The Best of A. W. Tozer by A. W. Tozer, compiled by Warren W. Wiersbe) Camp Hill, PA: Wing Spread Publishers. Copyright– Zur Ltd., 1978, 2000.

In the meantime he will have attained a place of soul rest. As he walks on in meekness, he will be happy to let God defend him. The old struggle to defend himself is over. He has found the peace which meekness brings.

p. 31



(The Treasures of Fanny Crosby by Fanny Crosby) Uhrichsville, OH:  
Barbour. Copyright– Barbour Publishing, Inc., 2003.

Blessed Redeemer, Thou art my refuge,  
Under Thy watch-care, safe I shall be;  
Gladly adoring, joyfully trusting,  
Still I am coming closer to Thee.

p. 66

(Fear Not: For I Am With You Always by Max Lucado) Nashville, TN:  
Thomas Nelson. Copyright– Max Lucado, 2009.

With perfect knowledge of the past and perfect vision of the future, he loves  
you perfectly in spite of both.

COME THIRSTY

p. 191

(The Beautiful Fight: Surrendering to the Transforming Presence of God  
Every Day of Your Life by Gary Thomas) Grand Rapids, MI:  
Zondervan. Copyright– Gary L. Thomas, 2007.

I sensed God saying, “I have waited forty-two years for this day.”  
I cried at the impact of those words.

p. 123

(Morning and Evening by Charles H. Spurgeon) Peabody, Massachusetts:  
Hendrickson. Copyright – Unknown.

A godly man often grows best when his worldly circumstances decay. He who  
follows Christ for his bag is a Judas; they who follow for loaves and fishes are  
children of the devil; but they who attend him out of love to Himself are His  
own beloved ones. Lord, let me find my life in *Thee*, and not in the mire of  
this world’s favour or gain.

p. 724

**v.24 And they were glorifying God [for that which they found] in me.**

The NET Bible translates verse 24:

So they glorified God because of me.

Peterson paraphrases verse 24:

Their response was to recognize and worship God because of me!

*The Bible Knowledge Commentary* says:

And in the face of this report the Judean believers **praised God because of Paul**. This was a telling blow to the false teachers. The Jewish Christians in Judea rejoiced in the same gospel the Judaizers sought to undermine.

Here Paul gives the **RESPONSE** of the Christians in Judea to the change in Paul's life. They were:

**"GLORIFYING GOD"**—the One who was responsible for the change—  
**"FOR THAT WHICH THEY FOUND IN ME."**

**HAS ANYONE GLORIFIED GOD FOR WHAT THEY FOUND IN YOU TODAY?**

(If God is in Charge . . . by Stephen W. Brown.) Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers. Copyright - Stephen W. Brown, 1983.

Have you ever seen a baby when the baby gets its first taste of something sweet? The poor baby has had it up to his ears in yucky cereal and bland milk. You can see it in the baby's face at mealtime: "Oh, great, the same old stuff, and I'm tired of it. I don't see how I can spend the rest of my life eating this awful stuff." But a little applesauce on his tongue makes the whole world light up. With every bit of body language he can muster, the baby says: "I was created for applesauce!"

A Christian's learning his or her place (i.e., glorifying God in everything) is a lot like the baby's first taste of applesauce. There is a sense of rightness, a sense of rest, a sense of reality that doesn't come from any other source.

Christians are unhappy because they try to play a role for which they were not created. They were created to glorify God. It is the desire to *be* God rather than to *worship* God that creates an almost unbearable tension in the Christian. An elderly pastor once made a good point: "It is very hard to glorify God and yourself at the same time."  
p. 63

Our text in verse 24 says:

**"THEY WERE GLORIFYING GOD."**

And why were they?

**"[FOR THAT WHICH THEY FOUND] IN ME."**

What was it that they found in the apostle?

That **TAKES US BACK** to verse 15:

**"But when it was the good pleasure of one who set me apart from my mother's womb and called me through His grace to reveal His Son in me."**

It is the attractiveness of the Lord Jesus Christ indwelling the Apostle Paul that caused these saints to be **"GLORIFYING GOD."**

(The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People: Restoring the Character Ethic by Stephen R. Covey). New York: Simon and Schuster. Copyright - Stephen R. Covey, 1989.

In the words of George Bernard Shaw,

This is the true joy in life—that being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one. That being a force of nature, instead of a feverish, selfish little clod of ailments and grievances complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy. I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community and as long as I live it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can. I want to be thoroughly used up when I die. For the harder I work the more I live. I rejoice in life for its own sake. Life is no brief candle to me. It's a sort of splendid torch which I've got to hold up for the moment and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations.  
p. 299

Galatians 1:15-16 (DAV)

But when it was the good pleasure of the one who set me apart from my mother's womb and called me through His grace to reveal His Son in me. In order that I might proclaim Him among the Gentiles, at once I consulted (communicated) not with flesh and blood.

Anders says:

**MAIN IDEA REVIEW:** *Paul, the messenger of grace, is trustworthy because he received his message directly from God and it dramatically changed his life.*  
p. 9

Barclay says:

In these verses Paul is seeking to defend and prove the independence of his gospel. He got it from no man; he got it from God. He consulted no man; he consulted God. But as he wrote he unconsciously delineated himself as the man who had the courage to witness to his change and to preach his gospel in the hardest places of all.  
p. 15

Bartlett says:

Whatever causes men to glorify God is worth all it costs in hardship, danger and sacrifice.  
p. 31

Bickel & Jantz say:

Another strong confirmation of Paul's authority is the way his message was received among the churches in Judea. The Jewish Christians in this region, who didn't know Paul personally, gave glory to God because Paul was now preaching the gospel of grace and faith, the "very faith he tried to destroy."  
p. 40

Calvin says:

This was an evident proof that his ministry was approved by all the churches of Judea, and approved in such a manner, that they broke out into admiration and praise of the wonderful power of God. Thus he indirectly reproves their malice, by shewing that their venom and slanders could have no other effect than to hide the glory of God, which, as the apostles admitted and openly acknowledged, shone brightly in the apostleship of Paul.  
p. 45

Dunnam says:

To the degree that we are as Christ, to that degree God can be glorified *in* us.  
p. 29

Eadie says:

Not only did his conversion give them occasion to glorify God, but they glorified God working in him, and in him changing their malignant and resolute persecutor into a bold enthusiastic preacher. They were thankful not simply because persecution had ceased, but they rejoiced that he who did the havoc was openly building up the cause which he had laboured to overthrow. On hearing of a change in so prominent and terrible an adversary—a change not leading merely to a momentary check or a longer neutral pause, but passing into unwearied activity, self-denial, and apostolical pre-eminence—they glorified God in him, for in him God’s gracious power had wrought with unexpected and unexampled might and result.  
p. 57

Fergusson says:

10. The more that God hath made it convincingly, and from clear evidences, manifest to the conscience of his people that a work is owned and approved by him, and hath drawn an acknowledgment from them to that purpose unto his own praise, it aggregeth [aggravateth] the sin of those the more who would afterwards question or deny that work to be his: for the apostle’s scope, in part, is, to aggregate the sin of his adversaries, who denied him to be an apostle immediately sent from Jesus Christ, and that the doctrine preached by him was the truth of God; from this, that the churches in Judea were convinced of the contrary, and had acknowledged so much long since, to the praise of God, by giving glory unto him on Paul’s behalf; so that those Galatians and the false apostles were guilty of obscuring the glory of God, shining forth in his conversion and office, which was already acknowledged by others: “And they glorified God in me.”  
pp. 26-27

Hendriksen says:

Paul concludes: **And they**—all of them together—**were glorifying God on my account.** They were not *suspicious*, as those of Jerusalem had been at one time. (Acts 9:26), nor *indifferent* (cf. Rev. 3:16), nor *unforgiving*, nor even *merely happy*. On the contrary, fully realizing that whatever comes from God must be returned to him in the form of praise and thanksgiving, and that this circle must never be broken, they declared the glorious character of God's marvelous attributes: power, sovereignty, wisdom, grace, mercy, etc., shown in saving a wretch, a relentless persecutor, and transforming him into a flame-tongued herald of the gospel! What depth of feeling must have overwhelmed Paul's soul as he wrote these last words: "They were glorifying God *on my account* (literally "in me")!"  
pp. 64-65

Henry says:

The very report of this mighty change in him, as it filled them with joy, so it excited them to give glory to God on the account of it.  
p. 1839

Hogg & Vine say:

. . . they ascribed the credit for the transformation of an erstwhile persecutor into a zealous advocate, not to the man in whom the change had been wrought, but to the One Who had accomplished it, God, to Whose Name the emphasis is given by its position at the end of the sentence.  
p. 54

Ironside says:

"And they glorified God in me." Truly, Paul's conversion was a divine, sovereign work of grace, and praise and glory redounded to the One who had chosen, commissioned, and sent him forth.  
p. 56

Jamieson, Fausset & Brown say:

“Having understood the entire change, and that the former wolf is now acting the shepherd’s part, they received occasion for joyful thanksgiving to God in respect to me” [THEODORET]. How different, he implies to the Galatians, *their* spirit from *yours*!

p. 1261

Lenski says:

Instead of running down Paul as the Judaizers in Galatia did all these churches went on glorifying God “in connection with me,” . . . All these, mark it, were Jewish churches who also had received all their news about Paul from Jerusalem itself, the very seat of the Twelve. What more can the Galatians ask?

Thus by a simple recounting of the historical facts Paul sets before the Galatians what they should never have allowed anyone to make them doubt: he had his gospel directly from God and Christ, by revelation and not at secondhand, the identical gospel of all the other apostles, of all the churches in Judea.

p. 65

Lightfoot says:

‘He does not say,’ adds Chrysostom, ‘they marveled at me, they praised me, they were struck with admiration of me, but he attributes all to grace. They glorified God, he says, in me.’

p. 86

Lucado says:

Father, you amaze me! Thank you for the beauty and power of the gospel. I open my heart to you and invite you to work in me. Transform me. Make my life a continual tribute to your goodness and grace.

p. 19



Luther says:

“And,” Paul adds, “these churches glorified God in me, not because I taught that circumcision and the law of Moses should be observed, but because I urged upon all faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.”

p. 43

Pinnock says:

They were thankful to God that the one who formerly had persecuted them so savagely had been converted and was now actively engaged in preaching the gospel. They glorified God because of Paul. This is important to Paul’s argument, because it shows that his relations with these Jewish Christians were cordial. They accepted Paul completely and regarded him as a colaborer in the gospel.

p. 26

Radmacher, Allen & House say:

Paul’s gospel ministry caused **God** to be **glorified**, in keeping with the constant and eternal “glory” God has and deserves from humankind (1:5).

p. 1518

Ridderbos says:

The final thought, namely, that these churches glorified God in Paul, incidentally suggests that these churches did *not* doubt the genuineness and integrity of Paul’s calling and preaching. And that, if you please, from those who had suffered so much on his account! How different the attitude in the churches of Galatia, even though these had experienced only good from him, and had not the slightest reason to doubt his apostolic calling and authority!

p. 74

Simpson says:

Shall we take the place the Father gives the prodigal—not the kitchen and the servant’s place, but the best robe, the ring, the feast, the Father’s heart—and go forth to live as we often sing:

“Oh, the love that sought me!  
 Oh, the blood that bought me!  
 Oh, the grace that brought me to the fold!  
 Wondrous grace that brought me to the fold!”

p. 18

Vos says:

When the churches of Judea (including Jerusalem) heard of Paul’s preaching of the faith, “they glorified God.” *Glorified* is in the Greek imperfect tense, which denotes continuous action. They kept on glorifying, not the one who was preaching but the one who had brought about the change in him.

p. 37

(The Loveliness Of Christ: Extracts from the Letters of Samuel Rutherford selected by Ellen S. Lister) Carlisle, PA.: Banner of Truth Trust. Copyright – Banner of Truth, 2007.

Acquaint yourself with prayer, make Christ your Captain and your Armour; make conscience of sinning when no eye seeth you.

p. 49

## Our Confidence in Christ

Faith is confidence in the person of Jesus Christ and in his power, so that even when his power does not serve my end, my confidence in him remains because of who he is.

—Ravi Zacharias, philosopher, apologist, and evangelist (1946- )

*Ravi Zacharias, Jesus Among Other Gods (Thomas Nelson, 2002), p. 58;  
submitted by Van Morris, Mountain Washington, Kentucky*

© 2010 PreachingToday.com & Christianity Today International

(PreachingToday.com)

(The Best of A. W. Tozer by A. W. Tozer, compiled by Warren W. Wiersbe)  
Camp Hill, PA: Wing Spread Publishers. Copyright– Zur Ltd., 1978,  
2000.

The true believer owns Christ as his All in All without reservation. He includes all of himself, leaving no part of his being unaffected by the revolutionary transaction.  
p. 103

(Exploring the Mind & Heart of the Prince of Preachers: Five-thousand illustrations under one-thousand topical headings from the works of C. H. Spurgeon by C. H. Spurgeon) Oswego, IL: Fox River Press.  
Copyright– Fox River Press, 2005.

What a marvellous life it is! It brings with it new perceptions, new emotions, new desires. It has new senses: there are new eyes, with which we see the invisible; new ears, with which we hear the voice of God, before inaudible. Then have we a new touch, with which we lay hold on divine truth; then have we a new taste, so that we “taste and see that the Lord is good.” This new life ushers us into a new world, and gives us new relationships and new privileges. 1946.75  
p. 46

## God Transforms Dad's Life

Author, pastor, and former atheist Lee Strobel says in one sermon:

How can I tell you the difference God has made in my life? My daughter Allison was 5 years old when I became a follower of Jesus, and all she had known in those five years was a dad who was profane and angry. I remember I came home one night and kicked a hole in the living room wall just out of anger with life. I am ashamed to think of the times Allison hid in her room to get away from me.

Five months after I gave my life to Jesus Christ, that little girl went to my wife and said, "Mommy, I want God to do for me what he's done for Daddy." At age 5! What was she saying? She'd never studied the archeological evidence [regarding the truth of the Bible]. All she knew was her dad used to be this way: hard to live with. But more and more her dad is becoming this way. And if that is what God does to people, then sign her up. At age 5 she gave her life to Jesus.

God changed my family. He changed my world. He changed my eternity.

*Lee Strobel, author and teaching pastor at Saddleback Church, Lake Forest, California, from sermon "The Case for Christ"*

© 2010 PreachingToday.com & Christianity Today International

(PreachingToday.com)

(The Barbarian Way: Soul Cravings by Erwin Raphael McManus) Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson. Copyright— Erwin Raphael McManus, 2005.

If God is love, those who know God best would love people most.  
p. (Entry #13)

LOVE CAN NEVER BE SIMPLY BETWEEN YOU AND GOD. IT can never be limited to that relationship. Jesus makes that clear. Love is more than the relationship between a man and a woman, no matter how extraordinary it may be. Love is ever expanding. Love always grows, not just deeper, but wider. Love always loves people more and always loves more people. Loves calls us to community; love calls us to humanity; love calls us to each other.

p. (Entry #16)

(A Year With Jesus: Daily Readings and Meditations by Eugene H. Peterson)  
 San Francisco, CA: HarperCollins. Copyright– Eugene H. Peterson,  
 2006.

*God in Christ: you probe my heart and discover behind the words that I speak  
 the life that I live. Purify and sanctify that inner life so that I may please you  
 and glorify your name. Amen.*  
 p. 180

(Morning and Evening by Charles H. Spurgeon) Peabody, Massachusetts:  
 Hendrickson. Copyright – Unknown.

Practically in your life give Him honour, putting the “Amen” to this doxology  
 to your great and gracious Lord, by your own individual service and  
 increasing holiness.  
 p. 644

Sing, believer, for it will cheer thine own heart, and the hearts of other  
 desolate ones. Sing on, for now that thou art really ashamed of being barren,  
 thou wilt be fruitful soon; now that God makes thee *loath* to be without fruit  
 He will soon cover thee with clusters. The experience of our barrenness is  
 painful, but the Lord’s visitations are delightful. A sense of our own poverty  
 drives us to Christ, and that is where we need to be, for in Him is our fruit  
 found.  
 p. 483

### **Mother Teresa's Prayer for Help in Recognizing Christ**

O Jesus . . . grant that, even if you are hidden under the unattractive disguise of anger, of crime, or of madness, I may recognize you and say, "Jesus, you who suffer, how sweet it is to serve you."

—Mother Teresa

*Source unknown; submitted by Kevin Miller, executive vice president,  
Christianity Today International*

© 2010 PreachingToday.com & Christianity Today International

(PreachingToday.com)

**CONCLUSION:**

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: Have you forgotten what God has done and is doing in your life?

LESSON #2: You cannot please men and be a bond-slave of Christ.

LESSON #3: Can you say that you are consumed with the cause of Christ?

LESSON #4: Are you aware that you have been chosen, called, in the process of being changed, and charged with a ministry?

LESSON #5: Have you sensed God's obvious direction in your life?

LESSON #6: Are others glorifying God for what they see in your life?

LESSON #7: Are you living by Proverbs 3:5, 6? "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight."

LESSON #8: Is Christ living in you so that others are rejoicing in what they see?

LESSON #9: "In view of this, I also am doing my best to be having a conscience which does not cause offense to God and to men at all times" (Acts 24:16 DAV).

LESSON #10: Are you telling the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?



Anders says:

## PRINCIPLES

- Perversion of the truth is more difficult to spot than blatant falsehood.
- God has given us only one way by to be saved—through Jesus Christ.
- A teacher may be sincere and still be sincerely wrong.
- Your testimony is a powerful witnessing tool.
- The gospel is true because it comes straight from God and it changes lives.

## APPLICATIONS

- Beware of people who say we need more than simple faith in Christ to be saved.
- If you have never put your faith and trust in Christ to save you, then tell him now that you believe and accept him as your Savior.
- Thank God that you are free from the burden of having to earn his love and approval.
- List three changes Christ has made in your life.
- Enjoy the fact that God is working in your life.
- Pray and ask him to work even more.

p. 10

Arthur says:

## THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

Have you wept over your past and been, in a sense, tormented in your thoughts because you didn't come to know Jesus earlier? Rest, beloved child of God, for God saved you when it pleased Him. His promise is there to comfort and assure you that the Sovereign God—the God of all flesh—is able to cause all things, even your “before Christ” days, to work together for good. He will use them to make you like Jesus.

So, like Paul, take God at His Word. He does not lie. He stands by His Word to perform it. Forget those things which are past and press on toward the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Philippians 3:7-14). You are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works which God has foreordained for you to walk in (Ephesians 2:10). Go forth in faith.

p. 27

Is the story of your life:

**“You Have Been Running Well: UNTIL You Forgot What God Was Doing In Your Life”?**

Would not it be good to pause and reflect back on all of the great things that the Father has done for you:

**CHOOSING** you before the foundation of the world,

**CALLING** you in the fullness of time by His Spirit to relationship to the Lord Jesus, and through that relationship

**CHANGE** you into the image of His dear Son so that you might be

**CHARGED** to communicate the message of Christ to a lost and dying world.

Can you say today that your motivation is to please God, as a bonds slave of Jesus Christ, and that the message you preach is of divine origin? The validity of that message is a changed life.

Are others glorifying God for that which they find in you? Or do you have to honestly say:

**“Yes, I Was Running Well: UNTIL I Forgot What God Was Doing In My Life”?**

Perhaps your Christian profession cannot be recounted in a similar way to that of the apostles, and there is a great deal of confusion about whether or not you have the relationship with Him at all.

You just thought you were running well and you do not know whether or not you are even in the race yet. If the Spirit of God is blowing upon your heart in conviction of your sin, accept the advice of the writer to the book of Hebrews:

Hebrews 3:15 (DAV)

while it is being said, “Today if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts, as in the rebellion.”

Let the Spirit of God do His work and then be willing to be submissive and obedient to that which He leads you to do in receiving the gift of God’s Son, the Lord Jesus Christ as your own personal Savior.

(Signs of Life: Back to the Basics of Authentic Christianity by David Jeremiah) Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson. Copyright– David Jeremiah, 2007.

Besides loving us purposefully and selflessly, God loves us without strings. A.W. Tozer once prayed this way:

If nothing in us can win Thy love, nothing in the universe can prevent Thee from loving us. Thy love is uncaused and undeserved. Thou art thyself the reason for the love wherewith we are loved. Help us to believe in the intensity, the eternity of the love that has found us. Then love will cast out fear; and our troubled hearts will be at peace. <sup>4</sup>

4. A. W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy: The Attributes of God: Their Meaning in the Christian Life* (New York: Harper & Row, 1961), 104.  
p. 232

(A Year With Jesus: Daily Readings and Meditations by Eugene H. Peterson) San Francisco, CA: HarperCollins. Copyright– Eugene H. Peterson, 2006.

*Lord, I place what I have in offering to you. And not just my money, but my life—my energies, my abilities and my goals. Let everything be fragrant in devotion to you. Amen.*  
p. 309

(Christ/Life by Ruth Myers) Sisters, OR: Multnomah. Copyright – Ruth Myers, 2005.

*Loving Father, thank You for supplying everything I need in my sense of who I am. You supply it as I let You relate to me, and as I learn to know You better.*

*Thank You for wanting me and for bringing me to Yourself for Your own enjoyment and glory. I'm Yours! I belong to the Almighty God of the universe! What a thrill this is—and what a soothing remedy for the times when I'm tempted to feel alienated or excluded or ignored by others. I always have You, and I'll always belong to You.*

*I praise You for Your rich love that has welcomed me into a union with Yourself, a union which transcends all others in intimacy and permanence. In Your eyes, I will never be an outsider, but always an insider.*

*Thank You for bringing me inside the circle of Your love and purpose. Thank You for Your Church which is my eternal family and household and nation. I rejoice in the warm embrace of belongingness that surrounds me—all because of You!*

p. 129