

Romans 1:1

“Paul, an bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God”

“Paul” means “Little”- the Lord Jesus gave him that new name as a follower of Christ. His old name, “Saul” meant “dedicated to God”- he was full of zeal, but without knowledge of the Savior. The Lord Jesus needed to break him, to bring him to a point of realizing he was “little” before he could be used by God as a servant of the gospel. As a Pharisee, Paul was on top of the world- a Hebrew of Hebrews, legalistically righteous- but he threw all that away- it was as dung to him compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Jesus Christ his Lord (*Phil 3:4-9*). He came to a point of realizing what his life was without Christ- that he was a blasphemer, a persecutor, a violent man who had violated the Lord’s commandments but had received mercy and grace poured out exceedingly abundantly in his life. He could say with all sincerity, “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.” (*1 Tim 1:12-16*) This is the message Paul proclaimed of his past and his conversion as God gave him opportunity (*1 Cor 15:9-11, Acts 22:3-16, 26:1-30*). Is that the testimony of your life as well? Until you go from the glory of “dedicated to God” to “little”, you cannot be used by God to minister the gospel.

Do you see yourself as a bond-servant of Jesus Christ? In the Old Testament, a bondservant was one who willingly served his master, not wanting to leave when his time was up to be set free (*Deut 15:12-17*). Are you a bond-servant of Jesus Christ- willingly serving His interests and obeying His commands out of a heart of gratitude and love for all He has done for you as your Master? Is He the only Master you serve? This is necessary for one to be used by God to minister the gospel.

Paul was “Called to be an apostle”- an apostle was a “messenger” with a message. An apostle was an office and a gifting, but in another sense, we’re all messengers and our message is the gospel. Jesus commanded us to preach the gospel to every creature (*Mark 16:15*). We’re all called as well: “you also are the called of Jesus Christ” (*Romans 1:6*). What has God called you to? He’s called you to salvation, and He’s called you to preach the gospel. You don’t need a degree or an office or a title- you’re called. Now therefore, Go!

Paul was “separated to the gospel of God”. What is “the gospel of God”? People declare lots of “gospels” in this world- Paul told us the gospel was the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins (*1 Cor 15:1-7*). Paul vehemently stated that if anyone preaches another gospel, let him be eternally condemned (*Gal 1:6-9*). Jude exhorted us to “contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints” (*Jude 3*) There are many false gospels out there- how important it is that we feast on God’s Word daily, know it well, preach it earnestly and defend it heartily- it is a matter of life and death.

How are you separating yourself to the gospel of God? The world seduces us constantly to other gospels- it tells us of how to feed our flesh- are you? Truly, are you separating

yourself to the gospel of God? We're strangers and aliens on this earth. We've been born again, we're a new creation- we cannot go back to the old gospels of the world. Regarding this world, the Lord pleads with us, "Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues." (*Rev 18:4*)

Insert your name and pray it back to the Lord, asking for His grace to fulfill His word in you:

"_____, an bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God"

"In answer to your inquiry, I consider that the chief dangers which confront the coming century will be religion without the Holy Ghost, Christianity without Christ, forgiveness without repentance, salvation without regeneration, politics without God, and heaven without hell."

William Booth quote (1829 - 1916)