

# *Paul's Claims = His Story?*

**Galatians 1: 13-17; Acts 9:1-9**

East Berlin Community Church

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June 10, 2018

## Introduction

- The power of personal stories to substantiate claims!
- Paul's opponents attacked the MAN—his apostleship, and his MESSAGE, particularly the source of his message.
- Paul's bold claims:
  - His apostleship was not *"from men, through a man, but through Jesus Christ."*—Galatians 1:1
  - His message was not *"according to man, nor received by man, nor taught it, but received through revelation"*—Galatians 1:11-12
- Paul claims to be an independent contractor!

## *Paul's Claims = His Story?*

### A. Paul's Jewish Upbringing = NOTHING Galatians 1:13-14

1. His Jewish pedigree—Philippians 3:4-6
2. Educated under Gamaliel, the top rabbi of his day—Acts 22:3
3. Advancing beyond his contemporaries, Galatians 1:14 especially in regards to the "traditions of my fathers". A quintessential legalist!
4. Mission in life: Persecute the church –Galatians 1:13
  - a. Defied the religious tolerance of his mentor—Acts 5:35-36
  - b. Hatred for Christians first surfaced at Stephen's trial-Acts 7
  - c. Intent on wiping out Christianity—Acts 26:9-11
5. His Jewish upbringing prepared him to be the chief Judaizer.

### B. Paul's Personal Encounter with Christ = EVERYTHING

1. The Historical Recounting of the Encounter—Acts 9:1-9
  - a. Very unusual or unique conversion experience
  - b. The end result of a long process—under "conviction"
  - c. Jesus encounters the risen Christ—changed his life!
2. The Theological Recounting of the Encounter—Galatians 1:15-16
  - a. God set him apart from birth—Jeremiah 1:5; Isaiah 49:1; Luke 1
  - b. God called him through His grace. 1Thess. 1:4-5
    - 1) Responded with repentance of his sin
    - 2) Responded with repudiation of self-righteousness- Phil 3
  - c. Called and set apart for two purposes
    - 1) *"To reveal His Son in Me"*— CONVERSION Gal. 1:15
      - a) Christian life = *"Christ in you!"*
      - b) *"Not a religion, but a personal relationship"*
    - 2) *"To preach Him among the Gentiles"*—COMMISSION 1:16
      - a) Commission direct from Jesus—Acts 26:15-18
      - b) Our commission—Ephesians 2:10; 1 Peter 2:9
3. Owes everything to GRACE—1 Timothy 1:12-15; 1 Cor. 15:9-10