

The Greatest Letter Ever Written

An Expository Study of the **Epistle of Romans**

Romans 1:1

1- A Bond-Slave of Jesus Christ; Called to be an Apostle; and Set Apart for the Gospel of God

July 10, 2022

Romans 1:1

Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God,

The style in which men wrote letters 2000 years ago differs from the way in which we write letters today. The “old- world” letters began with a Salutation which usually consisted of three Parts:

- The writer's name
- The person addressed
- A word of greeting

Normally, nothing else would be added to the Salutation. Therefore, everything else that the writer would add in this “Introduction” or “Salutation” portion of a letter was considered to be of the highest Importance.

With this in mind, consider that in **Romans 1:1** Paul states his name, in accordance with the accepted practices of the day. But it is not until **Romans 1:7** that we find any reference to the people to whom the letter is written or any cordial word of Greeting. Therefore, everything after the word, “*Paul*” in verse 1 and prior to the phrase, “*beloved of God in Rome*”, in verse 7 is an *unusual* addition to Paul’s Salutation, and we should put great Importance upon it.

So, everything that is between **Romans 1:1** and **Romans 1:7** is vital to us. All that is written in between these two parts gives us an enormous amount of Information about who Paul is and is not; Who has inspired his life; and Who has compelled him to write this letter- namely, the Lord Jesus Christ.

So, even as he identifies himself, Paul links himself and his letter to Jesus Christ. He begins with his name, Paul. His Hebrew name was Saul, meaning “*asked for*”. But here, he used his Roman name Paul, which means “*little*”. It is thought that Paul was *physically*, a small man. Some historical accounts say that Paul was no taller than just under 5 feet. While we do not know this for sure, it could have been that the name “Paul”, which meant “*little*” could have been used to describe his Stature. But whether Paul was physically small or not- we do know that he was a giant in the Faith.

His choice in using his Roman name and not his Hebrew name also shows us Paul’s orientation to Grace- as opposed to the works of Man. Paul was a brilliant and well accomplished man and, although he had much to boast about in the natural, Paul did not try to make anything out of himself- but gave all Glory to God. In Paul’s own eyes- he was little, and the Lord was

great. So, we may assume that his choice in using his Roman name during his Ministry was also because he wanted all men to hear Christ- and not himself. He wanted all men to see Jesus- and not see him. Therefore, the writer of this letter is telling the readers that he was “little”. So, let’s begin our Study by examining what Paul said:

Romans 1:1a

Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus ...

Paul *could* have been called a lot of things. He *could* have been called by his title that he received from being on the Sanhedrin Court. He *could* have been called by his honorable position as a Pharisee’s Pharisee. But Paul chose a name and a title that has tremendous impact- “*Slave*.”

The Mentality of Slavery

Now the word that Paul used in here **Romans 1:1** for “servant” is actually the Greek word, *doulos*, which means: a “*Slave*”. And originally, this was the *lowest* term in the “Scale of Servitude” and came also to mean “*one who gives himself up to the will of another*”.

Back in the 1st Century there were several different *kinds* of Slaves. Some men were Slaves- “by birth”. Some men were *forcefully* made Slaves by War or Conquest. But some men *willfully* became Slaves. During that period of time in the Middle East, when someone else was so great or that which someone was doing was considered to be so worthwhile- other people would *voluntarily* give up their own Freedom in order to serve them. And those who *willfully* gave up their individual Freedom to become Slaves were the *lowest* Class of Slaves. Paul said that he was that kind of Slave.

Exodus 21:5&6

5 “But if the slave plainly says, ‘I love my master, my wife and my children; I will not go out as a free man,’

6 then his master shall bring him to God, then he shall bring him to the door or the doorpost. And his master shall pierce his ear with an awl; and he shall serve him permanently.

The mistake that many make here is simply to read this about Paul and then admire him for his Service. But by Paul telling us who he was; and by the other Apostles saying the same thing about themselves- these anointed men of God were not simply discussing their own willful Service- but were teaching us an important Point of Doctrine. That is, that ALL those who come to Christ by Grace through Faith alone are to consider themselves to also be Slaves *of, to, or for* Jesus Christ.

Paul believed and taught that a Christian no longer had any claim over his own Life- but that he has *willingly* and *knowingly* given up his own personal Rights and completely and permanently *abdicated* those Rights to the Will of God; and the Lordship of Jesus Christ- by virtue of his Salvation. As a redeemed person, Paul taught that he and all those who are redeemed were bought and paid for by the precious Blood of Jesus, and therefore were to consider themselves to be Slaves.

1 Corinthians 6:15-20

15 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take away the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? May it never be!
16 Or do you not know that the one who joins himself to a prostitute is one body with her? For He says, "THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH."
17 But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him.
18 Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.
19 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?
20 For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

Not only did Paul consider himself to be a bond- slave to Jesus- the other Apostles also considered themselves to be this as well. Peter looked at himself the same way that Paul did.

2 Peter 1:1-3

1 Simon Peter, a bond-servant [doulos] and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours, by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ:
2 Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord;
3 seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

... and not only Paul and Peter- but Jude and James felt the same way.

Jude 1&2

1 Jude, a bond-servant [doulos] of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, To those who are the called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ:
2 May mercy and peace and love be multiplied to you.

James 1:1

James, a bond-servant [doulos] of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad: Greetings.

It is difficult today for us to comprehend the Apostles' level and intensity of Surrender to Christ in light of our egotistical Society that teaches that "*Godliness is a means of Gain*".

1 Timothy 6:3-12

3 If anyone advocates a different doctrine and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness,
4 he is conceited and understands nothing; but he has a morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words, out of which arise envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions,
5 and constant friction between men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain.
6 But godliness actually is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment.
7 For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either.
8 If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content.

9 But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction.

10 For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

11 But flee from these things, you man of God, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness.

12 Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

All of this was much more than Paul simply making a “stab” at Humility. The Apostles of the Lord are telling us that not only themselves, but **all those** who belong to Jesus should consider themselves to be Slaves to Jesus and to no longer belong to themselves.

With all the Self-centeredness that exists today (even in the Church), is it not wonderful to read about a Self-less Life? We must hear Paul as he tells us that it is *fundamental* to the Christian Life that the believer have this same mind about himself and be Self-less rather than Self-ish. Jesus taught us that the single most important person that we can love- is *not* ourselves- but God.

Matthew 22:35-38

35 One of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him,

36 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?"

37 And He said to him, " 'YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.'

38 "This is the great and foremost commandment.

The second person that we are to love is still not ourselves, but rather our neighbor.

Matthew 22:39&40

39 "The second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.'

40 "On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets."

After reading these verses, we must acknowledge that the pathway to *servicing* God is the same as *loving* God. So, serving IS loving and loving IS serving. Our level and our intensity of Loyalty, Devotion, and Service to God is *directly* proportionate to our love for God. Those who can't bring themselves to be faithful to God in their daily Walk are those who have *not* fallen in love with God. And those who are *not* “in love” with God- have *not* been “born again”.

It is impossible to separate our Love for and our Belief in God with our Obedience to God. Loving God is more than simply believing that He exists. True Love *mandates* that we surrender our Ambitions, Plans, Devotion, and Will to the Savior in Whom we say that we love. Those who seem to do the most for God are those who burn in their hearts with undying love for the Savior Who died for them.

To those who are smitten with love for God, no amount of Hardship or Trial is enough to sway them on their Journey. To those who serve God out of Obligation or Guilt- they are constantly murmuring about how much they have done and how little they get out of it.

The answer to this Dilemma is to fall in love with Jesus and to hate the very garment that is spotted with the flesh. And we cannot differentiate between being in love with Christ and being saved by Christ. Those who are saved- love. Those who are not saved- do not love.

The unsaved, and unregenerate world teaches that to love *yourself* is to love God. The fallen world teaches that the highest form of Love is to love oneself. That is a hurtful and dangerous lie. Jesus said that to love God is the highest form of Love.

Mark 12:29&30

29 Jesus answered, "The foremost is, 'HEAR, O ISRAEL! THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD;

30 AND YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH.'

A person *cannot* truly love himself until he first loves God and strives to love Him with all the Heart, Soul, Mind, and Strength.

And we must know that the Ability for humans to love God does not originate from inside the human being. Our Love *for* God is a supernatural Gift *from* God and is nothing short of a Miracle. Our Love for God is not natural and operates counterintuitive to human Nature. And because this is true- all those who have been sovereignly Redeemed by Grace through Faith- love God.

It is important to know that Paul was not saying here that he had improved his “Jewishness” by being a slave of Jesus Christ. Paul was not saying that he was almost right by doing what he had done as a Pharisee and now he had learned how to “do it right”. No, Paul was clearly saying that while he was a Pharisee- he was completely wrong- he was a sinner- who was lost and unsaved- even though he was very sincere. Paul was saying that he once was lost but now he is found; he was blind but now he sees. Paul was saying that he didn’t go from being a *good* man to being a *better* man through Salvation- but that he went from being a lost sinner to being saved.

Ephesians 3:4-19

4 By the reading of which you will be clear about my knowledge of the secret of Christ;

5 Which in other generations was not given to the sons of men, but the revelation of it has now been made to his holy Apostles and prophets in the Spirit;

6 Which is that the Gentiles have a part in the heritage, and in the same body, and in the same hope in Christ through the good news,

7 Of which I was made a preacher, through that grace of God which was given to me in the measure of the working of his power.

8 To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, was this grace given, so that I might make clear to the Gentiles the good news of the unending wealth of Christ:

9 And make all men see what is the ordering of the secret which from the first has been kept in God who made all things;

10 So that now to the rulers and the authorities in the heavens might be made clear through the church the wide-shining wisdom of God,

11 Which is seen in his eternal purpose in Christ Jesus our Lord:

12 By whom we come near to God without fear through faith in him.

13 For this reason it is my prayer that you may not become feeble because of my troubles for you, which are your glory.

14 For this cause I go down on my knees before the Father,

15 From whom every family in heaven and on earth is named,

16 That in the wealth of his glory he would make you strong with power through his Spirit in your hearts;

17 So that Christ may have his place in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and based in love,

18 May have strength to see with all the saints how wide and long and high and deep it is,

19 And to have knowledge of the love of Christ which is outside all knowledge, so that you may be made complete as God himself is complete.

Paul could have been famous at anything he chose to do. He was qualified to be either the High Priest in the Temple in Jerusalem or even the Emperor of all of Rome. But he willingly walked away from all of that. And his entire life became completely interwoven around one Man- his Savior, Lord, and Master, Jesus Christ. And although able and imminently qualified- he is not known today for any other accomplishment outside of Jesus. Paul truly died to himself and lived to Christ.

Galatians 2:15-21

15 "We are Jews by nature and not sinners from among the Gentiles;

16 nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified.

17 "But if, while seeking to be justified in Christ, we ourselves have also been found sinners, is Christ then a minister of sin? May it never be!

18 "For if I rebuild what I have once destroyed, I prove myself to be a transgressor.

19 "For through the Law I died to the Law, so that I might live to God.

20 "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

21 "I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly."

Paul literally surrendered himself into Slavery. He *voluntarily* gave up all his Rights- all his personal Ambitions and all his personal Dreams- laid them at the Feet of Jesus and followed Him- with no regard for the Consequences. Paul did not just "*put Jesus first*", as is commonly stated today, but rather Paul placed Jesus Christ as the sole *Totality* of all that he is and ever could be. Paul was not simply "committed" to Jesus Christ- but rather this Apostle was completely *surrendered* to Christ. It is no wonder that God used Paul so mightily and entrusted to him the writing of two-thirds of the New Testament.

1 Corinthians 15:22-32

22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.

23 But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming,

24 then comes the end, when He hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power.

25 For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet.

26 The last enemy that will be abolished is death.

27 For HE HAS PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET. But when He says, "All things are put in subjection," it is evident that He is excepted who put all things in subjection to Him.

28 When all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, so that God may be all in all.

29 Otherwise, what will those do who are baptized for the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why then are they baptized for them?

30 Why are we also in danger every hour?

31 I affirm, brethren, by the boasting in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily.

32 If from human motives I fought with wild beasts at Ephesus, what does it profit me? If the dead are not raised, LET US EAT AND DRINK, FOR TOMORROW WE DIE.

One must stand in awe of such complete Service to Christ. I know of no living person who has attained this level- including myself. Those who came the closest to what Paul was speaking about were a group of German saints called the "Moravians", who after experiencing their glorious Salvation in the 18th Century and after having a personal visitation of the Holy Spirit one summer afternoon in Prayer, began a Prayer Meeting that went on twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week for 100 years! These bond slaves of Jesus Christ were so surrendered to Jesus that they literally sold themselves into Slavery in order to preach to both the slave owners and the Slaves. We, who serve Christ; we, who love Christ; we, who have been born of God must, like Paul, consider ourselves to be slave of Jesus Christ.

Called to be an Apostle

Romans 1:1b

...called as an apostle...

The word that is used here that was translated into English as "called" is the Greek word, *kletos* which means: *invited, or appointed*. And this means that Paul had not taken on the task of preaching the Gospel; of being one of men who raised up the Church and established the Christian Faith- on his own. He was not someone who wanted to co-opt Christianity and change it into what he wanted it to be. He was not some ego maniac who wanted power and control. Paul was "called" to be an Apostle. He was appointed *personally* by Jesus Himself! Jesus Christ had *personally* called Paul to do what he was doing.

The Acts 9:1-22

1 Now Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest,

2 and asked for letters from him 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.

3 As he was traveling, it happened that he was approaching Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him;

4 and he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?"

5 And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" And He said, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting,

6 but get up and enter the city, and it will be told you what you must do."

7 The men who traveled with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one.
8 Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; and leading him by the hand, they brought him into Damascus.
9 And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank.
10 Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias; and the Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Here I am, Lord."
11 And the Lord said to him, "Get up and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying,
12 and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him, so that he might regain his sight."
13 But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he did to Your saints at Jerusalem;
14 and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name."
15 But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel;
16 for I will show him how much he must suffer for My name's sake."
17 So Ananias departed and entered the house, and after laying his hands on him said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road by which you were coming, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit."
18 And immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he regained his sight, and he got up and was baptized;
19 and he took food and was strengthened. Saul Begins to Preach Christ Now for several days he was with the disciples who were at Damascus,
20 and immediately he began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues, saying, "He is the Son of God."
21 All those hearing him continued to be amazed, and were saying, "Is this not he who in Jerusalem destroyed those who called on this name, and who had come here for the purpose of bringing them bound before the chief priests?"
22 But Saul kept increasing in strength and confounding the Jews who lived at Damascus by proving that this Jesus is the Christ.

1Corinthians 15:1-10

1 Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand,
2 by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain.
3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,
4 and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,
5 and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.
6 After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep;
7 then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles;
8 and last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared to me also.
9 For I am the least of the apostles, and not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me.

... but, once again, Paul was not the only one who was called.

Matthew 4:21-22

21 Going on from there He saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and He called them.

22 Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him.

Hebrews 5:1-10

1 For every high priest taken from among men is appointed on behalf of men in things pertaining to God, in order to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins;

2 he can deal gently with the ignorant and misguided, since He himself also is beset with weakness;

3 and because of it he is obligated to offer sacrifices for sins, as for the people, so also for himself.

4 And no one takes the honor to himself, but receives it when he is called by God, even as Aaron was.

5 So also Christ did not glorify Himself so as to become a high priest, but He who said to Him, "YOU ARE MY SON, TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN YOU";

6 just as He says also in another passage, "YOU ARE A PRIEST FOREVER ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK."

7 In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety.

8 Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered.

9 And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation,

10 being designated by God as a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

1Peter 1:15-16

15 but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior;

16 because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY."

Jude 1

Jude, a bond-servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, To those who are the called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ:

The Apostles taught that all those who are saved are "called" to Salvation. And they also believed and taught that all those in Ministry should be "called". And those whom God calls- God will empower and enable to stand in the place that He has called them. So, without that Enabling and without that Empowerment- true, genuine Ministry cannot be accomplished. Men can do many things on their own- but no man can call himself. The "Hand of God" must be upon him. And when it is- he will know it; and all those around will know it. No man can do God's Will without God's Anointing and Power and that comes with the Calling. The ability to do what God has called a person to do is all part of the package that we call "Salvation". A man *cannot*

and *must not* assume a place of ministry on his own accord- because he will fail and hurt others in the process. God is the only one Who appoints- and we are to simply surrender and obey.

Paul was attacked while he was alive by many in the Church because what he wrote and said was so radical and unbelievable. The same is still true today. Paul was attacked by many; his writings were denounced; and his theology scorned- but three things were certain about Paul:

- He fought against the Church; persecuted those in it. So, he never dreamed that he would ever be a Christian- let alone an Apostle.
- Even after his dramatic encounter with Jesus- had it not been for Ananias, Paul would have never realized his Ministry.
- Even after he had been saved- had it not been for Barnabas, Paul would have never been accepted into the Church.

Now we can debate about what exactly happened to Paul, but we have to all agree that *something* happened to him. Something dramatic; something radical; something life changing happened to this Pharisee that one day he is going to Damascus to get permission to persecute the Christian Church even more than he already was- and the next day he is preaching and believing the Faith he one time tried to destroy.

Galatians 1:10-24

10 For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ.

Paul Defends His Ministry 11 For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man.

12 For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

13 For you have heard of my former manner of life in Judaism, how I used to persecute the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it;

14 and I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my countrymen, being more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions.

15 But when God, who had set me apart even from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, was pleased

16 to reveal His Son in me so that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood,

17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went away to Arabia, and returned once more to Damascus.

18 Then three years later I went up to Jerusalem to become acquainted with Cephas, and stayed with him fifteen days.

19 But I did not see any other of the apostles except James, the Lord's brother.

20 (Now in what I am writing to you, I assure you before God that I am not lying.)

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

22 I was still unknown by sight to the churches of Judea which were in Christ;

23 but only, they kept hearing, "He who once persecuted us is now preaching the faith which he once tried to destroy."

24 And they were glorifying God because of me.

There is absolutely no way to explain what happened to Paul other than to say that Paul really had an Encounter with Jesus Christ. And we must understand that our Transformation

must be no less radical; no less thorough; no less effectual than was Paul's. In the Bible, Paul said he met Jesus. Personally. And that single Encounter altered his Life forever- but it also altered the very course of History as well. My Life and your Life have been radically affected by Paul because he said that he was called to be an Apostle. Indeed, nothing less than Western Civilization itself was begun at the roadside with this man who was called to be an Apostle.

And even if you don't believe what Paul said about himself- you must remember that *others* were present at his Encounter and his subsequent Conversion:

- The Jews and others who were with him on the road to Damascus
- Ananias, who was alive while Paul was preaching
- Barnabas, who journeyed with Paul for some time
- Peter, James, John, and Andrew who were among the original Apostles who personally met Paul and spent time with him.
- John Mark, who was his scribe and who kept the diary known today as **The Acts of the Apostles**.

All of these men would have had to conspire with Paul to corrupt the Gospel or else they would have exposed him as a fraud had his Conversion and Ministry been anything other than genuine.

The Truth of the Gospel is that no one can meet Christ and stay the same. The Bible says that God is no respect of persons. Our Conversion should not be any less dramatic; no less radical; and no less complete than Paul's.

2Corinthians 5:14-21

14 For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died;

15 and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.

16 Therefore from now on we recognize no one according to the flesh; even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him in this way no longer.

17 Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

18 Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation,

19 namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

20 Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

21 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Through the years, many in the Church have watered down what it means to be "Saved"; "Born Again"; or "Converted." And most of the time, these terms are used *interchangeably*- even though they describe completely different phases or steps in the Salvation of sinful rebels. But, by anyone's estimation- Paul's Conversion was nothing short of a Miracle. But we must also understand that our Conversion is also nothing short of a Miracle, too. So, in that sense- our Conversion should be the same as Paul's. It took the shed Blood of the

Lamb of God to purchase our Salvation just as it did for Paul. The Life he led after his Conversion is a Pattern that we should follow this day. His willful Sacrifice; his unwavering Faith; his Trust; his ability to give Glory to God- even while falsely attacked- is a sterling example to you and me today- so much so that Paul himself said this:

1Corinthians 11:1

Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ.

I know of no other human in the New Testament who was inspired by the Holy Spirit to make that kind of Statement. To be sure, Paul was a man- not a god. Paul was a sinner- saved by Grace. Paul bowed his knees to Jesus. He listed his Frailties and talked often of his Desire to be what he knew he wasn't. But when you examine the *totality* of Paul's Life- you come away with several sure Statements:

- ✓ This man had been with Jesus
- ✓ This man walked with God
- ✓ This man was saved
- ✓ This man was born again
- ✓ This man was a living example of the Righteousness and Power of the resurrected Christ
- ✓ This man was indeed called to be an Apostle.

The Ministry and Sufferings of an Apostle

There are some within the modern Church, who lay claim to be a "modern Apostle." And they use the *basic* definition for the Greek word [*apostolos*; Strong's # 652] that was translated into English as "Apostle" as: "One who is sent." And they say, "Well, God sent me" and they feel justified to use the title, "Apostle"

And whereas that is the definition of that Greek word, what these people purposefully leave out- is both the Ministry and the Sufferings of an Apostle. SO, what did the Apostles in the Bible actually do? And how did they suffer?

The Apostolic Ministry

So, what was the Ministry of the Apostles? What did Jesus send the Apostles to do?

Luke 9:1-6

9 And He called the twelve together, and gave them power and authority over all the demons and to heal diseases.

2 And He sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to perform healing.

3 And He said to them, "Take nothing for your journey, neither a staff, nor a bag, nor bread, nor money; and do not even have two tunics apiece.

4 "Whatever house you enter, stay there until you leave that city.

5 "And as for those who do not receive you, as you go out from that city, shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them."

6 Departing, they began going throughout the villages, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere.

The Bible teaches that the Apostles had the VERY SAME Power and Authority over Disease and Demons; and they had the VERY SAME Authority to preach the VERY SAME Message that Jesus preached.

Now there are many Teachings in the modern Church about physical Healings and the casting out of demons. And most all of them have a qualifier in them:

Both the one performing the Healing and the one being healed must have enough Faith- or else the Healing will NOT occur

... and as a result of this caveat- the overwhelming majority of the attempts at physical healing- fail. But notice that there was no such Requirements given to the Apostles. They had the Divine Power to heal- so it didn't matter whether they or the one who was sick had enough Faith. Their Authority trumped Faith. Even Judas, who wasn't saved had that same Authority.¹

Also, we need to search the Scriptures to determine just what the Ministry of a true Apostle actually was. And when we do that- we see that, in addition to being able to heal the sick and cast out demons- the Apostle also:

- Received the Divine Revelation that is now the New Testament- directly from the Lord Himself
- Correctly and fully interpreted the Old Testament
- Established the Christian Church on the earth
- Established ALL Christian Doctrine

The Sufferings of an Apostle

But perhaps the greatest Omission in the so-called "modern-day Apostles" is the level of physical Suffering that the genuine Apostles were chosen to receive.

2Corinthians 11:22-33

22 Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I.

23 Are they servants of Christ?—I speak as if insane—I more so; in far more labors, in far more imprisonments, beaten times without number, often in danger of death.

24 Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine lashes.

25 Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep.

26 I have been on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren;

27 I have been in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure.

28 Apart from such external things, there is the daily pressure on me of concern for all the churches.

29 Who is weak without my being weak? Who is led into sin without my intense concern?

30 If I have to boast, I will boast of what pertains to my weakness.

¹ If Judas had not actually done what the other eleven men did- he would have stood out as having some sort of Problem. Yet when it came time to reveal the Traitor- nobody but Jesus knew it was Judas.

31 The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, He who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying.

32 In Damascus the ethnarch under Aretas the king was guarding the city of the Damascenes in order to seize me,

33 and I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and so escaped his hands.

When we say that the Apostles were “chosen to be a Witness”- it wasn’t only that they had personally witnessed the Sufferings of Christ and saw Him AFTER His Resurrection. It was also that they themselves would be a “Witness” or a living “Testimony” of those Sufferings themselves.

2Corinthians 1:3-7

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort,

4 who comforts us in all our affliction so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

5 For just as the sufferings of Christ are ours in abundance, so also our comfort is abundant through Christ.

6 But if we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; or if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which is effective in the patient enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer;

7 and our hope for you is firmly grounded, knowing that as you are sharers of our sufferings, so also you are sharers of our comfort.

Set Apart for the Gospel

Romans 1:1c

... set apart for the gospel of God ...

With the heavenly Calling that Paul had received- also came a Separation. Those who are called by God to do certain things are required to “give themselves” to that Calling. Many are called today, but they will never accomplish what God has called them to do until they are willing to do whatever it takes to obey Christ.

By definition, those who are called must be different than those who are not called. They must live different; act different; think different; and do different things than those who have not been called. For those who are called to be no different than those who are not called would be to deny the Calling itself; and to enter into a State of Rebellion that will spiral down to Destruction. This “Difference” or “Distinction” between those who are saved and those who are lost is the forgotten Truth about “**Christian Separation**”.

2Corinthians 6:14-18

14 Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?

15 Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever?

16 Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, "I WILL DWELL IN THEM AND WALK AMONG THEM; AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE.

17 "Therefore, COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST AND BE SEPARATE," says the Lord. "AND DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN; And I will welcome you.

18 "And I will be a father to you, And you shall be sons and daughters to Me," Says the Lord Almighty.

The Truth is that those who are called to Salvation are NOT “better people” than those who are NOT called. And those who are NOT called- are NOT “worse people” than those who are called. Everyone that God calls to Salvation is a unworthy sinner. And yet, God has chosen to “set His Love” upon some of those unworthy sinners while leaving the others to themselves.

So, from that standpoint- saved people are not “morally superior” to the Lost- in the sense that they supposedly possess some inherent Holiness about themselves that others do not have. That kind of Self- righteous thinking is what characterized the Pharisees of Jesus’ day.

Saved people are different only in the sense that they are now bond-slaves of Jesus and are the children of God- while lost people are “slaves to Sin” and are, by nature- children of the devil.

Romans 6

1 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase?

2 May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?

3 Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?

4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection,

6 knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin;

7 for he who has died is freed from sin.

8 Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,

9 knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him.

10 For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.

11 Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts,

13 and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.

14 For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

15 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it never be!

16 Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness?

**17 But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed,
18 and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.
19 I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in further lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification.
20 For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness.
21 Therefore what benefit were you then deriving from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the outcome of those things is death.
22 But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life.
23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

John 8:31-44

**31 So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine;
32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."
33 They answered Him, "We are Abraham's descendants and have never yet been enslaved to anyone; how is it that You say, 'You will become free'?"
34 Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin.
35 The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son does remain forever.
36 So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.
37 I know that you are Abraham's descendants; yet you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you.
38 I speak the things which I have seen with My Father; therefore you also do the things which you heard from your father."
39 They answered and said to Him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you are Abraham's children, do the deeds of Abraham.
40 But as it is, you are seeking to kill Me, a man who has told you the truth, which I heard from God; this Abraham did not do.
41 You are doing the deeds of your father." They said to Him, "We were not born of fornication; we have one Father: God."
42 Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and have come from God, for I have not even come on My own initiative, but He sent Me.
43 Why do you not understand what I am saying? It is because you cannot hear My word.
44 You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies.**

To surrender to the Call of God is to truly live Life at its best- for only by surrendering to the Call that is on your Life can you accomplish what you were born to do. And that Accomplishment- that comes only through Surrender- brings complete Peace, Joy, and Love that no Man or Circumstance can ever take away.

Now the phrase that was translated as, “**set apart**” in this Passage comes from a Greek word, [*aphorizo*; Strong’s # 873] which means: *to set off by boundary; to limit, to exclude, to divide, to separate; to make a distinction; or to sever*. So, Paul had to “sever”, or “cut off” from himself many things that tied him to his past.

Philippians 3:2-16

2 Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the false circumcision;

3 for we are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh,

4 although I myself might have confidence even in the flesh. If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more:

5 circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee;

6 as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless.

7 But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ.

8 More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ,

9 and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith,

10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death;

11 in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

12 Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.

13 Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,

14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

15 Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, have this attitude; and if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you;

16 however, let us keep living by that same standard to which we have attained.

Introduction and Romans 1:1 Recap

1. What was Paul’s full Roman name? _____

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2. From what city did Paul write Romans? _____
3. What does the word, “bond- servant” mean? _____
4. What kind? _____
5. For you have been _____ with a _____ : therefore glorify God in your
_____ **1Corinthians 6:20.**
6. It is fundamental to the Christian life for the saint to be Self- _____ rather than
Self- _____.
7. What is the difference between the two? _____

8. Jesus taught that the *highest* form of Love is to love _____.
9. Our level and our intensity of Loyalty, Devotion, and Service ___ God is
directly proportionate to our love ___ God.
10. Those who are not in love with Christ have not been _____.
11. Those who serve God out of Obligation or Guilt constantly talk about
_____ and _____

12. Paul was a Pharisee. He sat on the Sanhedrin Court. He was a highly educated
man. He persecuted the Church because he thought that Christianity was a
perversion of the Truth (Judaism). He did what he did out of his loyalty to his
Faith. So, at that time, was Paul lost (unsaved)? _____
13. How often did Paul “die to himself”? _____ **1Corinthians 15:31**
14. How did Paul get what he preached? _____
_____ **Galatians 1: 11 &12**
15. Therefore if _____ is in Christ, he is a _____;
_____ passed away; behold, _____ things have come. **2Corinthians 5:17**

16. Be imitators of _____, just as I also am of Christ. **1Corinthians 11:1**

17. By definition, those who are _____ must be _____ than those who have not been _____.

18. The word, “set apart” means _____
_____, _____, _____, _____, or _____.

19. But whatever things were _____ to me, those things I have counted _____ for the sake of Christ. **Philippians 3: 7**

20. That I may _____, and the _____, and the _____, being _____ to _____ . **Philippians 3: 10**

21. Do not be _____ together with _____ : for what partnership have _____ and _____ or what _____ has _____ with _____ ? **2Corinthians 6:14**

22. Name ways that we can obey the Biblical command of **2 Corinthians 6:14** and still reach the Lost for Christ? _____

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