

# A Man Whose Message You Can Trust

*Paul's Apostolic Authority, Part II Galatians 1:13-24* Chris Mueller 9-11-2022

## Introduction:

**Galatians 1:13** 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.

## #1                                  Paul was saved: pre-conversion evidence

**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.

**Philippians 3:5-6** circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church.

**Acts 8:3** "Saul began ravaging the church, entering house after house; and dragging off men and women, he would put them in prison

**Acts 9:1-2** "still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, [he] went to the high priest, 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"

**Acts 26:11** in all the synagogues, tried to force them to blaspheme; and being furiously enraged at them, [Paul] kept pursuing them even to foreign cities

**John MacArthur** 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.

No one can be so good (so religious) that they don't need God's gospel grace, and no one can be so bad that they can't receive the grace of the gospel.

## #2 Paul was saved: conversion evidence

**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

**Acts 22:4** I persecuted this Way to the death,  
**Acts 26:10** when they were being put to death I cast my vote against them.

**Jeremiah 1:5** Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, And before you were born I consecrated you;  
I have appointed you a prophet to the nations.

**1 Corinthians 1:1** called as an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God.

**Deuteronomy 7:7–8** "The Lord did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any of the peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples, but because the Lord loved you ...

**Acts 9:3–6** was approaching Damascus, ... suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him; and he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?' And he said, 'Who art Thou, Lord?' And He said, 'I am Jesus whom you are persecuting, but rise, and enter the city, and it shall be told you what you must do' .

**Ephesians 2:10** created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them"

## #3 Paul was saved: post-conversion evidence

**16b** 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.

**Galatians 2:9** "and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship" .

### Questions for Growth in Christ

1. Why is salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone constantly under attack?
2. Why is it that when you add anything to grace, it is no longer genuine grace?
3. What kinds of things were Paul's enemies saying about Paul to discredit him and malign the gospel?
4. How does Paul's life before Christ actually defend Paul and the message of salvation by grace alone?
5. How does Paul's conversion actually defend Paul and the message of salvation by grace alone?
6. Why are believers confused about the fact that though salvation is through faith alone, genuine faith produces works?
7. How can you personally grow to be a more trustworthy messenger of the true gospel message?
8. What part of today's passage impacted you the most, and how will you apply it?

