



World Christian Fellowship

www.wcflondon.com
wcflondon@gmail.com

Romans 07

The Messenger- Identity- Apostle

Romans 1:1, *Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God*

God called a unique man to be the major spokesman for the good news.

Paul, he was that man, the preacher of the good news.

1. Paul, an Apostle

Not only am I a servant of Jesus Christ but called an apostle. The best rendering of the Greek is a ***called apostle!***

The idea is that he was an apostle not because he decided on his own, but because God decided and effectually called him. There is no human appointment here.

Paul writes in the first sentence itself because he was mistreated and misrepresented people. Since Paul did not see like the other Apostle in Flesh.

Also, Paul's preaching to the Gentiles were viewed as not right and many of the Jews did not like it at all.

So, there was such a misrepresentation that is one of the reasons he always writes to all his epistles that he was called by God.

By the way, the term "apostle" was first used by the Lord in **Luke 6:13**. He called His Apostles from the disciples.

Matthew 10:1-2, *And when He had called His twelve disciples to Him, He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease.* ² *Now the names of the twelve apostles are these:*

Now Paul was called an apostle by God.

Acts chapter 9. remember from past week that Paul was on his way to Damascus to persecute Christians. The Lord stopped him in his tracks, slammed him in the ground, blinded him. Then there came a man by the name of Ananias who cared for him.

Acts 9:15, *But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel.*

It was not his choice.

It was God's choice.

Acts 22:12-16, *“Then a certain Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good testimony with all the Jews who dwelt there, ¹³ came to me; and he stood and said to me, ‘Brother Saul, receive your sight.’ And at that same hour I looked up at him. ¹⁴ Then he said, ‘The God of our fathers has chosen you that you should know His will, and see the Just One, and hear the voice of His mouth. ¹⁵ For you will be His witness to all men of what you have seen and heard. ¹⁶ And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.’*

Paul looks back and he remembers what Ananias told him.

Acts 26:17-18, *I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I ^[c]now send you, ¹⁸ to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.’*

He was called an apostle.

1 Corinthians 9:16-18, *For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel! ¹⁷ For if I do this willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have been entrusted with a stewardship. ¹⁸ What is my reward then? That when I preach the*

gospel, I may present the gospel of Christ without charge, that I may not abuse my authority in the gospel.

Do not give me a reward,
Do not give me an honour,
Pray for me.

God has given me a task to do I did not ask for, and if I mess up,
I am in a lot of trouble.

Galatians 1:1, *Paul, an apostle (not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead),*

Galatians 1:10-12, *For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.¹¹ But I make known to you, 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 it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ.*

Paul says that his call was from Christ Himself.

If you are going to represent the Lord Jesus Christ, you better know that He called you.

I would not take one step forward if I were not sure that God had placed me in the ministry!

It is far beyond me now.

The term *apostolos*, which is translated back in Romans 1 as "apostle"

"Apostle" means "a sent one, a commissioned one, a dispatched one, a messenger, an ambassador, or an envoy."

Those days they called certain boats apostolic boats. Apostolic boats were not the boats that carried apostles, but it had a secular use. An apostolic boat was a cargo ship. It was dispatched with a cargo for another city. So, it meant anything dispatched or sent.

You can send people for a specific purpose in a different way.
You can send someone giving him with a letter of authorization.
You can send someone with verbal message.
You can send someone to represent you.
You can send some to speak for you.

Paul is saying, I am sent, but my being sent is not a self-made decision.

The term "apostle" appears **78 times** in the New Testament and far and away most of those times refer to the Twelve and Paul. Modern day we find many were not sent but they just went!

But Paul was sent, and he knew it because God had affirmed it to him.

There is also an official sense in which we must understand the word "apostle."

An apostle was a very official office. It had a broad sense and everybody who bears the message of Christ is sent. Go into all the world and preach the gospel.

We are all sent. We all are apostles with a small "a".

The New Testament lists various people who are apostles who are outside the Twelve and Paul. But they are the ones with a capital "A", an official office.

If we study the New Testament, we will find that they had to be directly called by Jesus Christ.

- ✓ Directly,
- ✓ Verbally and
- ✓ Personally.

1. Eyewitness of Risen Lord

They had to have been eyewitnesses of Christ and His resurrection.

1 Corinthians 9:1, *Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord?*

1 Corinthians 15:6-8, *After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep.⁷ After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles.⁸ Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time.*

Paul was because he saw Him on the Damascus road.

2. Working of Miracles

They also were given the ability to do signs and wonders and mighty deeds and miracles, which are called by Paul the signs of an Apostle.

2 Corinthians 12:12, *Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds.*

Apostles also able to impart the spiritual gifts to others.

3. Revelation to write Scriptures

They were endowed with a special ability from the Holy Spirit in which they could correctly write the New Testament.

Because Jesus made the promise to them that the Spirit would come and live in them and lead them into all truth and bring to remembrance everything He had said.

1 Thessalonians 2:13, *For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.*

2 Corinthians 10:8, *For even if I should boast somewhat more about our authority, which the Lord gave ^[g]us for edification and not for your destruction, I shall not be ashamed—*

The Lord had given him the authority build His church.

2 Corinthians 13:10, *Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the authority which the Lord has given me for edification and not for destruction.*

Their office was not restricted to a local church, nor to any short period of time. But they became the foundation on which all the history of the church is built.

Not only Paul talks about the authority even Peter endorses the same.

2 Peter 3:15-16, *and consider that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation—as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, ¹⁶as also in all*

his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures.

So, these unique Twelve plus one, Matthias replacing Judas, were the foundation.

- ✓ They had to be called by Jesus Himself.
- ✓ They had to be eyewitnesses of His resurrection.
- ✓ They received the Holy Spirit by which they could write the revelation and
- ✓ They could do signs and wonders and mighty deeds.

Their office extended far beyond any local congregation. Paul was one of those very special people. He knew that God had called him.

Jeremiah 23, there were some prophets who went but they never were sent. People should never listen to them. There are so many prophets like that today who are out there talking but should not be listened to. They are damned prophets, false prophets.

There are those who never were sent, they just went. They have not the anointing of God on them. We are not to listen to them. They have corrupted the church through all the centuries of its existence and continue to do so even now.

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, a called apostle. By the way, he calls himself that at the beginning of several other letters as well.

When the New Testament cannon was finalized there were lot of debate which one should be included in the Bible.

They came to conclusion that unless a document purported to be a Gospel or Epistle and could be traced back to an Apostle, either directly or indirectly with apostolic authority, it should not be included.

Paul gave to the church what he received from the Lord.

1 Corinthians 11:23, *For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread;*

Paul had received it from the Lord directly.

1 Corinthians 15:3, *For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,*

Why do we make this point so much?

Revelation 2:2, *“I know your works, your labour, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have*

tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars;

False apostles were there in the first century itself.

Now in this modern era we have so many of them call themselves as apostles, bishops, many titles.

So, Church watch out!

2. **Separated**

Separated unto the gospel of God.

You cannot serve God unless you are separated.

The word “separated” is the idea of setting apart.

You can go back into the understanding of the Old Testament.

Exodus 13 the chapter we see that God wanted set apart unto Him the first born of man, the first born of the beasts.

Numbers 15 we see that God wanted the first fruits of the crop.

Numbers 8 we see that God set apart the best of men, consecrated the Levites to His service.

Leviticus 20 we see that God took the whole nation of Israel has been set apart for God.

Leviticus 20:26, *And you shall be holy to Me, for I the Lord am holy, and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be Mine.*

Every one of those scriptures,
the separating of the man,
the separation of beast,
the separating of the first fruit,
the separating of the Levites and
the separating of Israel.

In the Septuagint version, the Greek version, uses the word ***aphorizane*** and that is exactly the word used here.

It means separation in the fullest sense. Those animals and those first-born sons were utterly separated to the Lord. The first fruits, the Levites, and the nation, the same. There was to be no intermingling.

Paul knew that once he was called an apostle, he was disconnected from the past.

Pharisee meant “a separated one.”

All his life Paul had been a Pharisee, separated unto the tradition of the Jews.

Now he says, I am a Pharisee separated unto the gospel of God. Good news, no more of man's bad news.

Galatians 1:15, *But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace*

Paul was separated from his mother's womb.

Jeremiah 1:5, *“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; Before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations.”*

Jeremiah was set apart in his mother's womb.

When we look at the life of John the Baptist it is the same.

Luke 1:15, *For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb.*

When Apostle Paul talks about Esau and Jacob.

Romans 9:11-13, *(for the children not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of Him who calls), ¹² it was said to her, “The older shall serve the younger.” ¹³ As it is written, “Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated.”*

Why God did this?

Acts 15:18, *“Known to God from eternity are all His works.*

Paul being separated was not an afterthought but God's sovereign plan. God did not look at the circumstances and called him.

On the road to Damascus, he was separated unto the gospel of God.

Then he became a pastor of the church at Antioch.

Acts 13:2, *the Holy Spirit said unto them, "Separate me Paul and Barnabas and send them to the work I have for them."*

He was a separated man.

The secret of his service is that he was a bond slave. He utterly surrendered to the Lord. He was an apostle sent to carry the message.

Conclusion:

There are more people in gospel ministry who see little fruit and no power. Even though they may understand that they are to be servants and they may have been called, but somewhere along the line they are unwilling to be separated.

Timothy was a servant of the Lord, servant of Christ. Timothy was an apostle, small "a", not one of the Twelve plus Paul, but

nonetheless a messenger sent. But Timothy had come to the point in his life where everything was coming apart. He lost it.

What was happening to Timothy?

2 Timothy 1:6, *Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.*

What do you mean "stir up the gift of God"?

What was the gift of God?

The "gift of God" was the ability that he had for ministry, the preaching, and the teaching.

That was a gift of God given to him and it was confirmed to him, by those who were knowledgeable and affirmed, by the laying on of hands.

He was getting lazy in the ministry.

He just was not functioning.

2 Timothy 1:7-8, *For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. ⁸ Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God,*

Timothy, personally disciplined by Paul, gifted enough to have followed Paul as the pastor of the Ephesian church. This is Timothy of whom Paul said to the Corinthians, "I will send him to you to straighten you out because he will bring you unto remembrance of all my ways."

This was reproduction.

This was number one son.

He is not functioning.

He is timid.

He is ashamed of the gospel and even of his association with Paul.

2 Timothy 2:15-16, *Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.¹⁶ But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness.*

Verse 16, he was involved in profane and vain babblings, hassling with philosophers.

Verse 22 indicates that he probably was getting embroiled in some youthful lusts.

Verse 23, that he was striving in foolish and unlearned questions. He lacked gentleness.

In other words, the whole thing was coming apart. He had been sucked into the system.

2 Timothy 2:3-4, *You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. ⁴No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier.*

Timothy, have you forgotten that you are a soldier?

Have you forgotten that you are supposed to endure suffering as a good soldier?

No man that fights the battle can entangle himself with the affairs of this life?

Timothy, you cannot be caught in the lusts of this world.

Timothy, you cannot be caught in the philosophy of this world.

You cannot be caught in being ashamed of the gospel by the intimidation of this world.

You cannot be caught into the easy come-easy go society.

You must be diligent to stir up the gift of God.

Timothy, have you forgotten that you cannot entangle yourself with the affairs of this life?

When you go into the ministry of Jesus Christ, you cut the cord, you sever.

That is the kind of man Paul was.

A servant of Christ, but not just that,
called an apostle but not just that,
separated for the Gospel of God.

Paul never got himself entangled with the affairs of this life.

Many have lost their ministry and zeal for God because of fame, money etc.,

Not Paul!

His Identity: Slave and servant.

His authority: Sent by God.

His power: Separated for the Gospel of God.

His message: Gospel, good news.

Good news come from God Himself.