



# World Christian Fellowship

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## Galatians

### Lesson 03 Paul the Apostle

Paul wants to establish here just three things:

1. Paul's authority,
2. Paul's message, and
3. Paul's motive

### Paul's Authority

He was not like many other Pharisees who were religious hypocrites, but he was zealous for God. He wanted to obey every command, every tradition, every ceremony, offer every sacrifice. Everything that Moses required he wanted to do.

**Galatians 1:15-17**, *But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, <sup>16</sup> to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, <sup>17</sup> nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus.*

I don't have a commission from anybody in Jerusalem. I have a commission from Christ Himself.

- Separated from his mother's womb in the plan of God,
- saved on the Damascus Road,
- commissioned three years in the desert,
- in the wilderness the Lord reveals to him the gospel that he preaches.

Strict, intolerant, zealous, passionate legalist becomes the apostle of freedom in Christ, freedom from the Law.

He writes the charter of freedom that he found in Christ.

**Galatians 5:1,**

He had been freed from the bondage of his legalistic religion, which did nothing to deliver his soul from sin.

"I was sent from God."

Our Lord put such big responsibility on the shoulders of one man. When we cross chapter 12 of the book of Acts onwards we will find only one man doing all the work for the Lord.

They put him in prison,

They stoned him

He was Shipwrecked,

Whipped and

Stoned

He was left to die

But he did not, and the Lord would not, why?

Judas committed suicide and the others may say he is an outsider.

The gospel could not shut!

Paul, an apostle

Neither define nor defend the title, because the churches knew what an apostle was, and they knew he was an apostle.

Paul did not receive the revelation of the gospel second-hand from other apostles.

- He was chosen by God.
- He was called by God.
- He was justified and
- He was converted by God on the Damascus Road.
- Taught by God in desert

### **What is an apostle?**

The word means a messenger, a messenger.

Paul used it often to identify himself, because to the readers of the New Testament it had more meaning than just a lowercase messenger.

He uses it in,

- 1 and 2 Corinthians,
- Romans,
- Ephesians,

- Colossians, and
- here in the book of Galatians.

The word essentially means an envoy/delegate/ ambassador or messenger.

The word referred to some special emissary who is sent out from some monarch or some official government as a representative with legal authority to act on behalf of the king, or on behalf of that government.

Remember an Ambassador of a country operates the interest of their country in a foreign land.

Jesus chose twelve such apostles, and only twelve.

**Luke 6:12-16**, *Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. <sup>13</sup>And when it was day, He called His disciples to Himself; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles: <sup>14</sup>Simon, whom He also named Peter, and Andrew his brother; James and John; Philip and Bartholomew; <sup>15</sup>Matthew and Thomas; James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called the Zealot; <sup>16</sup>Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot who also became a traitor.*

You will find this in **Matthew 10:1-4** too as well.

Jesus called His disciples and chose from them twelve, and He named them apostles. There were twelve of them who were apostles, and they operated with a delegate authority.

Peter in Acts chapter 3 heals the lame man.

How and what does he say?

**Acts 3:6**, *Then Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk."*

It is not in his own name, he is a representative of the one who commissioned him and empowered.

There were twelve apostles. Judas committed suicide and his place was taken by a man named Matthias. Apostle Paul is been added later as an Apostle.

**1 Corinthians 15:9-10**, *For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. <sup>10</sup> But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.*

He was not worthy to be an apostle because he was a blasphemer.

## **Qualifications to be an Apostle**

### **1. Witness to Jesus Christ**

These men must have been with Christ during his ministry in order to qualify as his witnesses.

**Acts 1:21-22**

Paul was a personal witness of the resurrected Christ.

**1 Corinthians 15:1-9**

### **2. The apostle's student of Jesus Christ.**

They were constantly learning the truth of the gospel from their teacher during their time with him. They were able to teach others the same truth that they had learned directly from the Lord.

**John 16:7-15**

Paul learned the truth directly from Christ.

**Galatians 1:11-12**

### **3. Able to perform Miracles**

Miracles confirmed the truth of the apostles' message, they also proved that a man was qualified to serve as an apostle.

**Acts 2:43**

Paul made this clear to those who questioned his own right to apostleship about the miracles performed through him.

**2 Corinthians 12:11-12**

Apostle John testifies about his apostleship.

**1 John 1:1-3**, *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life— <sup>2</sup> the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us— <sup>3</sup> that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.*

Apostle is the one who had seen and heard, experienced the living Christ, been with Christ, seen Him risen from the dead.

Apostle and Prophets are the foundation of the church.

**Ephesians 2:20**, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief *cornerstone*,

The mysteries of the New Testament, the mystery of the church comes through the holy apostles.

There is no such thing as apostolic succession. The New Testament is the apostles' doctrine written down under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Paul goes on to say not chosen by men or through men but from God through Jesus Christ.

Is Jesus Christ a true representative of God?

Can Jesus Christ authorize the apostles?  
Does Christ have the authority?  
Does Christ have power to appoint apostles?

Yes! of course Jesus Christ does!

Why?

Because God the Father raised Him from the dead. God by raising Christ, is affirming Christ. God is declaring Christ to be His Son and Lord.

- The resurrection are God's authorizations on Christ.
- The call to apostleship is Christ's authorizations on the apostle.

The resurrection was God's validation of Christ. The resurrection of Christ from the dead was the inauguration of the New Covenant.

The OT ended with the final sacrifice, and the temple curtain being torn open from top to bottom.

There was no more priesthood.

There were no more sacrifices.

All Mosaic ritual was gone.

No more Sabbaths,  
no more feast days,  
no more holy days

All are gone.

The old era ends at the cross!

The new era begins at the resurrection!!

You don't go back to the old after the resurrection.

Why would you bring up circumcision?

Why would you bring up ceremonies?

Why would you bring up rituals?

Why would you bring up feast days?

Why would you bring up sabbaths?

All these things were the shadow of the things to come.

**Colossians 2:17**, *which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.*

We don't need any of those things.

The new covenant is grace and faith. The apostles began to preach after the resurrection, recorded in the book of **Acts chapter 2,3, 4, 5, 10, 13 17 &26.**

They were preaching that in the new covenant God saves sinners, ungodly people, purely on the basis of faith. Christ is the Son of God.

How do we know that?

Because God raised Him from the dead. That God was satisfied with Christ sacrifice, He accomplished the redemption of His people.

So, Paul's authority comes from his title as an apostle, and from his commission from the risen Christ.

### **Paul's authority comes from his association.**

V 2, "and all the brethren who are with me."

Note this, Paul doesn't say, "and all the other apostles who are with me." All the other preachers with him, whether Barnabas or whoever else, they were brothers. Paul an apostle and the rest are brothers. That is a term of distinction.

Paul usually names them in his other letters when he mentions about them. But here in this book he doesn't name them and just calls them "brother."

In many of his letters he names of some of the brothers that are with him, Barnabas, or Silas, or Timothy, or Titus, or whoever. Paul is happy for the association with other preaching brothers, but they are not apostles.

## Paul's message

**V 3 & 4**, *Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>4</sup> who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father,*

He defends his office based on his authority and based on his message.

A familiar salutation from Paul to the churches which he used it in **Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Ephesians, Philippians**, and here. There is no commendation, but there is a statement of, "*Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*"

- Grace is the source of salvation
- Peace is the result of Salvation.
  
- ✓ Grace is the sum of all blessings given by God.
- ✓ Peace is the enjoyment of all blessings experienced by the believer.

Grace and Peace brings to us,

- We are saved by grace into peace.
- We have a peace that passes understanding.
- We have peace with God.
- We don't fear death.
- We don't fear what the world brings.

- We have no fear of the enemy.
- We have no fear of Satan.
- We have no fear of demons.
- We have no fear of whatever happens in life, because we are at peace with God, our eternity is settled, and we're eager to be in His presence.

**V4**, the grace comes from, and the peace, because the Lord Jesus Christ *“who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father,”*

The nature of Christ's death.

What happened when He died?

How and why did He die?

Jesus Christ gave Himself for our sins. Jesus offered Himself as a sacrifice for sin. The death of Christ is an actual sacrifice for sin.

**John 1:29**, *The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”*

Circumcision adds nothing.

Ceremony adds nothing.

Ritual adds nothing.

Morality adds nothing.

**Galatians 2:20**, *I have been crucified with Christ; 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 for me.*

Christ dies and by a divine miracle, we die in Him.  
Our sins are paid for and then He comes to live in us.

Circumcision has nothing to do with that.

Baptism has nothing to do with that.

Christ's death is a sin offering to God, a ransom paid to God to rescue sinners, and to provide the forgiveness of their sins. It is a full atonement.

V4, "He gave Himself for our sins so that He might rescue us from this present evil age."

When He died, Jesus delivered, or rescued us!

**Colossians 1:13**, *He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,*

Jesus Christ the atoning sacrifice for the sins of God's people that rescues them from the domain of darkness from this present evil age.

What was behind this?

V 4: "According to the will of our God and Father."

God willed the death of Christ.

Peter said on the Day of Pentecost in

**Acts 2: 23**, *Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death;*

It is by the will of God, all planned by God and executed by Christ. So, there is no room in this for circumcision, for ritual of any kind.

## **Paul's motive**

**V 5**, *“to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.*

All of this to the glory of God.

Put your

Works,

Physical action,

Accomplishment,

Achievement,

Morality,

Ritual,

Ceremony, and

Sacrament aside.

All the glory belongs to Him alone!

**1 Corinthians 1:29-31**, *that no flesh should glory in His presence. <sup>30</sup> But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption— <sup>31</sup> that, as it is written, “He who glories, let him glory in the Lord.”*

This is the issue at stake.

“To Him be the glory forever and ever.” And this is repeated throughout Paul’s letters.

Paul says it in Ephesians.

Paul says it in Philippians.

Paul says it in 2 Timothy,

Paul says it Galatians

Why?

By insisting on human works, like insisting on circumcision and human effort of any kind, they were degrading what God had done in Christ.

In other words, you are telling that God’s work on cross was incomplete.

Paul is absolute in saying that all-sufficiency of Christ and His perfect work. Hence magnifying God, and giving Him all the glory.

A rich benediction comes to us out of this passage. Did you notice, at every stage in what Paul has said the Father and the Son are together?

The sin-bearing of Jesus was both an act of self-sacrifice and an act of the will of God the Father.

The authority of Paul as an apostle was through God the Father and Jesus Christ.

The grace and peace which we receive are from God the Father  
and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Together they planned it.

Together they provided it.

Together they announced it.

Together they bestow it.

That's why our Lord says in John 5:23, that all should honour the  
Son just as they honour the Father. He who does not honour the  
Son does not honour the Father who sent Him.

Don't tamper with the gospel.

That's Paul's heart cry.

Let this be our hearts cry too!

Amen.