

Sunday, July 26, 2022—Galatians 1:1 Paul’s Unique Apostleship

Introduction

- Please see our studies from [July 10](#) and [July 17](#) to access the introductory material presented in this series.

Galatians 1:1

- **Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;)**
- The first verse of Galatians is indicative of the entire book. Paul is in the face of his readers from the first verse of the book.
- **“Paul an apostle”**—Paul starts the book by stating in no uncertain terms that he is an apostle.
- “Apostle” comes from the Greek word *apostolos* which means a messenger or he that is sent. That is exactly what Paul was – one sent out by God with a message.
 - Romans 1:1—God had indeed called Paul to be an apostle.
 - I Corinthians 1:1—God called or appointed Paul to his apostleship.
- Paul begins the book in this fashion because people had come into the churches of Galatia after Paul had left and questioned his apostleship. Therefore, the first thing Paul does is remind the Galatians of his apostolic authority.
- Next, we enter a parenthesis in the verse where Paul diverts to further explain the conditions of his apostleship.
- **“not of man”**—Paul is saying this in relation to his being an apostle. That is to say, that man did not give him this position nor did it originate with man. The apostleship of Paul did not have a human source.
- **“neither by man”**—Paul also did not receive his apostleship through a man. That is to say, no human agent made Paul an apostle.
- From these statements, it is very clear that Paul wants us to understand that mankind had no part in bestowing upon Paul apostolic authority.
- **“but by Jesus Christ”**—the first word in this phrase, “but” sets it in direct contrast to what he has just said. Paul uses a strong word like “but” to sharply contrast and demonstrate that the source of his apostleship did not come through human origin.

- Paul was made an apostle by the direct revelation of Jesus Christ.
 - Acts 9:4-6, 15
 - Acts 26:16-18—Paul adds more information about what happened to him on the road to Damascus that is not recorded in Acts 9.
 - Acts 20:24—God made Paul to be an apostle.

The Ministry of the Twelve

- During his earthly ministry, Jesus Christ chose and commissioned twelve apostles who would have governing authority over the nation of Israel in the Millennium.
- Matthew 10:1-8—every apostle is a disciple, not every disciple is an apostle.
 - Go not into the way of the Gentiles or any city of the Samaritans
 - Go only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel
 - Preach the Gospel of the Kingdom—the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand
- Matthew 19:27-28—the twelve apostles that Christ chose will rule with Christ from twelve thrones in the Kingdom.
- The twelve apostles were given a totally and completely Jewish commission. In fact, they were not even supposed to go to the Gentiles until they had preached to all of Israel.
 - Acts 1:8
 - Luke 24:47—in fulfilling the so-called Great Commission, the twelve were to begin in Israel first.

Was Matthias An Incorrect Choice?

- After Judas betrayed Christ, he hung himself. This presented a problem. Twelve apostles were supposed to sit upon twelve thrones in the kingdom. Now there were only eleven apostles, so their first order of business after Christ's ascension into heaven, was to choose someone to take the place of Judas.
- Acts 1:20-26—many teach that the eleven made a mistake in picking Matthias. They teach that Paul should have been the one chosen to replace Judas. Paul did not meet the qualifications outlined by the Holy Spirit to replace Judas.
- Acts 5:31—even as late as Acts 5, the twelve apostles are still carrying forth their original commission by ministering exclusively to the nation of Israel.

Paul's Unique Apostleship

- It was not until Israel's transgression was full that Christ saved Paul and gave him a new and different apostleship.
- Romans 11:13—not only is Paul sent to the Gentiles, but the title of his office is the Apostle of the Gentiles. This is a totally and completely different commission than the one given to the twelve.
- Romans 15:15-16
- Ephesians 3:1-8—Paul was made a minister of the secret purpose of God, kept secret since the world began.
- I Timothy 2:4-7
- II Timothy 1:9-11
- Galatians 1:1—Paul says that his apostleship is *not of man, neither by man* to demonstrate his total uniqueness from the twelve before him.
- Paul is the only apostle to receive a commission directly by Christ Himself since the resurrection and ascension.
- Jesus Christ literally appeared to Saul on the road to Damascus, saved him and gave him a separate and unique apostleship than that of the twelve.