

Sunday, September 20, 2009—Grace Life School of Theology—Understanding Galatians and the Law—Galatians 1:1

Galatians 1:1

- 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 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 want us to understand 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 12

- During his earthly ministry Jesus Christ chose and commissioned 12 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 12 apostles that Christ chose will rule with Christ from 12 thrones in the Kingdom.
- The 12 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 12 were to begin in Israel first.

Was Matthias An Incorrect Choice?

- After Judas betrayed Christ he hung himself. This presented a problem 12 apostles were supposed to sit upon 12 thrones in the kingdom. Now there were only 11 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 11 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 12 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 give to the 12.
- 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 12 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 to of the 12.