

Paul's Origin Story

Galatians 1:10-23

The message and calling that Paul received was unique, precise, and directly from Jesus Christ (The Messiah).

What does it mean for us in our world to speak the truth in love and to not shout our faith in anger?

- 1:11-24, Paul's life is interrupted by Jesus and his first encounter with church leaders in Jerusalem.
- 2:1-10, A meeting between Paul and the Jerusalem leaders over the details of his missionary work.
- 2:11-21, Confrontation with Peter in Antioch which led to the central thrust of Paul's gospel message.

vs. 11, the gospel preached by me
What is Paul's good news?

1. Salvation is in Jesus Christ alone in fulfillment of the revelation given through Moses.
2. One becomes accepted by God only by faith, apart from living the law of Moses.
3. Jews and Gentiles are on equal footing in regards to church participation.

Justification before God is possible without obedience to the law of Moses.
This teaching was threatening the very existence of Judaism.
This is why Galatians is so pivotal to the establishment of the church.

Remember: Paul is unique as an Apostle.

John 15:27 You also will testify, because you have been with me from the beginning.

Acts 1:21-22 "Therefore, from among the men who have accompanied us during the whole time the Lord Jesus went in and out among us— **22** beginning from the baptism of John until the day he was taken up from us—from among these, it is necessary that one become a witness with us of his resurrection."

If Paul's message is directly from Jesus then his gospel is binding on us.

So how do we know the origin of Paul's message?

vs. 13-14, What is Paul's background?

- Advanced in Judaism
- Extremely zealous for the traditions of my ancestors.
- Determined to destroy God's church.

Zealous like others who are well known in the history of Israel.

1 Kings 18 & 19, Elijah destroys all the prophets of Baal.

19:13-15 Suddenly, a voice came to him and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" **14** "I have been very zealous for the Lord God of Armies," he replied, "but the Israelites have abandoned your covenant, torn down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they're looking for me to take my life. **15** Then the Lord said to him, "Go and return by the way you came to the Wilderness of Damascus.

Numbers 25, Phinehas intervenes

25:10-11 The Lord spoke to Moses, **11** "Phinehas son of Eleazar, son of Aaron the priest, has turned back my wrath from the Israelites because he was zealous among them with my zeal, so that I did not destroy the Israelites in my zeal.

Paul is describing the intensity of his pedigree. You wouldn't be able to find a more traditional and strict Jew.

vs. 15, But when God...

From my mother's womb

- I have always been faithful to Israel's God.
- I have also been faithful to my heritage and to scripture.
- I am now standing in front of you having received a call that is rooted in the prophetic traditions.
- By his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son in me. Jesus himself has commissioned me to be an apostle to the nations. This is God's continued revelation.

Paul is standing right at the center of those traditions, and speaking about the inauguration of Jesus the Messiah which is moving toward the reality of Revelation 5.

Jeremiah 1:5 I chose you before I formed you in the womb; I set you apart before you were born. I appointed you a prophet to the nations.

Isaiah 49:1, 5, 6 Coasts and islands, listen to me; distant peoples, pay attention. The Lord called me before I was born. He named me while I was in my mother's womb. **5** And now, says the Lord, who formed me from the womb to be his servant, **6** I will also make you a light for the nations, to be my salvation to the ends of the earth."

In Paul's extreme zeal he is confronted by Jesus.

Acts 9:1-19 - Paul's encounter with Jesus.

Only personal intervention in Paul's life could explain his transformation from such a person into a preacher of a Torah-free gospel.

vs. 17, I did not go up to Jerusalem.
Why is this an important point?

Paul wants to be very clear that his authority to preach the gospel has been given by no other apart from Jesus.

For three years Paul embraced all of the truth that Jesus had revealed to him. He was active in sharing the gospel in Arabia and Damascus.

Again notice the pattern that is present and not by accident.
Paul is confronted by Jesus, goes to Arabia (Mt Sinai) to do business with God (the God of Abraham), and then sent back to Damascus to announce Jesus as Messiah.

vs. 18-22, Paul is making sure that people understand that no place or person has authority over his gospel message other than Jesus!

vs. 23-24, Saul / Paul is a different man. He preaches the faith he once tried to destroy.

Question: Have you placed your faith in Jesus? Will you trust him to transform your life? Are you participating in the good news of Jesus? Does your involvement in the church demonstrate the intensity of Paul's origin story?