

**SERIES: THE ROMAN REVEALING**  
**From The Sermon Notebook of Dr. Doyce H. Nolan**

**SUBJECT: THE CREDENTIALS OF PAUL (Part 1)**

**SCRIPTURE: ROMANS 1:1**

**SERMON No. 2 January 21, 2007**

**Introduction**

One of the most pressing problems facing America today is our moral crisis. This problem contributes to our rising crime rate, drug usage, and sexual irresponsibility.

**Over the last thirty years:**

Violent crime has increased 560%.

Illegitimate births increased 419%.

Teenage suicides increased 200%.

Divorce rates have quadrupled the percentage of children living in single-parent homes.

Over 40 million abortions since 1973. *The Wall Street Journal*,

**The spiritual light of American life is growing dim.** We are undergoing an erosion of high moral and ethical values. We still live well, but we no longer live nobly. America's great strength, beauty and freedom proposed by our founding fathers is gradually decaying, not by Russia or Iraq, but from within.

**Traditionally America's great strength rested on the foundational belief in, and a dependence upon Almighty God.** Our fundamental purpose of education was to engage in the architecture of souls. This was a time when families, churches, schools and neighborhoods traditionally were united in taking on the responsibility of providing our children with love, order and

discipline; **teaching** self-control, compassion, tolerance, honesty, and respect for authority.

Teachers and parents worked together in the molding of children. I remember a teacher instruction me not to chew gum in public. Also that I was to chew my food eighteen times so it would digest better. She informed me that the proper way to speak was to place the tip end of my tongue at the edge of my teeth in the roof of my mouth. My parents enforced her instructions at home.

*Why are we in this erosion and destructive mode of Moral Values?*

**Because American families have been on a steady increase of adjusting and adapting to the ways of the world!** As American families we desperately need to recover a sense of the fundamental purpose of education in the home, which is to engage in the architecture of souls. A home where the man is the spiritual leader of the household. A home where the total family attends the worship service together. When a society ignores this responsibility, it does so at its destruction. Tragically, we do not know where we are going because we have forgotten from where we have come.

**The only hope for American families is a rehabilitation of hearing and heeding the word of God**, namely the Pauline Theology. We need a revival of the theology that made Paul great! We shall observe 3 facts: 1. Paul's Condition. 2. Paul's Calling. 3. Paul's Commission.

Text: vs 1 **Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,**

## **I. PAUL'S CONDITION. (vs.1) Paul a servant of Jesus Christ.**

**1. Paul Begins by Proclaiming Himself to be a "Servant."** The word means a "bond slave." Instead of exalting himself like so many do today, Paul chose to humble himself, which was the secret of his greatness! His life was dictated to him by the master. He was totally sold out to the will of God.

In modern day Christianity many feel that they are in control of their lives and that they have the right to do as they please and make their own decisions. We need to remember that when we were saved by Jesus Christ, we became His bond servants! He bought us, and now He owns us completely. (1 Cor. 6:19-20.)

**What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? 20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.**

### **2. The Four Biblical Facts Concerning A Slave.**

**(1) The slave was totally owned by the Master.** He was purchased by his master.

**(2) The slave existed for his Master.** He had no other reason for his existence. He had no rights of his own. The only rights he had were those of the Master.

**(3) The slave existed to serve his Master.** He had no other purpose in life but to do what the Master wanted him to do. He was to be at the Master's disposal any hour of the day or night. This is how Paul felt. He was to do his master's will totally, and without question! **Eph. 6:6 Not with eye service, as men pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.**

When you teach that Sunday School lesson, do you teach it from the heart? When you preach that sermon, do you preach it from the heart? When you correct your children, do you correct them from the heart?

**(4) The slave belonged exclusively to his Master.** There was to be a total surrender of every part of the slaves life to the will of the master. **2 Cor. 10:5.** Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

The phrase "casting down" means to throw down with all your might, all of the imaginations that go against the knowledge of God! We are to captivate, to imprison every thought into the prison house of obedience to God!

**3. When Paul Mentions His Master, He Refers to The Lord Jesus.** We are perhaps the only slaves in history who are allowed to sit with their Master in His throne, **Eph. 2:6** He has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. *Not only was Paul a slave to his Master, notice...*

**II. PAUL'S CALLING. (vs 1).** Called to be an apostle. He was not only a slave but an apostle. This word means an "ambassador", a "sent one."

The ambassador's of the United States are persons sent out into other countries as representatives of the United States with full authority of our President.

Paul was a representative of King Jesus and he operated under His Divine authority. When Paul spoke, he spoke for the Lord.

When he acted, he acted as a representative of the throne of Heaven. His authority was the very authority of God Himself.

**1. Paul Was What He Was By The Will of God.** Notice that he had been "Called". Paul did not just decide to go into the ministry, nor did friends and family persuade him that it was what he should do. He was placed in the ministry by the sovereign will of Almighty God. Just as God picked and placed Paul in his ministry, He places us in His kingdom work when and where it pleases Him. **The Bible says, 1 Cor. 12:18 Now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.**

If God could take Paul, his worst enemy, and make him His greatest messenger, then God can and will use your life for His glory if you will yield to Him. Never let the Devil or any person tell you that God cannot and will not use your life for His glory.

He saved you by His grace and He wants to use you to bring others unto Him. He has a place of service for you and He will place you there if you will yield to Him. *Lest we forget..*

**2. We Are the Ambassadors of Heaven.** God has commissioned us to be His spokespersons to a lost and dying world. The Bible plainly tells us that we are the very words of God written to speak to the peoples of the world, **2 Cor. 3:2-3. Ye are our epistles written in our hearts, known and read of all men; Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written, not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.**

**When the world sees you and me, let them see a people committed to the will of God in the world. Phil. 1:27 Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that**

whether I come and see you or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel. We are to stand fast... we are to dig our heels in and refuse to be moved! We should flavor our lives with the glory of God and create a thirst in others for the things of God. *Paul's Condition, Paul's Calling, also*

**III. PAUL'S COMMISSION. (vs 1) Separated unto the gospel of God.** Paul's next statement tells us that he had been "separated" unto the Gospel of God.

**1. Paul Tells Us That He Is Separated.** This word has the idea of being "set apart." Paul is telling us that his life has been set apart for the glory of God and for the Lord Jesus Christ. This literally means that nothing else mattered to Paul but the things that mattered to God.

**a) Our job is not to separate from the world,** it is to separate unto Christ. If we are separated unto Jesus, then we are automatically separated from the world. **2 Cor. 6:17, Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.**

**As Christians we should live lives that reflect the nature of God.** We should separate ourselves from actions, influences, and people that will contaminate us. **This is the biblical principle of living holy lives.** If I live to please Him, I will have no trouble with the world!

**b) The word translated "separated" is literally "off-horizon".** It tells us that Paul's horizons had changed. Before, he was headed toward a religious hell, living a life of legalism and rebellion

against Christ. Now, his life has been changed and he is headed towards a new horizon. His is a radically different life.

When I served the military of the United States I was sent overseas on the troop ship, the USNS Barrett. Way out in the Pacific Ocean you could see no land anywhere. The sea was like a slick glass of water, no waves, not even ripples. The only thing you could see was the far off horizon. It seemed that the world just ended at the horizon.

At one point a mighty storm was brewing in our path. The Captain of the ship began to chart another course, when suddenly a second storm was noticed. The Captain of the ship charted, yet another course, this time through the center of the two storms. All the while he kept his eye on the horizon between the two storms. We reached our destination safely.

My friends, life is full of storms, but we must keep our eyes on the horizon! We may have to change course from time to time, but the main thing is to keep our eyes on the horizon. We shall reach our destination safely.

**Paul had a new horizon. So it is with every child of God who is in the world today.** Like Paul we have been changed forever! We are headed toward a new horizon. Before, our destiny was an eternity in Hell. Now, we have been saved and are headed to Heaven to be with the Lord forever. Before, our lives were filled with sin and rebellion. Now, we have been called out as ambassadors of the kingdom of Heaven. The very representatives of God in the world today.

**2. Paul Tells Us That He Has Been Separated To The "Gospel of God."** His commission is that of carrying the "good news" of

Jesus to a world trapped in sin and lostness. *This Gospel is a special message.*

**a) It is the Gospel of God.** This message did not originate in the mind of man. It came from the heart of God. The plan that would culminate with Jesus dying on the cross and then rising from the dead was and is God's plan, not man's plan. It was devised long before man ever stood on the earth, (Rev. 13:8). Had man developed the plan of salvation, it surely would have included works and religious rituals. Today people are going to hell for love of works and religious rituals, just because they want a little credit for themselves!

**God fixed it so that lost sinners could come to Him freely,** in faith and receive eternal salvation by the grace of God, **Eph. 2:8-9.** *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

**b) It is a Gospel born in the heart of God.** Why would God want to go to such great lengths to save the world and get His message to the world? The answer is that God is love, 1 John 4:8 *He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.* The Bible says that God does not want to see a single sinner die without Him, 2 Pet. 3:9 *God is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.* God's love is so great that He is willing to use people like you and me to get His message out.

## **Conclusion**

Just as Paul was separated in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century to carry the Gospel to the lost then, we are called to do the same in this day.

**The message is just as precious and the need just as great, if not greater.** Our duty is to submit to the Lord's will for our lives and be His ambassadors in the world. How are you doing as an ambassador for Christ?