

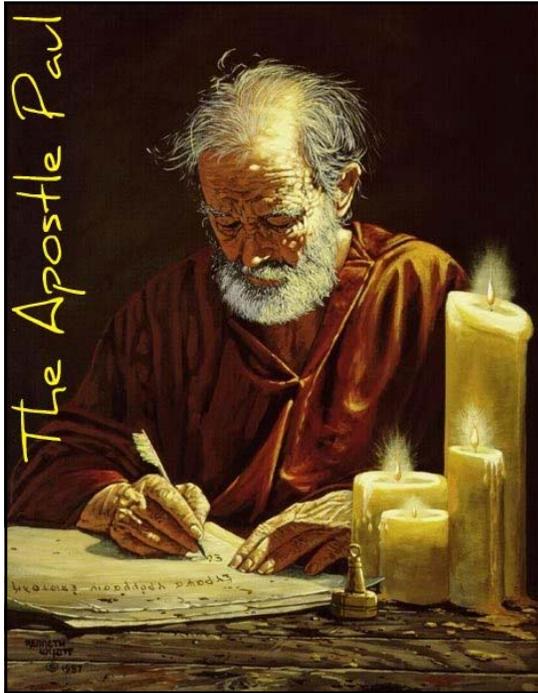


Mt 28:19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations,

Rev 5:9 For You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,

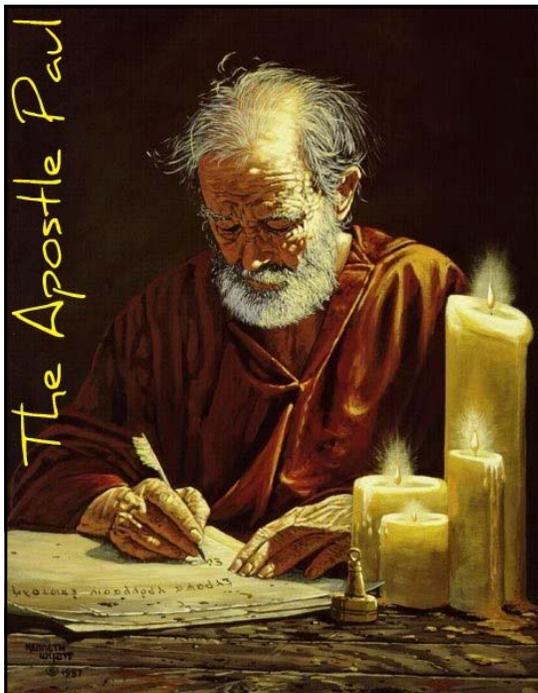
Acts 21:17-26 And when we had come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. ¹⁸ On the following day Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present. ¹⁹ When he had greeted them, he told in detail those things which God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. ²⁰ And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord. And they said to him, "You see, brother, how many myriads of Jews there are who have believed, and they are all zealous for the law; ²¹ but they have been informed about you that you teach all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children nor to walk according to the customs. ²² What then? The assembly must certainly meet, for they will hear that you have come.

²³ Therefore do what we tell you: We have four men who have taken a vow. ²⁴ Take them and be purified with them, and pay their expenses so that they may shave their heads, and that all may know that those things of which they were informed concerning you are nothing, but that you yourself also walk orderly and keep the law. ²⁵ But concerning the Gentiles who believe, we have written and decided that they should observe no such thing, except that they should keep themselves from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality." ²⁶ Then Paul took the men, and the next day, having been purified with them, entered the temple to announce the expiration of the days of purification, at which time an offering should be made for each one of them.

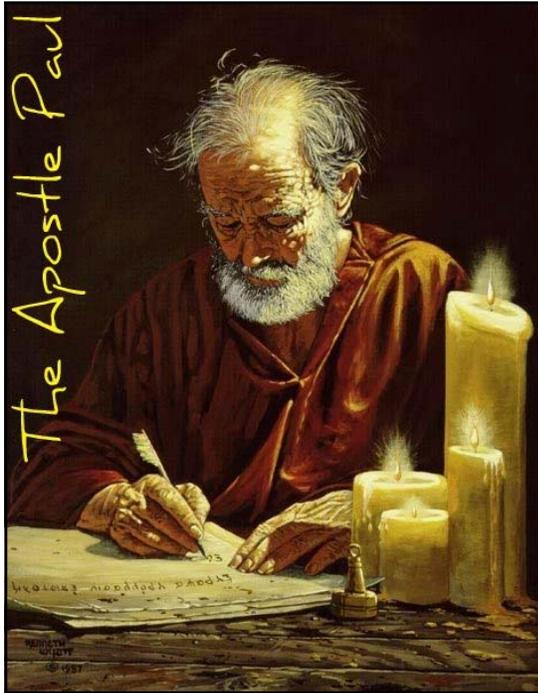


Gal 1:14 And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers.

Phil 3:5-6 circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; ⁶concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

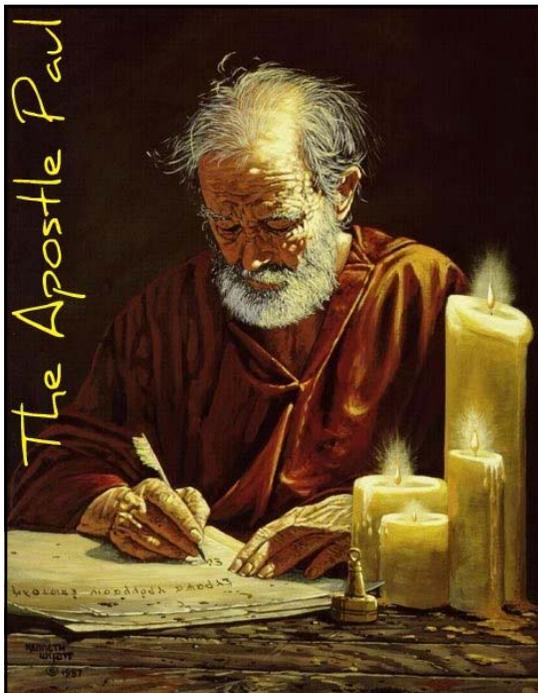


- **An apostle to the Gentiles:** Rom 11:13, 1 Tim 2:7
- **Caught up to the 3rd heaven:** 2 Cor 12:2
- **Performed signs of an apostle:** 2 Cor 12:12
- **Bore the marks of suffering for Christ:** Gal 6:17
- **Not inferior to the most eminent apostles:** 2 Cor 11:5



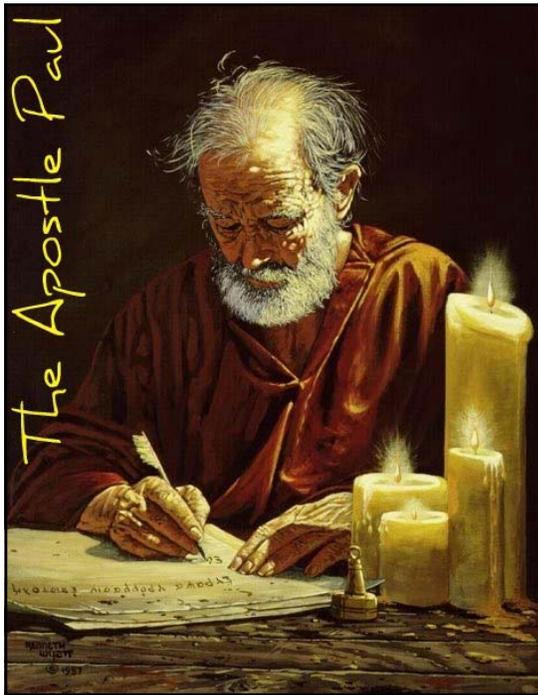
- He was humble:

1 Tim 1:12-17 He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, ¹³ although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. ... ¹⁵ This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.



Eph 3:8 To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given,

1 Cor 3:5-7 Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers through whom you believed, as the Lord gave to each one? ⁶ I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. ⁷ So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase.



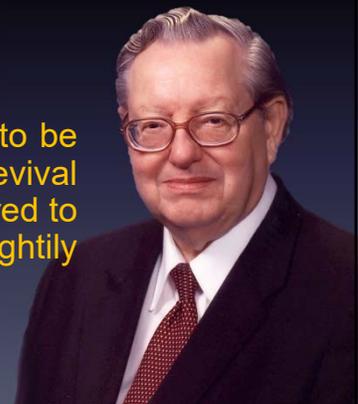
1 Cor 15:10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

2 Cor 10:17 But “he who glories, let him glory in the Lord.”

The “religion-centric” believer

1. They are quick to rejoice over what God is obviously doing (17-20a)

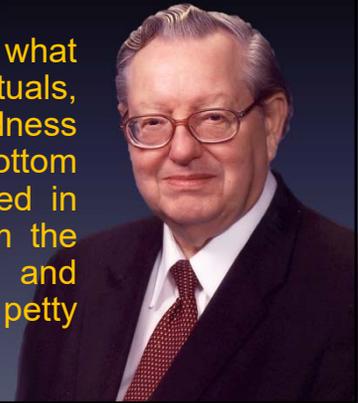
“Of course they glorified God. A person would have to be made of stone not to glorify God for news of such revival fires burning in all parts of the world and not to be stirred to the depths of his being at the story of a man so mightily used of God.



The “religion-centric” believer

1. They are quick to rejoice over what God is obviously doing (17-20a)

But the second word ‘and’ spoils it all. It links us to what follows: their miserable absorption with rites and rituals, forms and ceremonies, and their myopic shortsightedness and exclusiveness. When we come down to the bottom line, we discover that they were really not interested in world evangelism at all. They turned at once from the thrilling story of Paul’s missionary adventures and successes to a criticism of his neglect of their petty religious rules.” John Phillips



The “religion-centric” believer

1. They are quick to rejoice over what God is obviously doing (17-20a)
1. They are not as quick to give up their religious traditions (20b)
1. They exaggerate the facts (21-22, 25) (Acts 15:19-21)
1. They do not hesitate to project their traditions on others (22-26)

“There is no evidence that Paul’s compliance did the slightest amount of good, but he was in a difficult situation. To comply with their request might cause his Gentile friends to stumble; to refuse to do so would confirm his Jewish brethren in their already low opinion of him. Of the two evils, he chose the lesser, judging that the conscience of his Gentile friends, enlightened by his own teaching, was far stronger than that of these Jewish elders, bound as they were by traditions and shackles that kept them imprisoned to obsolete forms and ceremonies.” John Phillips

The “Christ-centric” believer

1 Cor 9:19, 22b-23 For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more; ... ²² I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. ²³ Now this I do for the gospel’s sake, that I may be partaker of it with you.

1. They are focused on the truth more than anything else
1. They are willing to set aside their “preferences” for the good of others
1. They are willing to become “all things to all men”

Rom 12:16 Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits. KJV

Rom 15:1-3 We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves. ² Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, leading to edification. ³ For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me."