

GALATIANS 1:13-16

Paul saw and talked with Jesus Christ. If the same message as the 12, and if dealing with the same Church, why all this with Paul?

A. Galatians 1:13 - For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it:

1. Paul evidently made such headway in the areas of Jerusalem and Judea, that he had pretty much cleaned house. Saul then asks the religious leaders to let him go to Damascus because he had heard there were still Jesus Christ Messiah believers there. Saul was a one man wrecking crew against the 12's Messianic Church.
2. Paul's zeal, reputation, and his love for the Law were well known. Judaism had just become a religion. In its beginning, it had the Law (613 rules), the priesthood, sacrificial worship, feast days, and it was pure. But Israel's leaders had over the years progressively degenerated into a spiritual downgrade until it had become apostate. This was proven by their unbelief and rejection of Jesus Christ. Rejecting truth led them to crucifying Christ and finally committing the unpardonable sin in their stoning of Stephen. *Paul was part of that religion that tried to eradicate the Little Flock. Saul was a fanatic who was in a frenzy to punish Christ followers.

Acts 7:56-58 - And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. Acts 7:57 Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, Acts 7:58 And cast *him* out of the city, and stoned *him*: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul.

Acts 8:1, 3 - And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles. Acts 8:3 As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed *them* to prison.

Acts 9:1 - And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest,

Acts 9:13 - Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem:

Acts 26:10 - Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against *them*.

Acts 22:4 - And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women.

B. Galatians 1:14 - And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.

1. Les Feldick said, "You can go into religions headquarters and the upper echelons, and what do you find? Money! And where did they get it? Their tremendous wealth comes from peons down on the lower levels."

**Judaism was no different. Why did Christ drive out the moneychangers in the temple? They would sell at gauging prices to the poor the necessary animals to sacrifice to fulfill the demands of religion. This was an easy way of getting rich and Israel's leaders lived sumptuously. They were feeding, living off the poor of their religion.

2. Because Saul was [more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers] he [profited in the Jews religion above many my equals]. *Religion always leans on traditions rather than on true doctrine. The reason for this is most do not study or read the Bible. They follow only what their Church or denomination says.
3. Saul advanced quickly through Israel's religious ranks:

Acts 26:4-5 - My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews; Acts 26:5 Which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee.

Philippians 3:5-6 - Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, *of* the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; Phil. 3:6 Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

*But: Mark 7:7-9 - Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. Mark 7:8 For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, *as* the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. Mark 7:9 And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.
4. When Saul saw the inroads that Jesus of Nazareth and the 12 were making into Judaism, he just about went into orbit. This religious, traditional Jew fought the new so-called Messiah followers tooth and nail. Saul was doing his best to stamp it out. He attacked and attacked. Saul was sincere, but sincerely wrong!
 - a. *Saul was a vicious man who had no mercy. He did not care if one was young or old, single or married with children. If they had embraced Christ, Saul thought they were not worth living. To Saul, they were only a threat to his religion.
 - b. Saul-Paul never got over hurting so many. The pain, hurt, and lives he took, haunted him always. I think that is why he was willing to suffer persecution himself. He thought what goes around comes around.

Acts 9:15-16 - But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: Acts 9:16 For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.

I Timothy 1:13 - Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did *it* ignorantly in unbelief.
 - c. So, Saul had become the epitome of rebellion against God. That is the irony of religion. Those who think they are doing God a favor in their religious activities are often the most rebellious against the truths of God. However, they are actual enemies of God without even realizing it.
5. Remember, there are three churches:
 - a. There is the Old Testament Mosaic Israel Church (Past).

Acts 7:38 - This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and *with* our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us:
 - b. There is today's Body Church (Present).

Ephesians 3:2 - If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward:

I Timothy 1:16 - Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

Ephesians 1:22-23 - And hath put all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* the head over all *things to the church*, Eph. 1:23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

- c. There is the 12's **Messianic Church** (Future).

Matthew 16:18-19 - And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Matt. 16:19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Revelation 1:20b [the seven candlesticks...are the seven churches]

6. The Kingdom Church was just beginning to get underway in the early chapters of Acts. God had to **interrupt** it because of Israel's **unbelief**, and their killing of God's messenger Stephen. Israel was temporarily set aside, but **resumes** in the Tribulation and Millennium.
7. As we can see here, religion is antagonistic toward **true** faith believers and truth in general. RCC slaughtered **50M+**! The reformers were put to death...burned at the stake for publishing bibles...the truth. Today we are seeing Islam, Hindus, Sudah, etc...do this for their religion.
8. So, we have Saul very religiously advancing through the ranks of Judaism. He is in a hurry to become **top** Pharisee. He is young, energetic, and craving for recognition in his religious achievements. He is rising **above** his competition, knowledgeable in the Old Testament and oral-written traditions. He has no equal, is full of pride, and is head of his class in ecclesiastical effort. He is so scholarly that he is becoming the **hero** of Israel.

C. Galatians 1:15 - But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called *me* by his grace,

1. Here we see again Paul's calling to Apostleship was **apart** from the 12. Paul says that God had planned his Apostleship from the time he was born - different than the 12.

*Note: When we speak of the 12 and their Kingdom followers, they had accepted the apostleship of the 12, but **not** Paul's. No doubt they would point out that the 12 were around **before** Paul; therefore, the 12 should be more important than Paul.

*Paul's answer here in 1:15 is saying that he was actually called in time **preceding** that of the 12 [from my mother's womb]. Called at his birth!
2. It almost sounds like the Lord was the attending **physician** at his birth. [But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb]
 - a. [separated] When Paul was born, God **al**ready had plans for his life. Paul was **pre**destined by God's boundaries to prepare him as a preacher of the Gospel of Grace.
 - b. God separated Paul from his heritage, from **all** that he was in the flesh through Jerusalem's Judaism, and from Israel's **iden**tity.

Acts 22:17-18, 21 - And it came to pass, that, when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance; Acts 22:18 And saw him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me. Acts 22:21 And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.

*This is when Paul realized God had **int**errupted Israel's program.

c. Why was Paul separated from Israel?

Matthew 12:31-32 - Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. Matt. 12:32 And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.

I Timothy 1:12 - And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry;

- (1) *Paul was a **blas**phemer in joining his nation against Christ and the Holy Spirit. That meant **no** salvation for him in the Jewish economy - program. So God had to separate Paul from that Jewish blasphemous generation, who had no ability to be saved and to only wait for God's wrath to come. If Paul had been **left** in Israel's program, he **never** could or would have been saved!
- (2) God had to interrupt the prophetic program and create a **new** age-dispensation in which Paul could be saved. God had a hidden mystery **secret** that he started with Paul.
- (3) The key word in verse 15 is "grace." Paul used the word grace **more** than all the other authors of scripture put together. *Only grace could have **changed** this man. If ever there was a man who did **not** deserve this grace (outside of myself), it was Saul of Tarsus!

D. Galatians 1:16 - To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:

1. God had revealed His Son to the 12. So why Paul? God reveals His Son in a **different** way through Paul. God finds the leader of the enemy against the Little Flock and in grace, saves Saul.
That is the difference between Law and Grace. Law would quickly, harshly **judge one. But grace offers **free**, full forgiveness. That is how Christ was revealed in a **new** way through Paul.
Acts 13:38-39 - Be it known unto you therefore, men *and* brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: Acts 13:39 And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.
Romans 3:24 - Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:
2. God chose this new Apostle so he might preach Christ in **pure** grace (as he had received) among the Gentiles.
It is Paul in Christ's stead. It is as if Paul is saying Israel did not want Him, but I am here in His **place in grace.
II Corinthians 5:20 - Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.
3. God could have judged the nation Israel, and the Gentile world; but He in grace, saved the **persecu**-tor Saul. Then he **became** the persecuted!
4. God kept Paul mostly **away** from the 12 so that he would not be sidetracked by what the 12 had learned at Jesus' feet concerning the Kingdom. God did not want Paul to mix - **blend** the **two** messages together.