

## Introduction

Christ Jesus the Apostle and High Priest of our profession. Who wrote such a statement as this? The Apostle Paul in HEBREWS 3:1. The Apostle Paul also wrote in COLOSSIANS 1:25 *Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil [fill up] the word of God.* The Apostle Paul also wrote in EPHESIANS 4:11 & 12 *And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.*

I have been teaching this Sunday School class for a little over sixteen years (as of this writing). About sixteen years ago we did a little study on the life of the Apostle Paul. Recently some have come to me with questions concerning the Apostle Paul. The majority of you were not here to hear that study, and I won't repeat that study for those of you who were here either. I did however go into great detail and depth in this study about the Apostle Paul, as the Lord led me, and after reviewing it I found I covered some very important points that emphasize why we need to know the Apostle Paul, and why we have Paul's gospel, and some of the important points Paul's gospel teaches us. By studying a little of Paul's life history we can get a better appreciation for the things he wrote.

Jesus Christ was the first Apostle, as acknowledged by The Apostle Paul in HEBREWS 3:1. Jesus Christ was born of man a Jew of the lineage of David, traceable back through Abraham and even further back to Adam, as we noted in a recent study on Mary the Mother of Jesus. JOHN 1:11 tells us: *He came unto his own, and his own received him not.* "His own" were the Jews, and we know that for the most part the Jews did not receive Jesus as their Messiah, their Saviour, their Lord, their Redeemer, their King of Kings and Lord of Lords. In JOHN 5:1-15 we read a story about a man who Jesus healed on the sabbath day. Then in JOHN 5:16 we read: *And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day.* Christ Jesus the Apostle and High Priest preached unto the Jews for approximately three years. In JOHN 11:47-53 we read the account of how the chief priests of the Jews, and the Jewish Pharisees gathered together a council of Jews to plot against Jesus, whom they refused to receive or believe that He was The Apostle and High Priest. JOHN 11:45 *Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him. 46 But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done. 47 Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. 48 If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation. 49 And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, 50 Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. 51 And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; 52 And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. 53 Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death.* JOHN chapters 18 and 19 tell how the Jews were successful in putting Jesus to death. And so we see how the statement of JOHN 1:11 is true: *He came unto his own, and his own received him not.*

Jesus Christ was the first Apostle, and during His ministry here on earth He chose twelve of his disciples whom he also named apostles according to LUKE 6:13. The Apostle Paul was not one of the twelve apostles. LUKE 6:13 *And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles.* The definition of an apostle is a delegate, messenger, he that is sent, one sent forth with orders. Apostle comes from a root word meaning to send, to send forth, to send away, or to send out. GALATIANS 4:4 and 4:6 tells us that Jesus was "sent forth" from God, which is why Jesus Christ was the first Apostle. The twelve disciples Jesus named apostles in LUKE 6:13 were sent forth by Jesus in MATTHEW 10. MATTHEW 10:5 *These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: 6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of*

*Israel.* ACTS 1:26 tells us that Matthias was numbered with the eleven apostles after Judas Iscariot betrayed Jesus, meaning that there were still twelve apostles. But note what we read in MATTHEW 10:5 and 6, how that the twelve apostles were sent forth to the Jews, not to the Gentiles. So after Jesus death there were twelve Apostles, which we call kingdom Apostles, all sent for of Jesus to continue preaching unto the Jews.

This leaves those of us who are Gentile's, the non Jew, without an Apostle, except for Jesus.

Now think for a minute of the books of the New Testament written by the twelve Apostles. Only three of them wrote a written record that is included in the New Testament. The Apostle Matthew wrote the book of MATTHEW, also known as The Gospel According to MATTHEW. The Apostle John wrote five books of the New Testament: The Gospel According to JOHN, 1 JOHN, 2 JOHN, 3 JOHN, and the book of REVELATION. The Apostle Peter wrote 1 PETER, and 2 PETER. Eight books of the New Testament then are written by members of the twelve apostles. However there are 27 books found in the New Testament. We are 19 books short of that considering the 8 books we have already mentioned. Two books of the New Testament are written by James and Jude, half Brothers of Jesus. {Study GALATIANS 1:19, MATTHEW 13:55, MARK 6:3, and 1 CORINTHIANS 15:7}. The remaining 17 books of the New Testament are either written by the Apostle Paul, or are strongly influenced by the Apostle Paul. Paul himself wrote 14 of the 27 books of the New Testament; more than half of The New Testament! We make note of this fact to emphasize the importance of Paul's gospel, especially to our lives.

Jesus didn't leave we Gentile's without an Apostle. In fact we once did a study noting that we Gentile's were sent eight church Apostles all totaled, but of the eight only one left a written record that is included in the New Testament, and that, of course, is the Apostle Paul, who himself wrote 14 books of the New Testament. Furthermore the ministry of the Apostle Paul influenced John Mark to write The Gospel According to MARK, and Luke to write The Gospel According to LUKE, and the book that ties the twelve kingdom apostles to the church apostles, the book of ACTS.

We wouldn't have even considered Jesus to be an Apostle had it not been for the Apostle Paul noting this in HEBREWS 3:1 above. We wouldn't know the concept of being a full overcomer without the gospel record of the Apostle Paul. We wouldn't even begin to know what is the hope of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus if it wasn't for the gospel of the Apostle Paul. We wouldn't know what God's best is if it wasn't for the gospel of the Apostle Paul. If it wasn't for Paul's gospel we wouldn't be established, nor even know what that meant. We wouldn't know what a race course runner was except for Paul's gospel. We wouldn't know the great mysteries of scripture if it were not for Paul's gospel. We wouldn't really know anything about this present church age, this age of grace, if it wasn't for Paul's gospel. The things that Paul wrote in his gospel were in the Apostle Peter's own words "*hard to be understood... .*" We will never be able to rule and reign with Christ Jesus without knowing Paul's gospel. This all means that the Bride of Christ will be made up of those who do know Paul's gospel. And the list goes on of the reasons we need to know Paul's gospel. So it certainly doesn't hurt to learn a little about the Apostle Paul and how it was he became an Apostle in the first place.

## Personal Background of the Apostle Paul (Saul of Tarsus)

The Apostle Paul never set out to be an Apostle in the first place, nor did any of the other Apostles, except Jesus. Paul was born sometime after Jesus, and lived during the time of Christ, but was probably no more than a youth during the time of Jesus ministry. In ROMANS 11:1 Paul writes: *...I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.* Paul states in ACTS 22:3 *I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia... .* Further in PHILIPPIANS 3:5 Paul writes that he was: *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.* In ACTS 23:6 Paul states: *...I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee... .*

So we see Paul was a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee. Let me try to explain what this means. The word Pharisee comes from an Aramaic word meaning "separated." This means that the Pharisee chose a manner of life different from the general Jewish