



The Persecutor Becomes the Preacher

Galatians 1:11-24

Doug Sachtleben, Lead Pastor

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In Galatians 1:11-24 Paul gives autobiographical material that is meant to support the message of 1:6-7, that there is only one gospel and it is God's gospel. In the course of Paul's testimony, we are also reminded of the matchless power and loving grace of God to save sinners, and we are encouraged to never lose hope.

Background (Galatians 1:11-12)

Paul gave his own testimony so that the Galatians would know that he spoke with the authority of one who was saved, called, and taught by God. In order to accept Paul's teaching that faith in Jesus Christ alone was necessary for salvation, the Galatians had to be convinced that he was speaking God's truth.

1. Before he was saved, Paul was a violent, self-centered sinner who hated Jesus Christ (1:13-14)

2. By His matchless power and His loving and sovereign grace, God saved Paul (1:15-16).
3. After the persecutor became the preacher, the transformation of Paul's life brought glory to God (1:22-24)

Questions to Consider

1. Is there someone you know who seems hardened against the gospel of Jesus Christ? If you haven't already, commit to pray regularly this week for God to save him/her. If you are in that person's life, pray for God to give you wisdom and opportunity to love and serve that person.
2. Could you explain the gospel of Jesus Christ to an unbeliever? If you're not sure, make it your goal to learn a basic outline of Bible verses that you could use. One example can be found at twowaystolive.com.
3. What are some things we know from the book of Acts and from Philippians 3 about Paul *before* he was saved?
4. According to Galatians 1:15-16, what three things did God do concerning Paul? Why is it important that God did these things?
5. In what ways did Paul's purpose and goals in life change with his conversion? For example, what he did desire before and what did he desire after?
6. How do we know that the example of God's sovereign and powerful work in Paul's salvation should not leave us complacent about evangelism?
7. Our testimony may be nothing like Paul's, but the miracle of our salvation is no less profound. Who or what did God use to save you? Pause and give thanks to God.

For further reading: *The Gospel Comes with a House Key* (2018) by Rosaria Butterfield