

Gal 1:13-17

- I. For you have heard about my lifestyle while in Judaism (13a)
Paul WAS a Judaizer. He knew what he was talking about.
- II. Specifics about his lifestyle and conversion (13b-17)
 - A. Before (13b-14)
 1. Against the Christians (13b-c)
Just like the Galatians were being persecuted, Paul WAS a persecutor.
 - a That I persecuted the church of God to an extraordinary degree (13b)
Notice how Paul specifies that the Christian church is the “assembly of God”, not Israel
 - b And I tried to destroy it (13c)
Literally, this reads, “and I was destroying it.” But because Paul was working against God, he was unsuccessful. Though he tried to destroy the church, he failed.
 2. For the Jewish traditions/law (14)
Paul WAS a keener for Judaism and the Law
 - a And I made progress beyond many contemporaries in my generation/race (14a)
 - b By excessively being a zealot for the traditions of my ancestors (14b)
Paul cannot be accused of being anti-Jewish or light on the law or a law hater, his history proves against it
Paul cannot be accused of compromising the law because he wanted it easy, his history proves against it
 - B. After (15-17)
 1. God’s preceding activity (15-16b)
 - a God revealed His Son in me (15-16a)
 - 1) When God determined (15)
 - a) God determined (15a)
"highlights God's Sovereign disposition and initiative" Silva 786
 - b) More specific description of God (15b-c)
 - (1) The One selecting and appointing me from my mother’s womb (15b)
Selecting - cf. Acts 13:2, Rom. 1:1, 2 Cor 6:17, Gal. 2:2
From mother’s womb - reference to Jer. 1:5, Isa. 44:2, 24, 49:1-6 (in context of gospel going to gentiles)
Paul as prophet, similar call to OT prophets
Paul is continuing the mission of the "Servant" taking the good news/being a light to the gentiles
 - (2) The One calling me through His grace (15c)
 - 2) To reveal His Son in me (16a)
Reference to Damascus vision
 - b Purpose: so that I might proclaim the good news of Him among the gentiles (16b)
From the start, Paul was called to be an apostle specifically to the gentiles
Therefore, He knew the law-free gospel to the gentiles as the true Gospel, separate from law
All this is God's idea and God's doing - cf. Peter in Acts 10

2. Paul's response (16c-17)
 - a Paul did not (16c-17a)
 - 1) I did not consult with flesh and blood [humans] (16c)
Unnecessary - what could anyone add to a call of God?
 - 2) Nor did I go up into Jerusalem toward those who were apostles before me (17a)
 - b Paul did (17b-c)
 - 1) But I went up into Arabia (17b)
 - 2) And I returned again into Damascus (17c)
Why is he making this point?
Challenged that He did not have credentials
Point is that he doesn't need credentials and in this case it is better that He does not have them from Jerusalem because he has from God
Only God could make the kind of change that Paul experienced
Must be from God, Paul could not have and would not have made this change if doing it on own