

A Trustworthy Source Part 2

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 01 October 2023

Preacher: BK Smith

[0 : 00] Just go on, follow the crowd. Usually we don't say that, right? Is that a bad thing? Follow the crowd, but I guess here at church it's okay. A couple things.

October is kind of a funny month for us. Not only in, you know, just what Chris said, and thank you very much for that, Chris, just on pastor appreciation.

It was in October that I first met you. It was a Thanksgiving dinner. I did not know the significance you would have in my life, but usually on Thanksgiving I was living in Abbotsford with my wife and all, just kind of praying, searching out what God would have for us, whether it was going to be the states where God was going to send us or somewhere else in Canada.

We were praying specifically, not Ontario. Don't be offended, right? Just, so as we were driving back down from Whistler, we just were able to get there, have some family together, enjoy.

I remember it was a cold, sunny time and driving through Squamish. My wife just simply asked, what about churches in Squamish? And to which I asked, there's no churches in Squamish?

[1 : 20] What are you talking about? And it was interesting because I said, you know, usually I know there's churches, but I had really not heard of any churches in Squamish having already been pastoring in BC for a while.

And I certainly did not think there was any Bible-based churches in Squamish. And I simply said, there's not going to be any churches that will want what I do.

Sure enough, within 48 hours of making that statement, a friend of a friend called, and I'm on the phone with a guy by the name of Carl Neufeld, and we're talking, and Carl just says, why don't you come up next Sunday and worship with us?

And we did. That was at the very end of October, which led to the search committee and the painful drama that is. It was very kind.

It was the exact opposite. And we found ourselves starting in a march. Now, what's significant in that story and how it relates to everything today is not only is it special for us, but one of the things that I did find out, there wasn't just one really solid church.

[2 : 24] There was actually a couple of other really solid Bible-based churches some of you had come from. And through this process, I have become friends with two of the other pastors.

In fact, we are quite close. We're usually talking every week. We are praying. We're talking. We're sharing. Whether it be struggles or blessings or what's going on.

And this worship night, as I've come to know, is pretty special to not just us, but to some of the other churches as well. And if you're new to Squamish, and this is outside of you, usually when you're a church, very small Christian community in a very small community, you tend to know everybody.

Sometimes there's factions. Sometimes there's hurts. As you all know, about 10 years ago, a group from Church 99 came here. Even like 20 years ago, there was a group of church that went to another church.

And then they're all kind of mixing it. And they're wondering, can we still be friends? Right? Do we ignore them when we see them at the grocery store? Do we still embrace them as brothers, even though we don't really get to connect with them on Sundays so much?

[3 : 36] Or we might have some slight disagreements. But as these six years have gone on, it's been six years now. It's my sixth year of being with you in October. October. Man, there's more in common than there was ever not in common.

But in fact, there's very few things. If you sat down the three leaderships of the group, would there be something that we would disagree upon? And I don't know if there's anything.

There is a love for God's Word, love for Jesus Christ, a love for sharing. That's why when Chris talks about BSF, that is multi-church relationships that have come together.

And we praise God for that. But as this Sunday has been coming, and it's not something that I organize, by the way, or the pastors. It's been some of the worship leaders who've known each other.

They've been wanting to do this. And just God has been so kind to be moving different pieces across the board. That when usually churches talk about it, they usually say that a pastor's sweet time in a church is between the seventh and fifteenth year of their ministry.

[4 : 52] So we're just kind of getting in there. They say that's the sweet time. That's where the growth really begins. I believe God's doing that for all of us in Squamish for the cause of Christ.

My prayer is that we would be heading into a sweet time as a Christian community to reach people, to connect with people in such a real way.

As we all know, the world is going cuckoo right now. And I'm going to talk about that later. But that largely happens when God pulls his blessing out and he leaves man to his own devices.

Craziness occurs. People who can't think straight. Two plus two equals fish. Right? Nothing seems to connect. But people during those times, Amos calls it a famine in the land.

That God purposely withdraws his word so it creates a hunger for people who desire truth. And I rejoice that we have at least three churches here that are strongly working together to proclaim that truth.

[6 : 03] And to pour this truth into you so that you might be blessed, grown, and equipped. And what's interesting is we all have different giftings. And each church is unique.

And we're praying that God would just do those things. So before I go any further, how about we just pray for tonight? I'd ask that you would commit to praying for tonight. Commit to, you know, we're sitting here at this communion table.

And one of the things that is important for fellowship to happen around the communion table is that we're connected with one another with no unconfessed sin with one another.

This is a great opportunity if there's a brother or sister from those churches which you might have harbored some anger, frustration, bitterness. This is an opportunity to come and make it right with God and make it right with one another.

I think these are the things because when you've heard, I've heard some of those tender prayers that some of those people have. And it's amazing how much they're thinking about us and loving us and how much they're looking forward to coming together and worship our Lord.

[7 : 12] So let's just pray for God's hand upon that. Dear Lord, Heavenly Father, we just think about tonight, we think about the blessing there is in true Christian fellowship.

We're not coming together to watch a football game, but we're coming together to lift up your name on high. Father, we lift up those relationships that may have been broken, that may have soured, that may have been hurt.

A lot of those times there's been misinformation, misunderstandings. But God, we just pray that it would become a priority for us to correct those relationships.

Father, let our hearts not be on ourselves, but our other brothers and sisters of the faith as they are praying this morning as well, as they look forward to coming before here to worship with us, to worship together.

Father, I really pray that when people think of the church in Squamish, they're able to think of the church in Squamish that meets in multiple locations.

[8 : 22] They're all sold out that these churches care for people's souls. They are united in their love for you, O God. And they're united in their service.

Father, I don't know exactly what's going to happen or what you're going to do, what lives you're going to change. But I already know that you've already begun that process. I know there's been great encouragement by some, and some have offered testimonies.

And I pray it will continue to grow. And I pray that man's hand would not be on the rudder of this boat, but you would be. And that you'd be clear in your direction in what you would have us become, O Father.

Father, these are great times we live in. In no greater time does your name need to be proclaimed than the present time.

Father, as the saints that gather here at Squamish Baptist in this morning, we ask for your favor. We ask for your blessing. And all of God's people said, Amen.

[9 : 29] Please turn with me in your Bibles to Romans chapter 1. Romans chapter 1. As you all know, any book that you've read begins with an introduction.

And the book of Romans is no different. Any book of the Bible begins with an introduction. But what's really interesting is the introduction to the book of Romans is quite unique than the other introductions.

And in case you didn't know, the Apostle Paul, who wrote this book, wrote many other letters. There's 13. Some would argue that he wrote the book, or the letter to the Hebrews as well.

We're not here to settle that debate. But in any instance, there is a short, sometimes lengthier introductions. Like all introductions, we are introduced to an author, the recipients, and there is a greeting.

But Paul does something more in this introduction. I am very much convinced of this compared to other introductions. And it's to demonstrate that he is indeed a trustworthy source.

[10 : 42] A trustworthy source. If you were with us last week, I characterized Paul's introduction as a description of finding a trustworthy source.

The reality is, we live in a world where everyone has an opinion. Now, some of you might say, there's nothing new about that. I'm sure the people in the 50s had an opinion.

If you had a dad like mine in the 40s, my dad had an opinion about everything in life. Whether he knew anything about it or not, there was an opinion, right? Now, the difference between now, my voice will come back.

Now, the difference between now, my voice will come back.

The difference between now and, say, living in the 50s, is we now have the power to broadcast our opinions around the world. Do we not? That's the major difference.

[12 : 06] Some of you are saying, like, praise the Lord, my father didn't have a microphone. Right? Or people had this type of an idea.

But if you remember last week, I cited this article that stated that 57% of Canadian, American, and British Gen Zs, their career aspiration was to be an influencer.

That they want to broadcast their opinions using YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, in order to offer an opinion. Canadian. Statistics show that almost 80% of this generation goes online and solicits the advice of thousands of strangers to find their answers.

Have you thought about how insane that is? What's interesting is this article stated that authenticity was the desire rather than expertise.

But as we all know, expertise truly matters. When you go to fix your car, you take your car to a mechanic. If you got legal problems, you go to a lawyer.

[13 : 31] If you got medical issues, you go to a doctor. And if you have spiritual issues, life, death, issues of eternal significance, you go to someone who knows something.

In the first century, that person was an apostle. That person was an apostle. The fact is, we not only want expertise, we need it.

We need reliable sources. We need people we trust. We need someone with knowledge. We need someone who understands the context of our living situation.

what I am demonstrating for you in this introduction is Paul's goal for this introduction. So last week, I actually kind of reversed things up.

We looked at verse 7. Take a look at Romans 1, verse 7. Simply tells us who this letter is written for. It's to all those who are in Rome. What's interesting is that Paul did not differentiate between Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians.

[14 : 36] He didn't differentiate between Roman Christians and Israeli Christians or Turkish Christians or French Christians or English Christians. He talked specifically about all who are in Rome.

And there was two defining characteristics of those who are in Rome who know Christ Jesus. One, they are loved by God. And two, they were called to be saints.

Here, Paul is affirming their identity in Christ. And that they are all one in Christ. This morning, I'm going to go back to verse 1. And I want us to look at the uniqueness of Paul's introduction of himself and how he uses it to build trust with his Roman leaders.

Let's take a look and let's just read Romans 1 for us. And I'm going to have Paul, or Paul, Shane is going to put it up here. In case you're new, you didn't know what we're doing. One of my goals is to teach you how to study God's word.

And one of the uses that I use is called block diagramming. What I do is I just kind of, I write down, I usually write it out by hand or I use a computer.

[15 : 47] But I understand that there's the first word, Paul, and then it's giving us defining characteristics of who he is. Right now, now right here, we are learning who he is, what he's showing for us is his authority and third, his purpose.

So who he is, he's a slave of Christ, his station in life as it were, he's called to be an apostle and what is his job? He is set apart for the gospel of God.

Now, if you were here for our first sermon on this section, I shared with you the story of Paul's conversion.

How Paul started out as an enemy of the Christian church. What's interesting, when he was an enemy, he did not start out with evil intentions that he hates the church because he wants to hate.

He actually believed he was a true servant of God. He was doing the true work of God and he went around. Israel wanted to go up to Damascus and he was imprisoning these people.

- [16 : 58] Paul thought he was a righteous man who feared God. Later, in Acts chapter 9, when Jesus Christ appeared to him, simply says, Paul, Paul, or Saul, Saul, what he was known at that time, why are you persecuting with me?

Later on, in Acts 9, Paul's words were described as evil. Evil. Now, I want you to think about that for a second.

Here's this man who's zealously, this guy's going station to station, city to city, doing what he believes is the highest calling that God could do.

him. Like, I'm going out and I am going to protect the name of Yahweh. My Lord. And not only is he told that he's wrong, he's told that the works that you did are evil.

It's a sobering thought, isn't it? I think that's why we are often called to put our motives under a microscope sometimes.

- [18 : 21] There's many things, men and women, parents, kids, grandfathers, grandmothers, we believe we are doing for the cause of God, but sometimes we need to bring it under other Christian authority to expose our hearts, because sometimes our hearts are wicked and deceitful.

We have motives that try to serve ourselves, and even though we are genuine in what we are trying to do, we need to be confronted with an outside source called the Bible, God's word.

We need God's word to shed light on who we are. So here is Paul, he finds out that he was working against his people, that not only that, he was interfering with the plan of God.

Praise the Lord, thankfully God transformed Paul into a new person. The Bible tells us that he was removed into Arabia, and he was given where he received the revelation of Jesus Christ for three years.

We believe this is the time that Jesus Christ, some scholars would argue that Jesus Christ took those three years to equip Paul, to teach Paul. And as I said before, Paul, and we're going to get into it, Paul is unlike any of the other apostles.

- [19 : 38] The other ones were all uneducated, he is the best educated. In fact, if he were to have written this letter to the people in Rome before he was saved, he could have said, hey, it's Paul, me, Roman citizen.

I've got a BA from the University of Tarsus, a Masters of Divinity from the University of Jerusalem. I have doctrinal studies under Gamaliel, grandson of Bilal, the greatest Hebrew Jew rabbi of our generation.

Not only that, my parents were the Hebrews of Hebrews. They circumcised me on the eighth day. I am the tribe of Benjamin. You know who that tribe of Benjamin is? My people when Israel and Judah back in the early Old Testament my tribe stayed with God's calling king.

I wasn't like the rest of you ten tribes that disobeyed. I stayed with Judah. We stayed faithful. Right?

He could have said all that. I got a lot of things going for me. Not only that, I love the law. I love pleasing God. God. But notice verse one.

- [21 : 01] Paul simply states Paul a servant of Christ Jesus. Now this word servant, and you guys have heard me talk about that, the Greek word is doulos, which actually means slave.

A lot of your translations will read bond servant, because they know that servant really isn't kind of the right fit here.

At least a bond servant is someone who is bonded to the master, but I really believe that the text and the church fathers would agree with me that the word to be used here is slave.

And the reason why, if you're asking, why are Bible translators using this word? And there's actually a great journal article written from the 40s, cautioning people from using the word slave in their Bibles for all the horrible sins that happened in the United States in regards to slavery.

But the reality is back then slavery was a part of life. In fact, in Rome, they believed that almost 50% of the population was a slave.

[22 : 14] When you were conquered by a Roman army, more often, you became a slave. If you had debt you could not repay, you became a slave.

If you happened to be slaves and you had children, that wasn't your child, that was the slave owner's child. Now, slavery differed in different situations.

Some lived their whole life in slavery. Others were able to buy themselves out of slavery. Dave and I were just talking about this, and Dave had this article that I was talking about.

When you look at the studies of these type of things, and some of the owners knew that if you offer something back for the work, people work harder, right?

There's freedom at the end of the day. You're going to work harder to earn your freedom than you would otherwise. But one thing was certain.

[23 : 12] If you were a slave, you had no rights. You were not the master of your domain. You were the master of the master's domain.

It was his kingdom. So right at the very beginning, Paul identifies himself as a slave of Christ Jesus. Now, why did he not say Jesus Christ?

That's one of the questions scholars ask. Often times, when Paul says Christ Jesus, he is demonstrating that he wants you to pay attention to the Messiahship, that he is the promised one of God.

So when we look at Jesus Christ, not just thinking about his earthly reign, but he is the messianic answer that the Jewish people have been longing for for thousands of years.

So here is Paul identifying himself totally to the commander, the master. a servant gets time off.

[24 : 14] A servant has medical benefits, dental benefits, gets to go home on the weekends. He gets two weeks vacation if he's in the States, but if it's in Canada, I think he gets six weeks vacation and about 52 long weekends or something.

Anyway, praise the Lord for Canada for that. Anyhow, but a slave doesn't have those rights or those benefits. A slave was someone who was purchased, and once purchased, they were a possession of the one that bought him.

Now, what is interesting is that Paul, in using this term, would be immediately recognized by the Jewish believers. You see, the prophets of the Old Testament, they all used the term servants of God.

God. The Jewish term was used to refer to Abraham, Joshua, David, Moses, Isaiah, but he's not doing it in a way that identifies with their greatness.

He's using it to identify with their humility, because they all, never any of those men, identify as great, but it was known as humble nobility and honor, which equals insignificance.

[25 : 44] For we know that in 1 Timothy 1.15, Paul regarded himself as the foremost of sinners. Now, if you were to go through your New Testament letters to Paul, and you look at the introductions, you would see that Paul, very rarely, only on two other occasions, does he identify him as a servant.

The first way he identifies himself in the Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Timothy, is as an apostle. But here, it's different.

See, Paul isn't so much worried about his position of authority. Paul is not worried about correcting any error. What Paul recognizes is this church, these churches in Rome need solid teaching.

And I was thinking about this this morning, in fact. There's a difference that you guys deal with, especially parents can identify with this. Your child does something wrong, right?

We'll call it bad. I know, they're not bad kids, right? But they're doing something that is not good. How's that? Is that better? But anyway, you have to identify yourself in that moment.

[27 : 08] Is this child disobeying, or is this child just doesn't know any better? Right? Some children don't know any better at that time, but some is willfully disobeying.

The one who's disobeying, you want to correct that behavior, right? That's why when you look at Galatians, the tone of Galatians, Paul actually confronts them.

He says, who has bewitched you? Right? There's this confrontation. Like, what happened to you? You knew the truth, and you're not doing the truth.

If you study the letters of 1 Corinthians, massive amounts of correction are going on in that letter. But with a child who doesn't know, it's like, son, daughter, let me teach you, right?

This is the tone, I really believe, in the book of Romans. It's not a correction, but it's an understanding that there is a teaching that needs to occur.

[28 : 11] Now, why here? Why is this significant? We know that this is the church that is the center of the Roman Empire. It is the seat of government of the most powerful empire that some would argue that ever lived.

It is the home of senators, the rich, the powerful. They're all situated in Rome. And what does every single one of those people have?

Slaves. They all have slaves. Now, if we understand that half the population is slaves, what are the chances of the church being not made up of slaves as well?

So, not only with that statement, I'm a servant of the Lord, you have Paul identifying with Jews their heritage which occurs from the past, which reaches back almost 1,500, if not longer.

And now there's these new people, these Gentiles who've been enslaved their whole life. Perhaps they're conquered people. And now there's something there for them.

[29 : 28] What's interesting, I always think about it, you're a slave, you are insignificant, you are nothing. But if you're part of this church, you're getting something that a slave would rarely receive, a letter.

A letter that is addressed to you. Usually you'd be used to instructions or commands, but they are now getting a letter which simply states that they are beloved, they are loved, dearly, that they are saints.

Not only are they saints, they are called and known by God. So here Paul begins by identifying with them.

And he's identifying with them in a tone that they have probably never heard before. And what does he say about himself? He says, I am a slave of Christ Jesus.

What a beautiful statement. Beautiful, really? Did BK get enough sleep this morning to think that calling oneself a slave would be a beautiful statement?

[30 : 47] See, one of the terms that the Bible uses to describe people who are not saved. If you do not know the Lord Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, Savior, there's too many L's here, is that you are identified as a slave to sin.

You are not your own. You are a slave to sin. You are a slave to your natural disposition. If your natural disposition is of the world, that is who you were a slave to.

sin. The fact of the matter is, even if you grew up in a Christian family, you were at one point a slave to sin.

You were a slave to your heart. You were a slave to your nature. We were by nature fallen people, enemies of God.

We were slaves of the flesh. But if you were a Christian, if you are renewed, if you are a saint, if you are beloved, you are now a slave of Christ.

[32 : 00] Well, how did that happen? Well, 1 Corinthians 6-9, Paul would tell them that we are not our own. We were bought with a price.

And that price, that was used to purchase out from a slave to sin, a slave to nature, to a slave of Jesus Christ.

Christ was the precious blood of Jesus. That to buy us from our chains and our prison, it was blood.

That was us. This was Paul. But here's one mistake that people make. Freedom from slavery does not mean we have freedom to do our own thing.

You know that? That's probably one of the biggest mistakes that some young Christians are taught. They believe at that moment they are saved, I can do whatever I want. But you're not.

[33 : 03] You actually have a new master. You're no longer bought, you were purchased by someone else, and that someone else is God. God. And unlike the uncaring, horrible master that your sin is, your nature is, your new master is perfectly just.

He's perfectly loving. He is perfectly sovereign. He is a holy master who calls us to love him. He calls us to reflect our love for him by loving one another.

it's no longer a master who hates you, who discards you when he has no more use for you.

When you get old, you're either sold off to the market, or in those days you're often just sent to the Colosseum to be used for the destruction of your flesh.

The beauty of us being purchased by God is, we no longer serve man's devices. We no longer serve our devices. We serve the God of this universe.

[34 : 22] So when Paul says he is a slave of Christ Jesus, I am a slave to the Messiah who came, who redeemed you. This is a great and beautiful thing.

Amen? We are a slave to Christ the Lord. The second designation that he uses is I'm called to be an apostle.

So now that we know that Paul is a lowly slave, he was once a slave to his flesh and his his slave to his flesh. Listen, Paul's not going to argue with me.

It was a lot worse than ours, right? He actually did evil things against the ways of God and if he could be redeemed, how much more can we be redeemed?

God can call a wanton murderer to salvation in Jesus Christ and use him for his goodness and his glory. I would argue probably can use us just as much.

[35 : 27] But he says here that God called to be an apostle, that God called him. This word called we know it's a summoning. But what's interesting in this Paul is not saying I passed the test to become an apostle.

I did not make myself an apostle. That even though I was a lowly slave God reached down grabbed me really by the scruff of his neck and said you're going to be mine.

In fact Galatians 1.1 Paul confirms this when he says Paul an apostle not from men nor through men was I made an apostle but I was made an apostle through Jesus Christ and God the Father.

Why is this so important? Well what's interesting that Paul is unlike all the other apostles. So much so that even the other apostles doubted that Paul was an apostle.

Did you guys know that? They fought about it. This was a guy they feared. He was those apostles were incredibly brave men. We know records that they pretty much all went to their death.

[36 : 40] But for some reason no one wanted to evangelize Paul. Do you ever have someone like that in your life? Like you think there is no way no how they are interested in Jesus.

So you don't even go near them. And then someone confronts you. Well have you shared God with them? No way I want to let that person know I know God. You know and I've shared the shameful story of my life when there was a young man in my resident who would mock me and my friends going to church every Sunday.

His roommate became a Christian in one of my Bible studies and every Sunday morning kind of knock on we're going to church. Why don't you invite me? Why don't you invite me? And he would mock and mock and mock and then one day I took him to a campus crusade meeting and as God would have it we were playing broomball that night so who could resist good night of broomball someone in his faculty that he was in he recognized found out that person was a Christian and that person had the pleasure of seeing that young man come to Christ so what is an apostle and I want to spend some time on this and it's kind of interesting I was arguing with myself what is the purpose of preaching if there's a lot of different schools of thought but I truly believe preaching isn't just telling you what to do in order to you get to that point I'm just breaking it down right I'm not trying but first we need to understand amen that's why this whole book of

Romans is broken up from chapters 1 to chapters 11 it's going to teach us the deep truths of God then God is going to challenge us with what to do with them you with me on that one because when you go to preaching school they always say try to always put every point in such a way that there's an instruction for you to do things so I would fail some of these classes today but I want you to understand some of the deeper truths that are involved here and part of these truths I'm teaching to them because I know from experience there's issues with them so anyhow definition of an apostle there's some confusion over this term and I want to break it down for you so if you remember in Jesus earthly ministry Jesus Christ had many disciples that followed him right and a disciple was one who followed to learn so if I'm a teacher you guys are coming around you're following around and I'm teaching you these deep truths it's essentially you are a learner when we read the gospels we read these incredible stories of these fishermen and

Jesus calls Peter you know the story of Peter we also know the story of Philip and Andrew and there's this great story of Levi who is actually Matthew he's a tax collector and Jesus says come and follow me God at that point Jesus Christ was not calling them to be apostles he was calling them to be a disciple you if you're here as a believer in Jesus Christ you have been called to be a follower of you to Jesus that's that's the whole thing with the Christian faith right so I there's a disciple and there is an apostle what's interesting is many of the apostles when they were disciples they followed after John the Baptist and John the Baptist was preparing the way for Jesus remember this in the life of Christ story his whole thing was look to Jesus look to Jesus and when Jesus finally came

[40 : 23] John the Baptist said my job is no longer needed when heaven happens we're not going to need any more preachers amen we're not we're all going to be there in one worshipping the king but until that time God uses different people different gifts to share his word and one of those gifts is you as disciples your calling not just mine your calling is to teach others about the life and what Jesus taught some of you will be to your children perhaps family members some will be to others but that's a calling and God specifically calls this so when John the Baptist had his disciples after he did he said go with Jesus and they did they went with they went with Jesus we know that there was at least 70 disciples with Jesus if not more I'm going to guess there was hundreds but at one point Luke 6 tells us that God Jesus Christ went away in the wilderness and he was praying he's praying to

God Lord I'm preparing these men that are going to take these eternal truths and they're going to go out all the world and they became foundational to the ministry of Jesus Christ because all these men have been sitting with Jesus for three years being prepared learning what to share learning how to think and they were going to go out so they became the foundation of the early church why this is important is because we didn't have a new testament right they just had the old testament and we're going to get into that that's why Paul's book of Romans is rooted in the old testament because we had all those truths and these apostles are going to be building on the truth from the old testament but what Jesus taught so they became very authoritative someone would say what about this the apostles say no that is not what Jesus Christ said well how do you know because I was with them I know so

Jesus Christ calls these twelve men and he called twelve and we know the sad story of Judas so they were down one so what we know is these men differed from disciples they weren't simply learners of Jesus but they were also apostles now there's this story in Acts chapter one where the apostles recognized that hey we're down one we're supposed to have twelve and the early church desired to what are the qualifications that makes one an apostle so they came up with these rules one they needed to be a disciple or a follower of Jesus since the beginning and two he needed to be an eyewitness of the resurrection you with me on that I believe this is what the early church is taught I believe it's wrong you guys like what and I'll tell you why the description we find in Acts chapter one is simply a description the foundational aspect for being an apostle is this you were called by

Jesus Christ that's it and who did God call to be an apostle of Jesus Christ Paul Paul wasn't an early follower he didn't see Jesus at that moment of the resurrection he saw the glorified Jesus when Jesus appeared to him on the road to Damascus and God's glory was so brilliant it blinded him right so if anybody ever says hey I want to see God hey it's going to be the last thing you ever see on this earth right that is an incredible wonderful glory so the one way is that you have a direct and immediate call to Jesus but Paul also has something different and we know this story in Acts 9 15 Ananias I'm convinced is probably one of the bravest men that we are ever going to meet because

Ananias was given the job to go to Paul and when God gave him that said he says when asked by God to go get Paul he was like I know this man he is an evil man he says he is the authority of the chief priests to jail the believers and then God simply says go for Paul is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel so here we see that there is a specific calling by Jesus Christ by God himself in the story and the Acts actually includes the story three times because the rest of the apostles struggled because in their mind an apostle was like Matthias who remember they cast lots they basically put the guys who were with Jesus since the beginning and had seen the resurrection didn't know who to pick so they cast lots so when people say

[45 : 45] I believe Matthias was an apostle he wasn't he might have been a apostle we'll get to that a second but an apostle of Jesus Christ needs to be called by Jesus Christ and you're wondering why am I worked up about but he's given a specific task and that task the root word apostle means one who is commissioned to speak in this case it's to speak for the master when I am called by Jesus Christ an apostle you're given that text he's like an ambassador you guys know what an ambassador is an ambassador is one who represents our country when they're in another nation it's kind of funny one of the tour but he was the ambassador to Dominican Republic and remember when Haiti had that massive disaster a long time ago he had to go over and the prime minister didn't come over or any of those but on that island he was considered the highest

Canadian authority when it came to making decisions for Canadian citizens so whatever words he spoke was like coming from the highest level of government and that ambassador means to be sent with a message so when the Americans had a question what's Canada's position my buddy would be called to represent and speak that message right you with me on this this is important so he's there he's got this so and my friend would tell you he loved it because there's a lot of baseball players in Dominican Republic so he got to meet all the baseball meaning is one who is sent to represent the one who sent him with a purpose now the tragedy in our day and this has happened to me you're going to see why this matters a couple weeks ago maybe a month I was talking about a theological technicality and the guy asked me he says well did

Paul say that or did Jesus say that understand the problem with that was that a red letter in the Bible that said that or was that black print in your Bible in that person's mind they were esteeming Jesus words over Paul's words but Paul is the authoritative envoy of the one who called him it's all the same fact the matter is Jesus didn't write out anything it was recorded by an apostle or a disciple in the gospels and because God is the one who sent Paul to say the things and write the things he did under the power of the Holy Spirit they're going to be equal right they're going to combine they're going to work as one none is like really higher regarded than less and the simple question that someone asked me was why didn't Jesus write something and imagine if we still had that book what do you think would be worshipped the book it wouldn't be so much

Jesus that would be worshipped be the book I was just listening to a podcast and they were saying you know when the crusades happened I guess the churches promised that if you brought anything associated with Jesus Christ you you'd be recompensed on it so all the soldiers that went to Jerusalem the crusades they came back with pieces of the cross and I think one guy said well with all the pieces of wood that we got back we could build the city of London all over again or Rome or like everyone was lying they were just taking pieces because that became revered rather than the message rather than the one who was sent with that message so here's Paul he's different he's not just sent to the Jews but he's sent specifically to Gentiles kings and children of Israel the authority of any apostle is dependent upon the person who sent him so what happens when you have the authority of

Jesus not only are your words more authority your words have more authority but God also granted them the ability to do works and wonders and miracles and if you're with us through the study of life of Christ Jesus did all these incredible marvelous things some of them he did to prove that he was indeed the son of God he could do something that no one else could but when he spoke it was the words that brought life amen it wasn't I believed in the miracle that Jesus does that saves you it's you believe in the words that Jesus speaks that truth that brings salvation amen you with me on that one so a lot of times different people would have different messages so as they grow out we see this in Acts in the beginning of Acts the apostles have the same ability they're healing they're saving they're doing healings they're doing these miracles and it's not that they want their attention they're saying no no no the words that

[51 : 24] I am speaking to you that Jesus Christ was the son of God he was died and he rose three days and he ascended to heaven that is what's verifying it the fact that I do these miracles is to tell you that everything that Jesus Christ said was true so they had these signs and wonders were done to demonstrate that what they were teaching it was a sign right so that's not the end goal in fact some people love the miracles they were trying to buy them hey I'll give you money I'll give you riches if you just teach me how to do that so why is this so important to know what apostle means one there's actually four reasons one we understand that anything that Paul teaches is the same authority that Jesus Christ because he is sent with the same authority sent up by Jesus you with me on that one people still bring that up number two there's confusion with that word disciple that's not a major one but it's a point nonetheless now this is where it starts to figure out in other ways some people is sent is there by an apostle because the word apostle is used in several parts of

New Testament there's a scholar today that is trying to argue that Mary Magdalene in Matthew 28 because an angel said hey you know she shows up to the tomb hey where's Jesus and he says he's risen go to the disciples and bring him that message so there's this one New Testament scholar he's like she was actually the first apostle she was actually the apostle that was sent out with this message to the disciples the problem is she may be technically apostle but she'd be an apostle of the angel you get it that's the one who sent her Jesus Christ did not send her and we see the same thing later there's another name Junie is a woman she's in Romans 16 and she's referred to as an apostle so some people said hey listen she is an apostle she has the same anything that she would say or write would have the same authority as the other apostles that's not true she was a messenger we don't know in what capacity but she's not on par with who these original 12 people are my last point is there's people today who call themselves modern day apostles in some corners of the

Christian church there's these people that exist and they believe when they speak they're speaking with that same authority of God and they sell people on this authority and they sell people to acquire riches to accomplish fame there's one well noted I can give you his name it's on YouTube they treat him like he is a prince he shows up to church in a Rolls Royce because what other car would Jesus ever have right he kind of missed that whole point of that he walked in on a donkey right but they get the Rolls Royce he's got to have the best of clothes he's got to have a palace and people apostle and I'm preaching to you something that's untrue that's on the same par with the Bible I'm undermining the testimony of what the Bible says we want you guys not to be slaves of me but slaves of

God the fact of the matter is once the Bible was written out and the letters of the New Testament dispersed we no longer needed apostles I believe that's when they faded away because these guys would say well I'm apostle in the line of Peter because Peter was appointed by Jesus then Peter appointed something they tracked some kind of lineage across time that that's who they were well they might have been appointed by Jim Bob Ray over there but they were not appointed by Jesus Christ and this gets back to another issue and ask the question is I have zip zero zilch the authority that I rely on is on the word of God I preach to you like the apostles do because the church has recognized certain qualifications that I have but at the same time

I can be disqualified I can sin I can bring shame on this church in this word but what we read here is written by the apostle Paul it is written with the same authority as if spoke by Jesus Christ himself so we're to pay attention it says true to us as it was to that first church in Rome that's why some people cite the book of Romans as being probably the most powerful letter which has been at the heart of every revival in history because of the truth that God Jesus Christ used to use Paul to say so we see Paul identifies himself as a slave we see himself designating as apostle and now he defines himself by his purpose so let's take a look at verse one it says set apart for the gospel of

[57:17] God that word set apart means he was assigned he was separated from he was segregated from all others as we read in Acts 9 15 Paul himself is God's chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles so here Paul is a slave an apostle and he's been chosen by God and this term gospel of God is an interesting term Paul is not saying I've been set apart to announce a message or good news about God that's actually not what he's been called because if you understand the word gospel the core meaning is good news that is not what is Paul saying here what he's saying is this good news that

I have been set apart to announce is God's good news not my good news it's not good news it's not the end of a war it is God's good news not only is it God's good news God is the author of this news God is the maker of this news he is the owner of this news Paul is simply the messenger of this news because it's God's good news it's like me being up here and I said listen I got some really great news for you you know most of you would probably show me the required respect and want to hear what that news was but if I said I got God's good news for you you're going to listen you want to know what

God has to say you see the words that the apostle spoke were authoritative next Sunday we're going to look at a deeper dive into what that gospel what that means but before I do I want us to sit in our seminary class again with me for a minute or two and I'm going to have Shane throw up our next slide and I want you to work on this if you're brave this week but I want you to see how I'm doing the sermon in these points so notice it says the gospel and I've got these words underneath here these are characteristics of the gospel of God we're going to understand under the gospel it's which he promised beforehand and the gospel is concerning his son so the points are where did he promise beforehand we're going to look at through his prophets and the holy scripture and then we talk about what is the gospel concerning his son and these are the characteristics of the gospel and my thing is dying one he was born was appointed and that son is

Jesus Christ who we receive grace and apostleship for the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles among whom you were called by Jesus Christ you with me on that so that's the seminary part and I want you to do that work I want you to see how scripture divides and scripture provides the answers for the information that's going and it helps you form the questions that you need to be asking it's like I said I obviously want you to so before

I go any further I just want to give thanks for time but I want to prepare us for communion in the table that we have before us dear Lord heavenly father we just thank you for your words and the authority that you passed down to these men men who all died to give us this news they chose others to write down their words some other times they wrote them others you called to go to far off distant places with the gospel Lord we don't know where or how but somehow it made its all its way over to Squamish BC because we're a long line of faithful disciples who took the words that were preached by the apostles that was given to them by Jesus Christ and we believed and we follow and we learn father

[62:37] I pray that as we do this teaching we see your greatness and the details and the words that you offer as we see these details I pray that our worship would be enhanced that this knowledge is not meant to puff us up this knowledge is to drive us to our knees that when we have this eureka moment and we make this deep connection sometimes it's just between two phrases it's not a demonstration of how smart we are but it's a demonstration of how wonderful your form of communication is and we can now understand it and make sense of it and lord as we move on you will teach us how to apply it properly to our lives God we thank you for Paul we thank you for these Roman Christians we thank you for those believers who heard

Peter preaching on that day of Pentecost and were faithful to take this your good news to the people of Rome 300 years later the Christian faith would be declared the religion of the nation of all things more and more people heard they believed I don't know what you're doing in our time oh father but I pray as we go forward in this city that more and more people would believe that you sent your son Jesus that he lived as a normal man but he was in fact God but yet was rejected because people chose their sin and their laws more than they chose God's way they did not understand how great the love of

God was for them so they put your son on a cross and crucified him and Jesus simply said father forgive them for they know not what they do for that half day you poured out the wrath that we deserved for our sins on your son and him and his perfection was the only vessel that could receive that wrath and he died and on on the third day conquering sin conquering death conquering the plans of Satan he rose again and 40 days later he ascended into heaven and created this church for which we are part of thank you

Jesus in your name we pray amen what's interesting about communion is communion functions to keep our minds on the fact that Jesus is indeed coming again amen hurrah it is to celebrate and is to keep our minds focused that even in the depths of despair lostness brokenness that we see around us and sometimes as I said before we are indeed redeemed as saints but we still sin we still struggle with our sin nature but he is coming back he's coming back for those who are his those his children those who he calls to follow him and it's a simple act it's not a mystical act that we do but we just take this wine and these crackers as symbol of his body and the blood that was broken for us so if you are an unbeliever and you do not call

Jesus Christ Lord this table isn't for you this is for those who are looking forward to Jesus coming back but but as a warning to you you should know that when Jesus comes back he's not coming back to walk the world for 30 some years and healing and praying he's actually coming to bring judgment he said those who reject him will receive hell and he's coming good to make on that word to those who are opposed to him so I pray and need be this sermon will be on the our website to listen through it again so that you can know more of Jesus Christ but to those who follow God this is a wonderful time for us where God is coming back to us if you are a

[67 : 48] Christian a child who's been disobedient I pray that you take this time to repent just sit there in your chairs quietly and just confess your sins before the Lord there's no shame in that in fact that's what brings us closer to God amen it's knowing that we can receive the grace that Christ so freely offers us so we also understand that communion this communion table is a reflection of who follows Jesus in this community so to take this bread and wine and you're broken in your relationships it actually brings shame upon the body here you're living a life that is not in accord with what God calls us to so I ask you to refrain from this table until you make those things right in your life so what we're going to do is ask our worship team will give you a glass and a cracker and then you return to your seats and then when everyone has that what

I do is I'm going to offer a prayer of thanksgiving for what God has done we're going to thank him for the bread and the wine then we'll take it together as a family as one before God you all with me on that one all right okay