

Chapter One
GOD'S MAN

God chooses to use men in His program. He did in the past and He does today. Some in the past have claimed to be God's men when they were not. There are some today who claim to be God's men and are not. So we have a problem. How can we be sure when someone claims to be GOD'S MAN that he really is God's man?

I can, in fact, ask this question: how can we be sure that Paul, the Apostle, was God's man? He claimed to be. But how can we know? We will find an answer in Galatians 1:1-5.

- 1. Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;)*
- 2. And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia:*
- 3. Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ,*
- 4. Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:*
- 5. To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

Now we can be sure Paul was God's man after we have made certain careful EXAMINATIONS of his testimony.

WE EXAMINE HIS PERSON. His name is Paul. As we study the history of this man we learn that his parents named him Saul. He was born of godly parents. They were Jewish

parents of the tribe of Benjamin. The tribe of Benjamin was the tribe from which Saul, the son of Kish came, who was the first king of Israel. It could well be that his parents named him Saul so that he would bear the name of the first king of Israel. But his ancestry did not make him God's man.

Saul was his name in Hebrew. When he became a believer in Christ he became known by his Greek name Paul. That is how he is called in the opening verse of this text, "Paul, an apostle."

This brings me to consider another part of his person, and that is his calling. Here he identifies himself as an apostle. Now an apostle in the strictest sense is one who has been sent. The word itself means a sent one. He makes it clear right away that his apostleship, or the fact of his being sent, did not come from man. He puts it twice in that way: "Not of men, neither by man."

So he made it clear that his calling to the position of being an apostle did not originate from men. No, it came by Jesus Christ and God the Father. That was a divine calling which he had. He could identify himself as a sent one, sent by Jesus Christ and God the Father.

He includes in his greeting his companions in the ministry. We don't know who they were. He says, "the brethren who are with me." While we don't have their names, we know that the Apostle Paul worked together with those people who were his companions in the ministry.

Now we know that Paul was God's man, then, by his person, his name, and his calling.

WE EXAMINE HIS PRAYER. It demands special attention. It is in verse 3: "Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ." There are two

significant words in Paul's prayer. The first, 'grace,' in its most elementary definition is the unmerited favor of God. God exercised love toward us, mercy toward us, when we actually deserved justice. And the justice of God would have required that we should die for our sins.

In the first chapters of the Bible, God said to the first man and woman, "In the day that you eat of this forbidden fruit you will surely die." Right there in the beginning of time the sentence is pronounced that the wages of sin is death.

But now, this word 'grace' speaks another word to us. It means that even though justice, the sentence of death, is deserved, grace makes pardon possible. That grace comes from God: "Grace be to you and peace from God," the sovereign God. There's nothing you can do and there's nothing I can do to deserve that grace. Whatever I can do only emphasizes the fact that I deserve justice. But God has expressed grace toward you and me so that the pardon of our sins is possible.

Then notice the second word, 'peace.' This prayer for peace is a most cherished hope: peace in personal life. I know that you long for peace in your heart and life. I am glad to tell you that peace is possible. We long for it on the personal and political level. But we find a constant conflict. Peace so often seems to escape us.

Now notice that peace comes from God the Father and from our Lord Jesus Christ. Yes, before He was crucified Jesus said to the disciples, "My peace I give unto you. Not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled." Peace comes from Jesus Christ. It is a gift. What a joy this is!

So when we examine Paul's prayer we discover that he has prayed that grace and peace might be administered to us from God the Father and from Jesus Christ our Lord. We

know Paul was God's man by his prayer.

WE EXAMINE HIS PRAISE. Paul's first praise was for the gift of Jesus. He gave Himself. Reference is made here to the crucifixion of Christ. When He died on the cross He gave Himself for our sins. Friend, that is a reality. All the records affirm that He died on the cross. All the evidence is there that Jesus gave Himself. He sacrificed Himself on the cross for our sins that He might deliver us from this present evil world.

Well, praise the Lord, my friend, because when Jesus gave Himself on the cross He made it possible for us to be rescued from this evil age. Even though we are living in the world we need not be subject to the world. We need not be bound by the world because Jesus gave Himself that He might deliver us. That is what I call a rescue operation—Jesus rescued us! He will rescue you from this present evil world if you will receive Him. Paul said that God did this according to His will: "according to the will of God and our Father." His will, not ours. We have no power of will at all to do anything about this. But God did something about it. God sent His Son and the Son gave His life.

Surely to God and the Son belong all the glory, which to the Apostle was the supreme element of praise. This is our response, to give glory and praise unto God for what He has done. We know Paul was God's man by his praise, because it was his desire that all the glory should be unto God.

Now by using these three examinations we can tell if anybody is God's man: by his person, by his prayer, and by his praise. We are all looking for somebody to follow. A good way to find out whether that person who is asking you to follow him is really God's man is by examination. Examine his person. Examine his prayer. Examine his praise. You will know whether or not he is God's man.

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