

Sermon outline:**1. The Present Course of Paul****I. Who He Pleases**

¹⁰ *For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.*

II. What He Preaches

¹¹ *For I would have you know, brothers, that the gospel that was preached by me is not man's gospel.* ¹² *For I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.*

2. The Past Course of Paul**I. Paul Persecuted the church**

¹³ *For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it.*

II. Paul Advanced in Judaism

¹⁴ *And I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people,*

III. Paul was Passionate

so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers.

3. The Eternal Course of God

¹⁵ *But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and who called me by his grace,* ¹⁶ *was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles*

I. God Saved Paul

was pleased

II. By Grace

¹⁵ *But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and who called me by his grace,*

III. Through Christ

¹⁶ *was pleased to reveal his Son to me,*

IV. To Serve

in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles

V. For His Glory

²⁴ *And they glorified God because of me.*

Further Application:

Saved people have a testimony. In their life God has brought the gospel to bear upon them and they have been changed by this encounter. Your testimony is the story of what you were before conversion, how God revealed the gospel to you, and how you are different because of His work of grace.

Have you taken the time like Paul did in this passage to write out and express your testimony in written form? If not then why and when?

God does not love us because we are serviceable. He loves us simply because He loves us. This is the only kind of love we can ever be secure in. Since it is the only kind of love we cannot possibly lose. This is grace.

How does the gospel of grace free you from pride?

How does the gospel of grace free you from guilt?

The Christian is assured of God's love and approval. God is pleased with us in Christ. So the Christian longs to obey God, not for himself, so that God will save him, but out of gratitude to God, who he knows has already saved him. And so Paul lives as a "servant of Christ". God's approval liberates us to live in a way which God approves of. The gospel is both a powerful assurance, and a powerful motivation to live in radical obedience. We do not live God's way in order to become His children, but out of gratitude that we are already God's children. A Christian has more than an intellectual belief in Christ; they sense a personal relationship. And they know that this relationship is not given to them solely for their own personal comfort and joy. They know they have a responsibility to reveal Christ to others through what they are, do, and say.

How could you live your life so that people would respect and praise God more because of you?

How committed are you to spending time with God... to spending time with other believers... to spending time sharing your testimony with others?