



The Apostle Paul, Servant of Christ

Overview Study Guide Unit I, Chapter Three "Paul's Calling to Ministry"

by Lorin L Cranford



Boiling Springs, NC
704 966-6845
clv@cranfordville.com
© All rights reserved

Quick Links to Study

Part I: The Person, Chapter Three

3.1.0 Calling to Ministry

3.1.1 Background History of Terminology

3.1.1.1 Organizational Structure

3.1.1.2 Leadership Labels

3.1.1.3 The Vocabulary of Calling

3.2.0 Paul's Calling

3.2.0.1 His Self-Perception

3.2.0.2 Luke's Depiction

3.3.0 Paul's Theology of Ministry

3.3.0.1 Divine Calling

3.3.0.2 Ministry Directions



Introduction

In modern Christian discussions about serving God -- especially among preachers -- the topic of a divine calling arises usually before the discussions progress very far. "Have you been called to preach?" or some similar question will come up. To any non-Christian present in such a conversation such a question may very well sound rather strange. "Called? By whom? God?" "How does something like that happen? I didn't think that God spoke to people today." For many Christians even, the need to be called by God sounds strange as well. What is this all about?¹

When a group of preachers get together in conversation, the topic of a calling to ministry will often surface. Most who serve in some kind of position on a church staff will affirm a sense of divine calling to their ministry. In Baptist heritage, most churches are convinced that a call to ministry is essential to being able to preach and serve in vocational Christian ministry, and thus on the church staff. Education and experience are important, but a divine call is critical. Licensing and ordination² to "the Gospel Ministry" are normally based upon being able

¹Stephen Motyer ["Call, Calling," *Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology*] speaks of three shades of meaning for the id: "This prominent biblical term is used with particular theological significance in three ways: in connection with worship, with election, and with vocation."

²These two terms are difficult to define, since they are not found in the New Testament and the concept of formal ministerial consecration to service doesn't develop in Christianity until well after the apostolic era of the first century. Jesus' choosing of the Twelve in Luke 6:12-16, the choosing of Judas' replacement in Acts 1:12-26, and the choosing of the seven in Acts 6:1-7 represents the precedents that much later were used to justify ministerial ordination, but in no way do these actions constitute an action of ministerial ordination. Licensing and ordination as two separate actions reflect a pattern found only in the United States and not even uniformly.

The English word 'ordination' emerges in the fourteenth century and is defined by the Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary simply as "the act or an instance of ordaining : the state of being ordained." [*Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, Eleventh ed. (Springfield, Mass.: Merriam-Webster, Inc., 2003).] This tells one almost nothing about meaning. The verb 'ordain' is defined somewhat more helpfully as "to invest officially (as by the laying on of hands) with ministerial or priestly authority." [*Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, Eleventh ed. (Springfield, Mass.: Merriam-Webster, Inc., 2003).] The Oxford English Dictionary is little better with its definition of 'ordain' as "confer holy orders on" and ordination as "the action of ordaining someone in holy orders."

Some of the religious dictionaries are somewhat more helpful. "The separation and commissioning of particular persons by the church for the work of the Christian ministry; but the outward calling by the congregation should correspond to and be consequent on the inward calling of the Holy Spirit. There is general consent that essential to the form of ordination are prayer and the laying on of hands, in accordance with what seems to have been the practice of the apostolic church. It is true that in the accounts of the calling of the Twelve (Mark 3:13ff.) and the commissioning of the Seventy (Luke 10:1ff.) it is not said that Christ prayed and laid hands on them; but this does not rule out the possibility that He did so. On the other hand, it might be concluded that a direct dominical commissioning rendered these acts unnecessary." [J. D. Douglas, Earle E. Cairns and James E. Ruark, *The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church*. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978), 732.]

A Baptist depiction of ordination that helps explain Baptist heritage and belief is by Wm. Loyd Allen, "The Meaning of Ordination,"

to articulate to a local church a clear sense of divine calling.

And yet what are we talking about? In current English usage, various terms are floated around but not always with a clear sense of meaning. A person is called; he/she has a vocation. How is that different from having a job? Is it different from having a trade? Or, a career? A vocation? The dictionary helps some, but then also contributes to the confusion:

Vocation:³

1. a: a summons or strong inclination to a particular state or course of action; especially : a divine call to the religious life
b: an entry into the priesthood or a religious order
2. a: the work in which a person is employed : occupation
b: the persons engaged in a particular occupation
- 3: the special function of an individual or group

Calling:⁴

- 1: a strong inner impulse toward a particular course of action especially when accompanied by conviction of divine influence
- 2: the vocation or profession in which one customarily engages
- 3: the characteristic cry of a female cat in heat; also: the period of heat

No wonder then that a lot of confusion about the topic of calling and ministry exists in our world today. Is God actually speaking to us, or, are we just ‘in heat’?

3.1.0 Calling to Ministry

What we are seeking to understand here is the sense of God’s leadership in the life of the apostle Paul that prompted him to switch careers from being a Pharisee to preaching the Gospel as a Christian apostle. Paul will use a variety of ‘career’ labels to designate this, such as apostle (Rom. 1:1, κλητὸς ἀπόστολος), servant (Rom. 1:1, δοῦλος), minister (2 Cor. 6:4, διάκονοι), teacher (διδάσκαλος), preacher (κῆρυξ), among others.⁵ Scholars today are prone to divide out these terms into formal and functional categories; but Paul never did so. Every term for him was functional. The only label that he claimed divine authorization⁶ for was as an apostle, and this was because the Gospel message he preached was questioned regarding its consistency with that proclaimed by the original Twelve apostles.

Ministry labels also have to be sorted out in terms of a regional ministry in contrast to a local congregational ministry. But again we tend to draw a very distinct line of distinction between the two, and it is much more sharply drawn today than it ever was in the apostolic church of the first century. Because of the functional orientation of these ministry labels in the New Testament, the boundaries of ministry actions could -- and often did -- overlap one another since the definitions remained very fluid and did not become rigidly fixed.

Thus in seeking to understand the concepts of Paul in relation to the rest of the New Testament a real sensitivity to the first century Christian situation is absolutely essential. It is very different from any modern ministry setting, and has its own heritage and evolution during the seventy years of the apostolic church. That developing understanding continued to change beginning with the post-apostolic fathers in the first half of the second century, and, in term, underwent profound changes in the subsequent centuries until the middle ages when it became relatively static until the Protestant Reformation when major shifts again took place.⁷

3.1.1 Background History of terminology.

Baptist Heritage in the 21st Century at <http://www.baptisthistory.org/bhhs/21stcentury/ordination.html>.

³<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/vocation>. The following synonyms are listed: calling, employment, game, lay, line, profession, trade, occupation, work. The Merriam-Webster Spanish dictionary lists: *vocación* feminine - to have a vocation for: *tener vocación de*. The German LEO dictionary lists *die Berufung* for vocation, with *die Begabung* as an alternative meaning.

⁴<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/calling>. **Synonyms:** abandonment, abortion, cancellation, calling off, dropping, recall, rescission, repeal, rescission, revocation; **Antonyms:** continuation. M-W Spanish dictionary translation for calling: : *vocación* feminine, *profesión* feminine. The German LEO dictionary lists *die Berufung* for calling.

⁵Among the many passages in Paul’s writings 2 Tim. 1:11 stands as one of the more insightful: “For this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher,...” (εἰς ὃ ἐτέθην ἐγὼ κῆρυξ καὶ ἀπόστολος καὶ διδάσκαλος).

⁶And Paul never directly claimed ‘authority’ as an apostle. Instead, he claimed divine authorization to preach the Gospel as an apostle. There’s a huge difference between these two concepts, as will be explored below.

⁷I will seek to use modern oriented terms cautiously since labels like ministry, calling, vocation, job etc. all have substantial modern ‘baggage’ built into their definitions. Major emphasis will fall on concepts more than labels.

A bit of background history of the terms calling and vocation are necessary for us to better understand not only why the present confusion exists, but also because this history will help us put the biblical materials in their ancient context much better. And it is out of this ancient setting that we must try to understand the apostle Paul. Only then can we build legitimate bridges of connection to our world and individual religious experience in our day.

Several trends can be noted over the centuries after the apostolic era down to the present.

3.1.1.1. Organizational Structure. The organizational structure of individual churches grows out of the Christian denominational group the church belongs to. Beginning slowly in the second century, this structure migrated into a regional issue. With this came a shift increasingly toward leadership roles taking on claims of authority more than anything else, in a chain of command type structure. Bishop became distinct from elder which was distinct from deacon. But all three belonged to the clergy, which was increasingly distinct from the laity. Ordination was the dividing line between clergy and laity. These distinctions were driven by several factors. Central to this shift was the impact of persecution of Christians until the beginning of the fourth century. Closely linked to this was the development of sacramentalism in which divine grace was channeled to individual Christians through the administration of the sacraments. But the administrators had to be properly authorized and so the idea of clergy ordination began taking shape. This was performed by the regional bishop whose authority was claimed to have come from Christ himself through the teaching called Apostolic Succession.⁸ Added to the list of leadership labels was that of priest, in significant measure as an impact of developing sacramentalism that picked up the OT Israelite model. But a priest was also a deacon, an elder (= presbyter now the more frequently used term), and a bishop, although increasingly 'priest' came to be mostly referring to the local congregational spiritual leader. Still, being ordained as a priest became essential to administering the sacraments at every level of church leadership.

Also contributing to the movement toward centralization were the leaders on the fringe of Christianity whose teachings were considered to advocate heresy. Individuals like Marcion in the second century adopted a strongly authoritarian model for leading their groups. Those claiming succession from Christ and the apostles moved increasingly toward authoritarian leadership tendencies as well, in their efforts to combat these whom they considered to be dangerous heretics. Both patterns reflected a growing tendency of the churches to reflect later Greco-Roman culture and society, more than the models of Christ and the apostles. The model of a 'servant' ministry ceased to be functional, and became 'ceremonial.'

With Christianity becoming the official religion of the Roman Empire in the fourth century, the organizational patterns migrated in two directions. In western Christianity, the bishop of Rome became dominant over the other regional bishops, and, with recognition by the Roman government, the Roman bishop assumed growing authority over all of the churches in western Christianity. By adopting and adapting the governmental structure of emperor and senate, the western church established the position of pope and college of cardinals as the pinnacle of authority over all the churches under its control. Eastern Christianity moved along somewhat similar lines but with the bishop of Athens becoming a leader of the council of bishops, called patriarchs in the emerging Orthodox Christianity of Eastern Christianity. Development and gradual defining of roles continued to take place, but within these essential frameworks of the structures inside both western and eastern Christianity.

With the Protestant Reformation in the 1500s came a restructuring of church organization. Among the reformers of Luther, Calvin, and Zwingli, the one thing held in common among all of them was a determination to eliminate any kind of pope with control over the churches. The idea of a council took root in both the Lutheran and Reformed church traditions. Within the Reformed Church, the town council in Geneva became Calvin's model for the idea of a council at the local and regional levels. Occasional appeal would be made to the second and third century patterns, but the contemporary governmental structure of their time played the primary role.

⁸The earliest expression of Apostolic Succession is *First Clement* 42:1-5, "42:1 The Apostles received for us the gospel from our Lord Jesus Christ; our Lord Jesus Christ received it from God. 2 Christ, therefore, was sent out from God, and the Apostles from Christ; and both these things were done in good order, according to the will of God. 3 They, therefore, having received the promises, having been fully persuaded by the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and having been confirmed by the word of God, with the full persuasion of the Holy Spirit, went forth preaching the good tidings that the kingdom of God was at hand. 4 Preaching, therefore, through the countries and cities, they appointed their firstfruits to be bishops and deacons over such as should believe, after they had proved them in the Spirit. 42:5 And this they did in no new way, for in truth it had in long past time been written concerning bishops and deacons; for the scripture, in a certain place, saith in this wise: I will establish their bishops in righteousness, and their deacons in faith."

Most likely written about 96 AD, Clement sets forth a line of 'authority' passed from God to Christ to the apostles to the bishops. This early limited assertion of transmitted authority to the regional bishops would undergo expansion over time and later became the basis of the Roman Catholic papacy.

To be sure, a council could be regional also and gradually the term synod came to signify the denominational gatherings of different Reform / Presbyterian and also Lutheran groups, but again with a wide diversity of meanings.⁹ The Radical Reformers took a different direction by pretty much dissolving the distinction between clergy and laity, spiritual leadership was assumed by elders (= lay pastors) and deacons, all of whom were 'laity' rather than ordained clergy. Not until much later did some of the descendants of these radical reformers, such as Baptists, began moving back toward ordination and a trained clergyman as pastor, while the deacon remained a lay person. Other descendents have retained a completely non-ordained lay leadership of their churches through rejecting the idea of ordained clergy leaders. Culture mostly, as well as differing biblical interpretation, has driven these various models.

3.1.1.2. Leadership Labels. Crucial to any understanding of a leadership concept in the New Testament, including those of the apostle Paul, is some awareness of the range of leadership terms found in the pages of the New Testament. And especially how these labels relate to one another. Otherwise, the irresistible tendency is going to be to read leadership concepts from the modern world back into the biblical materials as though the modern ideas come straight out of scripture.¹⁰ The truth of the matter is that very few modern concepts have any roots whatsoever in first century biblical concepts.¹¹



What are the leadership terms in the New Testament? Some clarification needs to be given here before answering the question. A question like this one usually assumes, dominantly or exclusively, the dynamic of leadership in a local congregation; something that is legitimate. But the New Testament era of the Christian movement did not solidify leadership concepts just in terms of individual congregations made up of house churches. Regional and at large leadership concepts blend together with local leadership concepts in the New Testament. Quite often the same label has application to all of these levels.¹²

In the pages of the New Testament, the several terms¹³ can reflect leadership responsibility at some level, ranging from the individual house church groups to the Christian movement as a whole.¹⁴ But, any categorizing of most of these terms into 'leadership' roles and excluding others from such a listing does not reflect the basic

⁹For example, in the USA, three major Lutheran groups (Lutheran Church in America; American Lutheran Church; Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod) are composed of numerous smaller groups that have merged together to form these three larger groups.

In the Reformed tradition different patterns have developed among the various groups in this tradition, as W.E. Reid summarizes:

During the Middle Ages the term "presbyter" was shortened to "priest," while the presbyter-bishop assumed a superior position, often becoming a feudal lord. Although neither the Lutherans nor the Anabaptists stressed the presbyterate, John Calvin and his followers did, believing that there were in the NT four orders: pastors, doctors (teachers), deacons, and presbyters (elders), the last being primarily responsible for discipline — the admission of new members and the supervision of the individual and corporate lives of the congregation. The minister or pastor was a teaching elder. This view is still held by most Reformed and Presbyterian churches.

[J. D. Douglas, Earle E. Cairns and James E. Ruark, *The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church*. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978), 799.]

¹⁰For a helpful treatment of this, see K. N. Giles, "Church Order, Government," *Dictionary of the Later New Testament and Its Developments*. electronic ed., eds. Martin, Ralph P. and Peter H. Davids (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000). In topic 1.2. *False presuppositions*, Giles identifies three modern assumptions now seen as false: 1.2.1. *Individualism*; 1.2.2. *One Defined Ecclesiology*; and 1.2.3. *Charismatic versus Institutional*. Assuming the New Testament to adopt any of these three views will prevent correct reading of the biblical text. Additionally, the frequent modern tendency is to begin with the fourth century clearly defined church order and to work backwards to the less well defined first century perspective and this is to doom the analysis of the New Testament to distortion, since the process was not a uniform development from the first to the fourth centuries, and scarcely uniform even in the beginnings of the first century.

¹¹One major reason is the concepts of leadership are highly shaped by the culture around them. Different cultures and cultural traditions are going to produce differing definitions of what constitutes acceptable leadership over any kind of group of people, both religious and non-religious. Failure to recognize this social dynamic will seriously hinder the ability to understand leadership concepts in the apostolic churches of the first Christian century.

¹²For example Peter identifies himself as a συμπρεσβύτερος, fellow elder, while addressing Πρεσβύτερους who were functioning at a local level of spiritual leadership (cf. 1 Peter. 5:1).

¹³Cf. apostle (ἀπόστολος, τοὺς μὲν ἀποστόλους,); prophet (προφήτης, τοὺς δὲ προφήτας,); evangelists (τοὺς δὲ εὐαγγελιστάς,); pastor and teacher (τοὺς δὲ ποιμένας καὶ διδασκάλους,); teacher (διδάσκαλος, ὁ διδάσκων); exhorter (ὁ παρακαλῶν); giver (ὁ μεταδιδούς); leader (ὁ προϊστάμενος); shepherd or pastor (ποιμὴν); elder (πρεσβύτερος); bishop (ἐπίσκοπος); deacon (διάκονος). These terms come mainly from the listing of spiritual gifts, although a few are used elsewhere as well.

¹⁴The concept of 'spiritual gifts' comes into this picture but do not provide 'labels.' Instead, ministry contribution on a level playing field is the perspective found in 1 Cor. 12:1-11, 28-30; Eph. 4:7-16 (somewhat an exception); Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Pet. 4:11.

perspective of the New Testament.¹⁵ Contributing to the life of the congregation, i.e., the ἐκκλησία, is the responsibility of every member and each has been ‘gifted’ by God for such. Thus, very little distinction is made in terms of a leadership responsibility over against everyone else.

Furthermore, the meaning of the various terms was undergoing change throughout the first Christian century.¹⁶ One makes a substantial mistake if he assesses church leadership concepts in the New Testament in a flat, one dimensional view. The influence of the Jewish synagogue¹⁷ was heavy in the beginning, but the influx of massive numbers of non-Jews largely through the Pauline mission from the mid-first century onward shifted and redefined those meanings.¹⁸ Also, rather clear signals emerge that different patterns of structure and leader-

¹⁵In Paul’s discussion of spiritual gifts to the Corinthian believers, he goes out of his way to stress the importance of the supposed “inferior members” in 1 Cor. 12:19-26. What he alludes to with the labels ‘inferior’ (τῶ ὑστεροῦντι περισσοτέρων), ‘weaker’ (ἄσθενέστερα), ‘less honorable’ (ἀτιμότερα), and ‘less respectable’ (τὰ ἀσχήμονα) would generally fall into a modern category of non-leadership roles in church life. The apostle scorchingly denounces any effort to consider such roles as less important to the life of the church. The proper attitude is to see every ministry role as essential. The greater gift is that of love (chap. 13) and ministry roles are measured by how they edify the community of believers (chap. 14).

¹⁶The loose, rather fluid concepts of religious leadership in ancient Israel helped lay a foundation of minimal definition of leadership in the early church. Note description in the *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*:

When viewed from a social perspective, the pyramid of religious organization in ancient Israel is remarkably flat. Though there is a clear sense of hierarchy in the Pentateuch, the structure of high priest, priests, Levites and people is relatively simple, and it somewhat mirrors the concentric degrees of holiness represented architecturally in the sanctuary (see SACRED SPACE). We do not find layers of religious bureaucracy or officially numerous purveyors of religion. The formal religious leadership can be divided into three groups: those with inherited offices (priests and Levites), those with positions that are confirmed as a result of their giftedness (prophets, overseers, elders, spiritual leaders) and those that come through the agency of others (Nazirite, Samuel dedicated in the temple, Jephthah’s daughter).

[Leland Ryken, Jim Wilhoit, Tremper Longman et al., *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, electronic ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 494-95. S.V., “Religious Leadership.”]

¹⁷“Before studying the limited and varied data in the NT and postapostolic writings on church order and government, we turn to a brief outline of what we know about Jewish communal organization and leadership in the century before the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 (see Judaism). What can be discovered from Jewish texts is also limited and not always uniform, but a broad picture of typical thinking and structures can be outlined.

“**2.1. Jewish Communal Identity.** The Jews had a strong sense of themselves as a distinct people in the world. Circumcision, law keeping and sabbath observance were the primary visible identity markers, but their inner belief that they were the elect people of God was foundational to their communal identity. This communal self-awareness was universal in scope, but of necessity it took localized expression wherever Jews found themselves. Because the Jews insisted so strongly on being seen as a distinct people, the Roman authorities allowed the numerous Jewish communities in the Mediterranean world to be self-governing *politeumata*, a term used of an organized body of citizens. They themselves, however, more characteristically called their local communities a *synagogue*, literally an assembly. In the Septuagint *synagōgē* was used of all Israel as God’s elect people, but in the Second Temple period it came to be used of specific communities of Jews and then secondarily in the first century A.D. of the building where Jews assembled together.

“**2.2. Jewish Communal Government.** Self-governing Jewish communities usually had a ruling council, the *gerousia*, to direct their affairs. The *gerousia* was made up of respected older men who were generally called *presbyteroi* (‘elders’). One elder was usually recognized as the presiding elder, sometimes called a *gerousiarchēs* (‘ruling council member’) and sometimes an *archōn* (‘ruler’), but some texts and inscriptions mention three ruling *archōntēs*. The oft-mentioned *archisynagōgos* (‘ruler of the synagogue’) was also a significant communal figure, but his special domain was the sabbath assemblies where he presided. He was assisted by a one or more officers who were designated individually *hāzzān* (Heb), *hyperetēs* (Gk) and in English translation, *servant*.

“**2.3. Sabbath Assemblies.** Meeting together for Scripture reading, exposition, prayer and common meals was very much part of localized Jewish communal life in the first century. Although special buildings were known, the most common venue was a home setting. In any location where there was a Jewish community of some size there were usually several meeting places. One tradition has it that there were 394 synagogues in Jerusalem when the city was destroyed by Titus in A.D. 70; another tradition has it that there were 480. It may be conjectured that the owner of the home, as the host of those meeting in his house, usually assumed the office of *archisynagōgos*. Philo and Josephus usually called these buildings *proseuchai* (‘a house of prayer’). Once Josephus calls them *sabbateion* (‘sabbath meeting place’). Later Jewish texts also use the title ‘house of prayer’ as well as ‘house of study’ and ‘house of assembly.’ It was only late in the Second Temple era and first in Palestine that the name for the local community of Jews in their complete number, *synagōgos*, became the name for a specific meeting place, a usage often seen in the NT.” [Ralph P. Martin and Peter H. Davids, *Dictionary of the Later New Testament and Its Developments*, electronic ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000).]

¹⁸This should not be surprising since governance and leadership concepts of the Jewish people underwent drastic changes from their nomadic beginnings with the patriarchs to the highly urbanized Judaism of the first Christian century. The Jewish sources clearly suggest regional variations in the way the synagogues functioned as well. Hellenistic Judaism was influenced by the surrounding Greco-Roman culture in the way the synagogues operated in Diaspora Judaism.

The non-Jewish and non-Christian perspective in the first century toward groups of Christians meeting together in homes was to see them largely in terms of a *koinōnia*, that is, an association that came together for some specific purpose:

Clubs, guilds, and corporations were a feature of the Greco-Roman world from the 4th century on into the Roman imperial

ship perspectives were present in differing geographical regions of the first century world. Both of these trends appear in Luke's depiction of church life in the book of Acts. The writings of Paul signals a similar perspective of development in the way congregations functioned regionally.

Clearly at the highest level of leadership in early Christianity were the apostles, ἀπόστολοι. Because the term ἀπόστολος possessed several levels of meaning,¹⁹ other designations of this leadership group surface in

period. Most of the information about these organizations is derived from inscriptions and documentary papyri.

According to Aristotle, the essence of association (*koinōnia*) is friendship (*Eth.Nic.* 8.9.1 [1159b]). Pythagoras is alleged to have founded in the latter half of the 6th century a society of which it could be said that "men who live at distant points count one another friends before they even know or speak with one another" (*Iamb.* VP 237).

Developed out of common interests, all associations were culturally oriented, but other objectives were also frequently satisfied (*Arist. Eth.Nic.* 8.9.5 [1160a]). To achieve honored familial status, numerous Attic groups, whose members called themselves *orgeōnes*, were formed in devotion to deities and local heroes. Broader in outreach and interest were the *thiasoi*, originally associated with Dionysos. Also popular were the *eranoi* or mutual-aid societies, which persisted into Roman imperial times. The names of the associations are many. Frequently mentioned are guilds of artists, who were devoted to Dionysos and the promotion of music and drama. Merchants, who are on occasion linked with shippers in common enterprise, found that cities located on sea routes provided an attractive base for combining business with sociability. In addition, there appears an almost endless variety of guilds that shared a common trade or practice: stone masons, bankers, architects, physicians, tanners, cobblers, producers of linen or woolen goods, dyers, farmers, gardeners, bakers, barbers, fishers, to cite but a few.

David Noel Freedman, vol. 1, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 501.

From the Roman and Greek perspective the Jewish synagogue was a religious association or club (a *collegia* in Latin) and the Greek label *synagogē* was understood by non-Jews with this secular meaning. Two categories of *collegia* surface in the empire: those sanctioned by the Roman government and the private clubs. Whether or not Roman authorities tolerated the private associations largely depended on whether the club promoted public order or not. Government attitudes toward these clubs varied from time to time and from government leader -- either in Rome or provincially -- to leader. Religion was an aspect of all clubs, since each had their patron deity or deities. Some like the gatherings of Jews and Christians, as well as those organized to promote one of the Roman gods, were completely religious in nature.

A decree of a society devoted to Sarapis (Danker 1982: 154–55) is typical not only of the style of formulation but of the subject matter included in such decrees:

WHEREAS [Zopyros], the treasurer of the Sarapiastai, and the clerk Theophanes, and the trustee Olympichos have time and again proved themselves beyond reproach ..., be it RESOLVED that the Sarapiastai commend and crown them with a wreath of olive in the temple of Sarapis at the next sacrifice of the Sarapiastai ...; and be it further resolved to commend and crown the priestess Nikippe for offering the sacrifices at the appointed times. And be it finally resolved to record this decree on a stone stele and to set it up in the [temple of Sarapis], with expenses for these items to be met by the treasurer Zopyros out of the Association's account.

Luke, who was familiar with Greco-Roman bureaucratic style, uses this type of formulation in Acts 15:22–29 to record the action of the association of Christians at Jerusalem respecting a problem that had originated in Antioch.

[David Noel Freedman, vol. 1, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 501.]

Leadership structures in the various kinds of clubs differed from group to group, although, as the above inscription indicates, designated leaders of a club did exist with specified functions.

The inscription respecting the *lobakchoi* probably reflects a common bureaucratic structure. But the differences between their detailed administrative structure and those exhibited in the NT are striking. Indeed, it is improbable that Christians of the 1st century were at all in debt to Greco-Roman structures for administration of their cult. Furthermore, it appears that early Christian communities lacked a fixed-dues structure or rules for admission and made no provision for a priestly office.

[David Noel Freedman, vol. 1, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 502.]

¹⁹“ἀπόστολος, ου, ό. 1. of messengers without extraordinary status *delegate, envoy, messenger* (opp. ό πέμψας) **J 13:16**. Of Epheroditus, messenger of the Philippians **Phil 2:25**.—**2 Cor 8:23**.

2. of messengers with extraordinary status, esp. of God's *messenger, envoy* (cp. Epict. 3, 22, 23 of Cynic wise men: ἄγγελος ἀπό τ. Διός ἀπέσταλται).

a. of prophets **Lk 11:49; Rv 18:20**; cp. **2:2; Eph 3:5**.

b. of Christ (w. ἄρχιερέυς) **Hb 3:1** (cp. ApcEsdr 2:1 p. 25, 29 T.; Just., A I, 12, 9; the extra-Christian firman Sb 7240, 4f οὐκ ἔστιν θεός εἰ μή ό θεός μόνος. Μααμετ ἀπόστολος θεοῦ). GWetter, 'D. Sohn Gottes' 1916, 26ff.

c. but predominately in the NT (of the apologists, only Just.) of a group of highly honored believers w. a special function as God's envoys. Also Judaism had a figure known as apostle (אַפּוּסְטוֹלוֹס; Schürer III 124f w. sources and lit.; Billerb. III 1926, 2–4; JTruron, Theology 51, '48, 166–70; 341–43; GDix, *ibid.* 249–56; 385f; JBühner, art. ἄ. in EDNT I 142–46). In Christian circles, at first ἄ. denoted one who proclaimed the gospel, and was not strictly limited: Paul freq. calls himself an ἄ.: **Ro 1:1; 11:13; 1 Cor 1:1; 9:1f; 15:9; 2 Cor 1:1; Gal 1:1; Eph 1:1; Col 1:1; 1 Ti 1:1; 2:7; 2 Ti 1:1; Tit 1:1**.—I Cl 47:1. Of Barnabas **Ac 14:14; 15:2**. Of Andronicus and Junia (less prob. Junias, s. Ἰουνία) **Ro 16:7**. Of James, the Lord's brother **Gal 1:19**. Of Peter **1 Pt 1:1; 2 Pt 1:1**. Then esp. of the 12 apostles οἱ δώδεκα ἄ. (cp. ParJer 9:20; AscIs 3:21; 4:3) **Mt 10:2; Mk 3:14; Lk 22:14** (v.l. οἱ δώδεκα); cp. **6:13; 9:10; 17:5; Ac 1:26** (P-HMenoud, RHPR 37 '57, 71–80); **Rv 21:14**; PtK 3 p. 15, 18. Peter and the apostles **Ac 2:37; 5:29**. Paul and apostles Pol 9:1 (cp. AcPITh Aa I, 235 app. of Thecla). Gener. the apostles **Mk 6:30; Lk 24:10; 1 Cor 4:9; 9:5; 15:7; 2 Cor 11:13; 1 Th 2:7; Ac 1:2; 2:42f; 4:33, 35, 37; 5:2, 12, 18, 34 v.l., 40; 6:6; 8:1, 14, 18; 9:27; 11:1; 14:4; 2 Pt 3:2; Jd 17; IEph 11:2; IMG 7:1; 13:2; ITr 2:2; 3:1; 7:1; IPhld 5:1; ISm 8:1; D ins;**

the New Testament, such as οἱ δώδεκα (the Twelve),²⁰ τοὺς πρὸ ἐμοῦ ἀποστόλους (“the apostles before me,” Gal. 1:17)²¹ in order to distinguish them as a separate group. Their witness becomes the foundation of the Christian movement;²² they possess the primary ministry gift from God;²³ they are divinely appointed to this leadership ministry.²⁴

11:3, 6. As a governing board, w. the elders **Ac 15:2, 4, 6, 22f; 16:4**. As possessors of the most important spiritual gift **1 Cor 12:28f**. Proclaimers of the gospel 1 Cl 42:1f; B 5:9; Hs 9, 17, 1. Prophesying strife 1 Cl 44:1. Working miracles **2 Cor 12:12**. W. overseers, teachers and attendants Hv 3, 5, 1; Hs 9, 15, 4; w. teachers Hs 9, 25, 2; w. teachers, preaching to those who had fallen asleep Hs 9, 16, 5; w. var. Christian officials IMg 6:1; w. prophets **Eph 2:20**; D 11:3; Pol 6:3. Christ and the apostles as the foundation of the church IMg 13:1; ITr 12; 2; cp. **Eph 2:20**. οἱ ἄ. and ἡ ἐκκλησία w. the three patriarchs and the prophets IPhd 9:1. The Holy Scriptures named w. the ap. 2 Cl 14:2 (sim. ApcSed 14:10 p. 136, 17 Ja.). Paul ironically refers to his opponents (or the original apostles; s. s.v. ὑπερλίαν) as οἱ ὑπερλίαν ἄ. the super-apostles **2 Cor 11:5; 12:11**. The orig. apostles he calls οἱ πρὸ ἐμοῦ ἄ. **Gal 1:17**; AcPICor 2:4.—Harnack, *Mission* 4 I 1923, 332ff (Eng. tr. I 319–31). WSeufert, D. Urspr. u. d. Bed. d. Apostolates 1887; EHaupt, Z. Verständnis d. Apostolates im NT 1896; EMonnier, La notion de l’Apostolat des origines à Irénée 1903; PBatiffol, RB n.s. 3, 1906, 520–32; Wlh., *Einleitung* 2, 1911, 138–47; EBurton, AJT 16, 1912, 561–88, Gal comm. 1921, 363–84; RSchütz, *Apostel u. Jünger* 1921; EMeyer I 265ff, III 255ff. HVogelstein, *Development of the Apostolate in Judaism, etc.*: HUCA 2, 1925, 99–123; JWagenmann, D. Stellg. d. Ap. Pls neben den Zwölf 1926; WMundle, D. Apostelbild der AG: ZNW 27, 1928, 36–54; KRengstorff, TW I 406–46 (s. critique by HConzelmann, *The Theol. of St. Luke* ’60, 216, n. 1), *Apost. u. Predigtamt* ’34; J-LLeuba, *Rech. exégét. rel. à l’apostolat dans le NT*, diss. Neuchâtel ’36; PSaintyves, *Deux mythes évangéliques, Les 12 apôtres et les 72 disciples* ’38; GSass, *Apostelamt u. Kirche ... paulin. Apostelbegr.* ’39; EKäsemann, ZNW 40, ’41, 33–71; RLiechtenhan, D. urchr. Mission ’46; ESchweizer, D. Leben d. Herrn in d. Gemeinde u. ihren Diensten ’46; AFridrichsen, *The Apostle and His Message* ’47; HvCampenhausen, D. urchristl. Apostelbegr.: StTh 1, ’47, 96–130; HMosbech, *ibid.* 2, ’48, 166–200; ELohe, *Ursprung u. Prägung des christl. Apostolates*: TZ 9, ’53, 259–75; GKlein, *Die 12 Apostel*, ’60; FHahn, *Mission in the NT*, tr. FClarke, ’65; WSchmithals, *The Office of the Apostle*, tr. JSteely, ’69; KKertelge, *Das Apostelamt des Paulus*, BZ 14, ’70, 161–81. S. also ἐκκλησία end, esp. Holl and Kattenbusch; also HBetz, *Hermeneia: Gal* ’79, 74f (w. additional lit.); FAGnew, *On the Origin of the Term ἀπόστολος*: CBQ 38, ’76, 49–53 (survey of debate); KHaacker, *NovT* 30, ’88, 9–38 (Acts). Ins evidence (s. e.g. SIG index) relating to the verb ἀποστέλλω is almost gener. ignored in debate about the meaning of the noun.—DELG s.v. στέλλω A. EDNT. M-M. TW. Spicq.” [William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 122.]

²⁰“**δώδεκα** indecl. (Hom.+; ins [Meisterhans3-Schw. 159]; pap [Mayer 316]; et al.) twelve **Mt 9:20; Mk 5:25, 42; Lk 2:42** (Plut., *Mor.* 839a γίνεσθαι ἐτῶν δώδεκα; on Jesus at 12 yrs. of age s. RBultmann, *Gesch. d. Syn. Tradition* 3 ’57, 327f.—At the beginning of the story an external parallel in Ps.-Callisth. 1, 14, 1 ὁ δὲ Ἀλέξανδρος ἠῤῥαζε τῇ ἡλικίᾳ, καὶ γενόμενος δωδεκαέτης μετὰ τοῦ πατρός ...) al.; οἱ δ. the twelve (sc. μαθηταί; AscIs 3:13 ἡ τῶν δ. μαθητεία; Orig., C. Cels. 1, 64, 12.—οἱ δ. is to be expanded differently, e.g. Lucian, *Jupp. Trag.* 26 [12 Olympian deities]; Jos., Vi. 56; Ps.-Clem., Hom. 6, 14) **1 Cor 15:5** (the separation of Judas the informer, for which the v.l. **ἔνδεκα** would make allowance, does not make it impossible to use the fixed expression ‘the 12’: X., *Hell.* 2, 4, 23 still speaks of οἱ τριάκοντα, despite the fact that acc. to 2, 4, 19 Critias and Hippomachus have already been put to death; but s. Orig., C. Cels. 2, 65, 6: οἱ δ., τοῦ Μαθθίου ἀντι τοῦ Ἰουδα καταταχθέντος; of Jacob’s sons 7, 7, 30); cp. **Mt 10:1f, 5; 11:1; 20:17; 26:14** et al.—1 Clem 43:2; Hm 12, 3, 2; Hs 9, 17, 1f al. Cp. δεκαδύο under δέκα.—RMeye, *Jesus and the Twelve* ’68, the term ‘the Twelve’ goes back to Jesus; diffit. GSchille, *Die urchristliche Kollegialmission* ’67, of later origin as honorary recognition of the earliest associates of Jesus. S. also the lit. s. on ἀπόστολος and ἐκκλησία, end. EDNT. TW.” [William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 265–66.]

²¹“Various traits, qualities and manifestations of leaders are articulated throughout the NT. The apostles are literally ‘sent ones,’ or ‘messengers’ (cf. 1 Tim 2:7; 2 Tim 1:11), a witness to God and the gospel (Lk 24:48; Acts 1:8). In the interest of maintaining humility and preserving that honor for Jesus himself, they should not take on the title of ‘Rabbi’ (Mt 23:8). They should regard themselves as servants (Jn 13:16; Acts 4:29) who, following the example of Jesus, ‘wash one another’s feet’ (Jn 13:14). In the same vein, Peter exhorts elders in the church not to lord it over the church (1 Pet 5:1–3) but to serve willingly and not for personal gain. Leadership also entails collegiality, and Paul calls Titus a partner and fellow worker (2 Cor 8:23) and so demonstrates his humility even while being the archetypal leader within the early church.” [Leland Ryken, Jim Wilhoit, Tremper Longman et al., *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, electronic ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 496.]

²²**Ephesians 2:19–20**: “19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, 20 built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone.”

19 ἄρα οὖν οὐκέτι ἐστέ ξένοι καὶ πάροικοι, ἀλλὰ ἐστέ συμπολίται τῶν ἁγίων καὶ οἰκεῖοι τοῦ θεοῦ, 20 ἐποικοδομηθέντες ἐπὶ τῷ θεμελίῳ τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ προφητῶν, ὄντος ἀκρογωνιαίου αὐτοῦ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ,

²³**1 Corinthians 12:28**: “28 And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues.”

καὶ οὓς μὲν ἔθετο ὁ θεὸς ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ πρῶτον ἀποστόλους, δευτέρον προφήτας, τρίτον διδασκάλους, ἔπειτα δυνάμεις, ἔπειτα χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων, ἀντιλήμψεις, κυβερνήσεις, γένη γλωσσῶν.

²⁴**Luke 6:13**, “And when day came, he called his disciples and chose twelve of them, whom he also named apostles:”

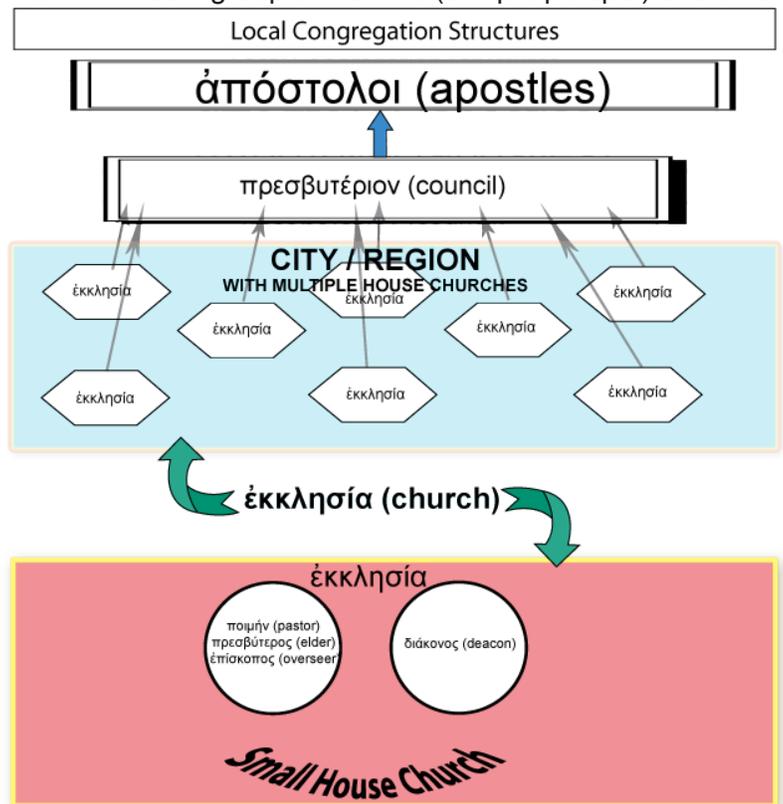
καὶ ὅτε ἐγένετο ἡμέρα, προσεφώνησεν τοὺς μαθητὰς αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐκλεξάμενος ἀπ’ αὐτῶν δώδεκα, οὓς καὶ ἀποστόλους ὠνόμασεν, **1 Tim. 2:7**, “For this I was appointed a herald and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.”

εἰς ὃ ἐτέθην ἐγὼ κήρυξ καὶ ἀπόστολος—ἀλήθειαν λέγω, οὐ ψεῦδομαι—διδάσκαλος ἐθνῶν ἐν πίστει καὶ ἀληθείᾳ.

2 Tim. 1:11, “For this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher,”

In the first eleven chapters of Acts covering from appx. AD 30 to 44, the apostles function as leaders of the Christian community in Jerusalem, since Christianity at that point is largely confined to Jerusalem and the nearby region. When the Gospel message began impacting others living outside Jerusalem, it was the apostles who felt compelled to make sure what was happening came from God and was not from a false teaching of the Gospel; note the following: a) Peter and John were sent by the apostles to Samaria (Acts 8:14); b) Barnabas was sent by them and the Jerusalem church to Antioch (Acts 11:22-26); c) the apostles lead the church in Jerusalem to accept Peter's report of the conversion of Cornelius over criticism against him (Acts 9:32-11:18).

Gradually, as the Gospel began to spread, the role of the apostles began shifting, so that by the late 40s with the Jerusalem council meeting described in Acts 15 a local group of leaders (οἱ πρεσβύτεροι) of the various house churches functioned as leaders in Jerusalem and the apostles gave general regional leadership.²⁵ The decisions regarding the status of Gentiles in the church was made, however, by the apostles, the elders, and the entire congregation, thus reflecting a cooperative role of leadership, rather than an authoritarian one.²⁶ Evidently because the letter fundamentally represented the Jerusalem church's decision, James as the leader of the elders of the house church groups penned the letter and took primary responsibility for leading in the decision making process. Because of Luke's literary objectives for Acts, the Twelve as a group fade from the narrative, with the emphasis in chapters twelve through twenty-eight centering on Paul's preaching of the gospel in the eastern Mediterranean world.²⁷ Each time that Paul returns to Jerusalem at the close of the second and third missionary journeys,²⁸ Luke stresses that his contacts in Jerusalem were with 'the church' (Acts 18:22-23²⁹; 21:17-19³⁰), rather than just with the apostles. That the apostles continued active in ministry both in Jerusalem and especially elsewhere is clear from the letters of Peter and John in the New Testament. Many legends from different church fathers suggest a wide range of ministry actions prior to the death of the last apostle, John, at the close of the first



- Notes:
1. The term ἐκκλησία means 'assembly' at different levels: a) house church; b) city/regional; c) all believers.
 2. Two leadership groups gradually emerge: a) Pastor/Elder/Overseer (synonyms), and b) Deacon.
 3. At the city/region level the individual house church leaders collectively make up the leadership of the Christian community in the city and are called the πρεσβυτέριον (council). James in Acts 15 illustrates this.
 4. The terms ποιμήν (pastor), πρεσβύτερος (elder), ἐπίσκοπος (overseer) διάκονος (deacon) could apply to individuals at any of these levels.
 5. Leadership labels were functional rather than positional. Spiritual gifts (τὰ πνευματικά / τὰ χαρίσματα) for leadership focus on communicating spiritual concepts (teaching / preaching) and ministry actions to help others. Thus a great deal of overlapping occurs in terms of what leaders do. As 1 Peter 5:1-5 makes clear, they don't 'boss' others around.

εἰς ὃ ἐτέθην ἐγὼ κήρυξ καὶ ἀπόστολος καὶ διδάσκαλος

²⁵Acts 15:6, "The apostles and the elders met together to consider this matter."

Συνήχθησαν τε οἱ ἀπόστολοι καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι ἰδεῖν περὶ τοῦ λόγου τούτου.

²⁶Acts 15:22-23a, "22 Then the apostles and the elders, with the consent of the whole church, decided to choose men from among their members and to send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They sent Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leaders among the brothers, 23 with the following letter:"

22 Τότε ἔδοξε τοῖς ἀποστόλοις καὶ τοῖς πρεσβυτέροις σὺν ὅλῃ τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ ἐκλεξαμένους ἄνδρας ἐξ αὐτῶν πέμψαι εἰς Ἀντιόχειαν σὺν τῷ Παύλῳ καὶ Βαρναβᾷ, Ἰουδᾶν τὸν καλούμενον Βαρσαββᾶν καὶ Σιλᾶν, ἄνδρας ἡγουμένους ἐν τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς, 23 γράψαντες διὰ χειρὸς αὐτῶν·

²⁷Acts 16:4 is the final mention of the term ἀπόστολοι in the book of Acts.

²⁸At the end of the first missionary journey, he and Barnabas went directly back to Antioch from where the journey had begun; cf. Acts 14:26. He went to Jerusalem only later as a part of the Judaizing controversy that erupted at Antioch.

²⁹Acts 18:22-23, "22 When he had landed at Caesarea, he went up to Jerusalem and greeted the church (ἀναβὰς καὶ ἀσπασάμενος τὴν ἐκκλησίαν), and then went down to Antioch. 23 After spending some time there he departed and went from place to place through the region of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples."

³⁰Acts 21:17-19, "17 When we arrived in Jerusalem, the brothers welcomed us warmly. 18 The next day Paul went with us to visit James; and all the elders were present. 19 After greeting them, he related one by one the things that God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry."

Christian century.³¹

In a few listings of spiritual gifts, some gifts point in the direction of leadership roles. But great caution needs to be exercised here, since a modern concept of leadership centered in authority must not be read back into the New Testament texts which are centered on ministry contributions to the spiritual welfare of the community of faith, and not on possessing authority or power.³² Ephesians 4:11-13 points toward leadership responsibilities:

11 The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, 12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, 13 until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. 14 We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming.

11 καὶ αὐτὸς ἔδωκεν τοὺς μὲν ἀποστόλους, τοὺς δὲ προφήτας, τοὺς δὲ εὐαγγελιστάς, τοὺς δὲ ποιμένας καὶ διδασκάλους, 12 πρὸς τὸν καταρτισμὸν τῶν ἁγίων εἰς ἔργον διακονίας, εἰς οἰκοδομὴν τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ, 13 μέχρι καταστήσωμεν οἱ πάντες εἰς τὴν ἐνότητα τῆς πίστεως καὶ τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ, εἰς ἄνδρα τέλειον, εἰς μέτρον ἡλικίας τοῦ πληρώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ, 14 ἵνα μηκέτι ὦμεν νήπιοι, κλυδωνιζόμενοι καὶ περιφερόμενοι παντὶ ἀνέμῳ τῆς διδασκαλίας ἐν τῇ κυβείᾳ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐν πανουργίᾳ πρὸς τὴν μεθοδεῖαν τῆς πλάνης,

Here Paul does not distinguish between general leadership roles and local leadership roles. Beyond apostles who occupy the chief role, he mentions prophets, evangelists, and pastor-teachers. Clearly these are ministry roles that contribute to the spiritual welfare of the Christian community. Prophets (προφήται) here could refer to the Old Testament prophets, but most likely it alludes to individuals inside the Christian community who proclaimed the message of God in the Gospel.³³ Evangelist (εὐαγγελιστής) is not a commonly used term in the New Testament, but refers to one who preaches the Gospel.³⁴ The individuals who are so labeled as prophet or evangelist in the New Testament served both generally and in local communities of believers. Both these terms are related to the term κήρυξ, 'herald,'³⁵ which is linked to the verb κηρύσσω, 'I preach,' and is used more commonly

³¹One online source of these legends narrated from a Roman Catholic perspective is "The Twelve Apostles of the Catholic Church."

³²The terms relating to authority and power in the New Testament center on God's possession of such, and never on religious leaders in the church possessing authority and power, and in particular in connection with their leadership roles in the Christian community, as Clinton E. Arnold notes:

The most common word for power in the NT is *dynamis* (and its cognates), occurring some 375 times and used by every NT writer. Less common are the terms *ischus* and *kratos*, which are probably not to be distinguished sharply in meaning from *dynamis*. All three terms denote the inherent or derived ability to accomplish a given end. The plural form of *dynamis* is used frequently in the NT to describe powerful supernatural acts such as healings or exorcisms, and is normally translated "miracle." The effectual exercise of power is indicated by the term *energeia* and its forms. It is only used of supernatural beings in the NT and is often used to describe God's manifestation of power in raising Christ from the dead. The term *exousia*, usually translated "authority," has primary reference to one's right to exercise power but implies an ability to exercise that right. The concept of power is also conveyed in many other terms and units of thought (grace, light, fullness, glory, word, spirit).

[David Noel Freedman, vol. 5, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 444.]

³³Christians, who are endowed w. the gift of προφητεία **Ac 15:32; 1 Cor 14:29, 32, 37; Rv 22:6, 9; D 10:7; 13:1, 3f, 6. W. ἀπόστολοι** (Celsus 2, 20) **Lk 11:49; Eph 2:20** (though here the ref. could be to the OT prophets, as is surely the case in Pol 6:3. Acc. to PJoüon, RSR 15, 1925, 534f, τῶν ἀπ. καὶ πρ. in Eph 2:20 refer to the same persons); 3:5; D 11:3. πρ. stands betw. ἀπόστολοι and διδάσκαλοι **1 Cor 12:28f**; cp. **Eph 4:11**. W. διδάσκαλοι **Ac 13:1; D 15:1f**. W. ἄγιοι and ἀπόστολοι **Rv 18:20**. W. ἄγιοι **11:18; 16:6; 18:24**. Prophets foretell future events (cp. Pla., Charm. 173c προφήται τῶν μελλόντων) **Ac 11:27** (s. vs. 28); **21:10** (s. vss. 11f). True and false prophets: τὸν προφήτην καὶ τὸν ψευδοπροφήτην Hm 11:7; s. vss. 9 and 15 (the rest of this 'mandate' also deals w. this subj.); D 11:7-11.—Harnack, *Lehre der Zwölf Apostel* 1884, 93ff; 119ff, *Mission 4 I* 1923, 344f; 362ff; Rtzst., *Mysterienrel.* 3 236-40; s. E Selwyn on 1 Pt 1:10 in 1a above; HGreeven, *Propheten, Lehrer, Vorsteher b. Pls: ZNW 44, '52/53, 3-15.*" [William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 891.]

³⁴εὐαγγελιστής, οὗ, ὁ (s. prec. two entries; acc. to ADieterich ZNW 1, 1900, 336-38, title of polytheistic priests: IG XII/1, 675.—GDI 5702, 22; 37 [Ionic] εὐαγγελίς is the official title of the priestess of Hera) *proclaimer of the gospel, evangelist* (ApcSed 15:4 [of Matthew]) **Eph 4:11** (DHadidian, CBQ 28, '66, 317-21: gospel writer). Acc. to **Ac 21:8** a designation of Philip (s. **Ac 6:5**). **2 Ti 4:5** Timothy is so called.—Harnack, *Mission u. Ausbreitung 4* 1924, 334, 6 al. (p. 983 index).—M-M. TW. Spicq." [William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 403.]

³⁵κήρυξ, υκος, ὁ (also κήρυξ; on the accent according to Herodian Gr. s. B-D-F §13; Mlt-H. 57; PKatz, TLZ 83, '58, 316 n. 6. S. κηρύσσω and prec. entry.)

1. an official entrusted with a proclamation, herald (Hom.+; ins, pap, LXX; Philo, Agr. 112; Jos., Bell. 2, 624, Ant. 10, 75) MPol 12:1f; GJs 8:3.

2. one who makes public declarations, esp. of a transcendent nature, herald, proclaimer (in the usage of the mystery cults: X., Page 92

in the New Testament with the sense of proclaiming the Gospel message. The rather unique linking of pastor and teacher, τοὺς δὲ ποιμένας καὶ διδασκάλους, into a single role seems more focused on local church leadership with a strong emphasis on both taking care of the spiritual needs of a congregation along side of teaching them the truths of the Gospel for daily living.

Reflecting a later understanding of local leadership roles (the 60s in the first century), references in Philipians, First Timothy, and Titus center on the responsibilities of spiritual leaders in local communities of faith.

Phil. 1:1, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, **with the bishops and deacons**:

πᾶσιν τοῖς ἁγίοις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τοῖς οὖσιν ἐν Φιλίπποις **σὺν ἐπισκόποις καὶ διακόνοις**.

1 Tim. 3:1-13, 3.1 The saying is sure: whoever aspires to **the office of bishop** desires a noble task. 2 Now **a bishop** must be above reproach, married only once, temperate, sensible, respectable, hospitable, an apt teacher, 3 not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, and not a lover of money. 4 He must manage his own household well, keeping his children submissive and respectful in every way — 5 for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how can he take care of God's church? 6 He must not be a recent convert, or he may be puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. 7 Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace and the snare of the devil.

8 Deacons likewise must be serious, not double-tongued, not indulging in much wine, not greedy for money; 9 they must hold fast to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. 10 And let them first be tested; then, if they prove themselves blameless, let them serve as deacons. 11 Women likewise must be serious, not slanderers, but temperate, faithful in all things. 12 Let **deacons** be married only once, and let them manage their children and their households well; 13 for **those who serve well as deacons** gain a good standing for themselves and great boldness in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

3.1 Πιστὸς ὁ λόγος· εἴ τις **ἐπισκοπῆς** ὀρέγεται, καλοῦ ἔργου ἐπιθυμεῖ. 2 δεῖ οὖν **τὸν ἐπίσκοπον** ἀνεπίλημπτον εἶναι, μιᾶς γυναικὸς ἄνδρα, νηφάλιον, σώφρονα, κόσμιον, φιλόξενον, διδακτικόν, 3 μὴ πάροινον, μὴ πλήκτην, ἀλλὰ ἐπιεικῆ, ἄμαχον, ἀφιλάργυρον, 4 τοῦ ἰδίου οἴκου καλῶς προϊστάμενον, τέκνα ἔχοντα ἐν ὑποταγῇ μετὰ πάσης σεμνότητος· 5 (εἰ δὲ τις τοῦ ἰδίου οἴκου προστῆναι οὐκ οἶδεν, πῶς ἐκκλησίας θεοῦ ἐπιμελήσεται;) 6 μὴ νεόφυτον, ἵνα μὴ τυφωθῆς εἰς κρίμα ἐμπέση τοῦ διαβόλου. 7 δεῖ δὲ καὶ μαρτυρίαν καλὴν ἔχειν ἀπὸ τῶν ἕξωθεν, ἵνα μὴ εἰς ὀνειδισμόν ἐμπέση καὶ παγίδα τοῦ διαβόλου.

8 Διακόνους ὡσαύτως σεμνοὺς, μὴ διλόγους, μὴ οἴνω πολλῷ προσέχοντας, μὴ αἰσχροκερδεῖς, 9 ἔχοντας τὸ μυστήριον τῆς πίστεως ἐν καθαρᾷ συνειδήσει. 10 καὶ οὗτοι δὲ δοκιμαζέσθωσαν πρῶτον, εἴτα διακονεῖτωσαν ἀνάγκητοι ὄντες. 11 γυναῖκας ὡσαύτως σεμνάς, μὴ διαβόλους, νηφαλίους, πιστάς ἐν πᾶσιν. 12 **διάκονοι** ἔστωσαν μιᾶς γυναικὸς ἄνδρες, τέκνων καλῶς προϊστάμενοι καὶ τῶν ἰδίων οἴκων· 13 **οἱ** γὰρ καλῶς **διακονήσαντες** βαθμὸν ἑαυτοῖς καλὸν περιποιῶνται καὶ πολλὴν παρρησίαν ἐν πίστει τῇ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.

Titus 1:5-9, 5 I left you behind in Crete for this reason, so that you should put in order what remained to be done, and should appoint **elders** in every town, as I directed you: 6 someone who is blameless, married only once, whose children are believers, not accused of debauchery and not rebellious. 7 For **a bishop**, as God's steward, must be blameless; he must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or addicted to wine or violent or greedy for gain; 8 but he must be hospitable, a lover of goodness, prudent, upright, devout, and self-controlled. 9 He must have a firm grasp of the word that is trustworthy in accordance with the teaching, so that he may be able both to preach with sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict it.

5 Τοῦτου χάριν ἀπέλιπόν σε ἐν Κρήτῃ ἵνα τὰ λείποντα ἐπιδιορθώσῃ, καὶ καταστήσῃ κατὰ πόλιν **πρεσβυτέρους**, ὡς ἐγὼ σοι διαταξάμην, 6 εἴ τις ἐστιν ἀνέγκλητος, μιᾶς γυναικὸς ἀνὴρ, τέκνα ἔχων πιστά, μὴ ἐν κατηγορίᾳ ἀσωτίας ἢ ἀνυπότακτα. 7 δεῖ γὰρ **τὸν ἐπίσκοπον** ἀνέγκλητον εἶναι ὡς θεοῦ οἰκονόμον, μὴ αὐθάδῃ, μὴ ὀργίλον, μὴ πάροινον, μὴ πλήκτην, μὴ αἰσχροκερδῆ, 8 ἀλλὰ φιλόξενον, φιλάγαθον, σώφρονα, δίκαιον, ὄσιον, ἐγκρατῆ, 9 ἀντεχόμενον τοῦ κατὰ τὴν διδαχὴν πιστοῦ λόγου, ἵνα δυνατὸς ᾗ καὶ παρακαλεῖν ἐν τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ τῇ ὑγιαίνουσῃ καὶ τοὺς ἀντιλέγοντας ἐλέγχειν.

In the traditional understanding of Pauline authorship, these writings emerge in the early to middle 60s of the first Christian century, and thus reflect the developing understanding of church leadership at a local level by the

Hell. 2, 4, 20 ὁ τῶν μυστῶν κήρυξ; Philostrate., Vi. Soph. 2, 33, 4 τοῦ Ἐλευσινίου ἱεροῦ κήρυξ; SIG 728B, 9 κήρυξ τοῦ θεοῦ, 773, 5 κ. τοῦ Ἀπόλλωνος, 845, 2 ὁ τῶν ἱερῶν κ.; Just. [of John the Baptist]; τῆς ἀληθείας Tat. 17, 1 and Iren. 1, 15, 6 [Harv. I 155, 14]. S. Poland, 395.—The Cynic, as a messenger fr. God, calls himself a κ.: Epict. 3, 22, 69; 3, 21, 13.—Herm. Wr. 4, 4. Cp. JosAs 14:2 ἄγγελος καὶ κ. ἐστὶ φωτὸς τῆς μεγάλης ἡμέρας [of the morning star]; sun, moon, and the stars as κ. and ἄγγελοι of God Orig., C. Cels. 5, 12, 38ff.) (God's) herald, one who proclaims, of Noah δικαιοσύνης κ. **2 Pt 2:5**. Of the ap. Paul (w. ἀπόστολος) **1 Ti 2:7**; (w. ἀπόστολος and διδάσκαλος) **2 Ti 1:11**. Likew. of Paul 1 Cl 5:6.

3. trumpet-shell (Aristot., HA 5, 544, 546, 547 al.; Machon 133 in Athen. 8, 349c), a large, sharp seashell, used in torturing MPol 2:4.—DELG. M-M. TW.”

[William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 543.]

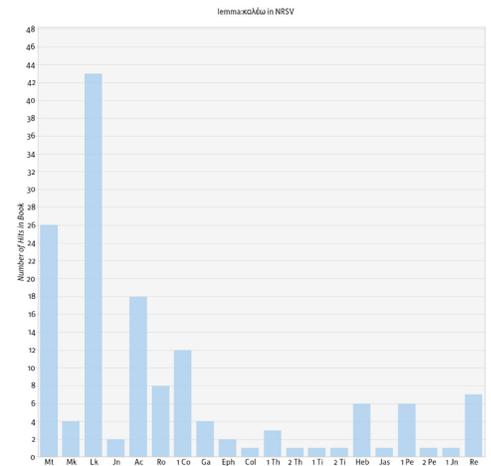
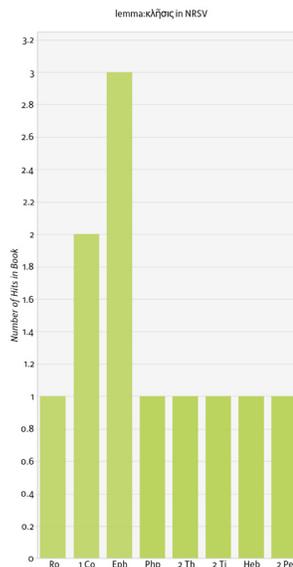
apostle Paul.³⁶ Collectively these three documents suggest that two distinct leadership roles had emerged in local church life by the mid 60s of the first century: that of the ἐπίσκοποι / πρεσβύτεροι and the διάκονοι.

These texts do not define *leadership responsibilities* for either leader in any detail. In 1 Tim. 3:5, the question is raised πῶς ἐκκλησίας θεοῦ ἐπιμελήσεται; (*How shall he take care of God's church?*). Leading (προσῆναι) his own family well is compared to taking care (ἐπιμελήσεται) of the church. The verb ἐπιμελέομαι stresses providing care for someone.³⁷ Thus, it is consistent with the use of ἐπίσκοπος as the label for spiritual leadership, which itself refers to seeing after the needs of others.³⁸ The specifics of how to do this are left undefined.

In a similar manner, Paul indicates the same thing for deacons in 1 Tim. 3:13: οἱ γὰρ καλῶς διακονήσαντες, “for those serving well...”. To Titus, regarding the pastoral leader in the churches, Paul offers a bit more detail in verse 9: ἀντεχόμενον τοῦ κατὰ τὴν διδαχὴν πιστοῦ λόγου, ἵνα δυνατὸς ᾖ καὶ παρακαλεῖν ἐν τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ τῇ ὑγιαίνουσῃ καὶ τοὺς ἀντιλέγοντας ἐλέγχειν, “He must have a firm grasp of the word that is trustworthy in accordance with the teaching, so that he may be able both to preach with sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict it.” His need to clearly understand the message of the gospel is to παρακαλεῖν and to ἐλέγχειν, ‘to exhort’ and ‘to refute.’ Thus communicating and defending the gospel message³⁹ are two assignments given to him.

No specification of ministry responsibilities in the local community of believers, beyond these general guidelines of nourishing the community and communicating effectively God’s message to them, is given. Titus, as Paul’s missionary associate, is instructed to teach sound doctrine (λάλει ἃ πρέπει τῇ ὑγιαίνουσῃ διδασκαλίᾳ, 2:1). He is to declare, exhort and reprove (Ταῦτα λάλει καὶ παρακάλει καὶ ἔλεγχε, 2:15). The essence of his ministry as a missionary associate to the churches on Crete is to communicate to them the details and relevant applications of the apostolic gospel message so that the congregations would grow spiritually.

Timothy’s ministry assignment as an associate of Paul to the congregation in Ephesus is similar. He is to instruct (παραγγεῖλῃς, 1:3), and teach (Παράγγελλε ταῦτα καὶ δίδασκε, 4:11), to stress reading of scripture, exhort, and teach (πρόσεχε τῇ ἀναγνώσει, τῇ παρακλήσει, τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ, 4:13), to teach and urge (Ταῦτα δίδασκε καὶ παρακάλει, 6:2c). Looking at the entire first letter to Timothy reveals the profile of a local spiritual leader who by his inspiring example and by his communicating the truths of the apostolic gospel provides direction and ministry to the congregation. The mention of local leaders in 4:17 hints at a variety of responsibilities: Οἱ καλῶς προεστῶτες⁴⁰ πρεσβύτεροι διπλῆς



³⁶Of course, with an anonymous view of authorship for these documents, their origin is pushed into the second century, which provides an entirely different contextual setting for understanding the meaning of the leadership terms.

³⁷“ἐπιμελέομαι pass. dep., fut. ἐπιμελήσομαι; 1 aor. ἐπεμελήθην, impv. ἐπιμελήθητι (s. prec. entry; Hdt.+; ins, pap, LXX; TestSol 4:15 D; Just., D. 1:4; Ath. 23:5 [Pla., Phdr. 246e]) *care for, take care of* w. gen. (Hdt. et al.; Herm. Wr. 10, 22b; Gen 44:21; Sir 30:25; Philo; Jos., Ant. 1, 53; 8, 297; Just., D. 1, 4) τινός *someone or someth. Lk 10:34f; 1 Ti 3:5. πιστεως, ἐλπίδος, whereby love for God and humans is generated and redounds to eternal life Agr 7.—DELG s.v. μέλω. M-M. Spicq.” [William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 375.]*

³⁸“ἐπίσκοπος, ου, ό (s. prec. entry; Hom. et al.; Diod S 37, 28, 1 [of a king w. synonym θεατής], ins, pap, LXX; JosAs 15:7 cod. A [p. 61, 16 Bat.] μετάνοια ... ἐπίσκοπος πάντων τῶν παρθένων; Philo, Joseph.—LPorter, The Word ἐπίσκοπος in Pre-Christian Usage: ATR 21, '39, 103–12) gener. ‘one who watches over, guardian’. BThiering, ‘Mebaqqer’ and ‘Episkopos’ in the Light of the Temple Scroll: JBL 100, '81, 59–74 (office of ‘bishop’ adopted fr. Essene lay communities; cp. CD 14, 8–12; רקר Ezk 34:11 [LXX ἐπισκέπτειν]).” [William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 379.]

³⁹“Sound teaching,” ἡ διδασκαλία ἡ ὑγιαίνουσα, in the pastoral epistles signifies the apostolic gospel message as understood and taught in the churches of the 60s.

⁴⁰προεστῶτες, which comes from προϊστημι and literally means “to stand in front of” with leadership by example (cf. 1 Peter 5:1–3) as the centerpiece of leading. With the later shift from leading to ruling mentality that developed in the church fathers even modern commentators and Bible translators have trouble getting rid of the authority mindset in dealing with these texts. Cf. προϊστημι in Arndt, William, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*.

τιμῆς ἀξιούσθωσαν, μάλιστα οἱ κοπιῶντες ἐν λόγῳ καὶ διδασκαλίᾳ, “let the elders who lead well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard in preaching and teaching...”

This theme is continued in Second Timothy without major variation. Particularly insightful is 3:10-17 and 4:1-5. In 4:2, a summary statement of responsibilities surfaces: κήρυξον τὸν λόγον, ἐπίστηθι εὐκαίρως ἀκαίρως, ἔλεγχον, ἐπιτίμησον, παρακάλεσον, ἐν πάσῃ μακροθυμίᾳ καὶ διδαχῇ, “proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favorable or unfavorable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching.” Ministry is defined in general terms as communicating the gospel and helping believers grow spiritually.

In Phil. 2:19-30, Paul mentions the sending of Timothy and Epaphroditus to the congregation at Philippi. He doesn't spell out their duties to the church once they arrived there beyond coming to minister and care for the communities of faith in Philippi. Timothy's ministry, described as σὺν ἐμοὶ ἐδούλευσεν εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον (2:22), is serving Christ to advance the gospel. Epaphroditus is described as τὸν ἀδελφὸν καὶ συνεργὸν καὶ συστρατιώτην μου, ὑμῶν δὲ ἀπόστολον καὶ λειτουργὸν τῆς χρείας μου, “my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, but but your messenger and servant for my need” (2:25). The ministry of both these men stand in sharp contrast to some already in Philippi whom Paul labels “dogs” (τοὺς κύνας), “evil workers” (τοὺς κακοὺς ἐργάτας), and “mutilators of the flesh” (τὴν κατατομήν) in 3:2. Paul encourages the Philippian believers to follow his example of Christian commitment, underscoring the principle of leadership by example, in 3:17, in contrast to the false teachers there who set a bad example (3:18-19). In 4:2-3, Paul addresses an unnamed leader there, whom he simply calls “my loyal companion” (γνήσιε σύζυγε), with the request that he intervene in a disagreement between two women leaders⁴¹ in the church named Euodia and Syntyche so that they would resolve their differences.

What all this background analysis hopefully underscores is that divine calling to vocational ministry doesn't include a detailed job description. Only in the developing institutionalization of Christianity in the centuries after Jesus and the apostles have detailed patterns of ministry assignments evolved in relationship to a local congregation or within a denominational structure. These patterns have been produced by culture and specific local and denominational needs, rather than by biblical guidelines.⁴² Understanding this is essential to a clear

3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000 for details. But even a cursory reading of First Timothy confirms the servant leadership model over against a ruling authority image.

Also note the following about the eight instances of this verb in the New Testament:

In most cases προῖστημι seems to have sense a. “to lead” (→ 700, 22 ff.) but the context shows in each case that one must also take into account sense b, “to care for” (→ 700, 29 ff.). This is explained by the fact that caring was the obligation of leading members of the infant Church.

Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, ed. Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley and Gerhard Friedrich, electronic ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964-), 6: 701. S.V., “προῖστημι,” by Bo Reicke.

⁴¹What these ladies did in the church is defined only in terms of αἵτινες ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ συνήθλησάν μοι μετὰ καὶ Κλήμεντος καὶ τῶν λοιπῶν συνεργῶν μου, ὧν τὰ ὀνόματα ἐν βίβλῳ ζωῆς, they have struggled beside me in the work of the gospel, together with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life. Clearly they enjoyed leadership roles in the believing community at Philippi.

⁴²“Nearly all denominations appeal for their church polity to the New Testament, with about equal right and equal wrong: the Romanists to the primacy of Peter; the Irvingites to the apostles and prophets and evangelists, and the miraculous gifts; the Episcopalians to the bishops, the angels, and James of Jerusalem; the Presbyterians to the presbyters and their identity with the bishops; the Congregationalists to the independence of the local congregations and the absence of centralization. The most that can be said is, that the apostolic age contains fruitful germs for various ecclesiastical organizations subsequently developed, but none of them can claim divine authority except for the gospel ministry, which is common to all. Dean Stanley asserts that no existing church can find any pattern or platform of its government in the first century, and thus strongly contrasts the apostolic and post-apostolic organizations (l.c.):

It is certain that the officers of the apostolical or of any subsequent church, were not part of the original institution of the Founder of our religion; that of Bishop, Presbyter, and Deacon; of Metropolitan, Patriarch, and Pope, there is not the shadow of a trace in the four Gospels. It is certain that they arose gradually out of the preexisting institutions either of the Jewish synagogue, or of the Roman empire, or of the Greek municipalities, or under the pressure of local emergencies. It is certain that throughout the first century, and for the first years of the second, that is, through the later chapters of the Acts, the Apostolical Epistles, and the writings of Clement and Hermas. Bishop and Presbyter were convertible terms, and that the body of men so-called were the rulers—so far as any permanent rulers existed—of the early church. It is certain that, as the necessities of the time demanded, first at Jerusalem, then in Asia Minor, the elevation of one Presbyter above the rest by the almost universal law, which even in republics engenders a monarchical element, the word ‘Bishop’ gradually changed its meaning, and by the middle of the second century became restricted to the chief Presbyter of the locality. It is certain that in no instance were the apostles called ‘Bishops’ in any other sense than they were equally called ‘Presbyters’ and ‘Deacons.’ It is certain that in no instance before the beginning of the third century the title or function of the Pagan or Jewish priesthood is applied to the Christian pastors.... It is as sure that nothing like modern Episcopacy existed before the close of the first century as it is that nothing like modern Presbyterianism existed after the beginning of the second. That which was once the Gordian knot of theologians has at least in this instance been untied, not

grasping of what Paul experienced in his calling from God. Otherwise we risk trying to turn Paul into a Roman Catholic bishop, a Presbyterian elder, or a Baptist preacher.

3.1.1.3 The Vocabulary of Calling. The language of vocational calling has its roots in the Greek noun κλήσις (11x) and verb καλέω (148x), with the basic meanings of ‘call’ and ‘to call.’ The distribution of both words in the documents of the NT is reflected in the above charts. The verb is found more often in the gospels, but the noun is found only in eight letters. The general sense of someone calling to another with an invitation or summons moves naturally to the religious idea of God extending such a call to people.⁴³ Such a religious ‘call’ from God can range from an invitation to salvation to a summons to live a certain lifestyle. In the middle is a calling to service.

Included in these ‘calls’ are summons to specific tasks, that may be temporary or lifetime vocational in nature. Καλέω, κλήσις, and προσκαλέομαι can all be used to express a call to do a task,⁴⁴ although the noun κλήσις more naturally can specify the ‘state of a calling.’⁴⁵ This range of meanings is found in 1 Co 7:15, 17, 18 (2x), 20, 22 (2x), 24; Gal 5:8, 13; Eph 4:1, 4; Col 3:15; 1 Th 2:12; 4:7; 5:24; 2 Th 2:14; 1 Ti 6:12; 2 Ti 1:9; Heb 5:4; 9:15; 11:8; 1 Pe 1:15; 2:9, 21; 3:9; 2 Pe 1:3.⁴⁶ The one passage in this group that comes the closest to the idea of a call to ministry is 1 Pet. 2:9,⁴⁷ but clearly this is a general invitation of God to salvation that brings us into the family of God with the inclusive mission of proclaiming the message of life in Christ. Paul approaches the idea of ‘vocational’ calling in 2 Tim. 1:9: “God, who saved us and **called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace**” (θεοῦ, τοῦ σώσαντος ἡμᾶς καὶ **καλέσαντος κλήσει ἁγία**, οὐ κατὰ τὰ ἔργα ἡμῶν ἀλλὰ κατὰ ἰδίαν πρόθεσιν καὶ χάριν,). But again this is reflective of his own experience of conversion and calling being intertwined into a single experience. Within the framework of the καλέω group of words, the basic sense is that God calls people to obey Him, and such obedience is inclusive of every aspect of life including one’s vocation.

by the sword of persecution, but by the patient unravelment of scholarships.”

[Philip Schaff and David Schley Schaff, *History of the Christian Church* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997). S.V., “§ 59. The Christian Ministry, and its Relation to the Christian Community.”]

⁴³The variety of forms use in the New Testament is extensive as the discussion in TDNT reflects: καλέω, κλήσις, κλητός, ἀντικαλέω, ἐγκαλέω, ἔγκλημα, εἰσκαλέω, μετακαλέω, προκαλέω, συγκαλέω, ἐπικαλέω, προσκαλέω, ἐκκλησία ἀνέγκλητος → I, 356 f., → παρακαλέω, παράκλητος → συμπαρακαλέω. [*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley and Gerhard Friedrich, electronic ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964-), 3:487].

The Louw-Nida lexicon defines καλέω with the following meanings: a name: 33.129; b call: 33.131; c summon: 33.307; d call to a task: 33.312; e invite: 33.315 [Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, vol. 2, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains*, electronic ed. of the 2nd edition. (New York: United Bible societies, 1996), 129]. But κλήσις is given three categories of meaning: a call: 33.312; b calling: 33.313; c role: 87.2.

⁴⁴“**33.312 καλέω^d; κλήσις^a, εως f; προσκαλέομαι^b**: to urgently invite someone to accept responsibilities for a particular task, implying a new relationship to the one who does the calling—‘to call, to call to a task.’⁵⁶

“καλέω^d: εἰς ὃ καὶ ἐκάλεσεν ὑμᾶς διὰ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου ἡμῶν ‘(God) called you to this through the good news we preached to you’ 2 Th 2:14.

“κλήσις^a: εἰς τὸ εἰδέναι ὑμᾶς τίς ἐστὶν ἡ ἐλπίς τῆς κλήσεως αὐτοῦ ‘so that you will know what is the hope to which he has called you’ Eph 1:18.

“προσκαλέομαι^b: ὅτι προσκέκληται ἡμᾶς ὁ θεὸς εὐαγγελίσασθαι αὐτοῦ ‘because God has called us to preach the good news to them’ or ‘... to the people there’ Ac 16:10.

“It is rare that one can translate καλέω^d, κλήσις^a, and προσκαλέομαι^b as simply ‘to call’ in the sense of ‘to speak to someone at a distance and tell them to come.’ For example, in 2 Th 2:14 it may be necessary to render the above clause as ‘through the good news we preached, which summoned you to do this.’ Similarly, in Ac 16:10 one may translate ‘because God has urgently invited us to preach the good news to the people there.’” [Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, vol. 1, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament : Based on Semantic Domains*, electronic ed. of the 2nd edition. (New York: United Bible societies, 1996), 423.]

⁴⁵“**33.313 κλήσις^b, εως f**: the state of having been called to a particular task and/or relation—‘calling.’ παρακαλῶ οὖν ὑμᾶς ... ἀξίως περιπατήσαι τῆς κλήσεως ἧς ἐκλήθητε ‘I ask you then ... live worthy of your calling to which (God) has called you’ Eph 4:1. As in the case of καλέω^d, κλήσις^a, and προσκαλέομαι^b (33.312), it may be entirely impossible to use a term in a receptor language which means literally ‘to call.’ Therefore, it may be necessary to translate Eph 4:1 as ‘I ask you then ... live worthy of the responsibility which God has urgently invited you to accept’ or ‘... live worthy of the task which God has given you to do.’” [Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, vol. 1, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament : Based on Semantic Domains*, electronic ed. of the 2nd edition. (New York: United Bible societies, 1996), 423.]

⁴⁶Logos Bible Software, *The Lexham Analytical Lexicon to the Greek New Testament* (Logos Bible Software, 2011), 2011.

⁴⁷**NRSV: But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.**

ὁμοίως δὲ γένος ἐκλεκτόν, βασιλείον ἱεράτευμα, ἔθνος ἅγιον, λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν, ὅπως τὰς ἀρετὰς ἐξαγγείλητε τοῦ ἐκ σκότους ὑμᾶς **καλέσαντος** εἰς τὸ θαυμαστὸν αὐτοῦ φῶς:

The richer background for the New Testament use of the καλέω group is the Septuagint (LXX).⁴⁸ In texts such as Isa. 41:9, 42:6, 46:11, 48:12, 50:2, the richness of God's calling of the Israelites to be His people and to obey His commands comes to the forefront.⁴⁹ In Paul's writings, the term κλήσις picks up on the richness of this Hebrew background with the designation of the 'calling' of God upon individuals to serve Him as saved people.⁵⁰ The closest expression to vocational calling in the New Testament is the Pauline phrase κλητὸς ἀπόστολος, "called apostle," that is found in Rom. 1:1 and 1 Cor. 1:1.

Other related terms to the idea of vocational calling include ἀφορίζω, "I separate," which has a task orientation in Gal. 1:13-15, Rom. 1:1, and Acts 13:2.⁵¹ Also τίθημι, "I place," has usage in the New Testament with the sense of assignment to a task: Acts 13:47; 1 Cor. 12:28; 1 Tim. 2:7; 2 Tim. 1:11-12.⁵²

What emerges from this quick survey is that the early Christian idea of 'calling' was more fluid and not 'institutionalized' as it has become in contemporary Christianity.⁵³ That early Christian leaders sensed a divine

⁴⁸"A richer and more illuminating field in respect of NT usage is to be found in the LXX, and it is here that we are to seek the origin. Most rewarding is the second part of Is." [Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, ed. Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley and Gerhard Friedrich, electronic ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964-), 3:490.]

⁴⁹"At Is. 41:9 ἐκάλεσά σε finds significant exposition in the words which follow at once: καὶ εἶπά σοι· παῖς μου εἶ, ἐξελεξάμην σε. καλεῖν is thus equivalent to ἐκλέγεσθαι. Cf. 42:6: ἐγὼ κύριος ὁ θεὸς ἐκάλεσά σε ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ ... καὶ ἔδωκά σε εἰς διαθήκην γένους Cf. also 46:11 and 48:12: Ἰσραὴλ ὃν ἐγὼ καλῶ; 48:15: ἐγὼ ἐλάλησα, ἐγὼ ἐκάλεσα; especially 50:2: ἐκάλεσα, καὶ οὐκ ἦν ὁ ὑπακούων; 51:2: ἐκάλεσα αὐτὸν καὶ εὐλόγησα αὐτὸν καὶ ἠγάπησα αὐτόν. In this context even naming takes on particular significance: 43:1: ἐκάλεσά σε τὸ ὄνομά σου, ἐμὸς εἶ σύ; 45:3: ἐγὼ κύριος ὁ θεὸς ὁ καλῶν τὸ ὄνομά σου, θεὸς Ἰσραὴλ.⁵⁰" [Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, ed. Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley and Gerhard Friedrich, electronic ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964-), 3:490.]

⁵⁰R. 11:29: κλησις τοῦ θεοῦ, the 'call' which goes out from God, the divine 'calling,' elucidated by the words χαρίσματα (v. 29) and → ἐκλογή (v. 28). 1 C. 1:26: βλέπετε ... τὴν κλησιν ὑμῶν ... ὅτι οὐ πολλοὶ σοφοὶ κτλ., 'consider the state of your calling, that there are not many wise etc.' In v. 27 we have instead of κλησις the stronger → ἐκλέγεσθαι. 7:20: ἕκαστος ἐν τῇ κλήσει ἢ ἐκλήθη, ἐν ταύτῃ μενέτω, 'each should remain in the state of the calling in which he was called,' because in any case he is ἐν κυρίῳ κληθεὶς (v. 22), because you τιμῆς ἠγοράσθητε, were brought back, redeemed (v. 23), because this κλησις is παρὰ θεῶ (v. 24). 1 Eph. 1:18: ἡ ἐλπὶς τῆς κλήσεως αὐτοῦ, "the hope to which V 3, p 492 he (God) has called." 4:1: ἀξίως περιπατῆσαι τῆς κλήσεως ἧς ἐκλήθητε; 4:4 like 1:18. Phil. 3:14: τὸ βραβεῖον τῆς ἄνω κλήσεως (codd apud Orig: ἀνεγκλησίας) τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ) 'the reward of the high (heavenly) calling through God in Christ Jesus.' 2 Th. 1:11: ἵνα ὑμᾶς ἀξιώσῃ τῆς κλήσεως ὁ θεός. 2 Tm. 1:9: (θεοῦ) τοῦ σώσαντος ἡμᾶς καὶ καλέσαντος κλήσει ἁγία, οὐ κατὰ τὰ ἔργα ἡμῶν ἀλλὰ κατὰ ἰδίαν πρόθεσιν καὶ χάριν. Hb. 3:1: ἀδελφοὶ ἄγιοι, κλήσεως ἐπουρανίου μέτοχοι. 2 Pt. 1:10: σπουδάσατε βεβαίαν ὑμῶν τὴν κλησιν καὶ ἐκλογὴν ποιεῖσθαι.

"These 11 passages, which are given in *extenso*, show that κλησις is in the NT a technical Pauline or deutero-Pauline term. Here, too, we may adopt the simple rendering 'call.' But it is better (cf. καλέω 1.c.) to adopt the more emphatic 'calling.' It is always God who calls in Christ. Hence the direct attributes are the corresponding ἄνω, ἁγία, ἐπουράνιος, and the related nouns and verbs are also in correspondence, viz. χαρίσματα, χάρις, ἐκλογή, πρόθεσις, and ἐκλέγεσθαι, σῶζειν. The fullest expression at 2 Tm. 1:9 brings out particularly clearly that our concern here is with a pure act of grace on the part of God.²²" [Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, ed. Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley and Gerhard Friedrich, electronic ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964-), 3:491-92.]

⁵¹ἀφορίζω impf. ἀφώριζον; fut. ἀφορίσω Mt 25:32—Attic (also LXX) ἀφοριῶ 13:49; 1 aor. ἀφώρισα. Pass.: 1 aor. ἀφωρίσθην LXX; impv. 2 pl. ἀφωρίσθητε; pf. ptc. ἀφωρισμένος (s. ὀρίζω, ὄρος; Soph., Pla.+; ins, pap, LXX; TestJob 9:3 al.; ParJer, Philo; Jos., Bell. 2, 488; Just.; Hippol., Ref. 1, 8, 10 'undertake to do someth.'). lit. to mark off or set apart as if by a line or boundary. . . .

2. to select one pers. out of a group for a purpose, set apart, appoint (Nägeli 35) τινά Gal 1:15 (no purpose mentioned; JDoeve, Paulus d. Pharisaer u. Gal 1:13–15, NovT 6, '63, 170–81). W. the purpose given εἰς τι (POxy 37, 9; 4 Macc 3:20) εἰς εὐαγγέλιον to proclaim the gospel Ro 1:1. ἅ. εἰς τὸ ἔργον Ac 13:2.—GDelling, Jüd. Lehre u. Frömmigkeit in den ParJer '67, 44.—DELG s.v. ὄρος, M-M. TW." [William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 158.]

⁵²3. to assign to some task or function, appoint, assign

a. τιθέναι τινὰ εἰς τι place/appoint someone to or for (to function as) someth. (for the construction cp. Ael. Aristid. 53 p. 636 D.: τοὺς οὐκ ὄντας νόμους εἰς νόμους τ.) τέθεικά σε εἰς φῶς ἐθνῶν Ac 13:47 (Is 49:6); pass.: εἰς ὃ ἐτέθην ἐγὼ κῆρυξ 1 Ti 2:7; 2 Ti 1:11. Also τιθ. τινὰ ἵνα appoint someone to ... J 15:16.

b. mid. τίθεσθαι τινὰ εἰς τι appoint someone to or for someth. Dg 6:10. W. acc. easily supplied 1 Ti 1:12."

[William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 1004.]

⁵³The so-called 'commissioning' texts in the New Testament contribute a richness to the background survey as well. These are mainly found in Acts: Acts 1:4-11; 5:17-21a; 8:26-40; 9:1-19a; 10:1-23a; 11:1-18; 12:6-11; 13:1-3; 16:6-10; 18:1-11; 23:11; 27:21-26. But Jesus' call to the disciples, "Follow me!" in Matt. 4:18-22 (//Mk. 1:16-20; Lk. 5:1-11) and in Matt. 9:9-13 (//Mk. 2:13-17, Lk. 5:27-32) illustrate the same principle with members of the original Twelve apostles. The heritage out of the Hebrew tradition of God commissioning individuals to specific jobs provided early Christians with a clear sense that God calls individuals to do specific jobs. Usually these are not life time 'vocational' callings but often do grow out of such a life time calling as an assignment for a specific time and place. Cf. Acts 13:1-3, the commissioning of Paul and Barnabas for mission service as one example. Modern Christianity usually distinguishes clearly between 'calling' and 'commissioning,' which may very well be making more distinction between these terms than was made in the New Testament.

calling to obey God in service is clear, but for them the ‘vocational’ tone was merged into the broader sense that God called sinners to Himself in salvation and this divine summons included the expectation of complete obedience in every aspect of life. It is out of such commitment to obedience that God leads some individuals into certain types of leadership roles in the life of the local church. He then ‘places’ (τίθημι) individuals in specific ministries that not only help the local congregation but additionally serve to advance the Gospel generally. Those ministries can be largely restricted to a house church group as ἐπίσκοποι / πρεσβύτεροι and διάκονοι who teach and minister. But these ministries may also be regional and general as τοὺς μὲν ἀποστόλους, τοὺς δὲ προφήτας, τοὺς δὲ εὐαγγελιστάς, with ἀπόστολοι at the head of the leadership role.⁵⁴

What this survey does highlight is that most of the development of the idea of ‘calling’ owes its origin to the apostle Paul in the New Testament. He talked about it more, he exemplified the idea of calling more prominently in the pages of the New Testament than do the other apostles. But one would misinterpret the New Testament to conclude that only Paul felt a sense of divine calling to ministry. The sense that God speaks to His people and in the process assigns them jobs to do was a universal conviction in the early church.

3.2.0 Paul's Calling

In order to understand Paul's experience we must first look at the primary sources, what Paul himself said. Then we will look at the main secondary source: Luke's depiction in Acts. Additionally, some clarification of terminology is important. Modern terms like calling, to be called etc. tend to have meaning mostly derived from a particular present day church denominational tradition, more than from any other source. Thus an exploration of the biblical terms defined against a first century backdrop is important.

3.2.0.1 His Self Perception

One thing that becomes clear from the outset is that Paul understood his calling to Christian ministry and his conversion to Christ to be but two faces of a single religious experience on the road to Damascus. For most Christians the two callings -- to salvation and to service -- don't happen as a single experience.

The following texts provide the primary statements of the apostle from his own writings regarding his sense of his divine calling to ministry, first coming toward the beginning of his ministry, and then at the end of his earthly life. We will look at each text in order to glean insights about Paul's self awareness of calling to ministry.⁵⁵

Galatians 1:15-17. 15 But when God, who had set me apart before I was born and called me through his grace, was pleased 16 to reveal his Son to me, so that I might proclaim him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with any human being, 17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were already apostles before me, but I went away at once into Arabia, and afterwards I returned to Damascus.

15 Ὅτε δὲ εὐδόκησεν [ὁ θεὸς] ὁ ἀφορίσας με ἐκ κοιλίας μητρός μου καὶ καλέσας διὰ τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ 16 ἀποκαλύψαι τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐμοί, ἵνα εὐαγγελίζωμαι αὐτὸν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, εὐθέως οὐ προσανεθέμην σαρκὶ καὶ αἵματι 17 οὐδὲ ἀνήλθον εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα πρὸς τοὺς πρὸ ἐμοῦ ἀποστόλους, ἀλλὰ ἀπήλθον εἰς Ἀραβίαν καὶ πάλιν ὑπέστρεψα εἰς Δαμασκόν.

Notes. This reflection on his conversion experience comes early in his writing ministry and gives insight into Paul's sense of calling to ministry. The literary setting for these verses establishes the purpose behind what Paul says. This objective is to present the first ‘proof’ of his calling to be an apostle, which Paul saw as foundational to the legitimacy of the gospel message he proclaimed. This first of five evidences of his divinely appointed apostleship covers 1:13-17.

The language of calling is found here in verse 15, καλέσας, and stresses the divine call to salvation in Christ. The objective of his conversion experience -- here described as “to reveal his Son in me” (ἀποκαλύψαι τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐμοί) -- is stated as “so that I might proclaim him among the Gentiles” (ἵνα εὐαγγελίζωμαι αὐτὸν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν). Paul then links conversion and ministry calling closely together in his own religious experience.

The apostle came to understand that God had been working in regard to his life even before his birth (ὁ ἀφορίσας με ἐκ κοιλίας μητρός μου). The background of this lays in the calling of the prophet Jeremiah (cf. 1:5): “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations” (Πρὸ τοῦ με πλάσαι σε ἐν κοιλίᾳ ἐπίσταμαί σε καὶ πρὸ τοῦ σε ἐξελεθεῖν ἐκ μήτρας ἡγίακά σε, προφήτην εἰς

⁵⁴The primary role of ἀποστόλους over the others in the list is made clear by the μὲν...δὲ contrast in the Eph. 4 listing. The same point is made in First Corinthians 12:28 with the listing πρῶτον ἀποστόλους (first apostles), δεῦτερον προφήτας, τρίτον διδασκάλους, ἔπειτα δυνάμεις, ἔπειτα χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων, ἀντιλήμψεις, κυβερνήσεις, γένη γλωσσῶν.

⁵⁵A few related texts will receive secondary attention, largely because they represent Paul's teaching to others rather than a personal reflection on his own ministry. Also note the deliberate use of “calling to ministry” rather than “calling to the ministry.” The presence of the definite article in English significantly shifts the meaning of the phrase -- away from the biblical concept of ministry.

ἔθνη τέθεικά σε). Also Isaiah 49:1-6 plays an important background role.⁵⁶ Paul's language of consecration and dedication to ministry here echoes that of the Old Testament prophets who served as a model and guide in his interpreting his own religious experience. Thus for him an authentic coming to God, through Christian conversion, naturally linked itself to a divine calling to ministry in the pattern of Jeremiah and Isaiah.

He understood and explained this calling to the Galatians simply εὐαγγελίζωμαι αὐτὸν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, to 'gospelize' Him among the Gentiles. Against the language of Jeremiah, προφήτην εἰς ἔθνη τέθεικά σε (I have made you a prophet to the nations), and Isaiah, εἰς φῶς ἔθνῶν (for a light to the nations), one can readily understand Paul's sense of calling to preach Christ among the nations.⁵⁷ Clearly the connection of preaching Christ with the salva-

⁵⁶**Isa. 49:1-6:** 1 Listen to me, O coastlands, pay attention, you peoples from far away! The LORD called me *before I was born, while I was in my mother's womb he named me*. 2 He made my mouth like a sharp sword, in the shadow of his hand he hid me; he made me a polished arrow, in his quiver he hid me away. 3 *And he said to me, "You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified."* 4 But I said, "I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity; yet surely my cause is with the LORD, and my reward with my God."

5 And now the LORD says, who formed me in the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him, and that Israel might be gathered to him, for I am honored in the sight of the LORD, and my God has become my strength — 6 he says, "It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the survivors of Israel; I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth."

Ἰακοῦσατέ μου, νῆσοι, καὶ προσέχετε, ἔθνη· διὰ χρόνου πολλοῦ στήσεται, λέγει κύριος. *ἐκ κοιλίας μητρὸς μου ἐκάλεσεν τὸ ὄνομα μου* † 2 καὶ ἔθηκεν τὸ στόμα μου ὡσεὶ μάχαιραν ὀξεῖαν καὶ ὑπὸ τὴν σκέπη τῆς χειρὸς αὐτοῦ ἔκρυψέν με, ἔθηκεν με ὡς βέλος ἐκλεκτὸν καὶ ἐν τῇ φαρέτρᾳ αὐτοῦ ἐσκέπασέν με. † 3 *καὶ εἶπέν μοι Δοῦλός μου εἶ σύ, Ἰσραηλ, καὶ ἐν σοὶ δοξασθήσομαι.* † 4 καὶ ἐγὼ εἶπα Κενῶς ἐκοπίασα καὶ εἰς μάταιον καὶ εἰς οὐδὲν ἔδωκα τὴν ἰσχύ μου· διὰ τοῦτο ἡ κρίσις μου παρὰ κυρίῳ, καὶ ὁ πόνος μου ἐναντίον τοῦ θεοῦ μου. † 5 *καὶ νῦν οὕτως λέγει κύριος ὁ πλάσας με ἐκ κοιλίας δοῦλον ἐναντῶ τοῦ συναγαγεῖν τὸν Ἰακωβ καὶ Ἰσραηλ πρὸς αὐτόν* — συναχθήσομαι καὶ δοξασθήσομαι ἐναντίον κυρίου, καὶ ὁ θεός μου ἔσται μου ἰσχύς — † 6 καὶ εἶπέν μοι Μέγα σοὶ ἐστὶν τοῦ κληθῆναι σε παῖδά μου τοῦ στησαι τὰς φυλάς Ἰακωβ καὶ τὴν διασπορὰν τοῦ Ἰσραηλ ἐπιστρέψαι· *ἰδοὺ τέθεικά σε εἰς διαθήκην γένους εἰς φῶς ἔθνῶν τοῦ εἶναι σε εἰς σωτηρίαν ἕως ἐσχάτου τῆς γῆς.* †

⁵⁷“εὐαγγελίζω (s. next entry) fut. εὐαγγελιῶ 2 Km 18:19; 1 aor. εὐηγγέλισα. The act., found in our lit. only **Rv 10:7; 14:6; Ac 16:17** v.l., belongs to later Gk. (Polyaenus 5, 7; Cass. Dio 61, 13, 4; PGiss 27, 6 [II A.D.]; PAmh 2, 16; 1 Km 31:9; 2 Km 18:19f; cp. Phryn. 268 Lob.), and does not differ in mng. (s. B-D-F §309, 1) from the much more common mid. in earlier Gk. εὐαγγελίζομαι (Aristoph., Demosth. et al.; Philo, Joseph., predom. in LXX; likewise PsSol 11:1; ParJer; Just.; pass. JosAs 19:2) impf. εὐηγγελιζόμεν; fut. εὐαγγελιοῦμαι 2 Km 18:20; Is 60:6; 1 aor. εὐηγγελισάμην (on the augment s. B-D-F §69, 4; Rob. 367). The foll. tenses are used in a passive sense: pres.; 1 aor. εὐηγγελίσθη; pf. εὐηγγέλισμα.

1. gener. bring good news, announce good news τί τι (Jos., Bell. 3, 503, Ant. 7, 250) **Lk 1:19** (ταῦτα εὐ. of the announcement by an angel of the impending birth of a much-desired child Jos., Ant. 5, 282; cp. 277 εὐ. αὐτῆ παιδὸς γονῆν; Just., D. 56, 5 εὐ. τῇ Σάρρα ὅτι τέκνον ἔξει); **2:10; 1 Th 3:6**. τί ἐπί τινα **Rv 14:6**. τινά to someone (pass. w. pers. subj. JosAs 19:2 ἐγὼ εὐηγγελίσθη περι σοῦ ἐξ οὐρανοῦ; for the usage s. 2 below) **10:7**.

2. mostly specif. proclaim the divine message of salvation, proclaim the gospel (cp. Is 60:6; Ps 67:12; PsSol 11, 1; ParJer 5:19 εὐαγγελίσασθαι αὐτοῖς καὶ καταχρῆσαι αὐτοῦς τὸν λόγον al. S. also PGM 5, 142 εὐάγγελος τ. θεοῦ=a glad messenger of God) proclaim, preach.

a. mid.

a. w. mention of the thing proclaimed, as well as of the pers. who receives the message τί τι **Lk 4:43; Ac 8:35** (τὸν Ἰησοῦν); **Gal 1:8b; Eph 2:17; 3:8**; B 8:3; 14:9. τὸ εὐαγγέλιον εὐ. τι **1 Cor 15:1; 2 Cor 11:7**. τί τινα *someh. to someone* (on the constr. s. below) **Ac 13:32**. εὐ. τὸν υἱὸν τ. θεοῦ ἐν τ. ἔθνεσιν *proclaim the Son of God among the nations* **Gal 1:16**

β. w. mention of the object of the proclamation τί (Lucian, Tyrannic. 9 τὴν ἐλευθερίαν; Synes., Prov. 1. 7 p. 96a [the heavenly σημεῖα] τὴν βασιλείαν Αἰγυπτίους εὐηγγελίζετο [mid.]=brought the Egyptians news of the fortunate reign; Ps 39:10; 95:2) **Lk 8:1; Ac 8:4; 10:36; 15:35; 17:18; Ro 10:15** (Is 52:7); **Gal 1:23**. Also w. pers. obj. in acc. to denote the object of the proclamation τινά *someone* τ. Χριστὸν Ἰ. **Ac 5:42**; τ. κύριον Ἰ. **11:20**; cp. **17:18**. εὐ. περι τῆς βασιλείας **8:12** (Jos., Ant. 15, 209 περι τούτων εὐηγγελίζετο). W. acc. and inf. foll. (Plut., Mar. 22 [22, 4]; Jos., Ant. 6, 56) **Ac 14:15**; 1 Cl 42:3.

γ. w. mention of the one who receives the message τινί (Aristoph., Eq. 643 al.; Jer 20:15; ParJer 3:15; Philo, De Jos. 250; Jos., Ant. 5, 24) **Lk 4:18** (Is 61:1); **Ro 1:15; 1 Cor 15:2; Gal 1:8a; 4:13; 1 Pt 1:12** P⁷². εἰς τ. ὑπερέκεινα ὑμῶν εὐ. *proclaim the gospel in lands beyond you* **2 Cor 10:16** (cp. **1 Pt 1:25**). τινά (Alciphron 2, 9, 2 v.l.; Heliod. 2, 10, 1 ed. IBekker [acc. to mss.]; Jos., Ant. 18, 228; Eus., HE 3, 4) **Lk 1:28** v.l.; **3:18; Ac 8:25, 40; 14:21; 16:10; Gal 1:9; 1 Pt 1:12**; Pol 6:3; PtK 3 p. 15, 19.

δ. abs. proclaim (ParJer 9:20 ἀποστόλους ἵνα εὐαγγελίζονται ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν) **Lk 9:6; 20:1; Ac 14:7; Ro 15:20; 1 Cor 1:17; 9:16, 18**.

b. pass.

a. w. a thing as subj. *be proclaimed* **Lk 16:16; Gal 1:11** (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον); **1 Pt 1:25**. Impers. νεκροῖς εὐηγγελίσθη **1 Pt 4:6** (cp. Just., D. 72, 4).

β. w. a pers. as subj. of one receiving a message of deliverance *have good news announced to one* (2 Km 18:31; Jo 3:5) of the gospel **Mt 11:5; Lk 7:22; Hb 4:2, 6**. Of apostles receiving the gospel in behalf of others ἀπὸ τινος fr. someone 1 Cl 42:1.—B. 1478. DELG s.v. ἄγγελος. M-M. EDNT. TW. Spicq.

[William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian* Page 99

tion mentioned in Isa. 49:6 is easy to grasp: τοῦ εἶναί σε εἰς σωτηρίαν ἕως ἐσχάτου τῆς γῆς.

Rom. 1:1. Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, Παῦλος δοῦλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ, κλητὸς ἀπόστολος, ἀφωρισμένος εἰς εὐαγγέλιον θεοῦ

1 Cor. 1:1. Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and our brother Sosthenes, Παῦλος κλητὸς ἀπόστολος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ διὰ θελήματος θεοῦ καὶ Σωσθένης ὁ ἀδελφός

Notes. For Paul to fulfill this calling to preach Christ to the nations, a special sense of authorization was needed in his situation. In Romans 1:1, he links together a calling to be an apostle and being set apart for the Gospel for his particular case.⁵⁸ In Rom. 1:1 and 1 Cor. 1:1, he links the idea of ‘called’ (κλητὸς) and apostle (ἀπόστολος) together. The divine action of consecration for this task (ἀφωρισμένος εἰς εὐαγγέλιον θεοῦ) is explained with different language in 1 Corinthians: Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ διὰ θελήματος θεοῦ (of Christ Jesus through God’s will). In Galatians 1:1, he stated the same idea even more forcefully: ἀπόστολος, οὐκ ἀπ’ ἀνθρώπων οὐδὲ δι’ ἀνθρώπου ἀλλὰ διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ θεοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ ἐγείραντος αὐτὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν (an apostle, not from men neither through a man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the death). The title apostle is used by Paul in the letter *Praescriptio* also in 2 Cor. 1:1; Col. 1:1; Eph. 1:1; 1 Tim. 1:1; 2 Tim. 1:1, and Titus 1:1.⁵⁹ In all of the references, except for Romans, the phrase is ἀπόστολος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, *apostle of Jesus Christ*, or a similar expression.⁶⁰ The reason for this construction at the beginning of Paul’s letters is that in ancient letter writing patterns, the sender of the letter frequently gave his credentials after listing his name to the readers of the letter.⁶¹ The titles, that surfaced in the *Superscriptio* to identify the sender(s) of the letter, signaled one’s authorization from a superior power to make demands on his readers.⁶²

This authorization from God to preach the Gospel was challenged on more than one occasion. Early on the so-called Judaizing controversy that erupted at Antioch (cf. Acts 15:1-35) prompted him to defend his claim to be an apostle on several occasions. First Corinthians 9:1-2 provides helpful insight in a manner that summarizes the longer defenses found in Second Corinthians 10-13 and Galatians 1-2:

9.1 Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord? 2 If I am not an apostle to others, at least I am to you; for you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.

9.1 Οὐκ εἰμι ἐλεύθερος; οὐκ εἰμι ἀπόστολος; οὐχὶ Ἰησοῦν τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν ἑώρακα; οὐ τὸ ἔργον μου ὑμεῖς ἐστε ἐν κυρίῳ; 2 εἰ ἄλλοις οὐκ εἰμι ἀπόστολος, ἀλλὰ γε ὑμῖν εἰμι, ἡ γὰρ σφραγὶς μου τῆς ἀποστολῆς ὑμεῖς ἐστε ἐν κυρίῳ.

Paul lays claim as an apostle, which for him meant divine authorization to preach the Gospel of grace to both Jews and non-Jews with salvation requirements being the same for all humanity (cf. Gal. 3:28): There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus (οὐκ ἔστι Ἰουδαῖος οὐδὲ Ἕλλην, οὐκ ἔστι δοῦλος οὐδὲ ἐλεύθερος, οὐκ ἔστι ἄρσεν καὶ θήλυ· πάντες γὰρ ὑμεῖς εἷς ἐστε ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ). Such a message was highly offensive to many Jews still with strong ties to their Jew-

Literature, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 402.]

⁵⁸A somewhat similar emphasis is found in **1 Cor. 1:1**, Paul, *called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God*, and our brother Sosthenes (Παῦλος κλητὸς ἀπόστολος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ διὰ θελήματος θεοῦ καὶ Σωσθένης ὁ ἀδελφός).

⁵⁹**2 Cor. 1:1**, Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, Παῦλος ἀπόστολος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ διὰ θελήματος θεοῦ

Col. 1:1, Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, Παῦλος ἀπόστολος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ διὰ θελήματος θεοῦ

Eph. 1:1, Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, Παῦλος ἀπόστολος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ διὰ θελήματος θεοῦ

1 Tim. 1:1, Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope, Παῦλος ἀπόστολος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ κατ’ ἐπιταγὴν θεοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν καὶ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τῆς ἐλπίδος ἡμῶν

2 Tim. 1:1, Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God according to the promise of the life which is in Christ Jesus, Παῦλος ἀπόστολος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ διὰ θελήματος θεοῦ κατ’ ἐπαγγελίαν ζωῆς τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ

Titus 1:1, Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, Παῦλος δοῦλος θεοῦ, ἀπόστολος δὲ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ κατὰ πίστιν ἐκλεκτῶν θεοῦ καὶ ἐπίγνωσιν ἀληθείας τῆς κατ’ εὐσέβειαν

For a listing of these in Greek, see my “The *Praescriptia* of NT Letters,” cranfordville.com.

⁶⁰Bible translators struggle with how to express ἀπόστολος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. The genitive case Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ carries a wide range of possible meanings: apostle of Jesus Christ (belonging to); apostle about Jesus Christ (object of the apostle’s preaching); apostle from Jesus Christ (ablative case function specifies source or origin). Bible translation languages usually force the translator to choose one of the possible meanings to the elimination of the others. But the idea in the original Greek easily carries all these meanings bundled into a single expression.

⁶¹For a discussion of the role of the letter *Praescriptio* in ancient letters, see “*Praescriptio*,” cranfordville.com.

⁶²I intentionally use the English word ‘authorization’ rather than ‘authority’ because clearly Paul understood that divine authority is never ever transferred to a human. As the Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines it, ‘authorization’ means permission to use the authority of another without possessing that authority. The consistent language of Paul in his letter *praescriptia* makes it clear that for Paul the authority always lay in God’s hands, and that Paul as an apostle was given authorization to preach the gospel that came to him through divine revelation. Thus he functioned under God’s authorization, not under any authority as an apostle.

ish traditions even after becoming Christians (cf. Acts 15:1): Then certain individuals came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, “Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved” (Καί τινες κατελθόντες ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰουδαίας ἐδίδασκον τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς ὅτι Ἐὰν μὴ περιτμηθῆτε τῷ ἔθει τῷ Μωϋσέως, οὐ δύνασθε σωθῆναι). Thus the legitimacy of Paul’s preaching of the Gospel was called into question, so that his defense of this message was linked to his claim of being an apostle with the same authorization from God that the Twelve had received from Jesus. Fortunately, the Twelve acknowledged this authorization from God to Paul (cf. Acts 15:22-29; Gal. 2:1-10).

Thus what Paul came to understand from his first encounter with the risen Christ was that God was calling him to proclaim the Gospel message to the nations within the basic framework of the Old Testament prophets of Jeremiah and Isaiah. This calling was to function as an apostle who belonged to Christ and was authorized by God Himself to serve along side the original Twelve Apostles that Jesus had earlier authorized (cf. Luke 6:12-16).⁶³

Toward the end of Paul’s earthly life, the need to write two separate letters to his colleague Timothy provided him the opportunity to reflect on this calling to ministry. For that reason they become important sources for understanding a side of the apostle that had matured over several decades of ministry service.⁶⁴

1 Tim. 1:12-17. 12 I am grateful to Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because he judged me faithful and appointed me to his service, 13 even though I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and a man of violence. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, 14 and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. 15 The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners — of whom I am the foremost. 16 But for that very reason I received mercy, so that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display the utmost patience, making me an example to those who would come to believe in him for eternal life. 17 To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

12 Χάριν ἔχω τῷ ἐνδυναμώσαντί με Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν, ὅτι πιστόν με ἠγήσατο θέμενος εἰς διακονίαν 13 τὸ πρότερον ὄντα βλάσφημον καὶ διώκτην καὶ ὑβριστήν, ἀλλὰ ἠλεήθην, ὅτι ἀγνοῶν ἐποίησα ἐν ἀπιστίᾳ· 14 ὑπερεπλεόνασεν δὲ ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν μετὰ πίστεως καὶ ἀγάπης τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ. 15 πιστὸς ὁ λόγος καὶ πάσης ἀποδοχῆς ἄξιος, ὅτι Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς ἦλθεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἁμαρτωλοὺς σῶσαι, ὧν πρῶτός εἰμι ἐγώ. 16 ἀλλὰ διὰ τοῦτο ἠλεήθην, ἵνα ἐν ἐμοὶ πρῶτῳ ἐνδείξηται Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς τὴν ἅπασαν μακροθυμίαν πρὸς ὑποτύπων τῶν μελλόντων πιστεῦειν ἐπ’ αὐτῷ εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον. 17 Τῷ δὲ βασιλεῖ τῶν αἰώνων, ἀφθάρτῳ ἀοράτῳ μόνῳ θεῷ, τιμὴ καὶ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων, ἀμήν.

2 Tim. 1:8-14. 8 Do not be ashamed, then, of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel, relying on the power of God, 9 who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace. This grace was given to us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, 10 but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. 11 For this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher, 12 and for this reason I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know the one in whom I have put my trust, and I am sure that he is able to guard until that day what I have entrusted to him. 13 Hold to the standard of sound teaching that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. 14 Guard the good treasure entrusted to you, with the help of the Holy Spirit living in us.

8 μὴ οὖν ἐπαισχυνθῆς τὸ μαρτύριον τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν μηδὲ ἐμὲ τὸν δέσμιον αὐτοῦ, ἀλλὰ συγκακοπάθησον τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ κατὰ δύναμιν θεοῦ, 9 τοῦ σώσαντος ἡμᾶς καὶ καλέσαντος κλήσει ἁγία, οὐ κατὰ τὰ ἔργα ἡμῶν ἀλλὰ κατὰ ἴδιαν πρόθεσιν καὶ χάριν, τὴν δοθεῖσαν ἡμῖν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ πρὸ χρόνων αἰώνιων, 10 φανερωθεῖσαν δὲ νῦν διὰ τῆς ἐπιφανείας τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ, καταργήσαντος μὲν τὸν θάνατον φωτίσαντος δὲ ζωὴν καὶ ἀφθαρσίαν διὰ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου 11 εἰς ὃ ἐτέθην ἐγὼ κήρυξ καὶ ἀπόστολος καὶ διδάσκαλος, 12 δι’ ἣν αἰτίαν καὶ ταῦτα πάσχω· ἀλλ’ οὐκ ἐπαισχύνομαι, οἶδα γὰρ ὃ πεπίστευκα καὶ πέπεισμαι ὅτι δυνατὸς ἐστὶν τὴν παραθήκην μου φυλάξαι εἰς ἐκείνην τὴν ἡμέραν. 13 Ὑποτύπων ἔχε ὑγιαίνοντων λόγων ὧν παρ’ ἐμοῦ ἤκουσας ἐν πίστει καὶ ἀγάπῃ τῇ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ· 14 τὴν καλὴν παραθήκην φυλάξον διὰ πνεύματος ἁγίου τοῦ ἐνοικοῦντος ἐν ἡμῖν.

⁶³“**53.74 ἀπόστολος**”, **ov m**: one who fulfills the role of being a special messenger (generally restricted to the immediate followers of Jesus Christ, but also extended, as in the case of Paul, to other early Christians active in proclaiming the message of the gospel)— ‘apostle, special messenger.’ Παῦλος δοῦλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ, κλητὸς ἀπόστολος ‘Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called (by God) to be an apostle’ Ro 1:1. The relationship of an apostle to Jesus Christ is sometimes expressed as ‘being Christ’s messenger’ or ‘being a special messenger of Jesus Christ.’ In such a phrase, the term ‘special’ refers to having been commissioned by Jesus Christ for a particular task or role.” [Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, vol. 1, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains*, electronic ed. of the 2nd edition. (New York: United Bible societies, 1996), 541.]

⁶⁴To be clear, this assumption is based on the acceptance of the traditional view of Pauline authorship of First and Second Timothy, which not all of modern scholarship accepts. In evaluating the arguments both pro and con about Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistles over the years, I find the arguments favoring a close connection of these three documents with Paul to be more persuasive than those against. Slowly, but steadily more scholars are inching toward a similar conclusion in our day.

Notes. The two passages written to Timothy at the end of Paul's ministry in the 60s of the first century reflect Paul's perspective that had developed over a thirty year ministry of preaching the Gospel as an apostle of Christ. In 2 Tim. 1:9, Paul uses the language of calling (καλέσαντος κλήσει ἀγία), but in the sense of a divine invitation to salvation.⁶⁵ In 1:11, Paul reflects on a divine appointment to ministry (εἰς ὃ ἐτέθην ἐγὼ κήρυξ καὶ ἀπόστολος καὶ διδάσκαλος) to serve the Gospel as a herald, apostle, and teacher.⁶⁶ Interestingly, the two ministry functions of preaching (κήρυξ) and teaching (διδάσκαλος) bracket the role of apostle (ἀπόστολος). These two actions certainly stood at the heart of his divine calling as an apostle. In 1 Tim. 2:7, he uses the same expression with slightly different wording: εἰς ὃ ἐτέθην ἐγὼ κήρυξ καὶ ἀπόστολος, ἀλήθειαν λέγω οὐ ψεύδομαι, διδάσκαλος ἐθνῶν ἐν πίστει καὶ ἀληθείᾳ, **For this I was appointed a herald and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.**

Also in 1 Tim. 1:12, a similar concept of 'appointment' to ministry is expressed: πιστόν με ἠγήσατο θέμενος εἰς διακονίαν, **He considered me faithful having appointed me to ministry.**⁶⁷ Here the apostle has expressed gratitude to Christ (Χάριν ἔχω) based (ὅτι) upon the divine calling to ministry set forth in the ministry appointment expression.⁶⁸

⁶⁵“καλέσαντος, also governed by the article τοῦ, further describes God. καλέω is used in the NT and especially in Paul of a ‘call’ that is effectual (K. L. Schmidt, TDNT III, 489), i.e., of the choice of a person for salvation (BAGD s.v. 2). Most often in Paul, as here, it is God who calls (e.g., Rom. 8:30; 9:12 [11 in English versions], 24; 1 Cor. 1:9; Gal. 1:6; 5:8; 1 Thes. 5:24).

“It is difficult to ascertain the precise force of dative κλήσει ἀγία, ‘a holy calling.’ Some suggest that it is dative of means or of instrument, ‘with a holy calling’ (RSV, NASB; Schmidt, TDNT III, 492; BAGD s.v. 1; Bouma) because the calling comes from a holy God. Others take it as dative of interest: called ‘to a holy life’ (NIV; NEB: ‘called to be saints’; Barrett, Kelly, Lenski, Lock, Robertson, N. J. D. White). κλήσις (Pl. 9x: Rom. 11:29; 1 Cor. 1:26; 7:20; Eph. 1:18; 4:1, 4; Phil. 3:14; 2 Thes. 1:11) is used in both senses in the NT (see the occurrences and BAGD s.v. 1, 2). The syntactical construction of τῆς κλήσεως ἧς ἐκλήθητε in Eph. 4:1 points to the first understanding, ‘with a holy calling.’ At the same time, the functional significance of the phrase in Eph. 4:1 is to call Christians ‘to walk in a manner worthy’ of that calling. It may well be that the phrase here functions in that kind of double capacity.” [George W. Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, Mich.; Carlisle, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press, 1992), 374.]

⁶⁶“εἰς ὃ refers to that ‘for which’ Paul was appointed, with the antecedent of ὃ being εὐαγγελίου. ἐτέθην (aorist passive of τίθημι), which generally means ‘put’ or ‘place,’ carries here the meaning ‘appoint’ and refers to a definite past action (cf. C. Maurer, TDNT VIII, 157). The passive voice assumes that the reader will intuitively grasp that ‘by God’ or ‘by Christ’ is to be understood (cf. Gal. 1:1). ἐγὼ is used for emphasis (cf. the other occurrences of ἐγὼ in the PE: 1 Tim. 1:11, 15; 2:7; Tit. 1:3, 5; 2 Tim. 1:11; 4:6, in which all but the second and the last refer to Paul’s appointment to ministry, and even those are in contexts that deal with that topic).

“The three terms κήρυξ, ἀπόστολος, and διδάσκαλος (nominative case with the passive verb) designate different aspects of Paul’s one ministry. κήρυξ (see 1 Tim. 2:7; 2 Pet. 2:5; cf. Paul’s use of κήρυγμα [6x] and κηρύσσω [19x]), a term found in the culture of the day in both secular and religious senses, is the ‘herald’ or ‘proclaimer’ (see BAGD, MM). ἀπόστολος (see 1 Tim. 1:1), ‘apostle,’ is used here in the special sense of one directly chosen by Christ and sent with Christ’s authority to speak for him (cf. Acts 11:14, 15; 26:16–18; 1 Cor. 15:8–10; Galatians 1). διδάσκαλος (Pl. 7x) is applied by Paul to himself only here and in 1 Tim. 2:7 (but see Acts 11:26). In other uses of the word he either includes διδάσκαλοι in a list in which they are distinguished from ἀπόστολοι (1 Cor. 12:28, 29; Eph. 4:11) or uses it in a derogatory sense (Rom. 2:20; 2 Tim. 4:3). Most of the textual witnesses add ἐθνῶν after διδάσκαλος (all except κ^* A I 33 1175 syr^{pal}). But the UBSGNT editors ‘regarded the word as a gloss introduced by copyists from the parallel in 1 Tm 2:7, there being no good reason to account for its omission if it were original here’ (TCGNT).

“What distinguishes these three aspects of Paul’s ministry? κήρυξ and διδάσκαλος emphasize his roles as evangelist on the one hand and teacher on the other. He may have added these two terms, both of which he uses of himself only here and in 1 Tim. 2:7, to his usual self-designation of ἀπόστολος to emphasize these aspects of his ministry in his letters to Timothy so that he could be a model for Timothy (and others), who is to serve as an evangelist (κηρύσσειν, 2 Tim. 4:2) and teacher (διδάσκειν, 1 Tim. 4:11; 6:2; 2 Tim. 2:2) but is not an ἀπόστολος.” [George W. Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, Mich.; Carlisle, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press, 1992), 377-78.]

⁶⁷“That for which Paul is thankful is stated in the ὅτι clause, which consists of two elements, namely, that Paul was considered faithful and put into Christ’s service. The connection between the two seems to be that first Paul was considered faithful (the finite verb ἠγήσατο) and then (without a connecting καί) placed in Christ’s service (a simple participle θέμενος following the verb and regarded by Robertson, Grammar, 1103, as ‘certainly circumstantial’). Hence the emphasis of his thankfulness is just as much on his being counted faithful as it is on being placed in service, but in essence is on both together as a whole.” [George W. Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, Mich.; Carlisle, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press, 1992), 93-94.]

The major problem with Knight’s assessment here is that he has reversed the sequence of the actions. The Aorist participle θέμενος happened first and was followed by the Aorist verb action ἠγήσατο. The appointment coming after being considered faithful is logical, but not how Paul expressed the idea. The appointment to ministry came first and then is closely linked to the divine assessment of Paul having the potential for faithful ministry. It is the latter point that is primary in Paul’s emphasis here, in large part because his desire to encourage Timothy to faithfulness in ministry through the letter.

⁶⁸“That the Lord regarded him as faithful is evidenced in the Acts account by Paul’s entering into the service in which the Lord placed him, and is expressed here by the words ‘putting me into service’ (θέμενος εἰς διακονίαν). θέμενος (the aorist middle participle of τίθημι) expresses the past action of the Lord in ‘appointing’ Paul, with εἰς διακονίαν indicating that into which or for which he was

Christ looked at the apostle not in terms of his persecution of Christianity (τὸ πρότερον ὄντα βλάσφημον καὶ διώκτην καὶ ὑβριστήν) but in terms of His own mercy (ἀλλὰ ἠλεήθην). The Lord could see the potential (πιστόν με ἠγήσατο) resident in this passionate young Pharisee for spreading the Gospel to a non-Jewish world. Thus a calling to salvation (τῷ ἐνδυναμώσαντί με) included a ministry appointment (θέμενος εἰς διακονίαν), both of which came as an expression of divine mercy. Paul also adds another causal statement: ὅτι ἀγνοῶν ἐποίησα ἐν ἀπιστίᾳ, **because being ignorant I acted in disbelief**. This saving/calling mercy of God in Christ came in part because Paul was working in blind disobedience as a Pharisee. He persecuted the church as a young Pharisee in the sincere belief that it was corrupting the truths of God's revelation in the Torah, and not as a Pharisee who clearly understood who Jesus was and His teaching. His conversion on the Damascus road began the process of the enlightenment of Paul so that now several decades later he clearly reflected on what God had had in mind in saving and calling him.

In the second letter, Paul also underscores the experience of suffering as a Christian and in service to Christ: ἀλλὰ συγκακοπάθησον τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ κατὰ δύναμιν θεοῦ, **but join me in suffering evil for the Gospel looking to the power of God**. Such suffering had been indicated to Paul by the risen Christ on the Damascus road (cf. Acts 9, 22, and 26). His life of service, preaching, and teaching as an apostle had seen numerous instances of such suffering; compare 2 Cor. 11:23-33 and 12:6-10 for a listing of those things that had happened up to the last months of the third missionary journey in the mid 50s before his return to Jerusalem and then being arrested by the authorities there. Now at the end of his earthly life in the mid 60s he reflects on the entire experience of suffering in ministry. He saw unjust suffering as built into his calling as an apostle (δὲ ἦν αἰτίαν καὶ ταῦτα πάσχω, v. 12), but did not feel embarrassment or shame because of it (ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐπαισχύνομαι). Out of this comes the encouragement to Timothy to not feel embarrassment over having to suffer in ministry (v. 8): Μὴ οὖν ἐπαισχυνθῆς τὸ μαρτύριον τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν μηδὲ ἐμὲ τὸν δέσμιον αὐτοῦ.

Summary of Paul's Insights. What can we conclude about the apostle Paul's understanding of his own calling from God to serve Christ as an apostle? Several insights surface in these passages that depict Paul's own self-awareness and then have application to us today.

1) Conversion and ministry calling came as a single package to Paul. For the apostle Paul, when God moved in his life to transform him from Phariseeism to Christianity, the divine action contained a commissioning to preach and teach as an apostle. The authorization from God brought with it a process of revelation of the Gospel to Paul that gave him the content of what he was to preach and teach. Over time that understanding deepened and matured in Paul's mind, but the heart of the Gospel was always at the center of his apostolic ministry. The radical nature of this message that asserted that Jews and Gentiles came to God on the identical foundation of faith commitment to Christ would bring challenges to his claim to be an apostle, because it was not universally accepted in the early church. But for Paul the message to be preached came out of God's commissioning as an apostle and this was inseparably linked to his life changing conversion on the Damascus road outside the city.

Although a divine commissioning to ministry and a divine calling to salvation do not usually happen at the same time for most Christians, Paul's experience does remind us that these encounters with God are inseparably linked together. We are authorized to preach and teach out of having had a life changing experience with God through the risen Christ. Without that initial conversion, there is no divine authorization to preach and teach the Gospel, for we have no true understanding of the Gospel outside of a saving relationship with Christ.

2) The language of ministry calling stresses divine appointment, not volunteerism. One of the clearest implications of the Pauline perspective about ministry calling is that one doesn't volunteer for it! The initiative for ministry commitment must come from God, never from the individual or other humans.

Thus when the vast needs for ministers, missionaries etc. are recognized, church leaders must never turn to human marketing strategies to enlist volunteers to commit to become career pastors, missionaries etc. As a seminary student in the 1960s, I well remember setting in chapel services where this humanized approach was followed with disastrous consequences for a lot of young people easily moved by highly emotionally charged appeals. Interestingly, in this huge seminary of several thousand students, large numbers of them would deliberately skip the "missions day" chapels because they felt insulted and were offended by the tactics of one or two of

appointed. με, having already been used with ἠγήσατο, is understood and is not repeated. διακονία is a general word for "service," which Paul uses not only in its general sense but also to designate the ministry of a special office, as here (cf. 2 Tim. 4:5; Rom. 11:13; 1 Cor. 16:15; 2 Cor. 3:8, 9; 4:1; 5:18; 6:3; Col. 4:17; cf. Acts 1:17, 25; 6:4; 20:24; 21:19), as well as for the ministry of all the people of God (cf. Eph. 4:12; 1 Cor. 12:5). Paul may have chosen the general term here to emphasize the marvel that he had been placed in any service at all and so that he might be a more direct example for others (v. 16) and for Timothy (vv. 18-20)." [George W. Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, Mich.; Carlisle, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press, 1992), 94-95.]

the professors who usually led these chapel services. A phoney mask was cleverly placed over what was done by labeling it “calling out the called.” But even then as a young seminary student I sensed strongly that God had little or nothing to do with these chapel services.

What I do remember with clarity are the wise insights of several other godly professors who spoke often about Jeremiah’s “fire in his bones” conviction⁶⁹ to proclaim God’s message solely in obedience to the Lord’s leading and that this is the only way to enter vocational ministry. Thankfully I listened to them after getting suckered by this other tactic early on, and have found a clear sense of God’s leading in ministry for almost half a century.⁷⁰

The divine calling nature of Paul’s sense of ministry is reflected in the key terms he employs. Central is his use of the Greek verb τίθημι in 1 Tim. 1:12, 2:7, and 2 Tim. 1:11 in connection to divine calling.⁷¹ In each of these texts God is the one who does the appointing, not Paul himself nor any other human agency including the Twelve, as he made abundantly clear in Galatians 1-2. This does not imply that Paul disdained recognition of this calling by others, including the Twelve. His defense of God’s calling him to preach and teach as an apostle in 2 Corinthians and Galatians was calculated to demonstrate to other people the reality of that calling by God and to solicit their recognition of it.⁷²

Another phrase found in Rom. 1:1 and 1 Cor. 1:1 is κλητὸς ἀπόστολος, *called to be an apostle*. The nature of the adjective κλητὸς (*called*) clearly signals that God is the one who called Paul to apostleship. This is made very obvious in the Corinthians expression by the phrase διὰ θελήματος θεοῦ (*by the will of God*) that qualifies κλητὸς ἀπόστολος.

See also 2 Cor. 1:1 where just ‘apostle’ is qualified by the will of God: ἀπόστολος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ διὰ θελήματος θεοῦ. More detailed is Gal. 1:1, ἀπόστολος οὐκ ἀπ’ ἀνθρώπων οὐδὲ δι’ ἀνθρώπου ἀλλὰ διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ θεοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ ἐγείραντος αὐτὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν, *an apostle not from men nor through a man but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead*. Being an apostle had everything to do with God’s will, not with Paul’s ambitions.

In Rom. 1:1, the phrase κλητὸς ἀπόστολος is linked to ἀφωρισμένος εἰς εὐαγγέλιον θεοῦ (*set apart for the gospel of God*). Clearly Paul’s divine calling to be an apostle was intended for the advancement of the gospel. He would accomplish that advancement by preaching and teaching it as he acknowledges later on in First and

⁶⁹Jeremiah 20:9 (NRSV): If I say, “I will not mention him, or speak any more in his name,” then within me there is something like a burning fire shut up in my bones; I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot.

⁷⁰A couple of decades later when the enrollment of the seminary surpassed five thousand students, my generation of faculty aggressively sought to encourage students in the Jeremiah tradition of seeking God’s leadership in ministry. We had to take this approach in large measure because with the dramatic growth of the seminary student body there came also an explosion of non-God called students who struggled in growing frustration over why they were doing theological studies with little or no interest in vocational Christian ministry. A momma or home church pastor calling to ministry could not sustain them. Most of us on the faculty knew our stewardship responsibility was to help them ease out of seminary studies and to not graduate them, which would have meant they would most certainly do great damage to any church they tried to lead without a clearly defined sense of ministry calling.

⁷¹τίθημι (Hom.+) and its by-form τίθειω (Hv 1, 1, 3 and 2, 1, 2 as historical present; B-D-F §321; s. Rob. 318); impf. 3 sg. ἐτίθει, 3 pl. ἐτίθεισαν Mk 6:56 and ἐτίθειον as v.l.; Ac 3:2; 4:35; Hv 3, 2, 7 (B-D-F §94, 1; Mlt-H. 202); fut. θήσω; 1 aor. ἔθηκα (B-D-F §95, 1; Rob. 308; 310); 2 aor. subj. θῶ, impv. 2 pl. θέτε, inf. θεῖναι, ptc. θεῖς; pf. τέθεικα.; plpf. ἐτεθείκει (Just., D. 78, 5). Mid.: fut.θήσομαι; 2 aor. ἐθέμην. Pass.: fut. 3 pl. τεθήσονται Jer 13:16; 1 aor. ἐτέθην; pf. τέθειμαι, ptc. τεθειμένος (Nicol. Dam.: 90 Fgm. 130, 18 p. 401, 3 Jac.) J 19:41; Hs 9, 15, 4 (on the pf. s. B-D-F §97, 2). The middle is gener. not different in mng. fr. the act. (B-D-F §316, 1; s. Rob. 804f). The semantic boundaries of this multivalent verb are quite flexible. . . .

3. to assign to some task or function, *appoint, assign*

a. τιθέναι τινὰ εἰς τι *place/appoint someone to or for* (to function as) *some*th. (for the construction cp. Ael. Aristid. 53 p. 636 D.: τοὺς οὐκ ὄντας νόμους εἰς νόμους τ.) τέθεικά σε εἰς φῶς ἐθνῶν Ac 13:47 (Is 49:6); pass.: εἰς ὃ ἐτέθην ἐγὼ κήρυξ 1 Ti 2:7; 2 Ti 1:11. Also τιθ. τινὰ ἵνα *appoint someone to* . . . J 15:16.

b. mid. τίθεσθαι τινὰ εἰς τι *appoint someone to or for some*th. Dg 6:10. W. acc. easily supplied 1 Ti 1:12.

[William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 1003-1004.

⁷²Very wisely over the past four centuries of Baptist existence, the typical ordination process has been worded to reflect that the local church is not calling the individual to Gospel ministry, but instead the ordination is a ‘recognition’ of *God’s calling* upon the individual. The church is simply affirming what should have already become abundantly clear, that God had made a ‘job assignment’ to this individual who was now accepting it publicly. The ordination brings no special spiritual powers nor elevates the individual to any position of authority. Rather, it merely affirms openly that other believers are convinced that God has chosen this individual for ministry.

This is in line with Paul’s appeal to the Corinthians in 1 Cor. 9:2, *If I am not an apostle to others, at least I am to you; for you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord* (εἰ ἄλλοις οὐκ εἰμι ἀπόστολος, ἀλλὰ γε ὑμῖν εἰμι, ἢ γὰρ σφραγίς μου τῆς ἀποστολῆς ὑμεῖς ἐστε ἐν κυρίῳ). Divine calling needs to be recognized and acknowledged by those being ministered to. Otherwise, the preacher will have difficulty genuinely helping the church he seeks to serve.

Second Timothy. The language of ἀφωρισμένος from the verb ἀφωρίζω signals divine dedication of Paul to this task of advancing the gospel.

What needs to be asked here is how do these two points connect up generally? Is it just an apostleship that is to advance the gospel? Or, is it not rather that every divine calling to ministry of some kind or another is to be for the advancement of the gospel? I would argue the latter is the correct understanding. In Gal. 1:16, Paul points this direction by his depiction without using the language of divine calling: ἀποκαλύψαι τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐμοί ἵνα εὐαγγελίζωμαι αὐτὸν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν (to reveal His Son in me so that I might proclaim Him among the Gentiles). God's disclosure of Jesus to us carries with it a huge responsibility for us to then make Him known to others.

For Paul, the taking up of Christian ministry was not something he decided to do on his own. As a budding young Pharisee, the thought of preaching a message of salvation from the God of Abraham to non-Jews was absolute anathema. Unquestionably, God -- and only God -- was able to produce the necessary change in Paul to re-direct him this radically new way. And thus it was that clear sense of God's leading over the coming decades that sustained Paul as he traveled over the northeastern Mediterranean world preaching and teaching Christ to both Jews and Gentiles alike, and often facing bitter opposition from both the Jewish synagogues and even fellow Christians.

Such a calling was not easy, and was not always easy for Paul to follow, as he reflected to the Corinthians in 2 Cor. 1:8-11:

8 We do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, of the affliction we experienced in Asia; for we were so utterly, unbearably crushed that we despaired of life itself. 9 Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death so that we would rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead. 10 He who rescued us from so deadly a peril will continue to rescue us; on him we have set our hope that he will rescue us again, 11 as you also join in helping us by your prayers, so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted us through the prayers of many.

8 Οὐ γὰρ θέλομεν ὑμᾶς ἀγνοεῖν, ἀδελφοί, ὑπὲρ τῆς θλίψεως ἡμῶν τῆς γενομένης ἐν τῇ Ἀσίᾳ, ὅτι καθ' ὑπερβολὴν ὑπὲρ δύναμιν ἐβαρῆθημεν, ὥστε ἐξαπορηθῆναι ἡμᾶς καὶ τοῦ ζῆν· 9 ἀλλὰ αὐτοὶ ἐν ἑαυτοῖς τὸ ἀπόκριμα τοῦ θανάτου ἐσχῆκαμεν, ἵνα μὴ πεποιθότες ὦμεν ἐφ' ἑαυτοῖς ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τῷ θεῷ τῷ ἐγείροντι τοὺς νεκρούς· 10 ὃς ἐκ τῆλικούτου θανάτου ἐρρύσατο ἡμᾶς καὶ ῥύσεται, εἰς ὃν ἠλπίκαμεν ὅτι καὶ ἔτι ῥύσεται, 11 συνυπουργούντων καὶ ὑμῶν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν τῇ δεήσει, ἵνα ἐκ πολλῶν προσώπων τὸ εἰς ἡμᾶς χάρισμα διὰ πολλῶν εὐχαριστηθῇ ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν.

Here Paul additionally solicits the prayer support of the Corinthians for God's sustaining presence in his preaching of the gospel. Unquestionably, God's people need to pray daily for those whom God has commissioned to carry His message to hostile places and peoples.

3) Ministry calling must come from God, whether or not it finds affirmation from others. With our sometimes romanticized picture of the apostle Paul, it may be difficult for us to grasp that many in early Christianity did not care for the apostle at all. Most of this dislike came out of shared disagreement toward him concerning the message of salvation that he preached to Gentiles. This internal opposition to Paul surfaced early in his missionary travels in the middle 40s and continued on until his martyrdom in the mid 60s. Acts 15:1 signals the first eruption of this passionate dislike of Paul.⁷³ Phil. 1:15-17 coming toward the end of Paul's life reflects that this dislike was still strong toward the end of his ministry.⁷⁴ Facing hostility from outsiders who had never experienced the grace of God was one thing, and even easier to face. But facing ongoing hostility from those claiming to be fellow believers was another matter, and far more discouraging. Verbal attacks against him centered on questioning his calling as an apostle and thus on the credibility of his message, as Gal. 1-2 and 2 Cor. 10-13 make very clear. A part of this opposition strategy was to isolate him away from the Twelve with false claims that he was not in agreement with them concerning the nature of the Gospel, especially as it related to non-Jews. The Jerusalem conference in the late 40s, described in Gal. 2:1-10 and Acts 15:1-31, clearly refuted this false

⁷³Acts 15:1-2, 1 Then certain individuals came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved." 2 And after Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to discuss this question with the apostles and the elders.

1 Καὶ τινες κατελθόντες ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰουδαίας ἐδίδασκον τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς ὅτι, ἐὰν μὴ περιτμηθῆτε τῷ ἔθει τῷ Μωϋσέως, οὐ δύνασθε σωθῆναι. 2 γενομένης δὲ στάσεως καὶ ζητήσεως οὐκ ὀλίγης τῷ Παύλῳ καὶ τῷ Βαρναβᾷ πρὸς αὐτούς, ἔταξαν ἀναβαίνειν Παῦλον καὶ Βαρναβᾶν καὶ τινὰς ἄλλους ἐξ αὐτῶν πρὸς τοὺς ἀποστόλους καὶ πρεσβυτέρους εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ περὶ τοῦ ζητήματος τούτου.

⁷⁴Phil. 1:15-17, 15 Some proclaim Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from goodwill. 16 These proclaim Christ out of love, knowing that I have been put here for the defense of the gospel; 17 the others proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely but intending to increase my suffering in my imprisonment.

15 τινὲς μὲν καὶ διὰ φθόνον καὶ ἔριν, τινὲς δὲ καὶ δι' εὐδοκίαν τὸν Χριστὸν κηρύσσουσιν· 16 οἱ μὲν ἐξ ἀγάπης, εἰδότες ὅτι εἰς ἀπολογίαὶν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου κείμεαι, 17 οἱ δὲ ἐξ ἐριθείας τὸν Χριστὸν καταγγέλλουσιν, οὐχ ἀγνῶς, οἰόμενοι θλίψιν ἐγείρειν τοῖς δεσμοῖς μου.

claim, when agreement was reached between Paul and the Twelve along with the entire Jerusalem church that his understanding of the gospel was the same as that of the Twelve. But this opposition surfaced in the churches of Galatia, at Corinth and at Rome, and probably elsewhere as well.

When Paul alludes to suffering under the burden of ministry in 2 Cor. 1:8-11, a part of it implies the weight of facing this hostility from fellow Christians. One could easily grow weary of such nonsense, but the apostle resisted such temptations, as he reflected also to the Corinthians in 2 Cor. 4:7-11:

7 But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us. 8 We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; 9 persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; 10 always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our bodies. 11 For while we live, we are always being given up to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may be made visible in our mortal flesh.

7 Ἐχομεν δὲ τὸν θησαυρὸν τοῦτον ἐν ὄστρακίνοις σκεύεσιν, ἵνα ἡ ὑπερβολὴ τῆς δυνάμεως ἧ τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ μὴ ἐξ ἡμῶν· 8 ἐν παντὶ θλιβόμενοι ἀλλ' οὐ στενοχωρούμενοι, ἀπορούμενοι ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐξαπορούμενοι, 9 διωκόμενοι ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐγκαταλειπόμενοι, καταβαλλόμενοι ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀπολλύμενοι, 10 πάντοτε τὴν νέκρωσιν τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐν τῷ σώματι περιφέροντες, ἵνα καὶ ἡ ζωὴ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐν τῷ σώματι ἡμῶν φανερωθῇ· 11 αἶψα γὰρ ἡμεῖς οἱ ζῶντες εἰς θάνατον παραδιδόμεθα διὰ Ἰησοῦν, ἵνα καὶ ἡ ζωὴ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ φανερωθῇ ἐν τῇ θνητῇ σαρκὶ ἡμῶν.

What kept him going through all this? Clearly one of the stimulations that sustained him was a clear sense of God's calling to this work. God's will became the foundation for his sense of ministry commitment.

This concept was expressed either by τὸ θέλημα θεοῦ or by ἡ βουλή τοῦ θεοῦ, along with ἡ εὐδοκία τοῦ θεοῦ and a few other related expressions. In his praise to God in the *Proem* of Ephesians, a collection of these terms surface in 1:5 (κατὰ τὴν **εὐδοκίαν** τοῦ **θελήματος** αὐτοῦ, according to the good pleasure of His will), 1:9 (γνωρίσας ἡμῖν τὸ μυστήριον τοῦ **θελήματος** αὐτοῦ, κατὰ τὴν εὐδοκίαν αὐτοῦ ἣν προέθετο ἐν αὐτῷ, having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He established in advance in Christ), and 1:11 (τοῦ τὰ πάντα ἐνεργοῦντος κατὰ τὴν **βουλήν τοῦ θελήματος** αὐτοῦ, of the One who energized all things according to the intention of His will). In this *Proem* (1:3-14), Paul is praising the work of God in providing salvation for all humanity. Foundational to this praise is the wisdom and strategy of God whose actions have been guided by clearly defined purpose and intentionality. The apostle came to clearly understand this cosmic plan of God and saw himself as being privileged to participate in it through preaching the Gospel to both Jews and Gentiles as an apostle. The above passages from different periods of Paul's public ministry make it clear that he possessed this perspective.

Understanding that you are participating in something far bigger and grander than you are will indeed give basis for ministry and will sustain you in ministry through the hard times that come. This was Paul's view of God's calling upon his life, and thus it was what kept him faithful in ministry when all the hostility and persecution came his way.

4) Ministry is functional rather than positional. A fourth insight to be gleaned from Paul's self awareness of ministry calling is his perspective of ministry as function, not as position. The closest he ever came to seeing a ministry status was his understanding of apostleship. But even this is defined in terms of divine calling to preach and teach the Gospel to Jews and Gentiles, rather than authorization to occupy an office of apostle. Essential to this perspective was Paul's understanding of authority. God never transfers His authority to any human being! Rather, He grants authorization to minister in His name, as 2 Cor. 4:7 makes clear. Thus, this authorization is always a stewardship responsibility for which strict accountability is imposed by God. Paul affirms this in Eph. 3:1-13, especially vv. 2-3: "2 for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace (τὴν οἰκονομίαν τῆς χάριτος τοῦ θεοῦ) that was given me for you, 3 and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation (κατὰ ἀποκάλυψιν ἐγνωρίσθη μοι τὸ μυστήριον), as I wrote above in a few words." Thus, the many noun designations that Paul uses of himself - ἀπόστολος (apostle), κήρυξ (preacher), διδάσκαλος (teacher), δοῦλος (servant), διάκονος (minister) - are seen as channels of ministry action for the benefit of others.

That a day of accountability lay ahead was made unmistakably clear by Paul to the young preacher Timothy in 2 Tim. 4:1-2,

"In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I solemnly urge you: 2 proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favorable or unfavorable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching."

Paul in facing that day himself anticipated a positive evaluation of his ministry, as he affirmed in 4:6-8.

6 As for me, I am already being poured out as a libation, and the time of my departure has come. 7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 8 From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who

have longed for his appearing.

The apostle then served with the ongoing awareness that every word, every action etc. would one day be evaluated by the God of this universe against the divinely established standards of ministry calling. And he knew this to be the situation for every believer as well.

5) Ministry is often bundled with sacrificial suffering. In no way did the apostle see Christian ministry as a money-making venture or a power accumulation possibility. Rather, from the outset the Lord made it clear that ministry and suffering hardship and poverty would go hand in hand for Paul. He accepted this from the Lord, as he affirms in 2 Cor. 1:8-11. These hardships were extensive in his service to Christ (2 Cor. 11:21-29), but he found a way to rejoice in them as the opportunity for God's presence and power to be reflected in his life through his weaknesses (2 Cor. 11:30).

Modern preachers dressed in expensive suits and living in wealth stand under the utter condemnation of Paul's example and teaching. They have disqualified themselves from authentic ministry by rejecting one of Paul's criteria for ministry: ἀφιλάργυρον, **not a lover of money** (1 Tim. 3:3) and μὴ αἰσχροκερδῆ, **not greedy for gain** (Titus 1:7). Timothy and Titus were explicitly instructed to lead churches not to call such individuals as their spiritual leader. Early in his ministry, Paul saw one of the traits of **false** preachers to be preaching a gospel that enabled them to avoid suffering: **It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh that try to compel you to be circumcised—only that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ** (Gal. 6:12). His experience, along with his calling to ministry from God, linked ministry and suffering inseparably together.

6) Ministry is centered on spreading the Gospel. In his vigorous defense of his apostleship in Gal. 1-2



and 2 Cor. 10-13, the claim to be an apostle was made as the foundation for the credibility of his Gospel message. That was the only reason Paul was an apostle: to preach the message of salvation in Christ to unsaved Jews and Gentiles. This he affirmed early on in Gal. 1:16-17, **But when God, who had set me apart before I was born and called me through his grace, was pleased**



16 to reveal his Son to me, so that I might proclaim him among the Gentiles,.... This was his life long passion as a Christian servant of God. To the Corinthians (2 Cor. 4:2) Paul commended himself as serving God with a clear conscience, meaning that he had been faithful to preach the Gospel without engaging in shady actions: **We have renounced the shameful things that one hides; we refuse to practice cunning or to falsify God's word; but by the open statement of the truth we commend ourselves to the conscience of everyone in the sight of God.** It was the integrity of such commitment that sustained the apostle in preaching Christ: **Therefore, since it is by God's mercy that we are engaged in this ministry, we do not lose heart** (2 Cor. 4:1). His non compromising stance comes as a challenge to every believer in today's world. Though making a living largely through his non-religious oriented craft of leather working, his focus remained centered on spreading the good news of salvation in Christ Jesus. No matter the criticism or the hostility thrust at him, he did not budge an inch away from his central mission of preaching and teaching the full message of salvation. He consistently refused to modify this message in order to make it more acceptable.⁷⁵

Wow! We can learn much from Paul about God's calling to both salvation and ministry! Both by example and by teaching he set a high standard that all in the Lord's service must strive to measure up to.

3.2.0.2 Luke's Description

In addition to Paul's own writings reflecting his sense of ministry calling, Luke in Acts provides an additional perspective in one of Paul's speeches in Acts 20:17-38, where the apostle characterizes his ministry to the spiritual leaders of the church at Ephesus. This merits attention as well, as an additional interpretation of divine

⁷⁵One example is his uncompromising stance on the gospel at the Jerusalem council meeting in the late 40s, as he relates in Gal. 2:3-5. "3 But even Titus, who was with me, was not compelled to be circumcised, though he was a Greek. 4 But because of false believers secretly brought in, who slipped in to spy on the freedom we have in Christ Jesus, so that they might enslave us— 5 **we did not submit to them even for a moment**, so that the truth of the gospel might always remain with you." 3 ἀλλ' οὐδὲ Τίτος ὁ σὺν ἐμοί, Ἕλληνας ὄντων, ἠναγκάσθη περιτεμεθῆναι· 4 διὰ δὲ τοὺς παρεισάκτους ψευδαδέλφους, οἵτινες παρεισήλθον κατασκοπεῖσαι τὴν ἐλευθερίαν ἡμῶν ἣν ἔχομεν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, ἵνα ἡμᾶς καταδουλώσουσιν— 5 **οἷς οὐδὲ πρὸς ὥραν εἴξαμεν τῇ ὑποταγῇ**, ἵνα ἡ ἀλήθεια τοῦ εὐαγγελίου διαμείνη πρὸς ὑμᾶς.

calling to ministry in connection to the apostle Paul.

17 From Miletus he sent a message to Ephesus, asking the elders of the church to meet him. 18 When they came to him, he said to them:

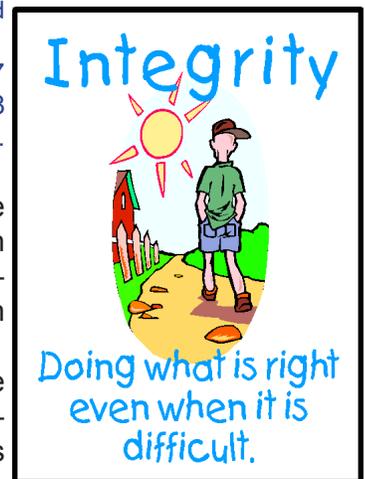
“You yourselves know how I lived among you the entire time from the first day that I set foot in Asia, 19 serving the Lord with all humility and with tears, enduring the trials that came to me through the plots of the Jews. 20 I did not shrink from doing anything helpful, proclaiming the message to you and teaching you publicly and from house to house, 21 as I testified to both Jews and Greeks about repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus. 22 And now, as a captive to the Spirit, I am on my way to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there, 23 except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and persecutions are waiting for me. 24 But I do not count my life of any value to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the good news of God’s grace.

25 “And now I know that none of you, among whom I have gone about proclaiming the kingdom, will ever see my face again. 26 Therefore I declare to you this day that I am not responsible for the blood of any of you, 27 for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God. 28 Keep watch over yourselves and over all the flock, of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God that he obtained with the blood of his own Son. 29 I know that after I have gone, savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 Some even from your own group will come distorting the truth in order to entice the disciples to follow them. 31 Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to warn everyone with tears. 32 And now I commend you to God and to the message of his grace, a message that is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all who are sanctified. 33 I coveted no one’s silver or gold or clothing. 34 You know for yourselves that I worked with my own hands to support myself and my companions. 35 In all this I have given you an example that by such work we must support the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, for he himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”

36 When he had finished speaking, he knelt down with them all and prayed. 37 There was much weeping among them all; they embraced Paul and kissed him, 38 grieving especially because of what he had said, that they would not see him again. Then they brought him to the ship.

With powerful words, and sad words, Paul spoke for the last time with these leaders⁷⁶ of the Christian community in Ephesus that he had spent more time with than with any other group of leaders anywhere else in his three decade long ministry. In this farewell speech, the apostle summarizes his ministry with the Ephesian church.⁷⁷

The narrative introduction (vv. 17-18a) and conclusion (vv. 36-38) set the scene of Paul traveling from Troas (cf. vv. 13-16) to Jerusalem with a stop off at Miletus for a short visit with the leaders of the church at Ephesus who come to Miletus



⁷⁶These leaders are addressed as τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους τῆς ἐκκλησίας (elders of the church, v. 17), ἐπισκόπους (overseers, v. 28) and told to ποιμαίνειν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ θεοῦ (pastor the church of God, v. 28). Luke signals through Paul that these terms are interchangeable for designating the spiritual leaders of the Christian community.

⁷⁷Modern scholarship is sometimes suspicious of the portrait of Paul in this speech painted by Luke. Richard Pervo notes this perspective:

The contrast between this speech (hereafter “Miletus”) and the Ephesian mission described in chap. 19 is astonishing. This is not because the leaders of a structured church suddenly emerge, for one may presume that such developments took place everywhere and required no more reporting than did the fact of baptism. In place of the Paul whose potency permeated cloth and compelled imitation by exorcists, whose message perpetrated a mass renunciation of magic and whose character attracted the admiration of Asiarchs comes one whose life is marked by blood, sweat, and tears, the hard-working laborer whose frugality and charity are an example for all. This is a figure familiar from the epistles, and for good reason, because no other section of Acts is so saturated with allusions to the Pauline corpus. Of almost equal interest is the dearth of any allusions to or citations from the LXX. Here is Paul as he is viewed by the general public: offering useful, if not always welcome, advice, issuing dire warnings, and freely willing to share examples of his selfless sacrifice and suffering. Those who wish to present the ‘Paul of Acts’ as ‘the real Paul’ will find considerable support in these verses, while scholars suspicious of Luke’s portrait will need to account for the dissonance. To follow the model of the old saw that Luke ‘paulinizes Peter and petrizes Paul’ one can say that in this speech Luke ‘paulinizes’ the Paul of Acts. Miletus shows that the author of Acts did not develop his picture(s) of Paul in ignorance of the letters and that, insofar as his general depiction is different, the differences were largely due to choice.¹⁰⁷

[Pervo, R. I., & Attridge, H. W. (2009). *Acts : A commentary on the Book of Acts*. Hermeneia--a critical and historical commentary on the Bible (515–516). Minneapolis: Fortress Press.]

Most of this questioning of Luke’s writing strategy is based upon the highly questionable assumption that Acts is a second century writing that seeks to harmonize the various segments of first century Christianity into a unified structure, and thus sacrifices historical differences between the Pauline mission and the apostolic teaching under the leadership of Peter.

for the meeting. As a farewell speech, it is related to Jesus' farewell speech in Luke 22:14-38 to His disciples prior to His arrest.⁷⁸ In the speech, Paul first looks back to the past ministry at Ephesus (vv. 18-21), then forward to his future (vv. 22-27). Next, he affirms the elders in their leadership responsibilities (vv. 28-31) and concludes with a blessing pronounced upon them (vv. 32-35).⁷⁹ One of the distinctives of this speech in Acts is that it is given to Christian leaders, rather than to outsiders either seeking to understand the Gospel or else showing hostility to the preaching of the Gospel as is the case of the other speeches in Acts.⁸⁰

The narrative conclusion in vv. 36-38 focuses on their response to Paul's speech. There was sadness (vv. 37-38a) mixed with the traditional goodbye (v. 38b). Paul and the leaders prayed together at the end of his speech (v. 36).

In the lengthy sentence found in verses 18-21, the heart of Paul's review of his previous ministry in Asia is expressed as Ὑμεῖς ἐπίστασθε ἀπὸ πρώτης ἡμέρας ἀφ' ἧς ἐπέβην εἰς τὴν Ἀσίαν πῶς μεθ' ὑμῶν τὸν πάντα χρόνον ἐγενόμην, *you understand that from the first days since I set foot in Asia how I spent all my time with you*. Key to this is πῶς μεθ' ὑμῶν τὸν πάντα χρόνον ἐγενόμην, how Paul conducted himself while with the Ephesians.

This broad based statement could include a wide range of aspects, but the modal participle phrase that follows defines more narrowly the scope of Paul's beginning statement (v. 19): δουλεύων τῷ κυρίῳ μετὰ πάσης ταπεινοφροσύνης καὶ δακρύων καὶ πειρασμῶν τῶν συμβάντων μοι ἐν ταῖς ἐπιβουλαῖς τῶν Ἰουδαίων, *servicing the Lord with complete humility and tears and trials put on me by the plottings of the Jews*. Service to Christ was the centerpiece of Paul's ministry among the Ephesians. Accompanying it was humility, tears, and severe trials. Humanly speaking, one would be tempted to pull back from the things that brought difficulty. But Paul reminds these leaders that he did not back away from this calling to preach Christ to everyone who would listen (vv. 20-21): ὡς οὐδὲν ὑπεστειλάμην τῶν συμφερόντων τοῦ μὴ ἀναγγεῖλαι ὑμῖν καὶ διδάξαι ὑμᾶς δημοσίᾳ καὶ κατ' οἶκους, διαμαρτυρόμενος Ἰουδαίοις τε καὶ Ἑλλήσιν τὴν εἰς θεὸν μετάνοιαν καὶ πίστιν εἰς τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν, *not shrinking back from anything helpful so that I would not proclaim to you and teach you publicly and privately as I gave witness to both Jews and Gentiles of repentance to God and faith in our Lord Jesus*. In this reminder, Paul stressed the heart of his calling to proclaim the Gospel to others in order to bring them to God through Christ.⁸¹ Among the Ephesians he had been true to that calling. Luke summarizes that ministry in Acts 19:1-41, that extended over a two year and three month period (cf. 19:8-10), although in 20:31 he indicates it was a three year ministry.⁸²

⁷⁸ The obvious intra-Lucan parallel, Jesus' final speech to his disciples prior to his arrest (Luke 22:14-38), also contributes to the interpretation of the address at Miletus, which has the same function.¹¹³ Both speeches lie under the shadow of coming death; both take up problems of leadership. This structural relation does not detract from the standing of Paul in Acts. He, rather than Peter, who departed the narrative stage long ago, or James, despite the latter's authority in Jerusalem, has become the successor to Jesus. This address also takes up some of the themes of Luke 21, particularly the admonition to be vigilant. A difference is that eschatology, the heart of Luke 21, is explicitly absent from this speech. This contrast is not without consequences for analyses of Lucan theology. Within the plot structure of Acts this address initiates a shift toward apologetic. All of the subsequent speeches of Paul in Acts (except the short remarks in chap. 27) continue to defend his views and actions." [Pervo, R. I., & Attridge, H. W. (2009). *Acts: A commentary on the Book of Acts*. Hermeneia—a critical and historical commentary on the Bible (517-518). Minneapolis: Fortress Press.]

⁷⁹ One should also note that this is the second of three 'we' sections in Acts; these are found in 16:10-17; **20:5 - 21:18**; 27:1 - 28:16. Traditionally, these are understood to signal that the author of Acts joined the missionary team of Paul and Silas at Macedonia, and thus the narrative view shifts from 'they' did this and went there to 'we' did this and went there. Since the prologues of both Luke's Gospel and Acts clearly indicate that the same person was responsible for both documents, the physician Luke has been understood as that person since early in the second century AD. It should be noted, however, that no where in either document does the author identify himself directly by name. Consequently, not all scholars accept Lukan authorship of these two documents.

⁸⁰ As the synagogue sermon at Pisidian Antioch (13:16-41) is intended to be a sample of Paul's approach to Jewish audiences, and the speeches at Lystra (14:15-17) and Athens (17:22-31) samples of his approach to pagan audiences, so it might be said that this Milesian speech is a sample of his ministry to Christian audiences. But it is more than the sort of thing that Paul was accustomed to say to Christian audiences: it is a farewell speech, suited to the special occasion on which it was delivered. Since it comes in the context of a 'we' section of Luke's narrative, Luke may well have heard it; if so, he could be reproducing its gist from memory." [Bruce, F. F. (1988). *The Book of the Acts*. The New International Commentary on the New Testament (388). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.]

⁸¹ "21 Here is a good example of a Lukan summary of doctrine, in dependence on a formal schema (cf. 1 Thess 1:9-10; Acts 14:15; 16:31; 26:18).¹² The unique expression μετάνοια 'εἰς θεόν', 'repentance to God,' may be explained by the relationship of μετάνοια, 'to repent,' to the more usual ἐπιστρέφειν, 'turn.' μετάνοια, 'repentance,' and πίστις, 'faith,' indicate the appropriate response to the first and second articles of the creed respectively, 'Jews and Greeks' is a consistent element in Luke's depiction of Christian mission." [Conzelmann, H., Epp, E. J., & Matthews, C. R. *Acts of the Apostles: A commentary on the Acts of the Apostles* (173-174). Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987.]

⁸² Such approximations of time periods are typical in the ancient world and represent 'rounding off' of time, rather than precise designations of time periods. Not until after the invention of the clock in the late middle ages did western culture become interested in

His integrity in that ministry at Ephesus is affirmed in 20:26-27: 26 διότι μαρτύρομαι ὑμῖν ἐν τῇ σήμερον ἡμέρᾳ ὅτι καθαρὸς εἰμι ἀπὸ τοῦ αἵματος πάντων, 27 οὐ γὰρ ὑπεστειλάμην τοῦ μὴ ἀναγγεῖλαι πᾶσαν τὴν βουλήν τοῦ θεοῦ ὑμῖν, Therefore I declare to you this day that I am clean from the blood of all, for I did not step back from proclaiming the entire council of God to you. Reflected in this is Paul's sense of accountability before God for how he preached the Gospel message. Next in vv. 28-30, he warns them against being taken in by false teachers with a false message, while seeking to build their own empire rather than the Kingdom of God. In concluding, Paul commends these leaders to God and affirms his ethical integrity while ministering to them (vv. 31-35).

31 Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to warn everyone with tears. 32 And now I commend you to God and to the message of his grace, a message that is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all who are sanctified. 33 I coveted no one's silver or gold or clothing. 34 You know for yourselves that I worked with my own hands to support myself and my companions. 35 In all this I have given you an example that by such work we must support the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, for he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'

What we observe here in Luke's depiction of Paul's self-awareness of his ministry calling is consistent with the Pauline expression in the writings of Paul himself. The central role of preaching and teaching the Gospel is found in both traditions, along with affirmations of ethical consistency in a faithful stewardship of that calling and the financial means of supporting it. Whether or not this reflects Luke's access to the letters of Paul is not clear, although this passage does point somewhat in that direction to this question.

One additional question relates to the portrait here of Paul's sense of ministry and its connection to the rest of Acts, especially the conversion narratives in chapters nine, twenty-two, and twenty-six.

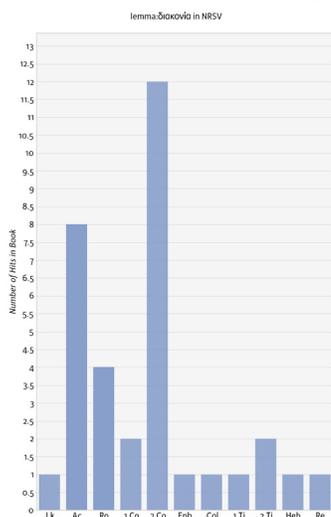
In the 'conversion' narratives of Acts 9, 22, and 26, Luke's emphasis is basically on the dramatic change in the life of the young Pharisee Saul from Tarsus. But in the chapter nine narration, and also in the two recollections by Paul in the defense speeches of chapters twenty-two and twenty-six, the same theme of preaching the Gospel to both Jews and Gentiles is stressed, along with the divinely predicted suffering of hardships in carrying out this mission assignment. The functional understanding of apostleship is clearly emphasized as preaching and teaching the Gospel (cf. Acts 26:16 with 1 Tim. 2:7 and 2 Tim. 1:11).

Clearly the ministry story line of Acts 12-28 that focuses on Paul illustrates this concept of ministry repeatedly as Paul traveled over the northeastern Mediterranean world preaching Christ and establishing Christian communities of believers. Luke closes his narrative in Acts 28:23-31 following this pattern; note verses 30-31,

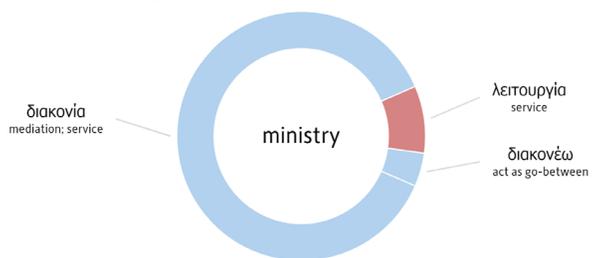
30 He lived there two whole years at his own expense and welcomed all who came to him, 31 proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance.

30 Ἐνέμεινεν δὲ διετίαν ὅλην ἐν ἰδίῳ μισθώματι, καὶ ἀπεδέχετο πάντας τοὺς εἰσπορευομένους πρὸς αὐτόν, 31 κηρύσσων τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ διδάσκων τὰ περὶ τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ μετὰ πάσης παρηρησίας ἀκωλύτως.

Ministry for the apostle Paul was centered in preaching and teaching Christ to non-believers both Jewish and Gentile. With the Christian conversion of converts came efforts to help the emerging communities of believers organize themselves into house church groups with minimal leadership structures who possessed a sufficient grasp of the Gospel message to be able to communicate it to the group and to others. His subsequent follow up visits, to some extent on all three missionary travels, was intended to teach these believers more of the implications of the gospel message they had received at conversion. The lengthy stays of Paul at both Ephesus and Corinth helped provide a base of operations for teaching this message. In addition, his extensive letter writing ministry supplemented this teaching when he was not able to travel there in person at a given point of time.



With the Christian conversion of converts came efforts to help the emerging communities of believers organize themselves into house church groups with minimal leadership structures who possessed a sufficient grasp of the Gospel message to be able to communicate it to the group and to others. His subsequent follow up visits, to some extent on all three missionary travels, was intended to teach these believers more of the implications of the gospel message they had received at conversion. The lengthy stays of Paul at both Ephesus and Corinth helped provide a base of operations for teaching this message. In addition, his extensive letter writing ministry supplemented this teaching when he was not able to travel there in person at a given point of time.



Paul emphatically believed -- as reported extensively in his own writings and by Luke in Acts -- that God's calling to him as an apostle was to be centered on proclaiming Christ to all peoples

precise measurements of time. Many cultures in our world even today have little concern for precise time measurements, as one would know clearly from experience if he has ever lived in Africa or Latin America.

regardless of race and background. His conversion outside the city of Damascus brought with it a commissioning to such ministry. At the close of his life in the second letter to Timothy he felt confident that this commissioning by God had been faithfully carried out over the span of his Christian life of some thirty or so years.

Here is an example for us today that sets the standards very high. The calling of God brings with it a day of accountability for how well we have followed the standards of ministry. Paul came to the end of his ministry with a clear sense of faithfulness to those standards and thus with confidence in facing God's examination. The challenge is for each of us to be able to do the same thing.

3.3.0 Paul's Theology of Ministry⁸³

Clarification of terms is important at the outset of this discussion. The English word 'ministry' is defined in religious terms by the Merriam-Webster Collegiate dictionary as:

- 2: the office, duties, or functions of a minister
- 3: the body of ministers of religion : CLERGY
- 4: AGENCY 2, INSTRUMENTALITY
- 5: the period of service or office of a minister or ministry⁸⁴

This provides a point of reference in modern English for understanding the meaning of the term ministry in today's world, but it says nothing about the concept of ministry inside early Christianity, as defined in the New Testament. The English word 'ministry' is used twenty-three times to translate one of three Greek words that refer to Christian ministry: διακονία,⁸⁵ διακονέω, and λειτουργία, as is reflected in the above chart. The meaning of the term διακονία is centered on Christian ministry to others.⁸⁶ As the listing of uses chart on the above left

⁸³The label 'Theology of Ministry' is used hesitantly because it is a thoroughly modern concept without roots in scripture. I use the label in the sense of a religious study of the idea of ministry as found in regard to Paul's life and teaching. The modern tradition of biblical theology, and Pauline theology in particular, stands as a backdrop to this exploration. The goal is to find relevant concepts of ministry with legitimate application to a modern setting.

⁸⁴*Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 10th ed. (Springfield, Mass., U.S.A.: Merriam-Webster, 1996).

Other dictionaries provide similar definitions of the English word, as is illustrated by the *Oxford English Dictionary*:

ministry

■ noun (plural ministries)

1 a government department headed by a minister.

2 a period of government under one Prime Minister.

3 the work, vocation, or office of a minister of religion.

*spiritual service to others provided by the Christian Church.

[Catherine Soanes and Angus Stevenson, *Concise Oxford English Dictionary*, 11th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).]

⁸⁵Compare Acts 1:17, 25; 20:20; 21:19; Rom. 11:13; 12:7; 15:31; 2 Cor. 3:7; 3:8, 3:9; 4:1; 5:18; 6:3; 8:4; 9:1, 13; Eph. 4:12; 2 Tim. 4:5; 11. διακονία is used 20 of the 23 times in the NT for ministry. Fourteen other uses in the NT are translated by service, services, serve, serving, task, tasks, mission, distribution, ministering, rendering.

⁸⁶διακονία, ας, ἡ (s. διακονέω, διάκονος; Thu. et al.; IG XII/5, 600, 14 [III B.C.]; PFouad 25 verso I, 1 [II A.D.]; 1 Macc 11:58; Esth 6:3, 5 [both v.l.]; TestJob 11:1ff, 15:1; Joseph.)

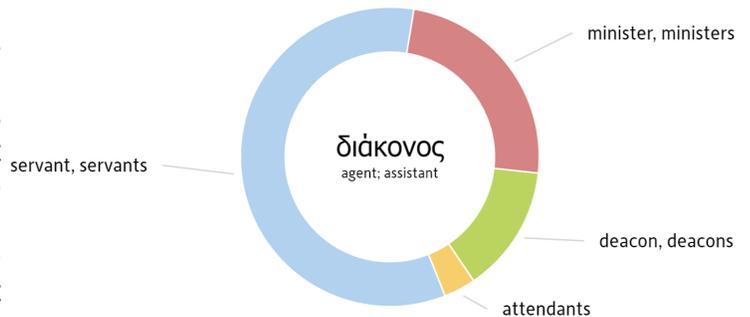
1. service rendered in an intermediary capacity, mediation, assignment, δ. τῆς λειτουργίας *mediation of this public obligation* **2 Cor 9:12; cp. 13**. ἡ δ. ἡ εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ *my embassy in behalf of J.* (=my role as delivery agent [for the gift] for J. The v.l. δωροφορία indicates that δ. denotes intermediary function; the context informs the reader that the mission involves the bringing of a gift) **Ro 15:31; cp. 2 Cor 8:4; 9:1**.—On the 'collection': ELombard, RTP 35, 1902, 113–39; 262–81; MGoguel, RHPR 4, 1925, 301–18; KNickle, The Collection '66.—πνεύματα εἰς δ. ἀποστελλόμενα *spirits sent out on assignment* **Hb 1:14**.

2. performance of a service

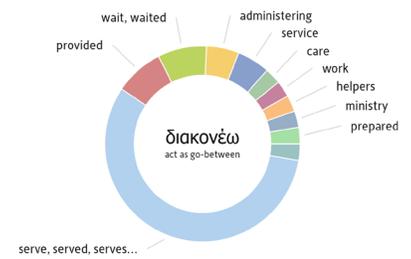
a. gener. *service* πρὸς τὸν καταρτισμὸν τ. ἀγίων εἰς ἔργον διακονίας to prepare God's people for productive service **Eph 4:12** (the rendering [as later edd. of RSV, also NRSV, REB] assumes that no comma, as in KJV, RV, RSV1, JB et al., is to be placed before εἰς [diff. 3 below]); δ. τοῦ λόγου **Ac 6:4**; ἡ ὑμῶν δ. service to you **2 Cor 11:8**.—**1 Cor 16:15; 2 Ti 4:11; Rv 2:19**.

b. specif. *engagement in preparations for a social event*, such as a meal (s. Plut., Philopoem. 357 [2, 3]: a Megarian hostess mistakes the statesman P. for one of his aides and sets him to chop wood as part of the διακονία or preparations for a meal; Jos., Ant. 2, 65; 11, 163 διακονεῖν τινι τὴν ἐπὶ τοῦ πότου διακονίαν) *περιεσπᾶτο περὶ πολλὴν δ.* (Martha) *was distracted w. many preparations* **Lk 10:40**.

3. functioning in the interest of a larger public, service, office of the prophets and apostles **1 Ti 1:12**; κληρὸς τῆς δ. **Ac 1:17**;



indicates, *διακονία* is an overwhelmingly Pauline word in the New Testament, with Luke accounting for just nine of the thirty four uses in the New Testament. The non-religious focus of this noun was in food preparation and serving, which provided a natural backdrop to the religious meaning of serving spiritual nourishment. The one who gives ministry can be labeled a *διάκονος* in the sense of servant or minister in twenty-six of the twenty-nine instances of use of this adjectival noun in the New Testament.⁸⁷ Again this term is overwhelmingly Pauline with 21 of the 29 uses in the writings of Paul. The verb *διακονέω* means simply ‘I serve.’⁸⁸ Service rendered to others can be done by anyone in the community of believers and



means simply ‘I serve.’⁸⁸ Service rendered to others can be done by anyone in the community of believers and τόπος τῆς δ. vs. 25. Of the service of the Levites 1 Cl 40:5; the office of an ecclesiastical overseer IPHd 1:1; 10:2; ISm 12:1; Hs 9, 27, 2; δ. λαμβάνειν *receive a ministry* Ac 20:24. διαίρεσεις διακονιῶν 1 Cor 12:5; δ. τοῦ θανάτου *ministry of death*: of the OT law 2 Cor 3:7. Also δ. τῆς κατακρίσεως *min. of condemnation* vs. 9. Opp. δ. τῆς δικαιοσύνης *min. of righteousness* ibid.; δ. τοῦ πνεύματος *min. of the Spirit* vs. 8 of service in behalf of the Gospel; cp. Ac 21:19; Ro 11:13; 2 Cor 4:1; 6:3; Col 4:17; 2 Ti 4:5; δ. τῆς καταλλαγῆς *ministry of reconciliation* 2 Cor 5:18; τὴν δ. τελέσαι *carry out this assignment* Hm 2:6; concerning obedience and exhortation 12, 3, 3; Hs 1:9; 2:7. τελειῶσαι ... τὴν δ’ *discharge ... my responsibility* Ac 20:34.—Eph 4:12 belongs here if, with KJV, RV, RSV1 et al. and contrary to N. and other edd., a comma is placed before εἰς (s. Collins [at 5, end, below] 233f).

4. rendering of specific assistance, aid, support (Arrian, Peripl. 3, 1 εἰς διακονίαν=for support), esp. of alms and charitable giving (AcThom 59 [Aa II/2, 176, 2] χρήματα πολλὰ εἰς διακονίαν τῶν χηρῶν=much money to take care of the widows) Ac 6:1. εἰς δ. πέμψαι τί τινα *send someone smeth. for support* 11:29; cp. 12:25.

5. an administrative function, service as attendant, aide, or assistant (Eng. loanw. ‘deacon’; Hippol., Ref. 7, 36, 3) Ro 12:7 (Ltzm., ZWT 55, 1913, 110); IMg 6:1; IPHd 10:2; Hs 9, 26, 2.—PAbbing, Diakonia, diss. Utrecht ’50; BREicke, Diakonie, Festfreude u. Zelos usw. ’51, 19–164; RAC III 909–17; WBrandt, Dienst u. Duienen im NT ’31 (diss. Münster: Diakonie u. das NT, 1923); JCollins, Diakonia ’90.—DELG s.v. διάκονος. M-M. TW. Sv.

[William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 230.]

⁸⁷The adjectival noun occurs in both the masculine and feminine genders in NT usage suggesting ministry opportunities for both men and women in early Christianity. In Phil. 1:1 and 1 Tim. 3:8, 12, the word *διάκονος* extends to mean ‘deacon’ as one of the leaders of the local church. But the English word ‘deacon’ has so much ecclesiastical baggage attached to it that it is questionable as to whether this English word is an appropriate translation of these three references: “the Eng. derivatives ‘deacon’ and ‘deaconess’ are technical terms, whose mng. varies in ecclesiastical history and are therefore inadequate for rendering NT usage of δ.” [William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 230-31.]

⁸⁸**διακονέω** (s. two next entries) impf. διηκόνουν; fut. διακονήσω; 1 aor. διηκόνησα; pf. inf. δεδηκονηκέναι (AssMos Fgm. k, Denis p. 67); aor. pass. διηκονήθη, for augm. s. B-D-F §69, 4; W-S. §12, 6; Mlt-H. 192 (Soph., Hdt. et al.; rare in ins, pap; never in LXX, but in Philo, Joseph.) gener. to render service in a variety of ways either at someone’s behest or voluntarily and freq. with suggestion of movement.

1. to function as an intermediary, act as go-between/agent, be at one’s service w. intermediary function either expressed or implied (lead tablet Sb 4947, 2 διακονήσόν μοι; in lover’s petition ‘serve as intermediary [medium] for me’ PWarr 21, 4; 8; Lucian, Cont. 1 of Hermes as messenger for Zeus; Theophr. Char. 2, 9 fetch things; Just., D. 79, 2; cp. the role of Repentance JosAs 15:7) w. dat. of pers. and acc. of thing οὐχ ἑαυτοῖς ἑμῖν δὲ διηκόνουν αὐτά *they were not acting as agents in their own behalf but for yours in the things* 1 Pt 1:12 (for a service consisting in the delivery of a message cp. Jos., Ant. 6, 298). For a similar contrast, and with suggestion of an intermediary’s mission: οὐκ ἦλθεν διακονηθῆναι ἀλλὰ διακονῆσαι *came not to be served, but to serve* Mt 20:28; Mk 10:45 (i.e. the Human One [Son of Man] came to carry out an assignment not to benefit himself but others [by giving his life in ransom]; cp. Mt 4:11; par. Mk 1:13 [service rendered by divine messengers]). Of Jesus carrying out his mission [ἀ]νῆλθε[ν δια]κονῶν AcPl BMM verso 13f.—Phlm 13 suggests that Onesimus can be used by Paul on assignment in behalf of the gospel. πορεύομαι ... διακονῶν τοῖς ἁγίοις *on an errand to God’s people* (REB) Ro 15:25 (s. 3).—Of delivery of an object: χάρις διακονουμένη ὑφ’ ἡμῶν *gift that we are transmitting* (a ref. to the collection for whose delivery they have accepted responsibility) 2 Cor 8:19; cp. vs. 20. In imagery, ἐπιστολὴ Χριστοῦ διακονηθεῖσα ὑφ’ ἡμῶν *a letter of Christ, delivered by us* 2 Cor 3:3 (WBaird, Letters of Recommendation: JBL 80, ’61, 190).

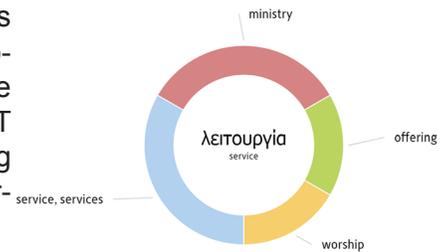
2. to perform obligations, without focus on intermediary function

a. of unspecified services **perform duties, render assistance, serve** τινί *someone* (Demosth. 9, 43; UPZ 18, 23 [163 B.C.]; δαίμοσι δ. Orig., C. Cels. 2, 51, 38) Mt 8:15; Mk 1:31; Lk 4:39; GJs 6:3; διακονοῦσαι αὐτῷ *being at his service* Mt 27:55; cp. Mk 15:41. διακόνει μοι *serve me* Hs 8, 4, 1, cp. 2; J 12:26; Ac 19:22. Also εἰς ἑαυτοὺς αὐτὸ δ. *serve one another w. it* 1 Pt 4:10. W. acc. of thing ὅσα διηκόνησεν *what services he rendered* 2 Ti 1:18; cp. Hs 2:10. Abs. (POxy 275, 10 [I A.D.]) 1 Pt 4:11. Pass. (Jos., Ant. 10, 242); ἀπλῶς δ. *complete a service in simplicity of heart* Hm 2:6.

b. of attention at meals **wait on someone** (τινί) *at table* (Menand., Fgm. 272; Pyrgion [Hellenistic times]: 467 Fgm. 1 Jac. [a communal meal in Crete]; Diod S 4, 36, 2; 5, 28, 4; Philo, Vi. Cont. 70; TestJob 12:1 al.; Jos., Ant. 11, 163; 166) Lk 12:37; 17:8. Abs. 10:40; J 12:2; GJs 6:3. In imagery ὡς ὁ διακονῶν *waiter* Lk 22:26f.

3. to meet an immediate need, help w. dat. (Iren. 1, pr. 3 [Harv. I 7, 1]) πότε οὐ διηκονήσαμέν σοι; *when did we not help you?* Mt 25:44 (but s. 4, Collins). ἐκ τῶν ὑπαρχόντων *helped to support them w. their means* Lk 8:3 (KTorjesen, When Women Were Priests ’93, 53ff); the saints Ro 15:25 (JO’Rourke, CBQ 29, ’67, 116–18; but s. 1); Hb 6:10.

can be given to anyone inside or outside the community. The range of things offered in serving can be extensive and includes actions all the way from providing food and financial support to giving the message of the Gospel to those without it. Clearly from the use of διακονέω in the four gospels (22 of 37 NT uses), Jesus was understood as the ultimate example and model of serving others. Paul's use of the verb eight times in his writings reflect a clear understanding of servant ministry modeled after the example of Jesus.



The third term λειτουργία also translates as ministry or service.⁸⁹ The temple associations of the ministry of a priest that were associated with this term limit its use in the New Testament mainly to a focus on Jesus as high priest providing redemptive service through his sacrificial death. But Paul can use the term to refer to the collection of the relief offering on the third missionary journey (2 Cor. 9:12) and to the service that Epaphroditus provided by bringing the financial support from the Philippian church to Paul while he was in prison at Rome (Phil. 2:30). In Phil. 2:17, he could also envision his martyrdom as a λειτουργία to encourage the faith of the believers in the church. Paul used the verb form λειτουργέω only once, in Rom. 15:27 to refer to the collection of the relief offering in Macedonia and Achaia as providing a service to the saints in Jerusalem.

What emerges from the biblical terms for ministry is a complete focus on functional actions, not positions or offices held by individuals. Careful study of the various terms in Paul's writings and in Acts as they refer to Paul will reflect the apostle's sense of responsibility to serve others with the Gospel. This included preaching, teaching, caring for, delivering relief offerings, and numerous other actions that grew out of the responsibilities of serving Christ. No where does the apostle speak of an office or position of ministry, even though such concepts

4. to carry out official duties, minister, in cultic context (of holy service at the altar Jos., Ant. 3, 155; cp. PGM 36, 304 and 335 παρά θεοῖς δ.) of διάκονοι **1 Ti 3:10**; καλῶς δ. vs. **13**. ἀγνῶς καὶ σεμνῶς Hv 3, 5, 1. Opp. κακῶς Hs 9, 26, 2. Collins (s. below) p. 65 argues for placement of **Mt 25:44** in this classification: those consigned to perdition plead their total dedication to the Lord's interests.

5. Ac 6:2 poses a special problem: *care for; take care of* w. dat. of thing τραπέζαις *look after tables* can be understood of serving food at tables (cp. βούλομαι ... διακονῆσαι τοῖς πτωχοῖς σήμερον ἐν τῇ σῇ τραπέζῃ TestJob 12:1), but it is improbable that some widows would be deprived of food at a communal meal. The term διακονία vs. 1 more probably refers to administrative responsibility (s. διακονία 5), one of whose aspects is concern for widows without specifying the kind of assistance that is allotted. Vs. 2 may contain word-play involving the phrase τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ, w. λόγος designating a ledger entry, in which case τράπεζα, which is also a banker's term (s. L-S-J-M s.v. II), may here denote accounts (s. τράπεζα 1c).—WBrandt, Dienst u. Dienen im NT '31; ESchweizer, D. Leben des Herrn in d. Gemeinde u. ihren Diensten '46; PBoulton, Διακονέω and Its Cognates in the 4 Gospels: TU 73, '59, 415–22. JCollins, Diakonia '90.—DELG s.v. διάκονος. M-M. TW.

[William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 229-30.]

⁸⁹**λειτουργία, ας, ἡ** (s. prec. entry; Pla.+; ins, pap, LXX, ParJer 3; ApcSed 14, 3 and 11; EpArist, Philo, Joseph., loanw. in rabb.) prim. 'public service', the usual designation for a service performed by an individual for the state or public cult (oft. free of charge, s. lit. under λειτουργέω 2), in our lit. almost always used w. some sort of relig. connotation. As with the use of the verb λειτουργέω NT writers suggest an aura of high status for those who render any type of service.

1. service of a formal or public type, service

a. of ritual and cultic services (Diod S 1, 21, 7; SIG 1109, 111; UPZ 17, 17 [163 B.C.] λ. τῶ θεῷ; 40, 19 [161 B.C.]; PTebt 302, 30 [s. Dssm. B 138=BS 141]; Ex 37:19; Num 8:22; 16:9; 18:4; 2 Ch 31:2; EpArist; Philo, Virt. 54 al.; Jos., Bell. 1, 26, Ant. 3, 107 al.; Hippol., Ref. 9, 30, 4) *service as priest* **Lk 1:23**. τὰς προσφορὰς καὶ λειτουργίας ἐπιτελεῖσθαι *bring offerings and perform (other) ceremonial services* 1 Cl 40:2. τὰ σκευὴ τῆς λ. *the vessels used in priestly service* **Hb 9:21** (ParJer 3:9, 11, 18). Of the high priest's service 1 Cl 40:5. Fig., of the high-priestly office of Christ **Hb 8:6**.

b. of other kinds of service to God 1 Cl 20:10. Of Noah 1 Cl 9:4. Of Paul (w. θυσία, q.v. 1; cp. BGU 1201, 7 [2 A.D.] πρὸς τὰς λειτουργίας καὶ θυσίας τῶν θεῶν) *sacrificial service* **Phil 2:17**.—Of officials in Christian congregations (ἡ τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς λ. Iren. 3, 3, 3 [Harv. II 10, 3]) διαδέχασθαι τὴν λ. αὐτῶν *succeed to their office* 1 Cl 44:2; ἡ αὐτοῖς τετιμημένη λ. the office held in honor by them 44:6; ἀποβάλλεσθαι τῆς λ. *be removed from office* 44:3. On D 15:1 cp. λειτουργέω 1a.—Also of the activities of a nonofficial pers. in the church service μὴ παρεκβαίνειν τὸν ὠρισμένον τῆς λ. αὐτοῦ κανόνα *not overstepping the fixed boundaries of his service* 1 Cl 41:1. Of acts that show forth Christian charity and other virtues that are beyond the call of ordinary duty and are therefore more like those rendered by public-spirited citizens and thus evoke God's special approval: αἱ λ. αὗται these services Hs 5, 3, 3; cp. 5, 3, 8 (λ. ἐκκλησίας θεοῦ ἐπὶ σωτηρία ἀνθρώπων Orig., C. Cels. 8, 75, 18).—Of angels: λ. τῆς κτίσεως 'service to the creation' Hippol., Ref. 9, 30, 2.

2. service of a personal nature, help, assistance, service transf. sense of the primary mng. and mng. 1: of Epaphroditus' services to Paul ἵνα ἀναπληρώσῃ τὸ ὑμῶν ὑστέρημα τῆς πρὸς με λειτουργίας *in order that he might supply what was lacking in your service to me* **Phil 2:30**. W. ref. to the collection ἡ διακονία τῆς λ. ταύτης **2 Cor 9:12**.—ESchweizer, D. Leben d. Herrn in d. Gemeinde u. ihren Diensten, '46, 19–23; AHillorst, Filologia Neotestamentaria 1, '88, 27–34.—DELG s.v. λαός. M-M. EDNT. TW. Spicq. Sv.

[William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 591.]

begin to emerge with Clement of Rome at the close of the first Christian century and gradually become cemented into Christian thinking with the development of the idea of an ordained clergy in distinction to a laity in the church. For Paul, such thinking would have seemed strange, if not clearly heretical. The label 'vocational Christian ministry' is not a term that can be inserted into the thinking of either Paul or apostolic Christianity! The obligation to serve others as service to Christ is a universal responsibility of every believer, not just of spiritual leaders.

Additionally, the matter of sources for understanding ministry becomes significant to this perspective. Not only must we probe the primary / secondary source issue of Paul's writings and Acts, but also, inside this material is the question of how normative is Paul's experience for others sensing a ministry calling. The above discussions have centered on Paul's experience of ministry calling from his own writings (topic 3.2.0.1) and then from Luke's depiction in Acts. But careful attention has to be given to the level of exemplary role that this experience of Paul plays for Christians in general.

How exemplary is Paul for Christian ministry today?

First, we should ask whether Paul himself thought his experience was to be taken as a model for others to follow. Clearly Paul saw in himself an example to be imitated by other believers, as is reflected in Phil. 3:17, 2 Thess. 3:9, where the Greek word τύπος is used for 'example.' Also ὑποτύπωσις for example is used in 1 Tim. 1:16; the verb ὑποδείκνυμι is used by Paul in Acts 20:35.

Acts 20:35. In all this I have given you **an example** that by such work we must support the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, for he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'

πάντα ὑπέδειξα ὑμῖν ὅτι οὕτως κοπιῶντας δεῖ ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι τῶν ἀσθενούντων, μνημονεῦειν τε τῶν λόγων τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ ὅτι αὐτὸς εἶπεν Μακάριόν ἐστιν μᾶλλον διδόναι ἢ λαμβάνειν.

2 Thess. 3:7-9. 7 For you yourselves know how you ought **to imitate us**; we were not idle when we were with you, 8 and we did not eat anyone's bread without paying for it; but with toil and labor we worked night and day, so that we might not burden any of you. 9 This was not because we do not have that right, but in order to give you an example to imitate.

7 αὐτοὶ γὰρ οἴδατε πῶς δεῖ **μιμεῖσθαι ἡμᾶς**, ὅτι οὐκ ἠτακτήσαμεν ἐν ὑμῖν 8 οὐδὲ δωρεὰν ἄρτον ἐφάγομεν παρά τινος, ἀλλ' ἐν κόπῳ καὶ μόχθῳ νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας ἐργαζόμενοι πρὸς τὸ μὴ ἐπιβαρῆσαί τινα ὑμῶν· 9 οὐχ ὅτι οὐκ ἔχομεν ἐξουσίαν, ἀλλ' ἵνα **ἑαυτοὺς τύπον** δώμεν ὑμῖν **εἰς τὸ μιμεῖσθαι ἡμᾶς**.

1 Cor. 11:1. Be **imitators of me**, as I am of Christ.

μιμηταὶ μου γίνεσθε καθὼς κἀγὼ Χριστοῦ.

Phil. 3:17. Brothers and sisters, join in **imitating me**, and observe those who live according to **the example** you have in us.

Συμμιμηταὶ μου γίνεσθε, ἀδελφοί, καὶ σκοπεῖτε τοὺς οὕτω περιπατοῦντας καθὼς ἔχετε **τύπον ἡμᾶς**.

1 Tim. 1:16. But for that very reason I received mercy, so that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display the utmost patience, making **me an example** to those who would come to believe in him for eternal life.

ἀλλὰ διὰ τοῦτο ἠλεήθην, ἵνα ἐν ἐμοὶ πρῶτω ἐνδείξηται Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς τὴν ἄπασαν μακροθυμίαν, πρὸς **ὑποτύπωσιν** τῶν μελλόντων πιστεῦειν ἐπ' αὐτῷ εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον.

In a day where written scriptures were available only from the Old Testament, and even then only to a small minority of believers, the observable example of Christian leaders played a very significant role in making clear what being a Christian was about. Orally given instruction on Christian behavior and commitment clearly was a part of the teaching package given by Paul, as well as his letters to the various churches that provided written instruction. For believers to see these concepts being lived out by their leaders served not only to affirm the validity of these instructions but also to clarify their meaning for daily living. Paul recognized this in his instruction to the Christian leaders in Ephesus with his affirmation to them in Acts 20:35.⁹⁰ Some years later he would affirm the same thing to Timothy who at the time was seeking to help these same churches and leaders at Ephesus; note his words in 1 Tim. 4:12, **Let no one despise your youth, but set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity**, μηδεὶς σου τῆς νεότητος καταφρονεῖτω, ἀλλὰ τύπος γίνου τῶν πιστῶν ἐν λόγῳ, ἐν ἀναστροφῇ, ἐν ἀγάπῃ, ἐν πίστει, ἐν ἀγνεῖα.

Unquestionably then, Paul saw himself responsible to set an example for other Christians to follow. The language of τύπος, ὑποτύπωσις, ὑποδείκνυμι, μιμητής, and μιμέομαι for example is genuinely Pauline without reflecting pride or superiority on his part.⁹¹ Careful observation of these scripture texts reflect that Paul's empha-

⁹⁰Acts 20:35. In all this I have given you an example that by such work we must support the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, for he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' πάντα ὑπέδειξα ὑμῖν ὅτι οὕτως κοπιῶντας δεῖ ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι τῶν ἀσθενούντων, μνημονεῦειν τε τῶν λόγων τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ ὅτι αὐτὸς εἶπεν Μακάριόν ἐστιν μᾶλλον διδόναι ἢ λαμβάνειν.

⁹¹"A number of different Greek words are found where the NIV and the NASB read 'example.' The basic meaning of the most significant words (hypodeigma and typos) is that of a figure or pattern, which can serve as a model. In the NT the pattern is nearly always established by a person whose words and actions provide a living expression of that which Scripture calls for from all believers. At times

sis on following his example centered on behavior and ministry to others. Although in Acts 20:35 and 1 Tim. 4:12 he spoke to Christian leaders, the emphasis doesn't shift from the focus in the remaining passages. He saw his example as applicable to all believers, not just to spiritual leaders. The very short admonition in 1 Cor. 11:1 is insightful (Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ. μιμηταί μου γίνεσθε, καθώς κάγω Χριστοῦ.), in that Paul's example to other believers was valid only to the extent that it modeled the example of Christ. Paul amplifies the details in Phil. 4:9, *Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you*, ἃ καὶ ἐμάθετε καὶ παρελάβετε καὶ ἤκούσατε καὶ εἶδετε ἐν ἐμοί, ταῦτα πράσσετε· καὶ ὁ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης ἔσται μεθ' ὑμῶν. The importance of example lies behind the guidelines set forth for Christian leaders in Titus 1:5-9 and 1 Tim. 3:1-13.



What remains unanswered by Paul in these texts is the extent he saw his own *calling to ministry* as normative for others. One can assume many of the core aspects of ministry calling in Paul's personal experience as normative. But allowance must also be made for individual aspects to be distinctive only for Paul himself and derived out of who Paul was and the specific mission that God had in mind for him. For example, a calling to apostleship is certainly not normative, since these apostles were limited solely to the Twelve and to Paul.

Methodologically, the better approach is to begin with elements of Paul's ministry calling that are unique to him and thus not applicable to anyone else.

First, most clearly is the uniqueness of Paul's calling to be an ἀπόστολος, apostle. Although capable of several shades of meaning, its dominant designation in the New Testament is of the Twelve and of Paul.⁹² These individuals functioned in the early church as the special representatives of Christ commissioned directly by Him to spread His message and teachings to the world. Thus their role was completed with the end of their earthly life and their heritage continues as the Christian New Testament, which is the compilation of the writings the example found in the Bible is negative (Heb 4). But the concept of example is essentially positive.” [Lawrence O. Richards, *New International Encyclopedia of Bible Words : Based on the NIV and the NASB*, Zondervan's understand the Bible reference series (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999), 256.]

⁹²“This adjective (Plato, Ep. 7.346 a) and noun derives from the verb *apostellō*, ‘send, dispatch,’¹ and like this verb it has a large variety of nuances that flow from the context.²

“From Herodotus on, *apostolos* refers to the bearer of a message, such as the herald sent by Alyattes to Miletus (1.21). Varus authorizes a ‘delegation’ (*ton apostolon*) of Jews to Rome (Josephus, *Ant.* 17.300, the only occurrence; 1.146 is very poorly attested). The word means someone sent on a mission out of the country, or an ‘expedition,’³ or a group of colonists (Dionysius of Halicarnassus 9.5). Beginning in the fourth century, however, *apostolos* almost always refers to a naval expedition, a fleet,⁴ a transport ship (P.Oxy. 522, 1; P.Tebt. 486: *logos apostolou* Triadelphou; PSI 1229, 13). In the papyri, it is a technical term⁵ for the *naulōtikai syngraphai*, the official papers ordering the shipment of grain by boat on the Nile from the public granaries to Alexandria.⁶ The *apostolos* is a passport, a safe-conduct, or, if the bearer wished to leave, an exit authorization (*prostagma*, P.Oxy. 1271; cf. Strabo 2.3.5), an export license. *Gnomon of the Idios Logos* 162 prescribes: ‘Legal proceeding against persons who have embarked (at Alexandria) without a passport (*chōris apostolou*) now fall under the jurisdiction of the prefects.’⁷

“None of these meanings from everyday or legal parlance, except for the basic meaning ‘envoy, emissary,’⁸ can explain the extreme theological density of this term in the NT, especially in St. Paul. Paul's usage presupposes a Semitic substrate, namely that of the *šaliaḥ*,⁹ an institution apparently going back to Jehoshaphat.¹⁰ This person is not a mere envoy but a *chargé d'affaires*, a person's authorized representative; his acts are binding upon the ‘sender.’¹¹ At this point the principal and the proxy are equivalent: ‘A person's *šaliaḥ* is as the person himself.’¹² This rule carries over into the religious sphere: when the *šaliaḥ* acts on God's orders, it is God himself who acts (b. B. Meṣ. 86b), as in the case of Abraham, Elijah, or Elisha (Midr. Ps. 78 5; 173b). The rabbis considered the priest who offered the sacrifice to be God's *šaliaḥ*, ‘doing more than we can do’ (b. Qidd. 23b; cf. Rengstorf, ‘ἀπόστολος,’ in *TDNT*, vol. 1, pp. 407, 419, 424), and on the Day of Atonement they called the high priest ‘the people's representative before God’ (m. Yoma 1.5; m. Giṭ. 3.6). On the other hand, in the Mishnah and the Talmud, the *šaliaḥ* represents the community (m. Roš Haš. 4.9), invested with the power given him by his constituents. These data were little by little transferred into the Christian tradition.

“Jesus spent the night praying to God. When it was day he called his disciples, and having chosen twelve from among them, he named them apostles’ (*kai apostolous ὀνομασεν*).¹³ Among the *mathētai* who followed him, shared his life, and belonged to him (cf. *talmīdīm*, students of a master), Christ marked out twelve who would represent him in a special way, would be more closely associated with him,¹⁴ and would therefore have special authority. For the moment nothing is said concerning their function, except that the word *šaliaḥ* in itself indicates that they would be envoys and proxies with appropriate powers.¹⁵ This is what Mark 6:7 says on the occasion of the temporary mission in Galilee: ‘He called the Twelve to himself and began to send them (*apostellein*) two by two, giving them power over unclean spirits’ (cf. Matt 10:1–2). With Jesus' *exousia* at their disposal, the apostles are prepared to carry out their mission. Here we already see the essential character of Christian apostleship.”

[Ceslas Spicq and James D. Ernest, vol. 1, *Theological Lexicon of the New Testament* (Peabody, MA.: Hendrickson, 1994), 186-90.]

of the apostles as sacred scripture. Therefore as Paul himself declares in Eph. 2:20, Christian experience in the household of God is “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone” (οἰκεῖοι τοῦ θεοῦ, ἐποικοδομηθέντες ἐπὶ τῷ θεμελίῳ τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ προφητῶν, ὄντος ἀκρογωνιαίου αὐτοῦ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ). In the 80 uses of ἀπόστολος in the pages of the New Testament, the dominate meaning of the word is to specify either Paul or the original Twelve, as is reflected in the above chart. With the death of the apostle John toward the close of the first century, the role of apostle came to an end and their witness shifted to the written record of their understanding in the twenty-seven documents of the New Testament. But other ministry functions that Paul used about himself -- κῆρυξ (*preacher*), διδάσκαλος (*teacher*), δοῦλος (*servant*), διάκονος (*minister*) -- do not possess the unique quality that ἀπόστολος (*apostle*) did, and so have continuing relevancy for Christian servants.

Second, one should be very cautious about seeing Paul’s Damascus road experience of conversion and calling rolled into a single experience as universally normative. The so-called calling narratives in the Synoptic Gospels of five of the Twelve suggest the likelihood that others in the early church had different experiences. In Mark 1:16-20 with parallel accounts in Matthew 4:18-22 and Luke 5:1-11, two sets of brothers -- Peter and Andrew; James and John -- were issued a simple calling to ministry by Jesus with the words, Δεῦτε ὀπίσω μου, καὶ ποιήσω ὑμᾶς γενέσθαι ἀλιεῖς ἀνθρώπων, *Come behind me, and I will make you become fishers of men!* Few would seek to identify this as a conversion experience; rather, it stands as Jesus’ calling to serve by becoming a follower of Christ. A little later in His beginning ministry Jesus also issued a similar calling to the tax collector Matthew, whose Jewish name was Levi, as recorded in Mark. 2:13-17 with parallels in Matt. 9:9-13 and Luke 5:27-32: Ἀκολούθει μοι, *Follow me!*⁹³ Signals are present in the gospel accounts, and are supplemented by John 1:35-51, that prior contact with Jesus had taken place in which a commitment to Christ as the promised Messiah took place. Thus conversion and calling may come in the same experience, as was the case with Paul. But they may come separately as seems to be the case with at least seven of the Twelve apostles.

These two aspects appear to me as the primary unique dimensions of Paul’s ministry calling. Thus in varying ways the other aspects of his ministry calling would have potential application to any and everyone sensing God’s calling on their lives.

Now consideration of Paul’s teaching about ministry and God’s calling needs to be explored, in part as a summary of what we have been examining throughout this chapter. I want to take a look at this topic around two emphases: the meaning of divine calling and possible directions of ministry service coming out of that calling.

One aspect should be noted at the beginning. Drawing upon that teaching means utilizing three perspectives set forth primarily in the writings of Paul. First, his awareness of his own calling from God; second, his admonitions to other Christian leaders, such as Timothy and Titus; and third, general principles set forth about ministry in his letters and speeches.

3.3.0.1 Divine Calling

Clearly the apostle Paul understood Christian service to originate from God, and not from the individual. Two groups of terms loom as pivotal in Paul’s thinking: the divine will (θέλημα, βούλημα) and the divine calling (καλέω, κλητός). Both are foundational to religious existence and religious activity by individuals.

God’s will, as defined in Paul,⁹⁴ is all inclusive and provides the divine plan for all humanity both for their spiritual existence and for their daily patterns of living. According to Eph. 1:11, God’s will is the framework of His actions toward humanity: κατὰ πρόθεσιν τοῦ τὰ πάντα ἐνεργοῦντος κατὰ τὴν βουλήν τοῦ θελήματος αὐτοῦ, *according to the purpose of the One who does everything according to the intention of His will.* This inclusive view by Paul is consistent with the rest of the New Testament.⁹⁵

Additionally, Paul affirms that God has a purpose in His plan and will, as ἡ πρόθεσις τοῦ θεοῦ expresses

⁹³The difference between Δεῦτε ὀπίσω μου and Ἀκολούθει μοι is minimal, being essentially two different ways to say the same thing in ancient Greek. Interestingly the three Synoptic Gospels uniformly maintain the two sets of commands with the two commissioning texts in their gospel accounts.

⁹⁴θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ, God’s will, is referenced in Rom. 1:10; 2:18; 12:2; 15:32; 1 Cor. 1:1; 2 Cor. 1:1; 8:5; Gal. 1:4; Eph. 1:1, 5, 9, 11; 5:17; 6:6; Col. 1:1, 9; 4:12; 1 Thess. 4:3; 5:18; 2 Tim. 1:1; 2:26. ἡ βουλή τοῦ θεοῦ, God’s will, is referenced in 1 Cor. 4:5 and Eph. 1:11. Closely related is τὸ βούλημα τοῦ θεοῦ, God’s will, that is referenced in Rom. 9:19. Both ἡ βουλή and τὸ βούλημα stress the idea of a plan to be implemented, while τὸ θέλημα stresses a desire for something.

⁹⁵Compare the remaining uses of these three terms elsewhere in the NT: θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ, Mt. 6:10; 7:21; 12:50; 18:14; 21:31; 26:42; Mk. 3:35; Lk. 22:42; Jhn. 1:13; 4:34; 5:30; 6:38; 39, 40; 7:17; 9:31; Acts. 21:14; 22:14; Heb. 10:7, 9, 10, 36; 13:21; 1 Pet. 2:15; 3:17; 4:2, 19; 2 Pet. 1:21; 1 Jhn 2:17; 5:14; Rev. 4:11 ; ἡ βουλή τοῦ θεοῦ, Acts 2:23; 4:28; 5:38; 13:36; 20:27; Heb. 6:17; τὸ βούλημα τοῦ θεοῦ is not found outside of Paul’s writings,

in Rom. 8:28; 9:11; Eph. 1:11; 3:11; 2 Tim. 1:9. What is God's purpose? These texts in Paul's writings provide critical insight into the apostle's understanding of that divine purpose.

Eph. 3:7-12. 7 Of this gospel I have become a **servant** according to the gift of God's grace that was given me by the working of his power. 8 Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me **to bring to the Gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ, 9 and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things;** 10 so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. 11 This was **in accordance with the eternal purpose** that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, 12 in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

7 οὗ ἐγενήθην **διάκονος** κατὰ τὴν δωρεὰν τῆς χάριτος τοῦ θεοῦ τῆς δοθείσης μοι κατὰ τὴν ἐνέργειαν τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ — 8 ἐμοὶ τῷ ἐλαχιστοτέρῳ πάντων ἁγίων ἐδόθη ἡ χάρις αὕτη — **τοῖς ἔθνεσιν εὐαγγελίσασθαι τὸ ἀνεξίχνιαστον πλοῦτος τοῦ Χριστοῦ, 9 καὶ φωτίσαι πάντας τὴν οἰκονομία τοῦ μυστηρίου τοῦ ἀποκεκρυμμένου ἀπὸ τῶν αἰώνων ἐν τῷ θεῷ τῷ τὰ πάντα κτίσαντι,** 10 ἵνα γνωρισθῇ νῦν ταῖς ἀρχαῖς καὶ ταῖς ἐξουσίαις ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις διὰ τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἡ πολυποίκιλος σοφία τοῦ θεοῦ, 11 **κατὰ πρόθεσιν τῶν αἰώνων** ἦν ἐποίησεν ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν, 12 ἐν ᾧ ἔχομεν τὴν παρρησίαν καὶ προσαγωγὴν ἐν πεποιθήσει διὰ τῆς πίστεως αὐτοῦ.

In this deeply profound expression of spiritual truth, God's eternal purpose (πρόθεσιν τῶν αἰώνων, v. 11) found its expression in Christ Jesus who provides access to God (vv. 11b-12).⁹⁶ This purpose is linked closely to ἡ οἰκονομία τοῦ μυστηρίου, **the management of the divine mystery**, hidden in God from the beginning of time (v. 9). Also this purpose is the ἡ πολυποίκιλος σοφία τοῦ θεοῦ, **the richly diverse wisdom of God**, now to be made known to everyone including the supernatural rulers and powers in the universe (v. 10). What God intended was to provide understanding of Himself to His creation so that through Christ sinful humanity could gain access into His holy presence. Paul sees the church as the disclosing instrument (διὰ τῆς ἐκκλησίας) of the management of that mystery. This mystery to be made known centers in τὸ ἀνεξίχνιαστον πλοῦτος τοῦ Χριστοῦ, **the limitless riches of Christ** (v. 8). The apostle saw himself as a divinely called διάκονος, **minister**, commissioned to εὐαγγελίσασθαι, **proclaim**, and φωτίσαι, **to enlighten**, this mystery of the riches of Christ to all humanity (vv. 7-9).

Thus in the midst of a typically long Pauline Greek sentence, Eph. 3:1-12, Paul reflects in vv. 7-12 on his calling as a minister of the Gospel to make the gospel known to the Gentile world of his day. The disclosure of access to God for all humanity through Christ lay at the heart of Paul's calling, which the apostle understood to be at the center of God's purpose for humanity. Here is the heart of the divine calling of every Christian: we have been called by God to make this profound will of God known to all! Every believer comes under this mandate, for Paul asserted that God's intention is to work through the church to get this message out to the world. As Paul indicates in vv. 1-6, that message was first given to the apostles and prophets by the Holy Spirit (v. 4), and now the church has the divinely appointed mission of disclosing that message to the entire world.

Eph. 1:11-12. 11 In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined **according to the purpose** of him **who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will,** 12 so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory.

11 ἐν ᾧ καὶ ἐκληρώθημεν προορισθέντες **κατὰ πρόθεσιν τοῦ τὰ πάντα ἐνεργοῦντος κατὰ τὴν βουλήν τοῦ θελήματος αὐτοῦ,** 12 εἰς τὸ εἶναι ἡμᾶς εἰς ἔπαινον δόξης αὐτοῦ τοὺς προηλπικότας ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ·

Once again, in this longest single sentence found in the Greek New Testament, 1:3-14, Paul sets up the rich expression in 3:1-13 with celebration of the divine purpose here in this beginning section of the letter Proem of Ephesians. Paul affirms that everything God does comes out of τὴν βουλήν τοῦ θελήματος αὐτοῦ, **the plan of His will**. **This divine plan** based in God's desires comes with a πρόθεσιν, **purpose**. God does nothing by impulse or without

⁹⁶I suspect that few, if any, of us today fully grasp the spiritual significance of Paul's expression τὴν παρρησίαν καὶ προσαγωγὴν ἐν πεποιθήσει διὰ τῆς πίστεως αὐτοῦ, **courage and access to God with confidence through faith in Him**, in v. 12. Paul, along with the first century Jewish Christians, had the very visible reminder of the Jerusalem temple in its structural design and religious restrictions that imposed severe limitations on access to the inner court, and especially to the Holy of Holies, where God's presence on earth resided. For one to worship in the Jewish temple meant clearly that no one outside the Jewish high priest had complete access to God, and he only had it one time a year for less than an hour. In the isolated theophany texts in the Bible where God discloses Himself to individuals more directly, one universal trait of such texts is to reflect on the overwhelming nature of such moments to individuals granted such an opportunity. The dominant common human response to God's presence is that of sheer terror and paralyzing fear. In modern church life, we sometimes sing 'our God is an awesome God,' but I seriously doubt that any of those singing this have a clue as to what it alludes to from a genuinely biblical perspective.

At the heart of the gospel message in Paul's depiction here in Eph. 3:1-13 is that all humanity, whether Jew or Gentile, can gain access into the presence of this overwhelming God through Christ Jesus. This access through Christ comes with confidence (πεποιθήσει) and courage (παρρησίαν) to enter into God's presence, not because of anything in us or anything we have accomplished. But solely because we come through Christ into God's presence. Apart from this there would be instant death to the individual!

an objective clearly in mind! Every action is carefully planned out and has an objective in mind, which Paul came to state in 3:1-13 in the letter body. In this part of the letter Proem in verse 11, our **being granted an inheritance** (ἐν ᾧ καὶ ἐκληρώθημεν) in Christ is a part of the **carefully planned out** (προορισθέντες) **objective** (πρόθεσιν). No wonder the apostle begins this prayer of praise with **Εὐλογητὸς ὁ θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ**, in v. 3. To be a recipient of such a blessing is marvelous. To have the privilege of sharing such good news with the rest of the world is even greater!

Rom. 8:28-30. 28 We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. 29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. 30 And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

28 Οἶδαμεν δὲ ὅτι τοῖς ἀγαπῶσι τὸν θεὸν πάντα συνεργεῖ εἰς ἀγαθόν, τοῖς κατὰ πρόθεσιν κλητοῖς οὖσιν. 29 ὅτι οὖς προέγνω, καὶ προώρισεν συμμόρφους τῆς εἰκόνος τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ, εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸν πρωτότοκον ἐν πολλοῖς ἀδελφοῖς· 30 οὖς δὲ προώρισεν, τούτους καὶ ἐκάλεσεν· καὶ οὖς ἐκάλεσεν, τούτους καὶ ἐδικαίωσεν· οὖς δὲ ἐδικαίωσεν, τούτους καὶ ἐδόξασεν.

In this earlier letter to the church at Rome, Paul packs into a single Greek sentence⁹⁷ an amazing picture of the divine purpose of God. The past actions of God (stated in vv. 29-30) -- οὖς προέγνω, καὶ προώρισεν συμμόρφους τῆς εἰκόνος τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ, εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸν πρωτότοκον ἐν πολλοῖς ἀδελφοῖς· οὖς δὲ προώρισεν, τούτους καὶ ἐκάλεσεν· καὶ οὖς ἐκάλεσεν, τούτους καὶ ἐδικαίωσεν· οὖς δὲ ἐδικαίωσεν, τούτους καὶ ἐδόξασεν -- define the heart of God's πρόθεσιν, **purpose**, in calling us into salvation. In the causal expression of vv. 29-30 Paul paints the picture of God's salvation action from start to finish as an already completed plan of action before ever being implemented.⁹⁸ If God is smart enough to devise in advance such an elaborate plan as this that can potentially impact every human being, it is clear that He is smart enough to know how to turn bad in our lives into something good. Such is easy for God to do, in light of the profound plan of salvation He has already put in place.

Paul then clearly understood the divine plan and purpose of God for His creation to center in salvation through Christ Jesus. The focus of this salvation is centered in new life in Christ as 8:1-27 describe in great detail. Later in Rom. 9:11, Paul sees this grand purpose of God (ἢ κατ' ἐκλογὴν πρόθεσις τοῦ θεοῦ) that led Him to the deliberate choice of Isaac as a part of that plan. God saw the 'big picture' while we can only see a small part of it, and thus have trouble understanding some of the decisions that have been made. Paul further argues that this choice of Isaac represents divine mercy (9:16), not injustice.

What Paul declares to the Christians at Rome is a God who thinks big, plans big, and has great intentions behind those plans. His actions in regard to His creation, and to humanity in that creation, then grow out of those plans and objectives. And most wonderfully, all of this centers in His desire to bring alienated creation back to Himself, and to provide sinful humanity a way to gain access into His holy presence without being destroyed. All of this was accomplished in and through Christ.



⁹⁷The current editions of the UBS *Greek New Testament* (4th rev.) and the Nestle-Aland *Novum Testamentum Graece* (27th rev) mistakenly treat the subordinate conjunction ὅτι (v. 29) as though it were a substitute for the coordinate conjunction γάρ. And thus inject a period at the end of verse 28. The older editions of the Nestle *Novum Testamentum Graece*, prior to the 25th ed., got it right by inserting a comma at the end of verse 27. Some modern translations adopt this as well, including the NIV, VP, NJB. The tendency of current editorial committees to squeeze the ancient Greek text into the framework of modern English is too great to resist at times.

The importance of this is that verse 29 stands as the conceptual basis for the axiom in verse 28. What we know about how God works now (v. 28) rests on the foundation of what He has already done in the past (v. 29). This close linkage of the two ideas is critical to proper understanding of this text. The very Jewish thought structure here is the argument from 'the greater to the lessor' (i.e., heavy to light). The more difficult past actions of God assure us of the easier actions of God in the present.

⁹⁸This prior planning of God is signaled clearly by the uniform use of the Aorist tense verbs in verses 29-30. All of these actions have been previously set up to be ready to be implemented in the lives of those who respond in faith commitment to God's invitation to come to Christ.

It is this divine objective that stands behind His saving action and calling to ministry, according to 2 Tim. 1:9, τοῦ σώσαντος ἡμᾶς καὶ καλέσαντος κλήσει ἁγία, οὐ κατὰ τὰ ἔργα ἡμῶν ἀλλὰ κατὰ ἰδίαν πρόθεσιν καὶ χάριν, τὴν δοθεῖσαν ἡμῖν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ πρὸ χρόνων αἰωνίων, *who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus before the ages began.*

For the apostle, his conversion experience with Christ expanded his horizons to be able to grasp that life in this world operates through the grand design of Almighty God. Further, he came to realize that our individual lives are best lived out when they are lived in harmony with this cosmic plan and intention of our God. In stark contrast to the pagan religious traditions of his day that saw little or no divine intention behind the events of life apart from the gods playing around with humans in a ‘cat and mouse’ kind of cruel game, Paul understood and proclaimed to that world that the God of this universe operates according to a plan that is focused on reconciling His creation back to Himself in harmony and peace. The indescribable privilege for the redeemed of God in Christ is that they get to not only live out their lives by that plan but are called by the Heavenly Father to announce that plan to all the world as the basis of life and hope. It is through God’s indwelling presence in their lives by the Holy Spirit that such a life and service become possible.

Thus a ministry calling comes as a part of this all encompassing plan of God for all creation. At the heart of such a calling is the privilege of giving to humanity the greatest news ever to happen since the fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Reconciliation with your Creator is now possible through Christ Jesus! Through faith commitment to God’s Son you can gain access into the Divine Presence of Almighty God without risking destruction. His absolute holiness and purity, once a huge threat that would bring immediate destruction to anyone and anything unpure, now has been overcome through the redeeming work of Christ on the cross. God remains utter purity and holiness, true to His very being, but He provided a way of safe and secure access to Himself in Christ. And this access is available not just to a select few ‘chosen’ people, but to all humanity, although corrupt to its very core with sin, by coming to God’s Son in surrender of life to Him. Paul saw his own ministry of preaching and teaching this Gospel message not as unique or him being the only one with such opportunity. Rather he understood that this was the privilege and responsibility of all believers. Some would devote their entire lives to such ministry; and the rest would use every opportunity in their daily living to share that news with everyone possible. His goal was to help train up those whom God brought to Himself so that they would faithfully spread this marvelous message. Now that is ministry calling at its highest and best!

3.3.0.2 Ministry Directions

In Paul’s writings, ministry is for every believer, not just for spiritual leaders. Consequently, the often made modern distinction between service (by all) and ministry (by leaders) is not relevant to the apostle’s understanding.⁹⁹ And the apostle makes it clear in Eph. 4:11-12 that the divine gifting of leaders -- τοὺς μὲν ἀποστόλους, τοὺς δὲ προφήτας, τοὺς δὲ εὐαγγελιστάς, τοὺς δὲ ποιμένας καὶ διδασκάλους -- is intended πρὸς τὸν καταρτισμὸν τῶν ἁγίων *εἰς ἔργον διακονίας*, *for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry*. Ministry is the responsibility of all believers and the responsibility of leaders is to prepare them well to do ministry.¹⁰⁰ In this perspective

⁹⁹The translation of λειτουργία as either ‘service’ or ‘ministry’ by the NRSV in the writings of Paul (Phil. 2:30, 2 Cor. 9:12) underscores this interchangeability of the two English words. In Phil. 2:30 it is a reference to the support of Paul by the entire church at Philippi, while in 2 Cor. 9:12 it is a reference to the relief offering collected by Paul from the churches for the saints in Jerusalem.

¹⁰⁰Further affirmation of this Pauline view comes in Rom. 12:7 where διακονία, *ministry*, is one of the gifts of God for members of the body of Christ along side the other service gifts mentioned in 12:3-8. No distinction in this listing is made between ‘leaders’ and ‘others’ in the church. None of the gifts outside of προϊστάμενος, *the one leading*, in v. 8 allude to of any kind of leadership role, and certainly none of these gifts elevate the possessor to a higher status in the congregation. And even here προϊστάμενος alludes to one standing at the head of the group setting the example for the others to follow as a servant leader. First Peter 5:1-4 provides the correct amplification of the concept implied by Paul in Rom. 12:8. Both draw off Jesus’ teaching of the servant leader model, as reflected in Luke 22:24-27 et als.

24 A dispute also arose among them as to which one of them was to be regarded as the greatest. 25 But he said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those in authority over them are called benefactors. 26 But not so with you; rather the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like **one who serves**. 27 For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one at the table? But I am among you as **one who serves**.



ministry is something believers do, not who they are. Even the nine different ways that διακονία is translated by the New Revised Standard Version reflects the various ways that believers can engage in service actions.

What direction can the divine ministry calling take? The Louw - Nida Greek Lexicon lists some eighteen different words in the Greek New Testament related to Christian service possibilities in the first century communities of believers.¹⁰¹ Although a few of the terms such as ἀπόστολος, Χριστός, Μεσσίας are limited to the apostolic era and no longer valid, the majority of these terms continue to be legitimate paths of service actions for believers in ministry through the church.¹⁰² And most all of the terms appear in the Pauline writings of the New Testament. Added to this listing should be the ministry gifts in the various writings of Paul.¹⁰³ Again the strong emphasis is

24 Ἐγένετο δὲ καὶ φιλονεικία ἐν αὐτοῖς, τὸ τίς αὐτῶν δοκεῖ εἶναι μείζων. 25 ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· οἱ βασιλεῖς τῶν ἐθνῶν κυριεύουσιν αὐτῶν καὶ οἱ ἐξουσιάζοντες αὐτῶν ἐνεργεῖται καλοῦνται. 26 ὑμεῖς δὲ οὐχ οὕτως, ἀλλ' ὁ μείζων ἐν ὑμῖν γινέσθω ὡς ὁ νεώτερος καὶ ὁ ἡγούμενος ὡς ὁ διακονῶν. 27 τίς γὰρ μείζων, ὁ ἀνακείμενος ἢ ὁ διακονῶν; οὐχὶ ὁ ἀνακείμενος; ἐγὼ δὲ ἐν μέσῳ ὑμῶν εἰμι ὡς ὁ διακονῶν.

¹⁰¹Quite interestingly, Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, in the *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* [electronic ed. of the 2nd edition. New York: United Bible Societies, 1996.], list thirty plus separate Greek words used in the New Testament that refer to some type of religious service (topics 53.66 - 53.95, I. Roles and Functions). Not all of them designate Christian activities (e.g., 53.91 Λευίτης, Levite), and some of them specify false or pseudo Christian actions (e.g., 53.75 ψευδαπόστολος, false apostle).

Here are those that specify legitimate Christian service (literally or figuratively) and with the negative counterpart also listed: 53.66 διακονέω (I serve), 53.67 διάκονος (servant); 53.68 εὐπάρεδρον (devoted service to God); 53.69 ἐπισκοπή (leadership), 53.70 ἐπισκοπέω (I lead), 53.71 ἐπίσκοπος (leader); 53.72 ποιμήν (shepherd, pastor); 53.73 ἀποστολή (apostleship), 53.74 ἀπόστολος (apostle), 53.75 ψευδαπόστολος (false apostle); 53.76 εὐαγγελιστής (evangelist); 53.77 πρεσβύτερος (elder), 53.78 συμπρεσβύτερος (fellow elder); 53.79 προφήτης (prophet), 53.80 προφήτις (prophetess), 53.81 ψευδοπροφήτης (false prophet); 53.82 Χριστός, Μεσσίας (Christ, Messiah), 53.83 ἀντίχριστος (antichrist), 53.84 ψευδόχριστος (false messiah); 53.85 ἱερουργέω; ἱερατεύω (I serve as a priest, cf. Rom. 15:16 w. fig. mng.), 53.86 ἱερατεία, ἱεράτευμα, ἱερωσύνη (priesthood, cf. 1 Pet. 2:5 w. fig. mng.).

Those that identify first century Jewish religious activity include 53.87 ἱερεὺς (priest), 53.88 ἀρχιερεὺς (chief priest), 53.89 ἀρχιερεὺς (high priest), 53.90 ἀρχιερατικός, ὄν (pertaining to high priest); 53.91 Λευίτης (Levite), 53.92 Λευιτικός, ἢ, ὄν (Levitical); 53.93 ἀρχισυνάγωγος (leader of a synagogue); 53.94 γραμματεὺς (scribe); 53.95 νεοκόρος (temple guard & maintenance keeper).

¹⁰²An additional four of these terms refer to negative ministry roles that one would seriously want to avoid: 53.75 ψευδαπόστολος (false apostle); 53.81 ψευδοπροφήτης (false prophet); 53.83 ἀντίχριστος (antichrist), 53.84 ψευδόχριστος (false messiah).

¹⁰³**Rom. 12:3-8.** 3For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. 4 For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, 5 so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. 6 We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: **prophecy (προφητεῖαν)**, in proportion to faith; 7 **ministry (διακονίαν)**, in ministering; **the teacher (ὁ διδάσκων)**, in teaching; 8 **the exhorter (ὁ παρακαλῶν)**, in exhortation; **the giver (ὁ μεταδίδους)**, in generosity; **the leader (ὁ προϊστάμενος)**, in diligence; **the compassionate (ὁ ἐλεῶν)**, in cheerfulness.

1 Cor. 12:4-15. 4 Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; 5 and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; 6 and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. 7 To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. 8 To one is given through the Spirit **the utterance of wisdom (λόγος σοφίας)**, and to another **the utterance of knowledge (λόγος γνώσεως)** according to the same Spirit, 9 to another **faith (πίστις)** by the same Spirit, to another **gifts of healing (χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων)** by the one Spirit, 10 to another **the working of miracles (ἐνεργήματα δυνάμεων)**, to another **prophecy (προφητεία)**, to another **the discernment of spirits (διακρίσεις πνευμάτων)**, to another **various kinds of tongues (γένη γλωσσῶν)**, to another **the interpretation of tongues (ἐρμηνεῖα γλωσσῶν)**. 11 All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.

12 For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. 13 For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. 14 Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many.

1 Cor. 12:27-31. 27 Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. 28 And God has appointed (ἔθετο ὁ θεός) in the church **first apostles (πρῶτον ἀποστόλους)**, **second prophets (δεύτερον προφήτας)**, **third teachers (τρίτον διδασκάλους)**; then **deeds of power (ἔπειτα δυνάμεις)**, then **gifts of healing (ἔπειτα χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων)**, forms of assistance (ἀντιλήψεις), forms of leadership (κυβερνήσεις), **various kinds of tongues (γένη γλωσσῶν)**. 29 Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? 30 Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? 31 But strive for the greater gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way.

Eph. 4:11-13. 11 The gifts he gave were that some would be **apostles (τοὺς μὲν ἀποστόλους)**, some **prophets (τοὺς δὲ προφήτας)**, some **evangelists (τοὺς δὲ εὐαγγελιστάς)**, some **pastors and teachers (τοὺς δὲ ποιμένας καὶ διδασκάλους)**, 12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, 13 until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ.

Also from Peter's perspective in **1 Peter. 4:10-11.** 10 Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. 11 **Whoever speaks (τις λαλεῖ)** must do so as one speaking the very words of God; **whoever serves (τις διακονεῖ)** must do so with the strength that God supplies, so that God may be glorified in all things through Jesus Christ. To him belong the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.

that these are 'authorizations' (χάρισμα) from God through His Spirit as expressions of His favor (χάριτος θεοῦ). This divine 'gifting' is upon every believer, not just a select few. The point to note in our discussion is the wide diversity of opportunities for serving Christ that become available. Each of these listings contain mostly different items that underscore either Paul's or Peter's sense of what needed to be emphasized to each group of readers being targeted by these apostles.

Out of this should come an emerging picture that in the early church God's provision moved along the observed needs surfacing in the various communities of faith. The developing structures in the Christian movement from the beginning Jewish phase to the later Gentile - Jewish composition of believers evolved around what was needed at the time, and thus these structures developed and some even changed as time passed. The fluid nature of Christian organization in the first century does not draw hard and fast boundaries between local organization and regional organization. One could be a δῖκονος (*servant*) in a local setting, and also as a regional servant who traveled from place to place. Additionally, at the local level the existing structures developed out of the house-church structure of Christianity in small groups as the gathering site of believers.

Although a lot of this picture emerges from Luke in the Book of Acts, the writings of Paul do not contradict and conflict with this picture with their portrayal of first century church life. In chapters twelve through twenty-eight much of the established organizational patterns came about through Paul's ministry of establishing most of the churches in the northeastern Mediterranean world.

What can be concluded from this picture coming out of the New Testament? The central point is that emerging organizational patterns in a church should center on meeting spiritual and physical needs in the group and in the community the congregation seeks to minister to around it. And those structural patterns are not set in concrete. To the contrary, a needs based structure will be adjusted and adapted as needs shift, which some will inevitably do over time. And the local group must always keep a broader world in its horizon with commitment to assist in sharing the gospel message far beyond its own geographical location. The repeated financial support of Paul's ministry by the Philippian congregation (cf. Phil. 4:10-20) and the major collection of the relief offering by the Gentile oriented Pauline churches for the believers in Jerusalem (cf. 2 Cor. 8-9) illustrate this larger vision by the Pauline churches of the first century. These groups of believers understood and took seriously the Lord's commission to evangelize their world (Matt. 28:16-20 and Acts 1:8-9).

What this kind of vigorous and dynamic Christianity did under Paul's leadership -- along with the other leaders -- was to provide a huge variety of ministry possibilities at all levels from the local group to the regional to the extensive world of the Mediterranean Sea. The options of ministry opened up with the vigorous activities of spreading the Gospel across that first century world in rapid fashion.

Quite clearly from Paul's own experience as a model as well as from his teaching, the individual's choice of ministry direction came from the prompting of God in ministry calling. Beyond the divine invitation to serve here or in this way came a 'gifting' from the Lord that provided the spiritual enablement for ministry. The continuous leadership of the Holy Spirit through ministry served to give direction and spiritual strength to complete the Heavenly assignments. And -- most importantly -- every ministry direction centered around sharing the good news of salvation through Christ that could bring access into the very presence of the Holy God of this universe. By word and by deed the presence of Christ at work in the individual believer was to be made clear to those receiving ministry and witness. And as the gifting lists in Romans 12 and First Peter 4 make clear, passionate commitment to serve is the divine expectation upon every believer. Additionally, as stressed especially by Ephesians 4, the goal of every ministry option and opportunity is to be pointed toward spiritual strengthening of the church of Christ with mature, genuinely committed believers.

In this picture there is no possibility of personal empire building, as 3 John 9-10 accuses Diotrephes of doing. In this picture is to be high levels of cooperation among the various Christian communities, not just locally but regionally as well. Ministry support of those traveling from place to place in full time service is to come from the local groups in the form of hospitality and financial support.¹⁰⁴

In my estimation, this is the picture of ministry calling emerging out of Paul's activity and writings. It remains essentially relevant and as a model for ministry in today's world. To be clear, the institutionalization of Christianity over the past two thousand years will have impact on some aspects of relevancy as well as developing strategies for implementation. But for Christianity in the modern world to be 'biblical', its ministry understanding and commitment must be drawn from this portrait of Paul's understanding of ministry in his day. The encouraging aspect is that when we approach ministry like Paul did, we have the possibility of experiencing the same kind of encouraging results that Paul experienced, that is, large numbers of individuals coming to faith commitment and beginning a life long discipleship walk with Christ. If spiritual awakening is to occur in those large segments of contemporary Christianity in decline and diminishing spiritual life, a re-discovery of this ministry model from Paul is essential. God help us follow Paul's example in ministry!

¹⁰⁴This aspect will be explored in great detail in chapter four on Paul the missionary.

Conclusion

With this introductory survey, hopefully some of the background of the Apostle Paul are clearer to you than previously. After touching on some of the time and place references, we can now propose a working timeline of the ministry of the apostle. The time from his birth to his conversion to Christ are not treated in the biblical text directly, and thus the need for chronological projection of this period is less important. What is listed below is the chronology of Paul that I developed from studies many years ago, and subsequently used with students in the classrooms of Southwestern Baptist Seminary in Forth Worth, Texas and of Gardner-Webb University in Boiling Springs, North Carolina for many years.

The dual column listing followed below centers on two aspects of Paul's ministry: his missionary activities and his writing ministry. The Book of Acts is the main source of understanding for the missionary travels of Paul and is supplemented in part from Paul's writings. His writing ministry, on the other hand, is drawn from the Letters that are linked to him in the twenty seven documents of the New Testament.

His missionary travels are divided into two segments: early and middle periods of ministry. The third period groups together the activities from the time of Paul's arrest in Jerusalem until his martyrdom in the mid-60s of the first century in Rome. The early period of ministry begins with his conversion about 33 AD and concludes with the Jerusalem council meeting around 48 AD. The initial activities after his conversion are followed by the so-called 'first missionary journey' mostly in the Roman province of Galatia. The controversy over how to become a Christian that arose at Antioch in the middle 40s climaxes in the pivotal turning point meeting in Jerusalem where the apostles and the Jerusalem community of believers endorse Paul and Barnabas' preaching of a Gospel of salvation for both Jew and Gentile solely on the basis of faith commitment to Christ.

The middle period of ministry includes the second and third missionary journeys in which Paul and Silas extend the Gospel message further westward toward the eastern side of modern Turkey and bring the Gospel into Europe with the church planting actions extending from Macedonia in the north to Corinth in the south. This happened largely on the second missionary journey, and the third trip to a large extent re-traced much of that path, but this time with a major objective of collecting the relief offering from the Gentile churches for the Jewish Christian brethren back in Judea who were suffering great physical needs.

When Paul arrived in Jerusalem during 57 AD at the time of the Jewish festival of Pentecost, he unfortunately found himself under arrest, in large part by the Roman authorities in order to prevent a mob killing of him by Jewish residents of Jerusalem. Because of a determined, but exposed assassination plot to kill him, the Romans hustled him out of Jerusalem in the middle of the night to take him to the military headquarters for the Eastern Mediterranean in Caesarea on the coast. He spent two plus years defending himself before the Roman authorities before appealing to the emperor with the privileges provided him as a Roman citizen. The travel from Caesarea eventually to Rome was a harrowing trip but after one shipwreck Paul made it to Rome and began a lengthy stay under house arrest while awaiting his appearance before the Roman emperor Nero in the early 60s.

The Acts narrative of Paul's life ends at this point. What happened to the apostle subsequently must be cautiously pieced together from bits and pieces taken from the Pastoral Epistles and from careful gleaning of the many and often contradicting church traditions that emerged about this period, after the beginning of the second century. The projection below is fairly common, but is presented tentatively as a likely scenario of the last three or four years of Paul's earthly life.¹⁰⁵

Nothing inside the writings connected to Paul inside the New Testament -- nor any of the other NT documents -- provide any hint at what eventually happened to the apostle at the end of his earthly life. However, from the Church Fathers a general consensus can be gleaned suggesting fairly reliably that Paul died a martyr at the hand of Emperor Nero in the mid 60s. The possible date of his death will range from about 64 to 68 AD.¹⁰⁶ One

¹⁰⁵In chapter four on Paul the Missionary, as well as chapter five on Paul the Writer, the data for such a projection will be explored in much greater detail. Also, the various scenarios related to this period as well as to the authorship issues connected to the Pastoral Epistles will be given detailed attention.

¹⁰⁶The details on St. Paul's death are not very well-recorded, so it is uncertain the exact date and details of his martyrdom. St. Paul had lived as a Christian missionary for many years, going on three missionary journeys, and escaping death more than once. He had been imprisoned in Rome after being accused by some Jews of having brought Gentiles into the Temple. He appealed to Caesar on the grounds of being a Roman citizen, and as a result was allowed to remain in Rome to be tried instead of being sent to Jerusalem. His trial is assumed to have ended in his acquittal sometime around 65 after being held for several years, at which point it seems he went to Macedonia. Upon his return to Rome, he was arrested once again and imprisoned. Because he was a Roman citizen, he received a different punishment than some other criminals of the time (who were often crucified), and was beheaded between 66-68 AD at *Aquae Salviae*, which is now known as *Tre Fontane*. Legend says that his head bounced three times, and a fountain sprung up at each stop –

of the late second century sources of legendary activities comes from the apocryphal writing *The Acts of Paul*, that contains the segment *The Martyrdom of Paul*.¹⁰⁷ This will be examined in greater detail in a subsequent chapter.

Chronological Timeline of Paul:

Missionary Activity	Writing Ministry
I. Paul's early ministry A. Conversion and early activities (AD 33-46) B. First missionary journey (AD 46-47), Acts 13:1-14:28 C. Jerusalem council (AD 48), Acts 15:1-35, Gal 2:1-10	 Galatians, AD 47 (??) (From Antioch)
II. Paul's middle period of ministry A. The second missionary journey (ca. AD 48-51), Acts 15:36-18:22 B. The third missionary journey (ca AD 52-57), Acts 18:23-21:16	I. Paul's Early Writing Ministry Galatians, AD 49* (From Macedonia) 1 Thessalonians AD 50 (From Athens) 2 Thessalonians AD 50 (From Corinth) II. Paul's Middle Period Writing Ministry 1 Corinthians, AD 53 (From Ephesus) (Possibly the Prison Letters, ??) 2 Corinthians, AD 56 (From Macedonia) Romans, AD 57 (From Corinth) Galatians, AD 57 (??) (From Corinth)

hence the name *Tre Fontane*, or Three Fountains. His body was taken about two miles away to be buried in land owned by a friend, where the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls was later built.” {taken from Aquinas & More, *The Martyrdom of St Paul*,” <http://www.aquinasandmore.com/catholic-articles/the-martyrdom-of-st.-paul/article/113>.

¹⁰⁷For those with curiosity about these kinds of materials, the web site *Acta Pauli* (<http://actapauli.wordpress.com/>) is devoted to tracing the history of research and texts on the document *The Acts of Paul*. Substantial amounts of material referencing the study of this New Testament apocryphal document can be found there. The document *Acts of Paul* was actually composed of four separate works that were brought together later into a single document:

- * the Acts of Paul and Thecla
- * the Epistle of the Corinthians to Paul
- * the Third Epistle to the Corinthians
- * the Martyrdom of Paul - his death at the hand of Nero

Lots of uncertainty about this material exists, and clearly most of it is legendary without historical foundation. The author(s) drew heavily from some of the writings of Paul, but reflect no awareness of the canonical Book of Acts in the New Testament. “The Acts of Paul is one of the major works and earliest pseudepigraphal (non canonical) series from the New Testament also known as Apocryphal Acts, an approximate date given to the Acts of Paul is 160 CE.¹ The Acts were first mentioned by Tertullian. Tertullian found it heretical because it encouraged women to preach and baptize. The Acts were considered orthodox by Hippolytus, but were eventually regarded as heretical when the Manichaeans started using the texts. The author of the Acts of Paul is unknown and wrote out of respect for Paul, in Asia Minor.” (“Acts of Paul,” Wikipedia Encyclopedia online)

inside the biblical text to the existing Roman calendar system(s) of the first century. Then they must be projected through the subsequent calendar systems to the modern calendar system of our day. Such a process is highly complex and often necessitates high degrees of subjectivity rather than certainty.

This is why any scholar working with honesty in research will project *approximate dates* on to a chronological chart of Paul's life, rather than specific dates. Whenever dogmatism surfaces in a modern writing at this point, a red flag should instantly shoot up warning you, the reader, to shift into a mode of high skepticism at anything that is claimed. Any author making dogmatic claims here is not following time tested methods of scholarly research. Most likely there is a hidden theological agenda of some sort that lies at the base of these arbitrarily deduced dates. Double check how such dates are concluded and make sure that they come out of the above process of analysis. Whenever they do, honest scholars will present them in an undogmatic manner.

3. Chronological efforts must be sensitive to the challenges presented by differing sources, correlation of conflicting dates, etc. The limited amount of available data, along with the nature of that data, poses numerous difficulties in developing a timeline of the life of an individual in the ancient world. The Bible student must not ignore such issues in drawing conclusions for a chronology projection. Hopefully these issues have been adequately introduced in this chapter so that you have awareness of the nature of these. Humility, not dogmatism, is the order of the day regarding many of the rather knotty issues in trying to sort out clearly when Paul did this or that in his life. To assume that one has solved all of these issues reflects the ignorance of the individual scholar more than anything else. But one does need to immerse himself/herself into the challenges sufficiently to be able to draw some tentative conclusions. These form the basis for a 'working hypothesis' of a projected chronology, and become an important part of the foundation for making sense of the writings and preaching of the Apostle Paul.



For Reflection and Further Study¹⁰⁹

1. From the listing of rights gained as a Roman citizen, identify which of those rights Paul exercised in four separate situations described in Acts:

Rights given

The rights available to individual citizen of Rome varied over time, according to their place of origin, and their service to the state. They also varied under Roman law according to the classification of the individual within the state. Various legal classes were defined by the individual legal rights that they enjoyed. However, the possible rights available to citizens with whom Roman law addressed are:

- * **Jus suffragiorum:** The right to vote in the Roman assemblies.
- * **Jus honorum:** The right to stand for civil or public office.
- * **Jus commercii:** The right to make legal contracts and to hold property as a Roman citizen.
- * **Jus gentium:** The legal recognition, developed in the 3rd century BC, of the growing international scope of Roman affairs, and the need for Roman law to deal with situations between Roman citizens and foreign persons. The jus gentium was therefore a Roman legal codification of the widely accepted international law of the time, and was based on highly developed commercial law of the Greek city-states and of other maritime powers.[3] The rights afforded by the jus gentium were considered to be held by all persons, regardless of citizenship.
- * **Jus connubii:** The right to have a lawful marriage with a Roman citizen, to have the legal rights of the paterfamilias over the family, and to have the children of any such marriage be counted as Roman citizens.
- * **Jus migrationis:** The right to preserve one's level of citizenship upon relocation to a polis of comparable status. For example, members of the cives romani (see below) maintained their full civitas when they migrated to a Roman colony with full rights under the law: a colonia civium Romanorum. Latins also had this right, and maintained their jus Latii if they relocated to a different Latin state or Latin colony (Latina colonia). This right did not preserve one's level of citizenship should one relocate to a colony of lesser legal status; full Roman citizens relocating to a Latina colonia were reduced to the level of the jus Latii, and such a migration and reduction in status had to be a voluntary act.
- * The right of immunity from some taxes and other legal obligations, especially local rules and regulations.[4]
- * The right to sue in the courts and the right to be sued.
- * The right to have a legal trial (to appear before a proper court and to defend oneself).

¹⁰⁹A section in each chapter will offer opportunities to apply some of the concepts treated in the discussion. Of course, these are optional learning activities. But I do want to challenge you the reader to begin applying appropriate skills in furthering their understanding of Paul.

* The right to appeal from the decisions of magistrates and to appeal the lower court decisions.

A Roman citizen could not be tortured or whipped, nor could he receive the death penalty, unless he was found guilty of treason. If accused of treason, a Roman citizen had the right to be tried in Rome, and even if sentenced to death, no Roman citizen could be sentenced to die on the cross. Roman citizenship was required in order to enlist in the Roman legions, but this was sometimes ignored. Non-citizens joined the Auxilia and gained citizenship through service.¹¹⁰

Acts 16:35-39¹¹¹

Acts 22:23-28¹¹²

Acts 25:7-12¹¹³

Acts 26:32.¹¹⁴

2. How did the evolving patterns of organizational structure in early Christianity shape the sense of divine calling to ministry?

¹¹⁰“Roman Citizenship: Rights given,” *Wikipedia.org* at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_citizenship#Rights_given.

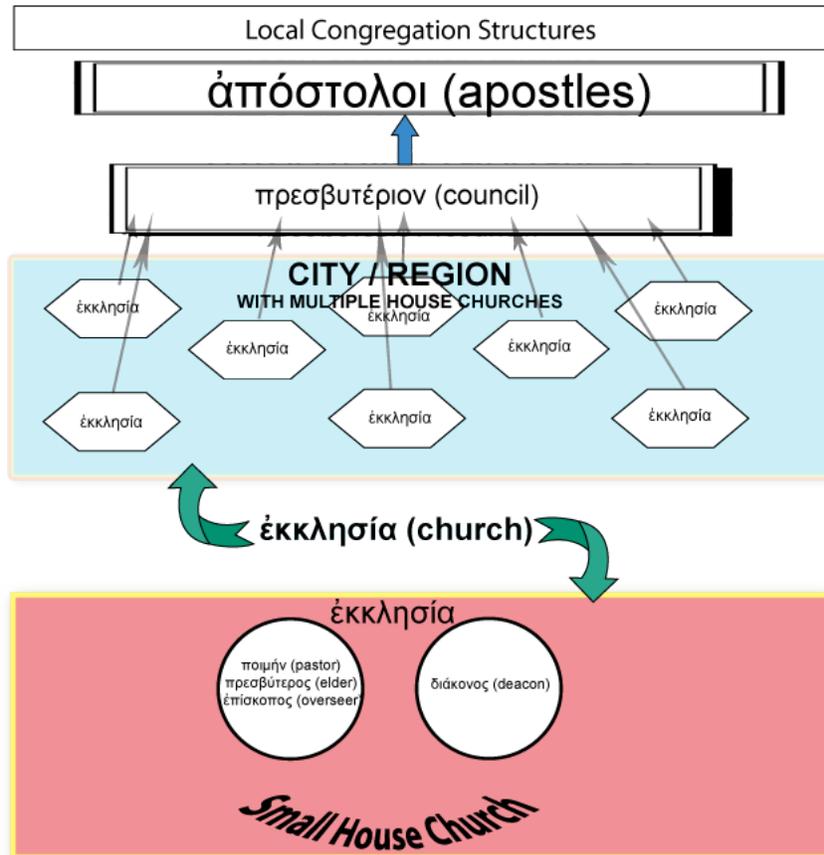
¹¹¹Acts 16:35-39, NRSV: 35 When morning came, the magistrates sent the police, saying, “Let those men go.” 36 And the jailer reported the message to Paul, saying, “The magistrates sent word to let you go; therefore come out now and go in peace.” 37 But Paul replied, “They have beaten us in public, uncondemned, *men who are Roman citizens*, and have thrown us into prison; and now are they going to discharge us in secret? Certainly not! Let them come and take us out themselves.” 38 The police reported these words to the magistrates, and they were afraid when they heard that *they were Roman citizens*; 39 so they came and apologized to them. And they took them out and asked them to leave the city.

¹¹²Acts 22:23-28, NRSV: 23 And while they were shouting, throwing off their cloaks, and tossing dust into the air, 24 the tribune directed that he was to be brought into the barracks, and ordered him to be examined by flogging, to find out the reason for this outcry against him. 25 But when they had tied him up with thongs, Paul said to the centurion who was standing by, “Is it legal for you to flog *a Roman citizen who is uncondemned?*” 26 When the centurion heard that, he went to the tribune and said to him, “What are you about to do? *This man is a Roman citizen.*” 27 The tribune came and asked Paul, “Tell me, are you a Roman citizen?” And he said, “Yes.” 28 The tribune answered, “It cost me a large sum of money to get my citizenship.” Paul said, “*But I was born a citizen.*”

¹¹³Acts 25:7-12, NRSV: 7 When he arrived, the Jews who had gone down from Jerusalem surrounded him, bringing many serious charges against him, which they could not prove. 8 Paul said in his defense, “I have in no way committed an offense against the law of the Jews, or against the temple, or against the emperor.” 9 But Festus, wishing to do the Jews a favor, asked Paul, “Do you wish to go up to Jerusalem and be tried there before me on these charges?” 10 Paul said, “*I am appealing to the emperor’s tribunal; this is where I should be tried.* I have done no wrong to the Jews, as you very well know. 11 Now if I am in the wrong and have committed something for which I deserve to die, I am not trying to escape death; but if there is nothing to their charges against me, no one can turn me over to them. *I appeal to the emperor.*” 12 Then Festus, after he had conferred with his council, replied, “*You have appealed to the emperor; to the emperor you will go.*”

¹¹⁴Acts 26:32, NRSV: Agrippa said to Festus, “This man could have been set free *if he had not appealed to the emperor.*”

3. Explain how early Christianity organized itself in light of the diagram below.



Notes:

1. The term ἐκκλησία means 'assembly' at different levels: a) house church; b) city/regional; c) all believers.
2. Two leadership groups gradually emerge: a) Pastor/Elder/Overseer (synonyms), and b) Deacon.
3. At the city/region level the individual house church leaders collectively make up the leadership of the Christian community in the city and are called the πρεσβυτέριον (council). James in Acts 15 illustrates this.
4. The terms ποιμήν (pastor), πρεσβύτερος (elder), ἐπίσκοπος (overseer) διάκονος (deacon) could apply to individuals at any of these levels.
5. Leadership labels were functional rather than positional. Spiritual gifts (τὰ πνευματικά / τὰ χαρίσματα) for leadership focus on communicating spiritual concepts (teaching / preaching) and ministry actions to help others. Thus a great deal of overlapping occurs in terms of what leaders do. As 1 Peter 5:1-5 makes clear, they don't "boss" others around.

4. Did Paul see ministry as positional or functional? Why? And what does this imply about ministry in today's world?

5. Briefly summarize the chronological span of Paul's life.

6. How does your sense of divine calling to ministry compare to the portrait of Paul's awareness of his ministry calling?