

## The Minister of the Mystery

### I. The Mission of the Mystery (3:1-13)

#### A. The man of the mission (ἐγὼ Παῦλος) (3:1)

- This is a strong insertion emphasizing the strength of Paul's personal feeling:
- The apostle Paul uses the emphatic introduction of his personal name in other passages 1 Thess. 2:18, 2 Cor. 10:1, Col. 1:23, but not quite like here:
- It reflects a sense of unique responsibility, especially as he elaborates "for you Gentiles" (ὕπερ ὑμῶν τῶν ἐθνῶν):
- There is no egotism but merely acknowledgment of special involvement:

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1. His background:
2. His circumstances (ὁ δέσμιος τοῦ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ) (3:1)
3. His character (3:2, 13, 8)

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##### 1. His Background:

##### a) Paul and his Citizenship (Acts 21:39)

- (1) A citizen of Tarsus (Acts 21:39, 22:3)
  - (a) The province of Cilicia:
  - (b) The city of Tarsus:
    - A city with a good reputation, especially of being an educational center:

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- (1) A citizen of Tarsus (Acts 21:39, 22:3)
- (2) A citizen of Rome (Acts 22:25-28; cf. Acts 16:35-40)

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##### b) Paul and His Ancestry (Phil 3:5a)

- (1) "An eighth-day person" (ὀκταήμερος)
  - In accord with the instruction given to Abraham (Gen 17:9-12):
  - In accord with what was given in the law (Lev 12:3):

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- (1) "An eighth-day person" (ὀκταήμερος)
- (2) "Of the nation of Israel" (ἐκ γένους Ἰσραήλ)
  - He was of Israelite stock not a proselyte; the blood of Jacob flowed through his veins:

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- (1) "An eighth-day person" (ὀκταήμερος)
- (2) "Of the nation of Israel" (ἐκ γένους Ἰσραήλ)
- (3) "Of the tribe of Benjamin" (φύλης Βενιαμίν, Ἰσραὴλ)
  - The tribe that was faithful to the throne of David at the time of the division of the kingdom:
  - The tribe which gave the kingdom its first king:
  - The patriarch of this tribe was the only one born in the Promised Land:
  - The patriarch of this tribe was the offspring of Jacob's favorite wife:

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- (1) "An eighth-day person" (ὀκταήμερος)
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- (3) "Of the tribe of Benjamin" (φύλης Βενιαμίν, Ἰσραὴλ)
- (4) "Hebrew of Hebrews" (Ἑβραῖος ἐξ Ἑβραίων)

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- a) *Paul and his Citizenship (Acts 21:39)*
- b) *Paul and His Ancestry (Phil 3:5a)*
- c) *Paul and His Achievement (Phil 3:5b-6)*

(1) “According to law, a Pharisee”  
(κατὰ νόμον Φαρισαῖος)

He was “educated at the feet of Gamaliel, according to the strictness of the ancestral law” (Acts 22:3)

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(1) “According to law, a Pharisee”  
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(2) “According to zeal, a persecutor” (κατὰ ζήλος διώκων)

Acts 26:9-11 “So then, I thought to myself that I had to do many things hostile to the name of Jesus of Nazareth.

“And this is just what I did in Jerusalem; not only did I lock up many of the saints in prisons, having received authority from the chief priests, but also when they were being put to death I cast my vote against them.

“And as I punished them often in all the synagogues, I tried to force them to blaspheme; and being furiously enraged at them, I kept pursuing them even to foreign cities.

Gal 1:13 For you have heard of my former manner of life in Judaism, how I used to persecute the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it;

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(3) “According to legal righteousness, blameless” (κατὰ δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐν νόμῳ ἄμωμος)

Acts 26:4-5 “So then, all Jews know my manner of life from my youth up, which from the beginning was spent among my own nation and at Jerusalem; since they have known about me for a long time, if they are willing to testify, that I lived as a Pharisee according to the strictest sect of our religion.

Gal 1:14 and I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my countrymen, being more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions.

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d) *Paul and His Conversion/Commission (Acts 9; Gal 1:15-16a)*

**Gal 1:15-16a**

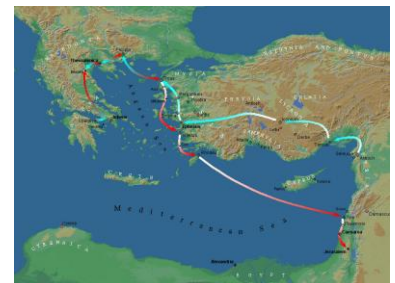
- *God Set him Apart from the Womb (1:15a)*  
God had providentially set him apart from birth and that all his life to this point was a preparation for his ministry as a proclaimer of the gospel of God's grace:
- *God Called him through His Grace (1:15b)*
- *God was Pleased to Reveal His Son in him (1:15c-16a)*  
God gave Paul an outward vision of Christ on the Damascus Road and later an inner revelation concerning the full significance of the person and work of the Savior:
- *God's Purpose in it All – To Preach Christ among the Gentiles (1:16a)*  
Paul emphasized that both his conversion and his commission owed nothing to man but were of God:

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- Paul here uses the articular form (cf. Philemon 1, 9) heighten the distinctiveness of his apostolic imprisonment:

- It stands in apposition to “I, Paul” and with the article it expresses him as – “the bond one...”

**A prisoner by the Lord's will:**  
**A prisoner for the Lord's work:**



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