

Intro:

Our title suggests a certain topic. What do you think it is?

Ordained a Preacher

Pastoral qualifications? The call to the ministry? The gifts for leadership?

These topics are ones that our text could suggest, if you take it in isolation.

What is the subject we have been talking about in the last few weeks from 2 Timothy?

Evangelistic prayer and the reasons for it...

How do you think this verse might fit into that topic?

Read 2 Tim 1.7

That is what we are going to consider this afternoon. Before we tie the verse into the context, we are going to spend some time considering what the verse says about the apostle Paul.

This is the second of two times in the epistle that Paul uses himself as an illustration of his theme.

Do you remember the context in which Paul inserted his own testimony into chapter 1?

Paul used himself as an illustration to encourage Timothy in the difficult work of dealing with difficult people – see 1 Tim 1.12-16.

Paul wants Timothy to know that blasphemers can be transformed by God's grace.

Now Paul is going to make another point on the basis of his calling, but it is in relation to another subject.

In light of this, we are going to have to leave the proposition till the end of the message.

Let's read our whole passage, however, to get started.

Read 1 Tim 2.1-7

I. Three remarkable transformations

Paul uses three terms here. Let's consider where Paul came from, then think about what God made him.

A. The injurious blasphemer (1.13)

1. Basic meaning of 'blasphemer' = 'slanderer'

In our town, there was once a man who went around spreading stories about some of the businessmen ... he was saying they were involved in dealing drugs and all kinds of wickedness. My dad was one of the ones included in the rumours.

It turned out that the rumours were being spread by a man who was mentally handicapped. He would wander into my dad's office and just mutter away about things for a while, then leave. I don't think anyone ever understood why he was spreading these stories.

Suppose you had someone who was an evil genius. Someone capable of inventing convincing stories with bits of 'evidence' that seemed air-tight.

Someone like Saul.

2. Persecutor = root word speaks of someone who is in zealous pursuit of someone or something

Ever have one of those 'pursuit' dreams? One where you were running and running and someone was after you and no matter how fast you ran, he kept gaining on you?

Suppose you were in some country where it was illegal to gather to worship so you had to do it in secret.

Suppose someone kept uncovering your meeting places.

Suppose you were meeting somewhere and someone knocked at your door.

Someone like Saul.

3. Injurious = an insolent, violent, sadistic man – a man who liked violence

I read a book when I was a teenager by a man from Russia, a man who had been in the KGB. He told of breaking up church meetings, humiliating and beating Christians for the excitement of it.

Suppose you were faced with someone like that?

Someone like Saul.

Read Ac 7.58-8.4; 9.1-2 (our entire record of Saul's persecution, other than his own testimony)

B. The ordained minister described (2.7)

1. Preacher

- a. "Common in Greek writings from Homer down; *a herald, a messenger* vested with public authority, who conveyed the official messages of kings, magistrates, princes, military commanders, or who gave a public summons or demand, and performed various other duties."¹
- b. "In the N. T. *God's ambassador, and the herald or proclaimer of the divine word.*"²

2. Apostle

- a. Basic meaning: an appointed messenger
- b. Technical meaning: one appointed by Christ and given authority as an official witness of his resurrection in order to build the foundation of the Christian church

3. Teacher

- a. One who builds on the basic foundation of the church with the teaching of its doctrine
- b. This is discipleship – training up believers in the whole counsel of God

One of my lexicons makes the point that the work of the preacher (the herald) and the teacher are the "twofold function of the ἀπόστολος. We have here a high sense of mission and an equally strong sense of service typical of Paul."³

- As preacher, he lays the foundation
- As teacher, he builds the superstructure

¹ Thayer's *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vols. 5-9 edited by Gerhard Friedrich. Vol. 10 compiled by Ronald Pitkin., ed. Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey William Bromiley and Gerhard Friedrich, electronic ed., 2:158 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964-c1976).

C. Serving at God's appointment: 'I am ordained'; 'I was appointed'

Compare these two verses:

^{NAU} **1 Ti 1.13** even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. ...

^{NAU} **1 Ti 2.7** For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle ... as a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth

Paul says, 'I'm not lying about this...' – Not that Timothy needed convincing, but the letter was to be read publicly. He wants to underscore the office that God put him in.

- Paul was a Pharisee of the Pharisees (the 'mother of all Pharisees')
- Can you imagine what he thought when God told him through Ananias — you are a chosen vessel unto me to go to the *Gentiles*?

That brings us to our next point...

II. One remarkable goal: a teacher of the Gentiles

A. The apostleship to the Gentiles is Paul's calling card

^{NAU} **Rm 11.13** But I am speaking to you who are Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I magnify my ministry,

^{NAU} **Rm 15.16** to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, ministering as a priest the gospel of God, so that *my* offering of the Gentiles may become acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

^{NAU} **Gal 2.9** and recognizing the grace that had been given to me, James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, so that we *might go* to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised.

^{NAU} **Eph 3:8** To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ,

^{KJV} **2 Ti 1.11** Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.

B. The content of his teaching ministry

1. Faith
2. Truth

This is the sum total of discipleship – you need to learn to live the life of faith, governed by the truth of God.

C. The goal of this ministry: the Gentiles

1. The Gentiles – not just the Jews
2. The Gentiles – not just God's chosen people
3. The Gentiles – idol-worshipping, sensual, degraded, immoral, drunken, godless; not just the keepers of the Law

For centuries the message of God to the Gentiles was only wrath — unless you submitted to Judaism and identified yourself with national Israel.

Now, God's grace gives salvation to all men, regardless of their previous relationship to God or their ethnic background.

- God desires *all men* to be saved!
- God in Christ gave Himself as a ransom *for all men*!

And this is how Paul's remarkable apostleship fits into the theme of our passage...

III. A third ground for evangelistic prayer

A. First two grounds for evangelistic prayer

1. God desires all men to be saved (3-4)
2. God in Christ gave himself as a ransom for all men (5-6)

B. Third ground: the apostolic charge of the apostle Paul is living proof of God's delight in your evangelistic prayers

1. This is what the Damascus Road experience was all about – so that the gospel of grace could come to all men, even Gentiles
2. This is what the long, arduous missionary journeys were all about – so that the gospel of grace could come to all men, even Gentiles

3. This is what the beatings and imprisonments were all about – so that the gospel of grace could come to all men, even Gentiles
4. This is what the shipwrecks were all about – so that the gospel of grace could come to all men, even Gentiles

This is why we pray – because God proves his will to save Gentiles by taking the most brilliant Jew of all time, one so Jewish that he could out-Jew anyone, and made *him* the apostle to the Gentiles.

So why pray evangelistically?

Proposition: God ordained the brilliant apostle to lay the foundation so that millions of Gentiles could be saved and brought into the Kingdom of God – so pray!

Conclusion:

It is interesting to me how God brought us to this topic at this time, then put it in the hearts of the local FBF leaders to make evangelism the theme of our recent conference.

Do you think the lord might be telling us something?

How many of you are you praying specifically for someone you know personally to be saved?

How are you putting feet to those prayers?

This is our mission. We need to have compassion on all men – even those who mistreat us. Especially those who mistreat us!