

## EXTRAORDINARY LIVING FOR ORDINARY MEN      Rom 1:1

Int: Why do such enthusiastic sinner make such lazy saints? This was not true of Paul. He went all out whatever he did. When he was bad, he was the “chief of sinners” (1 Tim 1:15). When he was good, he was “not a whit behind the chief of the apostles” (AV, 2 Cor 11:5). He easily ranks next to the Lord Jesus himself as the most extraordinary man in the history of Christianity.

Paul is living proof that there is extraordinary living for ordinary men. Perhaps unwittingly he set out his secret in this text in the three phrases that follow his name. Extraordinary living demands

SURRENDER    “a servant of Christ Jesus”

In a day when only twenty per cent of the people in the Roman Empire were citizens, Paul held full citizenship. But he counted it his highest honor to call himself a “bondslave” of Christ. *Doulos* described not merely a hired servant who might work for wages but a slave whose master owned him. A slave worked without pay or praise and owed his master unquestioning and absolute obedience.

It was in that spirit that Paul served Jesus. On the Damascus Road he knelt and whispered “Lord.” From that day Paul knew he was Christ’s man, at Christ’s disposal, under Christ’s command, about Christ’s business, an on Christ’s errands. He belonged to Jesus!

Too many sign on to take Jesus as a partner or an advisor. They will never rise above the ordinary. It takes full surrender to Christ to make life extraordinary.

Extraordinary life belongs to the ordinary man who surrenders fully to the Lord!

SERVICE      “called to be an apostle”

“Apostle” meant a fully authorized personal representative, i.e. a proxy or someone with full power of attorney. In Paul’s day such a person could enter into legal contracts, buy and sell goods and property, even marry and divorce, all as binding as if the man who sent him did these things. Paul exercised the authority of Jesus. When he acted, spoke or wrote in the name of Jesus, it was as much as if Jesus acted, spoke or wrote!

For present purposes it is more important how Paul got to be an apostle. He did not just assume it and no church made him one. His Lord had called him to that particular work as oppose to all other kinds of work in the Master’s household.

Christ calls all men. Every person in the world has a divine purpose. Finding and filling that role makes life extraordinary.

Extraordinary life belongs to the ordinary man who carries out God’s purpose for his life!

SEPARATION    “set apart for the gospel of God”

There must always be a difference between the people of God and the men of this world. Most define it in negatives, what NOT to do. But Paul put it in a positive: “Separated unto the gospel.”

Extraordinary life belongs to the ordinary man who is so busy with the gospel he has little time or energy for less important things!