**Follow Paul? Seriously? Paul?**

**Introduction**

Do you ever wonder why folks ‘might’ have had a hard time listening to Paul in his day?

Let’s start by asking. “Why do folks hate Paul so much today?”

Well, even if this isn’t the gist of this ‘study-commentary,’ I believe it is worth stating that is obvious why they don’t like to follow Paul, today!

1. Paul’s doctrine goes against just about ‘everything’ their pastor/pastorette says!
2. Paul’s manner of life doesn’t have the word ‘fun’ involved!
3. Paul’s doctrine doesn’t match their personal or denominational doctrine or even their personal modern version bible doctrine. (as if they have even actually checked it out for themselves.)
4. The people that claim to follow Paul appear to be as worldly, if not even more so, than those asking about Paul, salvation, church, religion, etc.
5. People tend to lose jobs and family and friends along with a ‘few’ other trials and tribulations if they even try to act like a Paul follower!
6. They would have to have a King James Bible to know what Paul says – and those that follow a rightly divided KJB are seldom ever welcome in most churches today!
7. ‘Christians’ say that Jesus is their Saviour, not Paul – and while that is true, people just don’t realize that we are not trying to follow Paul as a person. We are simply trying to follow Paul as he was of Christ. Paul teaches us what Christ told him to teach to the Gentile nation – over and above what the Jews were taught… and so we just are trying to follow what Paul teaches to us. We do not look to Paul as our Saviour nor do we look to him to be our ‘idol’ / example, etc. He can, however, be looked at for an ensample.
8. And – IF people were to look up Paul in their modern version bible, they would see their bible says to IMITATE Paul… and who would want to try that?
   1. Although – those that reject Paul in any manner, still do think they should and can imitate Jesus / God because that is what their ‘bible’ version says – and their pastor spends his/her time trying to get people to be ‘*more like Christ*’ – ‘*Christ like*’, etc. Yet, if those pastors were even a little honest and at least rightly divided their modern version, they would be trying to get their people to be more ‘*like Paul*.’ That is what their corrupted bibles say, ‘don’t-cha know!!!

However, this ‘commentary-study’ is more about my thoughts on why people in Paul’s own day hated him so much – not so much about the hatred from people today. If anyone would consider what say here, then this ‘study’ could possibly be beneficial to those of us who do try to follow Paul today.

**Body of Commentary/Study**

Let’s go back to the days of Paul. There is one obvious reason why they hated Paul so much that they even ‘conspired’ together to kill him. Paul’s teaching and preaching went against everything the Jews believed.

Even though all the OT prophecies about their ‘coming Saviour and King’ were completely met with the arrival of Jesus during the days of the Gospels – and even though Stephen, being a man of faith, preached to them a great ‘in their face’ sermon about what they did and even though Peter had preached to them about ‘what they could do’ now that they realized what they had done to their Saviour & King, they still just flat hated not only what Paul had to say.

I also believe they hated Paul as a person, as well!

That’s it? Yes, they hated Paul for what he taught and for who he was. Even today, people just get so upset over words – especially Paul’s words! Yet, as a person, I don’t think they even know much about Paul… and if they did learn about Paul, I just figure the pastors would make sure the people would hate him personally, as well.

Remember when the “heathen’ (Gentiles) first heard what Paul had to say, most of them had a totally different response to Paul than did the Jews.

It would seem that the Paul Jews knew and the Paul the Gentiles knew were ‘different’ Pauls.

**Bunny Trail #1** - To those of you that are reading this study and have gotten this far… I figure you already have a decent knowledge of that trials that Paul went through. I also figure you probably have experienced some of the same type of trials yourself.

If you haven’t, you might be soon, so hang on – fasten your spiritual seatbelt, etc. ☺. (Just don’t be so quick to blame your trials & troubles on your ‘following Paul’ – or even on from devil, etc. Sometimes we just do stupid things assuming that we are pleasing God – and in reality, we are just reaping a little of what we sowed!)

However, I will not talk about all those trials, etc. What I will be covering in this study is some general observations about Paul as a person, asking whether or not we would even want Paul to be in our daily activities – or even more important, what is the truth behind our Christian expectation today concerning our ‘walk?’

Let me first ask, “*Who was this Paul guy, anyway?”*

* What kind of a guy was this person that we are told to follow?
* Could Paul be your pastor?
* Would you go to his church?
* Would you be willing to be ‘seen’ going to Paul’s church?
* Would you hang around with him after church for those fellowships and potlucks we all have enjoyed so well?
* Would you sit down with him and talk about your barn building project?
* Would you invite him hunting or fishing with you?
* Would you talk about your job with him?
* Would you even introduce him to your fellow workers?
* Would you introduce him to your friends? Family?
* Would you ever invite him over to your house for dinner, etc.?
* Would you be willing to be seen with him in public?

Are you answering, “*Of course! Why do you ask?*” I will tell you – keep reading!

**Bunny Trial #2** - Let’s also remind ourselves from the ‘git-go’ here that we are told to follow Paul as he was of Christ, not to follow Paul as Paul lived his ‘walk.’ We are NOT to imitate him – we are NOT to be try to ‘*be like Paul*.’ We don’t ask ourselves, “*What would Paul do?* WWPD. Honestly, we don’t’ even ask “*What would Jesus do?*” If anything, we could ask, “*What would Paul ‘tell us’ to do?”* We could ask that because we are actually asking “*What would Jesus Christ ‘say’ to us to do*?” So, by looking up in a KJB akjv1611 what Paul says to us, we would find out what Jesus ‘says’ to us. We are not trying to ‘imitate’ Jesus or Paul! Religion is so nutty – and folks could wise-up simply by reading a King James Bible!

Anyway – let me try to get back onto the original trail – and in case you have forgotten, we are looking at the ‘person’ of Paul and possibly why the modern ‘Christian’ of today wouldn’t like Paul even if he did show up at their church, etc.

By the way, for me, I believe I would like Paul the moment I met him. I figure him to be just like me – or should I say, I could identify with some of his life ‘before’ he got ‘saved’ – and sad to say, probably ‘after’ he was ‘saved,’ too.

The person of Paul is just like you and me; he is not like the modern ‘sweet’ Christian that people make themselves out to be. Without a shadow of doubt, I can say that – and I do!

Whenever I start to think, “*Hey, I am doing ok as a Christian, etc*.” I run across something in my reading of Paul’s books that remind me, just like Paul said about himself, I have not attained yet. (not that I have ever thought I was close to attaining… but I think you know what I mean…)

I am constantly reminded of how important the dispensation of grace of God is to me. I am reminded that no matter how ‘good’ and how ‘hard’ I try, I have not “attained.” I figure Paul may have been a lot closer than me – or you – but he would still be just like one of us – fighting the war with his own flesh. While I can’t imagine Paul putting up with all the stuff we have around us today such as the entertainment world, although he did know evil communication corrupts. I can’t imagine Paul on Facebook, etc. as I am sure he would see this techy stuff and global thing being so close that he would simply to say to us, “*And why are you not full of joy and excitement when you see all that is taking place these day?!”*

Let’s remember who Paul was:

1. **Paul was an awful young man**. He lived during a ‘***time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria***…**Acts 8:1** … As for Saul specifically, he ***made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison***. **Acts 8:2,3**. In fact, Paul was personally present during the stoning of Stephen. In double fact, all the witnesses of Stephen’s stoning ***laid down their clothes at a young man’s feet, whose name was Saul.*** It is certainly obvious that Saul (Paul) was consenting unto the death of Stephen. **Acts 8:1**.

Dear reader, what is YOUR ‘background,’ if I may ask? How many people know about your past? It is hard enough knowing even Jesus had a hard time with His own… - **John 4:44** ***For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet hath no honour in his own country***. But if you had a past of being a drinker, carouser, quitter, abuser, etc. etc. and more etc. and now you want to tell people about being saved and you expect them to believe you?

And if you are one of those who look to the Great Commission, are you really and truly living that ‘gospel’ life of obedience to Jesus’ teachings? Have you read ‘the law’ that was given during the Gospels? Now, answer that question again only be more honest this time – are you living the life that Jesus taught to the JEWS during the times of the Gospels? Just asking…

But how about even harder question to those who are KJB rightly dividers, since you have gotten ahold of your KJB and rightly dividing – and realize that you don’t have to live the Gospel Christian life… how are you doing trying to live the life that Paul puts forth to us?

Before you answer that – and answer that to yourself, not to me… if you have been reading Paul’s words at all, you will see that living the manner of life according to Paul isn’t really all that tough when compared to the Gospel OT law, right? But when we all have the kinds of jobs we have, and wear the clothes that we wear, and go out ‘to shows’ and listen to ‘music’ and watch ‘tv’, YouTube, Facebook, etc. are we in somewhat of a compromised lifestyle? Do we rebuke who we should rebuke? (now, don’t be so quick to jump on the rebuking bandwagon, though…) Do we ‘avoid’ who we avoid – have we ‘withdrawn’ from whom we are told to withdraw? Have we purged all that needs to be purged? Have we marked the ‘bad-guys’ that are against Paul? Have we even found any Paul people so we can mark them as ‘good-guys’? With whom do you have ‘company’ with? Working with people is one thing, but having fellowship after work? Romans 12 even tells us that our ‘***reasonable service’*** is to ***not be conformed to this world***, etc.

And now you want to tell people that you are not only a Christian, but you are a Paul following Christian? All they see in you is some form of worldly walk that they don’t believe a real Christian should be walking – according to their gospel teachings! (like what do they know about being a Christian anyway, but they do still form their judgmental opinions!)

My point is this – we try… I try… to live the walk that Paul teaches. But these are hard days…getting ‘closer’ to the ‘rapture,’ getting closer to the famine of the word of God, getting closer to tribulation doctrine being ‘activated’, getting closer to our own dying process, etc.

Until I am either taken out of here or I die – I admit it - I need a paycheck and insurance! I try to keep control of how I teach music – but I am working with public school kids… and their concept of music is almost impenetrable. My family already despises what I stand for and barely speaks to me! I am still so short of money that my bank account reminds me of Mickey Rooney! Ha

So, without rambling on – I hope you get my point!

Do you appreciate the dispensation of the grace of God as much as I do? Do you understand why folks would have hated Paul in his day? Do you see why folks really don’t think Paul’s doctrine is anything special when they think THEY already are the special ‘clean-Christian – and then they look at you and wonder… you know…

* We have few friends – that is par for the course – neither did Paul – or Jesus!
* We are full of joy but appear unhappy with just about everything today!
* We are non-supportive of most everyone’s way of life taking today!
* Most of us don’t go to church – and we shouldn’t… unless…!
* We don’t read books, tapes, etc. ‘about’ the bible, doctrine, etc. even when well-meaning people give them to us for gifts – or in their attempt to get us away from the KJB – and we shouldn’t waste our time with that stuff!
* We certainly don’t purchase a bible version ‘easier to understand’ – and we shouldn’t – we don’t even need to!
* We do try to cover up your skin, etc. and we should – and not just for cancer concerns!
* We try not to enjoy that fleshy entertainment that is everywhere these days – and we shouldn’t enjoy it all!

But our flesh is still flesh. We have our soul saved and we have the Spirit of God in us, but our flesh is still that same old stinking flesh we had before we got into all this. We are cut away from sin but sin still exists ‘within’.

So, with that all said, that was a good segue into my second point of ‘*who this Paul guy really is’:*

2. **Paul fought his flesh all the time! *For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.***

After that marvelous Biblical passage, Paul concludes with these words:

***O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.***

Here we are today – following the man credited for the entire New Testament TO the Gentiles. Our ONLY apostle – the very man Christ CHOSE to go to us – to me – to you! The man who spoke face to face with the Risen Saviour! The man who knew about the King James Bible and how it would change the world even before the King James Bible ever came about! The man who knew exactly how to walk to please God! The man who said he was chief of sinners. The man who had an opportunity to go be with Christ but chose to stay here to tell us what we needed to hear! The man who chose to fight a good fight and didn’t give up. The man who ‘kept the faith’ well before any hippie ever thought of the phrase! The man who did the work of an evangelist instead of building churches yet he also was the man who knew how a local church should be designed. The man who knew who and what to avoid, have no company with, who to mark, etc.! The man who knew that he should make no provision for the flesh… that same man fought his flesh constantly!

Did he win those battles with flesh? Not according to what he told us in **Romans 7**.

**Bunny Trail:** By the way, why don’t we know some of the things he did that he shouldn’t have? Because they were not written down! They were not imputed to him – so why tell us? Your list / my list is clean! Christ took it all upon HIMSELF!

Sure – we have our works to be judged, and I am sure so did Paul! But Paul was delivered – as we were, are and will be!

In fact, despite all that Paul was, he is still an ensample in boldness, confidence, understanding, peace, etc. However, me must see that it wasn’t because of Paul’s own walk that he displayed those characteristics. It was because of Christ!

Yet, today’s self-proclaimed Christian – especially those so-called Bible Believing Baptist KJB Christians who still, to this day, refuse to accept Paul as their only apostle – and continue with the Great Deception called the Great Commission – and continue to think their old fashioned way of dressing, their hillbilly music, their shouting in people’s faces about them being sinners, who don’t miss a day of any church activity in spite of how it is destroying their family, say ‘in Jesus name’ whenever they pray – and make those public praying scenes ‘in Jesus name’, who abuse their wife, children and husband, etc. in the name of a KJB, etc. makes them a great Christian. They just get so ‘angry’ and ‘irritated’ at those of us who look to Paul to find the risen Saviour.

Why get so angry when Paul is EXACTLY the one to whom we are to turn to find the RISEN SAVIOUR – the Son of God! ***To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:*** **Galatians 1:16**

According to **Romans 11:25**, todays ‘religious’ person, Bible Believing Christian or whatever or whomever, are ***wise in their own conceits*** because they do not accept or understand rightly dividing the word of truth – you know who they are; the ones who will not follow Paul only! ***For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.***

They are the ones who think they are just fabulous – that God chose them – and that they are living a blessed life because of their ‘clean living’ they call their Christian walk. You know them – I know them. You have seen them – I have seen them. God doesn’t use them! ***For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.*  I Corinthians 1:20,21**

Honestly, there are times I wonder if God even knows them! But that is another sermon for another time.

**Conclusion:**

But you and I know who God ‘used’ with the truth! He used that awful guy named Paul! And still, Paul wasn’t liked by people then; and I am sorry to say, he isn’t liked by most people today, either! But remember, it wasn’t just his doctrine they hated – it was, is and will be Paul himself, too.

Can you imagine what people would say if Paul came to their church today? To their home? To visit their family? With the personality and testimony he had? Well, he sure knew a lot about truth – in fact, he knew all truth – but he just wasn’t the kind of ‘Christian’ people think their ‘leader’ should be.

And what about those people today who are familiar with Paul and his doctrine, and are familiar with those constant battles with their own flesh, as Paul was?

Maybe that is why I like Paul so much! His doctrine is the greatest in the world – but he certainly wasn’t the greatest Christian in the desert – by any stretch! And he knew it… and we should know it, and if we don’t know it, we need to remind ourselves – I am no different, you are no different!

My goal is not to be that ‘goody-goody, smiling, loving-everyone, church-going, worldly walking Christian in name and appearance’ type of person. ***And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought:* I Corinthians 2:1-6** (keep reading the rest of the chapter – it is all so fitting…)

**My Final Closing Comments:**

Paul was so correct when he said, “***Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?”* Galatians 4:16.**

And Paul also said it best when he said, ***And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.* II Corinthians 12:15.**

Paul just isn’t the kind of apostle people expect – or even want today!

However, and against almost everyone in my life these days, I do!

Christ is my Saviour, no doubt - but Paul is my kind of minister – apostle – teacher - and a man who knows the Risen Saviour – and hates religion, trusts the words of the Risen Saviour, fights the sin that dwelleth in him daily while wanting to try to please God, still wanting to tell others about the truth of the dispensation of the grace of God – all the while wanting to be delivered from the body of this death as he serves the law of God with his mind; but with the flesh the law of sin!

Now that is the true Christian! I wish more people would see the truth in that, too!