

3ABN SABBATH SCHOOL PANEL

01 - Sunday – June 28, 2026

Title of Quarterly Lesson – 1st & 2nd Corinthians

Memory Text

Acts 18:9-10 (NKJV) “(9) Now the Lord spoke to Paul in the night by a vision, “Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent; (10) for I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city.””

PAUL, A GOD-CALLED APOSTLE OF JESUS

The great English missionary William Carey used to say that he cobbled shoes to pay his expenses, but his real business was winning souls. This week, we will get a glimpse of Paul’s ministry to the church in the city of Corinth. The church, as we will see, was full of problems, many that were not unlike what our churches face today, almost two thousand years later. Indeed, anyone who has been in Christianity for any length of time, or who has been involved in church work, could ask the question: Have you ever found a Christian group that doesn’t have any problems? The answer is, of course, obvious.

I. Paul’s Identity: Called by God

Text: **1 Corinthians 1:1** — **Romans 1:1** — Compare: **Galatians 1:1**

Question 1: What two elements of Paul’s ministry are emphasized?

Answer:

1 Corinthians 1:1 (NKJV) “Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother,”

1. Divine Calling (Called by God)

- Paul emphasizes that he was “**called to be an apostle**”
- His ministry was **not self-appointed**
- It was **initiated by God’s will, not human ambition**

Supporting Insight:

- **Galatians 1:1 — “Not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ...”**

Key Truth: Our calling is **not validated by people**—it is **established by God**.

2. Divine Commission (Sent by Jesus)

Romans 1:1 (NKJV) “Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God”

- The word “**apostle**” = **one who is sent**
- Paul’s ministry was not just identity—it was **assignment**
- He was sent with a **message and mission**

Key Truth: **Calling** defines **who you are**, but **commission** defines **what you do**.

II. The Source of Paul's Calling

Text Connections:

Galatians 1:15 (NKJV) “But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb and called me through His grace,”

Jeremiah 1:5 (NKJV) “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; Before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations.””

Key Insight: Paul’s call was: **Pre-planned by God — Grace-based (not earned) — Revealed in time.**

Jeremiah 29:11 (NKJV) “For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.”

Just like: **Jeremiah** was called **before birth** — **Paul** was set apart **from the womb**

III. The Moment That Confirmed His Calling

Text: **1 Corinthians 15:8-11 (NKJV)** “(8) Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time. (9) For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. (10) But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. (11) Therefore, whether it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.”

Key Insight: Paul’s apostleship was confirmed through:

- A **personal encounter with Jesus Christ**
- A life-transforming experience

Principle: **Calling is not just theological—it is experiential.**

IV. The Meaning of “Apostle of Jesus”

Supporting Texts:

Titus 1:1 — Titus 1:1 (NKJV) “Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God’s elect and the acknowledgment of the truth which accords with godliness,”

Paul’s Apostolic Identity Includes: Sent One (**Apostle**), **Servant** of Christ, **Preacher** of the Gospel, **Teacher** of Truth

Unified Theme: **Everything Paul did pointed back to Jesus.** **1 Corinthians 2:2 (ESV)** “For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.”

V. Christ: The Center of Paul’s Life

Observation: Jesus is mentioned repeatedly in: Opening greeting — Thanksgiving section. **Nine times in nine verses**

Spiritual Insight: Paul didn’t just preach Christ

He lived Christ: His mind was filled with: Christ’s presence; Christ’s mission; Christ’s love

How to Identify Your Calling:

1. **God's Word:** Calling will never contradict Scripture
2. **Inner Conviction:** A deep, persistent burden or passion
3. **Providential Openings:** Doors God opens that align with purpose
4. **Spiritual Fruit:** Lives impacted through your influence
5. **Confirmation Over Time:** Calling becomes clearer as you walk with God

Our prayer should be: “Lord, help me to move from confusion to clarity, from noise to calling, from religion to relationship. Speak, Lord... Your servant is listening.”

**“EMPLOYMENT IS MEANT TO SATISFY YOUR NEEDS,
GOD'S CALLING IS MEANT TO SANCTIFY YOUR SOUL.”**

John Lomacang