

GALATIANS 1:15

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But when it pleased God, who **separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace,**

separated him hereunto from his mother's womb: the change that was wrought in him was in pursuance of a divine purpose concerning him, whereby he was appointed to be a Christian and an apostle, before he came into the world, or had done either good or evil.

It was the good pleasure of God (*eudokēsen ho theos*). Paul had no doubt about God's purpose in him (1Th_2:8).

It pleased - See on *good pleasure*, 2 Thessalonians 1:11

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Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of *this* calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of *his* goodness, and the work of faith with power:

Wherefore - Better, *to which end*. Comp. Col_1:29. The end is, "that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God," 2Th_1:5. The same thought is continued in 2Th_1:11.

Count - worthy - Comp. 1Ti_5:17; Heb_3:3; Heb_10:29.

Your calling - Including both the act and the end of the Christian calling. Comp. Phi_3:14; 1Th_2:12; Eph_4:1.

All the good pleasure of his goodness

Wrong. Paul does not mean *all the goodness which God is pleased to bestow*, but *the delight of the Thessalonians in goodness*. He prays that God may perfect their pleasure in goodness. So Weizsäcker, *die Freude an allem Guten*. The Rev. *desire* for is infelicitous, and lacks support. *goodness* (P. see on Rom_3:19) is never predicated of God in N.T. In lxx, see Neh_9:25, Neh_9:35.

good pleasure, delight, is a purely Biblical word. As related to one's self, it means *contentment, satisfaction*: see Sir. 29:23; Ps. of Sol. 3:4; 16:12. As related to others, *good will, benevolence*. Luk_10:21, Eph_1:5, Eph_1:9; Phi_1:15; Phi_2:13; Ps. of Sol. 8:39.

Who separated me (*ho apherisas me*). *Apherizoō* is old word (from *apo* and *horos*) to mark off from a boundary or line. The Pharisees were the separatists who held themselves off from others. Paul conceives himself as a spiritual Pharisee "separated unto the gospel of God" (Rom_1:1, the same word *aphōrismenos*). Before his birth God had his plans for him and called him.

Separated - Set apart: designated. See on Rom 1:1, and see on *declared*, Rom 1:4. The A.V. wrongly lends itself to the sense of the physical separation of the child from the mother.

"set me apart": in the purposes of His electing love (compare Acts 9:15; Acts 22:14), in order to show in me *His "pleasure,"* which is the farthest point that any can reach in inquiring the causes of his salvation. The actual "separating" or "setting apart" to the work marked out for him, is mentioned in Acts 13:2; Romans 1:1. There is an allusion, perhaps, in the way of contrast, to the

derivation of Pharisee from *Hebrew*, “pharash,” “separated.” I was once a so-called Pharisee or *Separatist*, but God had *separated* me to something far better.

God had *separated him hereunto from his mother's womb*: the change that was wrought in him was in pursuance of a divine purpose concerning him, whereby he was appointed to be a Christian and an apostle, before he came into the world, or had done either good or evil.

From my mother's womb - Before I was born.

Others, from the time of my birth.

Judges 16:17

¹⁷Then he told her all his mind and said to her, A razor has never come upon my head, for I have been a Nazirite to God from my birth. If I am shaved, then my strength will go from me, and I shall become weak and be like any other man.

That view is also favored by those instances in which **a child's destiny is clearly fixed by God before birth**, as Samson, Judges 16:17; comp. Judges 13:5, Judges 13:7; John the Baptist, Luke 1:15.

from ... womb — Thus merit in me was out of the question, in assigning causes for His call from Act 9:11. **Grace is the sole cause** (Psalm 22:9; 71:6; Isaiah 49:1, 49:5; Jeremiah 1:5; Luke 1:15).

an apostle by call – Romans 1:1; 1Corinthians 1:1.

called me — **on the way to Damascus** (Acts 9:3-8).

He was *called by his grace*. All who are savingly converted are called by the grace of God; their conversion is the effect of his good pleasure concerning them, and is effected by his power and grace in them. But there was something peculiar in the case of Paul, both in the suddenness and in the greatness of the change wrought in him, and also in the manner wherein it was effected, which was not by the mediation of others, as the instruments of it, but by Christ's personal appearance to him, and immediate operation upon him, whereby it was rendered a more special and extraordinary instance of divine power and favour.