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Paul Among Jews and Gentiles (Fortress Press, 1973).

In this book, a well-known New Testament scholar takes a stab at popular conceptions of Paul. Krister Stendahl proposes a new way of looking at Paul's speech in the essay with the same title: Paul must be understood as one who speaks of his call rather than conversion, forgiveness, justification, or weakness; his weakness rather than sin; love rather than integrity, and unique language rather than universal must be taken into account when listening to Paul. One of the most influential figures in Christian history, Paul, gets a fresh perspective in this book.

Paul's journey through Damascus is the best case study for studying conversion. As a dramatic story and an ideal model of a new life reborn, these photos of the former Paul are a must-see for anyone interested in a new beginning. Many Christians find this model comforting or encouraging when comparing their conversion. Christian leaders today frequently misinterpret Jesus' journey to Damascus as a call to repentance rather than a call to missionary work (Stendahl, 28). Consider the following to understand better why people in Damascus prefer to call rather than convert:

Similarly, in chapter 2, Krister Stendahl makes the case that the texts emphasize his call then on conversion. J.E. Toews has noted that the emphasis in all three Acts accounts is on assignment and Paul's perception (Gal. 1:16). Second, it has been pointed out that the language of Acts resembles that of the Biblical prophet. As an example, consider the words of the apostle

Paul, who claimed that he was chosen to be an apostle to the Gentiles "not by flesh and blood, but by the grace of God" (Gal. 1:15-16). Although Paul was aware of the truth, he was chosen to be an apostle by God's grace (I Cor. 15: 8-10). All of the accounts in Acts are written so that they support calling rather than conversion. Instead of defending his faith, Paul tells the story in chapters 22 and 26 to show the value of his apostolic work (Stendahl, 78). More than demonstrating Paul's conversion, Paul's conversion story in Chapter 9 explains why the book's apostolic advance included him in it. The Lord called him, and that his apostleship was authentic is made evident.

According to Stendahl in chapter three of this book, the Western church's understanding of Paul was distorted by the religious experiences of Augustine and Martin Luther. It was a heavy burden for both Augustine and Luther. Each found solace in the message of Paul's gospel. The faith-only justification was seen to be the solution to people's guilt-ridden consciences. It seems that Stendahl's justification by faith alone has more in common with the conflict of Augustine and Luther than with Paul's writings (Stendahl, 203). It has been said that Stendahl's insistence on Paul's "strong conscience" is widely recognized. "Robust conscience," as used by Stendahl, signifies that Apostle Paul had no personal guilt and instead relied on the gospel of Christ's atonement to alleviate it. The implication is that there is no proof that Paul the Jew ever sought solace from the heavyweight of his tormented conscience. Convinced by the conviction of his strong conscience, Stendahl believes that Paul had an encounter with the Holy Spirit on the "Damascus Road" (Acts 9, 22, 26). Over time, this episode has been seen as Paul's faith journey began. According to their understanding of what transpired, the Lord Jesus appointed Paul as His Apostle to the Gentiles at this time.

He says that God approached Paul on the route from Jerusalem, but Stendahl insists that he was not converted in the sense of Christianity. In Christianity, Paul was both saved and called to be an emissary for Christ to the Gentiles, according to the traditional interpretation. According to Stendahl, a 'conversion' to Christianity cannot account for Paul's conversion from Judaism, at the very least, not according to Stendahl. As Stendahl sees it, the question, "How can I discover a kind God?" is not on Paul's mind. Paul has two more questions for you. As soon as Messiah is born, the first issue that must be asked is: "What will happen to the Torah (the true Torah, not the principle of legalism)?" The second question is, 'What will the Messiah's arrival mean for Jewish- Gentile relations?' In other words, 'What are the Church and God's plan for the Gentiles?' 11 It is not the question of "What must I do to be saved?" but the question of "What does this mean for how you define the people of God now that Christ has come?" according to Stendahl's conversion from Judaism to Christianity (Stendahl, 307). At the time, Stendahl was promoting an idea that scholar E. P. Sanders would expand upon in his study of first-century Judaism. To the theology of the church, Paul devotes much of his attention (the doctrine of the church). Soteriology (the doctrine of salvation) is not a significant focus of his (the doctrine of salvation).

As a result of his meeting with Christ, Paul's personal life was forever changed. In realizing that what he thought was service was resistance to God's plan, he was forced to acknowledge as Lord the one he had tried to crush. His previous ideas about Israel, the Gentiles, the righteousness of the law, salvation, and eschatology had to be reorganized into a new theological framework. It was an epiphany that brought about a shift from a flawed notion of God's involvement in the world to an entirely new one, one that shifted him from an anti-Christ attitude toward him to one of awe-inspiring bond service to him. The conversion was made to

suit Paul's requirements. Although he was already a firm believer in God, devoted to serving him, and a doer of righteousness, he remained in the dark until the light of revelation was shed on him. He responded and which revolutionized his life.

Work Cited

Stendahl, Krister. Paul among Jews and Gentiles: and other essays. Fortress Press, 1976.