

## Paul as Apostle, Theologian, and Missionary in Ellen G. White's Writings<sup>1</sup>

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### Abstract

*Among the apostles, Ellen G. White wrote a biography of Paul only, Sketches from the Life of Paul (1883). In addition of this book, there are numerous statements about him throughout her writings. The purpose of this paper is to see what the idea of White about Paul as an apostle, theologian, and missionary was. This research argues that White understood the office of Paul as apostle was closely related to his eagerness in studying the Word of God, delivering the message in its simplicity to the hearers (theologian) and his zealous for missionary work. These three are intertwined in the life of Paul after his conversion. As he was called to be an apostle, this office required him to share the truth to others as well as a shepherd for God's people, nurturing them and protecting the church from the false teaching. The last task was closely related to his ability as theologian. She regarded him as a missionary. She stated that to be a missionary he was to teach the truth (theologian), to expand the church and to organize people to advance God's work. Thus, these three roles interwove in Paul's ministry.*

**Keywords:** *Paul*

### Introduction

Paul is one of the most important persons from the past. N. T. Wright mentions him as “one of a handful of people from the ancient world whose words still have the capacity to leap off the page and confront us.”<sup>2</sup> Regarding Paul's letters in the Scriptures, Wright comments, “That those letters, page for page, have generated more comment, more sermons, and seminars, more monograph and dissertations than any other writings from the ancient world.”<sup>3</sup>

As Wright noted, Ellen G. White also saw Paul's writings may give some insights for people nowadays. She wrote to one of ministers in 1875 about the example of Paul that he might imitate. He “became all things to all men if by any means he might save some” was a principle that everyone in God's work should follow.<sup>4</sup> Paul, according to Ellen, should be a model for everyone who ministers God's wills. He is a model “to every minister an example of loyalty, devotion, and untiring effort. His experiences and his instruction regarding the sacredness of the minister's work,

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<sup>1</sup> This paper was read in 22th AIIAS Theological Forum on 14 November 2019.

<sup>2</sup> N. T. Wright, *Paul: A Biography* (New York, NY: HarperOne, 2018), xi.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>4</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1948), 3: 422.

are a source of help and inspiration to those engaged in the gospel ministry.”<sup>5</sup> She also pointed out to Paul as “set an example of industry and thoroughness.”<sup>6</sup> It meant that “he was a quick, skillful worker, diligent in business” so that “losing no opportunity of witnessing for the Saviour, and of helping those who needed help.”<sup>7</sup> White referred to Paul as an example of industrious and productive Christian.<sup>8</sup> He was not idle in doing his ministry and at the same time he helped people in need. These examples of Paul may contribute for Christians how the followers of Christ should act in their life and ministry to spread the Good News. No wonder, she persuades young people to study the life of Paul.<sup>9</sup>

### Books About Paul in the Writings of Ellen G. White

There was no favoritism in Ellen’s writings. She considered Paul as significant as the other apostles of Christ.<sup>10</sup> But why among the apostles of Christ, she only wrote the biography of Paul? The answer can be seen from the background how the *Sketches From the Life of Paul* was written.

It was in 1883 that Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church studied the Sabbath School lesson from the Acts of the Apostles. To equip the church members on this lesson, in 1882 the church provided Conybeare and Howson’s *Life and Epistles of the Apostle Paul* as supporting reading.<sup>11</sup> This book was sold 2000 copies<sup>12</sup> and provided some insights in the life, work, and ministry of Paul. Then, there was a request to have Ellen White’s writing on the same topic. To meet this need, some materials from *Spirit of Prophecy* volume 3 and unpublished materials of the early part of the volume 4 together with some additional writings of Ellen White, it became *Sketches From the Life of Paul*. However, “it was published hastily so as to meet the immediate demands” and intended as “Sabbath school help.”<sup>13</sup> Thus, in 1883, Review and Herald began promoting this book.<sup>14</sup>

The *Sketches From the Life of Paul* became “one of the best loved book written by Mrs. White.”<sup>15</sup> It has been published for more than 12 years when the publisher asked permission from Ellen White to reproduce the book. W. C. White, Ellen’s son, wrote that “Mother said that this work was too brief, she had much to add, and she asked the publishers to wait. Then come the Review and Herald fire which burned up the electrotype plates.”<sup>16</sup> However, the *Sketches From the Life of Paul* has been intended to be replaced by more comprehensive book since 1888.<sup>17</sup> Finally, *Acts of the Apostles*<sup>18</sup> was published in 1911 to replace *Sketches From the Life of Paul*. In her writings, Ellen did not write about Paul only in these two books but also in periodicals, some

<sup>5</sup> Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1948), 58.

<sup>6</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles* [AA] (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1911), 351.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* [T] (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1948), 4: 410.

<sup>9</sup> Ellen G. White, *Education* [Ed] (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1952), 269.

<sup>10</sup> Ellen White, Ms 38, 1905, March 27, 1905, Ellen G. White Research Center, Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies (EGWRC-AIIAS), Silang, Cavite, Philippines.

<sup>11</sup> “Inducements to Workers for the Signs of Times,” *Signs of the Times*, Dec 21, 1882, 578.

<sup>12</sup> Ellen G. White estate document, no. 6296, 9.

<sup>13</sup> Letter of A. L. White to Donald R. Conley on April 25, 1972.

<sup>14</sup> “Sketches From the Life of Paul,” *Review and Herald* [RH], Oct 9, 1883, 638.

<sup>15</sup> Ellen G. White document no. 6296, 8.

<sup>16</sup> Letter of W. C. White to J. S. Washburn on January 3, 1917.

<sup>17</sup> Letter of W. C. White to L. C. Chadwick July 10, 1888.

<sup>18</sup> *Acts of the Apostles*, in a greater extant, came from *Spirit of Prophecy* volume 3 and *Sketches From the life of Paul*. See Ellen G. White document no. 6296, 9.

sections of books, and in personal letters and manuscripts. The next parts of this paper discuss Paul as apostle, theologian, and missionary in the Ellen White's writings.

### Paul as Apostle

In White's times, an apostle means "one sent forth; a messenger; one of the twelve disciples of Christ sent forth to preach the gospel."<sup>19</sup> Some of the dictionaries in her times indicated the same idea that the apostle was a messenger or one of twelve disciples of Jesus who was sent to preach the good news about Jesus.<sup>20</sup> As the dictionaries limited the meaning of an apostle only for preaching the gospel, Ellen had broader understanding about it.

Ellen understood the calling of Paul as an apostle had two meanings. First was for preaching the gospel and second was for nurturing the church. In the first meaning, she wrote that in his calling as the apostle of Christ it was including a task to "preach the gospel."<sup>21</sup> Nevertheless, this was not the only task. She added that the calling of Paul as apostle was also to "set for the defense of the church."<sup>22</sup> It meant that the second meaning of apostle was to shepherd the church so "that there be no divisions among them" and to "correct the existing evils" in it.<sup>23</sup> In this case, as an apostle, Paul "might know just how to treat them"<sup>24</sup> in solving their problem. Thus, the meaning of an apostle, for Ellen, was for reaching new converts, shepherding, and uniting them in Christ including solving problem that may appear in the church. She also noted that in the laying on of hands of church leaders to Paul as a servant in gospel ministry, he was "authorized by the church, not only to teach the truth, but to baptize, and to organize churches, being invested with full ecclesiastical authority."<sup>25</sup>

As one of his tasks was to unite the church, Paul, even though he was in travelling still he kept in touch with his congregation through letters of admonition, rebuking, and comfort. Ellen penned, "The apostle's desire for those to whom he addressed his letters of counsel and admonition was that they should 'be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine;' but that they should all come into 'the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.'<sup>26</sup> His intention was that "by word of mouth and by letter he bore a message that ever since has brought help and strength to the church of God."<sup>27</sup>

The Jews who were formerly the supporters of Saul (name of Paul before his conversion) in doing persecution could see these two meanings of Paul as apostle of Jesus Christ. According to Ellen, they could see the shifting of Paul's direction in his religion's doctrine and experience. She wrote that "yet now they [the Jews] beheld him preaching the gospel of Jesus, strengthening those who were already its disciples and continually making new converts to the faith he had once so

<sup>19</sup> *Webster's Academic Dictionary* (Springfield, MA: G. & C. Merriam, 1895), 30. This meaning was not much different compared with Webster's dictionary in 1828 which meant "A person deputed to execute some important business; but appropriately, a disciple of Christ commissioned to preach the gospel." However, it had similar meaning in 1884 as "a person sent forth to execute some important business; one of the twelve disciples of Christ sent forth to preach the gospel." *Webster's Practical Dictionary* (Springfield, MA: G. & C. Merriam, 1884), 24.

<sup>20</sup> See footnote 19.

<sup>21</sup> White, AA, 127.

<sup>22</sup> White, *Testimonies*, 5:65; cf. White, AA, 302.

<sup>23</sup> White, *Testimonies*, 5: 65.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 684.

<sup>25</sup> Ellen G. White, *Sketches From the Life of Paul [LP]* (Battle Creek, MI: Review and Herald, 1883), 42.

<sup>26</sup> White, AA, 470.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

zealously opposed.”<sup>28</sup> Therefore, the apostleship of Paul was not just seen by the church but also by outsiders.

How did Paul get his apostleship? Paul confidently believed that he received the calling to be an apostle from Jesus Christ himself (Gal 1:1).<sup>29</sup> Ellen confirmed Paul’s claim as she penned, “He declared himself to be an apostle, ‘not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead.’ Not from men, but from the highest Authority in heaven, had he received his commission. And his position had been acknowledged by a general council at Jerusalem, with the decisions of which Paul had complied in all his labors among the Gentiles.”<sup>30</sup>

Therefore, for Ellen, human’s acknowledgment, or ordination of the church to Paul was a confirmation of God’s calling to him. She stated that when Barnabas and Paul was ordained “their ordination was an open recognition of their divine mission, as messengers specially chosen by the Holy Ghost for a special work. Paul witnesses in his Epistle to the Romans, that he considered this sacred appointment as a new and important epoch in his life; he names himself, ‘a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God.’”<sup>31</sup> Ellen further explained the ordination to Paul and Barnabas as:

We have, in the history of these two apostles, only a simple record of the laying on of hands, and its bearing upon their work. *Both Paul and Barnabas had already received their commission from God himself; and the ceremony of the laying on of hands added no new grace or virtual qualification. It was merely setting the seal of the church upon the work of God--an acknowledged form of designation to an appointed office.* Therefore, when the ministers of Antioch laid their hands upon the apostles, they, by that action, asked God to bestow his blessing upon them, in their devotion to the specific work which *God had chosen them to do.*<sup>32</sup>

Paul’s attitude as apostle in his ministry was indicating that God has been calling him as His apostle. In his career as apostle, he dared to explain the truth to the enemy of the truth. Ellen wrote “Paul did not hesitate to speak the plain truth concerning the rejection of the Savior by the Jewish leaders.”<sup>33</sup> He also rebuked those who showing their antagonistic efforts to the Gospel.<sup>34</sup> However, “to those who believe, Christ is a sure foundation. Upon this living stone, Jews and Gentiles alike may build.”<sup>35</sup> For believers, he attempted to preserve the unity of the church in Christ as well as their faithfulness to the savior. He also prepared the successor of him as he saw several young men had a calling to be a gospel minister. Regarding Paul’s mentorship to Timothy, Ellen noted,

Paul loved Timothy, his “own son in the faith.” 1 Timothy 1:2. The great apostle often drew the younger disciple out, questioning him regarding Scripture history, and as they traveled from place to place, he carefully taught him how to do successful work. Both Paul and Silas, in all their association with Timothy, sought to deepen the impression that had already been made upon his mind, of the sacred, serious nature of the work of the gospel minister.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Ellen White, *The Story of Redemption [SR]* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1947), 274. Words in bracket added.

<sup>29</sup> White, *AA*, 127.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 387. See also White, *LP*, 42.

<sup>31</sup> White, *LP*, 43.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 43-44. Italics added.

<sup>33</sup> White, *AA*, 171.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 168.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 175.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 204.

Thus, Paul's ministry indicated his calling as apostle in reaching out, in, and across people.

The calling of Paul as apostle closely related to his gift in understand and explain the Scripture. Ellen stated that in his calling to be as apostle, "the Lord had shown him the difficulties and dangers which would arise in the churches."<sup>37</sup> Therefore, the great responsibility and "the greatness of the work before him led him to give much study to the Holy Scriptures."<sup>38</sup> In this sense, the work as apostle for Paul was closely related with what a modern people say as theologian since he did not just teach the people about the truth but also to distinguish the true teaching from the false.

### Paul as Theologian

The term "theologian" and the general way how the theologians got their knowledge made Ellen hesitated to use this term. Yet, it does not mean that to study theology is something prohibited for Christians. In her time the meaning of theologian was "one versed in theology; professor of divinity"<sup>39</sup> while the term "theology" was "the science of God and divine things; or the science which teaches the existence, character and attributes of God, his laws and government, the doctrines we are to believe, and the duties we are to practice."<sup>40</sup> All of these meanings were related to science and system of faith.

Why did Ellen hesitate to use this term for Adventist ministers and workers? There are several reasons. First, she reasoned that the theologians using "too many words"<sup>41</sup> of difficult "terms and propositions"<sup>42</sup> that were hard to be understood by ordinary people. In relation to this, theologians usually are not sensitive to the audiences by showing off their "smartness as theologians" and not "wise" in choosing their words.<sup>43</sup> As the result of this is the souls "are perishing for want of the bread of life."<sup>44</sup> The motive of using the complicated terms and arguments based on many books of "philosophers and theologians" indicating that they are well acquainted with these theories but, according to Ellen, "is not so much to obtain light or spiritual food."<sup>45</sup> The other reason why Ellen refused to use this expression was the tendency to rely on "ordinances of bishops, the decrees of council"<sup>46</sup> and less of "diligently and prayerfully searching the Scripture."<sup>47</sup> "Often the impressions left by man on the human mind are misleading"<sup>48</sup> because it depend on human's idea. As a consequence, this led to unbiblical teaching.<sup>49</sup> The third reason was that the theologians' teaching was not practical and this is contrary to what Jesus has taught his disciples with simple language, easy to be understood and is applicable in life. The outcome of such teaching

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 302.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 127.

<sup>39</sup> *Webster's Academic Dictionary*, 1895, 575.

<sup>40</sup> Noah Webster, *An American Dictionary of the English Language* [*Webster Dictionary*], vol. 2 (New York, NY: S. Converse, 1828), see "theology."

<sup>41</sup> Ellen G. White, Ms 23, 1890, EGWRC-AIIAS, Silang, Cavite, Philippines.

<sup>42</sup> Ellen G. White to Edson and Emma White, October 20, 1899, Letter 164, 1899, EGWRC-AIIAS, Silang, Cavite, Philippines.

<sup>43</sup> White, *Testimonies*, 6: 324.

<sup>44</sup> Ellen G. White, *Ministry of Healing* [MH] (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1942), 442.

<sup>45</sup> White to Edson and Emma White, Lt 164, 1899. See also White, *Testimonies*, 8: 307.

<sup>46</sup> Ellen G. White, Ms 172, 1897, EGWRC-AIIAS, Silang, Cavite, Philippines.

<sup>47</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan* [GC] (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1950), 312.

<sup>48</sup> Ellen G. White, Ms 134a, 1897, EGWRC-AIIAS, Silang, Cavite, Philippines.

<sup>49</sup> White, GC, 552. Another example of the human idea on the biblical topic is the immortality of the soul.



was “the people are not fed.”<sup>50</sup> Ellen was not against to study many books but if it is not to feed the mind with the understandable truth, it is vain. Motive of study, that is to present the truth in a simple manner and applicable in life is important to reach the soul. She was not against the learned theologians, but she warned that there is a danger to rely on human’s speculation and thought. For her, depending on the Bible and Holy Spirit is more important than human’s theories.

Ellen G. White persuaded the servants of God to be “higher than [ordinary] ministers and theologians.”<sup>51</sup> To attain this objective, she referred to Paul as an example. She wrote, “Work as Paul worked. Wherever he was, . . . he lifted up Christ as One who hates sin and loves the sinner, the One who bore our sins that He might have full power and authority to impart to us His righteousness.”<sup>52</sup> Paul’s teaching focused on Christ. According to Ellen, this is the heart of Paul’s theology. In relation to this, she argued that a true teaching of theologian should be based on the Bible and Christ.<sup>53</sup> In this sense, this theologian should have “practical lessons” that they may learn “from Christ.”<sup>54</sup> In doing this, this person should seek the truth with the whole heart.<sup>55</sup> According to Ellen, true theologians of Christ should have “their character and the simplicity of their teachings were similar to the character and teachings of Christ.”<sup>56</sup> In order to have true teaching in Christ, one should rely on God and the Scripture rather than to self, human and method-reliance. She penned that “Scriptural difficulties can never be mastered by the same methods that are employed in grappling with philosophical problems. We should not engage in the study of the Bible with that self-reliance with which so many enter the domains of science, but with a prayerful dependence upon God and a sincere desire to learn His will.”<sup>57</sup> She continued, “One reason why many theologians have no clearer understanding of God’s word is, they close their eyes to truths which they do not wish to practice.”<sup>58</sup> Therefore, “The Bible should never be studied without prayer. The Holy Spirit alone can cause us to feel the importance of those things easy to be understood or prevent us from wresting truths difficult of comprehension.”<sup>59</sup>

Ellen believed that good education may contribute to the “service in a greater variety of ways and can accomplish more extensive work” in God’s ministry.<sup>60</sup> She noticed that Paul had such qualification. She wrote that prior to his conversion, “Paul had been educated by the most learned teachers of the age. He had been taught by Gamaliel. Paul was a rabbi and a statesman. He was a member of the Sanhedrim.”<sup>61</sup> As part of Sanhedrin, he had “a position of power.”<sup>62</sup> He was a “popular orator,”<sup>63</sup> educated “in theological school of Judea,”<sup>64</sup> and in “scientific and literary”

<sup>50</sup> White, *Testimonies*, 8: 308; See also White, *MH*, 443.

<sup>51</sup> Ellen G. White, Ms 134a, 1897, EGWRC-AIIAS, Silang, Cavite, Philippines. Word in bracket added.

<sup>52</sup> Ellen G. White Ms 23, 1890, EGWRC-AIIAS, Silang, Cavite, Philippines.

<sup>53</sup> Ellen G. White Lt 85, 1889. See also Ellen G. White, Ms 134a, 1897.

<sup>54</sup> White, *MH*, 443.

<sup>55</sup> White, *GC*, 312.

<sup>56</sup> White, *Testimonies*, 4: 378.

<sup>57</sup> White, *GC*, 599.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 599.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 599-600.

<sup>60</sup> White, *MH*, 150.

<sup>61</sup> Ellen G. White Ms 95, 1899.

<sup>62</sup> White, *AA*, 112.

<sup>63</sup> White, *Testimonies*, 3: 433.

<sup>64</sup> White, *Education*, 64.

subjects.<sup>65</sup> He “was admired for his genius and eloquence”<sup>66</sup> and “educated in Jerusalem by the most eminent of the rabbis, and instructed in all the laws and traditions of the fathers.”<sup>67</sup> However, this qualifications are nothing without “another kind of education.”<sup>68</sup>

The new education was to educate Paul “in regard to the mission and work of Christ.”<sup>69</sup> Faith in Jesus Christ, according to Ellen, qualifies Paul’s “education of value to him and to the world.”<sup>70</sup> In this kind of training, “Paul became fully conscious that to know Jesus Christ by an experimental knowledge was for his present and eternal good. He saw the necessity of reaching a high standard.”<sup>71</sup> Since the vision that Paul had at the gate of Damascus, “Paul was a truly converted man.” Jesus Christ, at that time, has “changed the whole current of his life.”<sup>72</sup> After his conversion, Paul went to Arabia where he had “to study the Scriptures and to learn of God. He emptied his soul of prejudices and traditions that had shaped his life and received instruction from the Source of truth.”<sup>73</sup> After acquaintance with Jesus and studying the Scriptures, another education waited for him. Ellen penned that “his education had not been considered complete until he had served an apprenticeship at some useful trade. He rejoiced that he was able to support himself by manual labor, and frequently declared that his own hands had ministered to his necessities.”<sup>74</sup> This skill was not only for him, but he trained other minister to have such practice. She stated, “Paul was an educator. He preached the gospel with his voice, and in his intelligent labor he preached it with his hands. He educated others in the same way in which he had been educated by one who was regarded as the wisest of human teachers.”<sup>75</sup> By God’s education, Paul knew and experienced Jesus. He studied the Bible in Christian perspective. And by work education he learned how to be a sincere and perseverance servant of Christ by the power of “the Holy Spirit and God’s grace.”<sup>76</sup>

The result of this new education was remarkable. His former theological training in “rabbinical and Pharisaic education was now to be used to good account in preaching the gospel and in sustaining the cause he had once used every effort to destroy.”<sup>77</sup> He “was able to meet all classes with convincing arguments in support of the doctrines he taught. Thus, the apostle stood undaunted, meeting his opposers on their own ground, matching logic with logic, philosophy with philosophy, eloquence with eloquence.”<sup>78</sup> In this new strength, Paul now “was able to speak with power and authority, for he frequently received instruction from God in vision.”<sup>79</sup> His continuing communication with God was another strength of him. “Paul knew that the higher Christian attainments can be reached only through much prayer and constant watchfulness.”<sup>80</sup> Thus, a good

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<sup>65</sup> Ellen G. White in Francis D. Nichol, ed., *The Seventh-Day Adventist Bible Commentary [SDABC]* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1980), 6: 1084.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 1063.

<sup>67</sup> White, *Education*, 64.

<sup>68</sup> Ellen G. White, Ms 142, 1897.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>70</sup> Ellen G. White, Ms 142, 1897. See also White in *SDABC*, 6: 1084

<sup>71</sup> White, *SDABC*, 6: 1084.

<sup>72</sup> Ellen G. White to Workers in Nashville, October 9, 1907, Lt 332, 1907, EGWRC-AIIAS, Silang, Cavite, Philippines.

<sup>73</sup> White, *Education*, 65.

<sup>74</sup> White, *SDABC*, 6: 1063.

<sup>75</sup> Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, March 6, 1900.

<sup>76</sup> White, *Testimonies*, 4: 378.

<sup>77</sup> White, *SR*, 274.

<sup>78</sup> White, *AA*, 235.

<sup>79</sup> Ellen G. White, Ms 46, 1905.

<sup>80</sup> White, *AA*, 307.

quality of theological training will have greater impact when it is consecrated to glorify God's name.

Theology of Paul developed as he became Christians and had more experience with God. His theology focused on Christ and His cross. "As he endeavored to lead souls to the foot of the cross, . . . he set before them the true object of life and tried to impress upon their minds the lessons of the divine Teacher, which, if received, would lift them from worldliness and sin to purity and righteousness."<sup>81</sup> In this perspective, "Paul saw that the character of Christ must be understood before men could love Him or view the cross with the eye of faith." He believed, "In the light of the cross alone can the true value of the human soul be estimated."<sup>82</sup> Paul theology centered on Christ and His cross, his theology became more practical when he more understood about Jesus. "As love for his Redeemer increases, so also does love for his fellow men."<sup>83</sup> This theology changed Paul's life as well as His conduct. He valued the life of human more than before. For some people in his time, this idea might be as revolutionary. "In that age of caste, when the rights of men were often unrecognized, Paul set forth the great truth of human brotherhood." He promulgated a notion that "in the sight of God all are on an equality, and to the Creator every human being owes supreme allegiance."<sup>84</sup> Therefore, Paul regarded that theology should center on Christ and his cross in order to grasp the whole idea of Christianity.

### Paul as Missionary

The meaning of the word "missionary" did not change much during Ellen's lifetime. People at that time understood this term as "one sent to propagate religion."<sup>85</sup> For Ellen, a missionary is not just "to propagate religion." A missionary is a person who lives the message that he/she promulgates. Missionary means that the message that he/she proclaims, becomes the lifestyle of him/her.

Ellen describes a true missionary as "a living exposition of truth."<sup>86</sup> She believed that one who "eats the flesh and drinks the blood of the Son of God" would be "molded according to the divine similitude." True missionary would "hide self in Christ, praising and glorifying Him as the One altogether lovely."<sup>87</sup> She concluded that "the believer who is imbued with a true missionary spirit, will be a living epistle, known and read of all men. He is a partaker of the divine nature."<sup>88</sup> Thus, missionary is the one who preaches and lives the truth.<sup>89</sup>

Ellen believed that every true believer of Christ should be a missionary. She defines the term as "every true disciple is born into the kingdom of God as a missionary. He who drinks of the living water becomes a fountain of life. The receiver becomes a giver. The grace of Christ in the soul is like a spring in the desert, welling up to refresh all, and making those who are ready to perish eager to drink of the water of life."<sup>90</sup> All believers should be a missionary. For her, the scope of

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 272.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 273.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 261.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 238.

<sup>85</sup> *Webster Dictionary*, 1828, see "missionary;" *Webster Practical Dictionary*, 1884, 358; *Webster's academic Dictionary*, 1895, 364.

<sup>86</sup> Ellen G. White, *Signs of the Times*, August 21, 1901.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Ellen G. White, *Loma Linda Messages* (Payson, AZ: Leaves-Of-Autumn Books, 1981), 244.

<sup>89</sup> Ellen G. White Lt 123, 1903, EGWRC-AIIAS, Silang, Cavite, Philippines.

<sup>90</sup> Ellen G. White, *Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1940), 195.



missionary is divided into two major parts, home and abroad.<sup>91</sup> The work of home missionary includes family, church, and neighborhood while missionary for abroad is to reach foreign countries.<sup>92</sup> Both scopes are important and interwoven because missionary at home will prepare more missionaries for foreign countries as well as domestic territory.<sup>93</sup>

In line with Ellen's understanding that every disciple of Christ is a missionary, she understood that the calling of Jesus to Paul was both as apostle and missionary to abroad. These two offices are intertwined in her writings on Paul through preaching the gospel to the gentiles. According to Ellen, at the gate of Damascus he received a calling as an apostle.<sup>94</sup> And at the same occasion "the Lord had given Paul his commission to enter the missionary field of the Gentile world."<sup>95</sup> When the church was laying on of hands to him, Ellen also considered this as the recognition of the church of God's calling to Paul as apostle and missionary to the gentile. She wrote, "Paul and Barnabas, after their ordination by the brethren in Antioch, 'departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.' Thus, the apostles began their first missionary journey."<sup>96</sup> She noted, "Paul regarded the occasion of his formal ordination as marking the beginning of a new and important epoch in his lifework. It was from the time of this solemn ceremony, when, just before he was to depart on his first missionary journey, he was 'separated unto the gospel of God,' that he afterward dated the beginning of his apostleship in the Christian church."<sup>97</sup> She concluded this relationship as she stated, "apostle Paul was a true missionary."<sup>98</sup> Therefore, the formal ceremony of the church to send Paul abroad includes him as apostle and missionary to preach and organize churches among the gentiles.<sup>99</sup>

Ellen saw that Paul's background of education was helpful in doing his missionary work. She recognized this when she penned, "Paul was one of the most effectual missionary workers. He proclaimed the truth as it is in Jesus. He was a clear, eloquent speaker, and could meet his adversaries on almost any ground on which they chose to approach him."<sup>100</sup> His theological training before and after his conversion equipped him more in reaching diverse classes and groups of people in different countries.<sup>101</sup> In this case, God can use missionaries in "their varied gifts to bless humanity."<sup>102</sup>

Paul's strategy to win people for Christ is an example that every missionary should follow. Ellen observed that he tried to minimize the prejudice either from the Greeks and Jews. Based on 1 Cor 9:20-23, she explored the way how Paul won the Greeks. She said that before explaining the gospel to them he did not say about the law first but Jesus as "their only hope of salvation."<sup>103</sup> But for the Jews, he came to the common ground with them, that was the law, and then guided them to Jesus.<sup>104</sup> Paul did this because "he desired to bring to his Jewish brethren, as well as to the Gentiles,

<sup>91</sup> Ellen G. White, *Daughters of God* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1998), 133.

<sup>92</sup> White, *Testimonies*, 9: 30.

<sup>93</sup> Ellen G. White, *Signs of the Times*, May 4, 1888.

<sup>94</sup> White, AA, 126-127

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 159. This relates to Eph 3:5 and 6 in which the idea of Paul as apostle and missionary is intertwined.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., 165.

<sup>97</sup> Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, May 11, 1911.

<sup>98</sup> Ellen G. White to Edson and Emma White, June 25, 1903, Lt 123, 1903, EGWRC-AIIAS, Silang, Cavite, Philippines.

<sup>99</sup> White, AA, 160.

<sup>100</sup> Ellen G. White, Ms 142, 1897.

<sup>101</sup> Ellen G. White, *Signs of the Times*, Nov 10, 1898.

<sup>102</sup> Ellen G. White to a Brother, September 10, 1899, Lt 233, 1899, EGWRC-AIIAS, Silang, Cavite, Philippines.

<sup>103</sup> Ellen G. White to A. O Tait, November 20, 1895, Lt 73, 1895, EGWRC-AIIAS, Silang, Cavite, Philippines

<sup>104</sup> White, AA, 204.

a knowledge of the gospel, and therefore he sought, so far as was consistent with the faith, to remove every pretext for opposition.”<sup>105</sup> Paul also used his work as a tent maker to neutralize a prejudice that he may take advantage of people for whom he addressed the message. Ellen wrote, “he had used all his means in furthering the cause of Christ, he resorted at times to his trade to gain a livelihood. Especially was this the case when he labored in places where his motives might have been misunderstood.”<sup>106</sup> Thus, Paul attempted to be as wise as possible using his theology and methods to make contact and win people for Christ.

The characteristics of Paul missionary work, according to Ellen, should inspire all God’s workers. She observed that Paul followed “Christ’s example of willing sacrifice and faithful, earnest labor for souls. Wide-awake, zealous, untiring, they did not consult inclination or personal ease, but with prayerful anxiety and unceasing activity” to preach the Gospel.”<sup>107</sup> At that time, these “earnestness and godly fear” were giving “lasting impression regarding the important of the gospel message” for new converts.<sup>108</sup> Paul also indicated his unceasing effort in doing his missionary work. He tried to make a new way if the usual way failed. Paul focused on pressing the work to advanced, creative as a missionary. He also focused on working for the salvation of others. This was his character as a missionary.<sup>109</sup> This characteristic does not just prevail in reaching people for Christ, but it is needed in spiritual growing as well as. She penned, “he who engages in the work of God, and is thoroughly devoted to that work, will not become dwarfed or stationary in his religious life; but will make earnest efforts to become a successful missionary, improving every opportunity, employing all his powers to advance step by step in practical Christian life.”<sup>110</sup> Therefore, as missionary Paul set an example on how missionaries should work for others and at the same time to keep living relationship with their God and Savior.

Paul considered his calling as missionary included his task to making disciple. She noted, “The apostle made it a part of his work to educate young men for the office of the ministry. He took them with him on his missionary journeys, and thus they gained an experience that later enabled them to fill positions of responsibility. When separated from them, he still kept in touch with their work, and his letters to Timothy and to Titus are evidence of how deep his desire for their success was.”<sup>111</sup> They were two ways to train these young workers. First is to accompany them in doing missionary. Second, encourage and support them by letters of admonition. Before doing this, Paul and Barnabas selected young people who desired to work for God. Ellen noticed that “After making a missionary tour, Paul and Barnabas retraced their steps, visiting the churches they had raised up, and selecting men to unite with them in the work. Thus, God’s servants today are to labor, selecting and training, worthy young men as co-laborers.”<sup>112</sup> Ellen observed that Paul as missionary did selection, training, and encouragement in the process of making disciples. She suggested that modern workers should do the same thing.

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<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., 347.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 186.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers* (Battle Creek, MI: Review and Herald, 1892,1901), 307-308.

<sup>110</sup> Ellen G. White, Ms 109, 1894, EGWRC-AIIAS, Silang, Cavite, Philippines.

<sup>111</sup> White, AA, 367.

<sup>112</sup> Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, August 19, 1902.

## Conclusion

Ellen White had wider and more practical understanding about the terms of apostle, theologian, and missionary if they were compared with dictionary in her time. She understood that Paul as apostle had two related meanings, first is a messenger of Christ for preaching the gospel and second is to nurture the church. Regarding Paul as theologian, she considered him as more than ordinary theologians in her era. If most theologians explained messages from many books, philosophers, church creeds and councils, Paul's message was center on the Scripture and Christ. He also used the common ground with the hearers in delivering his message. As she observed Paul as missionary, he did not just preach and teach the message, but he lived the message. Thus, for Ellen, true missionary should follow the example of Paul in teaching and living the truth.

Paul as apostle, theologian, and missionary, in Ellen G. White's writings are intertwined in his ministry. At the calling of Paul as apostle, in her writings, often time it also is seen as a calling to missionary work. And when he was ordained as apostle to the gentiles it is also regarded as his assignment as missionary to the non-Jews people. The common ground of Paul as apostle and missionary was preaching the Good News to others and making discipleship to those who would become gospel ministers and missionaries. Ellen, in her writings, considered the calling of Paul as apostle and missionary was supported by his background as theologian. In his preaching, teaching, and defending the church from the false doctrines; his former education training was beneficial to keep the church grew in the proper understanding of Christ. Thus, these three roles of Paul interwove in his ministry.