

# ***REFLECTIONS***

March 1, 2009

(From the Archives of June 12, 2005)

**And for this purpose I was appointed a herald and an apostle—I am telling the truth, I am not lying—and a teacher of the true faith to the Gentiles.**

*1 Timothy 2:7*

## **Man on a Mission**

In today's world he might have sold vacuum cleaners or encyclopedias door-to-door, or he might have been the Fuller Brush man. In those days though, his trade was tent making. He was an ordinary man making a living in a simple trade.

It is a fascinating notion to picture Apostle Paul soliciting customers for tents he would make. I suppose tents came in several sizes, maybe a couple of shapes; probably they came in only a few colors. Then once the orders were taken, I can picture him laying out the fabric and cutting it to size. But the most vivid picture I have of Paul's work setting is the sewing circle.

Can't you imagine people like Priscilla and Aquila sitting around him asking questions and listening to his answers as he was sewing the pieces together? Wouldn't it have been a great setting for him to share his story—to tell how he moved from Tarsus to Jerusalem to become a rabbi; to explain how his zeal for the Law allowed the stoning of Stephen; to describe the fear he felt when the blinding Light struck him down on the Damascus road, and the need to go into the desert while he sorted out the transformation of his life. I imagine the sewing circle to have been a great setting for him to introduce Christ. It was his workplace. But there is one thing I can't imagine. I can't imagine that Paul ever considered his daily work to be separated from his mission as a herald for Christ. About that his mind was clear.

Paul was a man on a mission. The mission was clear enough for him to write it down in a few words for young Timothy. And as he wrote it down, he made the surprising discovery that he had become something that he never dreamed—he was a *teacher*, and his subjects were a group of people he never expected to care about.

We remember Apostle Paul today as the author of some of the richest material in our Sunday school curriculum. But we should also remember him as an ordinary man who might just as well have been a barber, an auto mechanic, or a custodial servant. His mission did not define his vocation. Paul's vocation served his mission. It is a model we would do well to follow.

Like Paul, we may discover results we never dreamed.

*You are the light of the world,*

*Richard* +

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