

Romans 1:1-16

Pray That God would open your heart and mind to the power and depth of the gospel story so that you would long to live more deeply within it.

Read Romans 1:1-15

Look Closer... Paul calls himself a “servant of Jesus Christ” and called by God to be an apostle (v. 1). Notice what Paul is saying about himself in this verse. His apostleship is less about a *position*, and totally about the one who has placed him there, Jesus Christ. And because of his service to Jesus, he has been cut off from all other personal motivations and ambitions; he is set apart from all things for the sake of the gospel of God.

Think about it... Paul was the first church planter, a spokesperson for the gospel like none other. Paul couldn't have pursued his other, personal or religious dreams and still be the person God wanted him to be. You and Paul are different. You can pursue passions and ambitions that are woven into your personality (God gave you that!). But Paul's life teaches us that the gospel should cut us off from certain ambitions and motivations, that don't honor God's plan to save the world in Jesus.

Pray about it... God's plan to save the world centers on the suffering of His beloved Son. Sacrifice makes the gospel unique. It's what should make us unique as well. Thank God for the sacrifice of his Son, Jesus. Without the cross, the powers of evil would still reign over us. But also ask God to show you something in your life that needs sacrificing. What, like Paul, are you being *cut off* from by the gospel?