



## PART 2

# PAUL IN CORINTH: LEADERSHIP UNDER FIRE

## Chapter Seven

# “WHO IS SUFFICIENT FOR THESE THINGS?”

## HIS CALLING

### **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE #17**

### **A LEADER IS SURE OF HIS CALLING**

Those who are unsure of their own vocation cannot possibly be effective leaders. Nothing is more debilitating to leadership than self-doubt. People who have qualms about their own giftedness or calling never make good leaders, because at the most basic level they are uncertain about whether what they are doing is right. They will naturally be racked with indecision, hesitant, timid, and fainthearted in every choice they must make. As we have seen, those things are antithetical to the essential qualities of good leadership.

Paul never wavered in his confidence that God had called him to be an apostle. Others questioned him all the time. After all, he was not one of the Twelve. He was a relative latecomer to faith in Christ. He had, in fact, been a notorious persecutor of the church ([Acts 9:13](#)).

#### **Acts 9:13 (NASB)**

<sup>13</sup>“But Ananias answered, “Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he did to Your saints at Jerusalem.”

Paul himself confessed that if his past life were the only consideration, he was “not worthy to be called an apostle” ([1 Corinthians 15:9](#)).



**1 Corinthians 15:9 (NASB)**

<sup>9</sup>“For I am the least of the apostles, and not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.”

But the gracious call of God on his life, in spite of his past, was clear ([Acts 9:15](#); [Acts 13:2](#)).

**Acts 9:15 (NASB)**

<sup>15</sup>“But the Lord said to him, “Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel.”

**Acts 13:2 (NASB)**

<sup>2</sup>“While they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.”

The other apostles affirmed him without reservation ([Galatians 2:7-9](#)).

**Galatians 2:7-9 (NASB)**

<sup>7</sup>“But on the contrary, seeing that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter *had been* to the circumcised

<sup>8</sup>(for He who effectually worked for Peter in *his* apostleship to the circumcised effectually worked for me also to the Gentiles),

<sup>9</sup>and recognizing the grace that had been given to me, James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, so that we *might go* to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised.”

Therefore, while he considered himself “less than the least of all the saints” ([Ephesians 3:8](#)), he also knew that he was “not at all inferior to the most eminent apostles” ([2 Corinthians 11:5](#); cf. [2 Corinthians 12:11](#)).

**Ephesians 3:8 (NASB)**

<sup>8</sup>“To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ.”

**2 Corinthians 11:5 (NASB)**

<sup>5</sup>“For I consider myself not in the least inferior to the most eminent apostles.”

**2 Corinthians 12:11 (NASB)**

<sup>11</sup>“I have become foolish; you yourselves compelled me. Actually I should have been commended by you, for in no respect was I inferior to the most eminent apostles, even though I am a nobody.”