

TRANSFORMATION

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Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God Romans 1:1 (ESV)

Saul of Tarsus was an educated man and a faithful follower of the God of Israel. He saw the rise of the “Christian cult” as an affront to his Lord, the One he had given his life to serve as a rabbi. To that end he sought to not only get rid of the Christian cult and its followers, but also to wipe its memory from the earth. Then came his Damascus Road experience, and Saul of Tarsus was transformed by the living Lord Jesus Christ into the Apostle Paul.

Paul’s main argument against Christianity was that Jesus died on the cross and thus could not possibly be alive. That’s why his introduction of himself to the Roman church is so powerful: *a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God.*

So what happened? Paul himself put it this way: *transformed by the renewal of your mind.* Romans 12:2 (ESV) What does he mean by transformation? He puts it this way in Ephesians: *But that is not the way you learned Christ!—21 assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, 22 to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, 23 and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, 24 and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.* Ephesians 4:20–24 (ESV). So what do we do with this?

1. Acknowledge that the truth is found in Jesus as the Lord and Savior.
2. Take off our old assumptions, thought patterns and beliefs.
3. Take up the Bible and allow the Holy Spirit to build the mind of Christ in us.
4. Take on the new self, modeled after Christ’s actions and attitudes.

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