



The Letter Writer: Paul's Background and Torah Perspective

By Tim Hegg

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The majority of studies on Paul have taken a similar perspective—one well entrenched in the contemporary Church. This perspective might be generally characterized as follows: When Paul came to faith in Jesus, he underwent a conversion from one religion (Judaism) to another (Christianity). He left the works-based religion of Judaism for the new grace-based religion of Christianity. In his conversion, he came to realize that Judaism was based upon works because it continued to cling to the Law. Thus, he taught against the Law (Torah) in order to unshackle the people from its burden and bring them to see the liberty of grace in Jesus. As the Apostle to the Gentiles, he consistently led them away from Torah, fearing they might be trapped in its legalism the same way his own people were. But can such a perspective be honestly maintained if Paul is read objectively? Did he convert to Christianity? Did he invent Christianity? Did Christianity as we know it even exist in his day? And what about the many times he appeals to the Torah as proof of his message? How could he describe the Torah as “holy,” “righteous,” and “good,” and commend its message as “spiritual,” while at the same time teaching it was burdensome and something to be avoided? In *The Letter Writer*, Tim Hegg reveals a different Paul—one who maintained his Jewish identity and love of Torah; an Apostle of Yeshua the Messiah who not only lived an obedient Torah-life himself, but expected those he taught to do the same. In *The Letter Writer*, Paul is seen to be both the Apostle of grace and of Torah, because the Torah, when received in the context of faith in Yeshua, is God’s revelation of sanctifying grace.

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