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THE APOSTLE PAUL – LESSON 30

SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY – PART 16

PAUL THE APOLOGIST

I will pause here to speak of Paul's value to the Christian church both then and today. We have been tracing his work as a missionary and apostle. An apostle is one who plants new works and helps establish works and raise up others into ministry. He was one of the greatest at that, but he was so much more than that.

He was the first known great Christian apologist. Okay, what is an apologist? Here are two dictionary definitions, one of the field of apologetics, "apologia" (apology) and one of the person:

- Apologia (Greek): a statement in defense or justification of an idea, belief, religion, or doctrine.
- Apologist: a person who defends an idea, belief, religion, or other doctrine.

Paul was uniquely qualified to be the primary Christian apologist of the early church. He had extensive and deep training in the scriptures (Old Testament) as the top student of the renowned Jewish teacher Gamaliel. Following his encounter with Jesus, he was tutored for three years by the Holy Spirit teaching him how the scriptures were fulfilled by Jesus and how the gospel brought through Jesus relates to the new church and the believers. His epistles (letters) lay the doctrinal foundation of the church from his time even until today.

There were many others of Paul's time who claimed to be teachers, but many of them were teaching false doctrines or heresy. This is why it was necessary for Paul to travel widely for many years (over 30) to set a correct doctrine.

There was another very good teacher whom we will discuss tomorrow. Apollos became a close associate and teacher.