



Owned, Called, and Set Apart

Romans 1:1 — "Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God..."

Pastor Leia

ROMANS 1:1 · NKJV

A close-up photograph of a red wax seal on a piece of aged parchment. The seal is circular and features a detailed embossed design, including a crown at the top and a central shield-like emblem surrounded by ornate scrollwork and leaves. The parchment is light brown and shows signs of age and wear.

The Opening Line That Changed History

Every great letter begins with an introduction. When Paul wrote to the church in Rome — the capital of the known world — he could have opened with his Roman citizenship, his education under Gamaliel, or his prestigious Pharisaic credentials.

Instead, he chose three words that would have stunned every Roman who heard them read aloud.

"Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God..." — Romans 1:1

Three Identities · Every Follower of Christ

One Verse. Three Transforming Truths.

In a single sentence, Paul maps out the full identity of a life surrendered to God. These are not theological abstractions — they are the daily reality of every believer.

Owned

A bondservant — a *doulos* —
completely belonging to Jesus Christ

Called

Commissioned as an apostle — sent
with the authority of the King

Set Apart

Separated to the Gospel — wholly
dedicated to God's redemptive
purpose



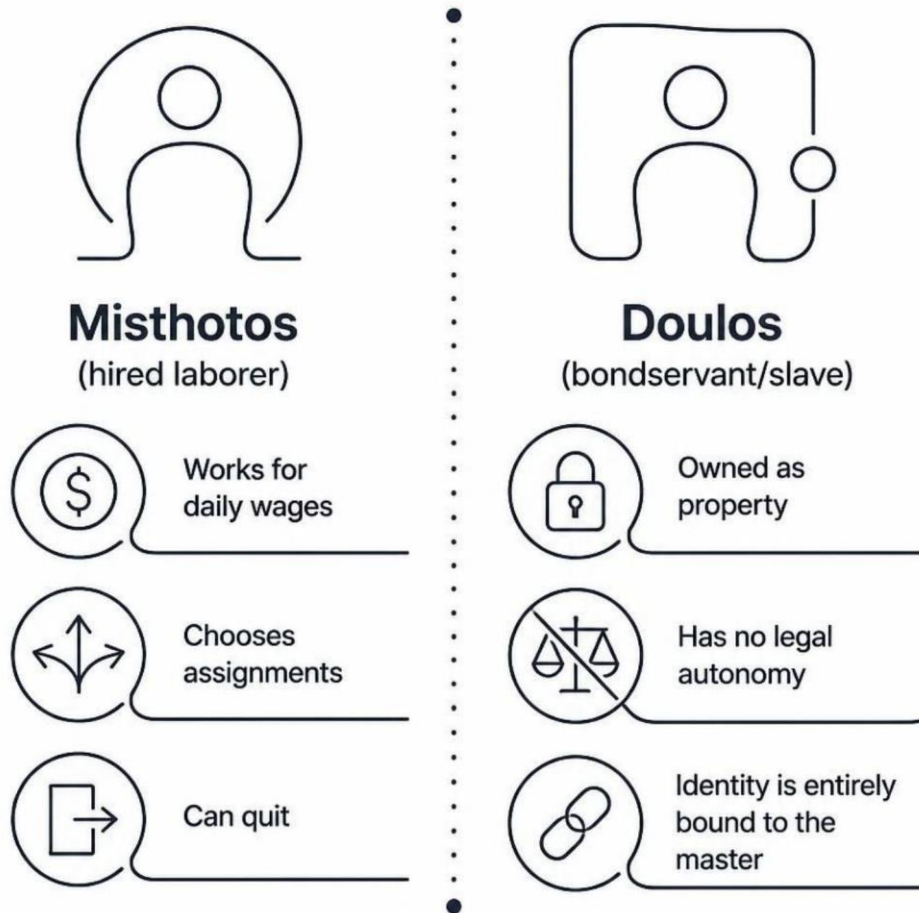
Point 1 · Owned

The Identity of a *Doulos*

Paul opens with a word that shocked Rome: *doulos* — slave, bondservant. In an empire where one-third of the population was enslaved, this was the lowest possible self-designation. A *doulos* had no legal autonomy, no self-determined schedule, no independent will. Their entire identity was bound to their master.

Paul — a free Roman citizen — deliberately chose this word. His declaration was radical: "I am not my own. I have been bought with a price." (1 Cor. 6:19–20)

Servant vs. Slave: Why the Distinction Matters



Paul was not a *misthotos* — a hired hand who served Jesus when the wages were good and quit when the work got hard. He was a *doulos*: bound in complete, joyful, surrendered allegiance.

His time, his intellect, his future, and his very breath belonged to his Master. Some skilled slaves even held a *peculium* — an allowance granted by their master — but their personhood still belonged to another.

When you make Jesus Lord, you hand Him the keys to your life.
You cease to be CEO of your own destiny.

Point 2 · Called

Commissioned as an Apostle

Notice Paul's deliberate sequence: servant first, apostle second. He does not rush to authority. He grounds his authority in his servitude.

Apostolos — "A Sent One"

An official ambassador dispatched with a specific message and the full, delegable authority of the sovereign who sent him. Paul's power was never his own.

Submission Before Authority

Paul separates servant from apostle to show a divine principle: before God sends you out as an ambassador, you must first be surrendered as a servant.

Called, Not Self-Appointed

Paul didn't vote himself into ministry. On the Damascus Road, Jesus intercepted his rebellion and issued an irresistible divine summons.



The Call Belongs to You Too

You Are Commissioned



You may not hold the first-century office of an apostle — but if you are in Christ, you are commissioned.

God has not saved you to sit on the sidelines.

He has sent you into your family, your workplace, and your community as His representative — carrying His message, bearing His authority, reflecting His character.

"As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." — John 20:21

Point 3 · Set Apart

Separated to the Gospel of God

Paul describes himself as *aphorizomenos* — marked off by boundaries, set apart for a singular, dedicated purpose. Here lies a stunning holy irony:

The Old Separation

As a *Pharisee* — "the separated ones" — Paul separated himself from people: from Gentiles, tax collectors, sinners. Religion built his walls.

The New Separation

After Damascus, Paul was separated for something far greater: the Gospel of God. Grace tore down his walls and gave him a mission.

To be separated to the Gospel means the Good News of Jesus Christ becomes the lens through which you view *everything* — your finances, your career, your relationships. It is not a Sunday side-hobby. It is your central orientation.

Conclusion & Call to Action

Two Invitations

1

Accept Jesus as Savior and Lord

Perhaps you've been serving the wrong master — self, sin, or the pressures of this world. Jesus died to pay your debt and free you from death. Acknowledge, Believe, Confess. Make Him your Master today.

2

Recommit to Your Call

Have you forgotten your first identity? Have you started acting like an owner instead of a *doulos*? Today, place your life back on the altar. Surrender afresh. Let God re-establish your calling and separate you once again for the purpose of His Gospel.

"Lord Jesus, I surrender my life to You afresh today. I am not my own — I am Yours. Reset my heart, re-establish my calling, and separate me for the purpose of Your Gospel. Use me for Your glory. Amen."