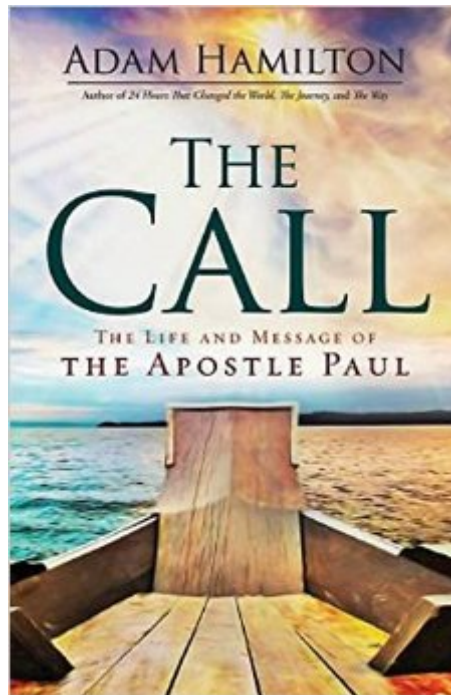


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# The Call: The Life And Message Of The Apostle Paul



## Synopsis

With Adam Hamilton, we have traced the life of Jesus from his birth *The Journey*, through his ministry *The Way*, to his death and resurrection *24 Hours That Changed the World*. What happened next? Follow the journeys of Paul, beginning with his dramatic conversion, as he spread the Gospel through modern-day Greece and Turkey. Travel to the early church sites and explore Paul's conversations with the Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians. In this six-week study, you are invited to experience faith through Christ's greatest teacher and missionary.

**Endorsements**

- Adam Hamilton has proven to be a faithful guide to applying the Bible to modern life in a sane and balanced way, and I trust him as an interpreter of the Apostle Paul for today.
- Philip Yancey, author of *Vanishing Grace* and *The Jesus I Never Knew*
- Pastor and teacher Adam Hamilton succeeds brilliantly in introducing the life and ministry of Paul. Adam's interweaving of personal testimony and ministry insights provide important lessons for Christian disciples today—something Paul himself would have readily welcomed.
- Dr. Mark Wilson, Asia Minor Research Center, Antalya, Turkey
- Adam Hamilton demonstrates theologically and spiritually how indispensable the apostle Paul is to both the early Christian and 21st century church. This book is a wonderful gift for the church, and I recommend it with utmost Christian enthusiasm.
- Dr. Israel Kamudzandu, Associate Professor of New Testament and Biblical Interpretation, Saint Paul School of Theology
- I regularly lead groups of seminary students, alums, clergy, and laity on immersion trips to Greece and Turkey. This book will certainly be on my reading list.
- Jaime Clark-Soles, Associate Professor of New Testament, Altshuler Distinguished Teaching Professor, Perkins School of Theology

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Hamilton combines a fascinating look at Paul's life and his shaping of early Christian teaching with detailed maps, timelines and a surprising number of photographs. It has always been hard for me to follow the journeys of Paul and to imagine where he taught and what the places were like - this helped tremendously. As always, this author brings each chapter to a close with a connection to our lives and faith today. It would be meaningful for people new to the Bible and is challenging enough for more seasoned readers.

First off, if you're looking for a complete understanding of Paul, his life and world, this book is too short for that. And a bunch of you are probably thinking "thank goodness for that". If you're looking for a "popular" account, and especially if you want a great book to do a small-group study, you probably can't do better. Hamilton fills his book with photos and stories to shed light on the man who some say founded Christianity. The book is a quick and easy read, but still gives enough depth and background to give the average Christian a firm grounding in who this man was and why he means so much to us today. Highly recommended, especially if you can get a group to do it together.

I always enjoy Pastor Hamilton's practical scholarship and his attention to contextualizing scripture into our own life and mission! The Call rollicks and frolics along with the energy and excitement of the NT book of Acts, and that's fitting, since a lot of the information we have about Saul (Jewish name) / Paul (Roman name) of Tarsus comes from the narrative in Luke's Acts. Pastor Adam knows the texts extremely well; he's also getting to know the terrain and layout of the biblical Holy Land. As we journey with Paul and his companions, Hamilton observes what was going on in politics, in Jewish circles, in Christian hangouts, "among the" Greek and Roman gods and culture back at that time and suggests real-life present day applications for each of us in our churches and in the surrounding communities. The book places Paul's life, ministry, and letters in the times and places when and where he grew up, learned, taught, talked, and walked; this New Covenant of grace is not entirely different from the Old one, but it's about Trusting Jesus rather than Trusting Torah. In the Protestant world in which many of us live (and move, and have our being), Paul is our most prominent theologian; we think we know him mostly for his Christology (on pages 72-74 we get a

very shorthand version of the saving person and work of Jesus the Christ), yet in *The Call* Hamilton reminds us it is the work and reign of the Pentecostal Spirit of Life that inspired and enabled Paul /Saul; the Spirit of Life that raised Jesus from the dead in turn brings us to living faith in Jesus. As Martin Luther famously said in his *Small Catechism*: "I cannot by my own effort or understanding know Jesus my Lord or come to him, but the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith, just as the HS calls, gathers, enlightens and sanctifies the whole Church..." In his *Acts of the Apostles* the gospel-writer Luke brings us most of what we know about the chronology and events in Paul's life; in fact, the Spirit is prominent throughout Luke and Acts. (Pneumatology is the branch of theology that emphasizes the person and work of the HS.) The six chapters of *The Call* describe God's call to the Apostle Paul along with a parallel call to each of us: 1. to Follow Christ; 2. to Go; 3. to Suffer; 4. to Love; 5. to Give, and 6. to be Faithful. Adam Hamilton includes a few anecdotes and incidents from his own life, mostly in ways that encourage us to discover similarities in our own. The hardbound book is a comfortable size to hold and heft, printed in easily readable type, and includes B&W maps and photographs. However, I seriously wish the book had been edited to omit and change at least most - if not all - of the too many sentences written in the passive voice.

I have been a student of the Bible and the Apostle Paul for a few years now, so I decided to pick up this book. First and foremost this book is written with a broad popular audience in mind. This book is not full of theological jargon, or Greek words so the average reader can pick it up and enjoy the book. At the same time, the book is based in solid scholarship (Hamilton gives an excellent short bibliography at the end of the book), so it is at the same time great for serious students of the Bible. The authors goal in this book is not to give an overview of the theology of the Apostle Paul, but rather to trace the important events of his life and his ministry. This book is great for someone who wants to learn a bit more about the life and times of the Apostle Paul, especially as it relates to his three missionary journeys. The author gives great details on the journeys of Paul drawing from the account in Acts. Seasoned veterans of Paul will find this book on Paul refreshing, and will find things that they were unaware of in the pages. Newcomers will come away with a full picture of the life and times of the Apostle Paul. It is for those reasons that I gave this book 5 stars. The book is not revolutionary in any way, but rather it is a solid, readable narrative of the life of Paul. The author includes pictures and commentary that really brings the locations that Paul visited alive for the reader. I think you will have a greater appreciation of the Apostle after reading this book, and a greater handle on the narrative of the book of Acts.

"The Call" by Adam Hamilton is an easily readable study of the life of the Apostle Paul. It is loaded with maps and timelines for at a glance reference. There are photos of what the places Paul visited look like today, which enhances study nicely. Of course, there is Scripture peppered throughout the text and this book is a great companion to study the book of Acts and Paul's Epistles. Each of the six chapters contains informative footnotes and explanations of obscure Scriptural references ("kicking against the goads") as well as challenging and thought provoking questions for personal or group use. I highly recommend this book for anyone studying the Apostle Paul's life and ministry.

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