

Even the Apostle Paul went through peer review!

Well...sort of. Paul defends his divine calling and recounts that the Jerusalem Apostles agreed with his exposition of the Gospel, and they recognized and entrusted him as it can be read in **Galatians 1.11 – 2.10**.

I normally use the Lexham English Bible (LEB) or the New English Translation (NET) for study, and the English Standard Version (ESV) for basic reading or for comparison. But here is the New Living Translation (NLT) of those pericopes for ease of reading:

Paul's Message Comes from Christ

¹¹ Dear brothers and sisters, I want you to understand that the gospel message I preach is not based on mere human reasoning. ¹² I received my message from no human source, and no one taught me. Instead, I received it by direct revelation from Jesus Christ.^[d]

¹³ You know what I was like when I followed the Jewish religion—how I violently persecuted God's church. I did my best to destroy it. ¹⁴ I was far ahead of my fellow Jews in my zeal for the traditions of my ancestors.

¹⁵ But even before I was born, God chose me and called me by his marvelous grace. Then it pleased him ¹⁶ to reveal his Son to me^[e] so that I would proclaim the Good News about Jesus to the Gentiles.

When this happened, I did not rush out to consult with any human being.^[f] ¹⁷ Nor did I go up to Jerusalem to consult with those who were apostles before I was. Instead, I went away into Arabia, and later I returned to the city of Damascus.

¹⁸ Then three years later I went to Jerusalem to get to know Peter,^[g] and I stayed with him for fifteen days. ¹⁹ The only other apostle I met at that time was James, the Lord's brother. ²⁰ I declare before God that what I am writing to you is not a lie.

²¹ After that visit I went north into the provinces of Syria and Cilicia. ²² And still the churches in Christ that are in Judea didn't know me personally. ²³ All they knew was that people were saying, "The one who used to persecute us is

now preaching the very faith he tried to destroy!”²⁴ And they praised God because of me.

The Apostles Accept Paul

2 Then fourteen years later I went back to Jerusalem again, this time with Barnabas; and Titus came along, too.² I went there because God revealed to me that I should go. **While I was there I met privately with those considered to be leaders of the church and shared with them the message I had been preaching to the Gentiles. I wanted to make sure that we were in agreement, for fear that all my efforts had been wasted and I was running the race for nothing.**³ And they supported me and did not even demand that my companion Titus be circumcised, though he was a Gentile.^[a]

⁴ Even that question came up only because of some so-called believers there—false ones, really^[b]—who were secretly brought in. They sneaked in to spy on us and take away the freedom we have in Christ Jesus. They wanted to enslave us and force us to follow their Jewish regulations.⁵ But we refused to give in to them for a single moment. We wanted to preserve the truth of the gospel message for you.

⁶ **And the leaders of the church had nothing to add to what I was preaching.** (By the way, their reputation as great leaders made no difference to me, for God has no favorites.)⁷ Instead, they saw that God had given me the responsibility of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, just as he had given Peter the responsibility of preaching to the Jews.⁸ For the same God who worked through Peter as the apostle to the Jews also worked through me as the apostle to the Gentiles.

⁹ **In fact, James, Peter, and John, who were known as pillars of the church, recognized the gift God had given me, and they accepted Barnabas and me as their co-workers. They encouraged us to keep preaching to the Gentiles, while they continued their work with the Jews.**¹⁰ Their only suggestion was that we keep on helping the poor, which I have always been eager to do.

So here Paul explains that:

1. He received the Gospel through a revelation of Jesus Christ;
2. Jesus Christ told Paul that he would need to go proclaim the Gospel to the Gentiles;
3. He did not immediately go to Jerusalem after this revelation, but instead, he went to Arabia and then back to Damascus;
4. Only after **three years** he went to Jerusalem to meet Cephas (Peter) and he saw James, the brother of Jesus (the Lord);
5. After **14 years**, Paul returned to Jerusalem with Barnabas and Titus and shared the Gospel that he was preaching to the Gentiles with the church leaders;
6. **Paul wanted to make sure that they were in agreement**, otherwise, it would have meant that he was preaching what appeared to him to be the correct Gospel all that time for nothing (i.e. in vain);
7. They supported Paul and did not ask that Titus be circumcised (which would have been strange and wrong);
8. The leaders did not add anything to Paul's explanation of the Gospel;
9. They recognized that God/Jesus was leading Paul just like he was leading Peter;
10. **James, Peter, and John recognized Paul and they approved his work to preach the Gospel to Gentiles.**

Paul is defending his assigned Apostleship both by divine revelation and by entrustment from the Jerusalem church leaders including James, Peter, and John since he was not an eyewitness nor one of the original Apostles.