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## Galatians 1

The apostle Paul now begins his difficult letter to the Galatians, one of urgency due to deception by the Judeizers. They had allowed themselves to be deceived and to an extent scorn Paul, their spiritual father, so he writes to discipline and woo his children back to Jesus.

Keep in mind that chapter one and two deal with the personal aspect of Paul's life and ministry that will validate both his gospel and authority as an apostle of Jesus.

\* Think of chapter one as conversion and consternation!

### 1:1-5 The salutation and greeting.

1:1-2a The salutation.

- 1) Paul is his Greek name which means little one, his Hebrew name was Saul which means ask, after king Saul of the Old Testament. vs. 1
  - a) He is an apostle "opostolos" one to send out.
    - 1) Not from man, he was not a learner of any man who sent him out.
    - 2) Not through man, he of human origin.

- 3) But through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raise Him from the dead.

- 4) Who raised Him from the dead.

- 5) Paul was an apostle sent out by Jesus and God the Father who had destroyed death.

- 6) Greeks and Hellenistic Jews of Paul's day in Classical Greek used the word for a moral expedition for military purposes. (Josephus 17:300, Ant. 1.146)

- b) Paul was being attacked regarding his gospel, that it was inferior since he was sent out by the gentile church in Antioch, therefore his apostleship was also inferior. Acts 13:1-4

- 1) So Paul opens up his letter with the very identity the sets the theme of the epistle, a defense of his gospel which would also attack his apostleship.

- 2) Paul's gospel and commission was divine.

- 2) The brethren. vs. 2a

- a) All refers to those which the Galatians alone knew based on the circumstances.

- b) The reference most likely was to a delegation of men from the churches of Galatian who had come to Paul to

inform him of the infiltration of the Judaizers.

- c) Most of Paul's letter identify individuals by name.
- d) The brethren were in support and witnesses to the content of Paul's letter but were not co-authors with him.

**1:2b-3** The greeting.

- 1) To the churches of Galatia. vs. 2b
  - a) The churches means those called out.
  - b) The word referees to the body of Christ on earth that comprise His church.
  - c) This is the only letter that is addressed to a number of churches in the New Testament.
- 2) The New Testament twins of grace and peace are pronounced on them.
  - a) Grace means beauty and undeserved generosity, the source of salvation and the customary Greek greeting.
    - 1) Any attempt to move away from grace to Law was to fall from grace. 5:4
    - 2) Grace is embrace by faith in Christ.
  - b) Peace Hebrew greeting Shalom, having the sense of well being.
    - 1) The Greek word means to join together something broken.

- 2) The finished work of Christ on the cross, making man one with God.
- 3) Peace is always the result of grace, never the reverse, we are to continue to stand in the finished work of Christ. 5:1

**1:5-5** The atonement through Christ.

- 1) He gave "huper" Himself for our sins, in place and for our benefit. 2Cor. 5:21.  
1Jn. 2:2
- 2) He did it in order to deliver us from the present evil age.
  - a) To deliver us out lost condition of death to life. Col. 1:13, 2 Cor. 1:10  
past, present, future
  - b) To rescue us from the power of the evil domination over our lives.
    - 1) The word evil "poneros" does not refer to mere evil "kakos" but that which seeks to contaminate others with and takes pleasure.
    - 2) The sinful fallen world that is under the control of Satan and sin nature in man. 2Cor. 4:4, Eph. 2:2
    - 3) the Galatians were in danger of being drawn back into the present wicked age by letting loose the deliverance of Christ by trusting in the Law and works of their own.
- 3) He did it according to the Father's will.

- a) The Father determined this council in his own foreknowledge before the world was. Acts 2:23
- b) The principle of authority and submission for the accomplishment of the salvation are modeled in the Father and the Son, without any sense of inferiority.

**1:5** The glory is to the Father in the sense of awe. 1 Cor.1:31

- 1) For His love of the sinful world. Jn. 3:16
- 2) For the manner in which no man can boast but only be grateful. Eph. 2:8-9
- 3) All will bow and worship Jesus in heaven. Rev. 4:8-11; 5:12-13

### **1: 6-10      The perversion of the Gospel.**

**1:6** Paul's amazement of the apostle Paul.

- 1) The stands in place of the usual thanksgiving and prayer, it is a rebuke.
- 2) The apostle marveled in amazement that the Galatians were turning away so soon from God. vs. 6a
  - a) The marvel "thaumozo" which has the idea of astonishment and shock at what is seen, heard or witnessed.
  - c) The phrase turning away "methathemi" means to change

places, to transfer two things putting one in the place of the other or desert.

- d) In classical Greek it was used of a turncoat, desertion or revolt, in allegiance of religion or philosophy for another school of thought.
- e) The phrase is in the present middle voice, implying that they were in the process.
- 3) They had turn so soon "takeos" which means quickly, shortly, suddenly, rashly from God the Father who called them.
  - a) Away from the grace of Christ, which is the only way to come to God.
  - b) To a different gospel which is no gospel at all.
    - \* The word different "heteros" means one of different quality, not of the same nature, be it form and class, an opposite, heterosexual. (Thayer)

**1:7** The gospel they were preaching was not another "allos" of the same nature with numerical difference. 2Cor. 11:13-15; 4:4; 1Jn. 4:1

- 1) They desired to trouble them "tarasso" which means to shake or agitate, creating turmoil and confusion in mind and heart.
- 2) They desired to pervert "metastrepho" the gospel, to reverse, twist or deform.

\* The present tense implies they were still present.

**1:8-9** The warning was to all.

1. If the apostles preach any other gospel.
2. If an angel from heaven preaches any other gospel.
3. If anyone preaches any other gospel than what they had received, they were to be accursed.
  - a. The word accursed “anathema” is used in the LXX of a person or thing devoted to God for destruction without hope of being redeemed. Deut. 7:26; Josh. 6:17-18; Rom. 9:3

**1:10** Paul’s faithfulness to the gospel.

- 1) Was Paul attempting to persuade men by preaching grace which his opponents called a watered down gospel, No!
 

\* Yet he was attempting to reason with them so the Holy Spirit could convict them.
- 2) Was he attempting to please men or God by the gospel of grace, God not men, otherwise he would not be a bond servant of Christ!
 

\* He became all things. 1Cor. 9:19.

**1:11-14** The independence of Paul’s gospel.

**1:11-12** The gospel Paul preached was not of human origin.

- 1) Therefore he was not an inferior apostle to the twelve.
- 2) He did not receive the gospel from any man.
- 3) He was not taught it by man.
- 4) He received it through the revelation “apokolutpo” unveiling of Jesus.
  - a) His conversion was on the Damascus Road, a chosen vessel to bear his name before the gentiles, kings and the children of Israel and suffer for his name sake. Acts 9:15
  - b) His testimony before the Sanhedrin was the same, chosen to know his will and see the just one and hear the voice of his mouth. For you shall be a witness unto all men of what you has seen and heard. Acts 22:13-15
  - c) His testimony before Agrippa again was the same, declaring that He had appeared to him for the purpose of making him a minister and witness of what he had seen and of the things in which God would yet reveal to him. Acts 26:16

**1:13** Paul’s former reputation of Paul.

- 1) He was belonged to the Pharisees, the strictest sect .

- 2) He persecuted the church of God, beyond measure.
- a) He entered every house and dragged off men and women, committing them to prison. Acts 8:3
  - b) He had letters from the High Priest to the synagogue of Damascus, if he found any of the way, to bind them and return them to Jerusalem. Acts 9:2
- 3) He tried to destroy the church.
- \* The word means to ruin or sack and translated havoc by Luke. Acts 8:3
  - a) A blasphemer. 1Tim. 1:12
  - b) A persecutor. 1Tim. 1:12
  - c) A violent arrogant man. 1Tim. 1:12

**1:14** The former success of Paul.

- 1) Paul advanced in Judaism beyond many of his contemporaries, literally he blazed away from all. Phil. 3:4-11
- 2) Paul was more exceedingly zealous for the tradition of his fathers, the Mosaic law.
  - a) His passion and enthusiasm was not according to knowledge but ignorance of the righteousness of God in Christ as his countrymen were till that very day. Rom. 10:2
  - b) If the tradition of Israel could be exalted above the excepted way God

had made, how much more all other tradition.

**1:15-17** **The independence of Paul's apostleship.**

**1:15** God's sovereign choosing.

- 1) God's perfect timing is marked by "But when it pleased God".
  - a) This was not some contanquerous move on God's part to do what He wanted when He wanted but rather the epitome of God's wisdom at the appointed time.
  - b) The word "but" marks the contrast between the course Paul had chosen in the previous verse and the one God had chosen for him.
    - \* It was God's good please to act!
- 2) God omnipresence is marked by the separation of Paul from his mothers womb.
  - a) God being Eternal can see our birth, life, death and glorification all at one time!
  - b) Like He told Jeremiah that He knew him before He formed him in his mother's womb. Jer. 1:5
    - \* Moses, Samuel, John the Baptist, etc.

- 3) God's basis of calling Paul was through His grace.
- a) Having called him, God enabled him. 1Tim. 1:12-14
  - b) Grace is that undeserved favor that looks to God alone!  
\* Paul said that he had not been disobedient to the vision. Acts 28:19

**1:16a-b** God's purpose for calling Paul.

- 1) To reveal His Son in him, this is the foundational step for all, to know Jesus as their own Lord and Savior.
- 2) To preach Jesus among the Gentiles.
  - a) This is Paul's personal call and he calls himself "the apostle to the Gentiles".
  - b) All believers are called to share their faith with the lost world. 2Cor. 5:20

**1:16c-17** The apostle's response to God's revelation.

- 1) Paul separated himself from all human contact, immediately he did not confer with flesh and blood. vs. 16c
- 2) Paul did not go up to Jerusalem, to those who were apostles before him. vs. 17a

- 3) Paul went to Arabia and returned to Damascus. vs. 17b-c, Acts 9:25-26 - 2 Cor. 11:32-33

**1:18-24** **The independent gospel and apostleship of Paul were acknowledged throughout.**

- 1: 18** Paul's first visit to Jerusalem.
- 1) Three years after his conversion he went up to see Peter due to having to escape for his life from Damascus. 2Cor. 12:32-33  
\* The word "see" means to inquire into for one's personal knowledge, we get our word history from it.
  - 2) Fifteen days is all Paul stayed.
    - a) It was not to receive the gospel or discuss it.
    - b) It was not to authenticate his apostleship.

**1:19** Paul emphasized that he saw none other but James the Lord's brother.

- 1) James the brother of John killed by Herod with the sword is not to be confused with him. Acts 12:2
- 2) Peter sent word to James, the Lord's brother after the angel released him from prison. Acts 12:17

3) James the Lord's brother was the head of church council at Jerusalem. Acts 15

**1:20** Paul assures the truthfulness of what he is saying, as he does many other times!

**1:21** The apostle Paul was obedient to his call.

1) The Jews sought his life and the Lord told him to leave Jerusalem while in the temple, this was the area of Tarsus. Acts 9:29-30; 22:17-18

2) Paul was content with the will of God.

**1:22-23** The apostle's separation from Judea.

1) He was unknown to the churches of Judea. vs. 22

2) He was known for his work in Christ. vs. 23

a) They heard of him who formerly persecuted Christians and attempted to destroy the church, now preached the faith.

b) This is the most powerful testimony that any one of us can give, not lip service but life service!

**1:24** The outcome of Paul's obedience.

1) They glorified God.

2) They did it in Paul, the vessel.