

1/25/26

Fungus Among Us!

Gal. 1:6-10

There is a story told by Eusebius, 260/265–339/340 AD, how John the Beloved went into a public house in Ephesus to bathe. But before entering he saw Cerinthus the Gnostic heretic and refused to enter exclaiming, “Let us flee, lest even the bath house fall because Cerinthus the enemy of truth is within.”

* Such was Paul’s outrage and consternation towards the heretic Judaizers, who had infiltrated the Galatian churches because they were enemies of the truth.

What is your response to false teaching that usually leads to heresy?

1. Are you indifferent to false teaching or does it bother you?
2. Do you have a sense of duty to respond to heresy or are you complacent?
3. Can you even detect false teaching and heresy, if you heard it?
4. Can you unmask it when you are confronted with heresy?
5. Better yet, are you one of those individuals who think that there are many ways to God and we should not be speaking against anyone, but we should just love one another!
6. Love without concern for doctrine becomes perverted and leads to heresy!

In the opening chapter we are given the response of the apostle Paul to heresy. Gal. 1:6-10

1. Heresy is defined as what is an opinion or doctrine that deviates, alters, opposes or contradicts orthodox Christianity and salvation by faith in Jesus Christ.
2. The root word means to make a choice or opinion and is used in the New Testament in a different form “heresies”, for the sect of the Pharisees and Saducees. Acts 5:17; 15:5
3. The word with time became identified uniquely with false doctrine and teaching which is identified as one of the works of the flesh. Gal. 5:20
4. The word a heretic is found only one time, in Titus and it tells us how to deal with such a man and describes the state of that man.
* Reject a divisive man “hairesikos”, a heretic after the first and second admonition, knowing that such a person is warped and sinning, being self-condemned. Tit. 3:10-11

So, we want to examine the response of Paul the apostle to heresy, which is a four-fold response:

- I. The amazement of the apostle. vs. 6
 - II. The announcement of the apostle. vs. 7
 - III. The assessment of the apostle. vs. 8-9
 - IV. The argument of the apostle. vs. 10
- I. **The amazement of the apostle. vs. 6**
* Having established his apostolic authority and his gospel message as direct from God in verse

one, he now deals with the Galatians as their spiritual father with consternation and severity, evident by there not being any usual prayer or thanksgiving at this point as in other epistles in the New Testament. Rom. 1:8; 1Cor. 1:4-9; Phil. 1:3-11

- A.** The apostle Paul was amazed that the Galatians were altering their allegiance from God, “I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you.” vs. 6a
- 1.** The mind of Paul was shocked in the use of the word marvel “thaumozo”, which has the idea of astonishment and dumbfoundedness at what is seen, heard or witnessed.
 - a.** The word is used of the response of the people at the miracles and words of Christ. Matt. 8:27; Lk. 11:14
 - b.** The word is used of Jesus for the lack of belief in Nazareth and at the great faith of the centurion at Capernaum. Matt. 8:10; Lk. 7:9
 - c.** The word is used of Nicodemus by Jesus as He told him he had to be born-again. Jn. 3:7
 - 2.** The understanding of Paul is stated by the phrase turning away “methathemi”, which means to change places, to transfer two things putting one in the place of the other.

- a.** In classical Greek it was used of a turncoat, desertion or revolt, in allegiance of religion or philosophy.
 - b.** The phrase is in the present middle voice, implying that they were in the process.
 - c.** The word is used of the change of priesthood in Hebrews. Heb. 7:12
 - d.** The word is used of Enoch being translated to heaven. Heb. 11:5
- 3.** The method of their turning is described as soon “takeos”, which means quickly, shortly, suddenly, rashly and is used as a prohibition of laying hands too sudden on any man for service. I Tim. 5:22
- a.** The Galatians had been to quick to embrace the false teaching from its arrival.
 - b.** It is in the present tense, indicating the change had begun, is in progress but not yet complete.
 - c.** The Galatians had been to rash to embrace the false teaching soon after receiving the gospel. Gal. 4:12-15; 5:7
- 4.** The replacement allegiance was not of Paul, but of God.
- a.** The reference “from Him” refers to God the Father, who called them for salvations.
 - b.** The phrase “called you” is aorist participle, stating the past fact.

- c. Paul was amazed and astonished that they would choose to turn away from the living God!
- B.** The apostle Paul was amazed that the Galatians were turning away so soon from the call in grace, “in the grace of Christ.” vs. 6a
1. The phrase “in the Grace” speaks of the sphere in which God had called them to, in contrast to law of the Old Testament
 - a. The word grace in it’s most basic meaning has beauty and charm.
 - b. The word in it’s theological sense describes the unmeritted favor which is undeserved.
 - c. The choice was bad theology, they were turning from the God and gospel of grace, to law and works. Gal. 5:4
 2. The phrase “of Christ” on the other hand speaks of the person God the Father had chosen to bestow grace on the sinner.
 - a. The law was given through Moses but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. Jn. 1:17
 - b. Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth and the life.” Jn. 14:6
 - c. There is no replacement for the person of Christ “Cristos”, the anointed, the Messiah!
 - * Paul was amazed at their turning away from the call in the grace of Christ!

- C.** The apostle was amazed that the Galatians were turning away so soon to a false gospel, “to a different gospel.” vs. 6b
1. The apostle Paul declared to them the deception by the word different “heteros”, which means one of different quality, not of the same nature, be it form and class. (Thayer)
 - a. The word different “heteros” means one of different quality, not of the same nature, be it form and class. (Thayer)
 - b. The word is used to describe opposite sexuality, heterosexual, a complete difference in kind, male and female.
 - c. The word is used of Sodom and Gomorra who in sexual immorality went after “strange flesh”, that contrary to what God intended. Jude 7
 - d. It was a false and counterfeit, not the genuine, but an adulterated gospel.
 2. The apostle identified the deception by the word gospel “euaggelion”, which means good news.
 - a. Paul was astonished that the Galatians were turning so soon to a different quality of gospel and dare to call it a gospel of good news.
 - b. Paul was astonished that the Galatians were turning from God the Father and replacing the gospel with religion and ceremony!

- c. Paul was astonished that the Galatians were releasing the grace of Christ to embrace the law that condemned them!

Illustration

The amazement of Paul was much like that of a father who after teaching his children not to talk to strangers, and doing so are nearly abducted!

* These deceiving impostors were like fishes in the sea that changed their color or appearance to allure prey!

Application

1. I am always amazed at how soon people turn away from Christ and still confess they know God, not realizing that when you turn from Christ, you turn from God.

- a. The Son is the only one who reveals the Father. Jn. 1:18
- b. The Son came to bring us to the Father. Jn. 14:6
- c. The Son declared we must worship the Father in Spirit and truth. Jn. 4:23

2. I am also amazed at how soon people turn away from the call in the grace of Christ to some form of legalistic or rule observing religion.

- a. They foolishly trust in their flesh not believing the Scriptures, that there is not one good thing in us. Rom. 7:18
- b. They fail to recognize that only in the sphere of Grace can we be accepted by God. Eph. 2:8

- c. They fail to recognize that only grace can supply the ability and strength for and in the severest of trials in life to please God. “My Grace is sufficient” 2Cor. 12:9

3. I never cease to be amazed at how soon people turn away to another gospel of inferior quality being distinct and opposed to the gospel of Grace or adding and taking away.

- a. Satan is out to deceive. 2Cor. 11:1-4
- b. Men, Satan and demons deceive. 2Cor. 11:13-15
- c. We are to try the spirits. 1Jn. 4:1
- d. We are to study the word and mature so as not to be tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine. Eph. 4:14

The amazement of the apostle was at their turning away to a false gospel!

II. The announcement of the apostle. vs. 7

* Having declared his amazement he now announces some important truths.

- A. The apostle Paul announces that there is only one gospel, “which is not another.” vs. 7a
 - 1. Paul uses the word another “allo”, which means it was not another of the same kind, denoting numerical difference, rather than quality as in verse six by the word “different”.

- a. The word is used to identify the Comforter by Jesus who would be given to the disciples and the church. Jn. 14:16b
 - b. The word is used for another disciple distinct from one already present. Jn. 18:16
2. Paul is telling these Galatians that they had been deceived and were being deceived.
- a. Due to the fact that there is but one gospel!
 - b. Due to the fact that the quality is grace and the Number is one, Jesus Christ!
- B.** The apostle Paul announced that there were a few who were troubling them, “but there are some who trouble you.” vs. 7b
1. Paul described the heretics by the word “some”.
- a. The word some “tis” is accompanied with the article indicating their occupation and character, false and heretics.
 - b. They are the Judaizers, who were attempting to bring the Gentiles under the Law, false teachers.
 - 1) The term is used of those who were challenging the apostle’s authority in Corinthians. 2Cor. 10:2
 - 2) The term is used of those who commend themselves. 2Cor. 10:12

2. Paul describes the Judaizers intent by the word trouble “tarasso”, which means to shake or agitate, creating turmoil and confusion in mind and heart.
- * The tense is in the present tense.
- a. The same word is used of King Herod when he heard of the birth of the Messiah, “He was troubled and all Jerusalem with him.” Matt. 2:3
 - b. The same word is used to identify those Judaizers troubling the Gentiles, in the letter of the First Church Council. Acts 15:24
 - c. Paul used it of the crowd at Thessalonica who were troubled against Paul and gospel. Acts 17:8
3. Paul was telling the Galatians that these men were of such character that they purposely were going about troubling the minds and hearts of young and unstable Christians regarding the gospel of the grace and Christ, in fact wolves in sheep's clothing.
- C.** The apostle Paul announced that there are some who made it their aim to pervert and replace the gospel of Christ, “and want to pervert the gospel of Christ.” vs. 7b
- 1. The actions of the false teachers is describes by the word pervert “metastrepho,” which means to reverse or turn about.

2. The object of their attack was the gospel “eugallion” the good news of God to lost man.
3. In other words these men were of such depraved nature that they willfully, knowingly and purposefully were attempting to reverse the good news of Christ that the Galatians had received from Paul.
 - a. Paul had been appointed in trust with the gospel. Phil. 1:17
 - b. Paul had been appointed to the defense of the gospel. 1Tim. 1:11

Illustration

The announcement of Paul regarding these truths is much like the Little boy in the crowd who yelled out “The King is naked”, while everyone else was going along with the lie of the kings beautiful clothes.

Application

1. Let me re-announce to you there is but one gospel.
 - a. The gospel was given by Inspiration of God’s Spirit, it represents God’s authority and is God’s final revelation. 2Tim. 3:16-27; 2Pet. 1:20-21; Heb. 1:1-2
 - b. The gospel is final in salvation by Jesus Christ, which was once for all delivered to the saints. Matt. 7:13-14; Jn. 10:1,9; 1Tim. 2:5; 1Jn. 5:10-12; Jude 3
 - c. The Lord Jesus warned about deception, all three synoptic gospels record the first words of

Jesus on the Olivet discourse, “Take heed that no man deceive you” Matt. 24; Mark 13; Luke 21

- d. The apostle Paul said, “evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.” 2Tim. 3:13
2. Let me announce to you some who have and are perverting the gospel.
 - a. Jehovah’s Witnesses, Mormons, New Agers.
 - b. Those embracing extra Biblical revelation through dreams, vision etc, and excepting them on equal authority with Scripture.
 - c. Positive confession teaches, teaching we are “little gods”, “seed faith” or “faith in faith”.
 - d. Legalistic churches, who put people under law bondage as evidence of their spirituality, being completely out of context.
 - e. The Catholic Church with all her idolatry, dogmas that contradict the Bible, but held equal or above the Bible.
 - f. Liberal “Seeker Friendly churches”, “The Emergent Church Movement” and seminaries who preach another gospel by their own words, “New reformation” or “Vintage theology” or “Generous orthodoxy.”
 - g. Now we have “The New Apostolic Reformation” and progressive liberal Christians.
 - 1) Paul says, “Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according

to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.” Col. 2:8

- 2) Paul declared that the Spirit explicitly said that in the latter times some would depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons. 1Tim. 4:1
- 3) Paul warned about the last days which would be characterized by love of self, money and ruthless pride. 2Tim. 3:1-4
- 4) Peter warned about heretics and their great followings. 2Pet. 2:13
 - * Peter tells us that between the heritage of the believer and our hope of His coming for us, there will have many heretics!

The announcement of the apostle was that there was only One Gospel!

III. The assessment of the apostle. vs. 8-9

- * This is the apostle's judgment regarding these false teachers who preach a gospel of works and not faith, law and not grace!

- A. The assessment was condemning, even to include the apostles. vs. 8a
 - * “But even if we,”
 - 1. But even if “we” refers to himself and others sent out by Christ, Barnabas, Silas, Timothy.
 - 2. For the apostles were to preach that which had been given by Christ. 1Cor. 15:1-4

- B. The assessment was condemning even to include the angels. vs. 8b
 - * “or an angel from heaven.”
 - 1. These of course would be those fallen angels that left their first estate and serve Satan. Rev. 12:7-9
 - 2. For they are able to transform themselves into angels of light. 2Cor. 11:14-15
 - * The false prophet deceived the true prophet of God. 1Kings 13:15-19
- C. The assessment of condemnation was to include anyone who would preach any other gospel. vs. 8c, 9c
 - * “preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you”, “if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received.”
 - 1. By announcing a message of good news when it is not.
 - * The words “preached” and “received” are in the indicative aorist tense, a past fact.
 - 2. By evangelizing a perverted gospel that is contrary to the original one.
 - * The words “preach” and “preaches” are in the present tense.
 - 3. By adding to or deleting from the Only gospel.
 - * Paul is damning those who are leading people away from the gospel of grace to a different Gospel of works for salvation.

- D.** The assessment of condemnation was strong and final. vs. 8d
 * “let him be accursed.”
1. This is evident by the choice of the word, not Paul’s but the Holy Spirit, 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.
 - b. The word is used of the carved images of silver and gold to be burned. Deut. 7:26
 - c. The word is used of the city of Jericho and all in it except Rahab and her family. Josh. 6:17-18
 * Ai could not be taken because Achan had taken the accursed thing, Josh. 7:1, 12
 - d. Paul uses it for himself if Israel were saved. Rom. 9:3
 2. This is evident by the repetition of the word. vs. 8d, 9d
 - a. Whenever God says something twice it isn’t merely to repeat Himself, but to give emphasis and importance.
 - 1) The first statement is in the subjunctive mode, describing that which though possible is highly improbable, namely that if Paul or any angel from heaven preached another gospel, though they would not, they are to be accursed. vs. 8d

- 2) The second statement is in the indicative mood, describing what was actually taking place in Galatia, the Judaizers were preaching a different gospel and were to be accursed.
 - b. Paul is not finalizing these men’s eternal destiny without hope of their repentance, but that if they continue in preaching this kind of gospel then they will be eternally alienated from God and devoted to destruction under God’s wrath.
- E.** The assessment of condemnation was not without thought, but in view of Paul having warned the Galatians at his first visit with Barnabas. vs. 9a-b
 * “As we have said before, so now I say again.”
1. The word before “prolego” refers to his having told them beforehand.
 - a. The word is used nine times in the New Testament, five of the nine are used in the sense of forth-telling ahead of time, before.
 - b. The phrase “have said” means once and for all, completed in the past.
 2. The word “now” is in contrast to “before” referring to the first time he preached. Gal. 4:13

Illustration

Just as a jury would assess the facts and evidence in a trial that would condemn a man, so Paul could do nothing, but what is based on the facts!

Application

1. The believer and Church needs to recognize God has no respect of persons when it comes to the perversion of the gospel. Deut. 13:1-5; Jer. 23:1, 16, 28-32
 - a. Therefore we should not be afraid or hesitant to assess and condemn those who pervert the gospel. Acts 20:29-30; 1Tim. 1:3-4; 4:6-7; 6:3-5; 2Tim. 1:13-15; 2:14-15; 3:14-17; Tit. 1:10-11
 - b. John says, “He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son. And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.” 2Jn. 10-11
2. The believer needs some cautions.
 - a. Make sure that you are not accusing believers who have a different view of doctrine and scripture than you, **if** it doesn’t touch salvation and orthodox teaching (post, mid and pre-tribulation, the gifts, Calvinism or Armenianism, etc.).
 - b. Make sure you have all the facts firsthand and not hearsay.

3. The believer needs to distinguish this responsibility to speak out against the perversion of the gospel, from the warning not to be a critical judge. Matt. 7:1-3
 - a. Paul says he was appointed to defend the gospel. Phil. 1:17
 - b. Jude tells us to contend for the faith. Jude 3
 - c. Paul says whose mouths must be stopped. Tit. 1:11
4. The believer needs to identify with the Biblical love that confronts men to turn them from the watered-down love in the church that discourages and condemns those who do confront.
 - a. Ezekiel was called to be the watchman. Ezk. 3, 18
 - b. Paul called men out by name and delivered them over to Satan, who had made shipwreck of the faith and were teaching heresy about the resurrection. 1Tim. 1:19-20; 2Tim. 2:17-18

The assessment of the apostle of being accursed was for all, men and angels, no exception!

IV. The argument of the apostle. vs. 10

- * Paul’s argument is rhetorical implying the most obvious answer to the questions he asked to clear up the false slander and lies regarding his motives in preaching the gospel of faith alone.
- A. The apostle Paul argued that his motive was not to persuade God. vs. 10a-b
 - * “For do I now persuade men or God?”

1. The obvious answer is men, God needs no persuasion to be reconciled to the gospel for, He revealed it!
 2. God is not the one deceived. Rom. 5:5;
2Cor. 5:18-20
 3. The motive of Paul was the reconciliation of the Galatians because he loved them. Gal. 3:1-9; 4:11-20; 5:7-15
- B.** The apostle Paul argued that his motive was not to please men. vs. 10c
* “Or do I seek to please men?”
1. Paul said he became all things to all men culturally, not spiritually to water the gospel down or to accommodate the gospel to men. 1Cor. 9:19-23
* Paul was nearly killed in the temple. Acts 21
 2. Paul was not giving in to the pressure of the Judaizers, who taught circumcision, therefore he was being persecuted. Gal. 5:11
* The Judaizers were doing it to escape persecution. Gal. 6:12
 3. Paul was not glorying in his flesh but the cross. Gal. 6:14
* The Judaizers were glorying in their flesh. Gal. 6:13
- C.** The apostle Paul argued that his motives reveal that he was a servant of Christ. vs. 10d-e

- * “For if I still pleased men, I would not be a servant of Christ.”
1. The word servant “doulos” means a slave by choice for life.
 2. As a servant his loyalty was completely to Christ for he belonged to Him.
 3. As a servant his duty was to obey.
 4. As a servant his life was not his own. 6:17
* No man can serve two masters...Matt. 6:24

Illustration

Polycarp at 86 was urged to reproach Christ by a Roman soldier or be burned at the stake, he replied, “Eighty-six years have I served Him and never did me any injury. How can I blaspheme my King and my Savior.”

Application

1. Our motive for confronting men is that they may turn from their error and not to please men. 1Thess. 2:4; 1Tim. 2:24-26
2. Our motives will at times be misunderstood, but we must trust and please God. 1Cor. 4:1-5; 2Cor. 12:14-15
3. Our motives should reveal we are servants of Christ.
 - a. In our single mindedness. 2Tim. 2:3-4
 - b. In our life of faith. Heb. 11:6
 - c. In our non-compromise commitment to God’s Word. 1Tim. 4:13-16
* “Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Do not neglect the

gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership. Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.”

The argument of the apostle was that he served Christ not man!

Conclusion

We have examined the response of Paul the apostle to heresy, which was a four-fold response:

- I. The amazement of the apostle was at their turning away to a false gospel!
- II. The announcement of the apostle was that there was only One Gospel!
- III. The assessment of the apostle of being accursed was for all, men and angels, no exception!
- IV. The argument of the apostle was that he served Christ not man!