

2/8/26

Galatians 1

The apostle Paul now begins his difficult letter to the Galatians, one of urgency due to deception by the Judaizers. 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) The author of the letter, "Paul, an apostle."
 - vs. 1a-b
 - a) Paul is his Greek name which means little one, his Hebrew name was Saul which means ask, after king Saul of the Old Testament.
 - b) Paul is an apostle "opostolos" one to send out, this is a title.
- 2) Paul specifies the source and origin of his apostleship is stated.

- a) The source, "Not from man", he was not a learner of any man who sent him out. vs. 1b
 - b) The origin, "Not through man", he did not obtain it of human origin. vs. 1b
 - c) The true source and origin was divine, "But through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raise Him from the dead." vs. 1c
 - 1)) Paul was an apostle sent out by Jesus and God the Father who had destroyed death.
 - 2)) 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)
 - 3)) Paul was being attacked regarding his gospel, saying it was inferior since he was sent out by the gentile church in Antioch, therefore his apostleship was also inferior. Acts 13:1-4
 - 4)) So Paul opens up his letter with the very identity that sets the theme of the epistle, a defense of his gospel which would also attack his apostleship.
 - 5)) Paul's gospel and commission was divine.
- 2) The companions of Paul, "and all the brethren who are with me." vs. 2a

- a) All refers to the individuals brethren “adelphos” born of the same womb and of the family of God, colabouers with Paul that 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) The ones being addresssd “To the churches of Galatia.” vs. 2b
 - a) The churches “ekklesia” means those called out and gathered as the people of God.
 - 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 plural, in the New Testament.
- 2) The common greeting, “Grace to you and peace from God the Father Jesus Christ.” vs. 3
 - a) These are the New Testament twins of grace and peace pronounced on them.

- 1)) The word grace “charis” means beauty and undeserved generosity, unmerited favor.
 - a)) The source of salvation and the customary Greek greeting.
 - b)) The apostle Paul reminds the Galatians from the very opening verses that any attempt to move away from grace to law, as they were doing, was to fall from grace. Gal. 5:4
 - c)) Grace is embrace by faith in Christ.
- 2)) The Greek word peace “eirene” means to join together something broken, now one with God to live in harmony and tranquility with God being a child of God.
 - a)) The word peace in Hebrew greeting Shalom, having the sense of well-being to the whole of life.
 - b)) The finished work of Christ on the cross, making man one with God.
 - c)) Peace is always the result of grace, never the reverse, we are to continue to stand in the finished work of Christ. Gal. 5:1
- b) The source of the greeting of blessing is stated, “from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.”
 - 1)) The source of “grace and peace” is from God the Father.

- a)) This refers to the First person of the Trinity.
- b)) The Father is Omnipotent, Omnipresent and Omniscient.
- 2)) The source of “grace and peace” is also from our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - a)) The Law said two witnesses were needed to establish anything as true. The Father and the Son. Deut. 19:15
 - b)) The title Lord “kurios” means master and owner.
- 3)) “Yahweh-shua” means Yahweh is salvation, the contraction gives us the Hebrew name Joshua.
 - a)) The Hebrew name Joshua translated to the Greek is “Jesus”.
 - b)) The name Jesus “Iesous” means Yahweh is salvation.

1:4-5 The atonement process through Christ.

- 1) The proclamation of His sacrifice, is said to be. “Who gave himself for our sins.” vs. 4a
 - a) He gave “huper” Himself for our sins, in place and for our benefit, as our substitute. Rom. 5:6; 2Cor. 5:14-15, 21; Jn. 10:11; 11:50; 1:29; 1Jn. 2:2
 - 1)) God in the person of Jesus Christ died for mankind.
 - 2)) A holy God paid the price for the sins of man.

- 2) The purposeful goal is declared, “that He might deliver us from this present evil age.” vs. 4b
 - a) The word deliver “exelatai” is an old verb; meaning to pluck out, to rescue out from the power of the evil that dominates our old lives, as an accomplished fact.
 - 1)) To deliver us out lost condition of death to life. Col. 1:13; 2Cor. 1:10 past, present, future
 - 2)) It is used for the rescue of Peter from prison. Acts 7:34
 - 3)) It is used for the rescue of Paul by the Roman guard in temple. Acts 23:27
 - b) The present evil age identifies the fallen world we live in.
 - 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, through the fall of Adam. 2Cor. 4:4; Eph. 2:2; Gen 3; Rom. 5:12
 - 2)) 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) The manner of this work is declared, “according to the will of our God and Father,” vs. 4c
- 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.
- 4) The directed glory is to the Father, “to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.” vs. 5
- a) The personal pronoun “whom” is reflexive pointing back to the Father in verse four.
 - b) The word glory “doxa” means praise, honor, splendor and brightness, magnificence, excellence and dignity.
 - c) The extent is forever and ever, “aion” means perpetuity of time, eternally and repeated twice for emphasis.
 - d) The glory to the Father in the sense of awe of salvation.
 - 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

- 4)) Paul said, “that, as it is written, “He who glories, let him glory in the LORD.” 1 Cor.1:31

1:6-10

The perversion of the Gospel.

1:6

The amazement of the apostle Paul.

- 1) The dumbfoundedness of Paul is declared, “I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ.” vs. 6a
 - a) This stands in place where the usual thanksgiving and prayer follows, this is a rebuke to the Galatians from the very beginning!
 - b) The response of Paul was to marvel “thaumozo”, that has the idea of astonishment and shock at what is seen, heard or witnessed.
 - c) The accusation of Paul follows by the phrase turning away “methathemi” means to change places, to transfer two things putting one in the place of the other or desert.
 - 1)) In classical Greek it was used of a turncoat, desertion or revolt, in allegiance of religion or philosophy for another school of thought.
 - 2)) The phrase is in the present middle voice, implying that they were in the process.

- d) Their decision to turn way from when they received the gospel was not long by the phrase, so soon “takeos” which means quickly, shortly, suddenly, rashly from God the Father who called them.
- e) Their foolishness of turning away was from God, “from Him who called you in the grace of Christ.”
 - 1)) The word from “apo” means to moved away, depart or separate.
 - 2)) The pronoun “Him” is capitalized to indicate the Divine First Person of the Godhead, the Father, “who called you into the grace of Christ.”
 - a)) Grace “charis” is unmerited favor or undeserved, the only means by which sinners can be forgiven and saved
 - b)) The channel, mediator and bestower of grace is “Christ”.
of Christ, which is the only way to come to God.
- 2) The great error of the Galatians is stated, “to a different gospel.” vs. 6b
 - a) The word different “heteros” means one of different quality, not of the same nature, be it form and class.
 - b) This gospel was not based on grace nor Christ, an opposite like heterosexual, of a different sex, male and female. (Thayer)

- c) A different gospel, which is no gospel at all.

- 1:7** The identification of the false gospel.
- 1) The gospel they had embraced was not the same they had received from Paul, “which is not another.” vs. 7a
 - a) The phrase not another “ou allos”, means absolutely not of the same nature with numerical difference.
 - b) The gospel they had embraced in place of the one in the grace of Christ was based on the Law of Moses and their interpretations. 2Cor. 11:13-15; 4:4; 1Jn. 4:1
 - 2) The ones preaching this different gospel, which was no gospel at all were the Judeaizers, “but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ.” vs. 7b
 - 1) The words “but there are some”, stand in sharp contrast to Paul, Silas and Timothy, the Judeaizers.
 - 2) The culprits caused the Galatians trouble “tarasso”, which means to shake or agitate, creating turmoil and confusion in mind and heart about the gospel of grace of Christ.
 - * The present tense implies they were still present!

- 3) Their intent and will was to pervert “metastrepho”, which means to turn around, reverse, twist or deform the gospel of Christ, so that the Galatians no longer believe the gospel of Christ.

1:8-9 The stern warning to all the Galatians.

- 1) The stern warning includes apostles and angels, “But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.” vs. 8
- a) The word “we” identifies Paul, Silas and Timothy, who preached the gospel of the grace of Christ and they received it.
* This implies any and every person on earth!
- b) Any angel from heaven was also included in the warning.
- c) The judgment to such a person or angel is declared, “let him be accursed”
- 1)) The word accursed “anathema” is the strongest word for damnation.
- 2)) The word 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
- 2) The stern warning is repeated, “As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what

you have received, let him be accursed.” vs. 9

- a) The repetition is for emphasis on the warning regarding perverting the gospel of grace through Jesus Christ.
- b) The repetition emphasizes the also severity of the judgment upon any person.
- c) The Mormon, Jehovah Witness, etc. have perverted the gospel of grace through Jesus Christ, they are anathema, devoted to God for destruction without hope of being redeemed., unless they repent before they die and accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Deut. 7:26; Josh. 6:17-18; Rom. 9:3

1:10 The faithfulness of Paul to the gospel.

- 1) Paul posed a question to the Galatians, “For do I now persuade men, or God?”
- a) Was Paul attempting to convince men by his preaching, the Judeaizers were saying Paul toned down the legal requirement of the law to gain approval of the Gentiles?
* The Judaizers said they came to restore the gospel to its true content saying the gospel by Paul was watered down!
- b) Yet Paul was attempting to reason with them by the gospel of grace of Christ so the Holy Spirit could convict them.

- 2) Paul posed a second question to the Galatians, “Or do I seek to please men?” vs. 10b
- a) Was Paul attempting to please “arsko”, which means to accommodate oneself, so as to not offend and manipulate them to win them over? No!
 - b) The gospel of Jesus Christ offends men, as it did the Judaizers.
 - c) The conclusion of Paul, “For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.
* Paul became all things to all men that he might win some to Christ. 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) The gospel of Christ is not based or from human beings, “But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man.” vs. 11
 - a) It was not written by University Professors.
 - b) It was not written by Philosophers.
 - c) It was not written by literary authors or poets.
- 2) The gospel of Christ was not imparted or taught to Paul by men, “For I neither

received it from man, nor was I taught it.” vs. 12a

- a) No human being gave or handed the gospel to Paul.
- b) No human being sat Paul down to teach him the gospel.
- 3) The gospel of Jesus Christ was revealed to Paul by Jesus Himself, “but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ.” vs. 12b
 - a) He received it through the revelation “apokolupto” the laying bear or unveiling of Jesus.
 - 1)) 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
 - 2)) 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
 - 3)) 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

- b) Therefore Paul was not an inferior apostle to the twelve apostles.
 - 1)) Paul calls himself the apostle of the Gentiles. Rom. 11:13
 - 2)) Paul considered himself the least of the apostles, not worthy to be called an apostle because he persecuted the church. 1Cor. 15:9

1:13 The former reputation of Paul.

- 1) Paul called them to remember what he was before he came to Christ, “For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism.” vs. 13a
 - a) Paul says, “If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: 5 circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.” Phil. 3:4-5, 6b-c
 - b) The Pharisees, the strictest sect.
- 2) Paul called them to remember his hate for Christians and Christianity, “how I persecuted the church of God, beyond measure and tried to destroy it.” vs. 13b
 - a) He told the Philippians, “concerning zeal, persecuting the church.” Phil. 3:6a

- b) He entered every house and dragged off men and women, committing them to prison. Acts 8:3
- c) 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
- d) He tried to destroy the church.
 - 1)) The word destroy “portheo” means to ruin or sack and translated havoc by Luke. Acts 8:3
 - 2)) A blasphemer. 1Tim. 1:12
 - 3)) A violent arrogant man. 1Tim. 1:12

1:14 The former success of Paul.

- 1) Paul surpassed all his peers, “And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation.” vs. 14a
* Literally he blazed away from all. Phil. 3:4-11
- 2) Paul surpassed other in passion, “being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers.” vs. 14b
 - a) His more exceedingly zealousness for the tradition of his fathers refers to the Mosaic law.
 - b) 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

- c) If the tradition of Israel could be exalted above the excepted way God had made through Christ, how much more all other tradition!

1:15-17 The independent apostleship of Paul.

1:15 The sovereign choosing of God.

- 1) God's perfect timing is stated "But when it pleased God". vs. 15a
 - 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 Omniscience and wisdom for 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 pleasure to act!
- 2) God's Omnipresence is stated, "who separated me from my mother's womb." vs. 15b
 - 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 for calling Paul is also stated, "and called me through His grace." vs. 15b

- a) Having called him, God enabled him. 1Tim. 1:12-14
- b) Grace is that undeserved favor that looks to God alone!
 - * Paul said to King Agrippa that he had not been disobedient to the vision. Acts 26:19

1:16a-b The purpose of God for calling Paul.

- 1) To save Paul, "to reveal His Son in me." vs. 16a
 - * This is the foundational step for all, to know Jesus as their own Lord and Savior.
- 2) To make him a preacher of the gospel, "that I might preach Him among the Gentiles." vs. 16b
 - 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, "I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood." vs. 16c
- 2) Paul did not go seek to join the apostles, "nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me." vs. 17a

- 3) Paul was discipled by Jesus. “but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus.” vs. 17b-c, Acts 9:25-26; 2Cor. 11:32-33

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

1:18 The first visit of Paul to Jerusalem.

- 1) The time was three years after his conversion, “Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter.” vs. 18a
 - a) Paul escaped for his life from Damascus, as he was lowered down in a basket out a window because King Aretus wanted to kill him. 2Cor. 12:32-33
 - b) The word “see” means to inquire into for one’s personal knowledge, we get our word history from it.
- 2) The length of time Paul stayed with Peter is stated, “and remained with him fifteen days.” vs. 18b
 - a) It was not to receive the gospel or discuss it.
 - b) It was not to authenticate his apostleship.

1:19 The commentary on Paul’s visit to Jerusalem.

- 1) The apostle Paul saw one other person, “But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord’s brother.”

* The emphasized of Paul was that he saw none other but James the brother of Jesus.

- 2) James the brother of John killed by Herod with the sword is not to be confused with him. Acts 12:2
- 3) Peter sent word to James, the Lord’s brother after the angel released him from prison. Acts 12:17
- 4) James the Lord’s brother was the head of church council at Jerusalem. Acts 15

1:20 The assured truthfulness of the words of Paul.

- 1) The context of the statement refers to the truth about his conversion, commission as an apostle, discipleship by Jesus and his journey to Jerusalem, “Now concerning the things which I write to you.” vs. 20a

* Pointing back to previous verses. Gal. 1:11-19
- 2) The words of Paul are by an oath, “indeed, before God, I do not lie.” vs. 20b

* Paul declared this many other times!

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

- 1) The apostle Paul did not remain in Jerusalem, “Afterward I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia.”
 - a) This is the area of Tarsus, where Paul was from, modern-day Turkey.

- 2) The supplementary information is in the book of Acts, the Jews sought his life and the Lord told him to leave Jerusalem while in the temple. Acts 9:29-30; 22:17-18
- a) Paul, then Saul spoke boldly in the name of Jesus.
 - b) He disputed against the Hellenist.
 - c) Saul was sent to Tarsus to escape death.
 - d) Saul was taken to Caesarea where he could go by boat or land to Tarsus.
- 3) Tarsus was his home town, where he remained obscure, until Barnabas sought him out for the work of Antioch, about 8 year after his conversion. Acts 11
- a) Paul was saved on the Damascus Road in 35 A.D.
 - b) Paul spent three years in Arabia and Damascus, then he went up to Jerusalem in 38 A.D.
 - c) Paul spent the next five years in Tarsus, then he was sought out at Tarsus in 43 A.D.

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

- 1) The churches of Judea did not know what Paul looked like, "And I was unknown by face to the churches of Judea which were in Christ." vs. 22
- a) Paul was content with the will of God at Tarsus.

- b) This again is about 8 years after his conversion.
- 2) The churches on heard about his conversion, "But they were hearing only, "He who formerly persecuted us now preaches the faith which he once tried to destroy." vs. 23
- * Paul went from persecuting, incarcerating and killing Christians to being the most zealous preacher of the faith, the gospel!
- 3) The church praise God for his conversion and preaching of the gospel. "And they glorified God in me." vs. 24
- a) The outcome of Paul's obedience, as a vessel of God!
 - b) This is the most powerful testimony that any one of us can give, not lip service but life service!