

## **Galatians 1:11-24: This Message Came From God**

### **Community Group Galatians Lesson 2**

#### **I. Basis for today: You have been wandering from a message given you by God 1:1-10**

- A. Last time's passage (1:1-5) *This letter is coming from God and not from man.*
1. Showed us that Paul was communicating a **message from God**, not from man;
  2. Showed us that his **message was rooted in the death and resurrection of Jesus** accomplished by God to rescue us from our sin and our present evil age;
  3. Showed us that the message Paul had was **all about God's glory**.
- B. Last time's passage (1:6-10) *How in the world are you leaving God's gospel?*
1. Showed us that the **Galatians were leaving the gospel of grace** which Paul had given them in favor of an altered gospel that was not good news (vv. 6-7);
  2. Showed us that the Galatians **were being falsely taught a distorted gospel** which was no gospel by people who deserved to be accursed (vv. 8-9).
  3. Showed us that **Paul had no interest in pleasing men**, but only in pleasing God, which was the opposite of the false teachers (v. 10).

#### **II. That Gospel Came by Revelation 1:11-16a**

**A. Galatians 1:11-12** – *For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.* (NASB) Again, Paul authenticates his apostleship and his message. This will become **very** important.

#### **B. You know that you received the true gospel from me**

1. The gospel Barnabas and I preached to you when we started your churches (see Acts 13:13-14:23) came from God and not from man and it's what saved you. These others who have added to what we taught (*circumcise males, follow the rules that faithful Jews follow in order to be accepted by God*) have taught you lies.
2. Let me remind you of that gospel. *We told you the entire Old Testament story that you know so well. Then we showed how our people (Jews) failed to recognize the Promised One. We had Him crucified and then God raised Him from the dead. Through Him forgiveness of sins is preached - "Everyone who believes is freed."*

#### **C. I am the last guy in the world to teach this message if Jesus hadn't confronted me.**

**(See also Acts 26:9-11) Galatians 1:13-16a** – *For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it. And I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my countrymen, being more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions. But when God who had set me apart from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, was pleased to reveal His Son in me so that I might preach Him among the Gentiles....*

**D. Acts 9:1-19 – Gospel Received Directly From Christ**

1. (vv. 1-2) Probably 14 years earlier (34AD?), Paul had set out to destroy *the way*. His full-on commitment was against Christ and the followers of Christ.
2. (vv. 3-4) He was struck off his horse by a dazzling light and a voice asked him, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me?” Note: Paul (Saul) was persecuting Christians, but Jesus says it is **really persecution against Him**.
3. (v. 5a) Paul had no clue who was speaking to him. But he knew that whoever it was had the power to make lightning target him, the power to make a voice come from the sky, and the power to render him blind. On top of that, He claimed Saul was persecuting Him. He had Saul’s attention. So Saul said, “Who are You, Lord?”
4. (vv. 5b-19) The voice answered that Saul was persecuting **Jesus**. He then commanded him what he was to do with his life – in the long-term (suffer for His name’s sake as a light to the Gentiles) and in short-term (exactly whose house to go to in order to see, to be baptized and to be started in the right direction).

E. **The implication of this story** which the Galatians already knew and which Paul was now reminding them of? This gospel was not his doing. It was 180 degrees from the message he would have given on his own. **This was from God by way of revelation.** Because of that, the Galatians would do well to remember that the gospel by which they had been called was from God, and not man. It was authoritative. Do not submit for even a minute to a different so-called gospel. *His gospel is that Jesus died for your sins and was raised from the dead and whoever believed on Him for eternal life was freed.*

**III. My message was given by God and confirmed by God and man 1:16b-20**

- A. **Galatians 1:16b-17** *I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went away into Arabia, and returned once more to Damascus.* Just as God **revealed to him the message of the gospel** through a blinding vision (picture of His glory, for He dwells in “unapproachable light”), so also Paul had this message confirmed by spending time alone with the Lord in “Arabia.” He was not in a hurry to have man teach him; he wanted God to teach him. This is not the Arabia we think of (**Saudi Arabia**). This is the Arabah of the Nabatean Kingdom in Jordan, near the Dead Sea (and in and around Petra). (2 Cor. 11:30-33)
- B. **Galatians 1:18-20** *Then three years later I went up to Jerusalem to become acquainted with Cephas and stayed with him fifteen days (see Acts 9:26-29). But I did not see any others of the apostles except James, the Lord’s brother. Now in what I am writing to you, I assure you before God that I am not lying. (Paul makes an oath.)*
- C. Paul wants the Galatians to know that His message **had three authentications:**
1. Jesus appeared to Him on the road to Damascus and spoke to him.
  2. Paul spent 3 years with God in the Arabah, learning and fellowshiping with Him.
  3. After this, Paul met with Peter and James (and his gospel was confirmed - *implied*).

**IV. I preached that message all around and God was glorified 1:21-24**

- A. I went into Syria and Cilicia “to preach the faith (I) once tried to destroy”
- B. Christians in Jerusalem who didn’t know me by sight heard what I was doing
- C. The believers in Jerusalem were glorifying God because of me

**V. Summary of chapter 1**

- A. God – not a group of men – has directed me to write this letter to you.
- B. This is the same God whose Son Jesus died for your sins and was raised from the dead.
- C. How could you drift away from the gospel of grace by which you were saved?
- D. Whoever has distorted the gospel we gave you is under a curse of God.
- E. I do what I do to please God and not to please men.
- F. I got this gospel from a direct revelation from Christ.
- G. Remember – I hated the church and was trying to destroy it when He visited me.
- H. Barnabas and I explained who Jesus is when we first visited. We told you that you are “freed and forgiven” when you believe on Jesus, not when you do certain things people want you to do.
- I. This message I gave you came from Jesus, was confirmed by the Holy Spirit and by leaders in the church and has born God-glorifying fruit wherever it is preached.

**VI. Discussion**

- A. When did you come to understand the gospel of eternal life in Christ by faith alone? If you haven’t shared that story in this group before now, be sure to do so. *(If you’re not sure you have, that is an ok answer, too. We’ve all been there.)*
- B. How did you verify that what you believe about Christ and your sin is accurate?
- C. When have you ever been challenged on what you believe? How have you handled that so far?
- D. What do you think is the best thing to do when the person talking to you seems to know more than you do, and yet they don’t believe the gospel that you believe?

**VII. Homework (10 minutes a day)**

- A. Read Galatians this week, one chapter a day.
- B. Write down one verse from each chapter (different from the ones you chose last week) and text it to yourself or write it down somewhere. Maybe share it.
- C. Ask this question at a shared meal this week: What is your bottom line authority? What gives you the most confidence that a thing is true? Why?