

No Other Gospel • Galatians 1:6-12

INTRO • Read vs 1-5

¹ Paul, an apostle (not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead), ² and all the brethren who are with me, To the churches of Galatia:

³ Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁴ who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, ⁵ to whom *be* glory forever and ever. Amen.

1. So begins the Apostle Paul's letter to the churches of Galatia. [PRAY]
2. While most of Paul's other letters were written to *cities*, Galatia was a *region* in the middle of Turkey.
3. He'd planted several churches there on his *first* missionary venture.
4. This letter was written them a few yrs later.
5. Why he wrote becomes clear in what he pens next >>

⁶ I marvel

1. "I'm amazed; astonished." We'd say, "I'm blown away" --

that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, ⁷ which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ.

2. Paul had been there planting their churches about 5 yrs before.
3. The Book of Acts marks their conversion as a dramatic work of the Holy Spirit.
4. They **knew** God was at work, bringing them to faith in Christ.
5. What made that so evident was this: The Galatians were **stubborn**. They **KNEW** it.
 - a. Theirs was an interesting history we'll go into Wednesday night.
 - b. For now, I'll just say they were what we'd call *Ultra-Conservative*.
 - c. Not so much *politically*. Not in the modern sense, but in the classic sense of 'conservative.'
 - d. They wanted to *conserve* that past. So, *tradition* was sacred. They abhorred *change*.
 - e. That made them *inordinately stubborn*.
6. If Paul had had to get permission from a Mission's Agency to do church-planting in Galatia, they would have turned him down.
 - a. Especially since it was his *first* mission.
 - b. But when it came to stubbornness, the Galatians met their match in Paul.
7. And a wild thing happened when he preached in there.
8. The conviction of the Spirit was so strong, they were persuaded and came to faith.
9. Being stubborn, Paul expected them to cling tenaciously to The Faith.
10. But, word reached him they were moving away from it to a perversion of The Gospel.
12. As we get deeper into the letter, we discover what that was.

Judaizers

1. Here's what happened in the churches of Galatia ...
2. This is a gift. Let's say I offer it to you.
 - a. Not because you **deserve** it, but simply because I want to.
 - b. I like you and want to bless you. So, the gift.
 - c. If you *deserved* it for something you'd *done*, it wouldn't be a gift.

- d. It'd be *earned*; a kind of *wage* since I *owed* it to you for services rendered.
 - e. But it's *not* a wage. It's a *gift* motivated purely by my desire to bless you.
 - f. Question: How do you make it *yours*? >> You have to *receive* it; reach out your hand & *take* it.
3. Salvation is the *gift* of God. That's what v6 means when it speaks of the *grace of Christ*.
 - a. Grace means *unearned* favor. This (the gift) is grace.
 - b. Salvation can't be earned because it isn't a wage.
 - 1) *Trying* to earn it is an insult to God.
 - 2) Back to this (the gift). Imagine I say, "A gift for you," because I want to bless you.
 - 3) And you reply, "I want to earn it. So, I'll wash your car, mow your lawn, paint your house."
 - 4) No! Because it wouldn't be a *gift* anymore. It would be a *reward*.
 - 5) And more importantly, the *emphasis* would shift from my benevolence & desire to show love and care for you –
 - 6) To your effort and right to *expect* me to compensate you.
 - 7) A more subtle perversion would be, when I offer the gift, instead of trying to *earn* it, you decline by saying, you're not *worthy*.
 - 8) But *worthiness* was never a consideration when I decided to give the gift.
 - 9) It was precisely your *lack* of this & your *need* **OF** it that prompted me to give it.
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4. The hand that *simply receives* the gift of salvation is *faith* = Believing in Jesus.
 5. The Galatians had responded to Paul's preaching of the Gospel of Grace & received God's gift by faith.
 6. Then, after Paul left the area, false teachers arrived.
 - a. They were Jewish Christians known as *Judaizers* because they believed the Law of Moses still applied.
 - b. They said Christians *had to keep* the Sabbath, eat kosher, practice purifications rituals, get circumcised, and a host of other rules.
 - c. Not just JEWS had to do all that. So did *Gentile* believers in Jesus.
 7. In Acts 15 we read that the Apostles made clear Gentiles did NOT need to keep the Law of Moses.
 - a. Circumcision, Sabbath, and a kosher diet weren't what following Jesus was about.
 - b. And even though the leaders of the Church decided that, a very vocal group of ignored them.
 - c. Some of them followed the Apostle Paul around, waiting till he planted a church, then left.
 - d. Then they snuck in, claiming they'd been sent from Jerusalem with "further instructions" on how Gentiles could be *really good Christians*.
 - e. = Get circumcised, eat Kosher, keep the Sabbath, & a host of other rules.
 8. They turned The Faith away from The Gospel of Grace to a Religion of Works.
 9. Salvation wasn't a *gift* from God to be received by faith but a *reward* for keeping a routine of rituals.
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10. These Judaizers are the ones Paul refers to in v7 as "some who trouble you & want to pervert the gospel of Christ."
 - a. It's *not* The Gospel, it's not *good news* anymore, --
 - b. When it's the age-old / same-old tired religious appeal to good-works.
 11. Paul was *amazed* that the Galatians, usually so resistant to change, were trading in the Gospel of Grace for a Religion of Works.
 12. So in his *by far* most strongly worded letter, he rebuts the Judaizers.

⁸ But even if we,

1. Paul & his team

or an angel from heaven, preach >> Any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.

2. The Gospel of Grace must NOT be trade in for something else, ***no matter what***.
 - a. Even if Paul himself went-off the rails & returned to Galatia preaching something other →
 - b. THAN the Gospel the Galatians KNEW had saved them, >> they were to send him packing.
3. Should an angelic being named Maroni appear, carrying golden tablets & special spectacles to read them, they were to consider it utterly off-limits.

4. What Paul says here cautions us on 2 fronts.

FIRST: Anointed, exceptionally-gifted & faithful men & women of God are not exempt from going off into error.

It's happens. So don't assume because God used someone in your life mightily 10 yrs ago, everything they're into today is solid.

SECOND: The presence of the supernatural isn't a guarantee it's legit.

Paul warns us satan often appears as an angel of light. //But we know it's him by the ***deceit*** he brings.

The *message* is everything; not the package it comes by.

5. Just in case they missed how important this was—

⁹As 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.

1. Off-limits.
2. When the message is counter to the Gospel of Grace, we're to have nothing to do with it.
3. We're not to *partner* with such folks, provide no *platform* for them.

¹⁰For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.

1. "Persuade" isn't the best translation // The word means to *gain approval*; to *make a friend*.
2. The questions Paul poses are the same → Whose *approval* did he seek; God's or man's.
 - a. Whose friend did he want to be? The World or Jesus?
 - b. TRUTH: We *can't* be both >> James 4:4

⁴Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God?

Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

3. We end with ...

¹¹But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. ¹²For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ.

1. The Gospel isn't of *human* origin.
2. What Paul preached in Galatia wasn't HIS Gospel in the sense that it was something he dreamed up.
3. Far from it! Paul's story begins with him try to stomp out the Gospel and crush The Church.
4. It utterly up-ended what he'd believed before coming to Faith in Christ.
5. He assumed it was a dangerous heresy.
6. Then the Risen Jesus appeared to him and Paul realized everything he'd fought against was true.
7. In an instant, Paul went from *persecutor* to *proclaimer*. From church-ender to church-planter.

CONCLUSION

1. We'll see how Paul deals with the error of the Judaizers in further studies.
2. This morning, I want to close with the warning Paul's words set us.
3. The Gospel is a message the followers of Jesus are entrusted with.
 - a. It's the only message that can save.
 - b. Everything else is a counterfeit, a perversion, a diversion.
 - c. It's a deviation that may *sound* good and tick off all the things the world considers important.
 - d. But if it isn't THE Gospel of Jesus Christ, then it's *another* gospel and we're to have nothing to do with it.
4. In v10, Paul exposes *why other* gospels arise = Because they're *appealing* to people.
 - a. They scratch the world's itch for something spiritual without requiring too much.
 - b. They allow people to feel like they've covered the spiritual side of life while staying anchored in the world.
5. Let's face it—The Gospel is offensive. It's hard to hear at first. // In 1 Cor 1:23 Paul says -

²³ We preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness,

- a. No one *likes* hearing they're a sinner headed for hell → But it's true.
 - b. No one *likes* hearing the doctor say, "The tests are back. It's cancer. You have a few months to live."
 - c. But if it's true, you need to know it.
 - d. Well, the HS's run a comprehensive set of tests on us. The diagnosis is terminal.
We're dead in trespasses and sins.
 - e. The solution is to believe in Jesus Whose death pays the penalty of our sin.
 - f. And Whose resurrection brings new life; eternal life.
6. But all that only works if Jesus is Who the Bible says He is = God come as Man. A miracle.
 7. And that requires as well that we believe the Bible is reliable; that what it says is true.
 8. And that's where we run into trouble.
 - a. You see, while the problem in Paul's day was the challenge of a religion of works,
 - b. The challenge today is the religion of *secularism*; of the belief that the material universe is all there is.
 - c. Spirituality is nothing more than the realm of ideas, thoughts.
 9. That's emerged now in what's known as *Progressive Christianity*.
 - a. It's an attempt to *merge* The Gospel with The World.
 - b. To do that, they remove anything the world finds offensive.
 - c. Miracles. Jesus' deity. Judgment. Sin. Sacrifice.
 - d. For Progressives, the Bible isn't God's inspired and inerrant Word;
it's a mixed bag of both wisdom and error you need a specially-trained guide to sort out for you.
 10. Progressive Christianity isn't! Progressive that is.
 - a. It's really nothing but a re-heated version of Theological Liberalism of the 18th & 19th Cs.
 - b. They believe all the same things // They've just changed the names of the leaders.
 - c. Instead of writing books & newspaper articles, they have blogs & YouTube channels.
 11. I have a Church History podcast called *Communio Sanctorum*.
 - a. While studying for it a few yrs ago, I realized the similarity between Classic Theological Liberalism and modern Progressivism.
 - b. I'd just read a blog by a Progressive leader and saw how the 2 lined up perfectly.
 - c. So I wrote an article for the CCO site titled *Regressive Christianity* pointing out Progressivism's origin & errors. [link]

d. Classic Liberalism rose for one reason:

- 1) It was an attempt to align Christianity with the Skepticism coming from the Enlightenment in Europe.
- 2) Church leaders tired of being considered fools by skeptics who'd managed to take over positions of cultural influence.
- 3) So they quietly backed away from the Bible, miracles, & The Gospel.
- 4) Seeking to be a friend of the world, they made themselves the enemies of God.

12. Progressives do the same today. The only progress they make is toward their own ruin.

13. The Only Gospel that saves is the Gospel of Jesus Christ → He Died. He Rose. He's Coming Again.