



Almont Vineyard Church

Week 2 Sermon Series: Targeted

September 12, 2026

Opening Monologue

Welcome to the AVC App. This is where we go deeper into the sermon. Here you will find spiritual reflections and commentary that line up with an in-depth look at this week's topic. Other features include submitting a prayer request, sign-ups, listening to the Bible, reading the Bible, and much more. Dive in and enjoy.

Welcome to Week Two of our new series, Targeted. If you missed Week One, here is a link to our YouTube channel where you can listen: <https://www.youtube.com/@almontvineyardchurch>

The backbone of this series is John's vision in the book of Revelation. Revelation 12:7-9 and 17 say this: "And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.... Then the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to make war against the rest of her offspring—those who obey God's commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus."

It is Satan and his demons who lead the whole world astray. That worldwide satanic web fights against Christians—those who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Because of that, we must stand guard at the gateways of our minds and our bodies. Satan's assaults will not stop until Jesus Christ returns, and Satan is thrown into the Abyss (Rev. 20:1-3)

The main gate is the protection of the eyes, the ears, and the imagination, so those pathways do not become strongholds. The body gate is this: "Do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires." Our bodies are a temple of the Holy Spirit. (Romans 6:12; 1 Corinthians 6:19)

This Sunday we are going to dive into one of the biggest pieces of warfare Satan uses against us: the Spirit of Confusion. As you can tell by looking at the world around you, a spirit of confusion has been dropped on us like an atomic bomb.

Confusion is more than simple mental fog. It describes an active disturbance that produces emotional and psychological turmoil. Its aim is to stir up, bring trouble, disturb, shake, and agitate—often resulting in perplexity and fear. (Logos scholars)

How does the spirit of confusion show up in our society? We are going to dive into that and much more this coming Sunday.

Come and be encouraged by God's Word.

In Christ,
Rev. Pastor Brad

To Listen to this week's Sermon: "Week 2 Targeted Series" Go to the Sermon tab here in our APP or use the links to our website or YouTube Channel where you can also listen to our Sermons:

Web: <https://www.almontvineyardchurch.org/media>

You Tube: <https://www.youtube.com/@almontvineyardchurch>

Key Sermon Text

Revelation 12: 7-9 & 17

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation%2012%3A%207-9%20&version=NIV>

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation%2012%3A%2017&version=NIV>

Galatians 1:6-8

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Galatians%201%3A6-8&version=NIV>

1 Corinthians 14:33

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2014%3A33%20&version=NIV>

2 Timothy 1:7

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Timothy%201%3A7%20&version=NIV>

2 Timothy 4:3-4

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Timothy%204%3A3-4&version=NIV>

Spiritual Reflection

The Warfare of Confusion

Paul does not ease into the subject. He opens Galatians like a man who sees the flock under fire:

“I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned!” (Galatians 1:6-8)

That phrase—“throwing you into confusion”—is the Greek word *tarassō* (tah-RAS-so). It is more than mental fog. It describes an active disturbance that produces emotional and psychological turmoil. The word means to stir up, confuse, trouble, and disturb, but its range is broader than intellectual bewilderment. It means to shake, to agitate, to excite to the point of perplexity and fear. That is the visceral thing Paul’s opponents were doing to the Galatians.

The word operates on more than one level. It is used of confusing or stirring people up, and of causing restlessness through words and false teaching.[1] In Galatians, Paul used it of those who were “trying to pervert the gospel of Christ.” That is why many call these heretics “agitators”—they were disturbing the churches with a false gospel.

The passive form of the word shows the condition it creates. It expresses being startled or terrified, as when the disciples saw Jesus on the water and were “troubled.” This was not detached intellectual disagreement. The false teachers were producing genuine psychological distress. It is not merely an altered mind. It is an agitated, unsettled state—a shaking of spiritual and emotional equilibrium. The Galatians were young in the faith and easily confused. The false teachers were not just offering other ideas. They were actively destabilizing the

believers' confidence in the gospel Paul had preached
That is warfare.

John saw the same war from the other side of the veil:

"And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.... Then the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to make war against the rest of her offspring—those who obey God's commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus."
(Revelation 12:7-9, 17)

Satan and his demons lead the whole world astray. That assault is aimed at those who hold to the testimony of Jesus. It does not stay "out there." It comes after minds, bodies, and souls. It does not stop with us. It reaches for our children and our families.

We cannot sit back as comfortable Christians and assume that because we keep a certain number of spiritual rituals we are automatically safe. Make no mistake: we are protected by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and by the power of His blood. But we cannot take that for granted and let our guard down. We cannot shrink back from the faith or crack the door even slightly. We must stand guard at the gateways of our minds and our bodies. Satan's assaults will not stop until Christ returns and Satan is thrown into the Abyss.

The mind gate is the eyes, the ears, and the imagination—so those pathways do not become strongholds. The body gate is this: "Do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires." Our bodies are a temple of the Holy Spirit. (Romans 6:12; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

A spirit of confusion is one of the enemy's chief weapons in that assault. God is not a God of disorder but of peace (1 Corinthians 14:33). Confusion of this kind does not come from Him. It comes from the world, the flesh, and the devil. It distorts truth and disorients believers in their understanding and their decisions.

Satan used this tactic on Jesus Himself: taking Scripture and twisting it just enough to sound like the Word of God while producing disastrous consequences. He still does that. He disguises himself as an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14), which is why his lies often look righteous, compassionate, and even Christian.

In Galatia the "different gospel" centered on circumcision and Mosaic law as a requirement for salvation. Teachers from Judea said, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved" (Acts 15:1). That was not a cultural preference. It was a requirement for salvation that contradicted the gospel of grace. Paul would not negotiate it. If they accepted that addition, Christ would be of no value to them. They would be obligated to obey the whole law, alienated from Christ, and fallen away from grace (Galatians 5:2-4). The issue was not ceremony. It was the basis of salvation itself. No one is justified before God by the law (Galatians 3:11). Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us (Galatians 3:13). In Christ, neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is faith expressing itself through love (Galatians 5:6). Paul's concern was not legalism as mere strictness. It was the corruption of grace through human works as a condition for acceptance before God.

The same spirit still works. It still adds something to Jesus. It still unsettles people who are not yet grounded. It still uses words, teachers, and slogans to shake confidence in the gospel. In our day it also shows up as a fog over created order itself: rewriting history to reshape a people, preaching that every religion leads to God,

teaching children they can discard the body God gave them, treating abortion as a casual form of birth control, calling good evil and evil good, and training a generation to trust feelings over the Word.

Inside the church, envy and strife also bring confusion into the body of Christ, fracturing unity and weakening our witness. False teachers twist Scripture through ignorance and through deliberate design. Confusion about the gospel can even produce a false hope of salvation—which is one of the enemy’s aims.

The result is not a lively debate. It is tarassō—agitation, fear, and a people who no longer know what is true. Scripture tells us how to fight. “Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world” (1 John 4:1). “The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons” (1 Timothy 4:1). Lazy Bible reading and outsourcing all our thinking to other voices leaves the gate open. Diligent study of God’s Word and dependence on the Holy Spirit shut it. The Spirit opens the heart to the truth.

Do not crack the door. Guard the gates. Hold to the testimony of Jesus.

Scripture

Galatians 1:6-8; 3:11, 13; 5:2-4, 6

Revelation 12:7-9, 17

Romans 6:12

1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 14:33

2 Corinthians 11:14

Acts 15:1

1 John 4:1

1 Timothy 4:1

Sources: 3-7

Commentary on Main Texts

Galatians 1:1-8

INTRODUCTION to The Book

The year was probably a.d. 49. Paul and Barnabas had just completed their first missionary journey (Acts 13:2–14:28). By their standards, it must have been a whirlwind adventure. Following a brief stay on the island of Cyprus, they had visited Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe, cities in the Roman province of Galatia (present-day Turkey). In their travels they had met with both wholehearted response and deep-seated resistance.

Usually Paul and Barnabas would introduce the gospel in a new area by starting in the local Jewish synagogue, demonstrating from the Scriptures that Jesus was the long-awaited Messiah. But they would venture beyond the Jewish community to offer the promise of forgiveness and eternal life to the Gentiles. And that would get them in trouble. Declaring that God wanted to save Gentiles placed Paul and Barnabas under a cloud of suspicion by Jews and Jewish Christians. As a result of their preaching, however, many Jews and Gentiles converted to Christ. The success of Christianity also created deep resentment in those holding positions of leadership in society and in religious circles. The work of Paul and Barnabas threatened their standing.

Thrilled by the number of persons who accepted their message, upon arriving back in Antioch, Paul and Barnabas “gathered the church together and reported all that God had done through them and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles” (Acts 14:27 niv).

Shortly after their return to Antioch, some Jewish Christians arrived from Judea. These Judeans claimed that the Antioch church and its missionaries were diluting Christianity to make it more appealing to Gentiles, and they challenged Paul’s authority as an apostle. They disagreed with Paul’s teaching that Gentiles did not have to follow many of the religious laws that the Jews had obeyed for centuries. The resultant heated debate touched almost every church in the first century. The issue: how to maintain a proper place for the Jewish root from which the vine of Christianity was flourishing.

LEGALISM AND LABELISM

Paul encountered two forms of Jewish attitudes toward the law. Modern forms of these same attitudes can be found in Christianity today.

Some of Paul’s accusers went to the Galatian churches and insisted that the Gentile converts had to be circumcised and follow all the Jewish laws and customs in order to be saved. According to these people (called Judaizers), Gentiles had to first become Jews in order to become Christians. This caused much confusion in the churches that Paul and Barnabas had planted in Galatia.

In response to this threat, Paul wrote this letter to the Galatian churches. In it, he explained that following the Old Testament laws or the Jewish laws would not bring salvation. A person is saved only by grace through faith. Most likely, Paul wrote this letter about a.d. 49, shortly before the meeting of the Jerusalem council, which settled the law-versus-grace controversy (Acts 15). By this time, Paul himself had been a Christian for about fifteen years.

1:1 Paul, an apostle. First-century letters often began by introducing the writer, although this “writer” often dictated his letters to a scribe. Paul used a secretary for most, if not all, of his letters (see Romans 16:22), usually writing the last few lines in his own hand to authenticate his message (6:11). Tertius served Paul in this way (Romans 16:22).

Saul (Paul was probably his Roman surname) was born into a Jewish family from the tribe of Benjamin. He was raised as a strict Pharisee (Philippians 3:5), grew up in Tarsus, and was educated under a well-known teacher, Gamaliel (Acts 22:3). However, he was also a Roman citizen, a privilege he used to great advantage at times (Acts 22:27–29). Out of this diverse background, God formed and called a valuable servant, using every aspect of Paul’s upbringing to further the spread of the gospel.

The Jewish name Saul, given to a man born in the tribe of Benjamin, evoked memories of the tribe’s days of glory—the first king of Israel was named Saul and came from this tribe (1 Samuel 10:20, 24–26). The Roman name Paul (Paulus) was a common surname (see, for example, Sergius Paulus in Acts 13:7). We know nothing of the origins of Paul’s Roman citizenship; the name may have been a family name, or Paul may have chosen the name simply because of how close it sounded to his Jewish name. In Acts, Luke wrote, “Then Saul, who also is called Paul” (Acts 13:9 nkjv), then used only the name Paul throughout the rest of the book. When Paul accepted the Christian faith and began his mission to the Gentiles, part of his effort to identify with his listeners included using his Roman name. In all of his letters, Paul used his Roman name, linking himself with the Gentile believers to whom he had been sent with the gospel of Christ.

Paul was called to be an apostle by Jesus Christ and God the Father. Paul was not one of the original twelve disciples (later called apostles), but Jesus had especially called him on the road to Damascus to preach the gospel to Jews and Gentiles (Acts 9:3–19). The apostles' mission was to be God's representatives; they were envoys, messengers, and delegates who were directly under the authority of Jesus Christ. They had authority to set up and supervise churches and discipline them if necessary. Paul presented his credentials as an apostle at the beginning of this letter because his authority was being undermined in the churches in Galatia.

Sent neither by human commission nor from human authorities, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead. The title apostle means "one sent on a mission." Paul had gone on a mission while he was still a committed Jew. Acts 9:1–2 records his mission, authorized by the high priest, to imprison Christians in Damascus. However, Paul's mission here was of an entirely different character from an entirely different authority. Paul was sent with the gospel not by any person but by Jesus Christ and God the Father. Jesus' name side-by-side with "God the Father" reveals Paul's understanding of the oneness of God and Jesus Christ.

No human had commissioned him; no human authority had called him; instead, Jesus Christ himself had spoken to Paul (Acts 9:4–5). Thus Paul added, who raised him from the dead, further clarifying that it was the living, risen Christ who had met him on the road to Damascus. Paul was not called during Jesus' ministry on earth; rather, he was called after Jesus' resurrection and ascension. Paul wrote that Jesus appeared "last of all ... to me also, as to one abnormally born. For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, ..." (1 Corinthians 15:8–10 niv).

Paul explained his apostleship in these words, not to separate himself from the original Twelve, but to show that his apostleship rested on the same basis as theirs. If the believers in Galatia questioned Paul's apostleship, then they also should question the apostleship of Peter, John, James, and all the others—and such questioning would be absurd. All the apostles were called by Jesus Christ and God the Father, and they answered to God as their final authority.

Paul was also challenging those who were calling his teaching into question. Paul used neither by human commission as part of his defense against the Judaizers, who challenged his apostolic commission and rejected his credentials. From whom did they take their authority? The Galatians needed to develop a more discerning approach to those who claimed to speak for God.

1:2 And all the brothers with me. Paul's fellow workers in Antioch joined him in sending greetings to the Galatian believers, for all of them together were brothers or "members of God's family." These coworkers in Antioch, a sizable group, included Barnabas, Titus, Timothy, and some of the men listed in Acts 13:1 (see also Acts 19:29; 20:4).

In most of his letters, Paul sent greetings at the outset from himself and one or two traveling companions whom he named, reserving the greetings from others who were with him for the end of the letters (see, for example, 1 Corinthians 1:1 and 16:19–20; 2 Corinthians 1:1 and 13:13; Philippians 1:1 and 4:21; Colossians 1:1 and 4:7–14). In this letter, however, he sent greetings from "all the brothers with me" immediately after his salutation. Paul may have wanted to reinforce the solidarity of the Christian church to show that he was not alone in opposing the false teachings of the Judaizers and in confirming the truth of the gospel. Others, many of whom the Galatians may have known, were "with Paul" in being concerned for their faith.

On one hand, in verse 1 Paul declared that he was not sent from men or by men, meaning that he did not need or seek their endorsement. On the other hand, the unity of his fellow workers added force to his argument. Those with Paul in the Asian ministry were single-minded about the gospel content, Paul's authority, and the role of the law in salvation.

To the churches in Galatia. This letter is an example of Paul writing to a region or group of churches. Another such epistle is Ephesians, which was probably a circular letter to the whole region. The words "to the Ephesians" are missing in several early manuscripts and were probably added because that city's copy was used to produce later copies. Each of Paul's other epistles is addressed to an individual church (such as Philippians) or person (such as Titus). In Paul's time, Galatia was the Roman province located in the center section of present-day Turkey. Much of the region was on a large and fertile plateau; many people had moved to the region because of its favorable agriculture. During his missionary journeys, Paul planned to visit regions with large population centers in order to reach as many people as possible and to plant churches in those centers. This letter was to be circulated among the churches in Galatia planted by Paul and Barnabas during the first missionary journey—in Derbe, Lystra, and Iconium (see the map in the Introduction).

While much has been written about the possibility of two distinct "Galatian areas," one north and one south, the weight of scholarship and tradition still affirms the southern Galatian cities as the correct addressees for this letter. In either case, the addressees are not as crucial to identify as the message itself. After all, we study this letter as if written to us.

Either Paul expected each church to read the letter, perhaps make a copy, and then pass it along; or Paul's scribe made several copies on which Paul wrote the authenticating final lines (6:11) and then had a copy delivered to each church. The first explanation is most likely correct, if Paul usually implemented the procedure explained at the end of his letter to the Colossians: "After this letter has been read to you, see that it is also read in the church of the Laodiceans and that you in turn read the letter from Laodicea" (Colossians 4:16 niv).

1:3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul used grace and peace in all his salutations, wishing his readers the benefits of both. "Grace" was the Greek greeting, as "peace" was the Jewish greeting. The two expressions were common greetings; jointly used in the context of the gospel, they gained unfathomable depth. The word "grace" (charis) reminded Paul's readers of God's kindness in offering salvation to undeserving people. It refers to the multifaceted gift that God makes available to us despite our unworthiness. Not only does God mercifully withhold the judgment and punishment that we so clearly deserve, he grants, instead, the almost unbelievable gift of forgiveness, salvation, and eternal life. God's grace requires faith because the moral and legal case against us leads to an inevitable verdict—guilty. Grace means the forgiveness of our sins. It cannot be earned by works or by any goodness in us. It is free and undeserved favor on us by Christ's faithful act of redemption. As long as we insist on finding or making our own way we remain lost. We who have shown a marked proficiency at sin find ourselves relentlessly pursued by God's grace. We do not discover God's grace; it finds us (see Romans 5:1–11)!

"Peace" (eirene) was a familiar word often used in salutations of letters even by unbelievers. Paul used it to remind the readers of Christ's offer of peace to his disciples as they lived out their faith in an evil world (John 14:27). Christian letters not only expressed the wish for peace, but identified the source of peace. If "grace" summarizes God's gift to us, then "peace" summarizes the personal results of that gift (see John 14:27; 16:33). Peace describes felt grace. Peace combines a quiet conscience, cleansed by forgiveness, with a growing sense of joy in the unlimited possibilities of freedom in Christ.

True peace comes only from a right relationship with God because peace comes from God our Father and the

Lord Jesus Christ. As in verse 1, the connecting of “God” and “Jesus” reveals their oneness (John 10:30). God is called “Father,” a name Jesus taught his disciples to use in the Lord’s Prayer (Matthew 6:9). In contrast with verse 1, Paul here personalized the divine name by adding “our” to Father. The earlier titles emphasized the authority of the Father and Jesus, while this expression pointed to God as the provider of grace and peace. Also, Jesus Christ is identified as “Lord,” a title given to him after his resurrection and ascension that reveals him as worthy of worship (see John 20:28; Acts 2:36; Philippians 2:9).

1:4 Who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age. Our Lord Jesus Christ (1:3) gave himself for our sins. “Giving” refers to Christ’s ultimate sacrifice for sin offered by his death on the cross. Jesus said of himself, “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45 nkjv). Jesus died for “our sins,” not his own, for he was sinless. Jesus’ sacrifice was ultimate, voluntary, and substitutionary. This refers to Christ’s substitutionary atonement. Christ died for our sins, in our place, so we would not have to suffer the punishment we deserve (see 1 Peter 2:24). In 1 Corinthians 15:3 Paul regards this truth as a key element of the early Christian confession of faith.

Paul wasted no time in laying the groundwork for his message to the Galatians. If they were to accept as valid any other “gospel” as an answer to sin, including the one offered by the Judaizers, they would be denying the value and effectiveness of Christ’s sacrifice. So, having claimed his authority to speak, Paul briefly summarized the gospel that he had given them in person.

The result of Jesus’ gift of himself was to rescue us from the present evil age. The Greek word for “rescue” (exeletai) could also be translated “deliver.” The nrsv used “to set us free” to emphasize the result of Jesus’ action; the rescue and deliverance had a purpose—to set us free. Christ not only gave himself for our sins; he also delivers us from the helpless condition where we cannot resist sin (present evil age) to his kingdom where he is Lord. Paul wanted his brothers and sisters in Galatia to be alarmed that they had exchanged their freedom in Christ for slavery under a system based on human effort.

This rescue or deliverance does not remove believers from the world (at least not yet); instead, it gives us the blessings of our future eternity with Christ and offers us his guidance and presence as we serve him in “the present evil age.” Indeed, if all the early believers had been rescued out of the evil age in which they lived, there would have been no hope for us. To use Jesus’ expression, though we are still “in” the world, we are no longer “of” the world (see John 17:15–18). In his letter to the Colossians, Paul enlarged his picture of Christ’s deliverance: “For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves” (Colossians 1:13 niv). From outward appearances we are still living in the same world, but our allegiance and “nationality” have been changed! (This is similar to Paul’s message to the Romans in Romans 12:1–2.)

Paul’s “present age” was “evil”; our present age could also be characterized as evil because Satan rules the world (1 John 5:19). The present evil age of Paul’s time was the Greco-Roman world. It was known for its intrigues, murders, adulteries, and military oppression. Has our age gone farther into decadence? Each newspaper contains stories of great wickedness. A man kills a woman because she won’t have sex with him. Several people kill another for twenty dollars so they can buy drugs. A neighbor systematically abuses young children. Millions of unborn children are destroyed with little if any remorse. Satan acts in every age, but we must see the tragedy of sin and the necessity for rescuing people in our own present evil age. The early believers committed themselves to their mission to carry the gospel down through the ages to us. Are we as committed to passing the gospel on to future generations?

According to the will of our God and Father. God's will is to bring people to himself (1 Timothy 2:4). But sin separates sinful people from a holy God. Thus, God made a way of salvation—the ultimate sacrifice of sending his only Son to die on the cross, taking the penalty for humanity's sins. People can only be saved through Christ. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6 nkjv). Salvation lies in Christ's work, not in any works we do. Our role is to be glad receivers of what we neither deserve nor earn.

God is the Father, he is also our God and Father. All who believe are adopted into God's family, becoming heirs with Christ of all God's promises. Paul expands this theme in chapter 4 of this letter to the Galatians.

1:5 To whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. Paul's spiritual depth broke through as he uttered an expression of love and awe upon speaking the holy names "our God and Father" (1:4). Thoughts of God's love, mercy, and guidance, and Christ's ultimate sacrifice on our behalf evoke words of praise and thanks. Does the glory of God mean that much to us? Glory belongs to God alone. Even if God had not done so much for us, he would still be the only one deserving glory from his creation. As believers, we will be able to glorify our God forever and ever because of the promise of eternal life with him.

All I know about Jesus Christ lies in His name. Martin Luther

With a decisive Amen ("Let it be so," "Let it come to pass"), Paul closed his introduction to this letter. In these first five verses, Paul touched on what would be the intent of his letter: his authority as an apostle, and the fact that salvation is not by works but by grace through faith in Christ alone.

CARING CONFRONTATION / 1:6–10

Paul was amazed at how easily the believers in the Galatian churches had given up the good news of the gospel of Christ for the bad news that they had been taught. Paul's concern was not over alternative viewpoints of interpretation; he was warning Galatian Christians about turning from the truth to lies, from what was right to what was wrong.

The apostle made it clear that he was not concerned about competing in popularity with other messengers. He wanted it understood that once the truth of the gospel had been declared, all amendments were false. Paul also predicted dire consequences to those who propagate any false gospel.

1:6 I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel. The news that the apostle had received about the Galatians left him stunned. In most of his letters, Paul would follow his greeting with a prayer of thanks for his readers based on what he had recently heard about them. Paul thanked God for the Romans and commended them for their well-known faith (Romans 1:8); he thanked God for the Corinthians (despite the moral lapses that he denounced in his letter, 1 Corinthians 1:4–9); he thanked God for the Ephesians (Ephesians 1:15–16), the Philippians (Philippians 1:3–10), the Colossians (Colossians 1:3), and the Thessalonians (1 Thessalonians 1:2–3).

However, no words of thanks occur in this letter; instead, Paul immediately expressed astonishment at the Galatians' behavior. The expression "I am astonished" (*thaumazo*) conveys a rebuke similar to our expression, "I can hardly believe what I am hearing about you!" Paul found it difficult to comprehend that the believers could desert the one who called them. The believers were turning away from God (or Christ) himself—the God who loved them and called them because of his great grace in Christ. These believers were throwing aside that

grace in order to try to earn their salvation. Paul was amazed that someone would insist on attempting to pay for a free (and priceless) gift!

The verb is in the present tense, “are ... deserting” (metatith-esthe), and was used in military circles to indicate that a soldier was AWOL (absent without leave). The process of desertion, of turning away from the faith, was happening as Paul wrote. This desertion connoted apostasy. Those who turned to this different gospel would no longer be Christians. Because it was in process, Paul was warning them against apostasy. Paul hoped to stop it immediately because desertion from the faith held dire consequences. Part of Paul’s astonishment focused on how quickly the believers were deserting—that is, so soon after Paul’s last visit and/or so soon after the false teachers had begun their destructive work. Apparently, it wasn’t taking much for the Galatians to be led away from the faith and to become enthusiastic about this different gospel.

What was the “different gospel”? If the original gospel involved God calling the Galatians by the grace of Christ, then this alternative “gospel” must invite a different trust and response. The Galatians were being invited to desert the kingdom of Christ for service in a kingdom without grace and, therefore, without hope.

The false teachers, Judaizers, taught that to be saved, Gentile believers had to follow Jewish laws and customs, especially the rite of circumcision. Faith in Christ was not enough. Note that they may have included in their teachings the need for faith in Christ for salvation, but they taught that additional requirements had to be met before true salvation could occur. Their message was “faith plus.” This infuriated Paul because the Judaizers’ message undermined the truth of the good news that salvation is a gift, not a reward for certain works.

Jesus Christ has made the gift of salvation available to all people, not just to Jews. And faith in Christ is the only requirement for salvation. Beware of people who say that we need more than simple faith in Christ to be saved. When people set up additional requirements for salvation, they deny the power of Christ’s death on the cross (see 3:1–5).

1:7 Not that there is another gospel. Paul’s sarcastic words in verse 6, “a different gospel,” were still too positive for the error he was resisting; so Paul pointed out that the Judaizers’ teaching was no gospel at all. There is only one way given to us by God to be forgiven of sin—through believing in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. No other person, method, or ritual can give eternal life. Attempting to be open-minded and tolerant, some people assert that all religions are equally valid paths to God. In a free society, people have the right to their religious opinions, but this doesn’t guarantee that their ideas are right. God does not accept human-made religion as a substitute for faith in Jesus Christ. He has provided just one way—Jesus Christ (John 14:6). That message alone constitutes the true gospel.

But there are some who are confusing you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. The people who were confusing the Galatian believers were zealous Jewish Christians who believed that the Old Testament practices, such as circumcision and dietary restrictions, were required of all believers (see 5:10). As long as Jewish believers made up the majority of the church, their emphasis made little difference. But the influx of Gentile believers with no Jewish background caused problems. Because these teachers wanted to turn the Gentile Christians into Jews, they were called “Judaizers.” This teaching confused the Galatians because they hadn’t heard from Paul about all these acts that they were being told were requirements.

In any event, the Judaizers had perverted the gospel of Christ. This term can be understood as a subjective genitive (Christ's gospel—the gospel given to us by Christ) and an objective genitive (the gospel about Christ—Christ is the content of the gospel).

Many of the newer Galatian Christians were Greeks who were unfamiliar with Jewish laws and customs. The Judaizers were an extreme faction of Jewish Christians. Both groups believed in Christ, but their lifestyles differed considerably. We do not know why the Judaizers traveled so far to teach their mistaken notions to the new Gentile converts in Galatia. They may have been motivated by (1) a sincere wish to integrate Judaism with the new Christian faith, (2) a sincere love for their Jewish heritage, or (3) a jealous desire to destroy Paul's authority. Whether or not the Judaizers were sincere, their teaching threatened these new churches and had to be countered. Based on Acts 15:24, the elders in Jerusalem denied giving any sanction to the teaching of the Judaizers, so any claim for their authority was false. But more to the point, the effect these "teachers" had on young Christians bears chilling similarities with Jesus' description of the missionary efforts of the Pharisees: "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You travel over land and sea to win a single convert, and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as you are" (Matthew 23:15 niv). Whatever the Judaizers' intentions, their efforts led to confusion. They were loading down people with the requirements of the "law" instead of encouraging them to live by grace in joyful obedience to Christ.

When Paul said others wanted to pervert the gospel of Christ, he was not rejecting everything Jewish. Paul was a Jew who worshiped in the temple and attended the religious festivals. But he was concerned that nothing get in the way of the simple truth of his message: salvation, for Jews and Gentiles alike, is through faith in Jesus Christ alone. Any other teaching is a perversion of that truth. The term "pervert" (metastrepsai) goes beyond the idea of confusion or complication; it implies reversal, or making something the opposite of what it was originally. Those who were trying to "improve" on Paul's message to the Galatians were in danger of destroying their faith.

Paul's concern invites the question: What is the gospel of Christ to which he was referring? At this time, the Galatians would not have had much more than eyewitness accounts of the life and ministry of Jesus. The application of that history and the invitation to believe had been given to them through Paul. We who have the Gospels in hand are perhaps able to answer the question: Was Paul himself consistent to the message and claims of Jesus as they are recorded in the Gospels? How did Jesus define the gospel?

The book of Mark introduces itself as "the gospel about Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (Mark 1:1). Mark's record of Jesus' first public message indicates that Jesus was the source of the term good news, or gospel in referring to himself and his message: "Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news' " (Mark 1:14–15 nrsv). Twice in this Gospel (Mark 8:35; 10:29) Jesus placed equal and supreme value on the gospel and himself, claiming that he and the gospel were worthy of the most devoted followers. Jesus also prophesied that the gospel would be carried worldwide (Mark 13:10). Jesus and the gospel cannot be separated; to understand either one properly you must understand both. Jesus presents in person the invitation described in the gospel: Repent and believe. Paul was rightly amazed that the Galatian believers were swallowing the pseudo medicine of those who offered a works religion when they already knew they could be healed by God's grace.

1:8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned! Paul denounced the Judaizers' perversion of the gospel of Christ. Using strong language to deal with this life-or-death issue, Paul said that even if an angel from heaven were to come preaching another message, that angel should be eternally condemned (other versions say "accursed,"

meaning doomed to destruction). If an angel came preaching another message, he would not be from heaven, no matter how he looked. (This passage, for instance, strongly refutes the claim by Mormons regarding the source of Joseph Smith's teaching, that the angel Moroni appeared to him.) Some think that Paul was referring ironically to the leaders of the Jerusalem church. Others think he was springboarding off the Jewish belief that angels had delivered the Law to Moses at Mount Sinai (3:19; Hebrews 2:2). Most likely, Paul was referring to the emissaries of Satan.

SLIPS AND FALLS

Paul included himself among those who ought to be held suspect if they preach a different message. Once right does not necessarily mean always right. Recent times have been filled with stories of ministers who have fallen into sin. Their failures have done great harm to those who trusted in Christ under their ministries. Is it possible that God allows some very successful ministers to fall in order to remind all of us who we are supposed to be trusting? Charisma or past effectiveness does not exempt anyone from remaining true to God's Word. None of us become spiritual enough to make our own rules as we go along!

Sources: 8

No Spirit of Confusion

The New Testament does not leave us guessing what God is like when the air is full of agitation. He is not the source of the unrest. He is the God of peace.

"For God is not a God of disorder but of peace—as in all the congregations of the saints." (1 Corinthians 14:33)

KJV: "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace..."

"For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline." (2 Timothy 1:7)

KJV: "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."

These two verses belong together. One tells us what God is not. The other tells us what He has given us instead.

Paul's point in 1 Corinthians 14 is not that every hard doctrine is "confusion," and therefore not from God. The setting is the gathered church. Gifts were being used all at once, without control, and the meeting was sliding into chaos. Paul says that cannot be blamed on God. If a meeting is marked by confusion and weirdness, that atmosphere is not from Him. God may do things we do not expect, but He does not produce a general spirit of turmoil. Worship should look like the God we claim to serve. Disorder misrepresents Him. The Spirit does not seize people the way a demon does. "The spirits of prophets are subject to the control of prophets" (1 Corinthians 14:32). Then Paul lands the chapter: "But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way" (1 Corinthians 14:40). Peace and order are not the enemy of the Spirit. They are evidence that He is the One at work.

2 Timothy 1:7 moves from the gathering to the inner life. Timothy was timid. Paul does not shame him. He tells him the fear is not a gift from God. The first step is to name it: this is not God making me feel this way. Fear may come from personality, the flesh, or attack—but it is not what God placed in us. What God has given is a spirit of power, love, and a sound mind. Power is not the power to control people. It is strength to do God's work and stand when it costs. Love keeps that power from becoming harsh. A sound mind (Greek

sōphronismos) is a calm, self-controlled, disciplined mind—the opposite of the panic and agitation that fear produces. God does not hand His people a spirit of cowardice. He gives courage, love, and a clear head so we are not swept into frenzy or despair.

The rest of the New Testament sings the same note.

Jesus used the same family of language Paul used in Galatians when He said, “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me.... Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid” (John 14:1, 27). The word troubled is tarassō—the same agitation false teachers were producing in Galatia. Jesus does not deny the storm. He forbids His people to surrender their inner life to it. His peace is not the world’s peace. The world offers numbness, distraction, or a truce that never holds. He gives His own peace.

That peace is not a mood. It is a Person and a garrison. “And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:7). The verb is military. God’s peace stands watch over the very gates this series has been naming—heart and mind—when we refuse the swirl of anxiety and bring everything to Him by prayer (Philippians 4:6). “Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace” (Colossians 3:15). Peace is not only a feeling. It is to rule. It umpires the inner life so competing voices do not get the last word.

Paul keeps calling God by this name because it is who He is: “The God of peace be with you all” (Romans 15:33). “The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet” (Romans 16:20). Peace is not weakness. The God of peace is the One who crushes the serpent. “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him” (Romans 15:13). “God has called us to live in peace” (1 Corinthians 7:15). “Aim for perfection, listen to my appeal, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you” (2 Corinthians 13:11). “May the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and in every way” (2 Thessalonians 3:16). “May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through” (1 Thessalonians 5:23). “May the God of peace... equip you with everything good for doing his will” (Hebrews 13:20-21).

James draws the line as sharply as Paul does. “For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice. But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness” (James 3:16-18). Earthly, unspiritual, demonic “wisdom” produces akatastasia—disorder. The wisdom from above produces peace. The fruit of the Spirit is not agitation. “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace...” (Galatians 5:22).

And Christ Himself is not merely a teacher of peace. “For he himself is our peace” (Ephesians 2:14). Romans 8:15 belongs beside 2 Timothy 1:7: “For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship.” The Spirit we have been given does not drive us back into bondage. He teaches us to cry, “Abba, Father.”

So the New Testament’s answer to the spirit of confusion is not a technique. It is God Himself. He is not the author of confusion. He is the God of peace. He does not give a spirit of fear. He gives power, love, and a sound mind. He does not leave the heart unguarded. His peace stands watch. He does not leave the church to chaos. He orders the gathering so that all may be built up. He does not leave Satan unopposed. The God of peace will crush him under our feet.

Confusion and fear are not the Holy Spirit’s signature. Peace and a sound mind are. The enemy agitates. God steadies. We do not accept what He has not given, and we do not lay down what He has.

Scripture

1 Corinthians 14:32-33, 40

2 Timothy 1:7

John 14:1, 27

Philippians 4:6-7

Colossians 3:15

Romans 8:15; 15:13, 33; 16:20

1 Corinthians 7:15

2 Corinthians 13:11

1 Thessalonians 5:23

2 Thessalonians 3:16

Galatians 5:22

Ephesians 2:14

James 3:16-18

Hebrews 13:20-21

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Sermon Notes:

The Spirit of Confusion

Good Morning and Happy Sunday to Everyone... Blessings to Everyone joining us Online...

As Announced our Discipleship Classes Start this Coming Wednesday... I want to Highly Encourage you to get Signed up...

Here are the AVC Connections Where you can Sign up and Stay Connected...

[PP] YouTube, App, Facebook / Website

[Let's Pray]

Last Sunday we started a New Sermon Series Titled — “Targeted”

Just a Quick Note of Correction... Last Week I Misspoke about who wrote the book of Revelation — it was Apostle John not Apostle Paul...

Let me give you a Brief Recap to Launch us into Today's Sermon...

The Backbone to this Series is based off John's Revelation... The Vision he had in the Book of Revelation Chapter 12...

REVELATION 12 — COSMIC WAR

Revelation 12 Talks about the Cosmic War in Heaven... And the Key Passages are this: Revelation 12:7-9 & 17

[PP] **Revelation 12:** And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. 8But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. 9The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.

[v. 17] Then the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to make war against the rest of her offspring—those who obey God's commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus.

- The Key is Satan Leads the Whole World Astray
- Satan has Waged war against Christians

As Christians we Cannot afford to get Carless...

We Must Stand Guard at the Gateways to our Minds & Bodies... As Satan never stops Attacking them...

THE MIND GATE

Let's Look at the Mind Gate

[PP] Mind Gate: Eyes, Ears, and Imagination. A thought that is not taken captive becomes a Stronghold. This can turn into a Critical Spirit, Fear, Lust, Bitterness & Alike...

THE BODY GATE

[PP] Body Gate: Do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. (Rom 6:12) Our bodies are the Temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19a). What we consume has the potential to take Control & overthrow.

SPIRIT OF CONFUSION

One of the Biggest Pieces of Warfare that Satan uses is a Spirit of Confusion...

[Galatia Story]

- Apostle Paul Planted a Church in Galatia
- He Preached the Gospel of Christ and People got Saved
- Some Jewish Spies heard about what Paul had done and went to the Church to sabotage the Gospel
- They were teaching people: "Unless you are circumcised according to the Law of Moses you can't be Saved"

Here was Paul's Response to the Galatian Church (Some will Remember this From Last Week)

[PP] Read Galatians 1:6-8

I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned!

We are going to Dig into the Word Confusion... This is going to be Very Revealing...

Let me say this before we Define the Word... Satan has dropped an Atomic Bomb of Confusion on this World...

Paul said: People have “Thrown you into Confusion”

Think about this: If you throw something without a Target... That Object will go aimlessly Anywhere...
(Inbounds / Out of Bounds)

If you Throw a Harmful Object it's going to do Damage to whatever it hits...

With that Said, “Let me give you a Real & Raw Translation of the Greek Word Confusion (tarassō — Tah-RAH-so)”

Multiple Theologians said this about the Word:

“Confusion is more than a Simple mental Confusion... it describes an active disturbance that Produces emotional and psychological turmoil. Its aim is to stir up, bring trouble, disturb, shake and agitate... often resulting in perplexity and fear.”

Here's the Real & Raw Question I believe we must Ask... How is the Spirit of Confusion Manifesting in Our Society?

THE SPIRIT OF CONFUSION IN AMERICA (Short List)

- An Attempt to Change American History to Reshape Society
- Preaching that All World Religions Lead to God
- Teaching Children & Teenagers that if you don't like your Biological sex you can change it (BTW — don't tell the parents)
- Teaching Abortion is a Safe way of Birth Control
- Saying our Feelings matter more than Facts
- Teaching disagreement and conversation is Hate Speech
- Proclaiming our Protectors are actually our Enemies
- A Call to Worship the Earth rather than the Creator

Look... I could go on & on... And don't say this is Political... No- God mentions all of this and so much more in His Word...

B.T.W. I put Spiritual Applications about all of these and more in this Church App (below the Sermon Notes section- Please Check it out)

Satan Leads the Whole World Astray and one Big Avenue is Confusion...

OUR LORD IS THE OPPOSITE OF CONFUSION

Scripture says: “For God is not the author of confusion but of peace...” (1 Corinthians 14:33)

[PP] 2 Timothy 1:7 Says: “For God did not give you a spirit of fear, but of power, love and a sound mind”

I will Close with this Passage: [PP] 2 Timothy 4:3-4

For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.

[Closing Prayer]

Spiritual Applications

The Spirit of Confusion in America— God’s Word has something to say about each of these.

1. An attempt to change history to reshape society

God does not airbrush the past. He records failure so we learn from it.

- “For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.” (Romans 15:4)
- “These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us.” (1 Corinthians 10:11)
- “Do not move an ancient boundary stone set up by your forefathers.” (Proverbs 22:28)

2. Preaching that all world religions lead to God

Jesus did not leave that door open.

- “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” (John 14:6)
- “Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.” (Acts 4:12)
- “For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” (1 Timothy 2:5)

3. Teaching children and teenagers they can change their biological sex (and not tell their parents) God formed the body. He does not assign it by feeling.

- “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.” (Genesis 1:27)
- “For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made.” (Psalm 139:13–14)
- “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart.” (Jeremiah 1:5)
- “For he chose us in him before the creation of the world.” (Ephesians 1:4)

4. Teaching abortion is a safe way of birth control

The child in the womb is not a method.

- “For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb.” (Psalm 139:13)
- “There are six things the LORD hates... hands that shed innocent blood.” (Proverbs 6:16–17)
- “You shall not murder.” (Exodus 20:13)
- “When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the baby leaped in her womb.” (Luke 1:41)

5. Saying our feelings matter more than facts

The heart is not the final authority. Truth is.

- “The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?” (Jeremiah 17:9)
- “There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.” (Proverbs 14:12)
- “We take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.” (2 Corinthians 10:5)
- “Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” (John 8:32)

6. Teaching that disagreement and conversation is hate speech

Truth spoken in love is not hate. Silence can be.

- “Have I now become your enemy by telling you the truth?” (Galatians 4:16)
- “Instead, speaking the truth in love...” (Ephesians 4:15)
- “Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses.” (Proverbs 27:6)
- “Preach the Word... correct, rebuke and encourage.” (2 Timothy 4:2)

7. Proclaiming our protectors are actually our enemies

God is not anti-authority. He appoints it for our good.

- “For he is God’s servant to do you good... He is God’s servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer.” (Romans 13:4)
- “Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake to every authority instituted among men.” (1 Peter 2:13)
- “I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone—for kings and all those in authority.” (1 Timothy 2:1–2)
- “Woe to those who call evil good and good evil.” (Isaiah 5:20)

8. A call to worship the earth rather than the Creator

Steward the ground. Do not bow to it.

- “They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.” (Romans 1:25)
- “The earth is the LORD’s, and everything in it.” (Psalm 24:1)
- “Worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water.” (Revelation 14:7)

Devotional Questions:

1. Revelation 12:7-9

“The great dragon was hurled down... Satan, who leads the whole world astray.”

If Satan’s strategy is to lead the whole world astray, where has that pull been strongest in your own life this past month — through what you watch, what you believe, or what you fear?

2. Revelation 12:17

The dragon “went off to make war against... those who obey God’s commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus.”

What does “holding to the testimony of Jesus” look like on a Wednesday, not just a Sunday? Where have you been tempted to let go of that testimony to keep the peace?

3. Romans 6:12

“Do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires.”

The sermon called this the body gate. What are you feeding your body or your appetites that is quietly taking control? What would it look like to shut that gate this week?

4. 1 Corinthians 6:19

“Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit.”

If your body is His temple, not your private property, what needs to change in what you consume, practice, or excuse? How does that truth confront the spirit of confusion around identity, desire, and self-rule?

5. Galatians 1:6

“I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel.”

Where have you been drifting — not into open unbelief, but into a quieter “Jesus plus something else”? What extra requirement have you started treating as necessary to be saved, accepted, or spiritually safe?

6. Galatians 1:7

“Some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ.”

The Greek word is *tarassō* — to stir, shake, agitate, and produce fear. When your soul feels shaken like that, whose voice starts it? A politician? A social media feed? A family member? Your own imagination?

7. Galatians 1:8

“Even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned!”

Would you recognize a false gospel if it came wrapped in kindness, church language, or an impressive messenger? What is the one gospel you will not let anyone add to or subtract from?

8. 1 Corinthians 14:33

“For God is not the author of confusion but of peace...”

If God authors peace, not agitation, what current confusion in your home, mind, or family can you now name as not from Him? What would His peace require you to stop listening to?

9. 2 Timothy 1:7

“For God did not give you a spirit of fear, but of power, love and a sound mind.”

Confusion breeds fear. A sound mind is a gift from God. Which has been ruling you lately — fear, or a sound mind? Ask the Lord to show you one thought that needs to be taken captive today.

10. 2 Timothy 4:3-4

“They will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.”

Where are your ears itching? What truth have you been tempted to set aside because another message felt easier, kinder, or more acceptable? What one step will you take this week to stand at the gate and hold to the testimony of Jesus?