

“The Gospel Under Siege” Galatians 1:1-10

There is just one work, and one work only, that can bring us into a right relationship with God and with one another. It is the work of Christ - His voluntary offering of His own life as a payment for our sins and guarantee of eternal life with God. However, this one true gospel has been, and always will be, under attack from those who want to add to the finished work of Christ, and in so doing destroy the unity of God’s family. We must guard the gospel. We must proclaim the gospel - simply, truthfully, powerfully.

Two thousand years ago all of mankind was given an indescribably valuable gift; the one gift we most needed. And since that point in time, all people have struggled with just receiving it – people who are not Christians AND believers in Jesus Christ. It just seems too good to be true that God would give us His Son and all we have to do is say “Thank you. I accept Your gift. I believe Your Son has paid for my sins and given me eternal life.” We struggle now, and this was the first and foundational struggle of the early church. Galatians was written to address this very issue.

I. Background

Author: Paul

Audience: Churches (plural) in the Galatian region

First missionary journey (Acts 13-14) he planted churches in a region known as Galatia. Populated by many races, but named after a people who migrated from Danube river basin of Central Europe to France where they were called “Gauls,” Great Britain, where they were called “Celts” and finally into Asia Minor.

Date: AD 49; shortly after first missionary journey; possibly the first book written in the New Testament; first book written by Paul

- o Time of transition. Just 15 years after resurrection.
- o Doctrinal uncertainty
- o Began all Jewish. Now extending to Gentiles. Peter didn’t get it (Acts 10:9-16, 28). Including Gentiles was a surprise.
- o Not seen as equals. Assumed by many that they had to obey the Law.
- o Faith in Christ AND obedience to the Law
- o Paul; was a Pharisee; persecuted the church. FAITH ALONE.

Paul's preaching created controversy. Others re-traced his steps, contradicting and misrepresenting Paul.

II. Paul's Opponents

A. Identity: Jewish believers

Jewish – from the Jerusalem church; Gal. 2:12

believers in Jesus – Acts 15:5

Believers in death, burial and resurrection of Jesus, God's Messiah

So what is the problem? MORE TO THE MESSAGE. Paul knows his message is incomplete. He did not tell you the whole story in order to win your favor.

Paul – no they are lying to you to build a following; avoid persecution. Jesus is not a part of Judaism, Jesus stands alone.

III. Paul's response – 1:8-10

A. "Let him be accursed" What is Paul saying? Go to hell?

Let him fall under the appropriate wrath of God. Appropriate consequences for such an action. Physically removed.

Something you love, you protect. Something you value highly

Why so mad?

GOSPEL itself is at stake

1. Diminishing Christ's work – ONE WORK makes you right with God

The WORK of Christ. Not work of Christ and WORKS of the Law.

- a. Voluntary – 1:4 "He gave"
- b. Costly – "Himself"
- c. Substitutionary – "on behalf of our sins"
- d. Purposeful "to rescue us"

Paul is not against "good works" – 5:22-23

Work of Christ puts you right with God; implants Spirit.

2. Distorting the response of faith – 1:6-7

another – *allos v. heteros*

distort

μεταστρέφω - to change, alter or pervert; Acts 2:20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and glorious day of the Lord shall come.

There is one GOSPEL

How are they distorting the gospel? They believe in Jesus?

That means ONLY FAITH is required.

3. Dividing the family of God

ταράσσω – disturb; stir up the waters; throw into confusion; to shake back and forth; reminds me of the image of the shepherds stirring the dirt up in the waters so that others cannot drink

ONE WORK, ONE FAITH, ONE FAMILY

B. Get the gospel right

1. We are saved on the basis of the finished work of Christ

You need to be rescued.

God's work. God saves you. God rescues you. NOT your faith.

2. We are saved because of God's grace – 1:6

3. We receive Christ's work through faith alone

Just believe

4. Christ alone. Only one way – Work of Christ is exclusive – 2:21

If you are going to enemies, let it be for the gospel.

Give up your rights. Don't give an inch on the gospel.

If you love others, and you love the gospel of Christ. Eternity.

Application

Do you know the gospel? Can you say it without confusion in 30 seconds?

Duty, privilege of every Christian. You possess the greatest gift, yours to give away freely.

Have you believed the gospel?

Tell a friend if you made a decision today. This is just a beginning. Now you can grow.

Share the gospel