

Churches of Galatia: Turning Away (Slide 1)

Galatians 1:6-10

Reading: Galatians 1:6-10

We introduced the Galatians last week and here are just some of the highlights: (Slide 2)

- 1. Apostle Paul established the churches at Galatia and had an intimate spiritual relationship with them*
- 2. They are of Celtic descent-once independent but now under Roman rule*
- 3. The letter is to all the churches of Galatia because they are all experiencing the same issue*
- 4. Lost their ability to independently critically analyze*
- 5. Influenced by those who undoubtedly were charismatic in their persuasion/ perversion*

In verse 6, Apostle Paul reveals the purpose of his letter to the churches of Galatia.

(Slide 3) ***I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which is not another***

“turning away so soon” indicates that it was relatively a short amount of time in which these Galatian Christians

were swayed by judaizing influencers who have tried to incorporate elements of the Old Law. Clearly shown in:

Acts 15:1 (Slide 4)

And certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved."

Apostle Paul also indicates that they are disguising their intent by calling it the Gospel, which we would formally distinguish as *"Good News"* or *"Good Tidings."* That being the case we can more readily understand why these gentile Christians have *"been taken in."* *It sounded true but the Apostle states that it's false.*

*The **grace of Christ** is the only hope of salvation.* We have spoken a great deal about *Grace* and with our understanding of the marvelous *Grace* offered through *Christ's sacrifice* for us, what the Galatians would do by turning to a *different gospel* would be more than just abandoning the **grace of Christ** through His sacrifice.

We need to understand that this *different gospel, which is not another*, means that the influencers are perverting the true Gospel by adding ritualistic human works which no longer have any value in the Christian age.

(Slide 5) The "*Homiletic*" commentary calls these ritualistic acts; *grim formalism* and adds that by participating in them they are now under the *impossible demands of the yoke of bondage* to keep them perfectly.

I understand this to be teaching that actually brings formality and acts performed by men's hands into worship and that they push it as necessary for salvation, it was meant only for those Jews under the Old Covenant. However, from our standpoint today, it compels us to consider that our acts of worship should never become ritualistic in nature by satisfying a Sunday routine.

"We would whittle down worshiping in spirit and truth to a step by step worship service devoid of Spiritual intimacy and any thought of the gentle nature of Grace afforded to us by the death of our Saviour Jesus Christ!"

So much of today's modern worship is plagued by showmanship rather than spirit and truth!

(Slide 6) ***there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ***

I have often wondered if these Judaizing teachers purposefully stirred up the question of Paul's authority and apostleship? Perhaps, one of their arguments against Apostle Paul was the circumcision of Timothy.

Many scholars believe that these false influencers used this circumstance as a pretext to give prudence to their claim of circumcision for salvation and to discredit Paul.

Yet, we need to read the context of what transpired and why this ceremonial rite was performed.

Acts 16:1-5 (Slide 7)

1 Then he came to Derbe and Lystra. And behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a certain Jewish woman who believed, but his father was Greek. 2 He was well spoken of by the brethren who were at Lystra and Iconium. (Slide 8) 3 Paul wanted to have him go on with him. And he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in that region, for they all knew that his father was Greek. 4 And as they went through the cities, they delivered to them the decrees to keep, which were (Slide 9) determined by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem. 5 So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily.

There could be no question that Timothy was part Jew and if one doesn't understand the reason for his circumcision and only considers the surface level, those Jews in observance might well conclude Paul believed it a necessary act for salvation. It was Jewish rite to be

circumcised which qualified Timothy based upon Jewish blood that ran through his veins.

His circumcision occurred prior to their travels through Galatia and was not considered until the churches were stirred up by these Judaizing teachers.

Apostle Paul, toward the end of his letter to the Galatian churches clearly states that circumcision means nothing for one's salvation:

Galatians 5:6 (Slide 10)

For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love.

The very reason Apostle Paul performed this rite on Timothy is outlined in the principle found in:

1 Corinthians 9:19-20 (Slide 11)

19 For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more; 20 and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the law, as under the law, that I might win those who are under the law;

(Slide 12) Referring back to **Acts 16:5** here is the result - ***So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily.***

Two very solid takeaways: (Slide 13)

1. *Principle has great bearing in our discernment*
2. *Know the facts and context before passing judgement*

“another gospel” - An important understanding must be explained here regarding this perversion/ this corruption. We need to understand that the true Gospel cannot be perverted. It is in essence an incorruptible entity, a unit of truth. Therefore the perversion is in the mind.

Nevertheless, there are those who have come into their midst dead set on perverting the Gospel and how it's done is by attacking their intellect. Whether this is done with intent of personal gain or glory or they truly believe what they are saying, Apostle Paul stresses the perversion.

Paul states that those who are spiritual - by the spirit discern what is spiritually true. That helps one develop the frame of mind of which is our saviour Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 2:16 (Slide 14)

For “who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?” But we have the mind of Christ.

What he means is that we acknowledge *His purpose* and *follow His plan*.

The greatest threat to the authentic *Gospel* is the ability of others to influence our perspective on it. Today, we have the ability, ease, and duty to know what is written in the Bible to prevent this *“indecent corruption propagated by many in the name of religion.”*

I would caution us all to be sure that even those in the Brotherhood who attempt to explain passages of the inspired word should be tested by the text.

(Slide 15) ***8 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. 9 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.***

It's amazing to me just how many people claim they have *“heard from heaven.”* A new revelation has been revealed and now one must believe them. That claim and their standing isn't an enviable position to be in.

Those in Galatia that have perverted the truth have evidently become devoted to their brand of perversion.

They have become enemies of the cross of Christ and will be condemned for it without repentance:

Philippians 3:17-21 (Slide 16)

17 Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern. 18 For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: 19 whose end is destruction, (Slide 17) whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame—who set their mind on earthly things. 20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, (Slide 18) 21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

I have known many great men, who I believe to be Christian, who perhaps we can note as to how they walked in the “Way” here on earth. Yet, I know, despite their outstanding qualities, we have Jesus Christ as a perfect example of one we must follow, that is; in the *Grace of Christ*.

Ephesians 5:1-2 (Slide 19)

1 Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. 2 And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.

Ephesians 5:25-27 (Slide 20)

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, 26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, (Slide 21) 27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

No amount of rule keeping or rigorous worship will ever do what Jesus has done through God's Grace on the cross.

Certainly there are things that one must teach to have the clear conscience we desire. But first and foremost one must teach the gentleness and love of God through Christ before any mind can be transformed or renewed.

(Slide 22) For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men?

Persuade - "means to make friends with"

What I believe is a valuable lesson from the statements of Apostle Paul is that we test what is taught because some

things sound to be spiritually accurate but simply don't align with the true doctrine dictated by the Gospel of Christ.

For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.

Apostle Paul was resolved, though a difficult undertaking, to be true to God!

Romans 3:1-4 (Slide 23)

1 What advantage then has the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision? 2 Much in every way! Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God. 3 For what if some did not believe? (Slide 24) Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect? 4 Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar.

Takeaways (Slide 25)

- 1. They turned away from the true Gospel because they were as yet not planted firmly in it*
- 2. Lies mixed with some truth is still a lie*
- 3. Know the truth before making spiritual discernment*
- 4. Deep consideration should be given to how and why we worship God*

Invitation

The call is heard throughout the land:

1 Corinthians 1:9 (Slide 26)

God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

The question is: will you hear the call and join the fellowship? If you have not been baptized into the blood of Christ to raise a new creature, why delay? Do it today?

If we are a child of God but need the prayers of your Brethren for whatever reason, please let us know.

Make your wish known today.....

Reading

Galatians 1:6-10

6 I marvel 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. 8 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. 9 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.

10 For 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.

Please visit our website for the full audio of this study:

Shelbyvillechurch.com

Shelbyville Church of Christ