

GALATIANS CHAPTER 1 – Greetings; Only One Gospel; Call to Apostleship; Contacts at Jerusalem

OBSERVATION

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Monday 7:00pm, H 105 (1st floor, High School--foot of stairs, behind the gym, by the vending machine area), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221; email – ptwente@gmail.com For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: <http://www.missioncalvary.com/> Click on “Bible Studies” on the left column. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.

INTRODUCTION TO GALATIANS -- JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH:

After Paul’s dramatic conversion on the Damascus Road, converting him from the chief resistor and persecutor of the early church to one recognizing that in his religious zeal he had actually become a persecutor of the Messiah, he became God’s messenger to the Gentiles. **Oh how he preached the gospel – “I preach nothing but Christ and Him crucified!”** (1Co 2:2 *For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.*) That salvation is through and only through the shed blood of Jesus Christ on the cross. Not Christ plus anything else at all!

For the Judaizers had come into Galatia and began spreading a perversion to the gospel message that for one to be saved they had to believe in Jesus Christ AND to be circumcised and to keep the dietary laws and to keep the law of Moses. Paul sees these false teachers as poisoning the believers. He looks on them as kidnappers of the true gospel position of being saved by grace and grace alone. He looks upon their false teachers committing the most horrible thing of taking people away from the one and only pure and true stream of eternal life! So here is addressing their foolishness of turning away for grace!

Thankfully in Paul’s responding to this awful situation, which is still prevalent in the church today, that of false teachers, **the Book of Galatians is such a source of truth and revealing that justification is through faith in what Jesus Christ has done and in this faith alone!**

Habakkuk wrote - Hab 2:4 "Behold the proud, His soul is not upright in him; But the just shall live by his faith.

In Galatians, Paul repeats this verse in chapter 3:11 “But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for “THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.”

In chapters 1 and 2, Paul wrote of his personal experience with grace. Chapters 3 and 4 address Paul’s doctrinal instruction about grace. Chapters 5 and 6 give practical application of grace. It’s a fabulous book—Paul’s manifesto on the absolute necessity of standing in liberty and his glorious defense of the gospel of grace.

Paul was **most passionate about the grace of Christ** – He used **the word 120 times** in his epistles; Compare that to the Apostle John who used it only **7 times** in his Biblical writings. Paul felt most strongly about grace – (God’s Riches At Christ’s Expense), probably because of his own experienced. Bringing the worst persecutor of the early church, he was dramatically called by the Lord and converted on the Damascus road. So in the 6 chapters of Galatians, we find the discussion of the condition for grace and its marvelous gift. **Words often used include: liberty – 11x; Christ – 45x; law – 31x; flesh 18x; Spirit 15x; faith – 22 x; the promise – 10x.**

We see quickly the thing this is so important and that our salvation is totally dependent, alone, on grace through faith, and not the law or anything else!

Gal 1:6-7 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.

Gal 3:1 O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified?

Gal 4:11 I am afraid for you, lest I have labored for you in vain.

Gal 5:4 You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.

Gal 5:7 You ran well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth?

Grace Greater Than Our Sin – Julia Johnson – sung Bob Kauflin

1. Marvelous grace of our loving Lord, grace that exceeds our sin and our guilt! Yonder on Calvary's mount outpoured, there where the blood of the Lamb was spilt.

Refrain:

Grace, grace, God's grace, grace that will pardon and cleanse within; grace, grace, God's grace, grace that is greater than all our sin!

2. Dark is the stain that we cannot hide. What can avail to wash it away? Look! There is flowing a crimson tide, brighter than snow you may be today.
(Refrain)

3. Marvelous, infinite, matchless grace, freely bestowed on all who believe! All who are longing to see his face, will you this moment his grace receive?
(Refrain)

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GALATIANS CHAPTER 1 – Greetings:

Gal 1:1 Paul, an apostle (not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead),

Gal 1:2 and all the brethren who are with me, To the churches of Galatia:

Gal 1:3 Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ,

Gal 1:4 who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver (rescue to Himself) us from this present evil (ponaros – pernicious - not only evil, but drawing others to destruction) age, according to the will of our God and Father,

Gal 1:5 to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

v. 1 Paul always began his Epistles in one of two ways: To the Romans and the Philippians, to Titus and Philemon, he introduced himself as a servant, or prisoner of Christ. To the Corinthians and the Ephesians, to the Colossians and the Galatians, he presented himself as an apostle. Why? Because to those who embraced and welcomed his ministry, he was a servant; but to those who challenged his authority, he was an apostle, a “sent one” of Jesus Christ. Thus, even the opening verse of this letter underscores the fact that Paul’s enemies—those who taught the “three R’s of religion”: rules, regulations, and rituals—sought to undermine the ministry of grace in the region of Galatia by questioning the authority of Paul.

v. 2-3 Why did Paul so often link peace with grace (*1 Cor. 1:3; 2 Cor. 1:2; Eph. 1:2; Phil. 1:2; Col. 1:2; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:2; Philemon 3*)? **Because man will never know peace until he understands grace.** What is grace? Grace is unmerited, undeserved, unearned favor. The old acrostic still says it best:

God’s Riches At Christ’s Expense—not because of anything you do or have done, but because of who Christ is and what He’s done. You don’t need to go through rituals. You don’t need to live under regulations. You can have peace today if you understand grace because the grace of God brings peace in a profound way. v. 4 “Evil age?” If it’s God’s, then why is it evil?” God the Father placed this world in the custody of Adam and Eve, our representatives in the Garden of Eden. When they fell, they, in turn, transferred ownership of the world to the one to whom they chose to submit—Satan. That is why when Satan offered Jesus all of the kingdoms of the world in return for worship (Matthew 4:8, 9), Jesus didn’t dispute his right to make such an offer. Therefore, when people indict God for the corruption and evil of this world, it belies their ignorance of world history. The reason the world is so messed up and perverted is because, in rejecting God, mankind gave Satan dominion of the world system. While it is true that God has placed perimeters around Satan, as we move toward the end of the ages, things will become more and more bizarre. People will excuse every sort of aberrant behavior by saying, “It’s not my fault. I’m made that way.” And evil will run rampant. The Good News is that Jesus Christ died for our sins so that He could deliver us from this present evil world. We’re going to heaven, folks. And that day is not very far off.

v. 5 I’m convinced we are on the verge of witnessing the coming of Jesus Christ. We’ll be taken to heaven, where things will be right at last. Then we’ll come back to earth, where He will rule and reign with righteousness for one thousand years. No wonder Paul says, “To Him be glory forever and ever”—for He has delivered us from this present evil world and into His glorious kingdom.

v. 4 - This world, this evil age is coming to an end. We are grieved to see our nation falling so fast, but we need to remember **we’re not to call America, but Americans and foreigners – the lost - to the Lord!**

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Only One Gospel:

Gal 1:6 I marvel that you are turning away (a deserter on the battlefield) so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different (heterous, opposite, not an alternative) gospel,

Gal 1:7 which is not another (allos – same kind (pulled in another direction); but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert (to complete opposite) the gospel of Christ.

Gal 1:8 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.

Gal 1:9 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.

Gal 1:10 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.

Call to Apostleship:

Gal 1:11 But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man.

Gal 1:12 For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Gal 1:13 For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it.

Gal 1:14 And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers. Rabbinic Judaism

Gal 1:15 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace,

Gal 1:16 to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood,

vs. 6 So-called “spiritual men” came on the scene in Galatia, saying, “It’s great that you’re born-again Christians and that you believe in the gospel. But it’s not quite that simple. **If you really want to be spiritual, you must follow the law—particularly the rite of circumcision. You must show you’re serious by inflicting pain upon your body.**” Paul said, “I marvel that you guys in Galatia have fallen for this.”

v. 7 The Greek word translated “trouble” means “seasick.” It’s the same word used in Matthew 14:26, when, in the midst of a storm, the disciples were troubled when they saw Jesus walking on the water. The word connotes queasiness. This is understandable, since hearing they needed to be circumcised would be troubling news indeed to the Gentile believers.

vs. 8-9 “we, or an angel—a preacher, prophet, or even an angel from heaven—who preaches another gospel is to be damned,” said Paul. In the days in which we live, there are many who will suggest to you practices, customs, and traditions that seem spiritual but aren’t scriptural. A so-called revival in the Church of England wherein people were laughing like hyenas, roaring like lions, and barking like dogs recently captured the attention of the secular media. My question is: Where is it written in the Word that people are to bark like dogs, roar like lions, or laugh hysterically for hours at a time? I firmly believe that everything we do in the practice of our faith and in the expression of worship must be seen in the Scriptures.

v.10 “Religious ritualists might come down on me and call me narrow-minded and simple,” said Paul. **“I don’t care. I must please God rather than men.** If I was trying to please these heavy-handed leaders, I could not be the servant or slave of Christ.”

vs. 11-12. In verses 1–11, we saw grace declared in Paul’s message. Beginning with verse 12, we see grace depicted in Paul’s life as he shares his own story.

vs.13-14 You know my story,” Paul said. “I was into Judaism radically, a Pharisee of Pharisees (Philippians 3:5, 6). In addition, I wasted the church, looking for Christians to bring to trial (Acts 9:1, 2). He was one of the leaders in the persecution of the early church. Paul later felt horrible about this because he forced people to blaspheme Jesus Christ at the threat of death. It bothered him that he was so blinded by his traditions and the religious institutions of his day, that he could have done such things. So you’ve heard about what I have done in the past, the persecution of the church and the wasting of it.

vs.15-16 “Even though I was a Jew’s Jew,” Paul argued, “God had something else in mind for me. From my mother’s womb, I was called into the ministry of sharing the Good News of the gospel. Sidetracked for a while, I got involved in religion. God, however, knew all along that I would be an apostle of the gospel of grace.” In looking back over our lives we can see how God’s hand was on us from the beginning. God has a purpose for each of our lives.

Vs. 6-7 In the churches of Galatia, there were these same types of false teachers, who followed Paul’s ministry. They sought, first of all, to denigrate Paul in the minds of the people, by declaring that Paul was not a true apostle, that he did not really have the authority of the church for his ministry. That he was sort of a self-appointed kind of an apostle. They were teaching the people that it was necessary to keep the law of Moses and that it was necessary to go through the ritual aspects of the Mosaic Law, circumcision and the things of that nature in order to be saved. They were basically preaching a gospel, which Paul said is not a gospel of working yourself in God’s favor. It was the works kind of gospel that they were espousing.

V. 10 The Father never forgets what His Son did for us on the cross! Just think what God has done for us through His grace! It’s miraculous! We didn’t do anything! It’s all what He has done! Let us grow in that! In the grace of the finished work of our Lord Jesus Christ!

Paul’s conversion on the road to Damascus!
Act 9:1-10 It’s all grace and grace alone!

Vs. 13-14 Rabbinic Judaism – had gotten off course! Around 400 BC the commentary of the Bible, called the **Midrash** was developed. Over time this was added to and became the **Talmud**. The original Law of Moses was only about 350 pages. The Talmud became 535 books – later 23 volumes including all extra rules. Shortly before the days of Jesus, the **Mishna** was developed. **It added oral traditions to the written word.** Oral traditions that only the rabbis knew. Then about 100 years before Christ, **the influence of the Grecian culture was added.** So the church was birthed into a religion that has been changed by traditions, secret oral traditions and by the culture. The result was that Paul, steeped in this religion **had become an enemy of the Messiah, of the living hope that we’ve been given!** This is similar to the way the church has drifted today—adding traditions and the culture-compromising the Word of God.

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Gal 1:17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus.

Contacts at Jerusalem

Gal 1:18 Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained (to get acquainted) with him fifteen days.

Gal 1:19 But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother.

Gal 1:20 (Now concerning the things which I write to you, indeed, before God, I do not lie.)

Gal 1:21 Afterward I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia.

Gal 1:22 And I was unknown by face to the churches of Judea which were in Christ.

Gal 1:23 But they were hearing only, "He who formerly persecuted us now preaches the faith which he once tried to destroy."

Gal 1:24 And they glorified God in me.

vs.17 In religious circles today, it's impressive to have a D.D.—a Doctorate of Divinity. Paul had a D.D.—a Doctorate of the Desert. He was in good company: Moses, John the Baptist, and Jesus all spent time in the desert. Maybe these are dry, difficult days for you. It could be that God wants to reveal Jesus Christ to you in a fresh way. For that to happen, He may do to you what He did to John the apostle when He sent him to Patmos.... At one hundred years of age, John was exiled to Patmos—a rocky, barren, seemingly God-forsaken island. It was a tough situation, and, no doubt, John questioned what was going on. “I’m old,” he could have said. “I’ve trusted in the Lord. I’m linked to Him. Why this isolation?” When he saw Jesus Christ, John started writing. Twenty-two chapters later, the Book of Revelation was complete. When was revelation given to John? When he was isolated on an island. Perhaps you’re at a point where you’re saying, “Who can I talk to?” or, “What counsel can I receive?”—when the Lord may have you on an island of isolation for a season in order to give you a revelation of Jesus Christ. Don’t bemoan your condition. Don’t bewail your situation. Worship the Lord. Draw close to Him. Be still—and you will see Him in ways you never would have had you been anywhere else.

vs.18-19 Peter greeted me and welcomed me for fifteen days. James did so briefly. The other apostles wanted nothing to do with me.” This is understandable. Seeing Paul spending time with Christians would have been comparable to seeing Adolf Hitler attending synagogue. Paul, being a persecutor of Christians, and a waster of the church, the church didn’t quite know what to make of him.

vs. 20-24 In some regions, people wondered about Paul. In others, they glorified God in him. Fearing God or Fearing Man? They praised God on my account. They regarded me as a true convert and a sincere Christian; and they praised God that He had converted such a persecutor, and had made him a preacher of the gospel. Let us remember that God has the same power now. There is not a persecutor whom He could not convert with the same ease with which He changed Saul of Tarsus. There is not a vile and sensual man that He could not make pure; not a dishonest man that His grace could not make honest; not a blasphemer that He could not teach to venerate his name; not a lost and abandoned sinner that He cannot receive to Himself. Let us then without ceasing cry unto Him that His grace may be continually manifested in reclaiming such sinners from the error of their ways, and bringing them to the knowledge of the truth, and to a consecration of their lives to His service.

Paul would so passionately say, Our salvation; our security - **It's all about grace!**

It's not law, but it's grace

It's not works, it's faith!

It's not Moses, it's Jesus!

It's not Mt. Sinai, it's Golgotha!

It's not earned, it's received!

It's not trying, it's trusting!

It's not religion, it's a relationship with God!

It's not do, but it's done!

Php 3:8-14 Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, **that I may gain Christ [9] and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; [10] that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death. [11] if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. [12] Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. [13] Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, [14] I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.**

Closing Prayer:

Father, we thank You for the glorious gospel of grace that You revealed to Paul, that he shared with us, the grace of God that has set us free, the grace of God wherein we stand. And Lord we pray that as we go through the Book of Galatians, the we will come to a deeper, richer appreciation for the work that You have done for us for the grace of God, manifested to us through Jesus. And Lord, may You help us to be on guard, that when some would come preaching another gospel, which is not really a gospel. That we will be alerted and that we, Lord, will not leave this position of relationship through the work of Jesus to try another relationship through our works. And Lord, we will just continue in the grace of God, wherein we are set free. Bless, Lord, the study of Galatians. Open our hearts. May we hear what the Spirit would say to the church. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.