

## PART ONE — ANALYSIS

### PAUL'S DEFENSE OF HIS APOSTLESHIP AND HIS GOSPEL 1:1 — 2:21

#### A. INTRODUCTION. 1:1-10

1. Personal Greeting. 1:1-5
  - a) Source and Agency of his Apostleship. 1:1
  - b) His Association in the Gospel. 1:2

#### TEXT 1:1, 2

**(1) Paul, an apostle (not from men, neither through man, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead), (2) and with all the brethren that are with me, unto the churches of Galatia:**

#### PARAPHRASE 1:1, 2

1 Paul an apostle, not sent forth from any society of men, neither appointed by any particular man, but by Jesus Christ, and by God the Father, who raised him from the dead, and after his resurrection sent him from heaven to make me an apostle;

2 And all the brethren who are with me, to the churches of Galatia. These brethren, by joining me in this letter, attest the truth of the matters I am going to relate.

#### COMMENT 1:1

##### **an apostle**

1. Meaning — "One Sent Forth."
  - a. They were chosen by Christ and ordained by God.
  - b. They had power to work miracles.
  - c. They were inspired. Cf. John 16:13

**2. Qualifications.**

- a. They were to be a witness of the resurrection. Acts 1:21, 22
- b. Their office ceased with their death.

**3. Work.**

- a. Their work was pre-eminently that of founding churches.
- b. They were sent to preach and make disciples.

**not from men, neither through man**

1. It was urged against Paul that he was just a messenger of other apostles.
2. Paul claimed he received his apostleship from the Lord. Cf. Acts 20:24; Galatians 1:12; 1:17; Acts 9:6; II Corinthians 11:5.

**but through Jesus Christ**

1. It was from Jesus on the Damascus road; hence, there was no human mixture.
2. He was not to be known as a preacher from Tarsus but an apostle of Christ.

**and God the Father**

1. Requests are to be made of God for workers. Matthew 9:37, 38
2. "And God hath set some in the church; first apostles, second prophets, thirdly teachers." I Corinthians 12:28

**who raised him from the dead**

1. The ability to raise the dead identifies the true God.
2. The God that would raise Jesus would sanction the calling of an apostle from heaven.
3. The Resurrection won victory over law, sin, flesh, world, devil, death, and hell.
4. Paul does not say "the God who created heaven and earth," but "God who raised Jesus"—this is His most important work.

## WORD STUDY 1:1

An apostle (*apostolos* — ah POSS tah loss) is literally “one sent forth.” Early usage included a wide variety of applications, such as: a ship sent on a mission, a bill of lading, a personal written message. An interesting passage in Herodotus mentions the *apostolos* as a herald of the king sent to conclude a truce. What these all have in common is that they carry the authority of the sender.

In the New Testament a very special application is made of *apostolos*. Jesus chose the Twelve and gave them power and authority, sending them out as ambassadors plenipotentiary (with full power to act in behalf of their king) John 20:21-23. These men, including Paul, were chosen and sent forth by Jesus himself. In the early church their authority was accepted as final and their writings as inspired. Paul will spend two full chapters of Galatians establishing the fact of his apostleship in this sense.

There was also a general use of *apostolos* which corresponds to our word “missionary.” Several men are called *apostolos* in this general sense: Barnabas in Acts 14:14, Andronicus and Junias in Romans 16:7, Silas and Timothy in I Thess. 1:1 and 2:6. Such men were “sent forth” by the church, instead of by Jesus himself.

## COMMENT 1:2

**all the brethren**

1. A probable list would include Titus, Timothy, Silas, and Luke.
2. “And there accompanied him as far as Asia, Sopater of Beroea, the son of Pyrrhus; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus.” Acts 20:4 See also Acts 21:16.
  - a. In these days we can hardly afford to have even one

evangelist for more than two weeks.

- b. Paul took crews with him and stayed until the work was established.
  - c. Today, evangelism is done on the basis of "How long can we, the church, stand his preaching and what can we afford?"
3. "The brethren" are not named probably because the Galatians were familiar with Paul's co-workers, either through personal visits or through correspondence.

### unto the churches of Galatia

1. Some things are conspicuous by their absence.
  - a. No single word of praise.
  - b. No commendation.
2. This is unlike the Roman epistle.

### WORD STUDY 1:2

A church (*ekklesia* — ek lay SEE ah) is literally a "called-out assembly." This word was in common usage to refer to the town council of the Greek city-state. Each citizen had equal vote and full freedom of speech in this earliest form of democracy. See Acts 19:32.

The word was also common in the Greek Old Testament for the total community of Israel, whether they were actually assembled or not. In this context it acquired the special sense of "the people of God."

In the New Testament *ekklesia* is used of the church in two different senses. There is the universal church, consisting of every child of God, as in Matthew 16:18, Ephesians 1:22, and Colossians 1:18. Most of the time, however, *ekklesia* is used of the local congregation. The plural usage in this verse points to all the congregations or assemblies throughout the province of Galatia.

## STUDY QUESTIONS 1:1, 2

10. What did Paul claim for himself?
11. Define the term "apostle."
12. Was Paul's call a divine one?
13. Was Paul merely a preacher from Tarsus?
14. Tell who sent Paul.
15. Tell what God did to Christ to establish His authority to send apostles.
16. Find other scriptures that tell of the Apostle's call.
17. Give a probable list of brethren with Paul when he greeted the Galatians in the letter.
18. How does this compare in size to our modern day evangelistic teams?
19. How does this salutation differ from other greetings in other epistles?

## c) Salutation 1:3-5

## TEXT 1:3-5

**(3) Grace to you and peace from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, (4) who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us out of this present evil world, according to the will of our God and Father: (5) to whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.**

## PARAPHRASE 1:3-5

3 We wish grace to you, and happiness from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the Father dispenses his blessings to men,

4 Because he gave himself to death for our sins, that he might deliver us from the bad principles, and practices, and punishment of this present evil age, agreeably to the will of our God and Father, who determined to save us by the death of his son.

5 To whom, for that unspeakable favour, be ascribed by angels and men, honour and praise, through all eternity. Amen.

### COMMENT 1:3

#### Grace to you

1. "Favor to you" is a single greeting stating that he was writing a friendly letter.
2. The grace is from God, or else Paul, a Jew, would not have had favor toward these indifferent Gentiles.

#### peace from God

1. *Salaam* (peace) is a typical oriental greeting, even today.
2. Real peace comes only through God and Christ.
  - a. "For he is our peace . . ." Ephesians 2:14
  - b. "And he came and preached peace to you that were afar off, and peace to them that were nigh." Ephesians 2:17
3. This peace is not from the Emperor, or from kings, or from governors, but from God the Father.
4. Peace differs from grace in that:
  - a. Grace remits sin; peace quiets the conscience.
  - b. Grace involves remission; peace makes a happy conscience.
  - c. Grace is God's favor; peace dispels fear.

#### and from our Lord Jesus Christ

1. One can not be of Jewish faith and have the favor of God and Christ.
2. The grace and peace of Christ is in the picture.

### PEACE FROM GOD 1:3

The peace greeting is characteristic of Paul. Peace is from God. There is no other way.

Our age is characterized by the invention of innumerable devices to make us feel good without being good, to banish

evil without quitting, to get the gifts of God without the need of God. As in the day of Jeremiah we have many false prophets who cry, "Peace, peace," when there is no peace. Too many people are trying to get adjusted when they need to get converted. They are going to psychiatrists to have their sins explained when they need to come to God to have them forgiven.

Peace is really a by-product of righteous living.

Righteousness first; after that, peace. Will we ever learn it? It must be a great burden on the heart of God to listen to prayers for peace prayed by people who will not walk in the ways of peace. God can't save us from war except as He saves us from our sins. If you want to find peace get "in Christ" by grace, through faith—peace then comes as naturally as breathing. It is peace in the midst of storm.

The world can not have peace without first living the life for the Prince of Peace.

The Bible promises no peace to the transgressor. There is no peace so long as conflict is in the heart. There is no radiance without rightness, no peace of mind until there is peace with God. Don't pray for peace, but for rightness of heart. Pray not for peace, but for birth from above. Peace is the fruit of reconciliation . . . being made right with God.

### GOD'S WONDERFUL GRACE 1:3

The subject of God's grace is introduced early in the book. Men need the mercy and grace of God to escape condemnation.

Condemnation is the exact opposite of justification. Since the latter means to declare one guiltless, the other means that one has heard the sentence "Guilty." He is amenable to punishment and subject to death. One cannot be esteemed as guilty and guiltless at the same time, so those who are justified by faith and have gained access to grace are not under condemnation. There is no guilt assessed against them. They are free! That is grace beyond human understanding.

God's act of grace is out of all proportion to Adam's wrong-

doing. For if the wrongdoing of that one man brought death upon so many, its effect is vastly exceeded by the grace of God and the gift that came to so many by the grace of one man, Jesus Christ. (Romans 5:15)

The problem in Galatia was the legalism of false teachers. They wanted to place Christians under the law, or the old covenant.

A legalist must have a law or he cannot survive. He breathes law like the human body breathes oxygen. If God provides no law, he will take what God has provided and convert it into law.

The Galatians were bewitched by law observers.

The problem is that legalists always exercise selectivity. They choose some features of the law to which they willingly submit, while ignoring others. But those which they choose then become the criteria of righteousness. To these men must conform even though they utterly neglect other valid and vital provisions of God's will.

Men who live and walk by law seldom have any idea of the restraint of perfect love. There must be a whip to crack. There must be threats issued and intimidation involved.

Law is off the throne and Jesus is King. The transfiguration scene settled who was to be heeded—Moses . . . or the Law.

### WORD STUDY 1:3

Grace (*charis* — KAR iss) is in general usage "that which causes pleasure or delight." In the doer of grace, it is the friendly disposition which brings happiness to others. In the receiver of grace, it is the sense of gratitude. The word is surrounded with happiness, warmth, and delight.

This aspect of delight must not be lost when we move to the New Testament, and define grace as "unmerited favor." God not only gave salvation when we did not deserve it, but also was *smiling* when He did it!

Every epistle signed by Paul uses this majestic word in both



the opening and the closing words.

One additional feature of *charis* in New Testament usage should be noted. When grace is given, there is always responsibility attached. In fact, Paul could even point to his job assignment as an apostle as "to me this grace was given" (Ephesians 3:8).

Peace (*eirene* — eye RAY nay) means "absence of alienation or estrangement" in Greek. It also has a rich background in Hebrew, where it means "total well-being." (See further comments on 5:22)

The customary Hebrew greeting was *shalom*, "peace." The standard Greek greeting was *chairein* (KY rine) "rejoice." Paul modified this slightly into the Christian *charis*, "grace." By combining these terms in the opening of every epistle, Paul was greeting both Greek and Jew in the family of God. The main thrust of his whole ministry was to usher in the Greek along with the Jew into fellowship in Christ (Ephesians 3:4-10).

The full force of "Lord" (*kurios* — KUR ee oss) is not appreciated by English-speaking people. Perhaps if we trace the word through its history and development, it will help.

The *kurios* was originally the owner of a piece of property. Next, the *kurios* was the owner and master of a slave. When the Greek mystery religions began to develop, *kurios* was used in reference to the deity they worshipped. To this point, then, the *kurios* was recognized as owner, obeyed as master, and honored as a god.

What happened next had tremendous impact on the word. When the translators of the Old Testament encountered the divine name YHWH, they faced a problem. No one knew how to pronounce the sacred name, since the vowels were omitted. There was no way to transliterate the name from Hebrew into Greek, letter by letter. The solution was to translate YHWH as *kurios*! Thus, every time a Jew saw the word *kurios*, he thought of God Himself.

In light of all this, just think what a momentous confession

it was to declare, "Jesus Christ is Lord" (Philippians 2:11).

### COMMENT 1:4

#### who gave himself for our sins

1. He gave:
  - a. Not gold, not a paschal lamb, not an angel, but self.
  - b. Not a moral code, nor a new political scheme, but self.
2. He could have sent twelve legions of angels. Matt. 26:53
3. He gave Himself humbly. Phil. 2:5-8
4. He gave Himself by the laws of Sacrifice, Ransom, and Justice.
5. Note the temptations; observe Gethsemane.

#### from our sins

1. He did not give Himself for a crown, a kingdom, or our goodness, but for our sins.
2. Sin is not maladjustment, but terrible transgression.
 

It means "missing the mark."

  - a. They are not small and insignificant, but mountainous.
  - b. We are not good moral men but sinners.
  - c. *Hamartia*, one of the Greek words for sins, catches all of us.

#### that he might deliver us

1. Man is lost; he does need saving; he does need help from God.
  - a. He is a slave.
  - b. He is a captive.
2. Too many people are not interested in salvation's delivery because they do not feel there is anything to be delivered from, but there is.
  - a. "Creatures without reason . . . to be taken and destroyed." II Pet. 2:12
  - b. "elements shall be dissolved . . ." II Pet. 3:8-11
  - c. ". . . they were judged every man according to their

works." Rev. 20:13

"... this is the second death, even the lake of fire." v. 14

"... and if any was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire." v. 15

d. John 3:14, 15, 16

e. "... the wrath of God ..." Rom. 5:9

f. "... who delivered us from the wrath to come."

I Thess. 1:10

### **from this present evil world**

1. Even our nation, so-called Christian America, is evil.

a. Hear the curses on the night air.

b. Listen to the vileness in the shop.

c. Check the lists of robberies, murders, and adulteries.

d. Watch the gambling.

e. Look at the abused little children.

2. This evil world will be destroyed and a new heaven and a new earth created. II Pet. 3:8-13; Rev. 21:1

### **according to the will of God**

1. Note these scriptures:

a. I John 4:10 "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

b. Phil. 2:5-11 indicates the will of Christ.

c. Gethsemane indicates the will of Christ.

2. The will of God is responsible for salvation for the righteous and punishment for the wicked.

### **our God and Father**

1. The Fatherhood of God is for both Christ and man.

a. Christ said to Mary Magdalene, "Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and unto my God and your God." John 20:17

b. "Pray ye our Father," are the Lord's words in Matt. 6:9.

1) A Father loves

2) A Father provides

- 3) A Father protects
  - 4) A Father gives
2. The will of God and Christ's will are in accord.

### THE CHURCH IS A HOLY PEOPLE 1:4

Christians are called out of ungodliness to be a separated and sanctified people. Christians in Paul's day, called out of heathenism, were acquainted with evil, even in their forms of pagan worship. In verse 4 of this chapter, the Galatians are informed that they are called to be holy and blameless.

The biblical demand for holiness is insistent: "You shall be holy for I am holy" (Lev. 11:44, 45, 19:2, 20:7; I Pet. 1:15, 16). Says Paul, Christ sanctifies the Church that it may be "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish" Eph. 5:27.

This holiness is a sharing of the divine nature (II Pet. 1:4). It is the fruit of the Spirit's dwelling and acting, not only within the individual believer, but also within the redeemed community. It is an aspect of the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. Human personality and the Christian community were made to be indwelt by the Spirit of God, and they reach their potential only when they are.

### OUR SINS 1:4

Millions of people are indulging in situation ethics rather than repenting from sin.

If a man will really study the Word of God and "situation ethics" he will find it impossible to ignore Galatians 5:16-21 with its condemnation of specified works of the flesh: "adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such.

The Bible is avoided by those who do not want to avoid sin.

Situation ethics declares that there are situations when the works of the flesh are fully acceptable. The new version might

read something like this: "The works of the flesh are adultery, unless you and your wife are not compatible; fornication, unless you are really in love, uncleanness, unless you just don't know any better; witchcraft, unless you were reared in Africa, wrath, unless you have inherited a temper from your parents; drunkenness, unless you are an alcoholic." When we begin making exceptions, we have no definite law or standard at all.

Situation doctrine is also practiced.

Situation doctrine is not a new game, for it has been played from the beginning of man. The rules are declared to be the same as situation ethics. It says that doctrine may vary according to situations. Jesus took note of this tendency among religious leaders.

Sin is sin whether it be in the realm of morals or doctrine.

#### WORD STUDY 1:4

To "deliver" (*exaireo* — ex i REH oh) is literally "to snatch out." It is more than merely to remove; it is to rescue from the power of. The book of Acts provides an excellent commentary on this word, using it in these ways:

1. The rescue of Joseph from his afflictions, 7:10.
2. The deliverance of Israel from Egypt, 7:34.
3. The rescue of Peter from prison, 12:11.
4. The rescue of Paul from the temple mob, 23:27.
5. The deliverance of Paul from the Jews, 26:17.

The "world" (*aion* — i OWN) of this verse should be translated "age." The ancient Jews often spoke of two ages: the present age, full of evil and sinfulness, and the future age, full of righteousness and peace. The present age was in the grip of the Evil One, but the age to come was to be ruled by the Messiah.

As Christians, we remain physically a part of the physical world, but spiritually we have become participants of the age to come.

## COMMENT 1:5

**to whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.**

1. God is to have all and Paul none, even though he has argued for his apostleship.
2. Glory means praise, honor, renown, distinction, brilliance and splendor.
3. If we fail to direct glory to God now, we will not have an opportunity to glorify Him in heaven.

**Glory to God — (Special exegetical outline)**

1. Because it is commanded.
  - a. "Ascribe unto Jehovah, ye kindreds of the people, ascribe unto Jehovah glory and strength." I Chron. 16:28.
  - b. "Ye that fear Jehovah, praise him, all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and stand in awe of him, all ye the seed of Israel." Psalm 22:23.
  - c. "Let them give glory unto Jehovah, and declare his praise in the islands." Isaiah 42:12
2. Because it is due Him. I Chron. 16:29; I Cor. 6:20
3. Because of His holiness. "Exalt ye Jehovah our God, and worship at his holy hill; For Jehovah our God is holy." Ps. 99:9  
 "Who shall not fear, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy; for all the nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy righteous acts have been made manifest." Rev. 15:4
4. Because of His mercy and truth.
  - a. "Not unto us, O Jehovah, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory for thy loving-kindness, and for thy truth's sake. Ps. 115:1
  - b. "And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy." Rom. 15:9
5. Because of His faithfulness and truth.
  - a. "O Jehovah, thou art my God; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; for thou hast done wonderful things, even counsels of old in faithfulness and truth." Isaiah 25:1

6. Because of His wondrous works.
  - a. "Insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb speaking, the maimed whole, and the lame walking, and the blind seeing: and they glorified the God of Israel." Matt. 15:31
  - b. "For all men glorified God for that which was done." Acts 4:21
7. Because of His judgments.
  - a. "Therefore shall a strong people glorify thee, a city of terrible nations shall fear thee." Isaiah 25:3
  - b. "I will be glorified in the midst of thee; and they shall know that I am Jehovah, when I shall have executed judgments in her." Ezekiel 28:22
  - c. "Fear God, and give him glory; for the hour of his judgment is come . . ." Rev. 14:7
8. Because of His deliverance. Psalms 50:15
9. Because of His grace to others.
  - a. "And when they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then to the Gentiles also hath God granted repentance unto life." Acts 11:18
  - b. ". . . they glorify God . . . for the liberality of your contribution unto them and unto all." II Cor. 9:13
  - c. ". . . and they glorified God in me." Gal. 1:24

### CHILDREN IN THE FAMILY OF GOD 1:5

Christians are to consider themselves as children of God and therefore a part of a great family. We are the people of a God in a unique way through being born again and adopted into His family.

The idea of a people has rich biblical and especially Old Testament roots. Biblical Greek uses the word *laos* in referring to the church as a people. This word (from which we get "laity") occurs more than 2000 times in the Septuagint, usually translating the Hebrew word 'am. *Laos* is the word commonly used for Israel as God's people; it serves to emphasize the special and privileged religious position of this people as the

people of God.

In Old Testament, *laos* "is the national society of Israel according to its religious basis and distinction."

In the New Testament, *laos* occurs some 140 times. It is the word both Paul and Peter use to describe the Church as a people, as the new Israel. Thus in the New Testament, "a new and figurative Christian concept arises along with the old biological and historical view and crowds it out."

The Church is constituted a people just as an individual is constituted a child of God; by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. The converted individual becomes a part of a transformed people.

### STUDY QUESTIONS 1:3-5

20. Does the word "grace" indicate "friendliness"?
21. What is the source of peace?
22. Would Paul have been so friendly to the Gauls if he were not of God?
23. Discuss what peace from God does for people who love barriers?
24. What does God's peace dispel in the human heart?
25. Name the two sources of peace found in this verse.
26. The word "who" refers to whom?
27. Why did Jesus give Himself?
28. How does His sacrifice compare with Old Testament sacrifices?
29. Is it fair to assume that sin is horrible, if Jesus died for our sins?
30. Did Jesus give Himself, or did men kill Him?
31. Are all men sinners, or did He die for certain vile people?
32. Discuss the deliverance stated in verse four.
33. Why do we need it?
34. From what are we delivered?
35. What kind of punishment does the Christian escape?
36. What evidence do we have that our present generation



1:6, 7      GUIDANCE FROM GALATIANS

is evil?

37. If we escape the punishment, what reward do we have in its place?
38. Whose will makes it possible?
39. Is divine will all that is necessary for salvation?
40. Define "glory."
41. Who is to be glorified?
42. How long does the glory last?
43. Why does God deserve glory? Name the reasons.

2. Occasion of the Epistle. 1:6-10

- a) Their removal unto a different gospel. 1:6, 7

TEXT 1:6, 7

**(6) I marvel that ye are so quickly removing from him that called you in the grace of Christ unto a different gospel; (7) which is not another gospel: only there are some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.**

PARAPHRASE 1:6, 7

6 I wonder that ye are so soon removed from me, who called you into the gospel of Christ, which promises to sinners justification through faith; and that ye have embraced another gospel, or pretended message from God, concerning your justification;

7 Which is not another gospel, or message from God: But some there are, who, on pretence that their doctrine of justification by the law of Moses is authorized by God, trouble you with doubts concerning my doctrine, and wish to pervert the gospel of Christ.

## COMMENT 1:6

**I marvel**

1. This is not awful condemnation, but surprise.
2. This is a severe blow to one who believes as Paul expressed it in Romans 8:35-38—"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?"
3. This is astonishing to one who believes in the Power of the Gospel and who has confidence in stability of man.

**so quickly removing**

1. Paul's labors to train a church are being overthrown in a short while.
2. Christianity is to be a thing of permanence, not a mushroom affair.
3. This is the opposite of what is required for salvation.
  - a. "Be thou faithful unto death." Rev. 2:10
  - b. "If we hold fast the beginning of our confidence firm unto the end." Heb. 3:14

**from him that called you**

1. They had changed their spiritual location by turning to another gospel.
2. When men accept falsehood, they remove themselves from God.
3. The calling is expressed in I Thess. 2:12; 5:24; II Tim. 1:9.
4. Some insist that Paul is the one who called them, but Paul didn't say they were removed from him, but from Christ.

**in the grace of Christ**

1. Truth had placed them in favor; now false teaching had made them unfavorable.
2. This knocks the idea that "sincerity alone is sufficient."
3. They were removed from grace: he does not say "peace."
4. God surely does not save them if they are removed from His favor.

**unto a different gospel**

1. This "gospel" was Judaism mixed with Christianity.
  - a. The Jew insisted on Jewish ceremonies for Gentiles.
  - b. Paul establishes in this book that Judaism is not ever essential for Christians.
2. Think how awful then is Catholicism mixed with paganism and Judaism.
3. Protestantism, which is a mixture of paganism, Judaism, Catholicism, and Christianity, is likewise a different "gospel."

**INTO THE GRACE OF CHRIST 1:6**

Amazing grace! how sweet the sound,  
that saved a wretch like me!  
I once was lost, but now am found,  
Was blind, but now I see.

John Newton penned those words several years after his conversion. Blindness keeps men from seeing God's love in Christ. Most of us are so nearsighted that we cannot really see how great is His love.

The death of Jesus formed the foundation of God's mercy. Jesus was crucified, died, was buried, and resurrected by God's awesome power. And believers reenact that divine drama in immersion. But we cannot say to God, "Now that I've been immersed, you owe me salvation!" Those are the words of one attempting to make baptism an act of merit. The forgiveness of sins associated with baptism is an act of pure grace. And the new relationship it symbolizes also rests upon God's mercy.

Cleansing is not a one time act.

Not only did the sacrifice of Christ initially save us from our former sins, but it continually cleanses us from our present daily sins (I John 1:7-10). "We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (I John 2:1).

The cross of Christ satisfied the judgment of God against sin, so we don't have to be good enough to merit God's grace. Our salvation did not result from our own attainments; it came

by Christ's atonement (Ephesians 2:8, 9). And, once we become members of the family of God, we continue to walk by faith in Christ, through whom we have obtained this grace in which we stand (Romans 5:2).

Just as the non-Christian cannot "buy" his way into God's family, neither can the Christian repay God for His adoption of him. Let every guilt-burdened child of God, memorize Paul's words: "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life" (Romans 5:10).

#### ANOTHER GOSPEL 1:6, 7

The Galatians were guilty of accepting another Gospel, but it really wasn't gospel at all. The doctrine which was added was removing them from the simple faith.

The Gospel is good news, because Jesus died, was buried, and rose again for our salvation. The good news announced to the Galatians by the apostle was that "the blessing of Abraham should in Christ Jesus be extended to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised spirit through faith" (3:14). It was this which delivered them from the written code of the law and set them free from the galling yoke of slavery. When Paul speaks of "the truth of the gospel" in this letter, he is not referring just to the veracity or integrity of the message. The truth means the basic elemental, foundational principle upon which the gospel is predicted. It is the core, the center, the kernel of the gospel. It is what makes the message gospel. The context shows that the truth of the gospel is justification by faith.

Paul was not saying that the Galatian letter was the Gospel.

By the time it was written the Galatians had already accepted the Gospel and turned from it. They had received the Spirit by believing the Gospel message (3:2). The letter was written not to bring them into relationship with the Spirit, but to encourage them to walk in the Spirit. "If the Spirit is the source of our life, let the Spirit also direct our course"

5:25). Acceptance of the Gospel brings the Spirit as God's gift to dwell in our bodies, guidance by epistles such as the letter to the Galatians enables the Spirit to direct our course.

### WORD STUDY 1:6

The word for "remove" (*metatithemi* — meh tah TITH a me) carries the connotation of treason and rebellion. When Dionysius deserted the Stoics and went over to the Epicureans, he was called "the Turncoat" or "Traitor." This complete turn-about was no more drastic than the desertion of the Galatians from grace to legalism.

The King James Version obscures an important distinction between the "different gospel" of verse six and "another gospel" in verse seven. Verse six speaks of "another of a different kind" (*heteros* — HEH ter oss), while verse seven speaks of "another of the same kind" (*allos* — ALL oss).

There is no other gospel of the same kind (*allos*). Any other gospel is necessarily one of a different (*heteros*) nature and has no saving power.

The Greek word for "gospel" is *euangelion* (you ahn GEL e on) (G as in "go"). It is seen in such English derivatives as evangelism, evangel, and evangelical. It seems literally "good news."

In secular usage outside the New Testament, it is nearly always plural, meaning something like "good tidings."

### COMMENT 1:7

#### **which is not another gospel**

1. There are not two gospels to choose from, for "oneness" is characteristic of God.
  - a. "I am the truth." John 14:6

- b. "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all." Ephesians 4:4-6
  - c. "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve in his craftiness, your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity and the purity that is toward Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we did not preach, or if ye receive a different spirit, which ye did not receive, or a different gospel, which ye did not accept, ye do well to bear with him." II Cor. 11:3
2. These denominational folk who say "it doesn't make any difference" are either lying or they are terribly ignorant.
- a. If it doesn't matter, why do they not preach the message that will produce unity?
  - b. It does make a difference to the preachers:
    - 1) Their pension is at stake.
    - 2) Their job is at stake.
    - 3) Their denominational reputation is at stake.
  - c. It makes a difference to God. Cf. Gal. 1:8, 9

#### **only there are some that trouble you**

- 1. Urging circumcision and keeping of the law was a troublesome doctrine.
- 2. Denominationalists are troublemakers in binding commandments of men.

#### **and would pervert the gospel of Christ**

- 1. Division is the beguiling of Satan, drawing men away from the simplicity of the gospel.
- 2. A creed is a perversion.
  - a. If it is like the Bible, we do not need it.
  - b. If it is unlike the Bible, it is erroneous.
- 3. Infant baptism is an unscriptural doctrine, originated by an unscriptural church, practiced by unscriptural churches upon unscriptural candidates to save those unscriptural

candidates from unscriptural sin.

STUDY QUESTIONS 1:6, 7

44. What surprised Paul?
45. Does this mean that the gospel lacks power?
46. Define "quickly removing."
47. Is this characteristic of good Christians?
48. Were they called?
49. Who did it and by what method?
50. What were they removed from?
51. Is this falling from grace?
52. Can you be in God's Church and participate in false teaching at the same time?
53. How different was the "different gospel"?
54. Harmonize Paul's expression "different gospel" and "not another gospel."
55. Is corrupted truth to be considered truth?
56. Is denominationalism wrong in the light of the Word of God?
57. Are false teachers, party teachers, etc., to be considered troublemakers to God?
58. If false teaching is troublesome, ought we to say that it doesn't make any difference what you believe as long as you are sincere?

b) Pronouncement of Divine Judgment upon Perverters of the Gospel. 1:8, 9

TEXT 1:8, 9

**(8) But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema. (9) As we have said before, so say I now again, If any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema.**

## PARAPHRASE 1:8, 9

8 They affirm that Peter preacheth, nay, that I myself preach justification by works of law. But even if we who write this, or an angel pretending to have come from heaven, should preach to you a method of justification contrary to, or different from, what we have formerly preached to you, let him be devoted to destruction.

9 To shew you how certain I am of the truth of the doctrine which I preach; As we who write this letter said before jointly, so now a second time I separately say, if any man or angel preach to you concerning your justification, contrary to what ye have learned from me, let him be devoted to destruction.

## COMMENT 1:8, 9

**but though we, or an angel from heaven**

1. Paul's fervency leads him to say that he, brethren, or angels of heaven should be accursed if they came with a perverted gospel.
2. The "we" probably means Paul specifically, but could include all his preaching brethren.

**should preach unto you any gospel other**

1. There is only one gospel, so there is no other gospel for us to hear.
2. Let us have faith in the gospel "once and for all delivered unto the saints." Jude vs. 3

**than that which we preached unto you**

1. Paul preached:
  - a. The death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. I Cor. 15:1-5
  - b. Belief in, and confession of, the Christ. Romans 10:9-10
  - c. Repentance from sin. Acts 17:30-31
  - d. Burial of sin repented-from. Romans 6:4
  - e. Resurrection from water to live in a new life. Romans 6:5



2. All gospel must be measured by this divine measure.

**let him be anathema**

1. Let us examine the meaning of the word in the original language.
  - a. The Greek word *anathema* and the Hebrew *herem* mean "to accurse," "to damn."
  - b. "Let him be anathema" does not mean we are to curse him.
2. Many scriptures show the awfulness of false teaching.
  - a. "For there are many unruly men, vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision, whose mouths must be stopped; men who overthrow whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake." Titus 1:10, 11
  - b. "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them that are causing divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned: and turn away from them." Romans 16:17
  - c. "If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting." II John 10
  - d. "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not . . . by thy name do many mighty works?" Matt. 7:22
  - e. The Word of God is not to be added to, nor subtracted from. Rev. 22:18, 19
3. In later years *anathema* came to mean excommunication (by the very ones who should have been accursed).
  - a. Excommunication meant separation from the church.
  - b. This is more than that, for angels were not in the church for man to excommunicate.
4. Verse nine differs only in the fact that Paul says that they received a gospel and therefore should not receive another one.

## WORD STUDY 1:8, 9

The word *anathema* (ah NATH eh mah) is the Greek word for "that which is set up for destruction." When Joshua led Israel in the defeat of Jericho, everything in the city was to be destroyed. It was all set aside for God, "devoted" (*anathema*) for destruction (Joshua 6:18).

Anyone who preaches a different gospel is to be marked as under a curse of destruction.

There is a subtle difference in verse nine from the preceding verse. Verse eight speaks hypothetically in the future tense, but this verse deals with the present reality. The distinction, then, could be shown this way:

Verse 8: If we ever should preach contrary . . .

Verse 9: If someone is right now preaching contrary . . .

## STUDY QUESTIONS 1:8, 9

59. What does the word "anathema" mean?
60. Who is included in the anathema?
61. Do we have modern day religions claiming to be from angels?
62. Name other verses that condemn false teachers.
63. How does verse nine differ from verse eight?
64. What may we assume by the emphasis of verse nine to verse eight?

c) His passion to please God. 1:10

## TEXT 1:10

**(10) For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? or am I striving to please men? if I were still pleasing men, I should not be a servant of Christ.**

## PARAPHRASE 1:10

10 Having twice denounced destruction to myself and to all others, if we preach contrary to what was first preached to you, I now ask those who say I suit my doctrine to the humours of men, Do I by this denunciation make men my friends, or God? Or do I seek to please men? If indeed I still pleased men, as before my conversion, I should not be the servant of Christ.

## COMMENT 1:10

**seeking the favor of men**

1. He was not a time-serving, man-pleasing factionist, and such a condemnation was most unfounded.
  - a. His former life as a Pharisee — pleasing the priest or the people — directly in contrast to his suffering for the gospel.
  - b. In this connection, read II Cor. 6:4-10.
2. He would not be a servant of Christ if he were in the business of pleasing men.
  - a. On occasions however, he had conformed to men's customs.
    - 1) He had Timothy circumcised. Acts 16:1-3
    - 2) Paul and four others purified themselves at the temple. Acts 21:26
    - 3) Paul shaved his head when he was at Cenchrea. Acts 18:18
  - b. These were done because of Paul's charitable disposition, but he never let down on doctrine.

## WORD STUDY 1:10

Although we shy away from the word, the very best translation for *doulos* (DOO loss) is not "servant," but "slave."

It is the same word used countless times in ancient literature to describe the slave class, who:

1. Had no remaining rights of their own,
2. Were owned by someone else,
3. Were compelled to do the will of their master.

Imagine the results if every Christian would truly commit himself as a slave for his Master!

### B. PAUL'S GOSPEL AND APOSTLESHIP DIVINELY DERIVED. 1:11-24

1. The divine source of his gospel. 1:11, 12

#### TEXT 1:11, 12

**(11) For I make known to you, brethren, as touching the gospel which was preached by me, that it is not after man. (12) For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ.**

#### PARAPHRASE 1:11, 12

11 Now, because my doctrine hath been disregarded, on pretence that I was taught it by men, I assure you, brethren, concerning justification by faith, which was preached by me, that it is not a doctrine which I was taught by man, and which I was in danger of mistaking.

12 For I neither received it from Ananias, nor from any of the apostles at Jerusalem, nor was I taught it any how, except by a revelation from Jesus Christ.