

Galatians ch 1 vs 6-10

So far in our studies in the book of Galatians we've covered a staggering 5 vs and this morning we look to double that. After this morning we should begin to pick up just a little bit of steam but as I was saying Wednesday evening I really wanted to take the time during these 1st few studies to get really familiar with what's happening here and the reasons that Paul is writing this letter. and Grasp the importance and the reasons for the urgency of Paul's writing this letter to the Galatians. Because had Paul not stuck so vehemently to his guns when it came to the reality of the gospel of Grace, it scares me to think where we would be as the church today. Because these people (the Judaizers) were coming in like a school of piranhas. and Just trying to eat up the message that Paul was preaching and undermining his authority as an apostle and really just trying to entangle these people back into a yoke of bondage saying that if they didn't keep the law, Jesus or no Jesus they weren't saved.

So Paul quickly reminded them of his authority as an apostle not being sent out by men nor was his apostleship through man but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead. and The message that he proclaimed to them was ratified by all the brethren who were with him, he wasn't out on his own on this deal he was accountable and all these people were willing to stand behind the work of God in his life. Why don't we just read over these 1st 5 vs real quick so that we can kind of get back into the groove of things as we approach this morning's text?

Vs1-3

We spoke of the impossibility of knowing the peace of God with out 1st experiencing the grace of God and that's why you always find in Paul's greetings the words "grace and peace" in that order. and What is grace, it's God's unmerited favor, the best way to remember it is by the acronym **God's Riches At Christ's Expense**, grace. There's nothing you or I can do to merit the riches of God given freely to us; they come to us at Christ's expense. He paid the price on the altar of the cross and when we receive Him as our Lord by faith we become recipients of the grace and peace of God and our Lord Jesus Christ

Vs4

In this vs we took our 3-point study last week #1 Jesus gave Himself, not because we're such a great people and benefit to His kingdom but for our sins and called us out of our self-centered sinfulness and freely offered us salvation by His grace through faith. Rom 5:8 "*God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*" Not while we were longing for a relationship with Him because according to the scriptures none of us were longing for a relationship with Him.

But yet out of His love for us, He died for us in that sinful state, He gave Himself for our sins that we might become friends of God and 2^{ndly} that we might be delivered from this present evil age.

We spent some time here as well He didn't die for us just to get us out of our sins, but also to get us into a life of holiness, a life of sanctification, and a life of consecration over to Him by the power of the Holy Spirit. Because point #3 that's His will for our lives, this is another aspect of that general will of God for our lives that seems to surface so much. What's God's will for your life, that you might be delivered from this present evil age, and that you not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, by the washing of the water of the word as you abide in Him. In that, as that work is accomplished in your life, the result will be eternal Glory for Him.

Now, a few thoughts regarding this mornings text before we tackle it, #1 in this section of the book of Galatians, Vs6-10 (for those of you who take notes) we'll be reminded that the Gospel is an invitation not to a system or a set of ethics and morals, but to a person. It's so easy to forget that, it's true that there are all kinds of truth's to be found, there all kinds of concepts and ideals and information to be received and that's all good, because it stems from God.

But all of those truth's and concepts and ideals are aiming toward a person. The person of Jesus Christ the Lord is calling us to know Him and to walk with Him personally and so this section reminds of that, that the gospel is an invitation to a person and to follow that person, the person of Jesus Christ 2^{ndly} We'll see that the gospel is to be defended and contended for earnestly (I know we just turned to Galatians but do me a favor, leave the book of Gal and turn to the book of Jude vs 3-4.

Now how are we to do that, what does he mean by contend earnestly for the faith, it means defend the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ at any cost. The entire book of Gal is very much so a Jude vs 3-4 type of an instrument in the hands of God. So the gospel is #1 about a person, but not only that, the gospel is #2 something to be defended, not just casually dealt with. But we're to invest our lives into it, we're to walk in it, know it and stand up for it no matter what the cost.

The gospel is to be defended and Galatians is a very strongly worded defense of the gospel, it tells you exactly what it is and what it isn't and the Holy Spirit through Paul uses some very strong language concerning anyone who would try to alter or change, add to or take away from the gospel. and 3^{rdly} we'll see that *warnings* are a biblical necessity, I mentioned this Wednesday evening when you really begin to look at the vast amount of warnings that there are in the scriptures it's mind blowing.

Now no doubt the greater majority or thrust of the scriptures is the proclamation of good news, but right along side that, to show man the necessity of getting into that good news and living by it and proclaiming it there are all kinds of warnings. Col 1:28 in regards to Jesus, Paul says, "*Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom.*" Acts 20:31 again Paul speaking to the Eph elders said, "*remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.*" 1 Cor 4:14 "*I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn you.*" 1 Thess 5:14 Again Paul writing says, "*Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all.*" and These are just a few scriptures in regards to warnings, not even getting into the warnings themselves of which the bible O.T and new is just laced with. and So with those 3 thoughts in mind lets look into this mornings text.

Vs6-10

Paul was absolutely dumbfounded and staggered at what was going on here, he says in vs 6 "I marvel" or "I'm astonished." The word marvel that's used here, in the Greek means to be surprised with an element of intense unbelief. What he's basically saying is that, I'm so surprised that you're doing this that I can't even believe it. He was astounded that these believers would be turning away from the good news of the grace of God through Jesus Christ and what amazed him is how *soon* they began to turn away from it having just begun to enjoy the benefits of the grace of God no strings attached. Our flesh wants to feel as though it's not absolutely worthless so bad that we'll naturally gravitate towards those things that give us a sense of accomplishment.

The "natural" tendency in that as it pertains to the Christian walk is to long to have some sort of grasp however small it may be, but to have some part in our own salvation. and So we have this tendency to gravitate towards a works oriented thought process and then if someone comes along and feeds that we can be quick to grab a hold of it. and We have to be careful to guard against that because it immediately sets us in opposition to the grace of God.

These people were falling back into a works oriented righteousness and Paul was staggered at that fact knowing how long he had labored, setting those churches in order and then so quickly they began to turn. He said, "*I marvel that you are turning away so soon (notice this) from Him*" Their turning away was quote "from Him", from who, from the Lord Himself. Their turning away was showing disrespect or a disregard and disinterest in the Lord Himself. Why, because the gospel is always about a person, all the facts and issues in the gospel and all the historical realities, they're all pointing to a person and that person is the Lord Jesus.

The gospel is about a person and a personal relationship with Jesus Christ again it's not only theological concepts and ideas or principals and patterns. Though those are all included and there's much to be learned in those things, but they're all flowing from and pointing to the person who embodies all of those realities and that's the person of Jesus Christ The gospel is a call to Jesus, (those of you who take notes I hope you brought a sharp pencil because this morning you're going to get a ton of scripture references.) Which is by far the most important thing that you can take down in a bible study, if the Spirit gives you a unique insight or perspective as we're going through the word and you jot that down that's wonderful.

But more important than that is to be maybe jotting down the subject at hand (which in this case is the gospel is about a person and a call to that person, the person of Jesus) and then the scriptures that support that. Because even though I may give you a reference and then read you the scripture it's important that you be taking these things in and meditating on them and allowing the word to be permeating your heart and mind in your own personal time with the Lord. David spoke of his delight being in the law or the word of the Lord and how he meditated on it day and night.

So I encourage you to be students of the word of God testing me in the things I say and make sure that I'm leading you right, search the scriptures to see if the things that I tell you are so. Don't take my word for it because I could tell you that the bible tells us in Zedeciah 3:2 that we're not to ever question those who shepherd the flock of God and that we're to believe every word they say knowing that it's God who has raised them up and some of you would maybe just think well if that's what the bible says then that's what I'll do. But many of you and hopefully all of you would go, wow that sounds kind of weird, what book did he say and as you began to test me on that you'd realize that there is no book of Zedeciah and that I'm blowing heresy. So know the scriptures and meditate on them, the gospel is a call to a person. Matt 8:22 *"Jesus said to him, "Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead."* The guy had some wapped out priorities, placing other people over his relationship with the Lord, but Jesus said you have to love Me more or you're not worthy of Me. The point in that scripture being "follow Me" in Matt 9:9 we read where *Jesus "saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, "Follow Me." So he arose and followed Him."* John 1:43 *"The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, "Follow Me."*

Notice the consistent and persistent invitation from the Lord, when the Lord went around and He offered the good news or the gospel, what was it that He offered? Himself, what was He calling people to, a life of following Him. In John 21:22 after the Lord had told Peter that he would face a pretty undesirable death, Peter looked at John and said hey, what about Him? and Jesus said to him, *"If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you? You follow Me."*

What a good word for all of us, we needn't worry about everything that's going on around us or who's doing what all we need to concentrate on is *us* following Jesus. That's what's going to keep us in line and equip us and change us and give us a growing personal intimacy with Him that He will use to infect others with His love and grace, you follow Me. and Of course there's the famous Matt 11:28 where Jesus said, *"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."*

Notice the consistency in that invitation to the person of Jesus Christ and In that vs we catch just a glimmer of the benefits to be found in following Jesus, rest for our weary and heavy-laden souls, that are tired of carrying the weight of guilt and condemnation because of the sin in my life, Jesus offers rest. Which in keeping with this morning's text would be hard to have if you're working for your righteousness, works or rest which is it going to be. As for me I'll choose rest, because I can work myself into the grave and it'll never merit me righteousness so I may as well rest in Jesus.

For times sake I'll only give you a couple of more, John 6:35 Jesus said to them, *"I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst."* Jesus is the bread of life and just like we take physical bread for the nutrients and nourishment that we need to survive even so Jesus is that spiritual supply of nourishment for our souls and we come to *Him* with our hunger and our need for life and nourishment and as we come to Him He nurtures our very souls and satisfies our deepest hunger. and It's in Him that we find spiritual satisfaction "and he who believes on Me shall never thirst." Those dry and needy places of our lives are saturated with torrents of living water as we trust in Jesus and come to Him. and In keeping with that thought and for our final reference pertaining to this John 7:37 *"On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink."*

Only Jesus Christ can satisfy the deep thirst in the heart of every man that desires desperately to be quenched, so the gospel is about a person and it's an invitation to have a personal relationship with that person, the person of Jesus Christ and In seeking to turn from the gospel of grace that Paul had proclaimed to the Gal, they were turning away from *Him*. and Paul was finding that a hard pill to swallow, because their turning wasn't just a turning from the gracious principals of the gospel to a more rigid and legalistic form of living, though it did include that. But in that they were turning from the Lord, The One that called them into the grace of Christ, to a system, from a person to a system.

Paul was startled and broken in his heart; he was experiencing what we might call an astonished grief. and That astonished grief surfaces over and over throughout this epistle, look over at Gal 3:1 (read) look at vs 3, Gal 4:9-11, look at Gal 5:7 so this astonished grief surfaces over and over in Paul's writing to the Galatians. and God looks at anyone in this same way who turns from His grace and takes their attention off of Him just to get into a heavy religious system that maybe somehow gratifies their flesh. It doesn't make sense; Jesus died to liberate you, to set you free and yet now you seek to get entangled into some form of legalism that ties you up, what an offense to the cross of Christ.

We spoke last week briefly about the offense *of* the cross; these types of things are an offense *to* the cross, and a grievance to the heart of God. Because they spit on the work of the cross, saying that's not sufficient for me, I've got to have my part in this, you see our nature repels grace and responds to legalism. Because the gospel of grace puts us in the dirt and makes us beggars before God who are poor and destitute and unable to do anything for ourselves of eternal value.

But through legalism we don't need Christ as a Savior, we need Christ as a Helper, we need Him to help us achieve our legalistic righteousness, but we don't need a helper, we need a Savior and that's what grace is all about. The basis of the gospel is grace, man being unable to merit God's favor in any way and in rebellion to God on top of that, but God in His grace sent Jesus Christ His only begotten Son to die on a cross to suffer the penalty of our sin, being put to death for our sin and raised for our justification. That By His grace we might have eternal life through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as we believe in Him. and The Galatians were turning away from that grace to a different gospel.

Vs7

Any other message other than that which we've been talking about, salvation through faith by the grace of God isn't a gospel at all, it's legalism. and Paul who stands to contend for the gospel is careful to point that out, it may be a message of someone's, but it isn't the message of Jesus Christ, it isn't the gospel at all. and Paul points that out because he has such a fervency in him when it comes to the gospel that he wants to set the record straight. We find in 2nd Cor 11:4 the apostle speaking to them in regards to a different gospel as well, and so the Galatians weren't the only one's to struggle with these things. I think that Christians in general have a tendency to struggle with these things that's why I'm so thankful that Paul had such a passion in Him to defend the gospel of grace. and In regards to the gospel as it pertains to Paul (and a few other's but primarily Paul) Leon Morris says this (get your pencils ready for those references.

So you can see why Paul was so quick to expose this teaching that they were receiving as not the gospel at all but rather a “perversion” of it. and That word “pervert” is the Greek word “*metastrepho*”and it means, "*to transform into something of an opposite character*" (From Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, Copyright (c)1985, Thomas Nelson Publishers) It's the same word that was used in Acts 2:20 where it says the sun “shall be turned” or “*metastrepho*” into darkness. James used it when he said let your, “*laughter be turned to mourning.*”

By seeking to cause the gospel to become anything other than the gospel of grace, you turn it into something just the opposite of God's intent. Because to the flip side of grace is works, it's one or the other, it can't happen both ways. Grace and works are in direct contrast and diametrically opposed to one another. and Trying to mix the 2 is like trying to mix oil and water, it can't be done; oh you can shake it up real good and for a time it may appear to be in harmony, but in no time at all it becomes extremely evident that it's not going to work out. and So it is with grace and works, it's got to be one or the other, the 2 don't mix.

You can read about how these guys were trying to mix grace and law in Acts 15 where it says in vs 1 that “*certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved."* In other words Jesus is good and all, but you also need to do this and this and keep the law as well or you aren't going to heaven. You've got to do something in your flesh to complete the work of the Spirit.

What a perversion to the gospel of Christ and how many times we can be troubled today by those who are perverting the gospel of the grace of Christ. That word troubled means to agitate or even to make sick, it's the same word that was used to describe the feeling of anxiety that Herod got when he heard that there was another King born in regards to Jesus.

These things that they were being taught was tearing them up, they were torn and perplexed but they were being swayed because Paul's authority and legitimacy had been put in question. and These guys looking all religious and pious and having all the right words to say and their Masters degree in theology must be right and so they were being persuaded into legalism. I'll never forget the ladies that tried to persuade me into legalism when I was a new believer out at the mall because I trusted in the grace of God and they just kept telling me how I took my salvation too lightly. That I needed to be doing this and this to be right with God as if the work of Jesus Christ wasn't sufficient for me, and that's what's happened to these guys.

Now they hadn't all out converted to their system just yet as vs 6 indicated that they were in the process of turning or they were being persuaded. But they were being influenced greatly nonetheless and Paul wants to strike while the irons hot, while there's still hope for them to be pulled out. and So he says listen, what you're being told isn't a gospel, it's heresy, anytime someone comes to you and says you need to receive Jesus Christ and (fill in the blank). Be it be baptized, or join our church, or follow our rules, or maybe it could be an emotional or experiential legalism, saying you have to experience these things before you've had a true encounter with Jesus Christ, then they are teaching a different gospel which in reality isn't the gospel at all. The blood of Jesus Christ is sufficient for you 1 John 5:13 *"These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life."* John 20:31 *"these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name."*

Paul told the Phillipian jailer *"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household."* The work of Jesus alone is sufficient to save you all it takes is simple trust and belief from the deep recesses of your heart, anything added to that is to pervert the gospel of Christ no matter how spiritual it may seem. Gal 2:21 *"I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, (that is any form of legalism) then Christ died in vain."* God will share His glory with no man and for you to have a part in your salvation is to give you a means to boast in your flesh, the very idea of that blasphemes the cross. and So what does Paul say concerning those who would teach anything but the gospel of grace?

Vs8

Paul says hey listen, even if I flip my lid and come to you preaching something else than what I already have or what I'm writing now. Or even if an angel from heaven, which is interesting when you stop to realize how the Mormons claim to have received their revelation of Jesus Christ (depending on which account you read) you'll find that at one time it was claimed that it was given to Joseph Smith by angels. In another account by extra-terrestrial beings from another planet, but regardless of that myth the gospel they preach definitely isn't the gospel it's something different all together that we don't have time to get into this morning. None of the cities or anything mentioned in the book of Mormon have any historical backing whatsoever and they boldly proclaim another gospel or testimony of Jesus Christ Paul says let them be accursed.

But Paul wasn't just picking on the Mormon gospel, because it didn't even exist then, but anyone, any teacher that would seek to add so much as 1 jot or tittle to the grace of God let them be accursed, or "anathema." Meaning confined to the deepest recesses of hell, the pronouncement gets no stronger than this. I don't see how this doesn't send every teacher of the word of God shaking in their boots. It's so important that we not add anything or take away anything to the pure gospel of the grace of God.

Vs9

Paul didn't mess around when it came to sharing the gospel and defending the gospel of Jesus Christ. He shot very straight and he aimed for the heart saying that if anyone taught more or less than Jesus Christ and Him crucified and salvation by grace through faith in Him, that they should be cast into the deepest parts of hell. But let's take note of the change in this verse, it wasn't exactly a repeat for the sake of emphasis though it no doubt does emphasize the point. But in vs 8 it was (read emphasizing "we have preached") and in vs 9 it is (read emphasizing "than what you have received") The Greek verb "received" used in this context was a technical one in Judaism for "receiving a tradition." (from the UBS Handbook Series. Copyright (c) 1961-1997, by United Bible Societies)

So Paul was saying, look you've received the truth, don't receive law and tradition in its place, plus this emphasized the fact that the gospel he committed to them didn't need further clarification by the Judaizers, they received the fullness of the gospel when Paul shared it. and If anyone teaches or preaches anything else, Paul says that man needs to find his place in the deep recesses of hell, again a scary thought and a stern warning of the scriptures. But necessary in order to keep the teachers of the word or for that matter anyone who shares the word be it with a friend or whatever in check concerning the importance of keeping the gospel of the grace of God pure.

Vs10

We'll save this vs for next week to comment on.