

July 8, 2018

Galatians 1: The 12th Apostle?

This morning, we'll take a closer look at the first chapter of Galatians. As you turn there in your bibles, our main focus will be Paul's defense of the true Gospel of Jesus Christ and of his own apostleship, both of which were being tainted by the legalistic Jewish converts to Christianity. Though Paul wasn't certain about their salvation, their motives in "twisting the Gospel & Paul's reputation" were all too familiar and transparent...*jealousy, human ambition, and fear of persecution* were the main reasons that the Judaizers were discrediting Paul and dismantling the true Gospel. Mark this down: anytime anyone challenges Christ's nature as God or His perfect human obedience into death on a cross as *the one & only basis for salvation*, their motive is purely selfish ambition!

READ: Galatians 1:1-5 – the true Gospel & Apostle

Paul's letter to the Christians in Galatia teaches us more about "how to read the scriptures properly!" At times, we forget that letters are often responses to people & changing circumstances. We need to learn to pay attention to the "back story" behind the text. From the beginning, v. 1 hints at the "back story" to this letter that helps us understand the purpose for Paul's writing!

Galatians 1:1

- "I was not appointed by...people or human authority..."

- "...but by Jesus Christ Himself and the Father!"

It doesn't require much imagination to wonder why Paul starts out with such a strong assertion! Apparently, others had been claiming the opposite! This is confirmed several times: 1:10-12, 16b-17; 2:2, 6-7; 6:17. Galatians teaches us to read for the "back-story" behind the text. When we pay attention to "what's not said," then the comments of the writers often disclose their motives and offer hints at the real problems being addressed!

READ: Galatians 1:6-10 – Gospel goes against flesh

The "gospel" the Judaizers promoted involved depending on human obedience to the law, beginning with circumcision, a *sign of the OC*, rather than the mercy of Christ! The true Gospel

is the amazing story that God Himself solved the impossible, human predicament of man's sin condition – eternal separation & disqualification from life with God. **God's gospel leaves no room for anything "man-made" to help with the solution... except a grateful response!** *Can the 10 C's help? NO! Can the law's sacrifices help? NO! Can good intentions help? NO! Can confession, effort, contriteness, praying, lamenting, reading, attendance, teaching, ministry, participation help? NO! Only Jesus is the answer for our predicament; only He can save...and sanctify us!* It's important to remember that everything that was necessary for salvation is the same for sanctification! JESUS! And He promised to finish the work of re-creation He began the moment we trusted Him for Eternal life with God!

READ: Galatians 1:11-16 – Saved to share the Gospel

12) Paul "received" the Gospel by "revelation" from Jesus

15) *But when God, who set me apart from my mother's womb and called me by his grace, was pleased*

-aphorizō (apó - separated from & horizō make boundaries to separate from a boundary (a previous condition – sin)

So, in the same way that God chose to save people in Christ, made effective when we responded in acceptance, God chose Paul from before his birth to be separated out from sin & others for salvation AND apostleship to preach the gospel to Gentiles.

READ: Galatians 1:17-24 – Paul's Apostleship!

17) Paul went to Arabia where Jesus revealed the Gospel to him

18) After being taught by Jesus for 3 yrs, Paul went to Jerusalem

-He met only Peter and James; none others!

-Paul remained unknown to the Christian churches (22)

21) Paul's first missionary journey (14 year)

24) Not Paul bragging; they praised God for his transformation!

INVITATION:

1) Is there enough evidence to convict you of being Christ's?

2) Is the transformation Christ makes in your life, priorities & preferences, becoming more obvious to others?

3) Are you participating in the ministries of the church, or merely attending a weekly service?

WORSHIP IN MEDITATION: Acts 1:18-19, 21-26

What is the prevalent characteristic Peter demonstrates throughout the scripture stories involving him? Impetuosity! Peter was erratic, emotional, quick-tempered and careless! He often acted without thinking – or at least, before thinking things thru. Some have suggested that Peter acts impetuously in this situation as well – the naming of an apostle to take Judas' place!

What if God had a different plan to fill the 12th position? We know that there were meant to be 12 disciples; the Judas was not a disciple – believer – in Jesus as Messiah; and that the requirement for 12 was set in the precedent of the 12 sons of Jacob – Revelation refers to the 24 Elders, implying the 12 sons or tribes of Israel AND the 12 Apostles of Christ – representing the one story in 2 parts – the Old and New Testaments!

As you'll see, Paul defends the true Gospel AND his apostleship in the opening of his letter to the Galatians.

Sermon in a Sentence: The 12th Apostle?

