

## STUDYING GALATIANS

BIBLE STUDY OUTREACH @ 1984, 1993

LESSON 2  
Galatians 1: 1 - 10

### ***It's So easy to Make Things Difficult***

For some of you, the most exciting and challenging discussion you have ever had with someone, came when you shared Jesus Christ with that person. It may have been scary. You may not have really known how to do it, but you jumped in and shared what you knew about Christ with that one. Or, you will remember how someone shared Him with you in just such a way. Perhaps it led, at that time, to your trusting Him as your personal Savior. Others of you have never had that opportunity and long to have the experience. What makes the experience such an exciting one is that when you shared God's Word, and the invitation to know Christ is given to another person, you are in direct relationship to God. God will give you strength and put into your mind thoughts you never consciously thought before, or that you never remembered thinking. God will enable you to speak as you never could by yourself. It will be God who opens the minds and hearts of others to receive what you are saying to them. Thus they are made ready to enter into the act of receiving Christ, God's gift of salvation. The amazing thing is your part in it; your mind and heart are fully involved and yet God is doing the inspiring. You are in a deep and personal partnership with God when you share His Son Jesus Christ with others and they receive His life into their being. This is glorious!

There are two parts to this partnership: Part one has to do with what God did when He gave His Son to come to this earth to die upon the cross for our sins. In the act of His suffering He bore all the penalty that you and I deserve for our sins. Then after He died physically and was buried, He rose again from the dead to ascend into heaven. Jesus died with our eternal life in mind.

Part two is what we do by God's grace, in knowing that we are sinners for whom He died and admitting to being sinners and asking forgiveness. It is imperative that we acknowledge we are lost and without help, and receive His gift of cleansing and forgiveness because He has paid the ultimate penalty for our sins.

There are two very simple but important facts that determine our eternal life: 1) Jesus Christ, God's Son died in my place to take the punishment that I should bear. 2) Jesus will save and forgive me if I will admit to my sin and want Him to save me from it, for that very wanting is faith given by God to believe. (See Eph. 2:8.) It is a very thrilling and simple message to give to somebody who is not a Christian. When he responds to that message he will receive forgiveness and eternal life. It is a miracle by God's grace! It is the most powerful spiritual event that ever takes place in the life of any individual. This comes about very simply by your willingness to share God's truth with others. God has been active in this. It is He that gives them understanding of what you are saying and what they are doing.

Galatians was written to people who had come to know Christ. They had understood the gospel and had found great joy in their hearts. They had shared the gospel with many others and had found them responsive and willing to receive Christ and experience His new life. Then some people came in to teach something different, so that the Galatian Christians thought they weren't really Christians at all. The false teachers talked about Christ, but they said, "It isn't that simple; you have to do something in order to be a Christian." They gave them all kinds of rules they needed to follow to prove they were sincere. There was confusion; the Galatians were made to believe it all depended upon what they did, not upon what Christ did upon the cross. This is where Paul's letter came in. He wrote to them to give them clear understanding of what was happening and then to correct the situation. He wanted his converts to continue to believe in the simplicity of the gospel of Christ, instead of listening to false teacher who taught an untrue doctrine.

We can see why this is such an important letter to us today. We are always in danger of taking the very

beautiful simplicity of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ and making it hard for somebody else. When you read through the book of Galatians you will find how to be saved. Nothing need be added to what Paul wrote. So the Galatians had two stories: the gospel complicated by additional requirements, and the gospel of Christ's saving, finished work for man's salvation at Calvary.

We see how Paul develops his theme in the first 10 verses of Chapter 1. It is fascinating how powerfully Paul is writing. In this opening section Paul is speaking about how our salvation is totally from God. It is not from a person.

Verses 1,2. Paul begins with himself, an apostle, not sent by men nor the agency of men, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father, Who raised Him from the dead. To begin with, Paul said his own calling and purpose to be a preacher was not related to a decision he made or because it was something he wanted to do. All his preaching and services were directed by God. It was 3 years from the time of his conversion to the time he went to Jerusalem, 3 years before he submitted himself to men. He was very aware that during those 3 years his ministry was from God and not a person. This knowledge came by a personal revelation from God's Spirit into his mind and heart through Jesus Christ and God the Father, Who raised Jesus from the dead.

The little commentary at the end of verse 1 is revealing. It is a Living Savior Who dealt with Paul. It was a living Savior Who met him on the road to Damascus. Paul was aware of that fact. It is the Living Savior Whom you and I know. When you share Christ with a person, it is the same Lord ministering through you to that person; Jesus' living presence is in the act of conversion, bringing His eternal life into that person's life.

Paul says everything we know about the gospel is given to us from God. It is not man's plan. Twenty centuries later it is still God's plan, not man's. Time does not change the gospel. If you read sermons written under the direction of the Holy Spirit you cannot tell in which century they were written, because the message from God does not change and it is He Who gives understanding.

Verses 3 through 10 show us that any hope that we can live forever in heaven rests in Jesus Christ alone. He gave Himself for our sins that He might deliver us out of this present evil age. Paul is thinking about the fact that we are very caught up in this world. We know it infinitely more than those who lived 3 or 4 generations ago. There is very little hope of things improving in this present age. Paul is talking about the hope of things to come, which comes totally and completely through the work Jesus Christ has done. If anyone teaches differently, he will be accursed. It is God's Word that is true and Christ's work that is eternal. "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from ourselves, it is the gift of God—" (Eph. 2:8 NIV.)

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### SCRIPTURE TO MEDITATE UPON:

“But now in Christ you who were sometimes far off are made near by the blood of Jesus” Eph. 2:13

Those of you who have never come to Jesus' cross and received the cleansing power of His blood are “far off,” separated from God for eternity, unless you ask God to forgive you of your unbelief in His provision for your sin and salvation and simply ask Jesus to come into your heart. Let the Holy Spirit do a work for eternity now! Then you will be able to share Jesus with someone who is “far off.”

When God saw everything that He had created He saw “that it was very good.” Rejoice with the Father over every new life born by the Spirit into his family as these lessons are studied. Rejoice that Jesus is the giver of life, that He is the sustainer of life and that He is the Way to the Father God. Just bow your head and rejoice in your heart. Now ask Jesus for His mind as you study your lesson and do the questions.

### QUESTIONS;

1. In review give:
  - a. The name of the author of Galatians.
  - b. When it was written.
  - c. Where Galatian was located.
  - d. Why the epistle was written.
  - e. What its main theme is.
2.
  - a. Read Acts 13:1 - 5 and tell how Paul received his commission.
  - b. In John 15:16 there are wonderful, personal words. Write out what they mean to you.
3.
  - a. What does Paul say about his credentials?
  - b. How can you identify with Paul about your credentials?
4.
  - a. Paul tells us something very important about Jesus in v.1. What is it?
  - b. Read Romans 8:11. In the first person, tell why this verse is important to you.
  - c. In what way can 1` Cor. 6:14 give you peace?
5.
  - a. Give the names of the cities where the churches were located in Galatia. (See a Bible Map.

If you do not have one call another class member for help.) See Acts 13:51 and 14:6.

- b. What does Acts 14:19, 20 tell you about Paul's reception in one of the cities where he preached?
6.
  - a. Paul's greeting in v.3 is to everyone, convert and non-convert. Tell what the greeting is and what relationship the two main words have to each other.
  - b. What do those two words mean to you?
7. What was Paul amazed or astonished about? What did he say about it?
8. Paul was quite adamant about keeping the gospel simple and pure. Read 2 Cor. 11:13 - 15 and tell who the real enemy of Jesus is and the different form he takes.
9. Write out 2 Cor. 11:3,4 (in your own words) and tell what "another" or "different" gospel means.
10.
  - a. What is the true gospel? See Rom. 3:22 - 24; Eph. 2:8,9.
  - b. Why is anything that is not the true gospel really not a gospel at all?
  - c. Are there "other gospels" today? What do the notes say about the false teachers' aim?
  - d. Write Romans 10:9,10 out as your personal testimony.
11.
  - a. What does v.8 say is the penalty for rejecting Christ?
  - b. How can this knowledge help you win unsaved family members and friends to Christ?
12. Why do you think Paul repeated his statement in v.9?
13.
  - a. What is the first question Paul asked in v.10?
  - b. What is Paul's second question?
  - c. What is Paul's final consensus of the matter?
  - d. What did Paul write to the Thessalonians in 1 Thess. 2:4 that enlarges upon his thought in v.10?
14. What does John 12:26 tell you Jesus said about service to Him?