

Crucified with Christ

Lesson One: A Different Gospel

Galatians 1:1-10

1. According to Galatians 1:1, who is the writer of the letter? How does he describe himself? Why is this important?
2. In Galatians 2:2, how is the letter addressed? In which cities are these churches most likely found? Why?
3. In Galatians 1:3-4, from whom does Paul seek a blessing? How is Jesus described? Why does he describe Jesus in this way?
4. According to Galatians 1:6, what are the Galatians doing? How does Paul react to this? Why would he react in this way?
5. What does Paul reveal in Galatians 1:7 about the nature of this "different" gospel? Why has it arisen? What should this teach us today?

We, or an Angel from Heaven

One of the greatest tragedies of the Christian era has been the willingness of those who are reputedly the people of God to listen to anybody but God. Since the earliest days of the first-century church, Satan has marketed an ingenious variety of different gospels which are not really different. In today's "Christian" buffet line of choices, any sort of religious appetite can find a church that will satisfy it.

If you want a church long on ritual and short on moral demands, Satan will be happy to provide it. If you want a church that thrives on emotionalism and excess, Satan's got one that's just right for you. In fact, even if you want a church that welcomes the practicing homosexual and every other variety of unrepentant sinner, Satan will be happy to lead you to a place of so-called worship that fits your preference.

God, of course, is not nearly as big on "Worship at the church of your choice" as the devil is. Instead, God takes the quite reasonable stance that if we want to share in the benefits of the sacrifice of His Son, we must worship at the church of His choice, not ours. The Lord's church is not a church for every appetite. It does not fulfill the desires of the apathetic, the hysterical, or the sensual. Its promise is that if we hunger and thirst for righteousness, we will be satisfied.

Just as there is one gospel, there can only be one assembly of people that hears it. When we hear the truth and obey the truth, we join that collection of saints. As we continue in the truth, we continue in that fellowship. If we seek to have our ears tickled with anything but the truth, we forsake it. There is nothing easy about righteousness. The lover of truth does not walk a soft road.

6. In Galatians 1:8-9, what does Paul say about those who preach any other gospel? How broad is the reach of this condemnation? What should we learn from this?

7. What rhetorical question does Paul ask in Galatians 1:10? How does he answer it? Why would Paul bring this up here?

Galatians 1:11-24

1. According to Galatians 1:11-12, what is Paul's gospel not? From whom did he not learn it? From whom did he learn it? Why is it important that Paul establish this here?
2. How does Paul describe his previous conduct in Galatians 1:13-14? Why did he behave in this way? What does this teach us about zeal alone?
3. How does Paul describe the actions of God in Galatians 1:15-16? Where else in the Bible do we find a description of this event? How do the two descriptions compare? Why is this significant?
4. According to Galatians 1:16-17, what did Paul not do when he was converted? What did he do instead? What does Paul mean for this to establish? Where does this fit in the Acts story?
5. As Paul reveals in Galatians 1:18-19, where did he go three years later? Whom did he see? How long was he there? Why does Paul bring this up? When does it occur in Acts?
6. What assertion does Paul make in Galatians 1:20? Is this something we would commonly expect an apostle to say? Why does Paul say it here?
7. According to Galatians 1:21-24, what did Paul do next? Who hadn't really seen him yet? What did they hear of him? How did they react? What should this teach us? Where does this belong in the Acts timeline?