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**BIBLE STUDY**

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**BEWARE OF THE PERVERTED GOSPEL**

**Galatians 1:1-24**

Galatians is a letter from Paul to the churches in Galatia. At the time that Paul wrote this letter, Galatia was a Roman province. This area is now known as the southern part of Turkey. This letter was probably written somewhere between 55 and 60 A.D. In this letter, Paul is explaining again the doctrine of justification through faith. Some of the Judaizers were trying to include keeping of the law of Moses as part of the Christian doctrine. Paul is not saying in this letter, that justification through faith gives the Christian the privilege of sinning without being held responsible for the sin. He is explaining that Christianity is a fellowship with the Father provided through His Son Jesus Christ.

In this, Paul is, also, explaining that he is truly an apostle of the Lord. Many were doubting Paul's right to apostleship, because He was brought into the work after the crucifixion of Jesus. The churches in Galatia had been founded on the first missionary journey of Paul. Paul was very concerned about these converts and visited them on his second and his third missionary journey, as well. These people were strong-willed people, and Paul felt that he must keep as tight a rein as he possibly could from a distance. It seemed in all of these churches, the minute he left, people with other doctrines tried to come in and change what Paul had established. This was a warning not to do that. Many Jews had received Christ but were trying to incorporate Christianity and Judaism. You cannot mix other beliefs with Christianity, and have Christianity remain strong. We should remember that today. Christianity must not be diluted to include other beliefs.

***Galatians 1:1 "Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;)"***

We see a declaration of who Paul is right at the very beginning. We find that Paul reminds them immediately that his call was of the Lord Himself. When we speak of a disciple of that day, we think of the 120, who had disciplined themselves to follow Jesus. We, also, think of the twelve who Jesus chose out of that larger group to make them apostles. We then realize that Matthias was also one of them. The Lord Himself had chosen him to replace the traitor, Judas Iscariot. Paul was an apostle also, even though he was not of the original group. Jesus had appeared to him on the road to Damascus and called him to apostleship. Paul never forgets to remind them that Jesus rose from the dead. These people all believed in God the Father, and Paul reminds them that it was the Father's will for Jesus to rise from the dead. To call Paul an apostle, verifies the fact that his authority is from God. Mighty signs and wonders followed these apostles. They were empowered of God to represent him in the earth. They were, also, empowered to lay hands on others that they might receive the Spirit to minister in a certain capacity. These are called, gifts of the Spirit. One very important thing we must note in Paul's statement, is that he was not called of men, or by a man. Jesus was much more than man. That is what Paul is saying there.

***Galatians 1:2 "And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia:"***

Notice in this, that Paul travelled with many others. There was usually a large group who went with him into each area. Probably, some of these very brethren with Paul, now, were the same that had been with him establishing the churches of Galatia. Galatia was an area with many small towns, and, perhaps, each had a small group of Christians meeting in a church. This letter is of a general nature. It is not to a specific church, but to all in this little province. These Galatians were partly European. When Gaul and this group came through this area on their way to Greece, they were stopped and surrounded. They intermarried with the local people. This, then, is speaking to these Europeans mixed with the local people. In the 18th chapter of Acts, Galatia is spoken of as a region. It seems there was not idolatry in this area as in other areas, but Jewish teachings filtering into the church. The argument was between law and grace. This could even be thought of as between the flesh and the spirit, also. This was not an argument with those who were idolaters, but those with another doctrine.

***Galatians 1:3 "Grace [be] to you and peace from God the Father, and [from] our Lord Jesus Christ,"***

This statement is strictly a statement of Paul. He spoke this often. "Grace", of course, means unmerited favor. All Christians received grace, not because of their actions, but because of God's love toward them. The only real peace is the peace of God. Even in the midst of terrible trials and temptations, we can know this peace of God. It surpasses the reason of man. Jesus is the King of Peace. Peace will reign on this earth the 1000 years that Jesus brings peace to the earth. In the meantime, there will be no peace on the earth, except that inner peace that Christians have when they totally trust the Lord Jesus. We have mentioned before, the name of Jesus meaning Saviour, and the name Christ meaning the anointed one, or Messiah. The Old Testament uses the name Lord for the same person the New Testament calls Jesus Christ. These Jewish people were looking for Messiah. This is Paul's way of telling them that Jesus was their long-awaited Messiah.

***Galatians 1:4 "Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:"***

Jesus, willingly, gave Himself to save His people. All of creation belonged to Jesus. He was Creator God. In John chapter one, we find that He made all things, and without Him was not anything created. It was right that the Creator would give His flesh for His creation. Jesus did follow the will of the Father in the crucifixion, but it was Jesus' choice to do, or not to do. He gave His body on the cross to purchase our salvation. We see in the following Scripture, that it was within the will of Jesus to do with His own life as He would.

***John 10:18 "No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."***

Egypt is a type of this evil world we live in. We must leave Egypt, before we can go to the promised land. The promised land for a Christian is heaven. Jesus is the door that we enter in by.

***Galatians 1:5 "To whom [be] glory for ever and ever. Amen."***

***Galatians 1:6 "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:"***

Paul stops to glorify the Father and the Son here. This glory shall never cease. "Amen" means so be it. God, Himself, had called them into the grace of Christ, through the teaching of Paul. He is amazed that they have already forgotten the teachings he had brought to them and had gotten into error. It seems that the very minute he left, they started listening to these Judaizers who were trying to put them under Moses' law. Paul is very disappointed that the gospel that he gave them was not better rooted within them. The thought that they would turn from his teachings so fast, makes Paul believe they are unstable in their belief. They would be like those fallen away from grace. They are actually saying, that grace is of none effect. All of this is beyond Paul's comprehension.

***Galatians 1:7 "Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ."***

Christianity brings hope. To go back to the law would not be good news {gospel} at all. The condemnation of the law brought hopelessness. For any Christian to give up the hope that is in Christ for the hopelessness of the law is not understandable. "Pervert" in this Scripture, means corrupt. This, then, would mean that they had changed it, and corrupted the message of hope that Paul had brought them.

***Galatians 1:8 "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."***

We know that Paul was primarily speaking of the message he had brought them, but as we have said before, many ministers traveled with Paul and they all brought this same message of hope. There are two kinds of angels. The angels that stayed in heaven, and did not follow Lucifer, minister good. The angels that followed Lucifer out of heaven are already cursed of God. They minister lies and deception, because they are working for that old devil Lucifer. Many people call them demons. They would definitely try to bring another message that would put you back under the law. Jesus commissioned Paul to bring the good news of the gospel, not the bad news of the law.

***Galatians 1:9 "As we said before, so say I now again, If any [man] preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."***

This is so important that Paul has mentioned it the second time. This should be a lesson to all of us, about how important it is to not look for another doctrine after we have been saved. If the message we receive is good enough to save us, it is, also, good enough to keep us. In our time frame, there are many false doctrines being proclaimed as the truth. We must examine the things that we hear and make sure they line up with the Word of God. False doctrine is usually pretty close to the truth. There will be just minor variations here and there. It will sound very near the truth. We are told to try the spirits and see whether they are of God or not.

***I John 4:1 "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."***

Look, with me, at how you can tell if they be of God or not.

***I John 4:2 "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:"***

***I John 4:3 "And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that [spirit] of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world."***

***Galatians 1:10 "For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ."***

You see that Paul is fully aware of the obligation to speak exactly what God has given him to say. Choose now whom you will serve, God or man. We must make the same decision that Paul faced. Paul had been a Pharisee he knew exactly what they taught. He, also, knew that the teaching of Judaism was another doctrine. Grace and law were not the same. The natural thing for Paul to do would have been to side in with these Jews, of whom he had been one, but he found out better when he met Jesus on the road to Damascus. Paul knew better than anyone else, the bondage that the law brought. He, also, had experienced first-hand the freedom of grace through Jesus Christ. Man is a free agent. We may choose God, or man. It is our choice. The way of the law is very similar to what we see in many countries today. The law burdens people down with a heavy load to bear. Grace lifts that load.

***I Thessalonians 2:4 "But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts."***

***Galatians 1:11 "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man."***

Paul had been taught the law in the school of Gamaliel in Jerusalem, but God the Holy Spirit had taught Paul the lesson in grace. His teaching of man had made him a Pharisee, not a Christian. The gospel that Paul had brought these Galatians was not what he had learned as a Pharisee but was a direct revelation of Christ to Paul through the Holy Spirit. Paul's learning of the gospel of Christ, then, was not of man, or by man, but of God. Jesus Christ is the Truth. This is what Paul taught. Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

***Galatians 1:12 "For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught [it], but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."***

Actually, Paul was 3 years in the desert, and the Holy Spirit of God taught him during that time. Paul's first encounter with the Lord on the road to Damascus was a revealing in itself. When the Light of Jesus shines upon you, you are never the same as you were before. Immediately, Paul was transformed from a doubter to a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. Before, he believed that a troublemaker called Jesus existed. Now his eyes have been opened, and he realizes that this Jesus, whom he persecuted, was, in fact, God manifest in the flesh. He even immediately called Him Lord. His eyes of understanding were opened at this time, and he was prepared to receive the real truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Paul had been taught of man, but it was the Jewish traditions that he had been taught, not the gospel of Christ. The Truth was revealed to him by the Holy Spirit.

***Galatians 1:13 "For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it:"***

Paul is speaking of the law that had been given to the Jews. Paul was educated by Gamaliel in this law, that they called the law of Moses. Paul believed that he was doing God's will, when he persecuted the Christians. He was very anxious to be rid of these Christians and their gospel. Paul was a Pharisee of the Pharisees. He was on a journey to persecute Christians, when he first met Jesus. It is easier for Paul to witness to someone that is in the same position he had been in.

***Galatians 1:14 "And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers."***

Let's look at a few of the Scriptures pertaining to the very thing Paul is saying here.

***Acts 22:3 "I am verily a man [which am] a Jew, born in Tarsus, [a city] in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, [and] taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day."***

***Acts 26:5 "Which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee."***

***Acts 26:9 "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth."***

We see from this and the next 2 verses, that Paul had been a Jew, just like them. In fact, he had been a very strict Jew, a Pharisee.

***Philippians 3:5 "Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, [of] the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee;"***

***Philippians 3:6 "Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless."***

***Galatians 1:15 "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called [me] by his grace,"***

God's foreknowledge was that Paul would be an apostle. God called Paul even in his mother's womb. We are all saved by grace, but Paul's calling was of grace. God knew the heart of Paul. He knew that Paul wanted to do the will of God. Paul just did not know the will of God for his life, until he was blinded by the Light of Jesus on the road to Damascus. Paul's call was of God, and not man. Paul owed no explanation to the others. It pleased God to make Paul an apostle.

***Galatians 1:16 "To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:"***

Paul did not run and get advice from his friends to make sure God had called him. This is good advice for us, as well. We must not question our call. We must do exactly what God has called us to do without conferring with our friends first. God called you, not your friends. It would be nice if they approved of your call, but that is highly unlikely. Notice, what happened to Paul. Jesus was revealed inside of Paul when the Light of God shined inside his understanding. This Light of Jesus, does away with all darkness and deception. Notice, this was for a purpose. Paul was to bring the message God had revealed to him, so that he would bring it to the Gentiles. God does not idly call us to a job. Each job God gives, is for a purpose. We do not question God by getting confirmations from people.

***Galatians 1:17 "Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus."***

Not even the other apostles were to teach Paul. He was to be taught of the Spirit of God. Paul was in the desert of Arabia 3 years in training by the Holy Spirit. We will see this in the next verse.

***Galatians 1:18 "Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days."***

Peter was the head of the Christian movement at this time. Paul was showing, that not even Peter taught him what to say. It was the Holy Spirit. When Paul was ready to minister the gospel, it was understandable that he would go tell Peter. Jesus had given the keys to Peter, as we read in the following verses.

***Matthew 16:18 "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."***

***Matthew 16:19 "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."***

***Galatians 1:19 "But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother."***

James was Mary's son, and would be the half-brother of Jesus. James was the leader of the church in Jerusalem. We remember that James and Jesus' other brothers and sisters did not believe Jesus to be the Christ, until He arose from the dead. Paul is going into detail about who he had been with, so that all would know that he was not taught of the other disciples.

***Galatians 1:20 "Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not."***

We see an almost identical Scripture in Romans

***Romans 9:1 "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost,"***

***Galatians 1:21 "Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia;"***

Most of Paul's ministry was done as a missionary. He did minister in Jerusalem, but his primary ministry was in the out-lying area. Paul established many churches on these journeys.

***Galatians 1:22 "And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judaea which were in Christ:"***

Paul did not go to churches that had already been established by someone else. Paul was an evangelist. His ministry was in starting new churches in areas where there was no Christian activity. He was one of the very first missionaries. Jesus had started many churches in Judaea, Himself. They were well cared for. They were not Paul's calling.

***Galatians 1:23 "But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed."***

The word had gotten to these churches in Judaea that Paul, who had persecuted them in the past, had been saved and was preaching the gospel to the lost. Some had a difficult time believing that Paul had changed. Perhaps, this is one reason that Paul went to places that were not yet committed to Christianity.

***Galatians 1:24 "And they glorified God in me."***

This had been such a drastic change in Paul, that they knew it had to be God who did it. Paul was not glorified by these people, but God. To think that God would save someone who had been so terribly opposed to Him, was almost unbelievable.

**QUESTIONS**

1. Who wrote Galatians?
2. Who was Galatia ruled by at the time this letter was written?
3. What doctrine is Paul explaining over again in this letter?
4. Christianity is a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with the Father through His Son Jesus Christ.
5. Many were doubting Paul's right to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
6. When were the churches in Galatia founded?
7. What two doctrines were they trying to incorporate?
8. What did Paul call himself in verse 1 of Galatians?
9. Verse 2 includes whom in the sending of this message to the Galatians?
10. These Galatians were part \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
11. Where is the promised land for the Christian?
12. What does "Amen" mean?
13. Who had called them into the grace of Christ?
14. What were the Judaizers trying to do?
15. What about all of this was beyond the comprehension of Paul?
16. The condemnation of the law brought \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
17. What does, pervert, in verse 7 mean?
18. What are the two types of angels?
19. What had Jesus commissioned Paul to do?
20. What danger was Paul writing these Galatians about?
21. Why did Paul mention this warning the second time?
22. Why do so many people accept a false doctrine for the truth?
23. How can you tell if a spirit is of God, or not?
24. Do I now persuade \_\_\_\_\_, or \_\_\_\_?
25. Galatians chapter 1 verse 10 and what other Scripture are saying the same thing?
26. The law burdens people down, but \_\_\_\_\_\_ lifts that load.
27. Paul's teaching by man had caused him to be a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
28. Who taught Paul the message of grace?
29. How long was Paul in the desert being taught?
30. When was the first moment Paul was changed?
31. Paul was changed from a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
32. In verse 13, Paul speaks of the law as what?
33. Who had Paul been educated by?
34. Who had Paul conferred with to make sure of his calling?
35. Who was Paul called to bring the good news to?
36. Exactly where had Paul first gone after his conversion?
37. Who was the first apostle Paul went to after his 3 year stay in the desert?
38. What half-brother of Jesus is mentioned as being the second Paul saw?
39. Why did Paul not go to Judaea to preach?
40. Verse 24 says, they glorified whom?