

GALATIANS

NO OTHER GOSPEL

Paul's Defense vs. The Accusations

Week 3: Galatians Book Study

Book of Galatians

Freedom in Christ

Week	Section	Topic	Teacher
1: May 3 rd	Galatians Intro	Paul's Background & Introduction	Ron Grebe
2: May 10 th	Galatians 1:1-10	Greeting & No Other Gospel	Ron Grebe
3: May 17 th	Galatians 1:11-24	Paul Called by God	Stew Bruner
4: May 24 th	Galatians 2:1-10	Paul Accepted by the Apostles	Adam Collins
5: May 31 st	Galatians 2:11-21	Paul Opposes Peter	Mike Gann
6: June 7 th	Galatians 3:1-14	By Faith or Works of the Law	Stew Bruner
7: June 14 th	Galatians 3:15-29	The Law and the Promise	Ron Grebe
8: June 21 st	Galatians 4:1-20	Sons and Heirs & Paul's Concern	Mike Gann
9: June 28 th	Galatians 4:21-31	Example of Hagar and Sarah	Grant Phipps
10: July 5 th	Galatians 5:1-15	Christ Has Set Us Free	Ron Grebe
11: July 12 th	Galatians 5:16-26	Keep in Step with the Spirit	Grant Phipps
12: July 19 th	Galatians 6:1-10	Bear One Another's Burdens	Mike Gann
13: July 26 th	Galatians 6:11-18	Final Warning and Conclusion	Ron Grebe

Galatians

- In Galatians, Paul aggressively defends his **apostolic authority** and the gospel of grace against "**false teachers**" claiming that Gentile Christians must follow Jewish laws (circumcision) to be saved.
- Outline of Galatians:

Galatians		
Chapters 1-2 Defense of Authority	Chapters 3-4 Justification by Faith	Chapters 5-6 Freedom and the Spirit
Paul defends his apostolic calling and asserts that his gospel message came directly from Jesus Christ, not men.	Righteousness comes through faith, just as Abraham was justified, not by adhering to the law. The law was a temporary guardian until Christ arrived.	Believers are called to freedom, not to use it as an opportunity for the flesh, but to walk in the Spirit, producing "fruits" such as love, joy, and peace.

Overview of Week 3

- Not doing life of Paul again – Ron covered it thoroughly Week 1
- Not the content of the argument but Paul's strategy in waging it
- From Paul's response, determine what the personal accusations against Paul actually were
 - Goal #1 of false teachers = discredit the true teacher
 - Examine the ultimate question: "Where is the seat of your authority?"
 - As Ron mentioned, Paul's claim to authority is his "Apostleship"
- Who authorizes the Gospel Paul preaches?
 - Why is that significant?
 - What authorization options exist?
- Who authorizes the Gospel you preach?
- A Stew tangent -- if there is time

Have you ever had to defend yourself, your actions, or your ministry choices?

How did you go about it?

To what did you appeal or what did you base your defense on?

Galatians 1:11-16

¹¹ For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. ¹² For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but *I received it* through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

¹³ For you have heard of my former manner of life in Judaism, how I used to persecute the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it; ¹⁴ and I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my countrymen, being more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions. ¹⁵ But when God, who had set me apart *even* from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, was pleased ¹⁶ to reveal His Son in me so that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood,

Galatians 1:17-24

- ¹⁷ nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went away to Arabia, and returned once more to Damascus.
- ¹⁸ Then three years later I went up to Jerusalem to become acquainted with Cephas, and stayed with him fifteen days. ¹⁹ But I did not see any other of the apostles except James, the Lord's brother. ²⁰ (Now in what I am writing to you, I assure you before God that I am not lying.) ²¹ Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. ²² I was *still* unknown by sight to the churches of Judea which were in Christ; ²³ but only, they kept hearing, "He who once persecuted us is now preaching the faith which he once tried to destroy." ²⁴ And they were glorifying God because of me.

Tests for a 'Big-A' Apostle

Acts 1:21-22

1. Accompanied Jesus for entire earthly ministry
2. Seen the resurrected Jesus and the Ascension
3. (By implication) Taught by Jesus Himself

What about Paul?

1. Met the resurrected Jesus in person
2. Chosen directly by Jesus
3. Taught the Gospel by Jesus
4. Had approval of other Apostles

The Judaizers' Mindset

- Premise: Jesus was JEWISH!
 - Premise: Jesus was a Jewish rabbi
 - Devout Jews have long followed leading rabbis
 - Premise: 'The Way' is just another Jewish sect
 - "Jesus Followers" are just like Essenes or Zealots
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- Conclusion: "Dance with who brung you" (aka Moses)

Read Between the Lines

1. Didn't have apostolic authority on the Christian side (Acts 1:21-22) or the approval of leaders on the Jewish side (Pharisees & Gamaliel)
2. Failed to respect the law and the traditions, aka "Moses AND," by preaching sufficiency of Christ alone
3. Was a man-pleaser only peddling the gospel for monetary gain
4. Crafted his own gospel message absent input from those taught by Jesus, who resided in Jerusalem, the seat of *The Way*

Defending Paul's Apostleship

- Paul's Defense Dilemma
 - If he leans on the authority of the Jerusalem Apostles...
 - If he doesn't lean on the authority of the Jerusalem Apostles...
- Either way he risks splitting the church
- He risks appearing to trash the Old Testament/Judaism
- He could be interpreted as antinomian – a 'law until himself'
 - Anti + Nomos

“Paul vigorously defends his right to go directly to Christ without the mediation of Peter and the rest..., but is careful to do so without breaking with the Old Testament and apostolic traditions...” --
Interpreters' Bible

Summary from *Interpreters' Bible*

- His approach was to tread a middle ground in arguing that his gospel was communicated to him by Jesus in person AND that the pillars of the church recognized it as true AND recognized his right to preach it to the Gentiles as they were doing to the Jews.
- He is careful to show that he did not go seeking the apostolic stamp of approval by explaining his intent in visiting Jerusalem was to get equal treatment for the Gentile believers, not approval.
- Paul also shows he's not subordinate to the Apostles by recounting how he directly confronted Peter at Antioch in Gal 2:11-14.

The Question behind the Question

Ultimately, “people are asking Paul the same questions that the Pharisees asked John the Baptist while he was baptizing down at the Jordan river. They said, ‘Who gave you the authority to do this? From whence comes your authority?’ (John 1:24-25)

When Jesus cleansed the temple, they asked Him the same question. ‘Who gave you the authority to do this’ (Mark 11:28)? People it seems are always looking for the basis of your authority.”

-- Chuck Smith, Calvary Chapel, *Galatians Commentary*, c.2000

Apostolic Succession/"Laying On Of Hands"

- Clearly began as an office held only by "The Original 12" from Acts
- R.C. Sproul says "there is no hint in the New Testament that the Apostles replaced their fellows as they died..."
- Clement and Polycarp distinguished between the apostolic office and their own offices as pastors and bishops in the early church
- Some religions believe that they actually did and continue it today

The Role of Certification

1. *What is your feeling about the competency level of people who loudly proclaim all of their impressive certifications?*
2. *Are there horrible practitioners who are nonetheless certified?*
3. *Are there fantastic practitioners who remain uncertified?*

The Evangelical View

Succession is of the pure Biblical message, not the messenger

It is the Word of Truth and the trustworthy message of the gospel that gets passed down from believer to believer, not an office

Stew's View...

There is only one who can actually ordain a man to the ministry and that is Jesus Christ Himself; men at best can only ratify a selection that was already made

So what about seminary & ordination & commissioning?

- *What's your view?*

Paul's Viewpoint

- ‘Paul said, ‘Hey, I wasn't ordained by man. I'm an apostle but "not of men, neither by man." I didn't look to man for my authority. I wasn't called by any man. I wasn't ordained by any man, "but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead.”
-- Chuck Smith... (yes, again)

Paul fellowshiped with the risen Jesus and expected believers to do likewise, placing themselves under the full control of Holy Spirit

How does that work today? Can anyone make that same declaration?

If Time, The Even Bigger Picture

- Consider Paul's approach in 2 Cor 3:17 "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is Liberty"
- Doesn't this boil down to being able to trust the Spirit of God to be working in another believer's life?
- Stew's Drastic-Torah-Interpretation Limitation
 - Power-protect approach of Pharisees and Sadducees
 - Conviction of Jesus on blasphemy charges vs. clear testimony of the prophets
- The Holy Spirit got imprisoned within the very Scriptures He inspired!
 - How many churches are doing same today?
 - How many believers are doing same today?
 - How are you not doing the same today?

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