

The Book of Galatians

I am expectant as we begin with this series on Galatians this week. We will be going through Galatians in a number of weeks, but we won't do this on consecutive Sundays, the messages will be interspersed between other messages. For example, my husband will complete his series on higher levels, and then I will do the second message in the series at the end of February.

It is a very enriching process to look at a complete epistle, or letter, or even book of the bible. Whenever we read the Bible, it's critical that we understand the context surrounding the writing of the book, who it was written by and why and whom it was written to. A really simple example of the importance of this is a telephone call. If we only hear one side of the conversation, it is easy to misunderstand the complete message that is being communicated to the person on the other end. In the same way, the books of the Bible were written to audiences or about people immersed in specific cultures and situations, we need to understand the contexts in order to best understand what the author was writing.

Another beautiful thing when studying a complete book is that we tend to get the message in its entirety and not a partial message. Taking a commonly used verse, for example,

"And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself." Jn. 12:32

This He said, signifying by what death He would die. Jn. 12:33.

Context makes all the difference to the meaning of a portion of scripture.

Another e.g.

...As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he...

Do not eat the bread of a selfish man,

Or desire his delicacies;

For as he thinks in his heart, so is he [in behaviour—one who manipulates].

He says to you, "Eat and drink,"

Yet his heart is not with you [but it is begrudging the cost].

The morsel which you have eaten you will vomit up,

And you will waste your compliments. Prov 23:6-8AMP

Don't eat with people who are stingy;

don't desire their delicacies.

They are always thinking about how much it costs.

"Eat and drink," they say, but they don't mean it. NLT

The beautiful thing when we study an entire book is that we tend to understand what the author is saying at a deeper level because we are reading the book in its entirety and so are better positioned to contextualise what is being said.

Galatians

The book of Galatians was written by the Apostle Paul to a group of churches in the region of Galatia around AD49 or 50; only 15-20 years after the death of Christ. In the book of Galatians, the Apostle Paul very clearly elucidates the gospel. What it is and what happens when we try to change it. He clearly draws the lines of truth, excluding any additions from man. You see, it's really critical that we understand that truth is truth, the gospel is the gospel, and we can't change it to suit our culture, needs, passions, lusts, situation, emotions, family or preferences. If that were the case, it would not be truth.

The poet Steve Turner describes brilliantly what many think when it comes to religion: "Jesus was a good man just like Buddha, Mohammed, and ourselves. We believe he was a good teacher of morals, but we believe that his good morals are really bad. We believe that all religions are basically the same, at least the one we read was. They all believe in love and goodness, they only differ on matters of creation, sin, heaven, hell, God, and salvation."

Often the parable of the elephant is used to illustrate the sheer arrogance of Christianity. It goes something like this: "Three blind scribes are touching different parts of an elephant. The one who is holding the tail says, "This is a rope." Another holding the elephant's leg says, "This is not a rope; you are wrong. It is a tree." Still another who is holding the trunk of the elephant says, "You are both wrong. It is a snake!" The moral of the story is that all religions are like these men. They each touch a different part of ultimate reality and therefore any one of them is arrogant to say they have the whole truth.

But can you see what is being suggested in this? Jesus, Muhammad, Buddha, Krishna and whomever else has a claim regarding truth must have partial sight, and I am the one who sees all.

Some people struggle with the exclusivity of truth and the Gospel.

- **How can you exclude people and other religions?**
- **How can the Christian claim to have the truth and exclude all others?**
- **How can the Gospel exclude parts of my culture? Surely God understands if I mix some in. That's where we find synchrotism happening. A bit of ancestral worship, and a bit of Christianity... "Hedging your bets".**
- **Jesus may have said he was the way to the Father, but how can I follow him and become an intolerant person who excludes others, even my family and culture? Surely that's not loving? Surely that's not God's heart?**

We need to think carefully about our view of the Gospel because the reality is that whatever position we hold will exclude something.

"...*Truth by definition is exclusive.* Everything cannot be true. If everything is true, then nothing is false. And if nothing is false then it would also be true to say everything is false. We cannot have it both ways. One should not be surprised at the claims of exclusivity. The reality is that even those who deny truth's exclusivity, in effect, exclude those who do not deny it. The truth quickly emerges. The law of non-contradiction does apply to reality: Two contradictory statements cannot both be true in the same sense. ..." Ravi Zacharias

The Gospel that Jesus endorsed and taught and that the apostles of old taught is the truth. Any time we add something on to it, or tweak it here and there, or change it somewhat to suit our situation, emotions, experience, culture, and so forth. At that point, it ceases to be the Gospel, and most often becomes religion. Religion is dead works. A set of rules and laws to keep, to ensure favour from God, and ones that Galatians will show us, simply don't work. This was one of the primary issues Paul was addressing in the book of Galatians.

“The gospel—the message that we are more wicked than we ever dared believe, but more loved and accepted in Christ than we ever dared hope—creates a radical new dynamic for personal growth, for obedience, for love.” Timothy Keller.

My prayer is that during this series on Galatians, we would have a fresh revelation of the Gospel, and understand where we need to align our Christian lives with the profound truths contained therein.

Author

We are first introduced to Paul when he was Saul of Tarsus. He was standing over the first Christian martyr Stephen looking on as Stephen was stoned to death.

Then they drove him out of the city and began stoning him (Stephen); and the witnesses placed their outer robes at the feet of a young man named Saul. They continued stoning Stephen as he called on the Lord and said, "Lord Jesus, receive and accept and welcome my spirit!" Then falling on his knees [in worship], he cried out loudly, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them [do not charge them]!" When he had said this, he fell asleep [in death]. Saul wholeheartedly approved of Stephen's death... (Acts 7: 58 - 8:1)

From this gruesome introduction to Saul of Tarsus, to the completion of his missionary journeys as the Apostle Paul, we see the transformative power of the Gospel at work in a life.

If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being

conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. (Phil 3:4-11)

Saul had an encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus. He was on his way to persecute more Christians.

Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" Then the Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads." So he, trembling and astonished, said, "Lord, what do You want me to do?" Then the Lord said to him, "Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do." ... And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus named Ananias; and to him the Lord said in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Here I am, Lord." So the Lord said to him, "Arise and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus, for behold, he is praying. And in a vision he has seen a man named Ananias coming in and putting his hand on him, so that he might receive his sight."

Then Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem. And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name." But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake." And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." ... Immediately he preached the Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God. Acts 9:1-20.

This gospel that Paul writes about in Galatians, he experienced its transformative power first-hand, and was instructed in it first-hand by the Lord Himself.

- **What was your state when you got saved?**
- **Were you a “good” person?**
- **From what were you saved?**
- **To what have you been saved?**
- **Where would you be if you had not been saved?**
- **How much praise and thanksgiving do you give to God for this?**

Background and Context to the book of Galatians

The apostle Paul was a church-planting missionary. He often wrote to the churches after having planted them to instruct, encourage, supervise them and so forth. In this case, Barnabus and Paul had planted churches in south Galatia, - Iconium, Lystra and Derbe in Galatia (present-day Turkey). These missionary journeys are documented somewhat in Acts 13-14. It is likely that this letter was addressed to these churches, although some scholars argue that it may have been written to churches in north Galatia that were not mentioned in Acts.

Most scholars agree that this letter was written by Paul around AD49-50 (only 15-20 years after the death of Christ), before the Jerusalem Council when these matters were addressed.

The first Christians in Jerusalem were Jewish. As the gospel spread, increasing numbers of Gentiles began to receive Christ. A group of teachers in Galatia began to insist that the Gentile Christians practice certain traditional ceremonial customs of the law of Moses, as the Jewish Christians did. They taught that the Gentiles had to observe all the dietary laws and be circumcised for full acceptance and to be completely pleasing to God. Some of these teachers actually followed after Paul teaching the Gentile converts that they had to first become Jews in order to become Christians. Although this specific controversy may seem remote to us today, Paul addressed it with an abiding, all-important truth. By insisting on Christ-plus-anything-else as a requirement for full acceptance by God, these teachers were presenting a whole different way of relating to God (a “different gospel”, 1:6) from the one Paul

had given them (“the one we preached”, 1:8). It was in response to this threat to the Gospel that Paul wrote this fiery letter to the Galatians. He was very clear in his writing. He forcefully and unapologetically fought the “different gospel”, insisting that the Old Testament laws and customs will no bring salvation. He reiterated that a person is saved by grace through faith.

In the letter to the Galatians, Paul expounds in detail what the gospel is and how it works. But the intended audience of this exposition of the gospel is not unbelievers, but rather professing Christians. It is not simply non-Christians who need to hear the Gospel, but also believers who need continually to learn the gospel and apply it to their lives.

Galatians 1 (Amp).

Paul, an apostle (not commissioned and sent from men nor through the agency of man, but through Jesus Christ—the Messiah—and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead), and all the brothers who are with me,

To the churches of Galatia:

Grace to you and peace [inner calm and spiritual well-being] from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself [as a sacrifice to atone] for our sins [to save and sanctify us] so that He might rescue us from this present evil age, in accordance with the will and purpose and plan of our God and Father— to Him be [ascribed all] the glory through the ages of the ages. Amen.

Perversion of the Gospel

I am astonished and extremely irritated that you are so quickly shifting your allegiance and deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different [even contrary] gospel; which is really not another [gospel]; but there are [obviously] some [people masquerading as teachers] who are disturbing and confusing you [with a misleading, counterfeit teaching] and want to distort the gospel of Christ [twisting it into something which it absolutely is not]. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we [originally] preached to you, let him be condemned to destruction! As we have said before, so I now say again, if

anyone is preaching to you a gospel different from that which you received [from us], let him be condemned to destruction!

Am I now trying to win the favor and approval of men, or of God? Or am I seeking to please someone? If I were still trying to be popular with men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ.

Paul Defends His Ministry

For I want you to know, believers, that the gospel which was preached by me is not man's gospel [it is not a human invention, patterned after any human concept]. For indeed I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a [direct] revelation of Jesus Christ.

You have heard of my career and former manner of life in Judaism, how I used to hunt down and persecute the church of God extensively and [with fanatical zeal] tried [my best] to destroy it. And [you have heard how] I surpassed many of my contemporaries among my countrymen in [my advanced study of the laws of] Judaism, as I was extremely loyal to the traditions of my ancestors. But when God, who had chosen me and set me apart before I was born, and called me through His grace, was pleased to reveal His Son in me so that I might preach Him among the Gentiles [as the good news—the way of salvation], I did not immediately consult with anyone [for guidance regarding God's call and His revelation to me]. Nor did I [even] go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia and stayed awhile, and afterward returned once more to Damascus.

Then three years later I did go up to Jerusalem to get acquainted with Cephas (Peter), and I stayed with him fifteen days. But I did not see any other apostle except James, the [half] brother of the Lord. (Now in what I am writing to you, I assure you as if I were standing before God that I am not lying.) Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. And I was still unknown by sight to the churches which were in Christ in Judea (Jerusalem and the surrounding region); they only kept hearing, "He who used to persecute us is now preaching the [good news of the] faith which he once was trying to destroy." And they were glorifying God [as the Author and Source of what had taken place and all that had been accomplished] in me. Gal. 1:1- 24.

Paul's Greeting (Gal. 1:1-5)

Paul's greeting to the churches is brief and direct. In it, he begins with a defence of his apostleship, and rounds it up by stating a summary of the gospel.

Galatians 1:1- 2

Paul, an apostle (not commissioned and sent from men nor through the agency of man, but through Jesus Christ—the Messiah—and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead), and all the brothers who are with me,

To the churches of Galatia:

Greetings in Paul's Letters		
	How does Paul describe himself?	How does Paul describe the recipients?
Gal	*Paul, an apostle – sent not from men nor by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father (Acts 9:1-19)	The churches in Galatia
Rom	Bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle	Beloved of God, called as saints
1 Cor	Called as an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God	Church of God at Corinth, sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling
2 Cor	Apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God	Church of God at Corinth
Eph	Apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God	Saints who are at Ephesus and faithful in Christ Jesus
Phil	Bond-servant of Christ Jesus	Saints in Christ Jesus in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons
Col	Apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God	Saints and faithful brethren in Christ at Colossae
1 Thess	(no description)	Church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ
2 Thess	(no description)	Church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ
1 Tim	Apostle of Christ Jesus according to the commandment of God our Savior, and of Christ Jesus, who is our hope	Timothy, my true child in the faith
2 Tim	Apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, according to the promise of life in Christ Jesus	Timothy, my beloved son
Titus	Bond-servant of God and apostle of Jesus Christ	Titus, my true child in a common faith
Phlm	Prisoner of Christ Jesus	Philemon, beloved brother and fellow worker, and to Apphia our sister, and to rchippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house

*Paul's accusers were claiming that Paul was not really a reliable apostle, and that they had more knowledge and had a more complete version of the gospel. Paul begins his letter by emphasizing that he did not receive his apostolic commission through anyone else at all. No other apostles commissioned him. He was commissioned and taught directly by the risen Jesus Himself (Acts 9:1-19).

- **Do you know that God has called you? Like Paul knew?**
- **Can you define what He has called you to?**
- **Are you constantly reliant on someone else's opinion, endorsement, recognition, praise?**
- **Do you rely more on man's validation than God's calling?**
- **How convinced are you about God's calling on your life?**

In Him also we have received an inheritance [a destiny—we were claimed by God as His own], having been predestined (chosen, appointed beforehand) according to the purpose of Him who works everything in agreement with the counsel and design of His will... Eph 1:11

*Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying:
"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you;
Before you were born I sanctified you;
I ordained you a prophet to the nations." Jer. 1:4-5*

*For You formed my inward parts;
You covered me in my mother's womb.
I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
Marvelous are Your works,
And that my soul knows very well.
My frame was not hidden from You,
When I was made in secret,
And skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.
Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed.
And in Your book they all were written,
The days fashioned for me,
When as yet there were none of them. Ps. 139:13-16*

God has something for each and every person on earth. Everyone is born with a purpose and a reason for existing.

Gal. 1:3-5

*Grace to you and peace [inner calm and spiritual well-being] from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself [as a sacrifice to atone] for our sins [to save and sanctify us] so that He might **rescue** us from this present evil age, in accordance with the will and purpose and plan of our God and Father— to Him be [ascribed all] the glory through the ages of the ages. Amen.*

Paul was also clear about his message. What it was and whom it was to. What is your message? Your life message? Is your life a message? What does it say? Who is the message for in particular? Who is God sending you to in a manner of speaking?

Timothy Keller in his book entitled Galatians for You outlines Paul's summary of the gospel message as such:

Who we are: Helpless and lost. That is what the word “**rescue**” implies in verse 4. Other founders of religions came to teach, not to rescue. Jesus was a great teacher, but when Paul gives us this nutshell version of Jesus' ministry, he makes no mention of that at all. The average person on the street believes that a Christian is someone who follows Christ's teaching and example. But Paul implies that's impossible. After all, you don't rescue people unless they are in a lost state and a helpless condition! Imagine you see a drowning woman. It doesn't help her at all if you throw her a manual on how to swim. You don't throw her some teaching—you throw her a rope. And Jesus is not so much a teacher as He is a rescuer. Because that's what we most need. Nothing in who we are or what we do saves us.

What Jesus did: How did Jesus rescue us? He “gave himself for our sins” (v 4a). He made a **sacrifice which was substitutionary in nature**. The word “for” means “on behalf of” or “in place of”. Substitution is why the gospel is so revolutionary. Christ's death was not just a general sacrifice, but a substitutionary one. He did not merely buy us a “second chance”, giving us another opportunity to get life right and stay right with God. He did all we needed to do, but cannot do. If Jesus' death really paid

for our sins on our behalf, we can never fall back into condemnation. Why? Because God would then be getting two payments for the same sin, which is unjust! Jesus did all we should have done, in our place, so when He becomes our Saviour, we are absolutely free from penalty or condemnation.

What the Father did: God accepted the work of Christ on our behalf by raising Him “from the dead” (v 1) and by giving us the “grace and peace” (v 3) that Christ won and achieved for us.

Why God did it: This was all done out of grace—not because of anything we have done, but “according to the will of our God and Father” (v 4d). We did not ask for rescue, but **God in His grace planned what we didn’t realize we needed**, and Christ by His grace (v 6) came to achieve the rescue we could never have achieved ourselves.

There is no indication of any other motivation or cause for Christ’s mission except the will of God. There is nothing in us which merits it. Salvation is sheer grace.

That is why the only one who gets “glory for ever” is God alone (v 5). If we contributed to our rescue... if we had rescued ourselves... or if God had seen something deserving of rescue, or useful for His plan, in us... or even if we had simply called out for rescue based on our own reasoning and understanding... then we could pat ourselves on the back for the part we played in saving ourselves.

But the biblical gospel—Paul’s gospel—is clear that salvation, from first to last, is God’s doing. It is His calling; His plan; His action; His work. And so it is He who deserves all the glory, for all time.

The reality is that **we love to be our own saviours**. Our hearts love to manufacture glory for themselves, or provide solutions for ourselves. We get impatient or don’t want to find out God’s way and prefer to make our own way. So we find messages of self-salvation extremely attractive, whether they are religious (Keep these rules and you earn eternal blessing) or secular (Grab hold of these things and you’ll experience blessing now). We find ways to rescue ourselves from the pain, loneliness, etc., in our lives. The gospel comes and turns this all upside down. It says: You are in such a hopeless position that you need a rescue that has nothing to

do with you at all. And then it says: God in Jesus provides a rescue which gives you far more than any false salvation your heart may love to chase.

*"For My people have committed two evils:
They have abandoned (rejected) Me,
The fountain of living water,
And they have carved out their own cisterns,
Broken cisterns
That cannot hold water. Jer. 2:13*

Paul reminds us that in the gospel we are both brought lower and raised higher than we can imagine. And the glory for that, rightly, all goes to "our God and Father ... for ever and ever. Amen" (v 5).

- **What is your source of salvation or rescue? Where do you run to in order to be rescued (from loneliness, despair, fear, pain, etc.)?**
- **Who is your source of rescue? Are you waiting for that wife or perfect husband? Is it your boyfriend or girlfriend? Authority whom you admire?**

Jesus my strong tower, or alcohol, addictive relationships, intellect, fame, power, drugs, success, work, etc?

- **What gospel are you living your life out of right now? Is it one where you believe you were saved by grace and now you must add certain works to gain God's favour and approval? Or do certain things to remain in God's good books?**

Paul knew who he was by God's grace. He was so clear about it, that even when others questioned it, He could defend it.

- **Who are you by God's grace? How has He called you? Commissioned you?**

In Paul's letters to the Corinthians, Colossians, Philippians, we see that he usually begins his letters with a greeting and follows up his greeting with a thanksgiving and prayer for those he's writing to. In Paul's letter to the Galatians, he launches straight

into the reason for his letter. No thanksgiving. No prayer. He is agitated, almost angry.

Paul's reason for the letter (Gal. 1:6-9):

I am astonished and extremely irritated that you are so quickly shifting your allegiance and deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different [even contrary] gospel; which is really not another [gospel]; but there are [obviously] some [people masquerading as teachers] who are disturbing and confusing you [with a misleading, counterfeit teaching] and want to distort the gospel of Christ [twisting it into something which it absolutely is not]. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we [originally] preached to you, let him be condemned to destruction! As we have said before, so I now say again, if anyone is preaching to you a gospel different from that which you received [from us], let him be condemned to destruction!

In verse 7 Paul expresses great distress over those “who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ.” Thus, from the beginning you understand the occasion for Paul's letter. In fact, he was so upset that he dispensed with his usual habit of giving thanks for his readers.

- **How protective over those you are discipling are you when it comes to the pure Gospel? Paul was extremely passionate about this. His love for the people and passion for the Gospel was so strong that correction and teaching was a natural outflow. These are part of the discipleship process. It can never be “each one doing whatever seems good in his own eyes”.**

The people who were disturbing the Galatians came to be known as Judaizers. These Judaizers were apparently following behind Paul and Barnabas, disturbing the churches they had labored so hard to establish. Paul had received reports of these disturbances.

The Judaizers, Jewish religious people, were probably Jewish Christians who were teaching that obedience to the law, especially circumcision, was required for a Christian to be right with God. They were teaching impressionable, non-Jewish

(Gentile) believers that they must be circumcised and live according to Jewish traditions. The letter to the Galatians condemns the teaching of the Judaizers and eloquently sets forth the purity of the gospel of grace.

- **Paul was extremely passionate about the purity and centrality of the Gospel. How passionate about this are you?**
- **Do you know the gospel? Is it really good news to you?**
- **Are you keeping the main thing the main thing?**
- **Have you learnt to make the basics beautiful?**
- **Or are you majoring on the minors?**

The reality is that in our lives we experience pressures. Sometimes it's pressures to conform, like Peter, to certain rituals, customs and expectations around us. Often these pressures can come from authority, spiritual authority, family as well as peers. To conform to this would constitute being double minded. And James is quite clear regarding the double-minded man:

But he must ask [for wisdom] in faith, without doubting [God's willingness to help], for the one who doubts is like a billowing surge of the sea that is blown about and tossed by the wind. For such a person ought not to think or expect that he will receive anything [at all] from the Lord, being a double-minded man, unstable and restless in all his ways [in everything he thinks, feels, or decides]. Jm. 1:6-8

Sometimes it is perceived pressure or peer pressure. And sometimes it is actual pressure to conform to contrary teachings to the Gospel. It is at these junctures in life that it becomes critical that we, like Paul, are very clear in who we are (identity in Christ) as well as what we believe and what we do not believe, what we will buy into and what we won't buy into.

- **Do you have the tendency to add to the gospel of grace in your life? To add to the truth of salvation?**
- **How do you do this? (have to do this or that...).**
- **Do you impose this on others?**
- **Do you have a tendency to be a chameleon? Easily conforming to those around you?**

A real challenge could be family culture.

Conclusion for today

Paul wrote the book of Galatians to a group of churches in the region of Galatia who were being misled by some Jewish teachers regarding the Gospel. He clarified passionately and clearly the Gospel, - that we are saved by grace through faith and that works simply cannot have a part in helping us to earn our salvation or gain favour from God. Today we looked at the first portion of chapter 1. We will continue in a number of weeks' time.

Altar Call

1. If you know that you end to run to a different source, whether it's for saving and rescue, or for life.
If you run to a different saviour (self or something or someone else).
2. If you are adding certain works to your Christian walk to attempt to garner the approval and favour of God.
Recommitment.
3. If you have never responded to the Gospel, and experienced it's transformative work. Never been saved.
Commitment.

Part 2

Am I now trying to win the favor and approval of men, or of God? Or am I seeking to please someone? If I were still trying to be popular with men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ. Gal. 1:10

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