

TITLE: DEFENDING THE ONE TRUE GOSPEL

TEXT: GAL 1:6-24

INTRO: It never ceases to amaze me how many new “churches” are popping up all the time in the OKC area. Probably all claim in some way or another (either verbally by the “pastor” or just assumed by the members) to be the one true church, but yet they teach and practice all sorts of different things. This is not a picture of the NT church! I can’t speak about their motives, but I can speak about their content. Paul spoke about it (in general) loud and clear in Gal 1!

I. CERTAINTY OF PAUL’S GOSPEL (v. 6-9):

- A. Rebuke for departing from the true gospel (v. 6-7a)
1. (v. 6) “*I marvel (I’m amazed, shocked) that you all are so quickly removed (change, transfer) from him that called you...*”
 - a. It’s amazing how quickly people can remove themselves from the true gospel (the only means of salvation). How can people care so little about this? So many believe that what’s taught doesn’t really matter, as long as your heart is right!
 - b. It’s amazing how this could happen so easily, regardless of the spirituality and knowledge level of their teacher (Paul)!
 - c. Notice that ‘leaving this gospel’ is ‘leaving him that called you.’ Altering Christ’s gospel in any way is to leave Christ!
 2. (v. 7a) You’re changing to *another* gospel (‘heteros’ - of a different kind), but it is **not** another gospel (‘allos’ - of the same kind). In other words, **the** gospel is the power of God unto salvation (**Rom 1:16**), but this “gospel” your changing to **is not!**
- B. Curse for perverting the true gospel (v. 7b-9)
1. (v. 7b) Some trouble you and pervert (corrupt) the gospel of Christ. This has always been and always will be (**2 Pet 2:1**).
 2. (v. 8-9) Even if we (apostles) or angels preach **any other gospel**...let him be accursed (“doomed to destruction” - Thayer).
 - a. Nobody is excluded from this, not even angels (cf. Joseph Smith’s claim); not even Paul could change his gospel.
 - b. Let him be accursed! This is how serious it is. God gave the gospel through Christ, then sent His HS to the apostles to bring about all truth. If anyone changes this (leading souls astray), he ought to expect the wrath of God!!
- C. Paul’s gospel is so certain and true that any variation of it in any way will bring a curse.
- D. Make sure your religion (hope, soul, salvation) is based on the truth. 1) Study it for yourself! 2) Verify what’s preached!
- E. Paul is about to demonstrate how his gospel is accurate – that he is not guilty of what he’s cursing in v. 8-9.

II. SOURCE/ACCURACY OF PAUL’S GOSPEL (v. 10-24):

- A. Paul’s motivation (v. 10) - was to please God, not men. He says that seeking to please men is *not* seeking to please Christ. You can’t do both (**Jam 4:4**). Paul sought to please God, which is evidenced by the persecution he received (**2 Tim 3:12**).
- B. Paul’s source (v. 11-12)
- (v. 11) It was not according to men. The gospel preached by me (emphatic, opposed to that preached by false teachers)...
- (v. 12) ...but by (through) the revelation of Jesus Christ. So he asserts the authenticity of 1) his apostleship, and 2) his gospel.
- C. Paul’s transformation (v. 13-19) – given to prove v. 12.
1. His past (v. 13-14) – Paul’s conversation was always in good conscience (**Ac 23:1**), even when persecuting the church.
 2. His present (v. 15-19)
 - a. His calling (v. 15)

Separated me from the womb... God had chosen Paul for a purpose, but this was not unconditional election. 1) Paul’s role was much more significant than ours today, and 2) this still didn’t change the fact that he had free will and could’ve refused to obey. Otherwise, why did he need to “keep under” his body and bring it into subjection (**1 Cor 9:27**)?
 - b. His mission (v. 16a) – for Jesus to be revealed in him; to preach Jesus to the Gentiles (not a popular idea to Jews)!
 - c. His initial activities (v. 16b-19) – show that his message was from Christ, and nobody else (not even the apostles)! “I went to Arabia, then Damascus. Then only 15 days w/Peter (not long enough to be taught – v.12).
- (v. 19) But other (‘heteros’ -of a different kind) of the apostles...except James (he was an apostle, not an Apostle).
- D. Paul’s positive influence (v. 20-24) – They didn’t recognize me (nobody there to introduce me). But they glorified God in me.

III. WE MUST DEFEND THE SOURCE OF THE GOSPEL:

- A. To those who don’t believe the Bible (“it’s not from God!”)
- Like Paul, we must defend our source of salvation – the Bible. It is true:
1. Because of what is *not* in it (beliefs during Moses’ time about the beginning of the Earth, etc.; no contradictions)
 2. Because of what *is* in it. (it claims to be from God; Historical accuracy; Medical accuracy (Lev 17:11-14 – Life is in the blood; even though some bled w/leaches); Scientific accuracy (**Ecc 1:7**–water cycle, 2000 years before science knew).
- B. To those who believe but don’t follow the Bible (“that’s just *your* interpretation!”)
1. We must defend the fact that the Bible is the complete, perfect, infallible Word of God.
 2. We must defend the authority of the Bible, that it applies to *all*, and how His silence forbids (**2 Tim 3:16-17; Col 3:17**).
 3. We must show how to rightly divide the Bible (**2 Tim 2:15**).
 - a. One must understand the difference between OT & NT (e.g., the old covenant does not apply to us today – **Col 2:14**).
 - b. One must understand the difference in types of literature in the Bible (law, didactic, narrative, poetry, prophecy).
 - c. One must understand the importance of studying a passage in its context.
 4. We must lovingly show the danger of denominations and divisions (**1 Cor 1:10f**), and God’s desire for unity (**Jn 17:11**).
 5. We must lovingly defend the Bible’s teaching on the existence and torturous nature of Hell (**Mt 25:46; Mk 9:43-48**).
 6. We must defend the Bible plan of salvation (believe-**Jn 3:16**; repent-**Lk 13:3**; confess-**Rom 10:9-10**; be baptized for forgiveness of sins-**Acts 2:38, 22:16**; stay faithful to death-**Heb 3:14**)!

CONCLUSION: How well have you been defending the one true gospel? This was extremely important to Paul. How important is it to you?