

# Galatians 1 Commentary

PREVIOUS

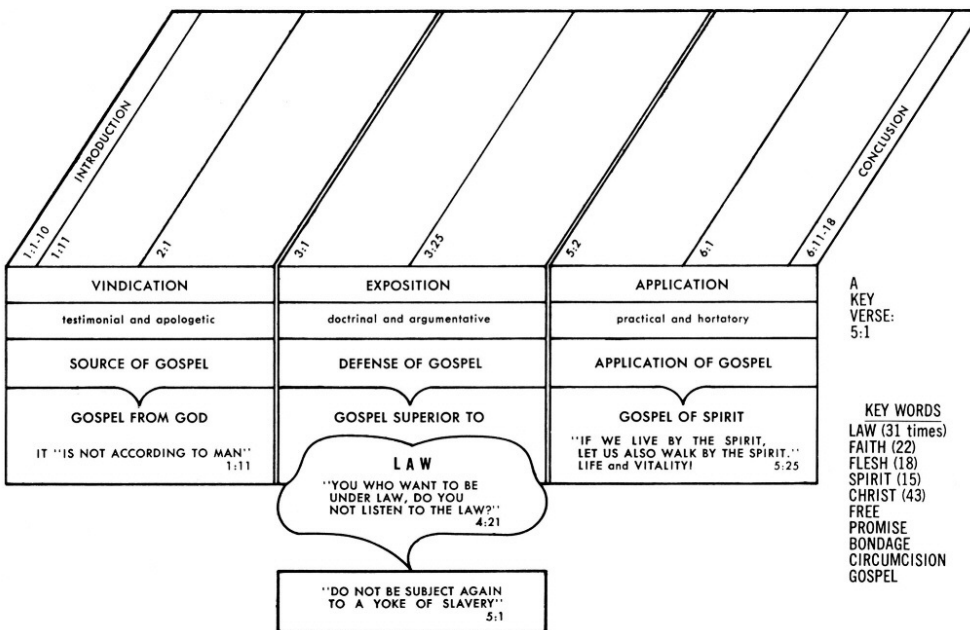
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"Magna Charta of spiritual emancipation" Favorite epistle of the Reformers.



MAGNA CARTA OF SPIRITUAL EMANCIPATION

Click chart to enlarge

Charts from Jensen's Survey of the NT - used by permission

Another Overview Chart - Galatians - Charles Swindoll

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**SUMMARY CHART:  
EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS**

| Gospel of Grace Defended              |                                  | Gospel of Grace Explained                   |   |  | Gospel of Grace Applied                          |                                   |  |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|---|--|--|-----------------------------------|--|
| Defense of the Gospel<br>Gal 1:1-2:21 |                                  | Freedom from Legalism<br>Gal 3:1-4:31       |   |  | Freedom to Love and to Serve<br>Gal 5:1-6:18     |                                   |  |
| Labor                                 |                                  | Liberty                                     |   |  | Life   |                                   |  |
| Authority Not Opinion                 |                                  | Freedom Not Bondage                         |   |  | Spirit Not Flesh                                 |                                   |  |
| Personal Autobiography                |                                  | Doctrinal Accuracy                          |   |  | Practical Application                            |                                   |  |
| Paul the Apostle<br>(Gal 1:1-24)      | Paul's Authority<br>(Gal 2:1-21) | Justified by Faith not Works<br>(Gal 3:1-9) | Justified by Faith not the Law<br>(Gal 3:10-4:20) | Grace and Law Cannot Co-Exist<br>(Gal 4:21-31) | Position and Practice of Liberty<br>(Gal 5:1-15) | Power of Liberty<br>(Gal 5:16-26) | Performance in Liberty<br>(Gal 6:1-18) |
| Vindication                           |                                  | Exposition                                  |   |  | Application                                      |                                   |  |
| Testimonial and Apologetic            |                                  | Doctrinal and Argumentative                 |   |  | Practical and Hortatory                          |                                   |  |
| Biographical Explanation              |                                  | Doctrinal Exposition                        |   |  | Practical Exhortation                            |                                   |  |
| Authentication of Liberty             |                                  | Argumentation for Liberty                   |   |  | Application of Liberty                           |                                   |  |

**Style or Tone:** Vigorous, blunt, aggressive, direct, corrective, urgent, brief, righteous anger, strong words

**Theme:** Justification by Faith and not by Works of the Law

**Author:** Paul in large letters (Gal 6:11)

**Recipients:** Churches in Galatia (Gal 1:2) (Most likely the Southern Region)

**Christ in Galatians:** Jesus is the Source and Power for the believer's New Life. (Gal 2:20, 5:16)

**CONTRAST OF GRACE AND LAW**

| LAW  | GRACE  |
|--|--|
| The law prohibits                            | Grace invites and gives                        |
| The law condemns the sinner                  | Grace redeems the sinner.                      |
| The law says DO                              | Grace says IT IS DONE.                         |
| The law says, Continue to be holy            | Grace says, It is finished.                    |
| The law curses                               | Grace blesses                                  |
| The law slays the sinner                     | Grace makes the sinner alive.                  |
| The law shuts every mouth before God         | Grace opens the mouth to praise God.           |
| The law condemns the best man                | Grace saves the worst man.                     |
| The law says, pay what you owe               | Grace says, I freely forgive you all.          |
| The law says "the wages of sin is death"     | Grace says, "the gift of God is eternal life." |
| The law says, "the soul that sins shall die" | Grace says, Believe and live.                  |

|                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| The law reveals sin                | Grace atones for sin.                            |
| By the law is the knowledge of sin | By grace is redemption from sin.                 |
| The law was given by Moses         | Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.            |
| The law demands obedience          | Grace bestows and gives power to obey.           |
| The law was written on stone       | Grace is written on the tables of the heart.     |
| The law was done away in Christ    | Grace abides forever.                            |
| The law puts us under bondage      | Grace sets us in the liberty of the sons of God. |

### CONTRASTS IN GALATIANS

(From Irving Jensen & Merrill Unger)

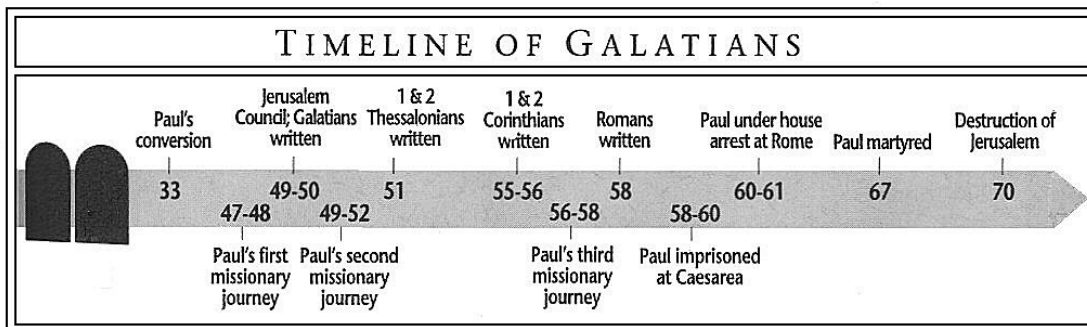
| CHAPTER | THE LOWER  | THE HIGHER  |
|---------|--|---|
| 1-2     | Lost in Adam all die<br>Physically in Adam<br>Another Gospel (false)<br>Man's Reasoning                                    | Saved in Christ all live<br>Spiritually in Christ<br>The Genuine Gospel<br>God's Revelation                                     |
| 3-4     | Law Works curse of death<br>Condemnation by Works<br>Servants in Bondage (Defeat)<br>Old Covenant<br>(Symbolized by Hagar) | Grace Faith blessing of<br>life<br>Justification by Faith<br>Sons in Freedom (Victory)<br>New Covenant<br>(Symbolized by Sarah) |
| 5-6     | Living in the Flesh<br>Works of the Flesh<br>Falling from grace<br>World or self object<br>of glorying                     | Walking by the Spirit<br>Fruit of the Spirit<br>Standing Firm in Grace<br>The Cross the sole object<br>of glorying              |

#### An Outline of Galatians - [D Edmond Hiebert](#)

##### THE INTRODUCTION (Galatians 1:1-10)

1. The salutation (Galatians 1:1-5)
  - a. The writer (Galatians 1:1-2a)
    - i. Paul, the Apostle (Galatians 1: 1)
    - ii. The brethren with him (Galatians 1:2a)
  - b. The readers (Galatians 1:2b)
  - c. The greeting (Galatians 1:3-5)
    - i. The contents of the greeting (Galatians 1:3a)
    - ii. The source of the grace and peace (Galatians 1:3b-4)
    - iii. The doxology (Galatians 1:5)
2. The rebuke (Galatians 1:6-10)
  - a. His astonishment at their fickleness (Galatians 1:6-7)
    - i. The reason for the astonishment (Galatians 1:6)
    - ii. The explanation of the departure (Galatians 1:7)
  - b. His assertion about its seriousness Galatians 1:8-9)
    - i. The seriousness asserted (Galatians 1:8)
    - ii. The seriousness reaffirmed (Galatians 1:9)
  - c. His attitude in the matter (Galatians 1:10)
- I. PERSONAL: THE VINDICATION OF HIS APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY (Galatians 1:11-2:21)
  1. How he got his Gospel (Galatians 1:11-24)
    - a. The origin of his Gospel through revelation (Galatians 1: 11-12)
      - i. The assertion as to its nature (Galatians 1:11)
      - ii. The manner of its reception (Galatians 1:12)

- b. The previous conduct of the one given the revelation (Galatians 1:13-14)
  - i. The manner of his former life known to them Galatians 1:13a
  - ii. The description of his former life (Galatians 1:13b-14)
    - a. In relation to the Church of God (Galatians 1:13b)
    - b. In relation to Judaism (Galatians 1:14)
- c. The description of the revelation received (Galatians 1:15-17)
  - i. The source of the revelation (Galatians 1:15)
  - ii. The subject of the revelation (Galatians 1:16a)
  - iii. The purpose of the revelation (Galatians 1:16b)
  - iv. The response to the revelation (Galatians 1:16c-17)
- d. His independence of the Jerusalem apostles (Galatians 1:18-24)
  - i. The first visit to Jerusalem (Galatians 1:18-20)
    - a. The time of the visit (Galatians 1:18a)
    - b. The purpose of the visit (Galatians 1:18b)
    - c. The duration of the visit (Galatians 1:18c)
    - d. The scope of contacts during the visit (Galatians 1:19-20)
  - ii. The subsequent absence from Jerusalem (Galatians 1:21-24)
    - a. The place of his withdrawal (Galatians 1:21)
    - b. The lack of acquaintance with the Judean churches (Galatians 1:22)
    - c. The response of the churches to reports about him (Galatians 1:23-24)



Click to Enlarge  
Source: Ryrie Study Bible Notes

**Galatians 1:1 Paul, an apostle (not sent from men nor through the agency of man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, Who raised Him from the dead),**

Wuest Paul an apostle, not from man (as an ultimate source), nor even through the intermediate agency of a man, but through the direct agency of Jesus Christ and God the Father, the One who raised Him out from among the dead. ([Eerdmans Publishing](#))

NET Galatians 1:1 From Paul, an apostle (not from men, nor by human agency, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised him from the dead)

GNT Galatians 1:1 Πα λος π στολος ο κ π νθρ πων ο δ δι νθρ που λλ δι ησο Χριστο κα θεο πατρ ς το γε ραντος α τ ν κ νεκρ ν,

NLT Galatians 1:1 This letter is from Paul, an apostle. I was not appointed by any group of people or any human authority, but by Jesus Christ himself and by God the Father, who raised Jesus from the dead.

KJV 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;)

ESV Galatians 1:1 Paul, an apostle-- not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead--

ASV Galatians 1:1 Paul, an apostle (not from men, neither through man, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead),

CSB Galatians 1:1 Paul, an apostle-- not from men or by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father who

raised Him from the dead--

NIV Galatians 1:1 Paul, an apostle--sent not from men nor by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead--

NKJ Galatians 1:1 Paul, an apostle (not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead),

NRS Galatians 1:1 Paul an apostle-- sent neither by human commission nor from human authorities, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead--

YLT Galatians 1:1 Paul, an apostle -- not from men, nor through man, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who did raise him out of the dead --

NAB Galatians 1:1 Paul, an apostle not from human beings nor through a human being but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised him from the dead,

NJB Galatians 1:1 From Paul, an apostle appointed not by human beings nor through any human being but by Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised him from the dead,

GWN Galatians 1:1 From Paul-an apostle chosen not by any group or individual but by Jesus Christ and God the Father who brought him back to life-

BBE Galatians 1:1 Paul, an Apostle (not from men, and not through man, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who made him come back from the dead),

- **an apostle:** Ro 1:1 1Co 1:1
- **not sent from men:** Ga 1:11,12,17
- **nor through the agency of man and God the Father, Who raised Him from the dead):** Ac 1:16-26 13:2-4
- **but through Jesus Christ :** Ac 9:6,15,16 22:10,14-21 26:16-18 Ro 1:4,5 2Co 3:1-3 Eph 3:8 1Ti 1:11-14 2Ti 1:1 Tit 1:3
- **and God the Father:** Mt 28:18-20 Jn 5:19 10:30 20:21
- **Who raised Him from the dead:** Ac 2:24-32 3:15 Ro 4:24,25 10:9 14:9 Eph 1:19,20 Heb 13:20 1Pe 1:21 Rev 1:5,18 2:8
- Galatians 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- **Click here for an introduction to Galatians,** the Magna Carta of Christian Liberty

### SENT WITH AN AUTHENTIC COMMISSION AND AN AUTHENTIC MESSAGE

An apostle is a "sent one" or one who is sent with a commission! Paul jumps right in to authenticate his apostleship. As **Martin Luther** said "Paul loses no time in defending himself against the charge that he had thrust himself into the ministry. He says to the Galatians: "My call may seem inferior to you. But those who have come to you are either called of men or by man. My call is the highest possible, for it is by Jesus Christ, and God the Father."

**R C H Lenski** adds that "Paul's first drop of ink is a decisive, challenging contradiction: "Paul, an apostle not from men nor by means of man." Men did not send and commission him. He is not the ambassador or representative of men. What he utters is not the word and the wisdom of men. The authority back of him and his message is not human." ([The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Galatians to the Ephesians and to the Philippians.](#))

The salutation is found in Galatians 1:1-5 and sets the tone for chapter 1 and for the entire book.

**Galatians** has been called a *rough draft* for his formal and far-reaching epistle to the Romans. In a sense it was a "rough" letter for the saints in Galatia who were being enticed by the **Judaizers** to "add to" the Gospel, which Paul quickly explains is another (false) gospel, not the true saving gospel.

**Pastor Rob Salvato** says "false teachers distort the gospel in 3 ways: (1) Some twist the truth - make it say what it was never meant to say. (2) Some subtract from the truth. They'll leave out crucial elements. (3) And some add to the truth – that was the tactic of the Judaizers. One Commentator described their message in this way: "Faith is fine – Jesus is good – the cross works – the blood helps – but it's not enough to cover sin. To be dressed for heaven you've got to add to the wardrobe a few religious accessories – like Sabbath worship, or circumcision, or baptism, or monthly fasting, or weekly tithes, or daily devotions – this discipline, that sacrifice." ([Sermon Notes Galatians 1:1-5](#))

**John Phillips** rightly remarks that "The letter not only was aimed at silencing the **Judaizers** but also was designed to define, once and for all, just exactly what Christianity really is." ([Exploring Galatians: An Expository Commentary](#))

**Max Anders** introduces Galatians - "This land will remain the land of the free only as long as it is the home of the brave." (Elmer Davis)...Sadly, many Galatian believers began believing...false teachers. They submitted to circumcision and other Old Testament laws to win God's approval, gain eternal life, and mature in Christ. With all the external regulations, they felt like slaves as they tried meticulously to obey the law. Therefore, they were no longer free in Christ. Then "to the rescue" came Paul, the liberator. His "smoking gun" was a six-chapter defense of grace known to us as "**Galatians**." In this letter, Paul went to the very fort of **legalism** and through closely reasoned biblical logic destroyed its errors. His bold defense of grace restored the Galatians and saved the early church from a cultic division. Because the message of Galatians frees Christians from the oppression of **legalism**, it has been called the "Magna Carta" of Christianity. **Martin Luther**, the father of the Reformation, loved Galatians and considered it the best of all books. He even compared his love for this book with his love for his wife, Katherine. Luther said, "**The epistle to the Galatians is my epistle. To it I am, as it were, in wedlock. It is my Katherine.**" ([Holman New Testament Commentary](#)) (ED: Galatians transformed Martin Luther's way of relating to God – and became the catalyst for the [Protestant Reformation](#).)

**Philip Graham Ryken** has an interesting note on the effect of Martin Luther's work on Galatians on [John Bunyan](#) - Through Martin Luther, the book of Galatians taught the same lesson to the great Puritan preacher John Bunyan (1628-1688). In his spiritual autobiography, [Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners](#) Bunyan describes how a battered old copy of Luther's commentary came into his possession. He was surprised how old the book was, but he was even more surprised when he read it. He wrote, "I found my condition in his experience, so largely and profoundly handled, as if his book had been written out of my heart... I do prefer this book of Mr. Luther upon the Galatians ([Reformed Expository Commentary – Galatians](#))

**Leon Morris** wrote, "Galatians is a passionate letter, the outpouring of the soul of a preacher on fire for his Lord and deeply committed to bringing his hearers to an understanding of what saving faith is." ([Galatians: Paul's Charter of Christian Freedom](#))

**J Vernon McGee** summarizes Galatians 1 - Salutation -- cool greeting; subject stated -- warm [declamation](#) (vehement oratory); Paul's experience in Arabia. Galatians is God's polemic against **legalism** of every and any description. The Mosaic Law is neither discredited, despised, nor disregarded. Its majesty, perfection, demands, fullness, and purpose are maintained. Yet these very qualities make it utterly impossible for man to come this route to God. Another way is opened for man to be justified before God, a way which entirely bypasses the Mosaic Law. The new route is by faith. Justification by faith is the theme, with the emphasis upon faith. ([Galatians 1 Thru the Bible](#))

**THOUGHT** - Have you fallen into legalism? Don't answer too quickly because some forms of legalism are very subtle -- e.g., do you berate yourself or feel like you have let God down or that He won't bless you if you miss a quiet time, miss your daily through the Bible in a year reading, etc? [What does the Bible say about legalism?](#) [How can a Christian avoid falling into the trap of legalism?](#); Ray Stedman on [Legalism](#); John Piper on [Legalism: Articles on Monergism](#)

**A C Gaebelein** - The object of this epistle is the defence of the Gospel which Paul had received by the revelation of Jesus Christ (Gal 1:12+). In order to do this successfully the apostle had first of all to defend his own apostolic authority.

**Hendriksen** has a dramatic introductory comment to Galatians writing that "The spiritual atmosphere is charged. It is sultry, sweltering. A storm is threatening. The sky is darkening. In the distance one can see flashes of lightning; one can hear faint muttering sounds. When each line of Galatians 1:1-5 is read in the light of the letter's occasion and purpose the atmospheric turbulence is immediately detected. The apostle, though in perfect control of himself, for he is writing under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is greatly agitated, deeply moved. His heart and mind are filled with a medley of emotions. For the perverters there is withering denunciation springing from holy indignation. For the addressed there is marked disapproval and an earnest desire to restore. For the One who has called him there is profound reverence and humble gratitude. ([Exposition of Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon](#))

**Martin Luther** points out that one reason the Apostle Paul so adamantly and boldly defends his apostolic authority is "because people need to be assured that the words we speak are the words of God." ([Galatians 1 Commentary](#))

Notice that Galatians is unusual for Paul's epistles because he does not open his letter with his usual praise to God and prayer for the saints. **Wiersbe** quips that the reason he does not open in his usual manner is that "He has no time! Paul is about to engage in a battle for the truth of the Gospel and the liberty of the Christian life. False teachers are spreading a false "gospel" which is a mixture of Law and grace, and Paul is not going to stand by and do nothing." ([Be Free \(Galatians\): Exchange Legalism for True Spirituality](#))

**Lenski on an apostle not sent from men...** - Place **no comma** after "apostle" and make **no parenthesis** of the following phrases, for these phrases modify "**apostle**" most closely and directly. The force of the apposition is not that Paul is an apostle but that he is **this kind** of an apostle. The whole impact lies in the phrases. They meet a challenge, meet it head on. They are not an incidental, parenthetical appendix....Paul is probably quoting the phrases of the **Judaizers** who maintained that, whatever his apostleship was,

it was either altogether only "from men" or at best had come to him only "through man." Whatever office he claimed he had was either altogether human or divine only in a secondary and thus more or less doubtful sense. ([The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians](#))

**Paul, an apostle (not sent from men nor through the agency of man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, Who raised Him from the dead)** - Paul immediately asserts his authority. Though not one of the original Twelve, Paul claimed equality with them as an **apostle**. He states that he is an authentic, genuine **apostle** of Jesus Christ and God the Father, and therefore he is qualified and ready to defend the true Gospel of Grace which is being assaulted by the adversaries, most likely **Judaizers**. So from Galatians 1:1 through Galatians 2:21 Paul gives his defense of the Gospel, basing his defense on his divinely bestowed authority and not based on his personal opinion.

**Paul** ([3972](#)) is from Latin, **Paulos** meaning "little, small". Before his Damascus Road experience he was known by his Hebrew name **Saul** (Greek **Saulos**) which means "desired" or "ask" (derived from Hebrew word for **ask**).

**Jon Courson on Judaizers** questioning Paul's credentials - This still happens today. When someone wants to subvert a ministry, he invariably slanders the minister—especially if he can't argue proficiently against the doctrine. Paul's enemies were no exception. They continually challenged his authority, saying, "He doesn't have the credentials to teach as he does. So, too, the religionist comes to us, saying, "You believe in Jesus? That's great. So do I. But there's a little more to it than that." "Really? Then how is man saved?" I ask. "Well, believe in Jesus Christ and join our church," or, "Believe in Jesus Christ and sell magazines," or, "Believe in Jesus Christ and wear holy underwear." Whenever you hear the word *and* in conjunction with belief, you know you're talking to a religionist. Jesus said it all boils down to only one thing: Believe on Him whom the Father hath sent (John 5:24). Put your trust in Him. Keep focused on Him. Open your heart to Him, for He alone is the basis of true faith. The question of authority is most often raised by those who want to keep people under the restraints of religion and legalism. "What authority do you have to do the things you do, to preach the way you preach, or to baptize in the manner you baptize?" they ask." (Jon Courson's Application Commentary New Testament)

| <b>JUDAIZERS' ACCUSATIONS AGAINST PAUL</b>                              |   |
|---|---|
| <b>THE JUDAIZERS</b>  | <b>APOSTLE PAUL</b>   |
| They said he was perverting the truth.                                  | He received his message from Christ himself (Ga; 1:11-12).  |
| They said he was a traitor to the Jewish faith.                         | Paul was one of the most dedicated Jews of his time. Yet, in the midst of one of his most zealous acts, God transformed him through a revelation of the Good News about Jesus (Gal 1:13-16; Acts 9:1-30). |
| They said he compromised and watered down his message for the Gentiles. | The other apostles declared that the message Paul preached was the true gospel (Gal 2:1-10).  |
| They said he was disregarding the law of Moses.                         | Far from degrading the law, Paul puts the law in its proper place. He says it shows people where they have sinned, and it points them to Christ (Gal 3:19-29).  |
| Source: Life Application Commentary                                     |   |

In this first section Paul will clearly describe salvation as by free grace of God without human works and in so doing he draws our attention fully on the complete sufficiency of Jesus Christ and the adequacy of simple faith as the only acceptable response to the Gospel.

**THOUGHT** - There are only two "religions" in the world - One seeks to impress God with man's deeds and the other calls for men to renounce such pretensions (that they can gain God's favor and earn His righteousness through their human works) and cast themselves by grace through faith on God's gift of righteousness in Christ alone. One "religion" (regardless of the name) teaches one can work their way to God -- this is true in some form of EVERY other "religion" in the world (no exceptions)! True "religion" teaches Jesus has accomplished the work of redemption, having paid the redemption price in full (Jn 19:30+, "It is Finished" = [tetelestai](#)) and now to be saved one must believe in His finished work. **So let me ask you dear reader** - Do you believe you

are saved by **believing** or by **achieving**? Are you counting on your **human accomplishments** or believing in **His accomplishment** on the Cross? Your answer will make all the difference in this life and the one to come in eternity. Don't be deceived! Don't delay! "**Believe** ([aorist imperative](#) = Do this now! Don't delay! It is urgent!) in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved." (Acts 16:31+)

**De Haan** says "Today the problem of the Galatians is still with us, in spite of the clear teaching of the Word of God. Men are made to believe they must DO something to be saved. Man adds to salvation by grace, religion, good works, church membership, ordinances, and the works of the law. But the Bible says: "But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness." (Ro 4:5+). ([Studies in Galatians](#))

**John Calvin** on **Paul an apostle** - In the [salutations](#) with which he commenced his Epistles, Paul was accustomed to claim the title of "**an Apostle**." His object in doing so, as we have remarked on former occasions, was to employ the authority of his station, for the purpose of enforcing his doctrine. This authority depends not on the judgment or opinion of men, but exclusively on the calling of God; and therefore he demands a hearing on the ground of his being "an Apostle." ([Galatians 1 Commentary](#))

**Vincent** adds this note on **apostle** - This title is prefixed to Romans (Ro 1:1), 1st and 2nd Corinthians (1 Cor 1:1, 2 Cor 1:1), Ephesians (Eph 1:1), Colossians (Col 1:1) (Also in 1 Ti 1:1, 2 Ti 1:1). Here with special emphasis, because Paul's apostleship had been challenged. ([Galatians 1 Commentary - Greek Word Studies](#))

**Martin Luther** has an interesting note - "When I was a young man I thought Paul was making too much of his call. I did not understand his purpose. I did not then realize the importance of the ministry...We exalt our calling, not to gain glory among men, or money, or satisfaction, or favor, but because people need to be assured that the words we speak are the words of God. This is no sinful pride. It is holy pride." ([Galatians 1 Commentary](#))

**Paul** - Paul is his Latin name. He was originally called by His Hebrew name Saul (Acts 13:9), was of the tribe of Benjamin, the tribe of Israel's first king also named Saul. As Butler says "One (King Saul) had a good start and bad ending, the other (Apostle Paul) had a bad start but a good ending."

**Todd Wilson** on Paul's affirmation of his apostleship - Does he say this because he's insecure about his own credentials? No, but in order to reassert the legitimacy of his Gospel! For if Paul himself isn't legitimate, that is, if he's not truly an apostle sent from God, **then his Gospel isn't legitimate either**. It's that simple. This is why Paul insists on his God-given commission here, something he'll go on to do at greater length in this and the next chapter (cf. Galatians 1:11-2:10). ([Preaching the Word – Galatians: Gospel-Rooted Living](#)) (Bold added)

**Apostle** ([652](#))( **apostolos** from **apo** = from + **stello** = send forth) means one sent forth from by another, often with a special commission to represent another and to accomplish his work. It can be a delegate, commissioner, ambassador sent out on a mission or orders or commission and with the authority of the one who sent him. (Another Discussion of Apostle) **Apostolos** referred to someone who was officially commissioned to a position or task, such as an envoy. Cargo ships were sometimes called "apostolic," because they were dispatched with a specific shipment for a specific destination. In secular Greek **apostolos** was used of an admiral of a fleet sent out by the king on special assignment. In the ancient world a **apostle** was the personal representatives of the king, functioning as an ambassador with the king's authority and provided with credentials to prove he was the king's envoy.

**Paul is an apostle sent out by the King with the King's authority**

**Boice** on **apostle** - In early use of Greek, the word "**apostle**" (*apostolos*) was used of a naval expedition, commissioned to represent Greek interests in foreign service. In Greek-speaking Judaism it was used of authorized representatives, either an individual or a body of persons. With the coming of Christ, the word was applied to those commissioned by Christ as bearers of the gospel. It is this sense, coupled with the idea of the full authority deriving from Christ, that prevails in all seventy-nine instances of the term in the NT. ([The Expositor's Bible Commentary](#))

**Wuest** on **apostle** - "The word **apostle** as Paul uses it here does not merely refer to one who has a message to announce, but to an appointed representative with an official status who is provided with the credentials of his office."([Wuest Word Studies - Eerdmans Publishing Company Volume 1, Volume 2, Volume 3](#) - used [by permission](#))

**MacArthur** adds that an **apostle** "was an envoy, ambassador, or messenger who was chosen and trained by Jesus Christ as His special emissary for proclaiming His truth during the formative years of the church. In its primary and technical usage, the term applied to the original twelve who were chosen at the beginning of Jesus' earthly ministry (Mark 3:14; Luke 6:13) and were set aside to lay the foundation of the early church and to be the channels of God's completed revelation (Acts 2:42; Eph. 2:20). They were also given power to perform healings and to cast out demons as verifying signs of their divine authority (Acts 2:43; 2 Cor. 12:12; Heb. 2:3-4). It should be noted that, shortly before Pentecost, Judas was replaced by Matthias (Acts 1:26)." ([MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Galatians](#))



**De Haan** says "Evidently God never recognized the choice of [Matthias](#), for he is never mentioned again in the rest of the Bible. God ignored man's ordination, and after the Holy Spirit came, He chose a man by the name of Paul to be an apostle. But it was not by man's choice, but an outright ordination by Christ. He was ordained for his office by God. He says in I Timothy 2:7 that he was "ordained a preacher, and an apostle, . . . a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity." ([Studies in Galatians](#)) (Not everyone agrees with this interpretation. See [Was Matthias or Paul God's choice to replace Judas as the 12th apostle?](#))

#### Related Resources:

- [What is an apostle?](#)
- [Was the Apostle Paul actually a false prophet?](#)
- [What is the difference between a disciple and apostle?](#)

**Not sent from men** - "**Not**" is **ouk** which signifies absolute negation, no exceptions. No **men** were appointed Paul an apostle. In other words Paul was not appointed an apostle by a group of men such as the leaders of the early church in Jerusalem or the leaders of the church at Antioch.

**Robertson** explains **not sent from men** ("as an ultimate source" = Wuest) - The bluntness of Paul's denial is due to the charge made by the **Judaizers** that Paul was not a genuine apostle because not one of the twelve. This charge had been made in Corinth and called forth the keenest irony of Paul (2 Cor. 10-12). In Galatians 1; Galatians 2 Paul proves his independence of the twelve and his equality with them as recognized by them. Paul denies that his apostleship had a human source (*ouk ap' anthrōpōn*) and that it had come to him through (*di' anthrōpou*) a human channel (Burton). ([Galatians 1 Commentary - Word Pictures in the NT](#))

**Nor through** (Gk prep **dia** - points to the medium by which authority is ordinarily conveyed) **the agency of man** - "**Nor**" is *oude* which is also the strongest negation and which more literally is "not even." So notice that Paul begins his personal introduction with two strong negatives (*ouk...oude*)! The point is that not only was Paul's apostleship not given directly by men (**Not sent from men**), neither was it mediated through any man "**but through** (THE GOD-MAN) **Jesus Christ and God the Father.**" The Father and the Son called Paul to be their apostle and they shared in this divine calling which is clear affirmation of Paul's credentials to defend the Gospel of grace.

**C H Spurgeon** - Paul begins this Epistle by stating his commission as an apostle. In Galatia, he had been subjected to the great sorrow of having his apostleship called in question. Does he, therefore, give up his claim to the office, and retire from the work? No, not for a moment; but he begins his letter to the Galatians by declaring himself to be "**an apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ.**" His enemies had said, "Paul was never one of the Saviour's twelve apostles; he is not like those who were trained and educated by Christ himself. No doubt he has borrowed his doctrine from them, and he is only a retailer of other men's goods". No, no," says Paul, "I am an apostle as truly as any other of the twelve; 'not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;'" ([Spurgeon's Exposition](#))

**J Vernon McGee** - Now I am an ordained minister from men and through men. I was told that I had to finish seminary and obtain certain degrees before I could do ordained. I did that. That was from men. That was the legalistic side. Next I went before a church body that examined me. Their decision was that I should be an ordained minister. In the Second Presbyterian Church in Nashville, Tennessee, I knelt, and a group of men put their hands on me and said, "You are now an ordained minister." That is the kind of minister I am. Paul said, "I am not that kind of an apostle. Men had nothing to do with it. I am an apostle directly by Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead." ([Galatians 1 Thru the Bible](#))

**But** - Term of contrast. This is a striking contrast. Paul has just given two negatives regarding his apostleship and now defends his apostleship from the positive viewpoint. **Wuest** adds that the word **but** is "**alla** the stronger of the two adversatives, **de** being a milder one. Paul is **very strong** in his language when **contrasting** the divine origin of his apostleship with the human origin of the apostleship of the false apostles." In short, in the strongest way (linguistically) possible Paul denies any human involvement in his appointment as an apostle." ([Wuest's Commentary](#))

**Phillips** - **God the Father!** What a wonderful name for God! Judaizers knew Him as Jehovah, the God of covenant; as Elohim, the God of creation; and as Adonai, the Sovereign Lord, the God of command. They knew Him as "the Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." But the Galatians had been taught a higher truth than that. He was "God the Father." ([Exploring Galatians: An Expository Commentary](#))

**Through Jesus Christ and God the Father, Who raised Him from the dead**- Again "**through**" is **dia** which is a preposition expressing the intermediate agent of an action, in this case the "intermediate agent" is the divine will of the Son and the Father and the "action" is Paul's appointment as an apostle. To reiterate, human beings had nothing to do with Paul's appointment as an apostle! God the Son and the Father called him to be an apostle. In his final letter he reiterated to Timothy that he "Paul (was) an

apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, according to the promise of life in Christ Jesus." (2 Ti 1:1<sup>±</sup>)

**Kenneth Wuest** elaborates on the preceding comments - "Not only does Paul say that his apostleship did not find its ultimate source in mankind, but it did not find its intermediate source in man. Man was not even the agent of God in conferring that apostleship. By is the translation of *dia*, the preposition denoting intermediate agency. It denotes the means or instrument in the hands of an individual by which an act is performed. Thus Paul not only denies that he was made an apostle by men, but also that God used the intermediate agency of man to constitute him an apostle. His apostleship was not derived from a human source or given through a human channel. The reason why Paul changes from the plural word *men* to the singular word *man*, is that titles and offices which emanate from a body of men are conferred by their single representative. The acts of the Roman senate took effect through the reigning monarch, those of the Sanhedrin, through the high priest." ([Word Studies from the Greek New Testament](#))

**Robertson** - The call to be an apostle came to Paul through Jesus Christ as he claimed in 1 Cor. 9:1+ and as told in Acts 9:4-6+; Acts 22:7ff+.; Acts 26:16ff+. He is apostle also by the will of God (2 Ti 1:1<sup>±</sup>). ([Word Pictures in the NT](#))

An old Jew named **Ebed Tob** used to say of the office he held: "It was not my father or my mother who installed me in this place, but the arm of the mighty king gave it to me." (source unknown) Paul could truly attest that it was THE Mighty King Jesus Who had "installed" him!

Related Cross References

1 Corinthians 9:1-2+ Am I not free? Am I not an **apostle**? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord? If to others I am not an **apostle**, at least I am to you; for you are the seal of my **apostleship** in the Lord.

2 Timothy 1:1<sup>±</sup> Paul, an **apostle** of Christ Jesus by the will of God, according to the promise of life in Christ Jesus.

2 Corinthians 12:12+ The signs of a **true apostle** were performed among you with all perseverance, by signs and wonders and miracles.

Acts 9:3-6+ As he was traveling, it happened that he was approaching Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him; 4 and he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" 5 And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" And He said, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting, 6 but get up and enter the city, and it will be told you what you must do.".....(**Lord to Ananias** - "But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel; 16 for I will show him how much he must suffer for My name's sake." -- Acts 9:15-16+)

**Raised Him from the dead** - While the resurrection is a crucial component in the Gospel, the fact that this is the only direct reference to the resurrection in Galatians suggests that false teaching on the resurrection was not a major or immediate concern. The other apostles commissioned by Jesus were still on earth to affirm the resurrection, but Paul's commission was unique in that it was given by the resurrected, ascended Lord Jesus (Acts 9:3-8+; see Acts 1:21-22+). So why did Paul mention resurrection? Most importantly, without the resurrection, the Gospel would be powerless! The resurrection is also mentioned to show us that the Lord is alive and that as the Living Lord He could call Paul as His apostle. Finally, the resurrection indicates that Paul was qualified to be an apostle since he had literally seen the Risen Christ (1 Cor. 9:1+).

**Paul** himself testified

"And last of all, as to one untimely born, He (THE RESURRECTED JESUS CHRIST) **appeared to me also**. For I am the least of the apostles, and not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me." (1 Cor. 15:8-10<sup>±</sup>)

**Raised** (1453)(**egeiro**) means literally to rise or stand up from a sitting or lying position (Mt 8:26, 9:5). Figuratively it means to awaken from sleep (Mt 8:25) and finally in another figurative use as in the present passage, it means to "awaken" from death and so to be raised up. In the NT **egeiro** is found 141 times. Of these, 73, or slightly more than half, refer to the resurrection of the dead. Of these 73, again, some 48, or about two-thirds, refer to the **resurrection of Jesus** as in Galatians 1:1, the only direct mention of the resurrection of Christ in Galatians.

**Anderson** - It is the resurrection that is the Father's FINAL SEAL OF APPROVAL, His ENDORSEMENT upon the completed work of His Son in providing salvation. It is the resurrection that makes Christianity distinctive among the religions of the world. (see 1 Pe

**Mounce** adds that "The core of **egeiro** has to do with the raising of Jesus from the dead. Except for Phil 1:17 ("to cause"), the letters of the NT never use this verb for anything except the resurrection of Jesus. It becomes a technical term for Paul because it occurs so often in Romans and 1 Corinthians (more than 30x, with a heavy saturation in 1 Cor. 15+, the chief passage on the resurrection in the NT). Jesus is the firstfruits of the resurrection, who is thus qualified to raise us from the dead when he returns to this earth (1 Cor. 15:20; 2 Cor. 4:14). God has transferred the power to raise the dead to his Son, who will enact it when he returns (1Th 4:13-18).(Mounce's complete expository dictionary of Old & New Testament words)

#### Related Resources:

- American Tract Society [Resurrection of Christ Resurrection of the Dead](#)
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary [Resurrection](#)
- Baker Evangelical Dictionary [Resurrection](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Resurrection of Christ Resurrection of the Dead](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Resurrection](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Resurrection of Jesus Christ Resurrection](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Resurrection](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Resurrection Resurrection of Christ Resurrection of Christ \(2\)](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Resurrection of Jesus Christ. the Resurrection](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Resurrection of the body Resurrection of christ](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Cross of the Resurrection of Christ Resurrection Resurrection of Christ.](#)

**G Walter Hansen** applies Paul's defense of his apostleship to our lives - Paul's affirmation of his divine appointment also encourages us to affirm our own divine appointments. We may not play the role of apostles, but we are given work to do by God's appointment. If we view our work as just another job to do for a difficult boss, we will soon become discouraged. But if by faith we can see that God has given us work to do for him, then we can overcome even the most difficult obstacles. All work is sacred if it has been given to us by God. Paul was able to endure through all the hardships he faced because he was convinced that his work was given to him by God. (The IVP New Testament Commentary Series – [Galatians 1 Commentary](#))

**NEVER THROW AWAY FREEDOM** - Sitting on top of the United States capitol building is a 20 foot statue known as the "Freedom Lady". She was sculpted by Italian artists in the city of Rome, & shipped across the Atlantic Ocean to her perch in Washington DC. During the delivery, the ship carrying the statue encountered a fierce storm. Howling winds and huge waves threatened to capsize the ship. Its skipper ordered the cargo thrown overboard. But when the men went to toss the Freedom Lady the captain shouted, "No, never! We'll flounder before we throw "Freedom" away."This is the message of Galatians... Never throw away your freedom.

**Harrison** says: Turning to the Epistle to the Galatians we find the Apostle Paul defining and describing a Christian in such terms as these: A Christian is one who has the living Christ living in him. (See Galatians 2:20; Gal 4:19) He has had a transforming experience. A Christian is one who has the Holy Spirit (Gal 4:6). He begets in the believer new characteristics that are productive of Christian conduct (Gal 5:22, 23). A Christian is one who has shared the Cross experience with Christ, as the basic solution of his personal problems. (See Galatians 2:20; Gal 5:24; Gal 6:14, 17) A Christian is one possessed of a life so divine, so ideal that it cannot be pressed into the mould of external regulations. (See Galatians 4:9-11, 19-21; Gal 5:1-6) In other words, the Christian life consists not in **behaving** but in **being**, a life out of which behavior naturally proceeds; not something **external**, but **internal**, the **root** producing the **fruit**. It is a life that must be free to express itself; to impose regulations upon it is fatal to it. ([Overview of Galatians](#))

**RECOVERING PHARISEES - Philip Graham Ryken** has an interesting introduction to Galatians 1 - Galatians is a letter for **recovering Pharisees**. The Pharisees who lived during and after the time of Christ were very religious. They were regular in their worship, orthodox in their theology, and moral in their conduct. Yet something was missing. Although God was in their minds and in their actions, he was not in their hearts. Therefore, their religion was little more than hypocrisy. The Pharisees were **hypocrites** because they thought that what God would do for them depended on what they did for God. So they read their Bibles, prayed, tithed, and kept the Sabbath as if their salvation depended on it. What they failed to understand is that **God's grace cannot be earned; it only comes free**. There is a way out of Pharisaism. The way out is called the **Gospel**. It is the good news that Jesus Christ has already done everything necessary for our salvation. If we trust in him, he will make us right with God by giving us the free gift of his grace. When we reject our own righteousness to receive the righteousness of Jesus Christ, we become former Pharisees. **Most former Pharisees have a problem, however**. It is hard for them to leave their legalism behind. Although initially

they received God's grace for free, they keep trying to put a surcharge on it. They believe that God loves them, but secretly they suspect that his love is conditional, that it depends on how they are doing in the Christian life. They end up with a performance-based Christianity that denies the grace of God. To put this in theological terms, **they want to base their justification on their sanctification. This means that most former Pharisees—indeed, most Christians—are still in recovery.** There is still something of the old legalist in us. Although we have been **saved by grace**, we do not always know how to **live by grace**. **The Gospel is something we received some time in the past, but not something we live and breathe.** Galatians was written for people like us....Why does this epistle have such a liberating influence? Because the church is always full of recovering Pharisees who need to receive the gospel again, as if for the very first time. ([Reformed Expository Commentary – Galatians](#) - recommended)  
(Bold added)

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**Max Lucado** - You may be decent. You may pay taxes and kiss your kids and sleep with a clean conscience. But apart from Christ you aren't holy. So how can you go to heaven? Only believe. Accept the work already done, the work of Jesus on the cross. Only believe . . . It's that simple? It's that simple. It's that easy? There was nothing easy at all about it. The cross was heavy, the blood was real, and the price was extravagant. It would have bankrupted you or me, so he paid it for us. Call it simple. Call it a gift. But don't call it easy. Call it what it is. Call it grace. ( [A Gentle Thunder by Max Lucado](#) )

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**David Platt on why the message of Galatians is so important to believers-** Everyone is born with a nature that insists that we can make our own way to God. Even after we are saved—saved by grace—there are still traces of a performance mentality that we all struggle with. We think we can earn God's favor by what we do. This ingrained mind-set of works-righteousness means that we have to be careful not to misinterpret passages that talk about obedience and discipleship. It is all too easy to lose sight of the grace that's at the heart of our faith. The hard sayings of Jesus can prompt us to ask, "What about grace?" That's an important question because if we leave grace behind, we become like every other religion in the world. We lose that which is distinct and eternally life transforming in the gospel, and we lose the very message that we are called to proclaim....Galatians is a book that was written specifically to counter legalism and to address the centrality of grace in the church. As we study this book, we should begin to see more clearly what grace is, to be saturated with it, and to know when it is being taught accurately. When we hear a false gospel, we should be discerning enough to recognize it. This is exactly what the Galatian church, a new church that was just beginning to grow, was in danger of missing. ([Christ-Centered Exposition – Exalting Jesus in Galatians](#))

#### Galatians 1:2 and all the brethren who are with me, to the churches of Galatia:

NAU Galatians 1:2 and all the brethren who are with me, To the churches of Galatia:

BGT Galatians 1:2 κα ο σ ν μο π ντες δελφο τα ς κκλησ αις τ ς Γαλατ ας,

NET Galatians 1:2 and all the brothers with me, to the churches of Galatia.

GNT Galatians 1:2 κα ο σ ν μο π ντες δελφο τα ς κκλησ αις τ ς Γαλατ ας,

NLT Galatians 1:2 All the brothers and sisters here join me in sending this letter to the churches of Galatia.

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

ESV Galatians 1:2 and all the brothers who are with me, To the churches of Galatia:

ASV Galatians 1:2 and all the brethren that are with me, unto the churches of Galatia:

CSB Galatians 1:2 and all the brothers who are with me: To the churches of Galatia.

NIV Galatians 1:2 and all the brothers with me, To the churches in Galatia:

NKJ Galatians 1:2 and all the brethren who are with me, To the churches of Galatia:

NRS Galatians 1:2 and all the members of God's family who are with me, To the churches of Galatia:

YLT Galatians 1:2 and all the brethren with me, to the assemblies of Galatia:

NAB Galatians 1:2 and all the brothers who are with me, to the churches of Galatia:

NJB Galatians 1:2 and all the brothers who are with me, to the churches of Galatia.

GWN Galatians 1:2 and all the believers who are with me. To the churches in Galatia.

BBE Galatians 1:2 And all the brothers who are with me, to the churches of Galatia:

- **All:** Php 2:22, Php 4:21
- **Churches:** Acts 9:31, Acts 15:41, Acts 16:5,6 Acts 18:23 1Co 16:1
- Galatians 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## TO THE CHURCHES IN GALATIA

This verse seems simple but has caused Bible students considerable angst in trying to understand to which churches was Paul referring. Wiersbe gives a simple summary (of a complex topic) - "Bible students are divided over whether Paul wrote to churches in the *country* of Galatia or in the *province* of Galatia. The former view is called the "**north Galatian theory**" and the latter the "**south Galatian theory**." The matter is not finally settled, but the evidence seems to indicate that Paul wrote to churches in the **southern part of the province of Galatia**—Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe—churches he founded on his first missionary journey (Acts 13:1-14:28)." ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**Northern or Southern Galatia?** - In Paul's day, the word Galatia had two distinct meanings. In a strict ethnic sense, Galatia was the region of central Asia Minor inhabited by the Galatians. They were a Celtic people who had migrated to that region from Gaul (modern France) in the third century B.C. The Romans conquered the Galatians in 189 B.C. but allowed them to have some measure of independence until 25 B.C. when Galatia became a Roman province, incorporating some regions not inhabited by ethnic Galatians (e.g., parts of Lycaonia, Phrygia, and Pisidia). In a political sense, Galatia came to describe the entire Roman province, not merely the region inhabited by the ethnic Galatians. Paul founded churches in the southern Galatian cities of Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe (Acts 13:14–14:23+). These cities, although within the Roman province of Galatia, were not in the ethnic Galatian region. There is no record of Paul's founding churches in that northern, less populated region. Those two uses of the word Galatia make it more difficult to determine who the original recipients of the epistle were. Some interpret Galatia in its strict racial sense and argue that Paul addressed this epistle to churches in the northern Galatian region, inhabited by the ethnic descendants of the Gauls. Although the apostle apparently crossed the border into the fringes of ethnic Galatia on at least two occasions (Acts 16:6+; Acts 18:23+), Acts does not record that he founded any churches or engaged in any evangelistic ministry there. Because neither Acts nor Galatians mentions any cities or people from northern (ethnic) Galatia, it is reasonable to believe that Paul addressed this epistle to churches located in the southern part of the Roman province, but outside of the ethnic Galatian region. Acts records the apostle's founding of such churches at Pisidian Antioch (Acts 13:14–50+;), Iconium (Acts 13:51–14:7+; cf. Acts 16:2+), Lystra (Acts 14:8–19+; cf. Acts 16:2+), and Derbe (Acts 14:20, 21+; cf. Acts 16:1+). In addition, the churches Paul addressed had apparently been established before the Jerusalem Council (Gal 2:5+), and the churches of southern Galatia fit that criterion, having been founded during Paul's first missionary journey before the Council met. Paul did not visit northern (ethnic) Galatia until after the Jerusalem Council (Acts 16:6+). ([John MacArthur's Introduction to Galatians](#))

### Related Resources:

1. [F. F. Bruce, "Galatian Problems. 1. Autobiographical Data," Bulletin of the John Rylands Library Manchester 51.2 \(Spring 1969\): 292-309.](#)
2. [F. F. Bruce, "Galatian Problems. 2. North or South Galatians?" Bulletin of the John Rylands Library Manchester 52.2 \(Spring 1970\): 243-266.](#)
3. [F. F. Bruce, "Galatian Problems. 3. The 'Other' Gospel," Bulletin of the John Rylands Library Manchester 53.2 \(Spring 1971\): 253-271.](#)
4. [F. F. Bruce, "Galatian Problems. 4. The Date of the Epistle," Bulletin of the John Rylands Library Manchester 54.2 \(Spring 1972\): 250-267.](#)
5. [F. F. Bruce, "Galatian Problems. 5. Galatians and Christian Origins," Bulletin of the John Rylands Library Manchester 55.2 \(Spring 1973\): 264-284.](#)

**All the brethren** - Paul's use of the word "**all**" suggests that there were a considerable number who were in agreement with his letter. Notice Paul's use of "I" in Galatians 1:6 ("I am amazed") indicating that this letter was personally from him and was not a "team effort." The NLT paraphrase gives a good sense of Paul's intended meaning - "All the brothers and sisters here join me in sending this letter." - "in sending" it, not in writing it.

**C H Spurgeon** - Paul ever loved to associate others with him in his Christian service. He was not one who wanted to ride the high horse, and to keep himself aloof from his brethren in Christ. He frequently mentions the true-hearted men who were with him, even

though they were far inferior to him in talent and also in grace. He often joins with himself such men as Timothy and Silvanus, and here he puts in, "all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia." ([Spurgeon's Exposition](#))

**Brethren who are with me** - We don't know who these **brethren** were, however the omission of their names shows that the Galatians must have known who they were. Clearly Paul's point is that he is not a "lone ranger" in regard to his concern for the integrity of the gospel of grace in Galatia. This suggests that he consulted with others (and with God of course) as to the best course of action to address the reports of "another gospel" being promoted in the Galatian churches. Indeed, Proverbs says "For by wise guidance you will wage war, And in abundance of counselors there is victory." (Pr 24:6).

I like how **R C H Lenski** explains **all the brethren** who were with Paul - **All** these **brethren** are at Paul's side, **all** of them know about the situation in Galatia, **all** of them know what Paul is writing, **all** of them agree with him and support him in **all** that he is writing. The Galatians are not to suppose that Paul is alone and writing by himself in a sort of private way. Nay, all the brethren with him, down to the last one, and "**all**" implies a goodly number, are backing Paul. ([Ibid](#))

**Martin Luther** notes that Paul "adds for good measure the argument that he does not stand alone, but that all the brethren with him attest to the fact that his doctrine is divinely true. "Although the brethren with me are not apostles like myself, yet they are all of one mind with me, think, write, and teach as I do." ([Galatians 1 Commentary](#))

**Brethren** (80)([adelphos](#) from **a** = denotes unity + **delphus** = a womb) means brother or near kinsman. "**Adelphós** generally denotes a fellowship of life based on identity of origin, e.g., members of the same family. The members of the same Christian community are called **brothers** (Jn 21:23; Acts 9:30; Ro 16:14; 1 Cor. 7:12+)

**Wuest** adds an interesting thought that "persons who join in the address prefixed to a letter, are persons whose authorization is required and conveyed in it. They are indicated as joint-authors (Ed: Not exactly). The letter, though composed by Paul, is a letter of Paul and those named with him. These all stamp with authority what is said in the letter. Accordingly, where Paul associates anyone with himself in the prefatory superscription of his letters, it is always some person who stands in a position of authority and influence towards those addressed. ([Word Studies from the Greek New Testament](#))

**To the churches of Galatia** - **Galatia** is not a city but a region with many churches. While some hold that these were churches in the northern region, many conservative commentators believe they were addressed to churches in southern Galatia - Antioch Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe and for that reason it would be worthwhile to take some time to study Acts 13+ and Acts 14+, noting especially how the Gospel was initially accepted until the Jews arrived and began to stir up the crowds against Paul and even got him stoned (As one writer quips "In a sense, they were still throwing rocks when he wrote this letter.") So in contrast to letters like 1 Thes 1:1 ("To the church of the Thessalonians") which was written to a single church, Galatians was written to a number of churches in the region of Galatia. It is notable that there is no commendation or thanks offered as Paul did for all the other churches to whom he wrote (cf 1 Th 1:2, Ro 1:8, 1 Cor 1:4, Phil 1:3, Col 1:3, Eph 1:16). Needless to say, Paul is not pleased with their defection from the Gospel of grace! **Wuest** adds "he did not address them as **saints**, although they were!" ([Wuest Word Studies - Eerdmann Publishing Company Volume 1, Volume 2, Volume 3](#) - used [by permission](#))

**Churches** (1577)([ekklesia](#) from **ek** = out + **klesis** = a calling, verb = **kaleo** = to call) literally means called out and as commonly used in the Greco-Roman vernacular referred to citizens who were called out from their homes to be publicly assembled or gathered to discuss or carry out affairs of state. **Ekklesia** is used in two ways in the New Testament, one meaning referring to the entire body of believers, of all different groups, who have trusted Christ as Savior which is synonymous with the Body of Christ (e.g. Eph 1:22, Eph 3:21, Eph 5:27). In Galatians 1:2 **ekklesia** refers to the local assemblies of believers in Galatia and thus the letter is what we would call a "**circular letter**," meant to be distributed among several churches. Since there must have been only one copy (and no copying machine), the letter would have to be read and digested before it was sent on to the next church. Did some members of the churches take "notes" like is so common in today's church? We'll ask in Heaven.

As someone said the church is the fruit of the Gospel, but Paul fears that the churches in Galatia are rotting fruit! And I would add that any fruit will be worthless that is not borne by abiding in the Vine. As Jesus said

"I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides ([present tense](#) as the habit of their lives) in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do (ABSOLUTELY) nothing.(John 15:5)

### Galatians 1:3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ

NET Galatians 1:3 Grace and peace to you from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ,

GNT Galatians 1:3 χ ρ ις μ ν κ α ε ρ ν η π θεο πατρ ς μ ν κ α κυρ ου ησο Χριστο

NLT Galatians 1:3 May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace.

KJV Galatians 1:3 Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ,

ESV Galatians 1:3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,

ASV Galatians 1:3 Grace to you and peace from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ,

CSB Galatians 1:3 Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ,

NIV Galatians 1:3 Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,

NKJ Galatians 1:3 Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ,

NRS Galatians 1:3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,

YLT Galatians 1:3 Grace to you, and peace from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ,

NAB Galatians 1:3 grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,

NJB Galatians 1:3 Grace and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ

GWN Galatians 1:3 Good will and peace are yours from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ!

BBE Galatians 1:3 Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ,

- Ro 1:7-15 1Co 1:3 2Co 1:2 13:14 Eph 1:2 Php 1:2 Col 1:2 1Th 1:1 2Th 1:2 2Jn 1:3
- Galatians 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## AMAZING GRACE SURPASSING PEACE

**Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ-** Grace comes from God, is mediated through His Son (cf 2 Ti 2:1<sup>±</sup>, 2 Cor 12:9<sup>±</sup> "My grace...") and made effective through the work of His Spirit (Heb 10:29<sup>±</sup>). We tend to forget that **grace** and **peace** are not only necessary and instrumental in our initial salvation, but they are to be experienced in our daily life as we learn to walk with God, specifically learning to "Walk by the Spirit" as Paul describes in Galatians 5:16+.

**Max Anders** writes that "**Grace** and **peace** summarize Paul's gospel of salvation. **Grace**, God's unmerited favor, is the source of salvation (Eph. 2:8-9<sup>±</sup>). When a person believes in Jesus Christ, he or she receives salvation and **peace** with God (Ro 5:1<sup>±</sup>), others, and self. Thus, **grace** leads to **peace**." (Holman NT Commentary - Galatians)

**Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones** - **Grace** is the beginning of our faith; **peace** is the end of our faith. Grace is the fountain, the spring, the source. It is that particular place in the mountain from which the mighty river you see rolling into the sea starts its race; without it there would be nothing. Grace is the origin and source and fount of everything in the Christian life. But what does the Christian life mean, what is it meant to produce? The answer is 'peace.' So there we have the source and there the estuary leading to the sea, the beginning and the end, the initiation, and the purpose for which it is all meant and designed. It is essential for us, therefore, to carry these two words in our minds because within the ellipse formed by grace and peace everything is included. ([Grace: Peace: Glory](#))

**Grace** was the Greek greeting and **peace** the Hebrew greeting. Paul frequently linked grace with peace (1 Corinthians 1:3; 2 Corinthians 1:2; Ephesians 1:2; Philippians 1:2; Colossians 1:2; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:2; Philemon 3). The grace of God is the source of salvation and peace with God is the result of salvation.

**MacArthur** - Since it offered no **grace** and provided no **peace**, the law system being taught by the lying Judaizers is attacked even in this simple greeting. If being right with God and possessing salvation is by works, as those false teachers maintained, then it is not of **grace** (Ro 4:4-5<sup>±</sup>) and can bring no peace, since one never knows if he has enough good works to be eternally secure. ([MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Galatians](#))

No grace, no peace

Know grace, no peace

**Bradley Nassif** said that "Grace is opposed to merit, but it is not opposed to effort." In fact the only way a Christian can carry out supernatural effort is by God's grace dispensed by the Spirit of grace (Heb 10:29<sup>±</sup>).

**Grace** (favor) (5485)(**charis** from **chairo** = to rejoice. English = charity. Beggars need "charity" even as sinners need grace, for we are all spiritual *paupers* outside of Christ, but "God gives where he finds empty hands"- Augustine cp Mt 5:3+) in simple terms is God's unmerited favor and supernatural enablement and empowerment for **salvation** (justification, past tense salvation) and for

daily **sanctification** (present tense salvation) (See [Relationship of Justified, Sanctified, Glorified](#)). **Grace** is everything for nothing (albeit to procure grace for sinners it cost God the inestimable value of His only Son's life, so there is no such thing as "cheap grace!") to those who don't deserve anything. Grace is what every man needs, what none can earn and what God Alone can and does freely give (Ro 8:32+ where "freely give" is charizoma from charis = a grace gift!). **Grace** addresses man's sin, while **mercy** addresses man's misery. It is also worth noting that this former zealously legalistic Pharisee now used the word **grace** more than 100 times in his writings compared to about 55 times by the other NT writers. Paul was indeed the apostle of grace.

**Martin Luther** writes "Paul wishes the Galatians **grace** and **peace**, not from the emperor or kings and princes; for these are wont oftimes to persecute the godly: nor does he wish them **grace** and **peace** from the world, for in the world they shall have tribulation (Jn 16:33); but from God our Father, that is, he wishes them a godly and heavenly **peace**." ([Galatians 1 Commentary](#))

**Peace** (1515)(eirene from verb eiro = to join or bind together) literally pictures the binding or joining together of that which had been separated or divided (See Romans Road to salvation). The result is a "setting at one" again, which is conveyed by the common expression of "having it all together". Peace is a state of concord and harmony and is the opposite of division, dissension or war.

Even this opening greeting directly confronts the false gospel that had spread like leaven through the Galatian churches. Law offers no **grace** and in fact negates it! It follows that a legalistic system will bring no **peace** because **peace** flows from God's **grace**! If you want **peace** with God, you first must accept the **grace** of God in Jesus Christ, the Prince of peace.

**Grace** precedes **peace**. There can be no **peace** without preceding **grace**. To experience **peace with God**, we must first accept the free gift of the grace of God in Christ Jesus. It is interesting that even though Paul is upset that the Galatians have listened to and begun to follow a false gospel, he does not hesitate to offer them God's **grace and peace**. Sadly, I must confess that my fleshly tendency, when someone rejects me in some way, is to withhold kind, edifying words like "**grace and peace to you**" (cp Eph 4:29+)! As someone has said the measure of PEACE ENJOYED is in proportion to the GRACE ACCEPTED.

**C H Spurgeon** - It is the genius of the gospel to wish well to others. Hence Paul begins the actual Epistle with a benediction: "Grace be to you and peace." Dear friends, may you all have a fullness of these two good things! Grace rightly comes first, and peace afterwards. Peace before grace would be perilous; nay more, it would be ruinous. But may you always have enough of grace to lead you on to a deep and joyful peace! The two things go together very delightfully, — grace and peace, — and it is the best of grace, and the best of peace, since they come "from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ," ([Spurgeon's Exposition](#))

**Wuest** - The [salutation](#) proper as given in this verse is the uniform one found in all of the Pauline church letters, but it has special significance in the Galatian letter since the recipients were turning away from the doctrine of grace toward the legalistic teachings of the Judaizers. The **grace** spoken of here is sanctifying grace, the enabling ministry of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the saints. The Galatian letter reveals the fact that the Galatian saints were being deprived of the ministry of the Spirit by the teaching of the Judaizers to the effect that growth in the Christian life was to be had by obedience to the legal enactments of the Mosaic law (Gal 4:19), and thus coming under the Mosaic economy in which there was no provision for an indwelling Spirit whose ministry it was to sanctify the believer, they substituted **self-effort** for their former **dependence upon the Spirit**. The salutation therefore is the out breathing of a Pauline prayer that the Galatians might again become recipients of the full work of the Spirit in their lives. The **peace** here mentioned is heart peace which is the result of the ministry of the Spirit. ([Wuest Word Studies - Eerdman Publishing Company Volume 1, Volume 2, Volume 3](#) - used [by permission](#))

## SOURCE OF GRACE AND PEACE

**From God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ** - The source of **grace and peace** is **both** the Father and the Son (the single preposition "**from**" links both Father and Son as the unified Source). Thus this passage shows us the **co-equality** of the Godhead.

**Lord Jesus Christ** - **Lord** implies His authority. **Jesus** speaks of His mission (Deliverer), and **Christ** denotes His Messianic anointing. This title for Jesus is found 63x in 63v in the NT

Acts 11:17; Acts 15:26; Acts 20:21; Acts 28:31; Rom. 1:7; Rom. 5:1; Rom. 5:11; Rom. 13:14; Rom. 15:6; Rom. 15:30; Rom. 16:24; 1 Co. 1:2; 1 Co. 1:3; 1 Co. 1:7; 1 Co. 1:8; 1 Co. 1:10; 1 Co. 6:11; 1 Co. 8:6; 1 Co. 15:57; 2 Co. 1:2; 2 Co. 1:3; 2 Co. 8:9; 2 Co. 13:14; Gal. 1:3; Gal. 6:14; Gal. 6:18; Eph. 1:2; Eph. 1:3; Eph. 1:17; Eph. 5:20; Eph. 6:23; Eph. 6:24; Phil. 1:2; Phil. 3:20; Phil. 4:23; Col. 1:3; 1 Thess. 1:1; 1 Thess. 1:3; 1 Thess. 5:9; 1 Thess. 5:23; 1 Thess. 5:28; 2 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:2; 2 Thess. 1:12; 2 Thess. 2:1; 2 Thess. 2:14; 2 Thess. 2:16; 2 Thess. 3:6; 2 Thess. 3:12; 2 Thess. 3:18; 1 Tim. 6:3; 1 Tim. 6:14; Phlm. 1:3; Phlm. 1:25; Jas. 1:1; Jas. 2:1; 1 Pet. 1:3; 2 Pet. 1:8; 2 Pet. 1:14; 2 Pet. 1:16; Jude 1:4; Jude 1:17; Jude 1:21

**Lord** (Master, Owner)([2962](#))(**kurios**) signifies that one is supreme, sovereign and possesses absolute authority, absolute ownership



and uncontested power. **Jesus** is referred to as **Lord (Kurios)** more frequently than by any other title. Lord is not merely a name that composes a title, but signifies a call to action so that every saint should willingly, reverently bow down to Jesus Christ. If Christ is our Lord, we are to live under Him, consciously, continually submitting our wills to him as His loyal, loving bondservants ("love slaves"), always seeking first His Kingdom and His righteousness (Mt 6:33-note).

**THOUGHT** - According to the preceding practical working "definition" of "Lord," beloved we all need to ask ourselves "Is Jesus Christ my Lord?". "Do I arise each day, acknowledges this is the day the Lord hath made?" (Ps 118:24+) "**Do I surrender my will to His will as I begin each day?**" (cp Ro 12:1+, Ro 12:2+) Beloved, don't misunderstand. None of us have "arrived" in this area of Jesus as Lord of our lives. And it is precisely for that reason that Peter commands us to continually "**grow** (present imperative) in the grace (unmerited favor, power to live the supernatural, abundant life in Christ) and knowledge (not just intellectual but transformational) of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen." (2 Pe 3:18+) So do not be discouraged. Don't "throw in the towel" as they say. Keep on keeping on, pressing (continually = [present tense](#)) "on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." (Php 3:14+)

**Jesus** (2424) ([Iesous](#) is [transliteration](#) of the Greek *Iesous*, which in turn is the transliteration of the Hebrew name [Jehoshua \(Yehoshua\)](#) or [Jeshua \(Yeshua\)](#) which mean Jehovah is help or Jehovah is salvation. Stated another way the Greek *Iesous* corresponds to the OT [Jehoshua \(Yehoshua\)](#) which is contracted as [Jeshua \(Yeshua\)](#).

**Christ** (5547) ([Christos](#) from [chrío](#) = to rub or anoint, consecrate to an office) describes one who has been anointed with oil, one who has been consecrated. The majority of the NT uses refer to Jesus (exceptions = "false Christs" - Mt 24:24, Mk 13:22). **Christos** describes one who has been anointed, symbolizing appointment to a task. It is used here as the title "Anointed One" and is the Greek synonym for "Messiah." (See also [Messiah - Anointed One](#))

**James Montgomery Boice** adds that "Citizens of the empire were required to burn a pinch of incense to the reigning Caesar and utter the words *Kyrios Kaisar* ("Caesar is Lord!"). It is this that the early Christians refused to do and for which they were themselves thrown to the wild lions or crucified. It was not that Christians were forbidden to worship God. They were free to worship any god they chose so long as they also acknowledged Caesar. Romans were tolerant. But when Christians denied to Caesar the allegiance that they believed belonged to the true God only, they were executed." (Daniel: An Expository Commentary)

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**Today in the Word** - Galatians 1:1-5 - In 1976, Vie Carlson bid \$400 for the angry letter Frank Sinatra wrote to Chicago Daily News columnist Mike Royko. Twenty years later, that letter was valued at more than \$15,000. In the letter, Sinatra promised Royko \$100,000 if he could prove that Sinatra punched the elderly man Royko claimed he did. He could double his earnings if he could pull Sinatra's alleged hairpiece. "Quite frankly," Sinatra fumed, "I don't understand why people don't spit in your eye three or four times a day."

It is always telling how a person responds to criticism and personal attack, and Paul began his letter to the Galatians having to do just this. Conspicuously absent are the customary greetings and blessings of his other letters. Rather, Paul had to immediately assume a defensive posture.

Much more is at stake than Paul's personal reputation. His critics wanted to subvert the gospel he had been preaching, and their first line of attack was to discredit Paul as an apostle. If Paul was to defend the gospel he preaches, he must also defend the validity of his apostleship. He reminded the Galatians that he had been sent by Jesus Christ and God the Father. No man commissioned him, not Peter or any other elder of the church. He had a divine call, and therefore he had legitimate apostolic authority. The forcefulness of his defense, which becomes even clearer as we read on in chapter one, helps us to realize the critical nature of the attack.

The gospel is what matters most. The Galatians had to understand the gospel rightly, and these opening verses summarize the gospel. The theology of Galatians is Trinitarian: the gospel is a shared work of the Father, Son and Spirit. In these opening verses, Paul exalts the work of the God the Father through the Son, Jesus Christ. Both have willingly expressed their love for humanity. God the Father sends Jesus for our rescue; God the Son lays down His life as payment for our sins. By the end of this letter, we'll see even more clearly the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit. For this spectacular mission to save the world, God deserves glory forever and ever.

Contemporary Americans pride themselves on personal freedom. They have much to say about the Constitution's guarantees of freedom of religion, speech, press and assembly. They want ""free love"" and freedom from all moral standards. For a nation that puts so much stress on personal freedom, the book of Galatians has a contemporary relevance. Its message is liberty--freedom from the law. This appeals to our ""freedom-seeking"" society. We welcome the chance to be free from any personal or moral restraints. But Galatians doesn't encourage that kind of liberty. As we will discover in our study of this key book, the world's idea of freedom is very different from true freedom in Christ.

**TODAY IN THE WORD** - A few years ago a popular series of posters initially looked like a jumble of patterns and colors. As one looked intently at them, the apparent chaos would suddenly resolve itself into a well-defined three-dimensional image. While it may not be immediately obvious, a long look at Galatians shows that this epistle fits nicely into the theme of wisdom that we have been studying throughout the year. Galatians represents the apostle Paul's teaching on living wisely in light of the gospel message.

**Galatians 1:4 Who gave Himself for our sins so that He might rescue us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father: tou dontos (AAPMSG) heauton huper ton hamartion hemon, hopos exeletai (3SAMS) hemas ek tou aionos tou enestotos (RAPMSG) ponerou kata to thelema tou theou kai patros hemon;**

Amplified - Who gave (yielded) Himself up [to atone] for our sins [and to save and sanctify us], in order to rescue and deliver us from this present wicked age and world order, in accordance with the will and purpose and plan of our God and Father—

Wuest - who gave himself in behalf of our sins so that He might rescue us out from this present pernicious age according to the will of our God and Father, ([Eerdmans Publishing](#))

NET Galatians 1:4 who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from this present evil age according to the will of our God and Father,

GNT Galatians 1:4 το ὄντος αὐτὸν πρὸς τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ἡμῶν, πῶς ἐλεῖται ἡμεῖς ἐκ τοῦ αἰῶνος τοῦ νῦν ὄντος πονηροῦ κατὰ τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ πατρὸς ἡμῶν,

NLT Galatians 1:4 Jesus gave his life for our sins, just as God our Father planned, in order to rescue us from this evil world in which we live.

KJV 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:

ESV Galatians 1:4 who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father,

ASV Galatians 1:4 who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us out of this present evil world, according to the will of our God and Father:

CSB Galatians 1:4 who gave Himself for our sins to rescue us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father.

NIV Galatians 1:4 who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father,

NKJ Galatians 1:4 who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father,

NRS Galatians 1:4 who gave himself for our sins to set us free from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father,

YLT Galatians 1:4 who did give himself for our sins, that he might deliver us out of the present evil age, according to the will of God even our Father,

NAB Galatians 1:4 who gave himself for our sins that he might rescue us from the present evil age in accord with the will of our God and Father,

NJB Galatians 1:4 who gave himself for our sins to liberate us from this present wicked world, in accordance with the will of our God and Father,

GWN Galatians 1:4 In order to free us from this present evil world, Christ took the punishment for our sins, because that was what our God and Father wanted.

BBE Galatians 1:4 Who gave himself for our sins, so that he might make us free from this present evil world, after the purpose of our God and Father:

- **Who gave Himself for our sins:** Ga 2:20 Mt 20:28 26:28 Mk 10:45 Lk 22:19 Jn 10:11,17,18 Ro 4:25 Eph 5:2 1Ti 2:6 Tit 2:14 Heb 9:14 10:9,10 1Pe 2:24 1Pe 3:18 1Jn 2:2 3:16 Rev 1:5

- **so that He might rescue us from this present evil age** Ga 6:14 Isa 65:17 Jn 12:31 14:30 15:18,19 17:14,15 Ro 12:2 2Co 4:4 Eph 2:2 6:12 Heb 2:5 6:5 Jas 4:4 1Jn 2:15-17 5:4,5,19 1Jn 5:20 Rev 5:9 7:9
- **according to the will:** Ps 40:8 Mt 26:42 Lk 22:42 Jn 5:30 6:38 14:30,31 Ro 8:3,27,32 Eph 1:3,11 Heb 10:4-10)
- **of our God and Father:** Mt 6:9 Ro 1:7 Eph 1:2 Php 4:20 1Th 3:11,13 2Th 2:16
- Galatians 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## OUR GREAT SAVIOR'S GRAND GOSPEL RESCUE

**Who gave Himself for our sins so that He might rescue us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father** - This could well be termed the believer's "Emancipation Proclamation!" (aka the "Declaration of Independence of Christian liberty.")

In a parallel passage **Paul** wrote that God has...

**delivered** us from the domain ([exousia](#) = the right and the might - in context right and might of Satan, cf 1 Jn 5:19<sup>+</sup>, Eph 2:2<sup>+</sup>) of darkness (cf **this present evil age**), and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in Whom we have redemption, the forgiveness ([aphesis](#); see also [Forgive - Aphiemi](#)) of sins (Notice Paul's "definition" of redemption = forgiveness). (Col 1:13-14<sup>+</sup>)

**Comment:** Notice that in Col 1:13<sup>+</sup> it is the **Father** Who delivers us and here in Gal 1:4 it is the **Son**. And of course the **Spirit** causes us to be [born again](#) (John 3:3-5, cf Father in 1 Pe 1:3<sup>+</sup>). This amazing rescue operation is the cooperative work of the Trinity!

**Phillip Ryken** observes four significant truths about Jesus' "rescue operation" on the Cross

**First**, it shows the **willingness** of Jesus to go to the Cross. The crucifixion was a voluntary self-sacrifice. Jesus gave the most precious gift of all. He "gave Himself" (Gal. 1:4). He "gave Himself up" (Eph. 5:25), or He "gave Himself for us" (Titus 2:14). No one took Christ's life away from Him; He freely gave it away: "I lay down my life"—Jesus said—"that I may take it up again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of My own accord" (John 10:17-18). This is also emphasized in the Gospel of Matthew, where an unusual phrase is used to show that at the moment of his death Jesus "yielded up His spirit" (Matt. 27:50).

**Second**, this verse shows the **purpose** of the Cross. The reason Christ gave himself away was "for our sins" (Gal. 1:4). A transaction took place on the cross. We were the ones who deserved to die because we owe God an infinite debt for our sin. But Christ took our place on the Cross. He became our substitute, our sin-offering. He gathered up all our sins, put them on His own shoulders, and paid for them with His death. Thus the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ was not merely an example of supreme sacrifice, but an actual atonement for sin. It enabled God to forgive us by satisfying His pure justice....

**Third**, this verse shows the **effect** of the Cross. Christ was crucified "to deliver us from the present evil age" (Gal. 1:4). When we think of the cross, we usually think first of the atonement. As we have seen, Christ died to pay for our sins. But Christ was also crucified to emancipate us from this evil age. **The Gospel is a rescue**, like being released from servitude or freed from prison....

**Fourth**, this verse shows the **origin** of the Cross. Christ died "according to the will of our God and Father" (Gal. 1:4). The execution of Jesus of Nazareth was not an unforeseen tragedy, a mere accident of history; it was part of God's plan for the salvation of sinners. The apostle Peter said as much to the very men who nailed Jesus to the cross. In his famous sermon in Jerusalem, he declared, "This Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men" (Acts 2:23). ([Reformed Expository Commentary – Galatians](#))

**Wuest** comments on the phrase "**Who gave Himself for our sins**" - Here Paul brings to the attention of the Galatian Christians who were practically ignoring the substitutionary character of the atoning death of the Lord Jesus, a declaration of the true ground of acceptance with God (Gal 2:21; 5:4). This was purposely added because the Galatians were falling back on works as the ground of such acceptance. The voluntary aspect of the death of our Lord is brought out here. He said, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God" (Heb. 10:9). ([Word Studies from the Greek New Testament](#))

Jesus **gave Himself** - **Gave** is in the [middle voice](#) which is reflexive and speaks of His personal and total surrender. The idea is that Jesus Who delivers us has an interest in the result of His own act, "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." (Mk 10:45)

God **gave** His only Son (John 3:16) and His only Son **gave** His only life out of love for men dead in their trespasses and sins otherwise headed for eternal destruction. And in Christ giving of Himself, He was the perfect fulfillment of all the Jewish **sin offerings** given at the Temple for hundreds of years. Jesus came to be the final, perfect **sin offering**, to which the entire Old Testament sacrificial system had always been pointing. Paul wrote...

He (GOD THE FATHER) made Him (JESUS THE SON) Who knew no sin to be sin (THE PERFECT SIN OFFERING!) on our behalf (SPEAKS OF SUBSTITUTIONARY SACRIFICE - JESUS TOOK OUR PLACE), so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (2 Cor 5:21<sup>+</sup>)

**Peter** wrote that

He (JESUS) Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross (AS A SIN OFFERING), so that (PURPOSE) we might die to (THE PENALTY AND POWER OF) sin and live (ENABLED BY HIS SPIRIT) to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed (FROM THE FATAL DISEASE OF SIN). (1 Pe 2:24<sup>+</sup>)

**John Calvin** adds that "These words, **Who gave Himself** for our sins, were intended to convey to the Galatians a doctrine of vast importance; that no other satisfactions can lawfully be brought into comparison with that sacrifice of himself which Christ offered to the Father; that in Christ, therefore, and in him alone, atonement for sin, and perfect righteousness, must be sought; and that the manner in which we are redeemed by him ought to excite our highest admiration.

**J Vernon McGee** says "Jesus Christ "gave himself for our sins." There is nothing that we can add to the value of His sacrifice. Nothing! He gave Himself. What do you have to give, friend? Anything? Can you add anything to His sacrifice? He gave Himself. How wonderful and glorious that is! I am speechless when I read a verse like this. He gave Himself! When you give yourselves, you have given everything—who you are, what you have, your time, your talent— everything. He gave Himself. He couldn't give any more. Paul just couldn't wait to say it. Having mentioned Him, he says, "Who gave himself for our sins." This is the germ of Paul's subject." ([Galatians 1 Thru the Bible](#))

**Who gave Himself** - The Father gave the Son. The Son gave Himself. **He gave Himself** which was a gift impossible without incarnation, a gift valueless without a mysterious union with divinity." (John Eadie)

**Robert Gromacki** - Since the nature of love is giving, the greatest gift is that of self. Christ gave Himself! (cp Jn 15:13, Jn 10:11, every husband's model = Eph 5:25<sup>+</sup>)

**ED COMMENT:** DO NOT TRY TO OBEY THIS COMMAND TO "**LOVE YOUR WIFE**" IN YOUR OWN STRENGTH [WITHOUT THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT!](#) YOU CANNOT DO IT!

**Henry Alford** - He thus reminds the Galatians, who wished to return to the bondage of the law, of the great object of the Atonement, which they had forgotten. Gal 3:13+ is but a restatement, in more precise terms, of this.

**Leon Morris** - "Throughout the epistle Paul points the Galatians to the centrality of the cross. He cannot wait to make this plain, and we find a reference to it in his very first sentence." ([Galatians: Paul's Charter of Christian Freedom](#))

**Jerry Bridges** adds that "We like novels in which the protagonist survives to fight another day, but in real life the hero sometimes perishes. A plaque at a makeshift memorial at the World Trade Center read, "All gave some. Some gave all." Jesus gave all of Himself for us."

**Spurgeon** comments on **Who gave himself for our sins**— There is the **doctrine of the atonement**, which Paul always brings into his preaching and writing as soon as he can: "Who gave himself for our sins." Well does Luther say, "Christ never gave himself for our righteousness; but he gave himself for our sins, because there was no other way of saving us except by a sacrifice for sin." The substitutionary character of Christ's death is always to be noticed. If our Lord's bearing our sin for us is not the gospel, I have no gospel to preach. The heart of the gospel is redemption, and the essence of redemption is the substitutionary sacrifice of Christ. ([Spurgeon's Exposition](#))

**Ridderbos** - By way of exception to the usual pattern of the salutation, the apostle attaches a long description of the work of Christ to his mention of the name of Christ. This at once thrusts the purpose of the letter to the fore: the issue between Paul and the Galatians is the significance of Christ. ([The Epistle of Paul to the Churches of Galatia](#))

**Jesus Himself** testified to the voluntary nature of His sacrificial gift...

John 10:17 "For this reason (**What reason?** see Jn 10:16) the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again.<sup>18</sup> "No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father."

Eph 5:2+ and **walk** ([present imperative](#) - [See discussion of need for the Holy Spirit to obey this command](#)) in love, (HOW ARE WE TO WALK? see also Eph 5:1 where be imitators = [present imperative](#)) just as Christ also loved you, and **gave Himself up** for (**huper**) us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.

Titus 2:14+ **Who gave Himself** for (**huper**) us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.

1 Timothy 2:6 **Who gave Himself** as a ransom for all, the testimony borne at the proper time.

Matt 20:28 (cf Mk 10:45) just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and **to give His life** a ransom for many."

Hebrews 9:14+ how much more will the blood of Christ, Who through the eternal Spirit **offered Himself** without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Jesus' action fulfilled the OT High Priest's actions on the Day of Atonement, with one exception. In His giving Jesus functioned in the same manner as the Jewish High Priest who brought the blood of the sacrifice into the Holy of Holies. However the pronoun "Himself" signifies that Jesus was the sacrifice! (Jn 1:29). Jesus, our Great High Priest, was both the **Sacrificer** and the **Sacrifice!** Amazing love for those who were so unlovely in their sinful state! Hallelujah! Thank You Lord Jesus!

For see discussion on [huper](#) below

**Our sins** - On account of them.

**Sin** (noun) ([266](#))(**hamartia**) literally conveys the idea of missing the mark as when hunting with a bow and arrow (in Homer some hundred times of a warrior hurling his spear but missing his foe). Later hamartia came to mean missing or falling short of any goal, standard, or purpose. Hamartia in the Bible signifies a departure from God's holy, perfect standard of what is right in word or deed (righteous). It pictures the idea of missing His appointed goal (His will) which results in a deviation from what is pleasing to Him. In short, sin is conceived as a missing the true end and scope of our lives, which is the Triune God Himself. As **Martin Luther** put it "Sin is essentially a departure from God." Ryrie adds that sin "is not only a negative idea but includes the positive idea of hitting some wrong mark." **Hamartia** is a deviation from the straight line, marked off by the "plumb line" of God's perfect, pure Word. As someone has well said ultimately sin is man's (foolish) declaration of independence of God, of the "apostasy" of the creature from his Creator! Woe! Puritan John Bunyan minced no words when he defined sin as "the dare of God's justice, the rape of His mercy, the jeer of His patience, the slight of His power and the contempt of His love." Hamartia is what happens when we err (err is from Latin errare = to wander!) which means to wander from the right way, to deviate from the true course or purpose and so to violate an accepted standard of conduct.

**Martin Luther** comments that "these words (Christ died for our sins) are very thunderclaps from heaven against all kinds of righteousness (i.e., all forms of self-righteousness)." ([Galatians 1 Commentary](#))

**John Stott** - Once we have seen that Christ 'gave himself for our sins', we realize that we are sinners unable to save ourselves, and we give up trusting in ourselves that we are righteous.

**Spurgeon** - Christ died **for our sins**, not for our virtues. It is not your efficiencies, but your **deficiencies** which entitle you to the Lord Jesus. It is not your wealth, but your **lack**. It is not what you have, but what you **have not**. It is not what you can boast of, but what you **mourn over** that qualifies you to receive the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**John Eadie** - The doctrine taught is, that Jesus Christ did spontaneously offer Himself as the one propitiation, so that He is the source of grace and peace; and the inference is, because He gave Himself, the oblation is perfect as also the deliverance secured by it, so that obedience to the Mosaic law as a means of salvation is quite incompatible with faith in Him. ([Commentary on Galatians](#))

**Barry Horner** - The Christ who "**gave himself for our sins**" is the same Christ who, on the ground of this justification, has rescued us from this present evil age; it is the same grace that justifies which also sanctifies as a consequence. We are not only clothed in righteousness (justification) (Ro 9:30; Phil. 3:9) whereby our sin is pardoned, but also rescued from unrighteousness (sanctification) that the world represents, solely on the basis of the Son of God's atonement, and the power of the Gospel. Having been initially saved by the Gospel, we are consummately saved by the Gospel (Phil 1:6).

**Warren Wiersbe** - Christ paid the price that He might achieve a purpose-delivering sinners from bondage. "Liberty in Christ" is the dominant theme of Galatians. (Check the word bondage in Gal 2:4; 4:3, 9, 24-25; 5:1.) The Judaizers wanted to lead the Christians out of the liberty of grace into the bondage of Law. Paul knew that bondage was not a part of the message of the Gospel, for Christ had died to set men free. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**A J Gordon** - Attachment to Christ is the only secret of detachment from the world.

**That** (hopos) means in order that and points to the purpose of Christ's sacrifice.

## **CHRIST'S "RESCUE MISSION"**

**So that He might rescue us from this present evil age**- Notice the "so that" which introduces a purpose, in this case what Jesus gave Himself for our sins. Paul said Jesus did it so that He could rescue us! We were (as it were) drowning in sin and a sea of evil and His death and His Gospel were like a life preserver thrown out from Heaven to save us from Hell! All we had to do be rescued was take hold of His "life preserving" Gospel by grace through faith! Amazing grace indeed! The hymn [Jesus, I Come](#) by William T. Sleeper accurately explains why we are in such dire need of rescue...

Out of my bondage, sorrow, and night,  
Into Thy freedom, gladness, and light,  
Out of my sickness, into Thy health,  
Out of my want and into Thy wealth,  
Out of my sin and into Thyself,  
Jesus, I come to Thee.

Out of my shameful failure and loss,  
Jesus, I come, Jesus, I come;  
Into the glorious gain of Thy cross,  
Jesus, I come to Thee;  
Out of earth's sorrows, into Thy balm,  
Out of life's storms and into Thy calm,  
Out of distress to jubilant psalm,  
Jesus, I come to Thee.

Out of unrest and arrogant pride,  
Jesus, I come, Jesus, I come;  
Into Thy blessed will to abide,  
Jesus, I come to Thee;  
Out of myself to dwell in Thy love,  
Out of despair, into raptures above,  
Upward for aye on wings like a dove,  
Jesus, I come to Thee.

Out of the fear and dread of the tomb,  
Jesus, I come, Jesus, I come;  
Into the joy and light of Thy home,  
Jesus, I come to Thee;  
Out of the depths of ruin untold,  
Into the peace of Thy sheltering fold,  
Ever Thy glorious face to behold,  
Jesus, I come to Thee.

In a sense the Biblical narrative of redemption that stretches from the expulsion from Eden to the reestablishment of the New Jerusalem can be viewed as one long rescue story.

**Dictionary of Biblical Imagery on rescue** - Much of the NT is an explication of the significance of the cross and resurrection in this **grand rescue**, and how a **rescued people** can live as those who will one day inherit and inhabit a **rescued creation**. But the Bible also contains numerous and smaller episodes of rescue, some of which foreshadow the grand rescue of the cross and resurrection. **Rescue** is in many ways synonymous with **deliverance**, though the image of rescue frequently carries a sense of immediate or impending danger, of a hazardous predicament and of bold and decisive action. It speaks of courage, strength, skill and risk. **Rescue** easily evokes more concrete scenes than deliverance or salvation. Many Americans will never forget the television image of a man risking his life by jumping into the ice-choked Potomac River to **rescue** a flight attendant from the wreckage of a crashed plane. **Rescues** involve hapless victims who are in over their heads and cannot help themselves. They face awful consequences, often death. **Rescuers** take risks. They plunge into the fray.

**Rescue** is variously rendered as "deliver" (KJV), "set us free," (NRSV, TEV), "to free us" (NCV), "to liberate us" (NJB)

**Rescue** strikes a keynote of Galatians for the Gospel is indeed a rescue from danger, an emancipation from a state of bondage. In context **rescue** speaks primarily of a deliverance of saints from the power of the "ethical errors" (and "eros") of this **present evil age**. Christ died not to improve us, but to **rescue** us! He did not come to reform us but to rescue and regenerate us! And Guzik adds the interesting thought that "The idea behind the word deliver (rescue) is not deliverance from the **presence** of something, but deliverance from the **power** of something."

**Webster** says **rescue** means to set free from confinement, danger or evil. To liberate from actual restraint, or to remove or withdraw from a state of exposure to evil. To **rescue** is to actively deliver someone out of danger. This implies that the one being rescued passively receives the rescuing.

**Rescue** - Deliverance from people or forces that are overwhelming. It implies a liberator with strength and wisdom to ensure true freedom. God's physical rescue of the Israelites points to the spiritual deliverance obtained by Jesus Christ. (Manser)

**Freedom** as the result of emancipation by the Cross of Christ is the great blessing of the Gospel and is a keynote of Galatians, the very "keynote" the Judaizers were attempting to "[dismantle!](#)"

Galatians 5:1,13+ It was for **freedom** ([eleutheria](#)) that Christ **set us free** ([eleutheroo](#)); therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery. 13 For you were called to **freedom** ([eleutheria](#)), brethren; only do not turn your **freedom** ([eleutheria](#)) into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.

John 8:32-36 and you will know the truth, and the truth **will make you free** ([eleutheroo](#))." 33 They answered Him, "We are Abraham's descendants and have never yet been enslaved to anyone; how is it that You say, 'You will become **free** ([eleutheros](#))'?" 34 Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin. 35 "The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son does remain forever. 36 "So if the Son **makes you free** ([eleutheroo](#)), you will be **free** ([eleutheros](#)) indeed.

**Criswell** comments that "Deliverance from **"this present evil age"** is assured through the atonement of Christ. This is accomplished in the present in the sense that Christ gives victory over the powers of Satan now. Ultimate delivery awaits either death or the translation of the saints...(See [Rapture](#))"

**Brian Bell** applies this passage to us today - Our present evil age whispers: Live for self! Yet, the worse bondage, is living for self, and yielding to the desires of the old nature. ([Sermon](#))

The Galatians needed to sing **Charles Wesley's** hymn [O For a Thousand Tongues](#) and we too do well to sing it as a reminder of the **"triumphs of His grace."** (especially when we sense we are falling in a subtle snare of legalism!)

Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing  
My great Redeemer's praise,  
The glories of my God and king,  
**The triumphs of His grace!**

My gracious Master and my God,  
Assist me to proclaim,  
To spread through all the earth abroad,  
The honors of Thy name.

Jesus! the name that charms our fears,  
That bids our sorrows cease—  
'Tis music in the sinner's ears,  
'Tis life, and health, and peace.

**He breaks the pow'r of canceled sin,  
He sets the pris'ner free;  
His blood can make the foulest clean,  
His blood availed for me.**

He speaks, and, list'ning to His voice,  
New life the dead receive,  
The mournful, broken hearts rejoice,  
The humble poor believe.

Glory to God, and praise and love  
Be ever, ever giv'n

By saints below and saints above,  
The church in earth and heav'n.

**Rescue (deliver)** (1807) (**exaireo** from **ek** = out + **aireo** = to take, remove, seize) literally means to take out (used literally in Lxx of Jdg 14:9KJV "he **took** the honey **out** of the mouth of the lion"). In some context it means tear out or pluck out (Mt 5:29, 18:9, Lxx = Lev 14:40). To take out from a number. To select.

In the **middle voice** (most of the uses in the Lxx and NT are middle voice) it means to take out for oneself and hence to rescue or deliver someone from a perilous or confining circumstance, setting them free. **Spicq** adds that "This idea of extracting or removing is indicated by the reflexive meaning of the **middle voice**, which places the beneficiaries of the act of deliverance in the hands of the agent of deliverance (**Ed**: Which in Gal 1:4 is Jesus!)."

**Vine** adds that "the middle voice, suggests that He who thus delivers us has an interest in the result of His own act. Thus in Ephesians 1:4 there is the thought that God "chose us for Himself" in Christ, i.e., that we might be His sons, verse 5. So here. The words may be paraphrased, "Who gave Himself for our sins, in order that He might deliver us out of this present evil age that so we might belong to Him."

**Exaireo** signifies to deliver by rescuing from danger! In some secular uses **exaireo** meant to choose for oneself or to carry off as booty.

**J. B. Lightfoot** writes that the **exaireo**, rescue, 'strikes the keynote of the epistle'. 'The Gospel is a rescue, an emancipation from a state of bondage.

**THOUGHT** - Since Jesus has rescued us from perishing forever in eternal hell, we now must go in the power of the Spirit (Acts 1:8+) into the highways and byways and rescue the perishing with the message of the Gospel...

#### [Rescue the perishing, care for the dying.](#)

Snatch them in pity from sin and the grave;  
Weep o'er the erring one, lift up the fallen,  
Tell them of Jesus, the mighty to save.

### **DELIVERED FROM THE POWER NOT PRESENCE OF THIS EVIL AGE**

**Guzik** has an excellent explanation of this **rescue** or deliverance - The idea behind the word **deliver** is not deliverance from the **presence** of something, but deliverance from the **power** of something. We will not be delivered from the **presence** of this present evil age until we go to be with Jesus. But we can be experience deliverance from the **power** of **this present evil age** right now. ([Galatians 1 Commentary](#))

**Max Anders** adds "Grace not only saves us from the penalty of sin; it also delivers us from the power of sin. We have been rescued from the enslaving power of this present evil age—a world ruled by Satan, full of cruelty, tragedy, temptation, and deception." (Ibid)

**John MacArthur** says that **exaireo** "was used by Stephen in his sermon before the Sanhedrin as he described the divine deliverance of Joseph and the children of Israel from Egyptian affliction (Acts 7:10, 34+). Peter used the word to describe God's deliverance of him from prison (Acts 12:11+), and the Roman commander Claudius Lysias used it of his rescue of Paul from the belligerent mob in Jerusalem (Acts 23:27+; cf. Acts 23:10+). Galatians 1:4 contains the only metaphorical use of the term in the New Testament." ([MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Galatians](#))

**John Eadie** on **exaireo** - In other passages of the New Testament it has the **sense of rescue from peril by an act of power**, as of Joseph (Acts 7:10); of the Hebrews out of slavery (Acts 7:34); of Peter from the hand of Herod (Acts 12:11); of Paul from the mob in Jerusalem (Acts 23:27); and it is the word used by the Divine Master to the apostle in reference to his frequent deliverances from danger (Acts 26:17). Compare Genesis 32:11, Isaiah 42:22, Psalms 140:1. ([Galatians 1 Commentary](#))

**Exaireo** - 8 verses in NT - pluck(1), rescue(2), rescued(3), rescuing(1), tear(1).

Matthew 5:29 "If your right eye makes you stumble, **tear it out** (aorist imperative) and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.

**Comment:** Depicts a violent extraction. The right eye was presumed to be more precious, so it was the one to go after in an enemy: "that I gouge out the right eyes of all of you" (1Sa 11:2; Zech 11:17); "to



gouge out their right eyes" (Josephus, Ant. 6.71)

**Zodhiates:** These functions (tear it out) symbolize actions we should perform at the inception of temptation. The second we are conscious of it, we must cut off the temptation. When we lose the function of our hands or eyes, we are severely handicapped. So if that which causes us to sin is destroyed, sin loses its power over us. (Exegetical Commentary on Matthew)

Matthew 18:9 "If your eye causes you to stumble, **pluck it out** (aorist imperative) and throw it from you. It is better for you to enter life with one eye, than to have two eyes and be cast into the fiery hell.

Acts 7:10 and **rescued** him (Joseph - Acts 7:9) from all his afflictions, and granted him favor and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and he made him governor over Egypt and all his household.

Acts 7:34 'I HAVE CERTAINLY SEEN THE OPPRESSION OF MY PEOPLE IN EGYPT AND HAVE HEARD THEIR GROANS, AND I HAVE COME DOWN TO **RESCUE** THEM; COME NOW, AND I WILL SEND YOU TO EGYPT.'

Acts 12:11 When Peter came to himself, he said, "Now I know for sure that the Lord has sent forth His angel and **rescued** me from the hand of Herod and from all that the Jewish people were expecting."

Acts 23:27 "When this man (Paul) was arrested by the Jews and was about to be slain by them, I came up to them with the troops and **rescued** him, having learned that he was a Roman.

Acts 26:17 **rescuing** you from the Jewish people and from the Gentiles, to whom I am sending you,

Galatians 1:4 who gave Himself for our sins so that He **might rescue** us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father,

#### **Exaireo** - 113x in 111v in the **Septuagint (Lxx)** -

Gen 32:11; 37:21f; Ex 3:8; Ex 18:4, 8ff; Lev 14:40, 43; Num 35:25; Deut 23:14; 25:11; 32:39; Josh 2:13; 9:26; 10:6; 24:10; Jdg 10:15; 14:9; 1 Sam 4:7f; 7:3; 10:18; 12:10f, 21; 14:48; 17:37; 26:24; 30:8, 18, 22; 2 Sam 14:6; 19:5, 9; 22:1f, 20; 23:12; 1Kgs 1:12; 2Kgs 17:39; 18:29f, 34f; 19:12; 1Chr 16:35; 2Chr 25:15; 32:17; Job 5:4, 19; 10:7; 36:21; Ps 31:1f; 37:40; 50:15; 59:1; 64:1; 71:2; 82:4; 91:15; 116:8; 119:153; 140:1, 4; 143:9; 144:7, 11; Eccl 7:26; Isa 16:12; 31:5; 38:14; 42:22; 43:13; 44:17, 20; 47:14; 48:10; 50:2; 57:13; 60:16; Jer 1:8, 17, 19; 15:21; 20:13; 21:12; 22:3; 31:11; 34:13; 42:11; Ezek 33:5, 9, 12; 34:10, 27; Da 3:15, 17, 29; 6:14ff; Hos 2:10; 5:14; Mic 5:8; 7:3; Nah 2:1; Zeph 1:18; Zech 11:6

Exodus 3:8 (cf Ex 18:8,9,10) "So I have come down to **deliver** (Lxx = exaireo) them from the power of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and spacious land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Amorite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite.

**Comment:** Notice how the purpose of the deliverance by God was to bring about a people of His own. That OT "shadow" is fulfilled in the NT where Jesus' delivers us that we might be His possession. (Titus 2:14, 1Pe 2:9, cf 1Cor 6:19-20)

2 Samuel 22:20 "He also brought me forth into a broad place; **Herescued** (Lxx = exaireo) me, because He delighted in me.

**Comment:** Keep the context in mind - for at least 10 years David had been in "tight" places.

David's bold prayer for deliverance - Psalm 31:1 For the choir director. A Psalm of David. In You, O LORD, I have taken refuge; Let me never be ashamed; In Your righteousness **deliver** (Lxx = aorist imperative) me. 2 Incline Your ear to me, **rescue** (Lxx = aorist imperative) me quickly; Be to me a rock of strength, A stronghold to save me.

**Spurgeon on "rescue me quickly":** We must not set times or seasons, yet in submission we may ask for swift as well as sure mercy. God's mercies are often enhanced in value by the timely haste which he uses in their bestowal; if they came late they might be too late—but he rides upon a cherub, and flies upon the wings of the wind when he intends the good of his beloved.

Psalm 37:40 The LORD helps them and **delivers** them; He delivers them from the wicked and saves them, Because they take refuge in Him.

Psalm 50:15 (Ps 50:14 - context is offering spiritual sacrifices from the heart, not dead ritual) Call upon Me in

the day of trouble; I shall **rescue** you, and you will honor (KJV = glorify which is supported by the Greek verb used in; Lxx = doxazo = to glorify) Me."

**Spurgeon:** Oh blessed verse! Is this then true sacrifice? Is it an offering to ask an alms of heaven? It is even so. The King himself so regards it. For herein is faith manifested, herein is love proved, for in the hour of peril we fly to those we love. It seems a small thing to pray to God when we are distressed, yet it is a more acceptable worship than the mere heartless presentation of bullocks and male goats. This is a voice from the throne, and how full of mercy it is! It is very tempestuous round about Jehovah, and yet what soft drops of mercy's rain drop from the bosom of the storm! Who would not offer such sacrifices?

#### **Troubled one, haste to present it now!**

Who shall say that Old Testament saints did not know the Gospel? (cp Gal 3:8) Its very spirit and essence breathes like frankincense all around this holy Psalm.

**I will rescue** (Lxx = exaireo) **you**. The reality of your sacrifice of prayer shall be seen in its answer. Whether the smoke of burning bulls be sweet to Me or not, certainly your humble prayer shall be, and I will prove it so by My gracious reply to your supplication. This promise is very large, and may refer both to temporal and eternal deliverances; faith can turn it every way, like the sword of the cherubim.

**And thou you glorify Me** (cf Gal 1:5). Your prayer will honour Me, and your grateful perception of My answering mercy will also glorify Me. The goats and bullocks would prove a failure, but the true sacrifice never could. The calves of the stall might be a vain oblation, but not the "calves" of sincere lips. Thus we see what is true ritual. Here we read inspired rubrics. Spiritual worship is the great, the essential matter; all else without it is rather provoking than pleasing to God. As helps to the soul, outward offerings were precious, but when men went not beyond them, even their hallowed things were profaned in the view of heaven.

Psalm 59:1 For the choir director; set to Al-tashheth. A Mikhtam of David, when Saul sent men and they watched the house in order to kill him. **Deliver** (aorist imperative) me from my enemies, O my God; Set me securely on high away from those who rise up against me. (**PRAYER FOR DELIVERANCE**)

Psalm 64:1 For the choir director. A Psalm of David. Hear my voice, O God, in my complaint; **Preserve** (aorist imperative) my life from dread of the enemy. (**PRAYER FOR PRESERVATION**)

Psalm 71:2 In Your righteousness **deliver** (Lxx = rhuomai - aorist imperative) me and **rescue** (Lxx = exaireo - aorist imperative) me; Incline Your ear to me and save me.

**Spurgeon:** "Deliver me in thy righteousness, and cause me to escape." Be true, O God, to thy word. It is a righteous thing in thee to keep the promises which thou hast made unto thy servants. I have trusted thee, and thou wilt not be unrighteous to forget my faith. I am taken as in a net, but do thou liberate me from the malice of my persecutors. "Incline thine ear unto me, and save me." Stoop to my feebleness, and hear my faint whispers; be gracious to my infirmities, and smite upon me: I ask salvation; listen thou to my petitions, and save me. Like one wounded and left for dead by mine enemies, I need that thou bend over me and bind up my wounds. These mercies are asked on the plea of faith, and they cannot, therefore, be denied.

Psalm 82:4 **Rescue** (Lxx = exaireo - aorist imperative) the weak and needy; Deliver them out of the hand of the wicked. (**PRAYER FOR RESCUE**)

**Spurgeon:** "Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked" Break the nets of the man-catchers, the legal toils, the bonds, the securities, with which cunning men capture and continue to hold in bondage the poor and the embarrassed. It is a brave thing when a judge can liberate a victim like a fly from the spider's web, and a horrible case when magistrate and plunderer are in league. Law has too often been an instrument for vengeance in the hand of unscrupulous men, an instrument as deadly as poison or the dagger. It is for the judge to prevent such villainy.

Psalm 91:15 "He will call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will **rescue** him and honor him.

**Spurgeon:** "I will deliver him, and honour him." The man honours God, and God honours him. Believers are not delivered or preserved in a way which lowers them, and makes them feel themselves degraded; far from it, the Lord's salvation bestows honour upon those it delivers. God first gives us conquering grace, and then rewards us for it.

Psalms 116:8 For You have **rescued** my soul from death, My eyes from tears, My feet from stumbling.

**Spurgeon:** “For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.” The triune God has given us a trinity of deliverances: our life has been spared from the grave, our heart has been uplifted from its griefs, and our course in life has been preserved from dishonor. We ought not to be satisfied unless we are conscious of all three of these deliverances. If our soul has been saved from death, why do we weep? What cause for sorrow remains? Whence those tears? And if our tears have been wiped away, can we endure to fall again into sin? Let us not rest unless with steady feet we pursue the path of the upright, escaping every snare and shunning every stumblingblock. Salvation, joy, and holiness must go together, and they are all provided for us in the covenant of grace. Death is vanquished, tears are dried, and fears are banished when the Lord is near.

Psalms 119:153 Look upon my affliction and **rescue** (Lxx = exaireo - aorist imperative) me, For I do not forget Your law. (**PRAYER FOR RESCUE**)

Psalms 140:1 For the choir director. A Psalm of David. **Rescue** (Lxx = exaireo - aorist imperative) me, O LORD, from evil men; Preserve me from violent men (**PRAYER FOR RESCUE**)

**Spurgeon:** “Deliver me, O LORD, from the evil man.” It reads like a clause of the Lord’s prayer, “Deliver us from evil.” David does not so much plead against an individual as against the species represented by him, namely, the being whose best description is—“the evil man.” There are many such abroad; indeed we shall not find an unregenerate man who is not in some sense an evil man, and yet all are not alike evil. It is well for us that our enemies are evil: it would be a horrible thing to have the good against us. When “the evil man” bestirs himself against the godly he is as terrible a being as a wolf, or a serpent, or even a devil. Fierce, implacable, unpitying, unrelenting, unscrupulous, he cares for nothing but the indulgence of his malice. The persecuted man turns to God in prayer; he could not do a wiser thing. Who can meet the evil man and defeat him save Jehovah himself, whose infinite goodness is more than a match for all the evil in the universe? We cannot of ourselves baffle the craft of the enemy, but the Lord knoweth how to deliver his saints. He can keep us out of the enemy’s reach, he can sustain us when under his power, he can rescue us when our doom seems fixed, he can give us the victory when defeat seems certain; and in any and every case, if he do not save us from the man he can keep us from the evil. Should we be at this moment oppressed in any measure by ungodly men, it will be better to leave our defence with God than to attempt it ourselves.

Psalms 140:4 Keep me, O LORD, from the hands of the wicked; **Preserve** (Lxx = exaireo - aorist imperative) me from violent men Who have purposed to trip up my feet. (**PRAYER FOR PRESERVATION**)

**Spurgeon:** “Preserve me from the violent man.” His intense passion makes him terribly dangerous. He will strike anyhow, use any weapon, smite from any quarter: he is so furious that he is reckless of his own life if he may accomplish his detestable design. Lord, preserve us by thine omnipotence when men attack us with their violence. This prayer is a wise and suitable one.

Psalms 143:9 **Deliver** (Lxx = exaireo - aorist imperative) me, O LORD, from my enemies; I take refuge in You. (**PRAYER FOR DELIVERANCE**)

**Spurgeon:** “Deliver me, O LORD, from mine enemies.” Many foes beset us, we cannot overcome them, we cannot even escape from them; but Jehovah can and will rescue us if we pray to him. The weapon of all-prayer will stand us in better stead than sword and shield. “I take refuge in You.” This was a good result from his persecutions. That which makes us flee to our God may be an ill wind, but it blows us good. There is no cowardice in such flight, but much holy courage. God can hide us out of reach of harm, and even out of sight of it. He is our hiding-place; Jesus has made himself the refuge of his people: the sooner, and the more entirely we flee to him the better for us. Beneath the crimson canopy of our Lord’s atonement believers are completely hidden; let us abide there and be at rest. In the seventh verse our poet cried. “Hide not thy face,” and here he prays, “Hide me.” Note also how often he uses the words “unto thee”; he is after his God: he must travel in that direction by some means, even though he may seem to be beating a retreat; his whole being longs to be near the Lord. It is possible that such thirstings for God will be left unsupplied? Never, while the Lord is love.

Psalms 144:7 Stretch forth Your hand from on high; **Rescue** (Lxx = exaireo - aorist imperative) me and deliver me out of great waters, Out of the hand of aliens (**PRAYER FOR RESCUE**)

**Spurgeon:** Make a Moses of me,—one drawn out of the waters. My foes pour in upon me like torrents,

they threaten to overwhelm me; save me from their force and fury; take them from me, and me from them.

Psalm 144:11 Rescue me and **deliver** (Lxx = exaireo - aorist imperative) me out of the hand of aliens, Whose mouth speaks deceit And whose right hand is a right hand of falsehood. (**PRAYER FOR DELIVERANCE**)

**Spurgeon:** Because of what the Lord had done, David returns to his pleading. He begs deliverance from him who is ever delivering him. "Rid me, and deliver me from the hand of strange children." This is in measure the refrain of the song, and the burden of the prayer. He desired to be delivered from his open and foreign adversaries, who had broken compacts, and treated treaties as vain things.

Jeremiah 1:8 Do not be afraid of them, **for** (**term of explanation** - What does Jehovah explain to Jeremiah?) I am with you to **deliver** (Lxx = exaireo) you," declares the LORD.

### **HE RESCUED ME**

On the stormy sea of sin I was sinking,  
Never to rise again;  
The wind and the rain 'round me crashing,  
Had battered and torn me within.

But He rescued me, Jesus rescued me,  
From the cold, dark waters of sin's troubled sea;  
Oh He rescued me through dark I can see,  
Jesus reached down in love and He rescued me.

**Present evil age** - The KJV says we are rescued from this "**present evil world**" but this is not as accurate as "**age**." The grand purpose of the **rescue** is to deliver us from the dominion of this godless age. We have been rescued from the enslaving power of this present evil age—a world ruled by Satan, full of cruelty, tragedy, temptation, and deception. Our rescue is from an ethical system, a way of thinking under the dominion of the Evil One and thus diametrically opposed to God. Our holy purpose now in this world which is passing away (1Jn 2:17) is to be salt (Mt 5:13) and light (Mt 5:14-16, cp Php 2:14, 15). So yes, for the present, we are **in** the world but we are no longer **of** the world (Jn 17:11, 14-18, Php 3:20-21, 1Jn 5:5.) And so now

**The present evil age** is under the domination of "the prince of this world" (Jn 12:31; 14:30; 16:11), the "Evil One," (1Jn 5:19) which helps understand why it is so evil.

**Matthew Henry** - This present world is an evil world: it has become so by the sin of man. Jesus Christ has died to deliver us from this present evil world, not to remove his people out of it, but to rescue them from the power of it

**Martin Luther** - Paul sticks to his theme. He never loses sight of the purpose of his epistle. He does not say, "Who received our works," but "who gave." Gave what? Not gold, or silver, or paschal lambs, or an angel, but Himself. What for? Not for a crown, or a kingdom, or our goodness, but for our sins. These words are like so many thunderclaps of protest from heaven against every kind and type of self-merit. Underscore these words, for they are full of comfort for sore consciences. ([Galatians 1 Commentary](#))

"The faithful Christian life is the **heavenly life lived on earth**." (John MacArthur) (Yes, even in the midst of a **present evil age**.)

"This **age** is **evil**, corrupt and corrupting, deceived and deceiving." (Hindson)

**Ron Dunn** - The Christian lives in two worlds. He is resident of this present evil age and of the Age to Come. Though he is a citizen of this world, the Bible says his "citizenship is in heaven" (Phil. 3:20) and that already he is "seated... with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:6). As a believer he has been delivered "from this present evil age" (Gal. 1:4) and has "tasted... the powers of the age to come" (Heb. 6:5). Eternal life is a present possession. The Christian lives simultaneously in the physical world and in the spiritual world, in the seen and in the unseen, in the present and in the future, on earth and in heaven.

**Robert Rapa** explains that **exaireo** in Gal 1:4 - "denotes not a 'deliverance from,' but a **rescue from the power of** " (Boice, 426). Thus, defeat of the power of this "**age**" (**ainos**) to incite and exacerbate human sinfulness is included in humanity's rescue in Christ's self-sacrifice. God's power in Christ is available to the believer not only to rescue from eternal death but also to energize an obedient life as a dependent disciple of Jesus (cf. Ro 6:12-14). (The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Volume 11)

**John Stott** agrees - The purpose of Christ's death, therefore, was not only to bring us forgiveness, but that, having been forgiven, we should live a new life, the life of the age to come.

**William MacDonald** - Christ died to deliver us from this present evil age. This includes not only the moral and political corruption of this age, but also the religious world which mixes rituals and ceremonies with faith in Christ. It was especially timely, therefore, for the Galatians to be reminded that they were going back into the very system from which Christ had died to rescue them!

**Alan Cole** - The division between 'the present age' and 'the age to come' was familiar to every Jew, and therefore to the Christian.

**Timothy George** - The notion of two ages, borrowed from Jewish apocalyptic thought, juxtaposes a present age of sin and decay and a future age of blessing and peace. For Paul, however, the death and resurrection of Jesus has radically punctuated this traditional time line. The Christian now lives in profound tension between the No Longer and the Not Yet. The coming of Christ has drastically relativized, though not completely obliterated, former distinctions of race, class, and gender. It also has placed in a totally new perspective such former requirements as circumcision, food laws, and feast days. Christ has rescued us from this present evil age through justifying us by faith and pouring out his Spirit in our lives. This is an accomplished fact, and we must not be drawn back into "a yoke of slavery" (Gal 5:1). But while Christ has rescued us from this evil age, he has not taken us out of it. Thus our liberty must not degenerate into license nor the gift of the Spirit be abused by selfish carnal behavior (Gal 5:16-26). (The New American Commentary)

**Wayne Barber** - Now this strikes the key note of the whole epistle. He has taken us out from under something that has been pulling us down for quite a while. Christ came to die for our sins to deliver us. And from what? A state of bondage. Bondage to what? **This present evil age**. (KJV = "present evil world") Now I don't know if you've studied Romans, but Romans focuses more on the fact that Jesus saved us from the penalty of sins. Yes, He did. And He saves us from the power of sin. Yes, He did. But Galatians has a slightly different focus on what Jesus came to do, which is germane to the remainder of the epistle. He wants them to understand this very thing. Our sins are simply indications of our bondage, bondage to a system of living and thinking that is found in this world. You turn a television on, you're listening to that system. You turn the radio on, and I hear stuff on that thing, I'm thinking good grief! Get a clue people! But, you know, it's interesting. I love to listen to it to kind of keep up with what the system's doing to people's minds. Christ not only delivered us from our personal sins, but He from the pull and the power of a system, which is the way the world does what it does.

We live in a spiritually (and morally) dark time, but God promises that this night (present evil age) is almost spent and the Day of the Lord is near (Ro 13:12-note). The **possibility** that Christ could come at *any time* and the **certainty** that He will come at *some time* should motivate us to holy living right now!

Note that Galatians 1:4 does not promise that Christ will deliver us from all of our present earthly problems (at least not yet, but of course one day He will!).

**Evil** (4190) (**poneros** from **pono** = work or toil, Robertson says the idea is that labor is an annoyance, bad, evil; Noun **poneria** derived from **poneros**) means evil including evil, malignant character, pernicious (see Webster 1828 definition below), that which is morally or socially worthless, wicked, base, bad, degenerate. **Poneros** denotes determined, aggressive, and fervent evil that actively opposes what is good. **Poneros** is not just bad in character (like kakos - see below), but bad in effect (injurious)!

**Poneros** describes evil in active opposition to good. It means not only evil in its nature but viciously evil in its influence and actively harmful. **Poneros** used to describe Satan (ho poneros = "Evil one"), the god of this age, who is corrupting man and dragging him to destruction. This denotes someone who is not content in being corrupt themselves. They seek to corrupt others and draw them into the same destruction.

**Age** (**aion**) is used in this context does not refer to a period of time but to the popular culture and manner of thinking that is in rebellion against God and which will try to conform us to its ungodly pattern (cf use of **aion** in Ro 12:2+). Bengel adds that "**aion**" is that "subtle, informing spirit of the world of men who are living alienated and apart from God." **Aion** conveys the sense of "the spirit of this age" in which we live. It describes a lifestyle in which people follow the ways of the world and the evil ruler of the world system. It is dominated by SELF and by the humanistic philosophy that seeks to eliminate God from every aspect of life. But this age is a passing, transitory satanically dominated world about which John says "The world **is passing away**, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever." (1 Jn 2:17±)

**THOUGHT** - This truth about this dying, disappearing **age** begs the question - What are you living for, the passing temporal pleasures of this evil world or the enduring eternal pleasures of the perfect world to come? Every day you have a choice regarding whether you will live for this world or the next world, for self or for Savior, driven by the fallen flesh or empowered by the eternal Spirit? And do not be deceived beloved child of God. **The choice you make today will impact your eternal tomorrow!** Yes, sin's penalty is fully paid for, but as Paul explained "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad (**phaulos**)." (2 Cor 5:10±). Believer of course are still in the world, but we are no longer of it (John 17:11,14-18; Phil. 3:20-21±; 1 John 5:5±). "And now the faithful Christian life is the heavenly life lived on earth." (MacArthur)

**Trench** in his classic definition for **age** (**aion**) writes that "**age**" is "All that floating mass of thoughts, opinions, maxims, speculations, hopes, impulses, aims, aspirations, at any time current in the world, which it may be impossible to seize and accurately define, but

which constitute a most real and effective power, being the moral or immoral atmosphere which at every moment of our lives we inhale, again inevitably to exhale. ([See Trench's analysis of kosmos versus aion](#))

Why would we ever want to go back into this foul environment after being miraculously rescued by grace, grace in which we now stand and which enables and transforms us? In context the Galatians were believing a false teaching (a teaching originating from this **present evil age** and the father of lies - Jn 8:44) and were going back up under the burdensome yoke of the Law and the old dead works based mentality.

**Barry Horner** - By way of application the New Testament picture of this **age** is that of a ship run aground on rocks, breaking up. Some are rescued since they confess their plight and cry out to be delivered, but others are foolishly trying to patch the vessel up and cast off once again, only to encounter further tragedy after tragedy! We might name this ship, "**this present evil age**."

**Don Anderson** writes that "THIS PRESENT EVIL AGE" is not content to perish by itself but desires to drag man down with it to the same destruction. There is a powerful undertow of "THIS PRESENT EVIL AGE" endeavoring to sweep us away from the potential safety that can be ours in the Savior. Satan, the god of this world, uses: DRUGS, DRINK, DIVORCE, DESPAIR, DISCOURAGEMENT, DEPRESSION and whatever else is at his disposal to accomplish his purpose. ([Notes](#))

## GOD IS OUR FATHER

**According to the will of God and our Father** - Paul explains the Source of the rescue operation, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.: (Jn 3:16). The **Father** planned the rescue mission from eternity past, "before the foundation of the world." (Eph 1:4+). The Cross of Christ was always in His heart and mind (1 Pe 1:20+). As Paul writes later in this letter

But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, 5so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. (Gal 4:4-5+)

**Peter** writes

The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance. (2 Peter 3:9+)

In Ephesians **Paul** spoke of God's will...

He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him (Eph 1:9+)

God has now revealed to us his mysterious plan regarding Christ, a plan to fulfill his own good pleasure. (Eph 1:9NLT)

God's **will** is the ultimate cause and law. Redemption is its fulfilment. Hence our Lord Jesus declares that He came to do the will of Him that sent Him. John 4:34, 5:30, and Jn 6:38–40. The Son became man and entered the world to do the will of God (Heb 10:7). As He approached the time of His crucifixion, He prayed, "not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Matt. 26:39). Even in the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus prayed in the Garden, "Father, if Thou art willing, remove this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Thine be done" (Luke 22:42). It was *not* the Father's will for that cup to be removed, because otherwise the world could not be saved. ([MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Galatians](#))

**MacDonald** on **according to the will of God** - "This places the credit where it belongs—not in man's puny efforts, but rather in the sovereign will of God. It emphasizes that Christ is God's way of salvation and that there is no other." (MacDonald)

**Guzik** - False doctrine was a real problem in the Galatian churches, and their false doctrines robbed God of some of the glory due to Him. By emphasizing the rightly recognized glory of God and His plan, Paul hopes to put them more on the right track. ([Galatians 1 Commentary](#))

**Will** ([2307](#))(**thelema** from **thelo** = to will with the "-ma" suffix indicating the result of the will = "a thing willed") generally speaks of the result of what one has decided. In its most basic form, thelema refers to a wish, a strong desire, and the willing of some event. (Note: See **boule** for comments relating to thelema).

**Our Father** - Do not miss this precious possessive pronoun "our." Contrary to popular opinion, God is not the **Father** of all mankind but only of those who have entered His family by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Not only can we call **God our Father**, but now "because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "**Abba!** Father!" (Gal 4:6+, Ro 8:15+)

**John** explains

He (Jesus) came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. 12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right **to become children of God**, even to those who believe in His name, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. (John 1:11-13<sup>+</sup>)

See how great a love the **Father** has bestowed on us, that we would be called **children of God**; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, **because it did not know Him**. (AS FATHER)(1 John 3:1<sup>+</sup>)

**Father** (3962)(**pater**) is used of our heavenly Father. He imparts life, from physical birth to the gift of eternal life through the second birth (regeneration, being born again). Through ongoing sanctification, the believer more and more resembles their heavenly Father (cf Mt 5:48). The NT refers to God as Father 29 times....

**God the Father** (15x in NAS, Not once in the OT): 1 Cor 8:6; Gal 1:1; Eph 6:23; Phil 2:11; Col 1:3; 3:17; 1Th 1:1; 2Th 1:2; 1Ti 1:2; 2Ti 1:2; Titus 1:4; 1Pet 1:2; 2Pet 1:17; 2 John 1:3; Jude 1:1

**God and Father** (14x NAS, Not once in the OT): Rom 15:6; 1 Cor 15:24; 2 Cor 1:3; 11:31; Gal 1:4; Eph 1:3; 4:6; Phil 4:20; 1Th 1:3; 3:11, 13; Jas 1:27; 1Pet 1:3; Rev 1:6

**J. I. Packer** considers one's grasp of God's Fatherhood and adoption as His child as of essential importance in one's spiritual life explaining that...

If you want to judge how well a person understands Christianity, find out how much he makes of the thought of being God's child, and having God as his Father. If this is not the thought that prompts and controls his worship and prayers and his whole outlook on life, it means that he does not understand Christianity very well at all. For everything that Christ taught, everything that makes the New Testament new, and better than the Old, everything that is distinctively Christian as opposed to merely Jewish, is summed up in the knowledge of the Fatherhood of God. "Father" is the Christian name for God. ([Packer, J: Knowing God](#))

**Kent Hughes** - the idea that God is **our Father**, our **Abba**, is not only a sign of our spiritual health and of the authenticity of our faith, it is one of the most healing doctrines in all of Scripture. Some grew up only with a mother and no father. Others grew up in conventional homes where the relationship with the father was negative at best. But whatever our background, we need the touch of a father, and our God wants to provide that. Some of us need to bow before God and simply say, "Dearest Father, **Abba**" and so find the wholeness and healing that he wants to give us... The problem among some evangelical Christians today is the opposite - they have sentimentalized God's fatherhood so much that they have little concept of his holiness. Many Christians are flippantly sentimental about God, as if he is a celestial teddy bear. Such flip familiarity outwardly suggests super-intimacy with God but actually hides a defective knowledge of God. ([Sermon on the Mount: The Message of the Kingdom. Crossway Books](#))

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**For** (behalf) (5228)(**huper** - see also uses below) can mean "on behalf of" and thus pictures the substitutionary aspect of Christ's sacrifice (Ro 5:6 2Co 5:15, 21 Ga 3:13 Phlm 13 Gal 1:4, 1Co 15:3; Ga 2:20). He did not become a sinner on the Cross, but our sin bearer (Jn 1:29, 1Co 5:7, 1Pe 2:24, Isa 53:4-6) ([What is the doctrine of substitution?](#))

**He Died for You:** When Lincoln's body was brought from Washington to Illinois, it passed through Albany and it was carried through the street. They say a black woman stood upon the curb and lifted her little son as far as she could reach above the heads of the crowd and was heard to say to him, "Take a long look, honey. He died for you." So, if I could, I would lift up your spirit to see Calvary. Take a long look, He died for you.

**Huper**, a common preposition, appears approximately 160 times in the New Testament, about 135 times with the genitive case meaning "for," etc.; 20 times with the accusative case meaning "above, beyond," etc.; and once as a separate adverb meaning "more" (2 Corinthians 11:23). In compounds with verbs, nouns, or adverbs it adds the ideas of: (1) "over" or "beyond," spatially; (2) "for" someone or something; or (3) "beyond (normal) limits." (Compare the English hyper- and super- forms which are derived from this Greek word and its cognate Latin form, respectively.)

In the **Septuagint** **huper** is used about 450 times, slightly over half of them with the accusative (objective) case. This frequent use with the accusative is in contrast with the New Testament where the genitive case is predominant. According to Bauer none of the Septuagint uses are in a local (literal) sense; all are figurative

In the New Testament **huper**, used with the genitive or accusative cases, is not used literally of position. The most common usage is with the sense of "for" someone or something (genitive). Some of these involve the more specific idea of "in their behalf" or "for their sake." Specific usage of this type involves the following constructions:

(1) after verbs of speaking, praying, etc. (e.g., Acts 26:1, "thou art permitted to speak for [i.e., in behalf of] thyself");

(2) with verbs of being (e.g., Mark 9:40, Luke 9:50, "he that is not against us is for us");

(3) following verbs of personal concern, effort, sacrifice, dying, etc. (Luke 22:20, "my blood . . . shed for you"; Romans 8:32, "delivered him up for us all"). Related to this last construction is a usage with the genitive case of the thing affected, e.g., "the life of the world" (= to bring life to), John 6:51; "the glory of God," John 11:4; "sins" (= to atone for), Galatians 1:4. *huper* is also used to refer to actions as done for Christ (2 Corinthians 5:20; 12:10) or "his name" (Acts 5:41, etc.).

*huper* is also used in instances where someone goes beyond just acting in behalf of someone to actually being God's representative or substitute, i.e., being "in place of" or "instead of" the other (e.g., Romans 9:3; 1 Corinthians 15:29; 2 Corinthians 5:14,15; Galatians 3:13; Philemon 13). This meaning is more precisely expressed by *anti* (470) which is more commonly used for this idea.

At the other extreme, *huper* is used in some passages in the weaker sense of "concerning, with reference to" (compare *peri* [3875]): e.g., Romans 9:27; 2 Corinthians 1:7,8; 5:12; 7:4,14; 8:23,24; 9:2,3; 12:5 (twice),8; Philippians 1:7; 2 Thessalonians 1:4; 2:1.

In the 20 New Testament occurrences with the accusative case *huper* is used only figuratively in the sense of excelling or surpassing: "over, above, beyond, more than." Examples include 1 Corinthians 4:6, "beyond what is written" (NIV); Philemon 16, "more than a slave" (RSV); Philemon 21, "even more than I ask" (NIV). A special form of this usage is its appearance after comparative adjectives (e.g., Luke 16:8; Hebrews 4:12) or a verb expressing a comparison (2 Corinthians 12:13). ([Complete Biblical Library - Incredible Resource](#))

Friberg's summary - *περ* preposition; literally over, above; used only in a nonliteral sense in the NT;

**(1) with the genitive;**

(a) with a component of protection and concern on behalf of, for the sake of, for (Php 4:10; Col 1:7);

(b) after expressions relating to prayer for, in behalf of (Mt 5:44);

(c) after expressions relating to sacrifice for, to atone for someone (Mk 14:24); to atone, pay the price for something (Heb 10:12);

(d) with a component of representation or substitution in the place of, for, in the name of, instead of (Ro 9:3; 1Co 15:29; Phile 13);

(e) to mark cause or reason on account of, for the sake of, in view of (Acts 5:41; 2Th 1:5);

(f) to mark general content with reference to, about, concerning (equivalent to *περι*) (JN 1:30; RO 9:27);

(2) with the accusative;

(a) with a component of excelling or surpassing exceeding, above, more than (2Co 1:8b; Eph 1:22);

(b) preceded by a comparative than (LU 16:8; HE 4:12);

(3) adverbially to an even greater degree, more (2Co 11:23; cf. *γ μλλον* [I (even) more] in Php 3:4) ([Analytical Greek New Testament](#))

**Wuest** explains the word "**huper**" -

The preposition **for** is **huper**, a word that speaks of substitution, which was its usual meaning in the secular world of the first century. The professional letter writer acting in behalf of and instead of the illiterate, would put that fact at the close of a document which he wrote, using this word; for instance, "*Heraikleios Horou*; I wrote on behalf of him who does not know letters." This is the usual formula which makes the contents legal. Two instances in the New Testament where **huper** in its substitutionary usage is as plain as in the secular documents are: John 11:50, where Caiaphas uses it to speak of a political substitution, not a theological, although John finds that too; and 2Cor 5:14, 15 in the words if one died for all, that is, instead of and in behalf of. Thus Paul brings over against the Judaizers' bloodless religion, the doctrine of the substitutionary atonement which teaches that the Lord Jesus took our place with relation to our sins and gave Himself as the Sacrifice that would perfectly satisfy the just demands of God's holy law which the human race has violated. ([Wuest Word Studies - Eerdmann Publishing Company Volume 1, Volume 2, Volume 3](#) - used [by permission](#))



**Huper** in Galatians - Gal. 1:4; Gal 1:14; Gal. 2:20; Gal. 3:13 - the last two describe Jesus Substitution, taking our place, dying for us, so that we might live eternally

Galatians 1:14 and I was advancing in Judaism **beyond** ([huper](#)) many of my contemporaries among my countrymen, being more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions.

Galatians 2:20+ "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up **for** ([huper](#)) me.

Galatians 3:13+ (Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse **for** ([huper](#)) us—for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE"—

**Huper** - 135v in NT - (following do not include "for") about(5), above(4), behalf(22), beyond(4), concerning(3), exceed(1), more so(1), more than(5), over(2), regard(1), sake(9), sakes(1), than(3).

Matt. 5:44; Matt. 10:24; Matt. 10:37; Mk. 9:40; Mk. 14:24; Lk. 6:40; Lk. 9:50; Lk. 16:8; Lk. 22:19; Lk. 22:20; Jn. 1:30; Jn. 6:51; Jn. 10:11; Jn. 10:15; Jn. 11:4; Jn. 11:50; Jn. 11:51; Jn. 11:52; Jn. 13:37; Jn. 13:38; Jn. 15:13; Jn. 17:19; Jn. 18:14; Acts 5:41; Acts 8:24; Acts 9:16; Acts 15:26; Acts 21:13; Acts 21:26; Acts 26:13; Rom. 1:5; Rom. 5:6; Rom. 5:7; Rom. 5:8; Rom. 8:27; Rom. 8:31; Rom. 8:32; Rom. 8:34; Rom. 9:3; Rom. 9:27; Rom. 10:1; Rom. 14:15; Rom. 15:8; Rom. 15:9; Rom. 15:30; Rom. 16:4; 1 Co. 1:13; 1 Co. 4:6; 1 Co. 10:13; 1 Co. 10:30; 1 Co. 11:24; 1 Co. 12:25; 1 Co. 15:3; 1 Co. 15:29; 2 Co. 1:6; 2 Co. 1:7; 2 Co. 1:8; 2 Co. 1:11; 2 Co. 5:12; 2 Co. 5:14; 2 Co. 5:15; 2 Co. 5:20; 2 Co. 5:21; 2 Co. 7:4; 2 Co. 7:7; 2 Co. 7:12; 2 Co. 7:14; 2 Co. 8:16; 2 Co. 8:23; 2 Co. 8:24; 2 Co. 9:2; 2 Co. 9:3; 2 Co. 9:14; 2 Co. 11:23; 2 Co. 12:5; 2 Co. 12:6; 2 Co. 12:8; 2 Co. 12:10; 2 Co. 12:13; 2 Co. 12:15; 2 Co. 12:19; 2 Co. 13:8; Gal. 1:4; Gal. 1:14; Gal. 2:20; Gal. 3:13; Eph. 1:16; Eph. 1:22; Eph. 3:1; Eph. 3:13; Eph. 3:20; Eph. 5:2; Eph. 5:20; Eph. 5:25; Eph. 6:19; Eph. 6:20; Phil. 1:4; Phil. 1:7; Phil. 1:29; Phil. 2:9; Phil. 2:13; Phil. 4:10; Col. 1:7; Col. 1:9; Col. 1:24; Col. 2:1; Col. 4:12; Col. 4:13; 1 Thess. 3:2; 1 Thess. 5:10; 2 Thess. 1:4; 2 Thess. 1:5; 2 Thess. 2:1; 1 Tim. 2:1; 1 Tim. 2:2; 1 Tim. 2:6; Tit. 2:14; Phlm. 1:13; Phlm. 1:16; Phlm. 1:21; Heb. 2:9; Heb. 4:12; Heb. 5:1; Heb. 6:20; Heb. 7:25; Heb. 7:27; Heb. 9:7; Heb. 9:24; Heb. 10:12; Heb. 13:17; Jas. 5:16; 1 Pet. 2:21; 1 Pet. 3:18; 1 Jn. 3:16; 3 Jn. 1:7

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**Rescued Twice** - A wealthy English family once invited friends to spend some time at their beautiful estate. The happy gathering was almost plunged into a terrible tragedy on the first day. When the children went swimming, one of them got into deep water and was drowning. Fortunately, the gardener heard the others screaming and plunged into the pool to rescue the helpless victim. That youngster was Winston Churchill. His parents, deeply grateful to the gardener, asked what they could do to reward him. He hesitated, then said, "I wish my son could go to college someday and become a doctor." "We'll pay his way," replied Churchill's parents. Years later when Sir Winston was prime minister of England, he was stricken with pneumonia. Greatly concerned, the king summoned the best physician who could be found to the bedside of the ailing leader. That doctor was Sir Alexander Fleming, the developer of penicillin. He was also the son of that gardener who had rescued Winston from drowning as a boy! Later Churchill said, "Rarely, has one man owed his life twice to the same person."

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**Rescuer's Marred Hands** - An orphaned boy was living with his grandmother when their house caught fire. The grandmother, trying to get upstairs to rescue the boy, perished in the flames. The boy's cries for help were finally answered by a man who climbed an iron drain pipe and came back down with the boy hanging tightly to his neck. Several weeks later, a public hearing was held to determine who would receive custody of the child. A farmer, a teacher, and the town's wealthiest citizen all gave the reasons they felt they should be chosen to give the boy a home. But as they talked, the lad's eyes remained focused on the floor. Then a stranger walked to the front and slowly took his hand from his pockets, revealing severe scars on them. As the crowd gasped, the boy cried out in recognition. This was the man who had saved his life. His hands had been burned when he climbed the hot pipe. With a leap the boy threw his arms around the man's neck and held on for dear life. The other men silently walked away, leaving the boy and his rescuer alone. Those marred hands had settled the issue. And so it is with Jesus. His nail-pierced hands remind us that he has rescued us from sin and its deadly consequences.

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**Rescue the Perishing** - One time Fanny Crosby, the blind hymn writer, visited the McAuley Mission in New York. She asked if there was a boy there who had no mother, and "if he would come up and let her lay her hand on his head." A motherless fellow came up, and she put her arms about him and kissed him. She went from that meeting and wrote: "**Rescue the perishing, care for the dying, Snatch them in pity from sin and the grave, Weep o'er the erring one, lift up the fallen, Tell them of Jesus the mighty to save.**" Some time later, when Mr. Sankey was about to sing this song in St. Louis, he related the incident. A man sprang to his feet in the audience and said, "I am the boy she kissed that night. I was never able to get away from the impression made by that

touching act, I have become a Christian."

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**Our Daily Bread** - William D. Matheson, in *My Grandfather's War*, tells of a veteran who walked through the streets of his hometown with an empty sleeve. When a passerby commented on the loss of his arm, the veteran replied, "I didn't lose it. I gave it." That describes what Jesus did for us. He didn't lose His life on the cross. He gave it. As today's verse says, He "gave Himself for our sins." He paid the penalty so that all who believe on Him would experience forgiveness of sin and have eternal life. In fulfillment of the Old Testament picture of the sacrifice of the lamb, He yielded His life for us. Following Christ's example, we are to give ourselves unselfishly to His service and help others. That makes sense, though it may seem absurd to many. Our sacrifices will glorify the Lord and make an impact for Christ on our selfish world. —D. C. Egner

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**When the Word Dawned** - When Dr. Willis R. Hotchkiss went to Central Africa, he had great trouble to find a word that would explain to them the Saviour who died to save them. Over two years had passed, but this magic word "Saviour" he could not translate clearly and adequately. One night he was sitting with some of the natives around their campfire, when Kikuvi, the most intelligent of the natives, began to tell about Mr. Krieger, who had been attacked by a lion and badly torn. Kikuvi had come to his rescue and had driven the lion away. Kikuvi modestly said, "Bwana nukuthaniwan na Kikuvi [The master was saved by Kikuvi]." The missionary leaped for joy. At last he had heard the precious word. He immediately changed the verb from the passive to the active form, and said, "Ukuthania Bwana? [You saved the master?]" This proving correct, the missionary said: "Why, Kikuvi, this is the word I have been trying to get you to tell me these many days, because I wanted to tell why Jesus, the Son of God, came to this earth." "Oh," Kikuvi interrupted, his black face lighting up as he turned to the missionary: "I see it now. I understand! Jesus came to kuthania [save] us from our sins, and to deliver us from the hands of Muima [Satan.]" The moment the word "Saviour" had dawned on his darkened vision, all the scattered fragments of truth that had been floating through his mind became one glorious revelation. ([Union Seminary Magazine](#))

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**Lawrence Lemieux: Rescue the Perishing (as told by Rob Morgan)** - One of the most incredible stories coming from the Olympics occurred during the 1988 games in Seoul, South Korea. There was a young competitor there whose whole life had been in pursuit of an Olympic medal. The 1988 games represented his best chance. He was a Canadian named Lawrence Lemieux, and his event was in sailing. Off the coast of Korea, he was racing for the Gold. The sea was stormy and rough, but Lemieux was in second place with an excellent start at first. Suddenly his attention was drawn aside by an overturned boat, and he saw a sailor draped over the hull, desperately trying to hold on. Another sailor was bobbing in the water. The tides and winds were pushing both men further out to sea. They were Olympians, too, and were competing in another event. The man who was draped over the overturned hull of the boat had cut his hand in the accident and was rapidly losing strength. The crewman in the water was drifting away from the boat and going down. Lemieux had a heart-rending decision to make. If he didn't stop to help the men, they would likely drown; but if he did stop and help them he would lose his lifelong dream of winning an Olympic Gold Medal. Well, it might have been a heart-rending decision, but it didn't take the young champion long to make it. He turned his boat toward into the screaming wind and paddled toward the desperate men. As he approached the man who was thrashing in the water, the man gasped, "Please help me! I can't last much longer." "Grab onto my boat when I come past you," said Lemieux. "I can't," said the man. "I hurt my back and I can't pull myself up into your boat." Lawrence leaned over and grabbed the man's vest and tried to haul him aboard, but the effort almost capsized the little craft. "Just try to hold on until we get to your boat," shouted Lemieux. Somehow he managed to navigate his boat through the crashing waves and he managed to rescue the other man as well. He held them both until a patrol boat arrived. But the delay cost him any chance he had of winning an Olympic medal. He resumed the race, but finished in 21st place. In its place, the International Olympic Committee awarded him The Fair Play Award of the 1988 games in Seoul. And when he returned home, the members of Northwood Presbyterian Church in Spokane, Washington, had a special medal cast for him and draped it around his neck while the Canadian National Anthem was played. He told the congregation, "You spend your whole lifetime trying to achieve a goal, and my goal was winning a gold medal. I didn't win a gold medal, but I won something more valuable—the love you've shown me here today." While everyone else in the world is trying to win medals, accomplish goals, accumulate prizes, and achieve status, we have only one mission, don't we—to **rescue the perishing and care for the dying**. (Going for Gold- A Sermon About the Olympics)

This one life will soon be past,  
Only what's done for Christ will last.

**Galatians 1:5 to Whom be the glory forevermore. Amen.**

NET Galatians 1:5 to whom be glory forever and ever! Amen.

GNT Galatians 1:5 ὃ ἔξα ε ς το ς α νας τ ν α νων, μ ν.

NLT Galatians 1:5 All glory to God forever and ever! Amen.

KJV Galatians 1:5 To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

ESV Galatians 1:5 to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

ASV Galatians 1:5 to whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

CSB Galatians 1:5 To whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

NIV Galatians 1:5 to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

NKJ Galatians 1:5 to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

NRS Galatians 1:5 to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

YLT Galatians 1:5 to whom is the glory to the ages of the ages. Amen.

NAB Galatians 1:5 to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

NJB Galatians 1:5 to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

GWN Galatians 1:5 Glory belongs to our God and Father forever! Amen.

BBE Galatians 1:5 To whom be the glory for ever and ever. So be it.

- **whom** : 1Ch 29:13 Ps 41:13 Ps 72:19 Isa 24:15 42:12 Mt 6:13 Lk 2:14 Ro 11:36 16:27 Eph 1:12 Php 4:20 1Ti 1:17 2Ti 4:18 Heb 13:21 1Pe 5:11 2Pe 3:18 Jude 1:25 Rev 4:9-11 5:12 7:12 14:7
- **Amen**: Mt 28:20)
- Galatians 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## TO GOD BE THE GLORY

Paul lived to glorify God and called us to do the same writing

Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. (1 Cor. 10:31)

As **Hansen** says "With the wonder of God's amazing grace in full view, it's time to sing a doxology to God." (Ibid)

**Will Metzger** - In a God-centered gospel, grace is central—God is exalted at every point.

**Trapp** - The benefit of our redemption should make us lift up many a humble, joyful, and thankful heart to God.

**Glory** to Jesus is the ultimate, consummate purpose of all things. Indeed, all heaven declares...

**Worthy is the Lamb** that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and **glory** and blessing. (Rev 5:12-[note](#))

**Glory** ([1391](#))(**doxa** from **dokeo** = to think) in simple terms means to give a proper opinion or estimate of something.**Glory** is something that is a source of honor, fame, or admiration. It describes renown, a thing that is beautiful, impressive, or worthy of praise. It follows that the **glory** of God expresses all that He is in His Being and in His nature, character, power and acts. He is glorified when He is allowed to be seen as He really is. To be where God is will be glory. To be what God intended will be glory. To do what God purposed will be glory.

he basic idea in the word doxa is that of manifestation. The glory of God is the manifestation of His Being, His character and His acts. The glory of God is what He is essentially. Glory, therefore, is the true apprehension of God or things. The glory of God must mean His unchanging essence.

I like the way Puritan writer **Thomas Watson** described God's glory - Glory is the sparkling of the Deity... We may see God's glory blazing in the sun and twinkling in the stars (Ps 19:1)... A sight of God's glory humbles. The stars vanish when the sun appears.

### [To God Be the Glory](#)

Lou Fellingham

To God be the glory great things He has done  
So loved He the world that He gave us His son

Who yielded His life an atonement for sin  
And opened the life gate that all may go in

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord let the earth hear His voice  
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord let the people rejoice  
Come to the Father through Jesus the Son  
Give Him the glory great things He has done

O perfect redemption the purchase of blood  
To every believer the promise of God  
The vilest offender who truly believes  
That moment from Jesus a pardon receives

Great things He has taught us great things He has done  
And great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son  
But purer and higher and greater will be  
Our wonder our worship when Jesus we see

**Forevermore** - Literally is "to the ages of the ages" translated "forever and ever" or "forevermore": Gal 1:5. This phrase "to the ages of the ages" occurs most often in the book of the Revelation (12x), the last use in Scripture recording the glorious truth that

"there shall no longer be any night and they shall not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God shall illumine them and they shall reign **forever and ever** ("to the ages of the ages)" (Rev 22:5)

**Ages** (165)([aion](#)) generally means an extended period of time and has various meanings depending on the context. The Greek phrase in this passage is *eis tous aionas ton aionas*.

Doxologies to God in the NT

Ro 11:36; Ro 16:27; Gal. 1:5; Eph. 3:21; Phil. 4:20; 2 Tim. 4:18; Heb. 13:21; 2 Pet. 3:18; Rev. 1:6

**Amen** (281)([amen](#)) is a transliteration from the Hebrew word [amen](#) which in turn is from the Hebrew verb [aman](#) = to be firm, to believe, this word conveying the idea of certainty) **Amen** is transliterated into Latin and English and many other languages, so that it is practically a universal word. In fact **amen** has been called the best-known word in human speech. To say "**Amen**" confirms a statement by someone else. Do you ever say "**Amen**" when the pastor is preaching?

**Alan Cole** on **Amen**: "When the old-fashioned Cantonese-speaking Christian says at the end of a prayer *shing sam shoh uen* ("with all my heart this is what I wish") he approaches very nearly the original Hebrew meaning" ([The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians](#)).

**Related Resource:**

- [What is the glory of God?](#)
- [The Glory of God](#) - Bob Deffinbaugh

## Galatians 1:6 - I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel

Amplified I am surprised and astonished that you are so quickly turning renegade and deserting Him Who invited and called you by the grace (unmerited favor) of Christ (the Messiah) [and that you are transferring your allegiance] to a different [even an opposition] gospel.

Barclay I am amazed that you have so quickly deserted him who called you by the grace of Christ, and that you have so soon gone over to a different gospel, a gospel which in point of fact is not another gospel at all.

TLB I am amazed that you are turning away so soon from God who, in his love and mercy, invited you to share the eternal life he gives through Christ; you are already following a different "way to heaven," which really doesn't go to heaven at all

Wuest I am marvelling that in such a manner suddenly you are becoming of another mind and deserting from

Him who called you in the sphere of Christ's grace to a message of good news diametrically opposed to the gospel, ([Eerdmans Publishing](#))

NET Galatians 1:6 I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are following a different gospel--

GNT Galatians 1:6 Θαυμζω τι οτως ταχως μετατ θεσθε πι το καλ σαντος μ ς ν χ ριπι [Χριστο] ε ς τερον ε αγγ λιον,

NLT Galatians 1:6 I am shocked that you are turning away so soon from God, who called you to himself through the loving mercy of Christ. You are following a different way that pretends to be the Good News

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

ESV Galatians 1:6 I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel--

ASV Galatians 1:6 I marvel that ye are so quickly removing from him that called you in the grace of Christ unto a different gospel;

CSB Galatians 1:6 I am amazed that you are so quickly turning away from Him who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel--

NIV Galatians 1:6 I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel--

NKJ Galatians 1:6 I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel,

NRS Galatians 1:6 I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel--

YLT Galatians 1:6 I wonder that ye are so quickly removed from Him who did call you in the grace of Christ to another good news;

NAB Galatians 1:6 I am amazed that you are so quickly forsaking the one who called you by (the) grace (of Christ) for a different gospel

NJB Galatians 1:6 I am astonished that you are so promptly turning away from the one who called you in the grace of Christ and are going over to a different gospel-

GWN Galatians 1:6 I'm surprised that you're so quickly deserting Christ, who called you in his kindness, to follow a different kind of good news.

BBE Galatians 1:6 I am surprised that you are being so quickly turned away from him whose word came to you in the grace of Christ, to good news of a different sort;

- **I am amazed:** Mk 6:6 Jn 9:30)(so (KJV): Ga 3:1-5 4:9-15 5:4,7 Ps 106:13 Isa 29:13 Jer 2:12,13
- **Him who called you:** Ga 5:8 1Co 4:15 2Th 2:14 2Ti 1:9 1Pe 1:15 2Pe 1:3
- **by the grace of Christ** Ac 15:11 Ro 5:2 1Ti 1:14 2Ti 2:1 Rev 22:21
- **for a different gospel:** Ro 10:3 2Co 11:4
- Galatians 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## AN AGONIZING AMAZEMENT

Paul was [flabbergasted](#), which means to be overcome with amazement . We see other exclamatory statements reflecting Paul's shock at their defection from the Gospel...

- You foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you? (Galatians 3:1+).
- I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain. (Galatians 4:11+).
- You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace. (Galatians 5:4+).

The following proverb is a good "commentary" on Paul's confrontation of these "prodigal sons (and daughters)" who were heading

straight for the "pig pen" (so to speak)...

Better is open rebuke

Than love that is concealed.

Faithful are the wounds of a friend,

But deceitful are the kisses of an enemy.

Proverbs 27:5-6

**I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel-** The **NLT** has "I am shocked that you are turning away so soon from God." The **Amplified version** has "I am surprised and astonished that you are so quickly turning renegade and deserting Him Who invited and called you by the grace (unmerited favor) of Christ (the Messiah) [and that you are transferring your allegiance] to a different [even an opposition] gospel." In essence Paul is saying they are "spiritual turncoats" abandoning a God centered message of salvation for a human centered one. How quickly they forgot - Grace + anything = nothing/eternal loss while Jesus + nothing = everything/eternal gain.

**By the grace of Christ** - This is a key thought in the entire book. Judaizers were grace killers to one's spiritual life. God's Word of grace invigorates ones spiritual life.

**I am amazed** - Present tense signifies he is continually amazed. Paul considered the defection of the Galatian Christians as an extra-ordinary thing. His use of *thaumazo* conveys a rebuke similar to our expression, "I can hardly believe what I am hearing about you!"

**Don Anderson** - One of the things that the evil one often does is to get us to fall into a position of doubting the truth of the Gospel. How quickly he swoops down and takes the seed of the Word of God or mixes in the tares so that grace never has an opportunity to operate in our lives. ([Notes](#))

**Henry Alford** on **amazed** - It is a word of mildness, inasmuch as it imports that better things were expected of them,—and of condescension, as letting down the writer to the level of the readers and even challenging explanation from them. Still, like many such mild words, it carries to the guilty conscience even sharper rebuke than a harsher one would.

**Oswald Chambers** - There is nothing attractive about the gospel to the natural man; the only man who finds the gospel attractive is the man who is convicted of sin.

**Amazed** ([2296](#)) (*thaumazo* from **thauma** [from **thaomai** = to wonder] = wonder, admiration) means to wonder, marvel, be struck with admiration or astonishment. To be surprised by the unexpected. **Thaumazo** describes the human response when confronted by divine revelation in some form (Mt 9:33). Be surprised (Gal 1:6). It denotes incredulous surprise. **Thaumazo** was a rhetorical device used in law courts and politics to attack things done by the opposition party.

**NIDNTT** on *Thaumazo* in Classic Greek - The word-group associated with **thauma** is found in Gk. from the 8th and 7th centuries, to designate that which by its appearance arouses astonishment and amazement. The root is cognate with **theomai**, to look at.

**TDNT** on Classic Greek uses - The group has first the sense of astonishment, whether critical or inquisitive, then admiration, with a nuance of awe or fear at what is unusual or mysterious, e.g., miracles or oracles in religion, also magical acts or media, and certain phenomena (prior to their explanation) in philosophy.

**Luke** uses **thaumazo** to express reaction to miraculous events or to teaching (cf. Lk 1:63; 2:18; 4:22; 7:9; 8:25; 9:43; 11:14; 20:26).

**W E Vine** - **Thaumazo** means **surprise at the unexpected**, whether regretful, as here in Gal 1:6, or pleasurable, as at 2Th 1:10, the only occurrences in Paul's epistles; but see also Acts 13:41.

**Ralph Earle** - **Thaumazo** is found most frequently in the Gospels (33 times), where it expresses the wonder and amazement caused by Jesus' miracles. It seems clear that the idea of wonder or astonishment is inherent in the term.

**Vincent** - **Thaumazo** is often used by Greek orators of surprise at something reprehensible. So in N T, Mk. 6:6; Jn 7:21; Lk 11:38; Jn 4:27.

In the KJV **thaumazo** is most often translated as marvel which Webster says means to become filled with surprise, wonder, or amazed curiosity. Webster says to amaze is to fill with wonder or transitively to cause astonishment and suggests an effect of bewilderment. To be astonished implies that one is surprised so greatly as to deem something incredible.

**Thaumazo** is used as a Hebraism in Jude 1:16 literally "admire the face" (*thaumazo* + *prosopon*) which signifies to flatter or to praise insincerely

John tells us "**Do not be surprised** (marvel), brethren, if the world hates you." (1John 3:13)

**MacArthur** says: The expression **not be surprised** translates the present active imperative form of the verb **thaumazo**, a term that has the connotation of wonder, astonishment, or amazement. Rather than being shocked by the world's opposition, believers should instead expect it (cf. Acts 14:22; 2Ti 3:12; 1Pe 4:12), because the world has nothing in common with the kingdom of God (cf. 2Co 6:14–15), and the lives of the righteous rebuke those of the unrighteous. ([MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Galatians](#))

**BDAG** says the two basic meanings of **thaumazo** are (1) to be extraordinarily impressed or disturbed by something - (a) intransitively to wonder, marvel, be astonished (the context determines whether in a good or bad sense) (Mt 8:10) or (b) transitively to admire, wonder at, respect (persons) with accusative and (2) to wonder, be amazed (to be filled with wonder), (Rev 17:8).

**Thaumazo** - 43x in 43v in NAS -**Translated** - am amazed(1), amazed(15), amazement(1), astonished(3), being amazed(1), flattering(1), marvel(4), marveled(5), marveling(2), surprised(2), wonder(2), wondered(4), wondering(2).

Matthew 8:10 Now when Jesus heard this, He **marveled** and said to those who were following, "Truly I say to you, I have not found such great faith with anyone in Israel.

Mt 8:27 The men **were amazed**, and said, "What kind of a man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?"

Matthew 9:33 After the demon was cast out, the mute man spoke; and the crowds **were amazed**, and were saying, "Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel."

**Comment: Thaumazo** means to be greatly amazed and astounded, to be overcome with awe. The intensified forms of the verb found in Matthew 27:14 (see below) and Mark 12:17 (Here the verb is related verb "ekthaumazo" which means to wonder or marvel greatly) carry an even stronger meaning. As Jesus' miracles increased so did the astonishment of the crowds. They became amazed beyond amazement.

Matthew 15:31 So the crowd **marveled** as they saw the mute speaking, the crippled restored, and the lame walking, and the blind seeing; and they glorified the God of Israel.

**Comment:** They were struck with awe. The people were seeing something that defied human explanation.

Matthew 21:20 Seeing this, the disciples were **amazed** and asked, "How did the fig tree wither all at once?"

Matthew 22:22 And hearing this, they were **amazed**, and leaving Him, they went away.

Matthew 27:14 And He did not answer him with regard to even a single charge, so the governor was quite **amazed**.

**Comment:** Here the sense is surprised that he received no response. The adverb quite (Gk = lian) means to a high degree, very much or exceedingly. See comment on Mt 9:33 above.

Mark 5:20 And he went away and began to proclaim in Decapolis what great things Jesus had done for him; and everyone was **amazed**.

Mark 6:6 And He **wondered** at their unbelief. And He was going around the villages teaching.

Mark 15:5 But Jesus made no further answer; so Pilate was **amazed**.

Mark 15:44 Pilate **wondered** if He was dead by this time, and summoning the centurion, he questioned him as to whether He was already dead.

Luke 1:21 The people were waiting for Zacharias, and were **wondering** at his delay in the temple.

Luke 1:63 And he asked for a tablet and wrote as follows, "His name is John." And they were all **astonished**.

Luke 2:18 And all who heard it **wondered** at the things which were told them by the shepherds.

Luke 2:33 And His father and mother were **amazed** at the things which were being said about Him.

Luke 4:22 And all were speaking well of Him, and **wondering** at the gracious words which were falling from His lips; and they were saying, "Is this not Joseph's son?"

Luke 7:9 Now when Jesus heard this, He **marveled** at him, and turned and said to the crowd that was following Him, "I say to you, not even in Israel have I found such great faith."

**Comment:** Would you like to amaze and astonish Jesus? There are two ways to do it—one is

recommended, the other is not. There are only two times when the Gospels record Jesus being “amazed” or “astonished” at something, and, amazingly, both have to do with **faith**. Here in Luke He is amazed that the Centurion believed and in Mark 6:6 "He **wondered** at their unbelief," their failure to believe!

Luke 8:25 And He said to them, "Where is your faith?" They were fearful and **amazed**, saying to one another, "Who then is this, that He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey Him?"

Luke 9:43 And they were all amazed (ekplesso) at the greatness of God. But while everyone was **marveling** (thaumazo) at all that He was doing, He said to His disciples,

**Comment: Ekplesso** is the stronger word than thaumazo. Ekplesso suggests a strong, sudden sense of being astounded. Ekplesso means to strike a person out of his senses by some strong feeling and is used 13x in the NT - Matt 7:28; 13:54; 19:25; 22:33; Mark 1:22; 6:2; 7:37; 10:26; 11:18; Luke 2:48; 4:32; 9:43; Acts 13:12

Luke 11:14 And He was casting out a demon, and it was mute; when the demon had gone out, the mute man spoke; and the crowds were **amazed**.

**Comment: Thaumazō** can be positive or negative, depending on its context. People can be amazed and still not like what they see. In fact, despite the amazement, Jesus' work splits the crowd. Luke 11:15 mentions the skepticism of some, while Lk 11:16 mentions the uncertainty of others.

Luke 11:38 When the Pharisee saw it, he was **surprised** that He had not first ceremonially washed before the meal.

Luke 20:26 And they were unable to catch Him in a saying in the presence of the people; and being **amazed** at His answer, they became silent.

Luke 24:12 But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen wrappings only; and he went away to his home, **marveling** at what had happened.

Luke 24:41 While they still could not believe it because of their joy and **amazement**, He said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?"

John 3:7 "Do not be **amazed** that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'

John 4:27 At this point His disciples came, and they were **amazed** that He had been speaking with a woman, yet no one said, "What do You seek?" or, "Why do You speak with her?"

**Comment: Thaumazo** denotes incredulous surprise (MM). Ingressive imperfect, “they began to wonder.” The surprise arises because He was talking to a woman, which was held to be improper, esp. for a rabbi. One does not talk to a woman publicly on the street, not one's own wife, and particularly not to another woman, due to the gossip of the people.

John 5:20 "For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself is doing; and the Father will show Him greater works than these, so that you will **marvel**.

28 "Do not **marvel** at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice,

John 7:15 The Jews then were **astonished**, saying, "How has this man become learned, having never been educated?"

21 Jesus answered them, "I did one deed, and you all **marvel**.

Acts 2:7 They were amazed and **astonished**, saying, "Why, are not all these who are speaking Galileans?"

**Comment:** Luke wants us to sense what a strong impact the Pentecost event had on the onlookers. They marvel that by a miracle of speaking or hearing, or both, they can understand Galileans, who were disdained for their indistinct pronunciation.

Acts 3:12 But when Peter saw this, he replied to the people, "Men of Israel, why are you **amazed** at this, or why do you gaze at us, as if by our own power or piety we had made him walk?"

Acts 4:13 Now as they observed the confidence of Peter and John and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were **amazed**, and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus.

Acts 7:31 "When Moses saw it, he **marveled** at the sight; and as he approached to look more closely, there came the voice of the Lord:



Acts 13:41 'BEHOLD, YOU SCOFFERS, AND **MARVEL**, AND PERISH; FOR I AM ACCOMPLISHING A WORK IN YOUR DAYS, A WORK WHICH YOU WILL NEVER BELIEVE, THOUGH SOMEONE SHOULD DESCRIBE IT TO YOU.'

Galatians 1:6 I am **amazed** that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel;

2 Thessalonians 1:10 when He comes to be glorified in His saints on that day, and to be **marveled** at among all who have believed-- for our testimony to you was believed.

**Comment:** Christ will come again with power and great glory and at the "shining forth of His Parousia, at the Second Advent."

1 John 3:13 Do not be **surprised**, brethren, if the world hates you.

Jude 1:16 These are grumblers, finding fault, following after their own lusts; they speak arrogantly, **flattering** people for the sake of gaining an advantage.

**Comment:** The expression is used to translate the Hebrew idiom, "to take, or raise, a man's countenance," i.e., to do honor or show favor to him. The formula had its origin in the oriental custom of making one to rise from the ground as a token of welcome. This imagery soon disappeared and the expression meant "to show favoritism toward" or "to curry favor w." (Kelly).

Revelation 13:3 I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was **amazed** and followed after the beast;

Revelation 17:6 And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. When I saw her, I **wondered** greatly.

7 And the angel said to me, "Why do you **wonder**? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns.

8 "The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss and go to destruction. And those who dwell on the earth, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, will **wonder** when they see the beast, that he was and is not and will come.

**Thaumazo** - 30x in the non-apocryphal Septuagint -

Ge 19:21; Lev 19:15; 26:32; Deut 10:17; 28:50; 2Kgs 5:1; 2Chr 19:7; Esther 4:17; Job 13:10; 21:5; 22:8; 32:22; 34:19; 41:9; 42:11; Ps 48:5; Pr 18:5; Eccl 5:8; Isa 9:15; 14:16; 41:23; 52:5, 15; 61:6; Jer 4:9; Dan 3:24; 4:17, 19; 6:12; Hab 1:5

## **DESERTING FROM THE TRUTH SO SOON!**

**I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting** - **Deserting** means to transfer allegiance and was used of a soldier who deserts and goes to the other side! Soldiers could be put to death for military desertion! The situation in Galatia was serious because believers (and possibly those who thought they were believers because they had made a "profession") were deserting the Gospel of Grace to join forces with the "side" of the Law. They were going "**AWOL**" and it would mean "death" to their spirituality! Paul called this a desertion to a "**heteros**" "gospel," a distinctly different "gospel" which was diametrically opposed to the true Gospel. Of course while the false teachers were culpable for fostering this desertion, the Galatian believers also bore a responsibility for defecting. They had been taught the truth by Paul and they could have refused to listen to the false teachers, who would then have had no power or influence. Beloved, doctrinal error is still rampant in churches today, and each believer is still responsible to turn away from such teaching (cf Heb 5:14+).

Paul's statement is like a rebuke and might be paraphrased "I can hardly believe what I am hearing about you!"

And he adds **quickly** which suggests that the desertion had been hasty.

**John Phillips** explains that "The Galatians had been swept off their feet. After all, the Judaizers specialized in quoting Scripture. But they took texts out of context and ignored the dispensational dimension of the Scriptures. Error, especially when it is wrapped in Scripture and presented under cover of a false hermeneutic, can sound very much like the truth. People who are not instructed in the whole counsel of God can become an easy prey to false teachers." ([Exploring Galatians: An Expository Commentary](#))

**Quickly** (5030) (**tacheos**) means with little or no delay, speedily, hastily, rashly, suddenly (1Co 4:19; Ga1:6; Php 2:19, 24; 2Ti 4:9; Jdg 9:48; Isa 8:3) . **Tacheos** can mean either easily and readily or soon, and sometimes both, as was probably the case with these renegade churches in Galatia. **Tacheos** in 1Ti 5:22 warns against ordaining an elder "too hastily." By using **tacheos** Paul is emphasizing how rapidly the Galatians offering little resistance to the "graceless messages" and were "jumping ship" from the Gospel ship to a sinking ship that was not the Gospel. Notice that the addition of "houtos" (so - "so quickly") even further emphasizes Paul's astonishment at the speed of desertion for a counterfeit gospel!

**THOUGHT** - Let us not be too hard on the Galatians. Yes, they had the greatest teacher in the history of the Church other than Jesus and His Spirit. And yet they were quickly deserting Paul grace filled message for the Judaizer's graceless message. Here is the point -- you may have been a believer for many years but you can still be fooled by slick presentations of hucksters claiming to hold orthodox truths. We can never let down our guard, no matter how many years we have walked with Jesus!

**Spurgeon** — The Galatians were a very fickle people. Some have said that they were a colony from Gaul, — Galatians, — and that they partook somewhat of the fickleness which is attributed to the character of the Gaul. I know not how true that may be; but, certainly, they seem very soon to have left the gospel, to have adulterated it, and to have fallen into Ritualism, into Sacramentarianism, into salvation by works, and all the errors into which people usually fall when they go away from the Gospel. ([Spurgeon's Exposition](#))

**Deserting** (3346)(**metatithemi** from **metá** = change of place or condition + **títhemi** = place) means to transpose two things, one of which is put in the place of the other. Metaphorically **metatithemi** speaks of a change sides or parties, of deserting or of turning away from someone. "In classical Greek **metatithemi** was used of a turncoat. The word is used of one altering his opinion or becoming of another mind. The word was also used of desertion or revolt, frequently of a change in religion, philosophy, or morals." ([Wuest](#))

**New Linguistic & Exegetical Key to the Greek New Testament** - The word was used of desertion or revolt in a military or political defection and frequently had the idea of a change in religion, philosophy, or morals

**Metatithemi** is in the **present tense** which indicates that when Paul wrote this letter, the Galatians were in the process of defecting. Defection was in progress. There was still time to arrest this desertion before it destroyed the churches in Galatia which was another reason Paul hastened to send this letter on its way. The **middle voice** which gives us a reflexive sense and means to transfer *oneself* - in other words they initiated the act of desertion and participated in the act of deserting. They were in effect in the process of removing themselves from the Gospel of grace. Paul is putting the blame for deserting on the converts themselves! Paul had explained God's grace to them, so they should have known better than to fall for the graceless teachings of the Judaizers!

**THOUGHT** - There is a lesson here for all of us - it is one thing to know the truth, but unless we make a firm decision to stand on the truth of Scripture, we make ourselves vulnerable to false teaching. Adam knew the truth about eating the forbidden fruit, but he failed to take a stand on the truth and bought into the lie which Eve had believed! The lesson is **stand firm** in the truth of God's Word (cf "**stand firm**" used THREE times in Paul's instructions on spiritual warfare - Eph 6:11+, Eph 6:13+, Eph 6:14+ and the last **stand firm** = **arist imperative**; 1 Cor 16:13+ where **stand firm** = **present imperative** calling for continued reliance on the **Holy Spirit to obey**; also Php 4:1+, 1 Th 3:8+, 2 Th 2:15, 1 Pe 5:12+).

If Paul had instead used the **perfect tense**, **Kenneth Wuest** observes "that would have indicated that the Galatians had actually and finally turned against grace and had come to a settled attitude in the matter. The mind of Paul wavers between fear and hope as to the outcome. Paul was trying desperately to arrest the progress of this new doctrinal infection if he could. The Judaizers had not yet achieved any decisive success, although the Galatians were disposed to lend a ready ear to their insinuations." ([Wuest](#))

**Rob Salvato** says "To turn away from the true gospel is always to turn away from the Person of Jesus Christ. Christianity is not just a truth to be learned, but a person to be experienced." ([Sermon](#))

**McGee** adds that "This is one of the oldest heresies known, and it is still with us today. It is adding something to the gospel of grace; it is doing something rather than simply believing something. It is faith plus something rather than faith plus nothing. Every cult and "ism" has something for you to do in order to be saved." ([Galatians 1 Thru the Bible](#))

**Boice** - Embracing legalism means rejecting God, according to Paul's reasoning, because it means substituting man for God in one's life. It is significant that once again even in the space of a few words ("who called you by the grace of Christ") Paul reiterates the true nature of the gospel: (1) it is of God, for God does the calling, and (2) it is of grace rather than of merit. (Ibid)

**Him who called you** - Called is aorist tense which in context points to a past, completed "historical" action, which would point to the previous time when the Galatians received the Gospel. As an aside, this indicates that Paul considered them genuine believers

despite their desertion.

**Vos** - The one who calls in grace must be the Father, for so He is commonly represented in the epistles (e.g., Gal 1:15; Eph 1:3-5). The assertion of turning from God may have startled the Galatians. No doubt they thought they were pleasing the Father by keeping the law, as did the Jews and Paul before his conversion. But the Father now calls in Christ's grace, the instrument by which, or the element of which, He calls us to salvation. ([Galatians- Everyman's Bible Commentary: A Call to Christian Liberty](#))

**Hendrikson** on **called** - The call to which reference is made, is here, as everywhere in Paul, the internal or effectual calling: that act of the Holy Spirit whereby he savingly applies the gospel-invitation to the heart and life of certain definite individuals among all of those to whom, in the course of history, that invitation is extended. It is a call to salvation, full and free, via the avenue of sanctification. Speaking by and large, the apostle is convinced that the Galatians whom he here addresses had received that effectual call. ([Exposition of Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon](#))

**Called** (2564)(**kaleo**) can have several meanings but the call spoken of in the New Testament epistles is always an effectual call to salvation.

**Wuest** writes that this is "a person for a definite purpose. Hence, it is synonymous with to select or choose. It refers to the act of calling someone so that he may hear, come, and do that which is incumbent upon him. It thus is a word that becomes a technical term for special relationships. In secular Greek it was used of a summons in the law courts. It denotes in the New Testament a call from God or in God's Name, a call to participate in the revelation of grace. Paul's use of the word in general suggests that he thought of those only as **called** who obeyed the divine summons. Of a rejected call he never speaks."([Wuest Word Studies - Eerdmans Publishing Company Volume 1, Volume 2, Volume 3](#) - used [by permission](#))

2 Thessalonians 2:13-14 But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. It was for this He **called** you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Timothy 1:8-9 Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God, Who has saved us and **called** us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity,

1 Peter 1:15 but like the Holy One who **called** you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior;

Romans 8:30 and these whom He predestined, He also **called**; and these whom He **called**, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

#### Related Resource:

- [What is the effectual calling/call?](#)

**By the grace** - This is literally "**in the grace**" (of Christ) which is "locative of sphere" signifying that God's call to the Galatians was in the sphere ("atmosphere") of grace, of unmerited favor!

**Wuest** goes on to explain that when God "effectually summoned them to a participation in the salvation procured by His Son on the Cross, it was on a basis, not of works, but of a salvation unmerited by them and freely bestowed, offered out of the pure generosity and love of the heart of God, with no strings tied to it, offered as a free gift to be accepted by the outstretched hand of faith. This put the Galatians in a position in relationship to God in which they were the objects of His everlasting favor. In speaking of the change of position on the part of the Galatians, it would be more natural for Paul to refer to the state in which God's call they are or should be than to emphasize the basis or instrument of God's call. The Galatians were abandoning the position of grace, the relation toward God which made them the objects of the grace of Christ and participants in its benefits, to put themselves under law which could only award them their sad desserts." ([Wuest Word Studies - Eerdmans Publishing Company Volume 1, Volume 2, Volume 3](#) - used [by permission](#))

**Grace** (favor) (5485)(**charis** from from **chairo** = to rejoice. English = charity. Beggars need "*charity*" even as sinners need *grace*, for we are all spiritual paupers outside of Christ, but "*God gives where he finds empty hands*"-Augustine [cp Mt 5:3-[note](#)]) in simple terms is God's unmerited favor and supernatural enablement and empowerment for salvation and for daily sanctification. Grace is everything for nothing to those who don't deserve anything. Grace is what every man needs, what none can earn and what God Alone can and does freely give (see Ro 8:32-[note](#) where "freely give" is [charizomai](#) from **charis** = a grace gift!). Grace addresses man's sin, while mercy addresses man's misery. The **gift of grace** makes men fit for salvation, miraculously making separated strangers into God's **beloved** sons (1Th 1:4-[note](#), 1Jn 3:1-[note](#)).

**MacArthur** makes an excellent point - The Judaizers who plagued the early church claimed to be Christians, and much of their doctrine was orthodox. They must have recognized Jesus as the promised Messiah and even acknowledged the value of His sacrificial death on the cross—otherwise they would never have gotten a hearing in the church. They claimed to believe all the truths that other Christians believed. They did not purport to overtly deny the gospel but to improve it by adding the requirements, ceremonies, and standards of the Old Covenant to the New. But anything added to grace destroys it just as surely as does anything taken from it. When law—even God's own law—is added to His grace, His grace ceases to be grace (cf. Rom. 11:6). The most destructive dangers to the church have never been atheism, pagan religions, or cults that openly deny Scripture, but rather supposedly Christian movements that accept so much biblical truth that their unscriptural doctrines seem relatively insignificant and harmless. But a single drop of poison in a large container can make all the water lethal. And a single false idea that in any way undercuts God's grace poisons the whole system of belief. [MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Galatians](#)

**For a different gospel** - Amplified = "to a different [even an opposition] gospel." Barclay = "a gospel which in point of fact is not another gospel at all" Wuest = "to a message of good news diametrically opposed to the gospel." ([Eerdmans Publishing](#) - used [by permission](#))

**Different** ((2087)([heteros](#)) refers qualitatively to another of a different kind, not identical with what was previously referred to. The true gospel is centered on "**the grace of Christ**." This "**heteros**" "gospel" was not "good news" but was in fact bad news! As Pastor Rob Morgan said "Don't be misled by a forgery. Only the original saves our souls." **James Denney** adds that "As there is only one God, so there can be only one gospel."

**Brian Bell** - We don't have a different gospel today...we have 50 of them...We have the **Me Gospel**. The **money Gospel**. The Gospel of **do do do**. The Gospel of **anything goes**. The **progressive Gospel** (i.e. salvation is a process). The **pick yourself up by your boot-straps Gospel**. NONE of Paul's letters start with what we need to do for God. Instead, always begins w/what God has already done. To get this the other way around is to miss the gospel....The gospel focuses on Jesus' performance for us, not our performance for Him. On what He's done, not on what we can do....And now, because Jesus is Extraordinary, we are free to be ordinary; Because Jesus is Someone, we are free to be no-one; Because Jesus Succeeded, we are free to fail (Quoting Tullian Tchividjian). ([Sermon](#))

**Roy Gustafson** - Religion is the story of what a sinful man tries to do for a holy God; the gospel is the story of what a holy God has done for sinful men.

**Vance Havner** -The gospel makes some people sad, some mad and some glad. It is better that people should go out of church mad than merely go out, neither sad, mad, nor glad.

**C S Lewis** made an interesting statement that "One of the great difficulties is to keep before the audience's mind the question of Truth. They always think you are recommending Christianity not because it is true but because it is good."

**Wuest** - Arthur S. Way in his excellent translation of Galatians renders **heteros** gospel, an **opposition gospel...an alternative gospel**. Thus, the Galatians were turning to an "opposition gospel" diametrically opposed to Paul's message of grace, and this opposition gospel was not an alternative one! ([Word Studies](#))

**Butler** - Any theology that requires one to do good works or be baptized or circumcised or be a church member to be saved is legalism and is condemned in Scripture.

Paul alludes to the effects of this "different" graceless, powerless Gospel several times in this letter

Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now **being perfected by the flesh?** (Gal 3:3+)

But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how is it that you **turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things**, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again? (Gal 4:9+)

You were running well; who **hindered you from obeying the truth?** (Gal 5:7+)

**Gospel** (2098)(**euaggelion** from **eú** = good + **aggéllō** = proclaim, tell) is literally good news or glad tidings. In secular Greek it originally referred to a reward for good news and later became the good news itself. The word **euaggelion** was commonly used in the first century as our words "good news" today. The idea then and now is something like this - "Have you any good news (euaggelion) for me today?" This was a common question in the ancient world.

**Euaggelion** in Galatians - note that Paul "frontloads" this epistle with the word "gospel" - Gal. 1:6; Gal. 1:7; Gal. 1:11; Gal. 2:2; Gal. 2:5; Gal. 2:7; Gal. 2:14.

**Swindoll** - (Their desertion) could be compared to your rearing your children in a healthy environment. They grow up in your home,

and because it is a good home, they develop a security and a stability as they pick up your authenticity and unguarded lifestyle. They communicate openly and freely. They learn how to confront and handle problems. In short, they learn the basics of real living . . . which include knowing Christ and loving God and walking with Him and relating well to one another—all those things that represent integrity, vulnerability, authenticity. Once they grow up, they move far away. Time passes and you begin to miss them, so after three or four years you go visit them. You're shocked! You find them living cramped, closed, dirty, and emotionally crippled lives. You're amazed to find them struggling with problems, evidencing negative attitudes; they're even suicidal. Naturally you ask, "Who got to you? Who twisted your mind? What's happened over these past few years?" It is with that same kind of passion that Paul writes his concern to his Galatian friends. (The grace awakening: believing in grace is one thing. living it is another)

**Spurgeon** - We have not only "another gospel," but we have fifty other gospels now preached.

Beware of a movement in our day known as the **Hebrew roots movement**. The "Judaizers" are alive and well in the twenty-first century! For more on this subtle and pernicious movement see the following...

- [What is the Hebrew Roots movement?](#)
- [The Haters: The Hebrew Roots Movement](#)
- [Who were the Judaizers?](#) - alludes to Hebrew roots and other false teachings in our day

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**G Campbell Morgan - To reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him.—Gal. 1.6** -The experience which the Apostle thus described was at once the inspiration of his preaching, and the secret of that conviction as to the authority of his Gospel which called forth this letter. To him the Gospel was infinitely more than a doctrine, a truth heard from others, and intellectually accepted. It was his very life, and the deepest thing therein. In this first chapter he made three references to his experience, which are revealing. First he wrote of a "revelation of Jesus Christ." Then, in our verse, of a revelation of "His Son in me." And finally he declared that the churches of Judaea glorified God in him. The first of these references was undoubtedly to that wondrous hour in which Jesus of Nazareth was unveiled before his astonished soul, as risen, and active in the affairs of His people. The experience on the road to Damascus was one of revolution. To this man the whole scheme of things was turned upside down. Then, in the quiet seclusion of those waiting days in Damascus, that which had been an arresting and blinding revelation from without, became a convincing and quickening revelation within his own soul. Christ was unveiled within him. That is the secret of preaching. A consciousness of Christ which is purely objective is fundamental, but it is not enough to equip any man for preaching. There must be this deeper knowledge of Christ, the subjective unveiling of Him within the life. A man who knows much about Christ, may talk about Him, A man who knows Him, can preach Him. (Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

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If you have ever had the opportunity of teaching water-skiing at camp, you find that one of the biggest problems with the beginning water-skier is that they pull back on the rope because they want to help the boat get them up. There is all the power in the world in the boat to get them out of the water, and yet, they insist on helping instead of depending on the boat to do what it is supposed to do. It is only when the skier learns to be totally dependent upon the boat to do for them what they are not able to do themselves that they begin to experience some success in the art of waterskiing.

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**Scammed By Spam** - Have you ever been scammed by spam? Spam is a computer term that refers to junk mail on the Internet. It's a common problem for people who use personal computers. Sometimes it's harmless, but sometimes it's not.

You open your e-mail, and you get a note saying someone wants to help you. Your credit card is invalid, the message says, and your number has to be reentered to reactivate your account. So, you type it in and hit "send"—thinking you're doing the right thing. Later you get a bill for a bunch of items you didn't buy. You've just been scammed by spam! What appeared to be helpful is no help at all. You trust the message, do what it says, and you end up losing.

We can also be **scammed spiritually**. It happens when supposed teachers of the Bible distort the gospel and proclaim a false message that they call the truth (salvation by works, for example). But it's "a different gospel" (Galatians 1:6). How can you avoid such a scam? By knowing from the Bible what the true gospel is. Eternal salvation is available only by grace, through trusting in Jesus Christ and His death on the cross for our sins (Galatians 2:16; Ephesians 2:8-9). Don't be fooled. **Any other message is a scam!** — by Dave Branon ([Our Daily Bread](#))

**There's no better news than the Gospel—  
spread the word!**

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**A Different Gospel** - What is the greatest challenge to us as Christians in the 21st century? Is it rampant immorality? Is it divisive social issues? Is it increasing hostility toward God? Those are dangers, for sure, but I would venture to say that our biggest threat is

religion—religion that draws us away from the gospel.

Some religions openly oppose Christ, but others are more subtle. They use language Christians already know, giving their faith a familiar sound. Then they add to it their own twisted brand of thinking.

If such groups sound Christian, how can we know if they are preaching “a different gospel”? (Galatians 1:6). Here are some false teachings to watch out for.

1. Salvation through anything other than faith in the finished work of Jesus on the cross (Acts 4:12).
2. A refusal to see Jesus as the eternal God in the flesh, our only Savior (John 1).
3. Giving more importance to the word of man than to the Word of God (1 Corinthians 2:12-13).
4. Leaders who do not provide Christlike guidance through careful biblical instruction (1 Timothy 4:6; Jude 4).

There are those who want to lead you into another gospel. Learn God's Word, so you won't be deceived. — by Dave Branon [Our Daily Bread](#)

The Word of God provides the light  
We need to see the way;  
So if we learn what God has said,  
We'll not be led astray. —Sper

**Apply yourself to the Scriptures  
and the Scriptures to yourself.**

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#### Theodore Epp - Don't Minimize God's Grace - Galatians 1:1-10

The basic error the Apostle Paul was dealing with was the mingling of Law with grace. There are three grave errors that arise out of this.

First there is what we call "legalism." This is the teaching that people are saved by works or human effort. That, in this case, would include the keeping of the Law and observing the rituals and ceremonies found in the Old Testament covenant God made with Israel.

This same error is reflected today when someone claims to have done his best to keep the Ten Commandments. This to him is the way of salvation.

The second error that can undermine true faith in Jesus Christ is what we may call "false liberty."

The Christian is called unto liberty, but that liberty is defined for us in the Scriptures and not left to our imagination. Yet there are those who teach that because they are saved by grace, it makes no difference how they live or behave.

This Satanic error is answered in the Book of James. He wrote: "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (2:17). In other words, a faith that does not produce works is not real faith.

The third error is the one Paul deals with in his Letter to the Galatians. In fact, the error itself is often named "Galatianism." This false doctrine teaches that we are saved by grace but are kept saved by the Law.

In reality this makes salvation dependent on our works. Our works of righteousness are to be a supplement to our faith for ultimate salvation. One must endure to the end by keeping the works of the Law if he is going to be saved.

This is the error of Galatianism, the error that Paul combats in this brief letter.

"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).

**Galatians 1:7 which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ.**

Amplified - Not that there is [or could be] any other [genuine Gospel], but there are [obviously] some who are troubling and disturbing and bewildering you [with a different kind of teaching which they offer as a gospel] and

want to pervert and distort the Gospel of Christ (the Messiah) [into something which it absolutely is not].

Barclay - What has really happened is that certain men are upsetting your whole faith and are aiming at reversing the gospel of Christ.

TLB - For there is no other way than the one we showed you; you are being fooled by those who twist and change the truth concerning Christ.

Wuest - which message is not an alternative gospel. Only, there are certain ones who are troubling your minds and are desiring to pervert the gospel of Christ. ([Eerdmans Publishing](#))

NET Galatians 1:7 not that there really is another gospel, but there are some who are disturbing you and wanting to distort the gospel of Christ.

GNT Galatians 1:7 ο κ σπιν λλο, ε μ τιν ς ε σιν ο ταρ σσοντες μ ς κ α θ λοντες μεταστρ ψαι τ ε αγγ λιον το Χριστο .

NLT Galatians 1:7 but is not the Good News at all. You are being fooled by those who deliberately twist the truth concerning Christ.

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

ESV Galatians 1:7 not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ.

ASV Galatians 1:7 which is not another gospel only there are some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

CSB Galatians 1:7 not that there is another gospel, but there are some who are troubling you and want to change the good news about the Messiah.

NIV Galatians 1:7 which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ.

NKJ Galatians 1:7 which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ.

NRS Galatians 1:7 not that there is another gospel, but there are some who are confusing you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ.

YLT Galatians 1:7 that is not another, except there be certain who are troubling you, and wishing to pervert the good news of the Christ;

NAB Galatians 1:7 (not that there is another). But there are some who are disturbing you and wish to pervert the gospel of Christ.

NJB Galatians 1:7 not that it is another gospel; except that there are trouble-makers among you who are seeking to pervert the gospel of Christ.

GWN Galatians 1:7 But what some people are calling good news is not really good news at all. They are confusing you. They want to distort the Good News about Christ.

BBE Galatians 1:7 Which is not another sort: only there are some who give you trouble, desiring to make changes in the good news of Christ.

- **only there are some who are disturbing you:** Ga 2:4 4:17 5:10,12 6:12,13,17 Ac 15:1-5,24 20:30 Ro 16:17,18 2Co 11:13
- **want to distort the gospel of Christ :** Ga 5:10,12 Jer 23:26 Mt 24:24 Ac 13:10 15:1,24 2Co 2:17 4:2 1Ti 4:1-3 2Ti 2:18 3:8,9 4:3,4 Tit 1:10,11 2Pe 2:1-3, 1 Jn 2:18,19,26 4:1, 2 Jn 1:7,10 Jude 1:4 Rev 2:2,6,14,15,20 12:9 Rev 13:14 19:20 20:3
- Galatians 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **PERVERSION OF THE GOSPEL ALWAYS TROUBLES THE CHURCH!**

**Which is really not another** - **Which** refers to the different Gospel. In Gal 1:6 Paul had used **heteros** (another of a different kind), but here Paul uses **allos** which means "another of exactly the same kind." The point is that this different Gospel (**which**) is not a gospel of the same kind that Paul preaches, that is, it is not a gospel at all! The Judaizers added works (conformity to the Old

Covenant, circumcision, etc) in order for a person to right with God which as we have said was not "good news" but "bad news" which totally undercut the power of the Gospel of grace. The true Gospel does have good works, but only as the "fruit" of genuine salvation, not the "root" cause of that salvation. See Eph 2:10+ and James 2:14-26+.

Interesting use of [allos](#) - Jesus uses **allos** to refer to the Spirit telling His disciples "I will ask the Father, and He will give you **another** (allos) Helper (His point was that He would send the Spirit Who would be **another Helper** of the same kind - just like the disciples had experienced His personal presence, His help, His teaching, His protection, His comfort, etc, the Holy Spirit would provide those things to the disciples), that He may be with you forever." (Jn 14:16).

**THOUGHT - Beloved, have you fully grasped the truth that while Christ is in you the hope of glory (Col 1:27+), He has also sent you another Helper of the the same kind (Lk 24:49+, Acts 1:8+), Whose purpose is to enable you to live a supernatural life? Don't try to live this Christian life in your own power, but daily seek to be filled with the Spirit of Jesus (Eph 5:18+) so that you might be enabled to walk by the Spirit (Gal 5:16+) and He will empower you (giving you the desire and the power - cf Php 2:13NLT+) to not carry out the lusts of the flesh! Don't miss out on this once in a lifetime opportunity!**

**For more on this vitally important topic see related resources:**

- [Make Disciples 1](#)
- [Make Disciples 2](#)
- [Make Disciples 3](#)
- [Make Disciples 4](#)
- [Make Disciples 5](#)
- [Make Disciples 6](#)
- [Make Disciples 7](#)
- [Make Disciples 8](#)

**Spurgeon** — "Another gospel: which is not another;" for there are not two gospels, any more than there are two gods. There is one only message from God, of good news to men; and if you turn away from that, you turn away to a falsehood, to that which will bring you trouble, to that which will pervert you, and lead you astray. ([Spurgeon's Exposition](#))

**Augustine** - If you believe what you like in the gospel, and reject what you don't like, it is not the gospel you believe, but yourself.

The "gospel truth" is that we don't change the Gospel, but the Gospel changes us! If we change the Gospel to another "gospel," it has no power to change us. There's a saying in Texas "Don't Mess with Texas!" Paul was not a Texan but I think if he were, he would say "Don't Mess with the Gospel!"

**Don Anderson** - If I had TWO \$1 BILLS—one real and one counterfeit—you could get the picture: They look alike. There is one that is good and one that is not. The counterfeit lacks quality, authority, and usefulness. One is worth 100 cents, vs. nothing. There is similarity without reality. ([Notes](#))

**THOUGHT** - The best way to defend our mind from error and false teaching is by continually imbibing and meditating on the Truth. Federal agents used to be trained to recognize counterfeit \$20 bills by spending what seemed like an inordinate amount of time "meditating" on genuine \$20 bills. If you know the truth, the truth will set you free from legalism, which can come in very subtle forms.

**Only there are some who are disturbing you - Some** probably refers to the Judaizers. Whoever they were they preached a message of "Bad News", a heteros (different) "gospel" of works and legalism diametrically opposed to the Good News of Grace found only in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

False doctrine had "**mentally disturbed**" the Galatians! And it will do the same for any saint who partakes of this false fetid fair!

**Disturbing** (troubling, stirring up) ([5015](#))(**tarasso**) literally means to shake back and forth and therefore to agitate and stir up (like the pool in John 5:4,7, Lxx = Ezek 32:2, 13, Isa 51:15). **Tarasso** conveys the idea of to disturb mentally or to cause a deep emotional disturbance and thus refers to an unsettled mind, as when Herod heard of the birth of Jesus (Mt 2:3), Zacharias' fear when he saw the angel (Lk 1:12), the terror of the disciples when they witnessed Jesus walking on the water (Mt 14:26), Jesus' reaction to the lack of faith among the people before He raises Lazarus (Jn 11:33), in Jesus' command to not let their hearts be troubled (Jn 14:1) and of disturbing the faith of someone (Gal 5:10). Tarasso emphasizes the intensity of the Lord's reaction to His impending death (Jn 12:27) and His response to Judas' imminent betrayal. Tarasso is a strong word, meaning "to deeply upset," "to



deeply disturbed," "to perplexed." Here in Galatians 1:7 (and also in Gal 5:10+) **tarasso** describes the effect of the graceless "gospel" on the minds and hearts of the Galatians.

**Tarasso** in Gal 1:7 is in the **present tense** they (the "some" presumably the Judaizers) are even at the time of the writing of this letter on the scene continually stirring up the Galatians with their false gospel, their "heteros" gospel. The **active voice** indicates that they are doing this as a definite choice which is emphasized even more by the following verb "**want**."

## **"TWISTED" SCRIPTURE!**

**And want to distort the gospel of Christ**- Notice Paul does not refer to it as the "Gospel of Paul," but "of Christ." The false teachers purposely desire to pervert the **Gospel of Christ** Paul had taught the Galatians. They were seeking to transform the true Gospel into something into something of the opposite character. Paul is describing **Spiritual Warfare 101!** The cults in one way or another will always center their "stealth attack" on the most vital aspect of our faith, the **Gospel of Christ**. A twisted Gospel will result in saints "twisted up" (so to speak) like the centipede in following little ditty...

The centipede was quite happy  
Until a frog in fun said,  
"Pray, which leg goes after which?"  
That worked her mind to such a pitch,  
She lay distracted in a ditch,  
Considering how to run

**Want** (2309)(**thelo**) indicates the false teachers have a desire, a motive, even a resolve to distort the true Gospel. And again the **present tense** indicates that this was their present, continual wish and desire, that the actions were still in progress. They are determined to distort the truth! Wow! Watch out for false teachers!

**Wuest** draws an interesting conclusion based on Paul's use of **thelo** writing that "the perversion was yet only a wish of the Judaizers, and that the Galatians had not completely succumbed to their influence."[\(Wuest Word Studies - Eerdman Publishing Company Volume 1, Volume 2, Volume 3 - used by permission\)](#)

**Guzik** points out that "The other gospel was really a perversion or a distortion of the true gospel of Jesus Christ. It didn't start from nothing and make up a new name for God and pretending to have a new Savior. It used the names and ideas familiar to the Galatian Christians, but it slightly twisted the ideas to make their message all the more deceptive." ([Galatians 1 Commentary](#))

So we need to remember that these false teachers are good at hiding their lies in a veneer of truth - while Paul does not specifically say, these men must have agreed with most of the orthodox teaching about Jesus (even His crucifixion and resurrection, etc), and their apparent orthodoxy would have gained them entry into the churches. Once in the churches, they added the poison of Jesus PLUS. Jesus plus works, plus circumcision, keeping the Sabbath, etc. Jesus plus anything equates with nothing! See the danger of [Hebrew Roots movement](#). Here is a short excerpt from that article...

The premise of the Hebrew Roots movement is the belief that the Church has veered far from the true teachings and Hebrew concepts of the Bible. The movement maintains that Christianity has been indoctrinated with the culture and beliefs of Greek and Roman philosophy and that ultimately biblical Christianity, taught in churches today, has been corrupted with a pagan imitation of the New Testament gospels. **Those of the Hebrew Roots belief hold to the teaching that Christ's death on the cross did not end the Mosaic Covenant,** (ED: NOTICE HOW THEY TEACH THE CROSS BUT ADD LAW!) but instead renewed it, expanded its message, and wrote it on the hearts of His true followers. They teach that the understanding of the New Testament can only come from a Hebrew perspective and that the teachings of the Apostle Paul are not understood clearly or taught correctly by Christian pastors today (THUS THEY DISTORT PAUL'S TEACHING - I HAVE HAD LETTERS FROM BELIEVERS WHO HAVE RELATIVES IN THIS MOVEMENT AND THEY WERE UNABLE TO GET THEM OUT! BEWARE!).

**Martin Luther** writes "To paraphrase this sentence: "These false apostles do not merely trouble you, they abolish Christ's Gospel. They act as if they were the only true Gospel-preachers. For all that they muddle Law and Gospel. As a result they pervert the Gospel. Either Christ must live and the Law perish, or the Law remains and Christ must perish; Christ and the Law cannot dwell side by side in the conscience. It is either grace or law. To muddle the two is to eliminate the Gospel of Christ entirely." ([Galatians 1 Commentary](#))

**Luther** adds "Note the resourcefulness of the devil. Heretics do not advertise their errors. Murderers, adulterers, thieves disguise themselves. So the devil masquerades all these devices and activities. He puts on white to make himself look like an angel of

light." (Galatians 1 Commentary)

**Distort** (3344) (**metastrepho** from **meta** = change + **strepho** = to twist) means to turn about or turn around. Transform into something of an opposite character. Corrupt. Pervert. Reverse. The idea is to turn something (here the true Gospel) to its opposite state, so altering it and causing it to be different, so that it really no longer a gospel of Christ and of His grace. In this passage **metastrepho** is in the **aoist tense** in this passage which indicates this was a complete and thorough change, a complete perversion of the Gospel of Grace! The intent of the Judaizers was to pervert Paul's message of grace by adding salvation by works instead of by faith alone.

**Wuest** adds that the desire of the false teachers "was not merely to derange Paul's Gospel of grace or to turn aside its true meaning. It was to transform it into something **diametrically opposed** to what it was originally, into something of an **opposite nature**. Thus the actions of the Judaizers themselves testify to the mutual incompatibility of **LAW** and **GRACE** (**Ed**: They are like oil and water! [See chart above for numerous contrasts](#)). These two systems have nothing in common; as Paul says, "If by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work" (Ro 11:6+). (**Ibid**)

**Pervert** - to cause to turn aside or away from what is good or true or morally right; to twist the meaning or sense of; To turn from truth, propriety, or from its proper purpose; to distort from its true use or end; as, to pervert reason by misdirecting it; to alter from its original meaning or state to a corruption of what was first intended.

**Distort** - to twist out of the true meaning or proportion; to twist out of a natural, normal, or original shape or condition. To mar or spoil by or as if by twisting.

The only other NT use of **metastrepho** is in Acts where Peter declares...

THE SUN **WILL BE TURNED** INTO DARKNESS AND THE MOON INTO BLOOD, BEFORE THE GREAT AND GLORIOUS DAY OF THE LORD SHALL COME. (Acts 2:20+)

**Comment** - How interesting that it was used of the sun being turned to darkness, for in a similar way the light of the Gospel was turned to the exact opposite darkness and that is the effect it had on the minds of these Galatians!

**Metastrepho** - 17x in the non-apocryphal Septuagint -

Ex 14:5 (of Pharaoh having "a **change** of heart") ; Deut 23:5 ("God turned the **curse** to blessing"); 1 Sam 10:9 ("God **changed** his [Saul's] heart"); 2 Chr 36:4 ("**changed** his name"); Ps 66:6 ("**turned** the sea into dry land"); Ps 78:44 ("**turned** their rivers to blood"), Ps 78:57 ("They **turned aside** like a treacherous bow"); Ps 105:25 ("He **turned** their heart to hate His people"), Ps 105:29 ("He **turned** their waters into blood"); Jer 6:12; 21:4; Lam 5:2; Hos 7:8 ("like a cake not **turned**"); Hos 11:8 ("My heart is **turned over** within Me"); Joel 2:31 (Quoted in Acts 2:20 above); Amos 8:10 ("I **will turn** your festivals into mourning"); Zeph 3:9 ("then I **will give** [turn to an opposite state] to the peoples purified lips [instead of impure speech - this is an act of grace, and the timing is most likely at the beginning of the **Millennium**]");

**D L Moody on Choosing a Church** - Salvation is obtained solely by faith in Him and quite apart from any works or human merit (Galatians 1:6-9). Be sure to find out what is taught concerning His precious blood. Apart from that blood there can be no remission of sins.

**John Stott** - To tamper with the gospel is to trouble the Church....Indeed, the Church's greatest troublemakers (now as then) are not those outside who oppose, ridicule and persecute it, but those inside who try to change the gospel....Conversely, the only way to be a good churchman is to be a good gospel-man. The best way to serve the Church is to believe and to preach the gospel (in loc.).

**Ray Pritchard** - The church had to hammer out its faith on the anvil of doctrinal controversy. That's why you find so many warnings in the New Testament concerning false teachers in the church. Virtually every New Testament book contains one. Some of the major references are: Matthew 24:4-5, 24; Acts 20:29-30; Romans 16:17-19; 2 Corinthians 11:13-15; Galatians 1:6-9; Philippians 3:1-2; Colossians 2:4, 8, 18, 20-23; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 4:1-6; 2 Timothy 3:1-9; 4:3-4; 2 Peter 2:1-3; 1 John 2:18-19; 2 John 7-11; Jude 3-4; Revelation 2:6, 14-15, 20-24. Clearly, the early church took very seriously the threat posed by those who would add to or subtract from the original faith handed down from the apostles. ([Stealth Attack](#) - cp sermon [How to Spot Counterfeit Christianity](#) - this latter resource has a fascinating discussion of the way of salvation as understood by evangelicals and by a well known cardinal. Check it out as there are many points of agreement, but there is a different gospel!)

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The writers of the New Testament adapted the term Gospel as God's glorious message of salvation for lost otherwise hopeless,

helpless sinners. [Euaggelion](#) is found in several combination phrases, each describing the gospel like a multifaceted jewel in various terms from a different viewpoint (from the NASB, 1977):

1. the gospel of the kingdom (Mt 4:23+, Mt 9:35+, Mt 24:14+)
2. the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God (Mk 1:1+) because it centers in Christ
3. the gospel of God (Mk 1:14+, Ro 15:16+, 2Co 11:7+, 1Th 2:2+, 1Th 2:8,9+, 1Pe 4:17+) because it originates with God and was not invented by man
4. the gospel of the kingdom of God (Lu 16:16+)
5. the gospel of the grace of God (Acts 20:24+, Ro 1:1+),
6. the gospel of His Son (Ro 1:9+)
7. the gospel of Christ (Ro 15:19+, 2Co 2:12+, 2Co 9:13+, 2Co 10:14+, Gal 1:7+, Phil 1:27+, 1Th 3:2+)
8. the gospel of the glory of Christ (2Co 4:4+)
9. the gospel of your salvation (Eph 1:14+)
10. the gospel of peace (Eph 6:15+)
11. the gospel of our Lord Jesus (2Th 1:8+)
12. the glorious gospel of the blessed God (1Ti 1:11+)
13. In Ro 16:25, 26+ Paul called it "**my Gospel**" indicating that the special emphasis he gave the gospel in his ministry.
14. **An eternal gospel** - Rev 14:6+ (Some writers such as C I Scofield interpret this as a "different gospel" than the other "gospels" mentioned above but I think such a distinction is incorrect and is poorly substantiated).

For a rewarding study, study the preceding references in context making notation of the truth you observe about the gospel. If you would like a special blessing, take an afternoon to go through all 76 uses of **euaggelion** in context making a list of what you learn about the gospel. The Spirit of God will enlighten your heart and encourage your spirit in a very special way...and you'll want to share the "good news" with someone because of your "discoveries"!

**Euaggelion** - Matt. 4:23; Matt. 9:35; Matt. 24:14; Matt. 26:13; Mk. 1:1; Mk. 1:14; Mk. 1:15; Mk. 8:35; Mk. 10:29; Mk. 13:10; Mk. 14:9; Mk. 16:15; Acts 15:7; Acts 20:24; Rom. 1:1; Rom. 1:9; Rom. 1:16; Rom. 2:16; Rom. 10:16; Rom. 11:28; Rom. 15:16; Rom. 15:19; Rom. 16:25; 1 Co. 4:15; 1 Co. 9:12; 1 Co. 9:14; 1 Co. 9:18; 1 Co. 9:23; 1 Co. 15:1; 2 Co. 2:12; 2 Co. 4:3; 2 Co. 4:4; 2 Co. 8:18; 2 Co. 9:13; 2 Co. 10:14; 2 Co. 11:4; 2 Co. 11:7; Gal. 1:6; Gal. 1:7; Gal. 1:11; Gal. 2:2; Gal. 2:5; Gal. 2:7; Gal. 2:14; Eph. 1:13; Eph. 3:6; Eph. 6:15; Eph. 6:19; Phil. 1:5; Phil. 1:7; Phil. 1:12; Phil. 1:16; Phil. 1:27; Phil. 2:22; Phil. 4:3; Phil. 4:15; Col. 1:5; Col. 1:23; 1 Thess. 1:5; 1 Thess. 2:2; 1 Thess. 2:4; 1 Thess. 2:8; 1 Thess. 2:9; 1 Thess. 3:2; 2 Thess. 1:8; 2 Thess. 2:14; 1 Tim. 1:11; 2 Tim. 1:8; 2 Tim. 1:10; 2 Tim. 2:8; Phlm. 1:13; 1 Pet. 4:17; Rev. 14:6

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**TODAY IN THE WORD** - A second-century Christian heresy was ""rediscovered"" in 1945. That year, archaeologists recovered a number of documents from an Egyptian monastery, among them a book called "[The Gospel of Truth](#)" by a theologian named Valentinus (or one of his followers). Once a candidate for bishop of Rome, [Valentinus \(Gnostic\)](#) was excommunicated when he emerged as leader of a gnostic heresy. Gnosticism denies that the spiritual has anything to do with the physical, a heresy with which other ages of the church have also wrestled. Valentinus interpreted the Bible in a strange, allegorical way. His teachings blurred the line between Christianity, mysticism, philosophy and Judaism. He rejected the incarnation, crucifixion and bodily resurrection of Jesus. Church leaders attacked Valentinus' heretical ideas and defended biblical truth.

Heresies and cults have always threatened the church. When falsehoods are exposed, the church must do all it can to defend the truth. In his epistle to the Galatians, Paul is defending the truth of Christianity against false theology. He criticizes the Galatians for neglecting Christian liberty and for focusing instead on the error of legalism. The Galatians may have been startled when the apostle accused them of turning from God (Gal 1:6). No doubt they thought they were pleasing the Father by keeping the law, as did the Jews and Paul before his conversion. But God had extended to the Galatians grace through Jesus Christ, the instrument by which He brings us to salvation. The Galatians had set aside that important truth, and distorted the simple truths of the gospel (Gal 1:6-7)

**TODAY IN THE WORD** - The neighborhood kids decided to organize themselves into a playgroup and little Danny was their leader. All the members had bicycles and decorated them the same way so that everyone in the neighborhood would know who they were. When Sarah's family moved in, she too wanted to be part of the group. "You can join," Danny told her, "but only if you have a bicycle and decorate it just like ours!" This story reflects something of the situation in Galatia. (Galatians Devotionals)

**Galatians 1:8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed!**

Amplified - But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to and different from that which we preached to you, let him be accursed (anathema, devoted to destruction, doomed to eternal punishment)!

Barclay - But even if we or an angel from heaven were to preach a gospel to you, other than that which you have received, let him be accursed.

TLB - Let God's curses fall on anyone, including myself, who preaches any other way to be saved than the one we told you about; yes, if an angel comes from heaven and preaches any other message, let him be forever cursed.

Wuest - In fact, even if we or a messenger from heaven should preach a gospel to you which goes beyond that which we preached to you as good news, let him be accursed. ([Eerdmans Publishing](#))

NET Galatians 1:8 But even if we (or an angel from heaven) should preach a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be condemned to hell!

GNT Galatians 1:8 ἅλλ' ἢ καὶ ἄνθρωπος ἢ ἄγγελος ἐξ οὐρανόθεν εὐαγγελίζῃται [μὴ] παρὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον μεθὰ μὴν, ἢ θεμάστω.

NLT Galatians 1:8 Let God's curse fall on anyone, including us or even an angel from heaven, who preaches a different kind of Good News than the one we preached to you.

KJV 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.

ESV Galatians 1:8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed.

ASV Galatians 1:8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema.

CSB Galatians 1:8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel other than what we have preached to you, a curse be on him!

NIV Galatians 1:8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned!

NKJ Galatians 1:8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.

NRS Galatians 1:8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should proclaim to you a gospel contrary to what we proclaimed to you, let that one be accursed!

YLT Galatians 1:8 but even if we or a messenger out of heaven may proclaim good news to you different from what we did proclaim to you -- anathema let him be!

NAB Galatians 1:8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach (to you) a gospel other than the one that we preached to you, let that one be accursed!

NJB Galatians 1:8 But even if we ourselves or an angel from heaven preaches to you a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let God's curse be on him.

GWN Galatians 1:8 Whoever tells you good news that is different from the Good News we gave you should be condemned to hell, even if he is one of us or an angel from heaven.

BBE Galatians 1:8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, were to be a preacher to you of good news other than that which we have given you, let there be a curse on him.

- **Even if:** Ga 1:9 1Co 16:22 2Co 11:13,14 1Ti 1:19,20 Tit 3:10 Rev 22:18,19
- **He is to be:** Ga 3:10,13 Ge 9:25 Dt 27:15-26 Jos 9:23 1Sa 26:19 Ne 13:25 Mt 25:41 2Pe 2:14
- **accursed:** Mk 14:71 Ac 23:14 Ro 9:3 1Co 12:3 16:22
- Galatians 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**PAUL PRESENTS  
A HYPOTHETICAL SITUATION**

**But even if we - But (alla)** is the strongest adversative conjunction and emphasizes how strong the contrast is between Paul's gospel and the counterfeit "gospel." **Even if** is a so-called third class condition which views the condition as a possibility, something that may happen but is not certain to happen. Most commentators see this as Paul's way of introducing a hypothetical case, something that in fact is highly improbable. **We** shows that Paul is not alone in his strong feelings concerning the integrity of the Gospel of grace (cf **all the brethren** - Gal 1:2). Indeed, we today should be just as zealous to "Guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure (GOSPEL OF CHRIST) which has been entrusted to" us (2Ti 1:14+)

**Or an angel from heaven** - Now Paul uses a [hyperbole](#) or deliberate exaggeration for effect by describing **an angel from heaven** preaching. How absurd would it be for **an angel from heaven** to preach a gospel that was not the Gospel of Christ, Who is seated in Heaven! In Hebrews 2:2 the writer notes "the word spoken through angels proved unalterable," so clearly the Jews believed that divine law came through angels. And Paul may have introduced this hyperbole because the Judaizers were using this truth ("proved unalterable") to say the Old Covenant was still binding.

**MacArthur** makes the point that in introducing **an angel from heaven** Paul "was reaching for the most fanciful possibilities imaginable to make his point that absolutely no messenger, no matter how seemingly godly and good, should be believed or followed if his teaching does not square with God-revealed apostolic doctrine. The truth outranks anyone's credentials, and every teacher or preacher must be evaluated on the basis of what he says, not who he is." [MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Galatians](#)

Writing to the church at Corinth Paul warned

For such men (in 2 Cor 11:12) are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds. (2 Cor 11:13-15)

**Should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you he is to be accursed!** - The NLT paraphrases it "Let God's curse fall on anyone, including us or even an angel from heaven, who preaches a different kind of Good News than the one we preached to you." Paul is presenting a hypothetical case - the true Gospel cannot be changed, but if it could be changed then the one who changes it is to be cursed.

**William Hendriksen** has a helpful paraphrase of verse 8 -

"Even if we or a holy angel must be the object of God's righteous curse, were any of us to preach a gospel contrary to the one we humans previously preached to you, then all the more divine wrath must be poured out on those self-appointed nobodies who are now making themselves guilty of this crime." ([Exposition of Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon](#))

There is only one Gospel as this 1906 hymn by Jessie Pounds emphasizes...

[I must needs go home by the way of the cross.](#)

There's no other way but this;  
I shall ne'er get sight of the Gates of Light,  
If the way of the cross I miss.

Refrain:

The way of the cross leads home,  
The way of the cross leads home;  
It is sweet to know, as I onward go,  
The way of the cross leads home.

I must needs go on in the blood-sprinkled way,  
The path that the Savior trod,  
If I ever climb to the heights sublime,  
Where the soul is at home with God.

Then I bid farewell to the way of the world,  
To walk in it nevermore;  
For my Lord says, "Come," and I seek my home,  
Where He waits at the open door.

**Spurgeon** — Paul is no fanatic, no raving enthusiast; yet he cannot endure the notion of a false gospel. In his solemn anathema, he includes himself, and all the brethren with him, yea, and the very angels of God if they “preach any other gospel.” Let him be accursed, saith he, and so he is. ([Spurgeon's Exposition](#))

**Preach...a gospel** (2097)(**euaggelizo/euangelizo**) to announce or bring good news, to "evangelize," making known God's message of salvation with the authority of His Word and the power of His Holy Spirit. As **Rees** says "The gospel is neither a discussion nor a debate. It is an announcement." And it is not "up for debate!" It is presented (hopefully) to be received or rejected! **John Marshall** clearly states that "God and His truth cannot be changed; the Gospel is not negotiable."

**A gospel contrary to what we have preached to you** - Wuest paraphrases it "preach a gospel to you which goes beyond that which we preached to you as good news." As Metzger says "A gospel that elevates man and dethrones God is not the gospel." ([Eerdmans Publishing](#) - used [by permission](#))

**Contrary** (3844)(**para**) has the root meaning of "beside." In the present context **para** is used adversatively which signifies against, contrary to or without regard for (cf this sense in Ro 4:18, Heb 11:11). In English **contrary** means a relation of direct opposition or exact opposition.

**He is to be accursed** - This is actually a command in the [present imperative](#) calling for those who distort the Gospel to be continually cursed! A teacher who requires others to obey the law as a requirement for salvation is leading others to a Christless eternity and that is what the teacher deserves!

**Wayne Detzler** - Not only are all accursed who do not love the Lord, but **those who preach a false gospel are under a special curse**. Paul aimed part of his Galatian letter at counterfeiters of the Christian message. Anyone who does not preach the same Gospel as Paul is accursed (Gal. 1:8–9). In this day of wildly divergent theologies, it is good to remember how important Gospel purity is. (New Testament Words in Today's Language)

**Accursed** (331)(**anathema** from **anathemi** = to place, lay up) means strictly speaking something set up or placed so as to be kept, such as a votive [free will] offering which is "set up" in the temple. It describes that which has been dedicated to divinity, in the positive sense as a free will offering, in the negative sense as one delivered over to divine wrath or dedicated for destruction! Read Acts 23:14+ for a forceful illustration of the meaning of this word. Most of the NT uses are by Paul who uses **anathema** in a negative sense of delivering ("setting up" or "placing") someone under divine wrath or a curse, "devoted to the direst woes." (Thayer)

**Machen on anathema** - The fundamental idea, when a thing is called an **anathema**, is that the thing has been taken from ordinary use and has been handed over to God. If it is a good thing, it has been handed over to Him for His use; if it is a bad thing, it has been handed over to Him for destruction: but in either case men have no more to say about it; it is taken out of ordinary relationships and is "devoted" to God. So here Paul says—if the original sense of the word is to be regarded as still in view—that the punishment of the man who attempts to lay violent hands upon the gospel of Christ should be in God's hands: that man should be regarded as beyond men's power to help; he should be regarded as having fallen into that state about which the Epistle to the Hebrews says: "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." [Hebrews 10:31]

**Vine - Anathema** is translated from the Greek, occurs frequently in LXX, where it is used to translate the Hebrew **cherem**, a thing devoted to God, whether, for His **service**, as the sacrifices, Leviticus 27:28, or, for **destruction**, as an idol, Deut 7:26, or Jericho, Josh 6:17. Then later, **cherem** took on a wider, more general meaning, the disfavor of Jehovah, see Isa 34:5; Zech 14:11+; Mal 4:6+. This latter is the New Testament sense of **anathema**.

**Wuest - Anathema** cannot refer here to ecclesiastical excommunication, for angels are included. The epistles of Paul attach to the word the idea of spiritual death. Its use in Romans 9:3 where Paul says that he could wish himself accursed from Christ for his brethren's sake, associates it with the further idea of separation from Christ and destruction for all eternity, which is the fate of the unsaved. The word does not, like excommunication, pronounce a judicial sentence on particular convicted offenders, but solemnly affirms general laws of the spiritual kingdom. In I Corinthians 16:22, those who love not the Lord Jesus are declared to be outcasts from the Faith. ([Word Studies from the Greek New Testament](#))

**Vos** points out: Just as Paul called down a curse on any who added to the requirements of the gospel, so John hurled a curse at those who added or subtracted from the message of Revelation (see Rev 22:18-19). ([Galatians- Everyman's Bible Commentary: A Call to Christian Liberty](#))

**Jerry Bridges** - Paul reacted against all forms of legalism with force and focus, calling for those who teach such lies to "be accursed" (Gal. 1:8–9) and even wishing that those who were unsettling the Galatian Christians would "emasculate themselves" (Gal. 5:12). This is strong language. But such attacks by Paul do not seem shocking when we pause to consider what is at stake. By substituting man centered performance as the basis for acquiring righteousness, the very essence and foundation of redemptive

truth is compromised. (The Great Exchange)

**James Montgomery Boice** comments that "The vehemence with which Paul denounces those who teach another gospel (literally, he says, 'Let them be damned') has bothered some commentators, as well as other readers of the letter. But this shows how little the gospel of God's grace is understood and appreciated and how little many Christians are concerned for the advance of biblical truth." (EBC)

**Kevin Backus** describes "another gospel" proclaimed by individuals who (sadly - as I have good friends in this cult) will be an eternal **anathema**. He asks "Do **Mormons** believe in Jesus? Yes, make no mistake about that. But the Jesus of Mormonism is not the Jesus of the historic Christian faith. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints proclaims a Jesus who is radically different from the Christ of Scripture. (The Journal of Modern Ministry, Volume 5, Issue 1, Winter 2008)

#### Related Resources:

- [What is Mormonism? What do Mormons believe?](#)
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- [Who are the Three Nephites in Mormonism?](#)
- [Witnessing to Mormons - what is the key?](#)
- [I am a Mormon. Why should I consider becoming a Christian?](#)

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**A doctored gospel by C H Spurgeon** - In "Babbage's Economy of Manufactures," we are told that some years ago a mode of preparing old clover and trefoil seeds, by a process called "doctoring," became so prevalent as to attract the attention of the House of Commons. By this process old and worthless seed was rendered in appearance equal to the best. One witness tried some "doctored" seed, and found that not above one grain in a hundred grew. Is it not to be feared that a "doctored" gospel is becoming very common among us; and if so, it is no wonder that conversions are but few. Only pure truth is living seed. ([The Biblical Illustrator](#))

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**TODAY IN THE WORD** - If you ever watch sports, you've seen this scenario: a time-out is called, and the players gather breathlessly around the coach. The coach's words are punctuated with urgency. He doesn't smile. He gestures emphatically at his clipboard. The outcome of the game hangs in the balance. Paul is like this coach on the sidelines. His words are urgent. The situation, as he sees it, is tenuous. Paul doesn't waste any time in his letter to the Galatians before addressing the dire problem he sees in their churches. False teachers have been given standing in the churches, and the Galatians have been deceived. The error of the Galatians actually threatens their standing in Christ. Paul accused the Galatians of having abandoned God the Father and the gospel of Jesus Christ. They have deserted the One who called them and embraced another gospel.

What Paul wants to emphasize is that the message that the Galatians have now believed is really no gospel at all. The Galatians, of course, didn't see it that way. Most likely, the false teachers hadn't asked the Galatians to renounce their faith in Christ. No, their message was probably much more subtle. They've criticized Paul's ministry, trying to discredit him and expose what they see as the error of his preaching and teaching. They've elevated their teaching as the "true" gospel. To Paul's horror, they've preached the necessity of circumcision to Gentile believers (cf. 5:2).

Paul answers back emphatically: May all of God's curses fall on them, or on anyone in fact who preaches anything other than the gospel of Jesus Christ! Paul was not going to cede any ground to these false teachers. He would not compromise the gospel, nor would he give up on the Galatians so easily.

What we start to see in this letter is Paul as a man who's fiercely committed to the Galatians and who wants to secure their total commitment to Christ. Like a coach explaining a key play in the game, Paul carefully outlined an argument in his letter for the true gospel of Jesus Christ.

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**Beecher** - No matter how infidel philosophers may regard the Bible: they may say that Genesis is awry, and that the Psalms are more than half bitter imprecations, and the Prophecies only the fantasies of brain-bewildered men, and the Gospels weak laudations of an impostor, and the Epistles but the letters of a mad Jew, and that the whole book has had its day, I shall cling to it until they show me a better revelation. The Bible emptied, effete, worn out! If all the wisest men of the world were placed man to man, they could not sound the shallowest depth of the Gospel of John. O philosophers! break the shell, and fly out, and let me hear how you

can sing,—not of passion, I know that already; not of worldly power, I hear that everywhere: but teach me, through your song, how to find joy in sorrow, strength in weakness, and light in darkest days; how to bear buffeting and scorn; how to welcome death, and to pass, through its ministrations, into the sphere of life; and this, not for me only, but for the whole world that groans and travails in pain. And, until you can do this, speak not to me of a better revelation.

**Galatians 1:9 As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed!**

Amplified - As we said before, so I now say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel different from or contrary to that which you received [from us], let him be accursed (anathema, devoted to destruction, doomed to eternal punishment)!

Wuest - In fact, even if we or a messenger from heaven should preach a gospel to you which goes beyond that which we preached to you as good news, let him be accursed. ([Eerdmans Publishing](#))

NET Galatians 1:9 As we have said before, and now I say again, if any one is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, let him be condemned to hell!

GNT Galatians 1:9 ς προειρ καμεν κα ρτι π λιν λ γω, ε τις μ ς ε αγγελ ζεται παρ παρελ βετε, ν θεμα στω.

NLT Galatians 1:9 I say again what we have said before: If anyone preaches any other Good News than the one you welcomed, let that person be cursed.

KJV 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.

ESV Galatians 1:9 As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed.

ASV Galatians 1:9 As we have said before, so say I now again, if any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema.

CSB Galatians 1:9 As we have said before, I now say again: If anyone preaches to you a gospel contrary to what you received, a curse be on him!

NIV Galatians 1:9 As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned!

NKJ Galatians 1:9 As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.

NRS Galatians 1:9 As we have said before, so now I repeat, if anyone proclaims to you a gospel contrary to what you received, let that one be accursed!

YLT Galatians 1:9 as we have said before, and now say again, If any one to you may proclaim good news different from what ye did receive -- anathema let him be!

NAB Galatians 1:9 As we have said before, and now I say again, if anyone preaches to you a gospel other than the one that you received, let that one be accursed!

NJB Galatians 1:9 I repeat again what we declared before: anyone who preaches to you a gospel other than the one you were first given is to be under God's curse.

GWN Galatians 1:9 I'm now telling you again what we've told you in the past: If anyone tells you good news that is different from the Good News you received, that person should be condemned to hell.

BBE Galatians 1:9 As we have said before, so say I now again, If any man is a preacher to you of any good news other than that which has been given to you, let there be a curse on him.

- **so:** 2Co 1:17 13:1,2 Php 3:1 4:4
- **Contrary:** Dt 4:2 Dt 12:32 Dt 13:1-11 Pr 30:6 Rev 22:18,19
- Galatians 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



## A REAL SITUATION

The conclusion of the hypothetical and the real proclamations of a false gospel is the same -eternal punishment! As **Max Anders** said "Ditto! Paul repeated his curse for effect."

**As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed!** - Now Paul turns from the hypothetical to the reality. In other words now the **IF** (ei) introduces a first class conditional statement which assumes that the condition that is described is true. That is, "**any man**" or "anyone" was in fact preaching a gospel contrary or in direct opposition to the gospel that Paul had preached and they had received. And just as in the hypothetical passage above, this person's condemnation was the same for he would "be doomed to eternal punishment" (Amplified).

**Howard Vos** offers an excellent explanation writing that "On the face of it, verse 9 seems to be largely a repetition of the curse enunciated in verse 8. But there are important differences. In verse 8 the subjunctive is used—"should preach." In verse 9 the Greek suggests that at least one person is actually preaching this false gospel. Another difference is that in verse 9 Paul observes, "As we said before." This is too emphatic to refer to the previous verse and is assumed to refer to the apostle's last visit among them. At that time he felt the need of warning them against possible false teaching which apparently had not yet actually come among them. Moreover, while verse 8 refers to Paul's preaching among them, verse 9 alludes to their reception of his message. So this verse is really quite strong language. It recalls the apostle's warning in person (ON HIS FIRST VISIT) of impending apostasy, alludes to an actual outbreak of heretical teaching among them, reminds them of their genuine reception of the truth at his hands, and pronounces a curse on the false teachers who are subverting them." ([Galatians- Everyman's Bible Commentary: A Call to Christian Liberty](#))

**We have said before** (**prolego** from **pro** = before + **lego** = to say, declare) means literally to say before, to foretell or predict, to speak in advance. Most commentators feel that the use of **prolego** here in Gal 1:9 was not referring to what he had just stated in Gal 1:8 but what he had **said** to the Galatians **before** about the dangers of a false gospel and the destruction decreed to those who propounded it. Furthermore, Paul used the **perfect tense**, which points to the abiding authority of that say previously-what Paul had said in the past still stands.

Paul uses **prolego** later in this letter in a different context writing "envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have **forewarned** you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God." (Galatians 5:21+) As **W E Vine** explains that Paul had told them before of the consequence (OF THE HABITUAL PRACTICE OF THE SINS IN Gal 5:19-21) and was now repeating his warning, as leaving no possible room for doubt or misunderstanding."

**To what you received** - The Galatians had not just blandly accepted Paul's teaching on the Gospel of Christ, but they actually welcomed it or received it with favor as one would a guest.

**Received** (3880) (**paralambano** from **para** = beside + **lambano** = appropriate, receive) means to receive from another, to receive alongside or to take to oneself and so into close association. **Paralambano** also means to receive as authoritative teaching what was passed on. Paul uses this same verb **paralambano** in Gal 1:12 writing (regarding his reception of the Gospel) "I neither received it from man...but...through a revelation of Jesus Christ." Paul was Jesus' "sent one" (apostle) and so in obedience to His Lord, he took the same message he received by divine revelation and the Galatians in turn received it gladly from him. In sum, the Galatians had appropriated Paul's Gospel for themselves, even as a host in the Middle East would extend a warm welcome to a guest.

Think about the recipients of this letter. Do you think that with this repetition of the curse who help them begin to sense that Paul was passionate about the Gospel of Christ? Surely this would have grabbed their attention, so that they would read the rest of the letter with a sense of sobriety and maybe even a bit of the fear of the Lord!

**He is to be accursed** - As in Gal 1:8 Paul again issues a command and the verb **is to be** (esto) is in the [present imperative](#) which is a command that this individual be eternally condemned to hell. The **NET** holds nothing back rendering it "let him be condemned to hell!" The **NIV** is not far behind with "let him be eternally condemned!" As **Chuck Swindoll** quipped "I don't think there is any disagreement...the man (PAUL) was hot!"

**Accursed** (331) see preceding discussion of [anathema](#)

**J Vernon McGee** - In strong language Paul says, "If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed," which literally means let him be damned. Friend, I cannot make that statement any stronger. The gospel shuts out all works. Romans 4:5 says, "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." I find a great many folk who think they have to become good enough to be saved. The other day a man said to me, "McGee, I want to become a Christian. I am going to try to be a little better, and if I improve, I am going to become a Christian." I said to him, "If you improve, you will never become a Christian. The only class that God is saving is the ungodly. The Lord Jesus said He didn't come to call the righteous; He came to call sinners. The reason He said that was because there is none righteous, no,

not one (Ro 3:10). Even the righteousness of man is as filthy rags in God's sight (Isa 64:6). Law condemns us (Ro 3:9), and it must make us speechless before grace can save us." ([Galatians 1 Thru the Bible](#))

**Augustus Toplady** had it right in the great old hymn [Rock of Ages](#)

Not the labors of my hands  
Can fulfill thy laws' demands  
Could my zeal no respite know,  
Could my tears forever flow  
All for sin could not atone;  
Thou must save and Thou Alone.

**John MacArthur** applies the truth in this section writing that "Christians are to have nothing to do with false teachers, no matter what their credentials. It is both naive and unscriptural to believe, for instance, that staying in a religious school or church that denies the Bible and distorts the gospel gives a believer the opportunity to be a positive influence for the Lord." [MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Galatians](#)

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**James Scudder - Living Water Devotional - Making It Clear** - Galatians 1:8-9 1 Corinthians 14:8 Have you ever tried to speak to someone who didn't understand your language? When I travel, I frequently encounter this problem. I forget that the entire world does not speak English. I will only get a smile or a blank stare. No matter how vital my conversation is, the other person cannot comprehend it. When we share the Gospel with people, we often speak in a language that the unsaved cannot comprehend. We talk with words that they've never heard. The Apostle Paul stressed in his letters that we must make the presentation of the Gospel as clear as crystal. Often, we add confusing terms and conditions that only confuse the issue. This reminds me of a story about the Chevy Nova. This was a moderately successful American car for many years. The company, encouraged by the sales, began marketing this vehicle throughout the world. Unfortunately, the car didn't sell so well in Spanish-speaking countries. The company could not figure out the reason for the decline in sales. That was, until they discovered that the word "Nova" in Spanish means, "no go." Not a very good name for a mode of transportation. When we confuse terminology in presenting the Gospel, we may be sending a false message to the world without realizing it. That is why it is so important to present a clear gospel message every time we share our faith with someone. We want to make sure we are speaking their language. I do not frustrate the grace of God. = Galatians 2:21

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**Spurgeon** - Ah! believer, it is safer always for you to be led of the Spirit into gospel liberty than to wear legal fetters. Judge yourself at what Christ is rather than at what you are. Satan will try to mar your peace by reminding you of your sinfulness and imperfections: you can only meet his accusations by faithfully adhering to the gospel and refusing to wear the yoke of bondage

**Galatians 1:10 For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ.**

Amplified - Now am I trying to win the favor of men, or of God? Do I seek to please men? If I were still seeking popularity with men, I should not be a bond servant of Christ (the Messiah).

Wuest - For, am I at this present moment seeking to win the favor of men rather than the approval of God? Or, am I making it my business to be constantly pleasing men? If I still were pleasing men, in that case Christ's bonds-lave I would not be. ([Erdmans Publishing](#))

NET Galatians 1:10 Am I now trying to gain the approval of people, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a slave of Christ!

GNT Galatians 1:10 ρι γ ρ νθρ πους πεθω τ ν θε ν; ζητ νθρ ποις ρ σκειν; ε τι νθρ ποις ρεσκον, Χριστο δο λος ο κ ν μην.

NLT Galatians 1:10 Obviously, I'm not trying to win the approval of people, but of God. If pleasing people were my goal, I would not be Christ's servant.

KJV 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.

ESV Galatians 1:10 For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.

ASV Galatians 1:10 For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? or am I striving to please men? if I were still pleasing men, I should not be a servant of Christ.

CSB Galatians 1:10 For am I now trying to win the favor of people, or God? Or am I striving to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a slave of Christ.

NIV Galatians 1:10 Am I now trying to win the approval of men, or of God? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Christ.

NKJ Galatians 1:10 For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.

NRS Galatians 1:10 Am I now seeking human approval, or God's approval? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still pleasing people, I would not be a servant of Christ.

YLT Galatians 1:10 for now men do I persuade, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if yet men I did please -- Christ's servant I should not be.

NAB Galatians 1:10 Am I now currying favor with human beings or God? Or am I seeking to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a slave of Christ.

NJB Galatians 1:10 Whom am I trying to convince now, human beings or God? Am I trying to please human beings? If I were still doing that I should not be a servant of Christ.

GWN Galatians 1:10 Am I saying this now to win the approval of people or God? Am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be Christ's servant.

BBE Galatians 1:10 Am I now using arguments to men, or God? or is it my desire to give men pleasure? if I was still pleasing men, I would not be a servant of Christ.

- **now:** Ac 4:19,20 5:29 2Co 5:9-11 1Th 2:4
- **seeking favor:** 1Sa 21:7 Mt 28:14 Ac 12:20 Ro 2:8 1Jn 3:9
- **seek:** 2Co 12:19 1Th 2:4
- **for if:** Mt 22:16 Ro 15:1,2 1Co 10:33 Eph 6:6 Col 3:22 Jas 4:4
- **bondservant:** Ro 1:1
- Galatians 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## PAUL BEGINS DEFENDING PAUL

He begins by explaining his motivation for doing what he is doing.

In Galatians 1:10-12 Paul presents some general credentials of his apostleship and message, and in Galatians 1:13-24 he unfolds autobiographical credentials that include preconversion, conversion, and postconversion proofs of his legitimacy. ([MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Galatians](#))

**For (gar)** is a term of explanation (always stop and determine "What is being explained?" See term of explanation). In this case **For** introduces a justification of the severe language just used." (Marvin Vincent) He is going to justify why he is speaking to them so strongly even calling for a curse of condemnation!

Paul was not a politician; he was an ambassador.

--Warren Wiersbe

**For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men?**- "Is what I have just now said a sample of men-pleasing, of which I am accused?" (Jamieson) Paul's question is rhetorical. Of course he is not striving to please **men** but **God!** Everything He did was with the perspective that God was His audience, an audience of One! "Men-pleasers simply do not hurl anathemas against those who proclaim false gospels. Indeed, if the apostle had wanted to please men, he would have remained a zealous Pharisee and promoter of the Law rather than becoming a servant of Christ" (BKC) Clearly Paul was not (like so many today) concerned about his "Approval Ratings!"

**Leon Morris** - "There have always been preachers who have sought popular acclaim above all else, and there are some still. It is part of fallen human nature that even those charged with the responsibility of proclaiming the gospel can fall into the trap of trying to be popular rather than faithful." ([Galatians: Paul's Charter of Christian Freedom](#))

**Vine** explains Paul's use of "**how (arti)**" - the contrast is not with his life before his conversion, when, indeed, he showed no conciliatory spirit, but rather with the general course of his ministry. His traducers (those seeking to expose Paul to shame by means of his having misrepresented himself) suggested that he was a trimmer (one who modifies a policy or position out of expediency) who sought to ingratiate (gain favor for) himself by "becoming all things to all men," 1 Corinthians 9:22. In support of this contention they could point to the circumcision of Timothy as a bid for Jewish favor (Acts 16:3+), and to his repudiation of law as an attempt to conciliate the Gentiles. So the emphasis is thrown on **now**, as though he would say, "**never mind the past**, at least in this repeated statement my meaning is not to be mistaken or misrepresented."

**John Phillips** adds on the issue of circumcision regarding Timothy and Titus - His enemies would doubtless accuse him of trying to curry favor in Jerusalem by having Timothy circumcised (Acts 16:3+) and of trying to keep in with the Gentiles by leaving Titus uncircumcised. Paul, however, had a good reason for circumcising Timothy, who was already half a Jew by birth, and an equally good reason for leaving Titus, who was a full Gentile, uncircumcised (Gal 2:3+) (**ED COMMENT:** If Titus were compelled to be circumcised, then other Gentile believers could be compelled but if not, then freedom from the law was upheld). Paul was accused of setting his sail to match the wind and of adapting his preaching and practice to suit the occasion. This accusation Paul vigorously denies. ([Exploring Galatians: An Expository Commentary](#))

**Don Anderson** - His opponents had insinuated that Paul had dropped all the legal requirements of salvation to please men and to cater to the laxity of human nature. The truth of the matter, however, was that many of the Judaizers taught circumcision and the law to keep from being persecuted. There was a time in Paul's experience when he was trying to please both men and God by the life that he lived as a Pharisee. Now his only concern is to be a faithful bondsman of Jesus Christ. You have to make a CHOICE who you are going to please in your life. YOU CANNOT PLEASE MEN AND BE A BONDSMAN OF CHRIST...Paul's motivation is TWO-FOLD. He wants to: FINISH THE RACE and HEAR "WELL DONE THOU GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT." Ever since the Damascus road experience, Paul has been a different man with a life that has a singleness of purpose. That purpose is to please God. ([Note](#))

**Martin Luther** points out that "To this day you will find many who seek to please men in order that they may live in peace and security. They teach whatever is agreeable to men, no matter whether it is contrary to God's Word or their own conscience." ([Galatians 1 Commentary](#))

**Todd Wilson** - **People-pleasers** don't make good servants of Christ because **people-pleasers** cave under pressure from **influential people**. ...**People-pleasers** don't make good servants of Christ because **people-pleasers ignore harmful hypocrisy**...*people-pleasers hide from the shame of the cross*..Do you know what the root of the problem with people-pleasers is? The root of the problem is that people-pleasers are idolaters. People-pleasers make idols of other people and thus crave their approval as though it were the bread of life. But in idolizing other people and their approval, they ultimately idolize themselves. They make idols of themselves and thus require the approval of others as though it were an offering being given to a god. People-pleasing is a kind of self-worship. It is the antithesis of being a servant of Christ Jesus....if we're going to fight the temptation to people-please, we must also come to really believe that **God's judgment is the only one that counts**....[Bishop Thomas Wolsey](#) once (SADLY) remarked, "If I had served God as faithfully as man, I had been better rewarded, and not forsaken in my distress (WHICH HE WAS BY KING HENRY VIII!)." There's a lot of wisdom in that statement. Being a servant of Christ is far sweeter than being a slave to man's opinion, and the reward of being a servant of Christ is far, far superior to any reward we can obtain from any man. For only by serving Christ Jesus will we hear on that final day the approval that our hearts so desperately long to hear: "Well done, good and faithful servant!" ([Galatians: Gospel-Rooted Living](#))

**Seeking the favor** (3982)(**peitho**) means to cause to come to a particular point of view or course of action, to prevail upon, to win over, to **persuade** or to bring about a change of one's mind (cp 2 Cor 5:1+, Acts 13:43+ = "urging"). While Paul was willing to "become all things to all men, so that (he might) by all means save some" (1 Cor 9:22) he would never do so by compromising a Biblical conviction or watering down God's Word of truth.

**Phillips** adds "**Persuading** men? Yes, indeed! That was exactly what he did. That was his business. That was what he had been called to do. **Pleasing** men? Nonsense! Did it sound as though he were trying to please men—damning those who preached something contrary to the grace of Christ **that** he preached." ([Exploring Galatians: An Expository Commentary](#))

## **PLEASING MEN OR PLEASING GOD**

**Am I striving to please men** - Before his conversion this was undoubtedly Paul's aim. "I have been charged with [conciliating](#) (seeking to gain as goodwill by pleasing acts) men. Does this **anathema** of mine look like it? Is it a time for [conciliatory](#) words now, when Judaizing emissaries are troubling you (Gal 1:7) and persuading you to forsake the true Gospel?" (Vincent)

Paul's aim was never to please men but God as he wrote in other letters...

1Thess 2:4+ but just as we have been approved ([dokimazo](#) in [perfect tense](#) = speaks of permanence) by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not as **pleasing** ([aresko](#)) men but God, who examines our hearts. For we never came with flattering speech, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed—God is witness—

2Cor 5:9+ Therefore also we have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be **pleasing** to Him.

In his last letter Paul urged young Timothy to not be a man-pleaser but a God-pleaser, but that in so doing it would entail a cost, a sacrifice...

**Suffer hardship** ([aorist imperative](#) - only possible as we rely on [Holy Spirit to obey](#)) with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, **so that he may please** ([aresko](#)) the One who enlisted him as a soldier. (2 Ti 2:3-4)

The paradox is that Paul's adversaries were in fact the people pleasers as he alluded to in chapter 6

**Those who desire to make a good showing in the flesh** (PEOPLE PLEASERS) try to compel you to be circumcised, simply so that they will not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. 13 For those who are circumcised do not even keep the Law themselves, but they desire to have you circumcised so that they may boast in your flesh. 14 But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. (Gal 6:11-14+)

**George MacDonald** - When one has learned to seek the honour that cometh from God only, he will take the withholding of the honour that cometh by man very lightly indeed.

**Max Anders** - To please people is to desert Christ. You must choose: serve people's fickle pleasures or serve the faithful Christ. (HNTC - Galatians)

**Puritan Thomas Watson** - Do not preach so much to please as to profit. Choose rather to discover men's sins than to show your own eloquence. That is the best looking-glass, not which is most gilded but which shows the truest face.

To please God is to walk with Him

To walk with God is to please Him

**If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ**- Prior to his conversion Paul was **continually trying to please men**, specifically his fellow Jews, as he zealously sought to persecute Christians! Here we have a "descriptive definition" of a **bond-servant of Christ**. What is it? It is a man or woman who is not trying to be a man-pleaser! It is that simple! Beloved, we have one Master and it is He Alone we should daily seek to please, for as Jesus warned "**No one can serve two masters**; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth" (Mt 6:24+) O God, deliver us from this all too frequent fleshly temptation! Amen. [Spurgeon](#) goes on to explain that "Those whom we try to please, are our masters. If a man tries to please the populace, or to please the refined few, these are his masters, and he will be their slave; but if he tries to please his God, then is he a free man indeed."

"I don't know the secret of success,  
but I do know the secret of failure—  
try to please everybody!"  
--Anonymous

**Charles Swindoll** was set free from trying to be a man-pleaser by this passage (may it have the same effect on all of us beloved!) writing that "There was a time in my ministry, many years ago, when a single verse of Scripture jolted me back to a place of confidence, delivering me from the trap of telling a group of influential people what they wanted to hear. I realize now it was a turning point in my leadership pilgrimage from "slave to others" to "servant of Christ." It reads, "**For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ**" (Galatians 1:10). A leader who wants to be respected can afford flattery no more than he can deception....It may take awhile. And you will have to train yourself to care less and less about what a few may say. It will help if you'll remind yourself that when they criticize you, they simply want you to be as miserable as they are. Since they cannot give themselves permission, who do you think you are to get away with it? If you keep that maverick thought in mind, it'll help you soar like an eagle instead of standing around with all the turkeys....find yourself on your deathbed surrounded by regrets. God, in grace, has purchased you from bondage. Christ has literally set you free. The Spirit of the Lord has provided long awaited liberty—and the indwelling power to go with it. Achievement waits like a new morning, just over that hill where the sun comes up. ([Start Where You Are : Catch a Fresh Vision for Your Life](#))

**To please** (700)(**aresko** from **airo** = thru idea of raising up, elevating or exciting emotion) originally meant to make peace, to reconcile someone, to be well disposed to someone. It later came to mean to be satisfied with, to take pleasure in and then to take a pleasant attitude toward someone. In short it means to cause someone to be pleased with someone or something or to be pleasing to or acceptable to. **Aresko** can mean to strive to please to accommodate one's self to the opinions desires and interests of others and that is the sense here in Galatians 1:10.

**De Haan** - Paul asks them, Do you think I am trying to please men or God? I could avoid all this persecution if I, like you, would bring a popular message of works and merit and righteousness, but I would prove myself to be a false teacher. Paul had received his message direct from Heaven, and knew he was right. It was a new message, not fully set forth until now. ([Studies in Galatians](#))

**Martin Luther** - With the same vehemence Paul continues: "You Galatians ought to be able to tell from my preaching and from the many afflictions which I have endured, whether I serve men or God. Everybody can see that my preaching has stirred up persecution against me everywhere, and has earned for me the cruel hatred of my own people, in fact the hatred of all men. This should convince you that by my preaching I do not seek the favor and praise of men, but the glory of God." ([Galatians 1 Commentary](#))

**Men or God?** - The answer of course is God is the One Paul was striving to please. How can fallen man be pleasing to a Holy God? This is something that can only be done as one relies on the enabling power of the Holy Spirit, for "those who are in the flesh (NOT BORN AGAIN) cannot please God." (Ro 8:8+) "However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him." (Ro 8:9+).

**THOUGHT** - Are you relying on your strength to please God or have you come to the point where you recognize the futility of the flesh to do **ANYTHING** pleasing to God and begun to rely wholly on the Holy Spirit? Paul had learned this secret through easy times and hard times. Have you learned Paul's secret?

Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am.12 ) I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. 13 I can do (present tense = continually) all things (Paul's responsibility as well as each believer's responsibility) through Christ Who **strengthens** (God's provision - endunamoo in present tense = CONTINUALLY infuses with dunamis, dynamic power, supernatural power, His power via His Spirit in) me. (Php 4:11, 12+, Php 4:13+)

**Wiersbe** gives us a great **illustration** - When **Verdi** produced his first opera in Florence, the composer stood by himself in the shadows and kept his eye on the face of one man in the audience-the great **Rossini**. It mattered not to Verdi whether the people in the hall were cheering him or jeering him; all he wanted was a smile of approval from the master musician. So it was with Paul. He knew what it was to suffer for the Gospel, but the approval or disapproval of men did not move him. "Therefore also we have as our ambition... to be pleasing to Him" (2 Co 5:9). Paul wanted the approval of Christ. The servant of God is constantly tempted to compromise in order to attract and please men (ED: DON'T DENY THIS TEMPTATION DEAR READER - WE ARE ALL PRONE TO IT'S SNARE!). When D. L. Moody was preaching in England, a worker came to him on the platform and told him that a very important nobleman had come into the hall. "May the meeting be a blessing to him!" was Moody's reply, and he preached just as before, without trying to impress anybody. Paul was not a politician; he was an ambassador. His task was not to "play politics" but to proclaim a message. These Judaizers, on the other hand, were cowardly compromisers who mixed Law and grace, hoping to please both Jews and Gentiles, but never asking whether or not they were pleasing God. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**Barker & Kohlenberger** say "The choice of the word **servant**" (lit., "slave") is interesting because this letter is about freedom. It is an early indication of the paradoxical teaching that real freedom is to be found in bondage—bondage to Christ.

**Leon Morris** on bond-servant - It is unfortunate that . . . our English translations should so consistently fail to give this word(doulos) its true meaning, thereby encouraging the false conception of Christian 'service' (as something essentially voluntary and part-time) so characteristic of modern religious idealism. The 'bond-servant of Christ' is not free to offer or withhold his 'service'; his life is not his own, but belongs entirely to his Lord." ([Galatians: Paul's Charter of Christian Freedom](#))

**Bondservant of Christ** - One description is a man or woman who seeks to please the Master in all things (See Eph 6:6+, Titus 2:9+; Col 3:22+). When we submit to Christ as Master, we may not (probably will not) be popular with men, a fact Paul knew all too well, for immediately after entering the bond service of Christ, his former friends took counsel to kill him (Acts 9:23+), and persecution for the sake of Christ had not ceased even as he wrote this epistle (Read Gal 5:11+). Beloved, if we truly yield to Him as Master, we can expect similar treatment! Paul preached the genuine Gospel, the "real thing," which did not curry people's favor nor please their **fallen flesh**, but instead brought him great suffering. In marked contrast, his opponents' false (man pleasing) pseudo "gospel" helped them avoid suffering!

**THOUGHT** - This begs several questions - "Have I been "persecuted" for the message my life and lips preach? Is my Gospel the same as Paul's Gospel? Am I seeking to please fallen men on earth or my exalted Father Who is in Heaven?"

**Bond-servant** (1401)(*doulos* from *deo* = to bind) is an individual bound to another in servitude. **Doulos** conveys the idea of the slave's close, binding ties with his master, belonging to him, obligated to him, desiring to do his will and in a permanent relation of servitude. In sum, the **will of the *doulos*** is consumed in the **will of the master**. Indeed, a bond-servant is one who surrendered wholly to another's will and thus devoted to another to the disregard of his own interest. Paul was not his own but had been bought with the price of the blood of Christ (cf 1Cor 6:19+, 1Cor 6:20+). He was now and forever the property of our Lord (= *kurios* which also means "Master") Jesus Christ and was His slave exclusively. No man can serve two masters (Mt 6:24+). Paul (as have all of believers before regeneration) had been a slave to the harsh task master, "**King Sin**" (who desires to reign and gives orders to "lust" cf Ro 6:11, 12, 13, 14+ - see note on "**the Sin**") by their birth into Adam's likeness (Ro 5:12NLT+), but now they are slaves of Christ by their new birth. They have no will of their own, no business of their own, no time of their own and are acting for their Master, Christ; dependent upon Him and obedient to Him. Does that describe you dear saint?

**Somerville writes** - The **success syndrome** says that you must achieve your own goals; you must achieve the approval of men. God says we must choose to seek to please Him. Rather than seeking to be a man pleaser, I need to be like Paul, who did not seek the favor of men but God. (The Journal of Modern Ministry, Volume 2, Issue 2, Spring 2005)

**William Barclay** regarding a **bond-servant of Christ** - What is in his mind is this—the slave was branded with his master's name and sign stamped on him with a red-hot branding iron. Paul bore on his body the marks of his campaigns, the marks of his sufferings, the brand of the slavery of Christ (Galatians 6:17+). "If," he said, "I were out to curry favour with men would I have these scars on me? If all I wanted was to stand well with men would I have these marks on my body?" The very fact that he was marked as he was the final proof that his one aim was to serve Christ and not to please men. ([Galatians 1 Commentary](#))

**Hansen** writes "True servants of Christ will not win popularity contests with people who "gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear" (2 Tim 4:3+). But even when they are unpopular, true servants of Christ are marked by unswerving loyalty to Christ. We can still hear the clear gospel message today because courageous men and women suffered greatly for their uncompromising defense of it in years past. They resisted immense pressure to renounce their faith in Christ, and they boldly declared, as Martin Luther did, "**Here I stand. I can do no other. God help me.**" ([Galatians 1 Commentary](#))

**Swindoll** - "The Conviction: Nonconformity of the Christian Upheld -

**A.** Those who seek to please only God become invincible within. When we serve the Lord diligently, our minds and hearts will not wander or become victimized by spiritual counterfeits. Our souls will become like steel, firmly cemented in the foundation of the Christian gospel. How solid is your foundation? Is it reinforced with a commitment of steel, bent on pleasing God only? Can it withstand the weight of counterfeits? Or does it crumble under pressure? If so, maybe you need to take an engineer's look at your life to determine whether pleasing God is truly an undergirding motivation (2 Cor. 5:9+).

**B.** Those who stop striving to please people are not intimidated by them.

There will always be those who try to lead us astray. But if our lives are centered on pleasing God rather than people, we will be able to stand strong when the lures come our way. Are you able to look intimidation in the face and stare it down?...

**C.** Those who are true servants of Christ think and act independently." (Quote from Paul Apple)

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**Sidlow Baxter** - Look, then, through the first two chapters of Galatians—the part where we have personal narrative. Why does Paul give this account of his movements? The usual idea is that he is here defending his apostleship: but if we are to be strictly exact, that rather misses the real purpose here. Read the chapters carefully again: Paul is here proving the genuineness, the authenticity of the Gospel which he preached. He begins by saying that his apostleship was neither from nor through man, but of God (Gal 1:1). His Gospel was "not after men," for he had neither received it nor been taught it of men—it had come by direct Divine revelation (Gal 1:11, 12). And after he had received this direct revelation and commission he had "conferred not with flesh and blood" (Gal 1:16). He certainly could not have got his Gospel second-hand from the other apostles (as his detractors were apparently alleging), for he had not gone up to Jerusalem at that time to see them (Gal 1:17); and even when later, after the expiry of three years, he had gone up on a short visit, he had seen only Peter and James (Gal 1:19). And, even after that, he had remained still unknown by face to the churches in Judæa (Gal 1:22, 23). **So there can be no doubt as to Paul's purpose here. It is to show that the Gospel which he preached was genuine as to its origin.** ([Explore the Book](#))

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**MacArthur** says: One of the primary objectives of the Judaizers who were stirring up so much controversy and confusion in the Galatian churches was to discredit Paul's apostolic authority. They knew they could not successfully undermine his teaching of God's gracious gospel until they undermined his divine authority in the eyes of the church members. In order to accomplish that end, they spread the idea that Paul was not a legitimate apostle but was self appointed and that his motivation was to elevate himself and build up a personal following. They accused him of putting aside the Mosaic ceremonies, standards, and practices in order to make the gospel more appealing to Gentiles by removing its Jewish associations. He also made the gospel easier for Jews to accept, they argued, because he removed the demanding requirements of traditional Judaism to which all loyal Jews subscribed. ([MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Galatians](#))

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**Ironside** says: The apostle Paul in this section is obliged to defend his apostleship. There is something pitiable about that. He had come to these Galatians when they were heathen, when they were idolaters, and had been God's messenger to them. Through him they had been brought to the Lord Jesus Christ. But they had fallen under the influence of false teachers, and now looked down upon the man who had led them to Christ; they despised his ministry and felt they were far better informed than he. This is not the only time in the history of the Church that such things have happened. Often we see young converts happy and radiant in the knowledge of sins forgiven, until under the influence of false teachers they look with contempt upon those who presented the gospel to them. ([Galatians 1 Commentary](#))

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**C Norman Bartlett** says: Paul is saying in effect that, while in the past, before he knew Jesus, he may have trimmed his sails to the breeze of popular acclaim, he now has but one aim in life, and this is to please Christ to whom he owes complete and undivided allegiance. We who bear the name of Jesus need to learn that the surest way to lose the favor of the Lord is to seek the favor of the world. Whom we seek to please shows who pleases us. The more Christ pleases, the more earnestly shall we seek to please Him in all we say and do and think: **"Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father."** (Col. 3:17). The deeper and sweeter our communion with Jesus, the more repellent is any suggestion of compromise with sin or conformity to a world that is at enmity with God. **"If I pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ: Men will never be transformed by the gospel that is cut to the style of the time or the tastes of the crowd. Steer clear of a diluted gospel that flatters rather than flattens the pride of men. Souls that want to be flattered need to be flattened. Let us not think to advance the cause of Christ by whittling down the truth. When tempted to tone down our message to the whims of men, let us tune up our message to the Word of Christ."** ([Galatians 1:1-10 - Historical Background of the Epistle](#))

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**Bickel & Jantz** - After laying his cards on the table—the Galatians have been deceived by false teachers, causing them to follow a perverted gospel of works—Paul begins to make his case for the true gospel of grace. Beginning in this section, and continuing through the end of Galatians 2, Paul lays out the first two or three proofs for the true gospel: Paul has apostolic authority, and the gospel he preached to the Galatians was not from man but from God. To do this, he gives a synopsis of his own conversion story, reminding his readers that he was an intense persecutor of the Christian church before God saved and called him through a special revelation of Jesus Christ. Paul then gives a chronology of the years after his conversion and call, making it clear that he didn't have contact with the Jerusalem church and its leaders for the first three years of his Christian life. He wants to make sure his Galatian readers know that his authority came directly from Jesus. The dramatic story of Paul's conversion is not meant to be a template for your own conversion experience. Most Christians can't claim a special revelation from Christ as Paul did. But like Paul, you have a unique and God-given mission in life, and it's something God planned for you long ago. ([Galatians: Walking in God's Grace](#))

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**WHAT OTHERS THINK** - Am I trying to please man? (GALATIANS 1:10) - Often we don't enjoy our freedom in Christ because we're afraid of what others will think. We do or don't do certain things because of a fear that we'll be judged by others. But standing firm in our freedom in Christ means resisting that fear. In Galatians, Paul wrote, "Am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ" (Galatians 1:10). I had to learn this lesson the hard way. Surprisingly soon after the death of my first wife, God brought into my life another godly lady—a single woman who had been a family friend for many years. As our friendship deepened into a romantic relationship, I became concerned about what people would think. I knew I would be violating the culturally accepted maxim of "don't make any major decisions the first year." I also sensed an inner compulsion in my spirit, which I felt was from God, to move ahead. My journal during those days records numerous times when I struggled with God over this issue. One day I wrote, "I wonder if God is pushing me along faster in this relationship than I want to go because of fear of what people will think." I'd put God in the box of our culturally accepted norm. Surely He wouldn't do anything in my life that would be unacceptable to my friends. God was actually doing a wonderful thing, but instead of fully enjoying His work of grace, I was struggling with Him because of what people might think. If you're going to experience the joy of your freedom in Christ, you have to decide whether you'll please God or people. (Jerry Bridges - Holiness Day by Day: Transformational Thoughts for Your Spiritual Journey)

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**Francis Lyall** - Be that as it may, it is nonetheless clear that for Paul, "the slave of Christ," all his goods, time, ambitions, and purposes were subject to the determination of Christ. Paul was no different from the ordinary slave: he was at his Master's disposal. He was also only at his Master's disposal. Just as a man can serve only one master (Matt. 6:24; Luke 16:13), so he was responsible only to his Master (Rom. 14:4)—a liberating thought for those dogged by the opinions of others. (Slaves, Citizens, Sons: Legal Metaphors in the Epistles)

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**The Mouth of Gold** - His name was John of Antioch, but history knows him as Chrysostom, a word which means "Mouth of Gold." His sermons in the fourth century are among the most eloquent in the history of the church. He was the Billy Graham of his day, combining careful exegesis of Scripture with incisive moral application to everyday life. His popular sermons were taken down in shorthand as he preached them and have been preserved through the centuries, making him the most quoted of the church's ancient preachers. But Chrysostom often found himself in the crosshairs of Roman rulers who resented his powerful and unflinching message. In such times, he kept Galatians 1:10 close to his heart. His archenemy was the Empress Eudoxia. Furious over Chrysostom's attacks on sin, she determined to rid Constantinople of him. He countered by preaching a blistering sermon about Elijah and Jezebel with obvious overtones. Eudoxia struck back and Chrysostom found himself deposed and shipped into exile. But the people of Constantinople rioted, angrily insisting on the preacher's return. At the same time an earthquake shook the city. Eudoxia, trembling, admitted defeat, and Chrysostom returned in triumph. He later expressed his feelings in these words: "When I was driven from the city, I felt no anxiety, but said to myself: If the empress wishes to banish me, let her do so. The earth is the Lord's. If she wants to have me sawn asunder, I have Isaiah for an example. If she wants me to be drowned in the ocean, I think of Jonah. If I am to be thrown into the fire, the three men in the furnace suffered the same. If cast before wild beasts, I remember Daniel in the lions' den. If she wants me to be stoned, I have before me Stephen, the first martyr. If she demands my head, let her do so; John the Baptist shines before me. Paul reminds me, "If I still pleased men, I would not be the servant of Christ.'"

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**Our Daily Bread** - At one point in his ministry, English evangelist George Whitefield (1714-1770) received a vicious letter accusing him of wrongdoing. His reply was brief and courteous: "I thank you heartily for your letter. As for what you and my other enemies are saying against me, I know worse things about myself than you will ever say about me. With love in Christ, George Whitefield." He didn't try to defend himself. He was much more concerned about pleasing the Lord. Such an attitude prevailed in the life of the apostle Paul. He said, "For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ" (Gal. 1:10). He also prayed that the Colossian believers would be "fully pleasing" to God (Col. 1:10). If we are faithfully serving Christ, we don't need to waste time defending ourselves when harsh, hurtful, and untrue things are said about us. We can take comfort in knowing that we are walking "worthy of the Lord" (Col. 1:10).

**What God knows about us is more important  
than what people say about us.**

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**TODAY IN THE WORD** - Since it was selected for Oprah's Book Club, New-Age spiritual leader Eckhart Tolle's book, *A New Earth: Awakening to Your Life's Purpose*, has sold over 3.5 million copies. When Tolle and Oprah launched a series of "webinars," over two million people participated. Tolle preaches a message that many people want to hear. According to Tolle, our basic problem is living out of our "false" self, which is ego-centered. Overcoming our false self involves discovering our "oneness" with God, who is everywhere and in everyone. Thus finding God and finding our true self is essentially the same thing, because God is in us, just as He is in everyone. It's easy to see why Tolle's message is so successful: the hard truth about sin and judgment is nowhere to be found. The situation wasn't much different in Paul's day. There were plenty of traveling philosophers who went from town to town preaching whatever people wanted to hear and often making good money by doing so. Speakers were considered to be good if they could persuade, not necessarily if they told the truth. Such individuals often used clever-sounding arguments or trickery, but when their deception was discovered, they frequently had to leave town quickly. Apparently, some in Thessalonica were accusing Paul of doing the same thing. They may have noted that Paul had to flee Philippi just as he had left Thessalonica. This probably explains why Paul defends himself and his ministry at several points in 1 Thessalonians, including today's passage.

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**John Phillips** - Paul reminds us of John Knox, Scotland's fearless voice. Mary, Queen of Scots, was more afraid of John Knox than of all of the armies of England. At one time in his stormy career, Knox was a galley slave, chained to an oar and under the interdiction of the court. The galleon was served by a Roman Catholic priest who came to where the prisoners were toiling at the oars and brought with him an image of the Virgin Mary. He presented the image to each of the galley slaves in turn, demanding that they, the blasphemous heretics, kiss the "Mother of God." At length, he came to John Knox. The bold preacher took the image from the priest. "Mother?" he cried, "Mother of God? This is nothing but a piece of painted wood, more fit for swimming, I think!" And before the horrified priest could stop him, he threw it overboard! Was John Knox seeking to please men? Of course not! Neither was Paul. He loved men. He gave himself wholeheartedly and unreservedly to try to win men. But compromise his message? Never! ([Exploring Galatians: An Expository Commentary](#))

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**Henry Blackaby - Pleasing God, Pleasing Others.**—Galatians 1:10 - At times you will have to make a choice between pleasing God and pleasing those around you, for God's ways are not man's ways (Isa. 55:8–9). As important as it is to strive for good relations with others, it is even more important to maintain a steadfast and obedient relationship with Christ. Disobeying God to keep peace with other people is never wise. Peace with God is always paramount. Jesus warned that obeying Him might cause division in your relationships (Matt. 10:35–36). If Paul's primary goal had been to please others, he would never have become an apostle of Jesus Christ. Paul went completely against the wishes of his colleagues in order to obey Christ. At times, obedience to God sets family members at odds with each other (Matt. 10:35–36). When you follow Jesus' Lordship, your family may misunderstand, or even oppose you, yet your obedience to God reflects your identity as His child. Jesus said that those who obey His will are His brothers and sisters (Luke 8:21). God does not intend to divide the home, but He places obedience before domestic harmony. It is important to get alone in quietness with God so that you understand what pleases Him. The world's thinking will mislead you more easily when you are not clear about what God desires. It broke Peter's heart to know that the opinion of a servant girl had mattered more to him than the approval of his Lord! If the desire to appease others tempts you to compromise what you know God wants you to do, learn from Peter's mistake. Determine that you will please your Lord regardless of the opinions of others. (Experiencing God Day by Day)

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**James Scudder - Living Water - Devotional - Dressing Up Sin - Galatians 1:10** - A man in a beat-up Volkswagen once scraped the side of a brand-new Porsche as he got out of his car at a parking lot. Noticing several people watching, he quickly took out a piece of paper and pen and began writing a note. When he was done, he placed it on the windshield. Do you know what it said, "The people watching think that I'm writing down my name and address, but I'm really not." How many times are we more concerned with our image than with our character? We live in an age shaped by opinion polls and surveys rather than by principle. The president, before making a tough decision, calls in his advisors and asks, "What will the media say? How will the people react?" Business leaders weigh their decisions by their effect on the bottom line. There's an old saying, "Be good and you'll look good." I think that is very true. Sometimes we work so hard on the impression we're giving but ignore our real spiritual needs inside. It is important to have a good testimony, but more important to have genuine Christian character. Even if you're the best at putting on a show, the real you is eventually revealed. People and polls are not our final authority. Our main objective is to please God. When we do that, our image will not only be good, but also genuine.

Character is what you are in the dark.

-D. L. Moody

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**Galatians 1:11 For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man**

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Amplified - For I want you to know, brethren, that the Gospel which was proclaimed and made known by me is not man's gospel [a human invention, according to or patterned after any human standard].

Wuest - For I make known to you, brethren, the message which was announced as good news by me, that it is not as to its nature, human. ([Eerdmans Publishing](#))

NET Galatians 1:11 Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel I preached is not of human origin.

GNT Galatians 1:11 Γνωρ ζω γ ρ μ ν, δελφο, τ ε αγγ λιον τ ε αγγελισθ ν π μο τι ο κ στιν κατ νθρωπων.

NLT Galatians 1:11 Dear brothers and sisters, I want you to understand that the gospel message I preach is not based on mere human reasoning.

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

ESV Galatians 1:11 For I would have you know, brothers, that the gospel that was preached by me is not man's gospel.

ASV Galatians 1:11 For I make known to you, brethren, as touching the gospel which was preached by me, that it is not after man.

CSB Galatians 1:11 Now I want you to know, brothers, that the gospel preached by me is not based on human thought.

NIV Galatians 1:11 I want you to know, brothers, that the gospel I preached is not something that man made up.

NKJ Galatians 1:11 But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man.

NRS Galatians 1:11 For I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel that was proclaimed by me is not of human origin;

YLT Galatians 1:11 And I make known to you, brethren, the good news that were proclaimed by me, that it is not according to man,

NAB Galatians 1:11 Now I want you to know, brothers, that the gospel preached by me is not of human origin.

NJB Galatians 1:11 Now I want to make it quite clear to you, brothers, about the gospel that was preached by me, that it was no human message.

GWN Galatians 1:11 I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the Good News I have spread is not a human message.

BBE Galatians 1:11 Because I say to you, my brothers, that the good news of which I was the preacher is not man's.

- **that:** Gal 1:1 1Co 2:9,10, 1Cor 11:23 1Cor 15:1-3 Eph 3:3-8
- Galatians 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [John Brown's exposition of Gal 1:11](#)
- [John Eadie's exposition of Gal 1:11](#)

## PAUL THE CPA "Certified Public Apostle"

In verse 10 the MOTIVATION for Paul's ministry is: "[He is] a bondsman of Christ." The MESSAGE which he preaches according to verse 11 was: NEGATIVELY—"NOT AFTER MAN." Now in verses 11 & 12 he deals with the MESSAGE which he preaches—How he got his "MESSAGE." (Anderson)

As **McGee** says "We come now to a new section that deals with the apostle Paul personally -- his experience in Arabia, his experience with the apostles in Jerusalem, and his experience in Antioch with Peter. This will take us through the first half of chapter 2." ([Galatians 1 Thru the Bible](#))

**Howard Vos** - Paul now moves into the next major section of the epistle, in which he defends his right to preach the gospel of grace and Christian liberty. He must clearly vindicate his apostleship before he can vindicate his message. Immediately he is on the defensive. ([Galatians- Everyman's Bible Commentary: A Call to Christian Liberty](#))

**Donald Campbell** adds "Paul then took up in more detail the challenge to his authority as an apostle. Was he a self-appointed impostor? Arguing autobiographically, Paul declared that (a) he was an apostle before he met the other apostles; (b) when he did meet them he was received as an equal; (c) and he even found it necessary to rebuke Peter, the reputed chief apostle." ([The Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

**For** - Paul continues his explanation of his credentials as an apostle.

**For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man-** The KJV has "I certify you." The idea of this passage is "Let me make this perfectly clear." He wants to leave no doubt that the Gospel he preached to them had not come from men but from God, and as such had absolutely no admixture of human wisdom! It had no taint of man's works or efforts playing any part in the righteousness God provided.

**To certify** (KJV) - to attest authoritatively: to confirm or attest as being true or as represented or as meeting a standard. To guarantee that the required standards have been met. "I certify to you with certainty" In other words, a certified statement of facts is about to follow.

**Bartlett** says: "**Certified**" is a word of magic potency. We buy with confidence food and drug products bearing this label. There are times when, as in the purchase of a home, for example, an ordinary check will not be accepted in payment; it must be certified. And yet how easily men and women who pride themselves upon their shrewdness in business matters are taken in by all sorts of fantastic isms and vagaries in the realm of religion. With eternal destiny hanging in the balance, it is assuredly the most arrant folly to accept a so-called gospel which is not divinely accredited. ([Galatians 1:11-24 - Personal Explanation](#))

**Have you know** (1107) ([gnorizo](#)) means make known with certainty, to certify, thus the KJV = "I certify". **Gnorizo** was used to

introduce matters of great importance (1Cor 12:3; 15:1; 2Cor 8:1) Paul is defending his authority as an apostle and the authenticity of his message and so he uses this emphatic word so as to leave no doubt in his hearers that what follows is "gospel truth," so to speak! In context, **gnorizo** also conveys the sense of reminding the Galatians of truths regarding which they had already become convinced.

**R A Cole** - What follows is a declaration of more than usual solemnity. Paul has a variety of ways with which he introduces such 'statements at law'; this is one of them. Once again, it is noteworthy that the apostle does not try to defend some theological position; he simply appeals to the sort of gospel which they, as well as he, know to have been preached in Galatia with well-remembered results. (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries)

**Spurgeon** — Paul foresaw what would be said about him in the after ages; and truly, to this day, the fiercest attack upon Christianity is always made upon the teaching of the apostle Paul. The men who creep in unawares among us talk glibly about having great reverence for Christ, but none for Paul. Yet Paul is Christ's apostle; Paul speaks only what was personally revealed to him by the Lord himself; and he is in everything to be accepted as speaking by divine revelation. ([Spurgeon's Exposition](#))

**Lehman Strauss** - His opponents argued that Paul was not of the original twelve who met with the risen Christ before His ascension, therefore he could not possibly be one of Christ's true apostles. It is the old satanic method of discrediting the man. The devil used this same approach against Job (Job 1:9).

**Brethren** ([adelphos](#)) means literally from the same womb. Adelfhos (here in the plural) is a reminder that they were members of the same family, Paul's brethren, who are in Christ with the same Father (1Jn 3:1+). KJV Bible Commentary adds that "They (Galatian believers) are deceived, disturbed, and defecting in their devotion and duty to Christ. But they are still regarded as **brethren**, brethren needing Paul's Spirit-inspired counsel."

## THE TRUE SOURCE OF THE GOSPEL

**The Gospel which was preached** ([euaggelizo/euangelizo](#)) **by me** (Literally, "the gospel gosselled by me") - "Paul uses the word "gospel" of two closely allied but quite distinct things, **a**, of the facts of the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, as in 1 Corinthians 15:1–3+; **b**, of the interpretation of these facts, as in Gal 1:8; 2:2, and here, cp. "my gospel" in Romans 2:16, et al. In **a** the gospel is viewed historically, in **b** doctrinally. Not the facts but the interpretation of them was in dispute among the Galatians. Hence **b** is the meaning here."

**Leon Morris** - Paul makes a play on words when he refers to 'the gospel that I gosselled to you.' ([Galatians: Paul's Charter of Christian Freedom](#))

**Is not according to man** - Note that "is" is in the [present tense](#) which "shows the permanence and unchangeableness of his gospel of grace." (Wuest) **Amplified** has "is not man's gospel [a human invention, according to or patterned after any human standard]."; "It rests on no human foundation" - **Barclay**; "something that man made up." **NIV** - The Greek word for "**not**" is "ou," the strongest adverb to negate an allegation. Paul is seeking to "set the record straight!" The gospel I preach is ABSOLUTELY NOT "man-made." "I did not invent it or alter it!" It is not according to a human standard and is not even in harmony with ideas of men! Human wisdom would not come with such a message. By implication, this message is completely divine in origin, and as such it counters all theories of salvation contrived by the fleshly wisdom of fallen men (who in some form always add works as a means of attaining salvation; i.e., a works based righteousness, a "religion" instead of a "relationship.") "Both his mission and his message are independent of man, both received by direct divine revelation." (KJV Bible Commentary)

"Not after a human standard and so he does not try to conform to the human ideal. Paul alone (1Cor 3:3; 9:8; 15:32; Ro 3:15) in the NT uses this old and common idiom." (A T Robertson [Galatians 1 Commentary - Word Pictures in the NT](#))

Paul received the DIVINE REVELATION through INSPIRATION.

Paul is dominated by a Gospel that is God and grace centered.

Man is dominated by a "Gospel" that is man and works centered.

**Max Anders** - The Judaizers knew that if they could undermine Paul's apostolic authority they could defeat his message of liberty. So Paul now defends his apostleship and message. The Judaizers said Paul perverted the gospel by omitting the Law of Moses; in reality, the Judaizers perverted the gospel by adding legalism. Paul now presents the first reason the Galatians should listen to him and not the false teachers: the gospel is not man-made (compare Gal 1:1+). No human mind apart from God's revelation would dream up a plan of salvation wholly dependent on God's grace and the death of his Son. (HNTC- Galatians)

**MacArthur** - The gospel Paul preached was not human in origin or it would have been like all other human religion, permeated with

works righteousness born of man's pride and Satan's deception...Man's sinful pride is offended by the idea that only God's mercy and grace can save him from sin, and he therefore insists on having a part in his own salvation. The very fact that Paul preached a message of salvation in which works play absolutely no part was itself evidence that his message was from God and **not...man**. ([MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Galatians](#))

**John Piper** - The point of Galatians 1:11–24 is to argue that Paul was not a second-hander. He was not a Johnny-come-lately to the apostolic band. He argues that there is enough public information about his life before and after his encounter with the living Christ that no one can reasonably assert that he is a second-hander. He makes a persuasive case (as we saw last week) that his apostleship and his gospel came to him independently from the Jerusalem apostles, and that he stands on an equal footing before Christ with Peter, James, and John. ([This Is Not Man's Gospel](#))

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**Religion Or Relationship?** - Two kinds of religion exist in our world: Religion A and Religion B. The first is “faith” in name only (2 Tim. 3:5). It's the outward practice of Christianity without genuine faith in the living Lord.

Religion B, on the other hand, is a life-transforming, destiny-changing experience. It's a definite commitment to the crucified and risen Savior, which establishes an ongoing personal relationship between a forgiven sinner and a gracious God.

This difference explains why for many years British author C. S. Lewis had such great difficulty in becoming a Christian. Religion A had blinded him to Religion B. According to his brother Warren, his conversion was “no sudden plunge into a new life, but rather a slow, steady convalescence from a deep-seated spiritual illness—an illness that had its origins in our childhood, in the dry husks of religion offered by the semi-political churchgoing of Ulster, and the similar dull emptiness of compulsory church during our school days.”

Are you bogged down in the empty ritual of Religion A? If so, you must receive Jesus as your Lord and Savior. Then make sure your relationship with Christ is growing deeper and more vital every day.— by Vernon C. Grounds ([Our Daily Bread](#))

You only are true life—  
To know You is to live  
The more abundant life  
That earth can never give.  
—Clarkson

**You can have tons of religion  
without one ounce of salvation!**

**Galatians 1:12 For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but [I received it] through a revelation of Jesus Christ**

Amplified - For indeed I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but [it came to me] through a [direct] revelation [given] by Jesus Christ (the Messiah).

Wuest - For, as for myself, neither did I receive it directly from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation given me by Jesus Christ. ([Eerdmans Publishing](#))

NET Galatians 1:12 For I did not receive it or learn it from any human source; instead I received it by a revelation of Jesus Christ.

GNT Galatians 1:12 ο δ γ ρ γ παρ νθρ που παρ λαβον ατ ο τε διδ χθην λλ δι ποκαλ ψεως ησο Χριστο .

NLT Galatians 1:12 I received my message from no human source, and no one taught me. Instead, I received it by direct revelation from Jesus Christ.

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

ESV Galatians 1:12 For I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

ASV Galatians 1:12 For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ.

CSB Galatians 1:12 For I did not receive it from a human source and I was not taught it, but it came by a revelation from Jesus Christ.

NIV Galatians 1:12 I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ.

NKJ Galatians 1:12 For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ.

NRS Galatians 1:12 for I did not receive it from a human source, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

YLT Galatians 1:12 for neither did I from man receive it, nor was I taught it, but through a revelation of Jesus Christ,

NAB Galatians 1:12 For I did not receive it from a human being, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

NJB Galatians 1:12 It was not from any human being that I received it, and I was not taught it, but it came to me through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

GWN Galatians 1:12 I didn't receive it from any person. I wasn't taught it, but Jesus Christ revealed it to me.

BBE Galatians 1:12 For I did not get it from man, and I was not given teaching in it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ.

- Galatians 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [John Brown's exposition of Gal 1:12](#)
- [John Eadie's exposition of Gal 1:12](#)

## **THE GOSPEL: RECEIVED NOT CONCEIVED!**

**For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but** / *received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ* - This verse is straightforward. Regarding the Gospel Paul preached, no man gave it to him or taught him, but it came from a direct "Coram Deo" (before the face of God) encounter.

I - This is the specific pronoun **ego** which adds **emphasis** (because a separate pronoun was not needed for the verb received which by itself is translated "I received.") ([More discussion by John Brown](#)) **Wuest** adds that "Paul uses the personal pronoun here to show that he is laying emphasis upon the special education he had received for his ministry of the gospel. He had not, like his converts, learnt it from human teachers (THEY HAD LEARNED IT FROM HIM), but by direct communion with God, as the Twelve had learnt it from Christ's teaching. Paul is studiously careful to show his independence of the **Twelve**....The entire tenor of this section indicates that Paul's commission had been declared inferior to that of the **Twelve**, and that he had this in view when he was defending his apostleship from the attacks of the Judaizers. ([Word Studies from the Greek New Testament](#))

**John Stott** - This is why Paul dared to call the gospel he preached **my gospel**' (cf. Ro 16:25). It was not 'his' because he had made it up but because it had been uniquely revealed to him. The magnitude of his claim is remarkable. He is affirming that **his message is not his message** but God's message, that **his gospel is not his gospel but God's gospel**, that **his words are not his words but God's words**.

**Neither (oude)...Nor (oute)** are the strongest Greek words for negating what follows. He **absolutely** denied reception from a man (e.g., he had heard Stephen's sermon in Acts 7) or teaching by a man. The gospel of Christ is not a gospel "**after man**."

**Harrison** comments on the contrasting "**but**" - Paul's repeated "but" carries the antithesis of a crisis experience. No trends here; no groping for something better. He knows himself taken out of the column of self-effort (Php 3:3) and flesh-confidence to the column of God's beneficiaries in the bestowment of His righteousness. It was a clear-cut break with OUR SIDE over to HIS SIDE.

**Comment:** As an aside, always take time to study the **terms of contrast** (but, yet, on the other hand) - Observe carefully and interrogate the text (interrogate with the 5W/H questions), asking questions like what the writer is contrasting? why now? how does it impact the flow of the argument? when does it occur? who is being contrasted? etc.

**Received** ([3880](#))(**paralambano**) speaks of communication received directly from another. - See other use of paralambano in Gal 1:9.

For this reason (Stop! Always ask "What reason?" which will force you to re-read preceding context) I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles-- if indeed you have heard of the stewardship (Paul was "appointed manager" over the Gospel and knew he would be held accountable one day by the "Owner", his Master, Jesus Christ! Talk about motivation!) of God's grace (**The Message of the Gospel of Grace**, the same one he had preached in Galatia) which was given to me for you; that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery (believing Jews and Gentiles would be equal heirs in the one body of Christ, the Church), as I wrote before in brief. (Eph 3:1-3)

**Vincent** notes that **from** is the preposition [para](#) which "emphasizes the idea of transmission, and marks the connection between giver and receiver. Cp. 1 Th 2:13; 4:1; 2 Ti 3:14; Acts 10:22."

**Taught** ([1321](#))(**didasko** from **dáo**= know or teach; English = didactic) means to provide instruction or information in a formal or informal setting. While the reception of specific teaching was the primary means most of the believers as well as the Christian teachers of Paul's day received the Gospel of Grace, such was NOT the case with Paul.

**John MacArthur** makes the excellent point that Paul's reception of the Gospel from Jesus was "in contrast to the Judaizers, who received their religious instruction from **rabbinic tradition**. **Most Jews did not study the actual Scriptures**; instead they used human interpretations of Scripture as their religious authority and guide. Many of their traditions not only were not taught in Scripture but also contradicted it (Mk 7:13). ([MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Galatians](#))

**Comment:** Dr MacArthur's preceding explanation begs the question, beloved student of God's Word -- Do I go directly to the Word of God to be taught Truth by the Holy Spirit, the Author of the Holy Word? If not, how can I honestly, accurately comment on the veracity of the commentaries? I am thankful you are reading these notes. I try to be as diligent as possible in rightly dividing the Word of Truth (because I have a strong fear of doing otherwise - all teachers read 2Ti 2:15-note, 2Cor 5:10-note, Jas 3:1+, Pr 30:6-note), but only the Word is inerrant and infallible (these note ARE NOT!). So be sure to perform your own **inductive study** of the Scriptures so that you can discern whether these or any other commentator's notes are an accurate **interpretation** of the inspired inerrant Word!

## **THE GOSPEL OF GRACE: NOT REASONING BUT REVELATION**

**But** ([alla](#)) is a strong term of contrast. Paul is clearly stating that the Gospel is not of human origin, but is a divine revelation, which is about as dramatic a contrast as he could have presented!

*I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ* - Note that "**I received it**" has been added to the NAS (and also by several other translations like ESV). Literally it reads "**but through a revelation of Jesus Christ** " **Through** is [dia](#) which is a preposition expressing the intermediate agent of an action, in this case the "intermediate agent" is Jesus Christ and the "action" is Paul's reception of the revelation. To reiterate, human beings had nothing to do with Paul's reception of the Gospel, even as they had nothing to do with his appointment as an apostle (Galatians 1:1+). So both his calling (apostle) and his message (Gospel) were from Heaven, not earth!

**Revelation** ([602](#))(**apokalupsis** from **apó** = from + **kalúpto** = cover, conceal, English = apocalypse) literally means "cover from" and so the idea is to remove that which conceals something. Apokalupsis conveys the idea of "taking the lid off," removing the cover and exposing to open view that which was heretofore not visible, known or disclosed. In all its uses, revelation refers to something or someone, once hidden, becoming visible and now made fully known. In this case it was the Gospel which had been a **mystery** to Paul until he had been regenerated and given specific revelation from Jesus, the Highest Authority! The gospel was not an invention, or a tradition, but a revelation. How then could the Galatians question his own authority and the authenticity of the Gospel he proclaimed?

**Vine** says Paul got "a direct communication of the mind of God."

**Wuest** - Revelation therefore is the act of God the Holy Spirit uncovering to the Bible writers truth incapable of being discovered by man's unaided reason, this revelation being accompanied by the imparted ability to understand what is uncovered. ([Wuest Word Studies - Eerdmans Publishing Company Volume 1, Volume 2, Volume 3](#) - used [by permission](#))

**Criswell:** "This message is a sermon on dogmatism, on finality, on authoritarianism, which is an unusual message to hear today in the midst of our studied broad-minded liberalism... The **revelation** of the Lord is not double-faced nor is it deceptively speculative. It is not as though we were selecting opinions. It is not as though we were in dilemmas choosing theories. It is not as though we were listening to blind, metaphysical gropings. The sound of the trumpet is clear in the Word of God. It is final. It is superlative, never

comparative. The authoritarianism of the Gospel! 'My brethren, though I or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than ye have heard, anathama 'Let him be accursed.' One faith, one Lord, one baptism, one God and Father for us all, one Book, one way -- just one!' (Quote from Paul Apple)

**Luther** says: This passage constitutes Paul's chief defense against the accusations of his opponents. He maintains under oath that he received his Gospel not from men, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. ([Galatians 1 Commentary](#))

**Of Jesus Christ** - That is to say **Jesus Christ** was the One who did the revealing of the Gospel to Paul (but see the technical note below). Paul attributes his Gospel to the highest authority possible, the Lord Jesus Christ. Yes, he had heard Stephen's great speech in Acts 7 and he had had contact with other believers like Ananias and Barnabas but he did not credit them with having revealed the Gospel to him.

TECHNICAL NOTE ON **OF JESUS CHRIST** - If it ("of Jesus Christ") is a subjective genitive, the meaning is "**a revelation from Jesus Christ**" but if objective genitive, it is "**a revelation about Jesus Christ**." Most likely this is objective since the explanation in Galatians 1:15–16 mentions God revealing the Son to Paul so that he might preach, although the idea of a direct revelation to Paul at some point cannot be ruled out. (NET Note)

**ADDENDUM** - I would add that it is notable that several translations are rendered in a way that favors this revelation coming **FROM** Jesus Christ, rather than being a revelation **ABOUT** Jesus Christ. (See these translations above - Amplified, Wuest, NLT, CSB, NIV). So we cannot be dogmatic and in a sense both "from" and "about" are true.

**Martin Luther** - "Paul did not receive instruction from Ananias. Paul had already been called, enlightened, and taught by Christ in the road. His contact with Ananias was merely a testimonial to the fact that Paul had been called by Christ to preach the gospel." ([Galatians 1 Commentary](#))

The question naturally arises when did Paul received this revelation from Jesus? Most commentators favor that the time of this revelation of the gospel of grace to Paul was during his sojourn in Arabia (Gal 1:17) which served to supplement his initial revelation on the Damascus Road (Acts 9:3-22+). Recall that in Gal 1:1 Paul had asserted the divine origin of his apostolic mission and now adds that his message was also of divine origin. Neither his mission nor his message had been from man, but both were from God! God also spoke to Paul at Corinth (Acts 18:9+), at Jerusalem (Acts 23:11+), and even in the instructions concerning the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:23).

**John Phillips** comments on **Paul's Damascus Road encounter with Jesus** "I am Jesus!" the voice had said (Acts 9:5+). His instant response had been to enthrone Him. "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 22:10+) He was already a saved man when he said that, saved and ready to serve his new found Lord to the end. It had all been of grace. The risen Jesus had extended unmerited favor to him, the chief of sinners. That was what had saved him! Grace and grace alone! In a flash, the light dawned. It was not **law**; it was **grace**. It was not **works**; it was simple **faith**. It was not **Moses**; it was **Christ**. It was not **Sinai**; it was **Calvary**. It was not to be **earned**; it was to be **received**. It was not **trying**; it was **trusting**. It was not by means of the **rules and rituals of religion**, however hedged about with both truth and tradition; it was by means of the **undeserved, undiluted, undying grace of God**. His gospel was received on the Damascus road "by the revelation of Jesus Christ." ([Exploring Galatians: An Expository Commentary](#))

**De Haan** says "How precious the song by the late Dr. James M. Gray, former president of the Moody Bible Institute. If it is not all of grace, then we are without a shred of hope or light for eternity.

Naught have I gotten but what I received;  
Grace hath bestowed it since I have believed;  
Boasting excluded, pride I abase;  
I'm only a sinner saved by grace!  
Suffer a sinner whose heart overflows,  
Loving his Saviour to tell what he knows;  
Once more to tell it would I embrace—  
I'm only a sinner saved by grace.

**Noel Due** - It came not through the agency of **man**, but through a revelation of **the Man**, Jesus Christ. We must allow the word '**revelation**' to have its full force. The gospel was not apprehended by Paul's intellect, or attained by his moral power. Rather it was a **revelation**, a sovereign work of God in unveiling the truth to him. ([Galatians Commentary](#))

**KJV Bible Commentary** on the phrase **of Jesus Christ** - This can mean either Christ is revealing or Christ is revealed; both interpretations make good sense....Christ revealed Himself to Paul. Christ was the subject, sum, and substance of that revelation



with the result that Paul became a new man with a new message to proclaim. Paul was not a man-made apostle. He received his commission and his message from Christ.

Puritan **John Brown** said that "Jesus Christ took him (Paul) under His own immediate tuition (instruction)."

**Ryken** - Not surprisingly, the religions that human beings invent always end up glorifying human beings. There is some law to keep, some teaching to follow, some ritual to perform, some penance to endure, or some state of consciousness to achieve that will bring salvation. One way or another, we can climb up to heaven and reach God. Christianity is different. What distinguishes it from other world religions is that it actually comes from God. The one true gospel is not man-made, which is why it gives all the glory to God. The good news of the cross and the empty tomb could come only from God because it is about what God has done to save us through Jesus Christ. It does not teach that we can reach up to heaven; it teaches that God has come down to earth. In Christ, God has entered human history and the human heart. ([Reformed Expository Commentary – Galatians](#))

**Irving Jensen** has an well done summary of the sometimes confusing Chronology of Paul's "autobiography" in Galatians and the parallel passages in Acts...

### Click Chronological Diagram to enlarge

**John MacArthur's** offers a caveat regarding **revelation** which is occasionally claimed by preachers and teachers in our day "It is one thing to claim direct revelation from God but another to prove it. Throughout the history of the church many people have falsely claimed such revelation, as many do today. But Paul was not content merely to make the claim. Nor did he expect his readers to believe him simply on the basis of personal assertions. In the next 12 verses (Gal 1:13-24), therefore, the apostle proceeds to substantiate his claim by presenting irrefutable evidence of that divine **revelation** and of his apostolic credentials. ([MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Galatians](#))

The writer of Hebrews substantiates that there is no need for new revelation...

God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, **in these last days has spoken to us in His Son**, Whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.(Hebrews 1:1-2+)

**Swindoll** - Paul asserted that Christ directly revealed redemptive truth to him (Gal. 1:11–12). Paul had instantaneous understanding of this imparted wisdom. (Understanding Christian theology)

**Don Anderson** - In SUMMARY of the Galatians 1:11-12 then, the Apostle Paul uses the NEGATIVE and the POSITIVE approach. NEGATIVELY—we can see THREE THINGS: 1. The message which he preached is "not after man," 2. "NEITHER DID [HE] RECEIVE IT FROM MAN," and 3. "NOR WAS [HE] TAUGHT IT [BY MAN]." From a POSITIVE point of view: "the message which was preached by [him is] . . . THROUGH A REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST." ([Notes](#))

In short Paul received his appointment as an **apostle** "through Jesus Christ and God the Father" (Galatians 1:1) and his **message** "through a revelation of Jesus Christ." (Galatians 1:12)

**John Bunyan** - A little from God is better than a great deal from men. What is from men is often tumbled over and over; things that we receive at God's hand come to us as things from the minting house. Old truths are always new to us if they come with the smell of heaven upon them.

If God has called you, do not spend time

Looking over your shoulder to see Who is following you.

—Corrie ten Boom

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**Norman Harrison** - The chief enemy of the Gospel is human nature. Man is proud. Especially is he proud of his own thinking. He does not want to be told what to do or believe! He dislikes having a supernatural revelation handed to him; it leaves to room for speculation. He likes to "discover truth"; then it is HIS truth, something he can be proud of.

Many of us who willingly acknowledge that man's MORAL nature is perverted by sin -- the evidence is incontrovertible -- still refuse to realize that man's MENTAL processes are likewise warped, biased and undependable because of sin. The Corinthians prided themselves on their thinking. Read 1 Corinthians 1-2 for God's estimate of human thinking that set aside divine wisdom, climaxing in a statement of man's utter incapacity for spiritual things: unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1Corinthians 2:14).

It is to be feared that the average preacher of our day is feeding his mind upon human thoughts; and, naturally, these mould his own

thinking and preaching, when the charge is, "Preach the Word."

I was in a metropolitan preachers' meeting when the visiting speaker, a popular pastor, advocated preachers reading a BOOK A DAY (preparation for book reviews). **Only a sense of courtesy restrained me from asking what he would advise as to habits of reading the Bible.**

On a transcontinental trip I was thrown in with a preacher who had just pocketed a call to a pulpit under the eaves of an outstandingly modern university. He had with him a case containing a dozen to a score of books. From them he was busy gleaning the latest "trends" of thought. Later I came to know his ministry. **His people testified that it lacked the Gospel. Human thought crowded it out.**

The reason men of our day repudiate Paul's theology and turn with preponderant emphasis to the teachings of Jesus is crystal clear. By ridding themselves of a supernatural interpretation of those teachings, climaxing in His death and resurrection -- an interpretation which is rigidly unsusceptible of alteration -- they leave themselves free to give their own interpretation. They are free to speculate as to what those "teachings of Jesus" SHOULD mean for "the modern mind."

What Christendom needs is a renewed fear of God's anathema upon all perversions of the pure Gospel. It seems that nothing but such fear will bring us back to its unadulterated purity. (Amen!)

And we, with our very best intentions, need to exercise great care lest our ministry be but Galatianizing our people, through exhorting them to a goodness of life which is not definitely the expression of an inliving Presence. ([Galatians 1:11, 12, 2:2 A Revelation versus a Reasoning](#))

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**TODAY IN THE WORD** - Towards the end of his second term, President George W. Bush set a record for the highest disapproval rating in the 70-year history of the Gallup poll. But in his recently published memoir, the former president resolutely affirms, "I had always done what I believed was right." Being popular and being principled don't always go hand-in-hand. The apostle Paul realized this in the context of his own ministry. To be faithful to the call of God and the truth of the gospel would make him wildly unpopular in most places. Early on, Paul had to settle in his mind the answer to these all-important questions: Whom am I trying to please? Whose approval do I seek? As a faithful minister of the gospel, his answer had to be Christ and Christ alone. He could not simultaneously seek the approval of people and of God. He had to surrender the desire to be liked, to be understood, and to be approved. This, as we'll see later in the letter, was not true of the false teachers.

Paul's ministry is accredited by the fact not only that he exclusively sought the approval of Christ, but also that he received a divine message and call. The gospel Paul preached is not of "human origin." That is to say, Paul hadn't learned the gospel secondhand from Peter or any other leaders of the early Christian church. He was not making it up to suit his own purposes, either. Paul received his commission directly from Jesus Christ, the crucified Messiah. His Damascus Road experience made him a true Apostle.

If the gospel Paul had received were of human origin, it would weaken his message and his authority. The gospel would be subject to human ratification or amendment. And it would put Paul under the authority of his teachers. But because Paul received the gospel directly from Jesus, the message was guaranteed to be true. As such, it would be protected. As well, Paul could claim a divine authority in his ministry.

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**TODAY IN THE WORD** - One of the great leaders of the Protestant movement in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Russia was [Ivan Prokhanov](#). His career in ministry was not unlike that of the apostle Paul. Ivan consciously followed Paul's "tent -making" example, earning a living as an engineer but using all of his remaining time to evangelize and teach. Like Paul, Ivan suffered persecution for his faith under both Czarist and Communist governments. And like Paul, Ivan's achievements were enormous, in areas including publishing, education, and even hymn-writing! As Paul reviews his career in ministry for the Galatians, he moves into a defense of his right to preach the gospel of grace and Christian liberty. He must clearly vindicate his apostleship before he can vindicate his message.

He has already made it clear that salvation is by grace alone and that one can enjoy true Christian liberty by the power of Christ alone. As was to be very clear from Paul's experience, preaching of that sort would not please men (Gal 1:10) and would not lead to an easy life. Paul insists that his presentation of the gospel is not "something that man made up" (Gal 1:11), nor does man give the gospel its authority. Furthermore, Paul did not receive his message from man--that is, he had not learned it from human teaching as his converts had. He obtained his message by direct revelation from Jesus Christ (Gal 1:12).

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**TODAY IN THE WORD** - "You may not run in the hall!" shouted the teacher. "Says who?" the defiant ninth-grader retorted. "Says the principal, and if you don't obey, you'll spend time in detention!" Challenge authority, and you'll face the consequences. We don't know exactly what was said by those to whom Paul is responding in this epistle, but it seems likely that they were challenging his

authority. We can imagine them saying something like, “Who gave Paul the authority to spread a gospel that extends salvation to Gentiles apart from obedience to the Law?” They might have added, “Isn’t Paul’s gospel just a compromise intended to please people by making salvation available without requiring them to follow the practices prescribed in the Law?”

Paul’s pointed response appeals to the highest authority—he is doing what he is doing and saying what he is saying because of his direct encounter with Jesus. His radical transformation in attitude and action (he changed from one who persecuted, to one who propagated the churches of Jesus) showed beyond doubt that his appeal to the authority of Christ was genuine and not a human fabrication (Gal 1:11–12, 20–23). In the end, his encounter with Jesus resulted in praising God (Gal 1:24), a sure mark that God was at work.

Paul’s appeal to Jesus is important not only because it helps him establish his authority, but also because it builds up the confidence of those who read his letter, both then and now. As Christians we are committed to the belief that God speaks in all of Scripture. We are committed to the authority and truth of what we now call the Old Testament. Yet a little reading in the Old Testament raises the issue of how Gentiles can be acceptable to God apart from obedience to the Law prescribed there.

**Galatians 1:13 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;**

Amplified - You have heard of my earlier career and former manner of life in the Jewish religion (Judaism), how I persecuted and abused the church of God furiously and extensively, and [with fanatical zeal did my best] to make havoc of it and destroy it.

Wuest - For you heard of my manner of life aforetime in Judaism, that beyond measure I kept on continually persecuting the Church of God and continually bringing destruction upon it, ([Eerdmans Publishing](#))

NET Galatians 1:13 For you have heard of my former way of life in Judaism, how I was savagely persecuting the church of God and trying to destroy it.

GNT Galatians 1:13 κο σατε γ ρ τ ν μ ν ναστροφ ν ποτε ν τ ουδαϊσμ , τι καθ περβολ ν δ ωκον τ ν κκλησ αν το θεο κα π ρθουν α τ ν,

NLT Galatians 1:13 You know what I was like when I followed the Jewish religion-- how I violently persecuted God's church. I did my best to destroy it.

KJV 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:

ESV Galatians 1:13 For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it.

ASV Galatians 1:13 For ye have heard of my manner of life in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and made havoc of it:

CSB Galatians 1:13 For you have heard about my former way of life in Judaism: I persecuted God's church to an extreme degree and tried to destroy it.

NIV Galatians 1:13 For you have heard of my previous way of life in Judaism, how intensely I persecuted the church of God and tried to destroy it.

NKJ Galatians 1:13 For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it.

NRS Galatians 1:13 You have heard, no doubt, of my earlier life in Judaism. I was violently persecuting the church of God and was trying to destroy it.

YLT Galatians 1:13 for ye did hear of my behaviour once in Judaism, that exceedingly I was persecuting the assembly of God, and wasting it,

NAB Galatians 1:13 For you heard of my former way of life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it,

NJB Galatians 1:13 You have surely heard how I lived in the past, within Judaism, and how there was simply no limit to the way I persecuted the Church of God in my attempts to destroy it;

GWN Galatians 1:13 You heard about the way I once lived when I followed the Jewish religion. You heard how I violently persecuted God's church and tried to destroy it.

BBE Galatians 1:13 For news has come to you of my way of life in the past in the Jews' religion, how I was cruel without measure to the church of God, and did great damage to it:

- **You have heard:** Ac 22:3-5 Acts 26:4,5
- **how** Ac 8:1,3 9:1,2,13,14,21,26 22:4,5 26:9-11 1Co 15:9 Php 3:6 1Ti 1:13)
- [John Brown's exposition of Gal 1:13](#)
- [John Eadie's exposition of Gal 1:13](#)
- Galatians 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## PRE-CONVERSION EVENTS IN PAUL'S LIFE - PART 1

**For (gar)** ([term of explanation](#)) - This "formally commences the historical proof."

**Don Anderson** summarizes it this way - Whereas we have witnessed: his MOTIVATION in Galatians 1:10, his MESSAGE in Galatians 1:11-12, now we consider his MANNER OF LIFE in Galatians 1:13 and following. ([Notes](#))

**Bickel & Jantz** note that "What Paul does next is a great example for the rest of us to follow. When someone questions the things we are saying about Jesus, we need to do what Paul does here and tell our story, specifically how Jesus converted us from our former life and called us to Himself. ([Galatians: Walking in God's Grace](#))

**J. C. Ryle** - There are no incurable cases under the gospel. Any sinner may be healed if he will only come to Christ.

**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** - Paul first reminds them of who he was before he met Jesus and believed His Gospel.

**THOUGHT** - If you are saved, you are a living, walking miracle, a manifestation of God's amazing grace. While most of us won't have quite as dramatic a testimony as Saul/Paul, nevertheless we do have a story to tell others. We are living illustrations of the power of the Gospel to transform a person. This begs the question -- have you ever told anyone your story of God's amazing Gospel grace? If not, you are missing the opportunity of a lifetime. Of course, they need to see it lived out, so that your changed life substantiates your new life in Christ. But the Gospel should not just be seen, but should be vocalized. Pray for opportunities to share your testimony. Will you be fearful? Most likely you will because every time I share my testimony I shudder to think of how it will be received. No one likes being rejected. But if they reject God's miracle in your life, ultimately they are not rejecting you but rejecting God. And so we need to pray for opportunities to share and for Holy Spirit enabled boldness to share. In the early church Luke records that "when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all **filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness**. (Acts 4:31+, cf Peter's fearfulness transformed to boldness when he was filled - Acts 2+, Acts 4:13+ where confidence = boldness; Acts 9:27+, Acts 13:46+, Acts 14:3+, Acts 18:26+, Acts 19:8+, and even the very last verse in Acts 28:31+ where "openness" = boldness - which I personally think was an answer to prayers by the saints - see Paul's request below to the Ephesians in his letter from prison) Now don't expect buildings to shake, but do expect that when the Spirit fills you, He will give you supernatural boldness. And remember that praying for boldness and asking others to pray for boldness for you is Biblical for that is exactly what Paul did asking the saints at Ephesus to "pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with **boldness** the mystery of the Gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; **that in proclaiming it I may speak boldly**, as I ought to speak." (Eph 6:19-20+). So we are in good company when we ask for boldness to speak the Gospel and give our testimony. But be careful when giving your testimony not to place too much emphasis on your life before Christ, being especially careful to avoid any potentially defiling details. The emphasis (and glory) should be focused on Christ and what He has done in our lives.

**Related Resource:** [My Personal Testimony of God's Grace](#)

When Paul gave his testimony, he included a short synopsis of his life before he was supernaturally transformed by the Gospel of Jesus Christ. And so **Dr Luke** records Paul's **pre-conversion testimony** before the Jews when he first taken into Roman custody in Jerusalem...

"I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city, educated under Gamaliel, strictly according to

the law of our fathers, being zealous for God, just as you all are today. 4 "And I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and putting both men and women into prisons, 5 as also the high priest and all the Council of the elders can testify. From them I also received letters to the brethren, and started off for Damascus in order to bring even those who were there to Jerusalem as prisoners to be punished. (Acts 22:3-5+)

"So then, I thought to myself that I had to do many things hostile to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. 10 "And this is just what I did in Jerusalem; not only did I lock up many of the saints in prisons, having received authority from the chief priests, but also when they were being put to death I cast my vote against them. 11 "And as I punished them often in all the synagogues, I tried to force them to blaspheme; and being furiously enraged at them, I kept pursuing them even to foreign cities. cp similar testimony before King Agrippa in Acts 26:9-11)

**You have heard** - This verb is in the [aorist tense](#) which in this context points to a past historical event. While we cannot be dogmatic, most likely he is referring to when he first preached the Gospel to the Galatians. It follows that the Galatians knew he had formerly been a vicious persecutor of the church. The supernatural transformation that took place in Paul's life after meeting Jesus should have been clear proof of the statement that the life changing Gospel was not of human but of divine origin. Only God could change the heart of one who had been such a terror to the church.

**J Vernon McGee on my former manner of life in Judaism** - Paul now calls the religion in which he was brought up the "Jews' religion." Paul was saved, not in Judaism, not by Judaism, but from Judaism. ([Galatians 1 Thru the Bible](#))

**MacArthur** explains that in this passage Paul was "offering them as a kind of negative proof that his message of grace had no foundation in the beliefs, circumstances, or events of his former life. It becomes clear that nothing in his unconverted life provided the source of the truth he was now proclaiming. In fact, both his conversion and his message were built on divine intervention....Grace was a foreign concept to the religion of Saul the Pharisee, despite the fact that grace was as much the basis of the Old Covenant as the New." ([MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Galatians](#))

**Wuest** - Paul's argument in this verse is that his early education is a proof that he did not receive the gospel from man. He was brought up in a rigid school of ritualism directly opposed to the liberty of the gospel. He was a staunch adherent of the principles of that school, and as such, relentlessly persecuted the Christian Church. No human agency could therefore have brought about the change. It required the direct interposition of God. ([Word Studies from the Greek New Testament](#))

**Spurgeon** — He was an out-and-out Jew. He never took up anything without going through with it thoroughly; so, while he believed in Judaism, he did believe it. He was no hypocrite, no pretender, so he fought for it tooth and nail. This was the man who afterwards preached the Christianity he had received from Christ, Evidently he did not borrow it from his parents, for they had taught him quite differently. His religion was not the product of his training; but it came to him from God, — to him who seemed to be the most unlikely person in the whole land ever to receive it. ([Spurgeon's Exposition](#))

**Judaism (Ioudaismos)** describes the religious system of the Jews that had its basis in the OT teachings, especially the Law of Moses and the traditions of the elders. The main emphases of Judaism are circumcision and Sabbath keeping. The word occurs in II Maccabees where it refers to the Jewish religion as opposed to the Hellenism that the Syrian kings were imposing upon the Jews.

**Wuest** - the Judaism with which Paul was acquainted and in which his life had been immersed, was apostate. He knew nothing before his conversion, of the supernatural Judaism in which the Levitical sacrifices were the outward expression of an inward faith in a coming substitutionary atonement for sin. Judaism in Paul's time was a mere ethical cult basing salvation on good works, and observing the sacrifices as a mere form. But when he was rethinking the Old Testament economy in the light of the revelations received in Arabia, the supernatural significance of it all opened up to him. But in this verse he is speaking of the apostate Judaism of his early life. ([Word Studies from the Greek New Testament](#))

**Manner of life** (conduct) ([391](#))(**anastrophe** from **ana** = again + **strepo** = to turn) literally describes a turning around or turning back and is used figuratively to refer to one's conduct, especially focusing on daily behavior and general deportment. The point is that Paul had explained his history as a persecutor of the church to the Galatians. They were able to bear personal testimony to the miraculous before and after transformative power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

No one among the Christians would question Saul's zeal with regard to his persecution of the church. He not only was persecuting, but he was also bringing destruction upon the church of God. Paul found himself in his former days of Judaism consumed with a cause. That cause was crushing Christianity.

**Howard Vos** comments that Paul "goes on to show why his **former** life could not be a preparation for present ministry by way of a declaration of what he used to do. "**Persecuted**," "**wasted**," and "**profited**" (I was advancing - Gal 1:13) are all in the Greek [imperfect tense](#), indicating the long continuance of this mode of life. He kept on earnestly pursuing the church and kept on wasting it. Violent

in his opposition to believers in Jerusalem (Acts 9:13), he was even responsible for the death of some (Acts 26:11). But his persecuting efforts extended to other towns besides Jerusalem, and Paul was on the way to Damascus to persecute believers there when God met him and changed his whole pattern of life (Acts 26:12-18) ([Galatians- Everyman's Bible Commentary: A Call to Christian Liberty](#))

**Persecute** (1377)(**dioko** from **dío** = pursue, prosecute, persecute) means to follow or press hard after, literally to pursue as one does a fleeing enemy. It means to chase, harass, vex and pressure and was used for chasing down criminals. **Dioko** speaks of an intensity of effort leading to a pursue with earnestness and diligence in order to obtain. To go after with the desire of obtaining or in Gal 1:13 the desire was to harm. **Dio** gives us a picture of hounds on the hunt, relentlessly tracking and pursuing their victim (fox).

Paul uses the **imperfect tense** which speaks of his persecution of the church as relentless (over and over, again and again) up to the time of his conversion. Paul was not a sporadic but persistent persecutor of the Church and thus of Jesus! (cf Acts 9:4-5+)

**John Phillips** - His behavior had been like that of a wild boar uprooting tender saplings. He was merciless. Some people he had forced to blaspheme; others had been martyred while he cheered on those who hurled the stones. ([Exploring Galatians: An Expository Commentary](#))

**The church** (**ekklesia**) of **God** - Prior to his conversion Paul's sole purpose in life had been to destroy Christianity which he now willingly recognizes as the **church of God**. "The possessive genitive (the theou) points out strongly the sinfulness and audacity of his career (**Ed**: because it was the possession of God he was attacking!)." ([Eadie](#))

1Cor 15:9+ For I am the least of the apostles, who am not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the **church of God**.

**Martin Luther** This passage does not contain doctrine. Paul adduces his own case for an example. "I have," says he, "at one time defended the traditions of the Pharisees more fiercely than any of your false apostles. Now, if the righteousness of the Law had been worth anything I would never have forsaken it. So carefully did I live up to the Law that I excelled many of my companions. So zealous was I in defense of the Law that I wasted the church of God." ([Galatians 1 Commentary](#))

**Beyond measure** (kata huperbole) (5236)(**huperbole** from **hupér** = above + **bállo** = cast, put) means literally a throwing beyond and figuratively expresses an extraordinary degree (amount, quality) of anything (2 Cor 4:7, 17); superiority, excellence, preeminence. **BDAG** - "a state of exceeding to an extraordinary degree a point on a scale of extent (the context indicating whether in a good or a bad sense)." Paul used huperbole in 2 Corinthians 1:8 of the afflictions which he suffered at the hands of others. Paul confesses that what he did to the Church was "beyond all reason," that he was unreasonable in the things he did.

**Eadie** - What the apostle says of himself is abundantly confirmed—Read Acts 8:3; Acts 9:1; Acts 9:2; Acts 9:21; Acts 22:4; Acts 22:19; Acts 26:10-11. No wonder, then, that he uses those two verbs (**persecute** and **destroy**), and prefixes to the first beyond measure *kata huperbole*, one of his favorite phrases. Ro 7:13; 1Co 12:31; 2Co 1:8; 2Co 4:17. It was no partial or spasmodic effort, either feeble in itself, or limited and intermittent in operation. It was the outgrowth of a zeal which never slept, and of an energy which could do nothing by halves, which was as eager as it was resolute, and was noted for its perseverance no less than for its ardor. And he distinctly sets before his readers the heinousness of his procedure, for he declares the object of his persecution and fierce devastation to have been **the church of God**...The object of this statement is to show that the apostle, during his furious persecution of the church, could not be in the way of learning its theology from any human source; its bloody and malignant enemy could not be consorting with the apostles as a pupil or colleague. ([Eadie](#))

**Destroy** (wreaking havoc) (4199)(**portheo**) means to attack and cause complete destruction. To pillage, devastate, wreak havoc or annihilate. **Portheo** applied not only to cities, walls, fields, lands and persons (Acts 9:21+). **Portheo** was used in secular Greek of besieging and a town or of soldiers ravaging. Paul uses the **imperfect tense** which speaks of continuous attempt by Paul not just to ravage but to ruin and utterly destroy the Church.

Although Acts 22:4+ does not use **portheo** it does portray the effect Paul sought ("to the death" for the "Way" = Christians).

**Portheo** - 3x in NT - destroy(2), destroyed(1).

Acts 9:21+ All those hearing him continued to be amazed, and were saying, "Is this not he who in Jerusalem **destroyed** those who called on this name, and who had come here for the purpose of bringing them bound before the chief priests?"

Galatians 1:13 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;

Galatians 1:23 but only, they kept hearing, "He who once persecuted us is now preaching the faith which he once tried to **destroy**."

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**Lightfoot** says: 'My early education is a proof that I did not receive the Gospel from man. I was brought up in a rigid school of ritualism, directly opposed to the liberty of the Gospel. I was from age and temper a staunch adherent of the principles of that school. Acting upon them, I relentlessly persecuted the Christian brotherhood. No human agency therefore could have brought about the change. It required a direct interposition from God.'

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**William Barclay** - It was Paul's contention that the gospel he preached to men was no carried story and no second-hand tale; it had come to him direct from God. That was a big claim to make; a claim which demanded some kind of proof. And for proof Paul had the courage to point to himself. He pointed to the radical change in his own life. (i) He had been a fanatic for the law. The law had been his life; it had been the one object of his study to know it; it had been the one effort of his life to keep it. And now the one dominant centre of his life is grace. This man, who had with passionate intensity tried to earn God's favour and approval, was now content in humble faith to take what God had offered. He had ceased forever to glory in what he could do for himself; and had begun forever to glory in what God had done for hm. (ii) He had been the arch-persecutor of the Church. He had devastated the Church. The word he uses is the word for utterly sacking a city; he had tried to make a scorched earth of the Church; and now his one aim and object, for which he was prepared to spend himself even to death, was to spread that same Church over all the world. Every effect must have an adequate cause. **When a man is proceeding headlong in one direction and suddenly turns and proceeds headlong in precisely the opposite direction; when a man suddenly reverses all his values so that his life turns upside down, there must be some adequate explanation. For Paul the explanation was the direct intervention of God.** God had laid His hand on Paul's shoulder and had arrested him in midcareer. "That," said Paul, "is the kind of effect which only God could produce." ([Galatians 1 Commentary](#))

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**Early persecution of Christians by C H Spurgeon** - "Oh!" said Caesar, "we will soon root up this Christianity. Off with their heads!" The different governors hastened one after another of the disciples to death; but, the more they persecuted them, the more they multiplied. The pro-consuls had orders to destroy Christians; the more they hunted them, the more Christians there were, until, at last, men pressed to the judgment-seat, and asked to be permitted to die for Christ. They invented torments; they dragged saints at the heels of wild horses; they laid them upon red-hot gridirons; they pulled off the skin from their flesh piece by piece; they were sawn asunder; they were wrapped up in skins, and daubed with pitch, and set in Nero's gardens at night to burn; they were left to rot in dungeons; they were made a spectacle to all men in the amphitheatre; the bears hugged them to death; the lions tore them to pieces; the wild bulls tossed them upon their horns: and yet Christianity spread. All the swords of the legionaries which had put to rout the armies of all nations, and had overcome the invincible Gaul and the savage Briton, could not withstand the feebleness of Christianity; for the weakness of God is mightier than men (1Cor 1:25). ([The Biblical Illustrator](#))

## PAUL PRE-CONVERSION A SUMMARY

- Raised in Tarsus (Acts 21:39+)
- A Roman citizen (Acts 21:39+)
- Studied under the famous rabbi Gamaliel (Acts 22:3+)
- Studied in Jerusalem (Acts 22:3+)
- Of the tribe of Benjamin (Phil 3:5+)
- Of the sect of the Pharisees (Acts 23:6+)
- Originally named Saul, probably after King Saul (Acts 9:1+)
- His sister's son resided in Jerusalem (Acts 23:16-22+)
- Probably had a wealthy father
- Was advancing as a leader in Judaism (Gal. 1:14)
- Was zealous for his Jewish traditions (Gal 1:14)
- Set out to destroy the church of God (Gal 1:13)
- Was given authority by the chief priests to murder Christians (Acts 9:1, 14+)

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**TODAY IN THE WORD** - Yigal Amir was born into an Orthodox Jewish family in 1970. His mother was a kindergarten teacher, his father a Jewish scribe. As a university student, Amir became actively involved in right-wing protests against Israel's signing of the Oslo Accords. On November 4, 1996, Amir shot and killed Israeli Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin. Later at his trial, Amir defended himself very simply: "According to the Halacha [Jewish legal code], you can kill the enemy." We could compare Saul of Tarsus to Yigal Amir. Saul belonged to the strictest sect of the Pharisees, a group whose concern wasn't simply personal piety but also

political revolution. Zeal for the Jew, in this first-century context of Roman occupation, called for violent overthrow of the Roman regime. As one scholar described it, “For the first-century Jew, ‘zeal’ was something you did with a knife.”

**Galatians 1:14 and I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my countrymen, being more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions.**

Amplified - And [you have heard how] I outstripped many of the men of my own generation among the people of my race in [my advancement in study and observance of the laws of] Judaism, so extremely enthusiastic and zealous I was for the traditions of my ancestors.

Wuest - and I was constantly blazing a pioneer path, outstripping in Judaism many of my own age in my race, being more exceedingly zealous of my ancestral traditions. ([Eerdmans Publishing](#))

NET Galatians 1:14 I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my nation, and was extremely zealous for the traditions of my ancestors.

GNT Galatians 1:14 κα̅ προ̅κοπτον̅ ν̅ τ̅ ου̅δα̅ισμ̅ π̅ρ̅ πολλο̅ς̅ συν̅η̅λικι̅τας̅ ν̅ τ̅ γ̅νει̅ μου̅, περισσο̅τω̅ς̅ ζηλω̅τ̅ς̅ π̅ρχων̅ τ̅ν̅ πα̅τρι̅κ̅ν̅ μου̅ παρα̅δ̅σεων̅.

NLT Galatians 1:14 I was far ahead of my fellow Jews in my zeal for the traditions of my ancestors.

KJV 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.

ESV Galatians 1:14 And I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers.

ASV Galatians 1:14 and I advanced in the Jews' religion beyond many of mine own age among my countrymen, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers.

CSB Galatians 1:14 I advanced in Judaism beyond many contemporaries among my people, because I was extremely zealous for the traditions of my ancestors.

NIV Galatians 1:14 I was advancing in Judaism beyond many Jews of my own age and was extremely zealous for the traditions of my fathers.

NKJ Galatians 1:14 And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers.

NRS Galatians 1:14 I advanced in Judaism beyond many among my people of the same age, for I was far more zealous for the traditions of my ancestors.

YLT Galatians 1:14 and I was advancing in Judaism above many equals in age in mine own race, being more abundantly zealous of my fathers' deliverances,

NAB Galatians 1:14 and progressed in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my race, since I was even more a zealot for my ancestral traditions.

NJB Galatians 1:14 and how, in Judaism, I outstripped most of my Jewish contemporaries in my limitless enthusiasm for the traditions of my ancestors.

GWN Galatians 1:14 You also heard how I was far ahead of other Jews in my age group in following the Jewish religion. I had become that fanatical for the traditions of my ancestors.

BBE Galatians 1:14 And I went farther in the Jews' religion than a number of my generation among my countrymen, having a more burning interest in the beliefs handed down from my fathers.

- **advancing:** Isa 29:13 57:12
- **being:** Ac 22:3 26:5,9 Php 3:4-6
- **traditions:** Jer 15:2 Mt 15:2,3,6 Mk 7:3-13 Col 2:8 1Pe 1:8
- [John Brown's exposition of Gal 1:14](#)
- [John Eadie's exposition of Gal 1:14](#)
- Galatians 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



## PRE-CONVERSION EVENTS IN PAUL'S LIFE - PART 2

**And I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my countrymen**- "I outstripped many of the men of my own generation among the people of my race in [my advancement in study and observance of the laws of] Judaism" (Amplified) Wuest has "I was constantly blazing a pioneer path, outstripping in Judaism many of my own age in my race."

**Advancing** (4298) (**prokopto** from **pró** = before or forward + **kópto** = cut) means literally to cut forward or cut down in front. The idea is to remove the obstacles from a road so that straight and uninterrupted progress is possible. Saul kept "cutting his way forward" or "chopping ahead" (**imperfect tense** over and over, again and again) through Judaism as a pioneer who was cutting down a forest and would let nothing stand in his path, especially Jewish Christians, who he sought to "chop down" so to speak!

**Wiersbe** says "He was persecuting the church and profiting and progressing in the Jewish religion. Everything was going his way, and he was rapidly being recognized as a spiritual leader in Israel." ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**Beyond my contemporaries** - "The persons referred to are those (Jews) of similar age and standing,-fellow-pupils, it may be, at the feet of Gamaliel." ([Eadie](#))

Paul was an **enthusiast**, a person full of enthusiasm; specifically, a religious fanatic or zealot and an ardent supporter of Judaistic traditions.

**Being more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions (traditions of my fathers)** - Paul was literally driven to excel over other Jews who were his peers. Paul is not bragging, but stating facts that emphasize how he burned passionately for the cause of Judaism. Paul was earnestly committed to Judaism. It is interesting that he was not zealous for the Word of God, but the traditions of the fathers! **More extremely** is **perissos** which is a comparative adverb which describes Paul's zeal as superabundantly beyond what one would expect for most Jews. Compared to their zeal, his was far more! He was indeed sincere, but sincerely wrong! **Ancestral** is **patrikos** used only here in the NT to convey the sense of the **traditions** as derived from or handed down by the Jewish fathers. It is paradoxical that the Judaizers would accuse Paul of not being acquainted with the teachings of Judaism when he knew them better than they did!

**Wuest** has an interesting note on **fathers** (ancestral) - The use of the word **fathers** makes it clear that Paul is not referring here to the Mosaic law, but to the instruction received from previous generations. This point is very important. Had Paul lived in his unsaved state in the thought world of the Mosaic economy instead of having his thinking dominated by the Pharisaic traditions, his act of receiving Christ as Saviour would have had some reasonable background, for the Mosaic institutions pointed to a need for Christ and also to the Christ who was needed, the moral law serving the first purpose, the Levitical sacrifices, the second. But Paul is at pains to show his Galatian converts that his salvation and his appointment to the apostleship broke completely with all his background and all his traditions. ([Wuest Word Studies - Eerdman Publishing Company Volume 1, Volume 2, Volume 3](#) - used by permission)

**Zealous** (2207) (**zelotes** from **zeloo** = be zealous from **zeo** = to boil) describes one "burning" with zeal, stirred to action by strong emotions. Used in Lxx to describe God (Ex 20:5, Dt 4:24). This word included the idea of defending and upholding some cause or vehemently contending for a thing. Zelotes was used of being zealous for the Law (Acts 22:3+). It is interesting that Paul uses **zelotes** (only 6x in NT - Acts 21:20; 22:3; 1 Co. 14:12; Gal. 1:14; Titus 2:14; 1 Pe 3:13) in Titus 2:14+ writing of Jesus "Who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, **zealous** for good deeds." Before he met Christ Paul was **zealous** for the wrong kind of works (works that sought to merit God's approval) but after being transformed by the Gospel, he advocated being **zealous for good deeds**, for such deeds glorify the Father (Mt 5:16+).

**Zealous** - means intense emotion compelling action and implies energetic and unflagging pursuit of an aim or devotion to a cause. Passionate ardor in pursuit of anything. Excessive zeal may rise to enthusiasm. In general, zeal is an eagerness of desire to accomplish or obtain some object, and it may be manifested either in favor of any person or thing, or in opposition to it, and in a good or bad cause. Zealous speaks of filled with fervent or enthusiastic devotion, often extreme or fanatical in nature.

**Ancestral traditions (KJV = traditions of my fathers)** - These traditions are of the same "genre" which Jesus classified as "the tradition of men," presumably rabbinic exposition of the law which was in conflict with God's Word and will. The point is that by using the word "ancestral" Paul is making it clear that he is not referring to the Mosaic law. As Jesus stated the manmade traditions were in direct conflict with the Word of God, for He accused his Jewish Pharisees and Scribes, saying that you are "neglecting the **commandment of God**, you hold to the **tradition of men**." (Mk 7:8)

**MacArthur - Ancestral traditions** refers to the body of oral teachings about the Old Testament law that came to have equal authority with the law commonly known as the Halakah, this collection of Torah interpretations became a fence around God's

revealed law and all but hid it from view. Over a period of several hundred years it had expanded into a mammoth accumulation of religious, moral, legal, practical, and ceremonial regulations that defied comprehension, much less total compliance. It contained such vast amounts of minutiae that even the most learned rabbinical scholars could not master it either by interpretation or in behavior. Yet the more complex and burdensome it became, the more zealously Jewish legalists revered and propagated it. ([MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Galatians](#))

**NET Note** - The **traditions of my ancestors** refers to both Pharisaic and popular teachings of this time which eventually were codified in Jewish literature such as the Mishnah, Midrashim, and Targums.

**Stott** comments on Paul's zealous devotion as a Pharisee - Now a man in that mental and emotional state is in no mood to change his mind, or even to have it changed for him by men....Only God could reach him-and God did!" (The Message of Galatians)

**Eadie** - It cannot therefore be supposed that the apostle would be learning Christianity during the period when his progress in Judaism was so marked, when his zeal for patristic traditions so far outran that of his contemporaries,-a zeal in utter and burning antagonism to the new religion. He had kept from all contact with it, save the contact of ferocity with the victim which it immolates. Luther touchingly applies this verse to his own previous history. ([Galatians 1 Commentary](#))

**Wuest** has an interesting note - Had Paul lived in his unsaved state in the thought world of the Mosaic economy instead of having his thinking dominated by the Pharisaic traditions, his act of receiving Christ as Saviour would have had some reasonable background, for the Mosaic institutions pointed to a need for Christ and also to the Christ who was needed, the moral law serving the first purpose, the Levitical sacrifices, the second. But Paul is at pains to show his Galatian converts that his salvation and his appointment to the apostleship broke completely with all his background and all his traditions. ([Word Studies from the Greek New Testament](#))

Paul gives a good summary in Philippians...

Although I myself might have confidence even in the flesh. If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more:5 circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee ([pharisaiois](#) - he was undoubtedly far stricter than his accusers the Judaizers! Paul would not be ignorant of the legalism they were teaching in Galatia!); 6 as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless. (Philippians 3:4-6+)

**Bartlett** says: In using the expression, "the traditions of my fathers," the apostle had reference, not to the Mosaic law as found in the Pentateuch, but to the hedge of more than six hundred human commandments (613) which the old rabbis had built around the law for purposes, as they thought, of protection. Paul's violence against the Christians was so excessive largely because in his mind the growth of the Church would sound the death knell of the Pharisaism to which he was so fanatically devoted. ([Galatians 1:11-24 - Personal Explanation](#))

**Lenski** adds that "Paul's violence against the Christians was so excessive because the church meant the death of Pharisaism. A converted Jew and Pharisee might live in the old Jewish way and freely choose to observe parts of the Mosaic law; but he would certainly give up the traditions of the elders as being mere useless and dangerous "commandments of men." These very traditions were the apple of Paul's eye; for them he wished to tear the church of God to pieces."

**Traditions** ([3862](#))(**paradosis** from **paradidomi** = deliver in teaching) means literally to give from the presence of, thus to give personally. It signifies an act of transmission or that which is transmitted and thus refers to that which is handed down or transmitted from generation to generation; injunction delivered or from one to another. It was used to refer to the Pharisaic traditions which had been engrafted on the Mosaic Law (Mt 15:2, 6; Mk 7:3, 13). **Paradosis** "means literally "to give from the presence of," thus "to give personally." It signifies an act of transmission or that which is transmitted. In the New Testament it is used in the latter sense, without indicating the method of transmission or implying any lapse of time such as is usually associated with the English word tradition." ([Wuest](#))

In the NT, "tradition" is used of doctrine *handed (passed) down* from the Lord through the apostles, i.e. transferred (transmitted) as *venerated tradition* (1 Cor 11:2,23; 2 Thes 2:15, 3:6). But more often, [3862](#) (*parádosis*) is used of *bogus religious traditions*, like passed on by uninformed rabbis and over-zealous Pharisees, etc. (Mt 15:2,3,6; Mk 7:3,5,8,9,13; Col 2:8).

In 2 Th 2:15+, "traditions" ([3862/parádosis](#)) include their written and oral aspects. "Tradition, in the scriptural sense, may be either written or oral. It implies (on the part of a teacher) that he is not expressing his own ideas, but is delivering or handing over (*paradídōmi*) a message received from some one else. See 1 Cor 11:23+. The prominent idea of *parádosis* is therefore that of an authority external to the teacher" (Vincent)

[HELPS](#) says - Reflection: Religious traditions are good when they are loyal to Scripture. Otherwise tradition degenerates into a powerful enemy of the Church – like the Judaism of Jesus' day with its many (unjustified) religious fabrications and exaggerations.

Such religious tradition became a huge hindrance to true spirituality, so Jesus sharply rebuked it. True theology replaces the "good" with the better – which always subordinates religious traditions to Scripture (not the other way around)!

**THOUGHT** - As an aside, whenever I hear the word "**Tradition**" I recall one of the most memorable songs from the musical [Fiddler On The Roof](#) in the Prologue of Act One where "Tradition" introduces the story of a Jewish family and community living in the small village of Anatevka, Russia, during the harsh era of Tsarist rule ([Watch the youtube version of Tradition - you'll love it](#)). The main character, Tevye, complains to God about the difficulty of being a "chosen people" during an era of pogroms the systematic elimination of Jewish villages. He concludes, however, that without **tradition** their lives would be as unsteady as a "fiddler on the roof." Tradition plays a role in the Jewish community and in all of our lives. Customary ways of thinking and acting give structure to daily living and a sense of connection from one generation to the next.

**MacArthur** adds that "Ancestral **traditions** refers to the body of oral teachings about the Old Testament law that came to have equal authority with the law. Commonly known as the [Halakah](#), this collection of [Torah](#) interpretations became a fence around God's revealed law and all but hid it from view. Over a period of several hundred years it had expanded into a mammoth accumulation of religious, moral, legal, practical, and ceremonial regulations that defied comprehension, much less total compliance. It contained such vast amounts of minutiae that even the most learned rabbinical scholars could not master it either by interpretation or in behavior. Yet the more complex and burdensome it became, the more zealously Jewish legalists revered and propagated it." ([MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Galatians](#))

**Eadie** - The noun **paradosis**, "giving over," is literally employed as with enemy (Thucydides, 3:53; Josephus); then it signifies handing over or down an inheritance (Thucydides, 1.9), and by a natural trope (use of the word) it is used of narration. ([Galatians 1 Commentary](#))

**Paradosis** is a giving over either by word of mouth or in writing; objectively, what is delivered. **Paradosis** refers to that which is passed along by teaching. It can have a negative (man made teachings passed on) or positive sense (divine teachings passed on) depending on the context. In the present context (Gal 1:14) **paradosis** refers to "man made" Jewish traditions (See similar negative sense in Mt 15:2, 3, 6; Col 2:8 Matt 15:2, 3, 6; Mark 7:3, 5, 8, 9, 13). Paul's teaching that was passed on to the saints at Thessalonica and Corinth reflects the positive (doctrinally acceptable) sense of **paradosis** (2Th 2:15; 3:6; 1 Cor. 11:2).

**New Unger's Bible Dictionary** on **traditions** - It is also used of the body of precepts, especially ritual, which, in the opinion of the later Jews, were orally delivered by Moses and orally transmitted in unbroken succession to subsequent generations. These precepts, both illustrating and expanding the written law, as they did, were to be obeyed with equal reverence (Matt. 15:2–3, 6; Mark 7:3, 5, 9, 13; Col. 2:8). "My ancestral traditions" (Gal. 1:14) are precepts received from the fathers, whether handed down in the OT books or orally. Meyer, in his Com. on Matt. 15:2, says: "The Jews, founding upon Deut. 4:14; 17:10, for the most part attached greater importance to this tradition than to the written law. They laid special stress upon the traditional precept, founded on Lev. 15:11, which required that the hands should be washed before every meal. Jesus and his disciples ignored this tradition as such, which had been handed down from the men of olden time."

**Patzia** writes that "Customs and beliefs that are handed down (Gk **paradosis**, "tradition"), such as the "traditions of the elders" referred to in the Gospels (Mt 15:2–3; Mk 7:5, 13) or the "human tradition" that Paul contrasts with a revelation from Christ (Col 2:8). Paul valued Christian traditions that he "**received**" (**paralambano**) from his early Christian predecessors and in turn "**delivered**" (**paradidomi**) to his congregations (1Co 11:23–25; 15:3–4). (Pocket Dictionary of Biblical Studies).

**Paradosis** - 13x/13v in NAS - All translated tradition(s). (Note: 2 uses in Lxx Jer 32:4, 34:2, neither with same sense as used in the NT).

Matthew 15:2 "Why do Your disciples break the **tradition** of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread."

3 And He answered and said to them, "Why do you yourselves transgress the commandment of God for the sake of your **tradition**?

6 he is not to honor his father or his mother.' And by this you invalidated the word of God for the sake of your **tradition**.

Mark 7:3 (For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they carefully wash their hands, thus observing the **traditions** of the elders;

5 The Pharisees and the scribes asked Him, "Why do Your disciples not walk according to the **tradition** of the elders, but eat their bread with impure hands?"

8 "Neglecting the commandment of God, you hold to the **tradition** of men."

9 He was also saying to them, "You are experts at setting aside the commandment of God in order to keep your **tradition**.

13 thus invalidating the word of God by your **tradition** which you have handed down; and you do many things such as that."

1 Corinthians 11:2 Now I praise you because you remember me in everything and hold firmly to the **traditions**, just as I delivered them to you.

**Comment:** Here **paradosis** refers to the inspired apostolic teaching of Paul which was passed on to the Corinthians and to which they were firmly adhering.

Galatians 1:14 and I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my countrymen, being more extremely zealous for my ancestral **traditions**.

Colossians 2:8 See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the **tradition** of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.

2 Thessalonians 2:15 So then, brethren, **stand firm** (present imperative - command to keep on standing firm) and **hold** (present imperative - command to keep on holding firm) to the **traditions** which you were taught, whether by word of mouth or by letter from us.

**Comment:** Again, here and in the following passage **paradosis** refers to the inspired apostolic teaching of Paul which was passed on to the Thessalonian believers and to which they were firmly adhering. In this verse Paul clearly shows that **paradosis** could be passed on to others either orally or in writing.

2 Thessalonians 3:6 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from every brother who leads an unruly life and not according to the **tradition** which you received from us.

#### Related Resource:

- [Tradition](#)

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**False zeal** - A false zeal in religion is always, in some respect or other, a misdirected zeal, or a zeal not according to knowledge; a zeal seeking some false end, or, while proposing to itself a good end, seeking its promotion in some unauthorized way. Jehu had a good zeal, which he called zeal for the Lord of Hosts. His fault was not that he was too zealous, but that his zeal was really directed to his own advancement. The Jews, in the days of Christ, had a zeal for God; but it was so misdirected as to fire them with a frenzy to destroy the Son of God, and extinguish the Light of the world. There are countless forms of false zeal now at work; but, in all cases, they sin not by excess, but by misdirection. Some are flaming with a zeal to spread some of the corruption of Christianity, and to carry men away from its great and cardinal truths. Some are equally zealous to build up a sect or a party on other foundations than those which God has laid in Zion; and that which taints their zeal is the purpose to which they employ it, and not any excessive fervour of their zeal itself. (Dr. Bonar.) ([The Biblical Illustrator](#))

**Galatians 1:15 But when God, Who had set me apart even from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, was pleased**

Amplified - But when He, Who had chosen and set me apart [even] before I was born and had called me by His grace (His undeserved favor and blessing), saw fit and was pleased

Wuest - But when it was the good pleasure of the One who set me apart before I was born and called me by His grace ([Eerdmans Publishing](#))

NET Galatians 1:15 But when the one who set me apart from birth and called me by his grace was pleased

GNT Galatians 1:15 τε δ ε δ κησεν [ θε ς ] φορ σας με κ κοιλ ας μητρ ς μου κα καλ σας δι τ ς χ ριτος α το

NLT Galatians 1:15 But even before I was born, God chose me and called me by his marvelous grace. Then it pleased him

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

ESV Galatians 1:15 But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and who called me by his grace, 16 was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with anyone;

ASV Galatians 1:15 But when it was the good pleasure of God, who separated me, even from my mother's womb, and called me through his grace,

CSB Galatians 1:15 But when God, who from my birth set me apart and called me by His grace, was pleased

NIV Galatians 1:15 But when God, who set me apart from birth and called me by his grace, was pleased

NKJ Galatians 1:15 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace,

NRS Galatians 1:15 But when God, who had set me apart before I was born and called me through his grace, was pleased

YLT Galatians 1:15 and when God was well pleased -- having separated me from the womb of my mother, and having called me through His grace --

NAB Galatians 1:15 But when (God), who from my mother's womb had set me apart and called me through his grace, was pleased

NJB Galatians 1:15 But when God, who had set me apart from the time when I was in my mother's womb, called me through his grace and chose

GWN Galatians 1:15 But God, who appointed me before I was born and who called me by his kindness, was pleased

BBE Galatians 1:15 But when it was the good pleasure of God, by whom I was marked out even from my mother's body, through his grace,

- **it:** Dt 7:7,8 1Sa 12:22 1Ch 28:4,5 Mt 11:26 Lk 10:21 1Co 1:1 Eph 1:5,9 3:11
- **who:** Isa 49:1,5 Jer 1:5 Lk 1:15,16 Ac 9:15 13:2 22:14,15 Ro 1:1
- **and:** Ro 1:5 Ro 8:30 Ro 9:24 1Co 1:9,24 1Cor 15:10 2Th 2:13,14 1Ti 1:12-14 2Ti 1:9 1Pe 5:10
- Galatians 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **GOD'S CALLING OF PAUL FROM BIRTH**

**But when God, Who had set me apart even from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, was pleased** - Paul now goes from before Christ to after Christ, explaining what God alone had done for him to make this possible. Beloved, we could all put our names on this passage! One thinks of the strategic "but God" in Ephesians 2

And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, 2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. 3 Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. 4+ **BUT GOD** being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), (Eph 2:1-5+)

**But when God** - (Always ask what God is contrasting. **See term of contrast**) The contrast with the preceding (Gal 1:13-14) is striking and is reflects God's intervention in the life of Saul of Tarsus, most graphically described in Acts 9+. And so here Paul alludes to his conversion. Look at some of the other great uses of "**but God**" - Ge 8:1, 21:12, 48:21, 50:20, Ps 49:15, 73:26, Mk 2:7, Acts 13:30, Ro 5:8, 1Cor 1:27, 3:6-7, 1Cor 7:15, Gal 3:18 and my all time favorite Eph 2:4 (see passage above)

**Vine on but when** - up to this point in Paul's life all had been of man and by man; now God intervened, and everything was changed.

**Set me apart even from my mother's womb** - After meeting Christ, it became obvious to him that God had sovereignly, providentially set him apart from birth so that his entire life was a preparation to become the greatest proclaimer of the Gospel of Jesus Christ! Clearly Paul did not choose God. God chose Paul for salvation even as He chose him to be His apostle.

We see a similar divine choosing in the lives of two OT prophets, Isaiah and Jeremiah

Isaiah said " The LORD called Me from the womb; From the body of My mother He named Me." (Isa 49:1) and "formed Me from the womb to be His Servant." (Isa 49:5)

Jer 1:5 "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, And before you were born I consecrated you; I have appointed you a prophet to the nations."

In a similar way John the Baptist was called before his conception to be the forerunner of the Messiah

But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your petition has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will give him the name John. 14 "You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. 15 "For he will be great in the sight of the Lord; and he will drink no wine or liquor, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit while yet in his mother's womb. 16 "And he will turn many of the sons of Israel back to the Lord their God. 17 "It is he who will go as a forerunner before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, TO TURN THE HEARTS OF THE FATHERS BACK TO THE CHILDREN, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous, so as to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." (Luke 1:13-17+).

**Set apart** (873) (**aphorizo** from **apó** = off from, apart + **horizo** = place a limitation upon, fix limits around) means to mark off the boundaries, to appoint, set one apart for some purpose. It is used of the final separation of the righteous from the wicked (Matt. 13:49; 25:32); of the separation of the disciples from the world (Luke 6:22+); and of the setting apart of apostles to special functions (Acts 13:2+). Setting apart indicates the separating of an individual for specific service. Paul was set apart to God for His service (cp 2Ti 2:21+ describing men as sanctified by the Master for good works.) Compare "chosen vessel," Acts 9:15+.

Ro 1:1+ Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, **set apart (aphorizo)** for the gospel of God (Note Paul had a clear delineated purpose).

**Guzik** points out that "The ancient Greek word **aphorizo** is related to the word used as a title for the religious elite in Paul's day, the "**separated ones**" known as the **Pharisees**. Before Paul came to Jesus he was an important Pharisee (Philippians 3:5), but he wasn't really separated to God. Now through the work of Jesus he was really separated to God." ([Galatians 1 Commentary](#))

**Paul's** testimony before King Agrippa...

And this is just what I did in Jerusalem; not only did I lock up many of the saints in prisons, having received authority from the chief priests, but also when they were being put to death I cast my vote against them. 11 "And as I punished them often in all the synagogues, I tried to force them to blaspheme; and being furiously enraged at them, I kept pursuing them even to foreign cities. 12 "While so engaged as I was journeying to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests, 13 at midday, O King, I saw on the way a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining all around me and those who were journeying with me. 14 "And when we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew dialect, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.' 15 "And I said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And the Lord said, 'I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. 16 'But get up and stand on your feet; for this purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you a minister and a witness not only to the things which you have seen, but also to the things in which I will appear to you; 17 rescuing you from the Jewish people and from the Gentiles, to whom I am sending you, 18 to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.' 19 "So, King Agrippa, I did not prove disobedient to the heavenly vision, 20 but kept declaring both to those of Damascus first, and also at Jerusalem and then throughout all the region of Judea, and even to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance. (Ac 26:10-20+)

**A T Robertson** - The Pharisees were the separatists who held themselves off from others. Paul conceives himself as a spiritual Pharisee "**separated unto the gospel of God**" (Ro 1:1+, the same word *aphōrismenos*) Before his birth God had his plans for him and called him. ([Galatians 1 Commentary - Word Pictures in the NT](#))

**MacArthur** - No human explanation or influence could account for the 180 degree turnaround in Saul's life. He had been like a runaway freight train that crushes everything in its path. He had lost control of his life and was without restraint. His legalistic zeal had put him on a headlong course of destruction from which no natural force short of death could have deterred him. His apostolic calling could only have been supernatural and sovereign, completely apart from human testimony or persuasion (though he may have heard much truth from the Christians he captured). ([MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Galatians](#))

**Called** (invited, summoned) (2564) (**kaleo**) in this context refers to God's effectual call in the sense of His choosing so that one might receive some special benefit or experience (salvation and apostleship). God's effectual call was realized on the Damascus Road (Acts 9:1-22). The Westminster Shorter Catechism states "Effectual calling is the work of God's Spirit, whereby, convincing us of our

sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and renewing our wills, He doth persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to us in the Gospel."

**Called** is [aorist tense](#), a point in time in the past which referred his Damascus Road experience (Acts 9:1-9).

In Romans Paul gives us the sequence of God's work in salvation

and these whom He predestined, **He also called**; and **these whom He called**, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified. (Ro 8:30<sup>±</sup>)

**Divine calling** - A river flowing with rapid and majestic current to the sea would defy the efforts of the whole world to turn it back again to its source; yet, by the returning tide it is not only arrested in its course but driven up again with great rapidity towards its fountain head. It is thus that a sinner is stopped in his career of sin, and turned towards high and heavenly things. (Charles Simeon.) ([The Biblical Illustrator](#))

**Lightfoot** sums it up this way - 'Then came my conversion. It was the work of God's **grace**. It was foreordained, before I had any separate existence. It was not therefore due to any merits of my own, it did not spring from any principles of my own. The revelation of His Son **in me**, the call to preach to the Gentiles, were acts of His good pleasure. Thus converted, I took no counsel of human advisers. I did not betake myself to the elder Apostles, as I might naturally have done. I secluded myself in Arabia, and, when I emerged from my retirement, instead of going to Jerusalem, I returned to Damascus.'

**Vine on through His grace** - this sums up in one comprehensive word, a, the motive of God in His own good pleasure, b, the purposive act of God in setting Paul apart before his birth, and, c, his actual call of God in time. And as in his case so also in that of every one partaking of the salvation provided in the gospel, 'grace reigns'.

**Lange on through His grace** - The grace of God, as free (without any merit of ours) as it is mighty in working—it can change the hearts so fully, that the man throws himself into the directly opposite course.—It is God, who defines our life's course: therefore, courage!—All depends on this, that the Son of God be revealed in us.

**Through His grace (charis)** - The basis for God's calling of Paul was grace, God's unmerited love, kindness and favor (See Ro 8:30-note, 2Ti 1:9-note). Paul (like all of us) deserved death, but God called him to life and into a life of service as an apostle and proclamation of the life giving Gospel of grace.

**Martin Luther** - "By the favor of God I, a wicked and cursed wretch, a blasphemer, persecutor, and rebel, was spared. Not content to spare me, God granted unto me the knowledge of His salvation, His Spirit, His Son, the office of an apostle, everlasting life." Paul speaking. God not only pardoned our iniquities, but in addition overwhelmed us with blessings and spiritual gifts. Many, however, are ungrateful. Worse, by opening again a window to the devil many begin to loathe God's Word, and end by perverting the Gospel...."Did God call me on account of my holy life? Or on account of my pharisaical religion? Or on account of my prayers, fastings, and works? Never. Well, then, it is certain God did not call me on account of my blasphemies, persecutions, oppressions. What prompted Him to call me? His grace alone." ([Galatians 1 Commentary](#))

**Ryken** - This ("set apart") was a clever phrase because the Pharisees (**Ed comment:** Greek **pharisaios** is from Aramaic "*peras*" meaning to separate, taking on a different manner of life from that of the general laity) considered themselves set apart by keeping God's law. Paul had been a Pharisee himself, but God did not set him apart merely to keep the law after all; he set him apart to preach the gospel. Literally, he set him apart "from the womb." Paul was like some great Old Testament prophet (see Jer. 1:5): God claimed his life and ministry while he was still in his mother's womb. Many years later, when the time was right, God was pleased to call Paul "by his grace" (Gal. 1:15). **Calling** refers to the life events that lead a person to repentance for sin and faith in Jesus Christ. Such **effectual calling** is always by grace because the call shows God's undeserved favor. Yet **calling** also refers to God's special plan for someone's life work. What God had planned for Paul to do was to take the gospel to the Gentiles ([Reformed Expository Commentary – Galatians](#))

**John Piper** - Jesus has chosen Paul long before Paul chose Jesus. In fact Paul says in Galatians 1:15 that God had set him apart before he was born. And since he is chosen by Jesus, Jesus does not speak as though Paul might not go along with it. He will. So Jesus speaks of the great ministry Paul is going to have with kings and nations and Israel. And he speaks of how much he must suffer—not might suffer. So it is clear that this conversion is a work of divine, sovereign grace. God moved in on Paul's life and, as C. S. Lewis said, surprised him with joy—and with suffering. ([This Is Not Man's Gospel](#))

**Rob Morgan** - You have been foreknown from the beginning of time. God has always known in advance exactly what you would look like. He has always known your innermost thoughts, your background, your history, your problems, your struggles, your strengths, your weaknesses, and the course of your life. He has always known His plans for you. With a single glance He knew all about you, long before the earth launched its maiden orbit around the sun. This was profound and praise-worthy to the psalmist. He

exclaimed in Psalm 139:6, "This extraordinary knowledge is beyond me."

**Wayne Detzler** - To the Galatians who were bothered by legalism, Paul explained that the call of God was a product of grace (Gal. 1:15). (New Testament Words in Today's Language)

**Pleased** (took pleasure) (2106) (**eudokeo** from **eu** = well, good + **dokeo** = to think) means literally to think well of and so to be well pleased, to take pleasure or delight in (This is the sense in which eudokeo is used in He 10:38). The idea is to find satisfaction in something or someone or to view with approval.

**Vine on pleased** - These words are to be connected directly with "to reveal His Son in me". The intervention of God in the life of Paul was neither sought nor deserved by him; his salvation, alike in its purpose and in its accomplishment, was God.

**McGee** says: The phrase "but when it pleased God," in verse 15, means that Paul was called according to the will of God. ([Galatians 1 Thru the Bible](#))

**Simpson** says: That is about the most we can say for our part. "By the grace of God I am what I am," was the testimony of Paul, and the [epitaph on the monument](#) of [William Carey](#) may well take us all in:

A worthless, weak, and helpless worm,  
On Thy kind arms I fall.  
Be Thou my perfect righteousness,  
My Saviour and my All."

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**Oswald Chambers** - The vocation of the natural life. But when it pleased God ... to reveal His son in me ... **Gal. 1:15-16** . - The call of God is not a call to any particular service; my interpretation of it may be, because contact with the nature of God has made me realize what I would like to do for Him. The call of God is essentially expressive of His nature; service is the outcome of what is fitted to my nature. The vocation of the natural life is stated by the apostle Paul—"When it pleased God to reveal His Son in me that I might preach Him" (i.e., sacramentally express Him) "among the Gentiles." Service is the overflow of superabounding devotion; but, profoundly speaking, there is no call to that, it is my own little actual bit, and is the echo of my identification with the nature of God. Service is the natural part of my life. God gets me into a relationship with Himself whereby I understand His call, then I do things out of sheer love for Him on my own account. To serve God is the deliberate love-gift of a nature that has heard the call of God. Service is expressive of that which is fitted to my nature: God's call is expressive of His nature; consequently when I receive His nature and hear His call, the voice of the Divine nature sounds in both and the two work together. The Son of God reveals Himself in me, and I serve Him in the ordinary ways of life out of devotion to Him. (My utmost for his highest)

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**Max Lucado**: It's often said, "The Lord works in mysterious ways." How true. Start with the gospel of grace. The enemies of God being offered unconditional pardon and adoption into the royal family of God? Heaven's most glorious riches lavished on the least deserving? It all reads like a fairy tale. And it gets even wilder. God announces his intention to partner with the likes of us so others can experience his love and grace. He could use angels or employ some other supernatural means. Instead he uses us. And what do we do? Mostly we stumble and fall and fail. Yet the Lord never gives up on us and never aborts his plan. He works in us and through us, despite us. The villains become the heroes. What a mystery! What a miracle! What a God we serve!

**Galatians 1:16 to reveal His Son in me so that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood,**

Amplified - To reveal (unveil, disclose) His Son within me so that I might proclaim Him among the Gentiles (the non-Jewish world) as the glad tidings (Gospel), immediately I did not confer with flesh and blood [did not consult or counsel with any frail human being or communicate with anyone].

Wuest - to give me an inward revelation of His Son in order that I might proclaim Him as glad tidings among the Gentiles, immediately I did not put myself in communication with flesh and blood for the purpose of consultation; ([Eerdmans Publishing](#))

NET Galatians 1:16 to reveal his Son in me so that I could preach him among the Gentiles, I did not go to ask advice from any human being,

GNT Galatians 1:16 ποκαλψαι τιν υνατο ν μο , να εαγγελζωμαι ατν ν το ς θνεσιν, εθως ο προσανεθ μην σαρκ κα αματι



NLT Galatians 1:16 to reveal his Son to me so that I would proclaim the Good News about Jesus to the Gentiles. When this happened, I did not rush out to consult with any human being.

KJV 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:

ESV Galatians 1:16 was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with anyone;

ASV Galatians 1:16 to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Gentiles; straightway I conferred not with flesh and blood:

CSB Galatians 1:16 to reveal His Son in me, so that I could preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with anyone.

NIV Galatians 1:16 to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not consult any man,

NKJ Galatians 1:16 to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood,

NRS Galatians 1:16 to reveal his Son to me, so that I might proclaim him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with any human being,

YLT Galatians 1:16 to reveal His Son in me, that I might proclaim him good news among the nations, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood,

NAB Galatians 1:16 to reveal his Son to me, so that I might proclaim him to the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult flesh and blood,

NJB Galatians 1:16 to reveal his Son in me, so that I should preach him to the gentiles, I was in no hurry to confer with any human being,

GWN Galatians 1:16 to show me his Son. He did this so that I would tell people who are not Jewish that his Son is the Good News. When this happened, I didn't talk it over with any other person.

BBE Galatians 1:16 To give the revelation of his Son in me, so that I might give the news of him to the Gentiles; then I did not take the opinion of flesh and blood,

- **reveal:** Mt 16:17 1Co 2:9-13 2Co 4:6 Eph 1:17,18 3:5-10
- **that:** Ga 2:7-9 Acts 9:15 Acts 22:21 Acts 26:17,18 Ro 1:13,14 Ro 11:13 Ro 15:16-19 Eph 3:1,8 Col 1:25-27 1Th 2:16 1Ti 2:7 2Ti 1:11)
- **immediately:** Ga 1:11,12 Gal 2:1,6 Dt 33:9 Lk 9:23-25,59-62 Ac 26:19,20 2Co 5:16
- **flesh:** Mt 16:17 26:41 1Co 15:50 Eph 6:12 Heb 2:14
- [John Brown's exposition of Gal 1:16](#)
- Galatians 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## A REVELATION FOR PROCLAMATION

**(Was pleased) to reveal His Son in me so that I might preach Him among the Gentiles-** The purpose of God's calling Paul was to be on mission to the Gentiles as Jesus explained to Ananias (below). Beloved, for what purpose has God called you? He has a purpose for your life! Will you surrender to Him? Will you fulfill the divine goal for your life? The Bema Seat will assess whether you (and I) have fulfilled God's purpose for our lives (2 Cor 5:10+)

But the Lord said to him (Ananias), "Go, for he (Saul/Paul) is a chosen instrument of Mine, **to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel**; for I will show him how much he must suffer for My name's sake." (Ac 9:15-16+)

**Pleased ([eudokeo](#)) to reveal His Son in me** (see Acts 9:1-31, esp 9:3-6, Acts 22:21) - This revelation was supernatural, reminiscent of Paul's statement to the Corinthians...

2 Cor 4:6+ For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

**To reveal** (601)([apokalupto](#) from **apó** = from + **kalúpto** = cover - see [apokalupsis](#) English = apocalypse) literally means to remove the cover from and so the idea is to remove that which conceals in this Paul's case the truth about Jesus, that He was the Messiah prophesied of throughout the Old Testament, the Redeemer of Israel and his personal Savior. **Apokalupto** in the NT always refers to some aspect of spiritual truth that was previously hidden but now has had the "lid removed" so that it can be seen and/or understood. Of course the Messiah had been revealed in a sense in over 300 OT prophecies, but for Jews (like Paul before conversion) the Messiah was veiled from their heart...

But their minds (JEWS) were hardened; for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same **veil** remains unlifted, because it is removed in Christ. 15 But to this day whenever Moses is read, **aveil** lies over their heart; 16 but whenever a person turns to the Lord (AS ENABLED BY THE SUPERNATURAL POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT), the **veil** is taken away. (2 Cor 3:14-16<sup>+</sup>)

**In me** - MacArthur comments that "**in me** does not force us to interpret the revelation as a purely internal, subjective feeling but can mean "to me" and carry the idea of objective experience." ([See Brown's note](#))

**NET Note** says **in me** can also be translated "**to me**"; the Greek preposition [en](#) can mean either, depending on the context."

**A T Robertson** on **in me** - By "**in me**" (en emoi) Paul can mean to lay emphasis on his inward experience of grace or he may refer objectively to the vision of Christ on the way to Damascus, "in my case." Paul uses en emoi in this sense (in my case) several times (Galatians 1:24; 2 Cor. 13:3; Phil. 1:30; 1 Tim. 1:16). Once (1 Cor. 14:11) en emoi is almost equivalent to the dative (to me). On the whole Lightfoot seems correct here in taking it to mean "in my case," though the following words suit either idea. Certainly Paul could not preach Christ among the Gentiles without the rich inward experience and in the objective vision he was called to that task. ([Galatians 1 Commentary - Word Pictures in the NT](#))

**Leon Morris** has an interesting note on **in me** - "What begins by being a revelation of Christ to Paul becomes a revelation of Christ in Paul as the Spirit produces his fruits in unaccustomed soil." ([Galatians: Paul's Charter of Christian Freedom](#))

**So that I might preach Him among the Gentiles- So that** [expresses the purpose](#) of the revelation. In this case we see it is a revelation for proclamation. In other words God supernaturally revealed the truth respecting His Son to Paul's heart and mind for the express purpose that he might preach Jesus among the Gentiles. As he later said he "had been entrusted with the Gospel to the **uncircumcised** (GENTILES), just as Peter had been to the circumcised." (Gal 2:7+) and "to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the **Gentiles**, ministering as a priest the gospel of God." (Ro 15:16<sup>+</sup>).

**THOUGHT** - By way of application, it is important to remember that God does not call individuals to salvation just to keep them out of hell and get them into heaven, but to be useful in His service, for **every believer** has been "created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared (specific, special works for them), that (they) should walk in them." (Eph 2:10<sup>+</sup>) Indeed, every believer is given the good work of proclaiming "the excellencies of Him who has called (us) out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1 Pe 2:9<sup>+</sup>). We are redeemed to give a witness of our Redeemer! Are you fulfilling the purpose for which you were called out of darkness, that others in darkness may also be called out by your Gospel witness?

**John Brown** has a "weighty" quote by **Perkins**...

Ministers of the gospel must learn Christ as Paul learned him. They may not content themselves with that learning which they find in schools; but they must proceed further to a real learning of Christ.

**They that must convert others,  
it is meet that they should be effectually converted.**

John must **eat** the book (**Ed**: I love this picture! Not books but THE BOOK!!!), and then prophesy; and they who would be fit ministers of the gospel, must first themselves **eat** the book of God. And this book is indeed eaten, when they are not only in their minds enlightened, but in their hearts are mortified, and brought in subjection to the Word of Christ. Unless Christ be thus learned spiritually and really, divines shall speak of the Word of God as men speak of riddles, and as priests in former times said their matins (morning prayers, first canonical hour in the Romish church), when they hardly knew what they said.

**Preach** (2097)([euaggelizo/euangelizo](#)) is same verb in Gal 1:8 (2x), Gal 1:9, 11, 16, 23. The [present tense](#) is "continuous" while the revelation was [aorist tense](#), at a point in time. While the **revelation** was a definite and completed act, the **commission to preach** was for his lifetime. Preach is in the middle voice which is reflexive ("I myself might preach") and indicates Paul initiated the action (preaching) and participated in the process. He was not like a passive bystander with a message, but was intimately involved in proclaiming the Good News.

**Among the Gentiles** - Two Jewish missionaries - Peter primarily to the Jews. Paul primarily to the Gentiles.

**David Guzik on so that I might preach Him among the Gentiles** - This shows that God has a sense of humor. He selected a man before he was born for the job of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles. That man grew up hating Gentiles, probably believing as some (not all) other Jewish people did in his day: that the only reason God made Gentiles was so they would fuel the fires of hell. ([Galatians 1 Commentary](#))

**Preach Him** - He preached "Christ crucified to Jews a stumbling block," because they expected a political savior, and to the Greeks it was foolishness because they considered anyone who would be crucified of no account. (1Cor 1:23). Paul adds...

And when I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. 2 For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. (1Cor 2:1-2)

Click Chronological Diagram to enlarge  
See Also [Map of Events of Paul's Conversion and Early Ministry](#)  
(Note: Map is copyright by Holman Publishing and not to be copied)

**I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood** - And this would include even Ananias who God had sent to minister to him after his blinding Damascus experience with the risen Lord Jesus (Acts 9:10-17+). In Galatians 2:1+ Paul writes...

Then after an interval of fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along also....6 But from those who were of high reputation (what they were makes no difference to me; God shows no partiality)—well, those who were of reputation **contributed nothing to me**.

**Immediately** (2112)([euthus](#) from [euthus](#) = immediate) means instantly, forthwith.

**Consult** (4323)([prosanatithemi](#) from [prós](#) = towards, in addition to + [anatithemi](#) from [ana](#) = up + [tithemi](#) = to put) means to lay up in addition, to impart or communicate further (Gal 2:6+) or by way of consultation, to confer with, consult as in the present passage. To go to someone for advice. To present one's cause to another as for approval or judgment (Gal 1:16). In other words in Gal 1:16 the idea is "to lay a matter before others so as to obtain counsel or instruction."

**Prosanatithemi** is used only in Gal 1:16 and Gal 2:6+ ("those who were of reputation **contributed** nothing to me.").

The root verb [anatithemi](#) means to set forth one's cause (Acts 25:14+), to expound with a request for counsel, approval, or decision, to communicate ([anatithemi](#) in Gal. 2:2+). The shorter form **anatithemi**, is the less intensive word simply signifying the imparting of information, rather than conferring with others to seek advice.

**John Brown** - The word translated "conferred (consult)," properly signifies 'to impose a new burden.' In the classics, the middle voice is used in the sense,—'I allow a burden to be imposed on myself—I undertake some difficult affair.' It is sometimes used by the later writers with the dative of a person, to signify 'to take counsel or advice of a person,' as he who asks advice lays a burden on the person consulted. This is its meaning here. ([Reference](#))

**Thayer** says "with a dative of the person to put oneself upon another by going to him (pros), i.e. to commit or betake oneself to another namely, for the purpose of consulting him, hence, to consult, to take one into counsel. (Gal 1:16)" To contribute or add something to someone. To add from one's store (the force of the middle voice), to impart, to lay before (Gal 2:6).

**Vine** - [prosanatithemi](#), lit., "to lay upon in addition," came to be used in the sense of putting oneself before another, for the purpose of consulting him; hence simply "to consult, to take one into counsel, to confer." With this meaning it is used only in Gal. 1:16. In Gal. 2:2, a shorter form, **anatithemi**, is used, which means "to lay before" (kjv, "communicated unto"). This less intensive word may have been purposely used there by the apostle to suggest that he described to his fellow apostles the character of his teaching, not to obtain their approval or their advice concerning it, but simply that they might have the facts of the case before them on which they were shortly to adjudicate. [Prosanatithemi](#) was also used to signify "to communicate, to impart." With this meaning it is used only in Gal. 2:6, in the middle voice, the suggestion being to "add" from one's store of things. In regard to his visit to Jerusalem the apostle says "those who were of repute imparted nothing to me" (kjv, "in conference added"), that is to say, they neither modified his teaching nor "added" to his authority.

**Wuest** - The word **conferred (consult)** deserves careful study. It is **prosanatithemi**. It means "to betake one's self to another for the purpose of consulting him." In pagan writers it was used of consulting soothsayers and the like. It was as if Paul said, "I did not consult with anyone in order to learn the opinion of others as to this revelation I received, or to obtain instruction from them, or guidance, or advice." ([Word Studies from the Greek New Testament](#))

**Donald Campbell** - Paul had emphasized that he did not receive his message from men before or at the time of his conversion.

Now he affirmed that he was free from human influences afterward as well. Though Paul met other Christians after his conversion he did not consult them on doctrine. ([The Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

**Flesh and blood** - Human nature in general. Paul did not consult with other human beings, other people, probably especially other human authorities. Paul asserts that his commission and message came to him directly from God, and that neither was affected in any way by human intervention. As **John Brown** expounds this...

'I neither consulted my own reason or inclination, nor did I seek instruction from others: I committed myself entirely to Divine guidance and teaching. I did not consult with any man. I did not seek instruction from any man. I did not inquire at other Christians if the views of Christianity which had been conveyed into my mind were correct or not. I asked at no man what I was to preach, or where I was to preach. I gave myself up to the guidance of the Divine impulse; and immediately commenced speaking the things of the Spirit, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth.' ([Reference](#))

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**Readiness for service** - Brutus visiting Ligarius found him ill, and said, "What! sick, Ligarius?" "No, Brutus," said he; if thou hast any noble enterprise in hand I am well." So should the believer say of Christ; what might excuse us from other labour shall never prevent our engaging in His service. (C. H. Spurgeon.)

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### Paul's mission

- I. His great motive. To preach Christ.
  - II. His prompt surrender.
    1. Personal.
    2. Decisive.
    3. Final. (A. F. Barfield.)
- 

**Personal conviction** - What we need is the revelation of Christ within us; not the communication of truths yet unrevealed, as was necessary in the case of the founders of our religion, but the communication of truths already made known; the removal of the veil from our hearts, and the giving of the knowledge of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Each of us must for himself discover the hid treasure; whether the light flashes upon us in an instant, as with the woman at the well of Jacob, or comes to us as the result of long search and patient inquiry, as in the case of the Ethiopian eunuch, we must find the Messiah, we must hear Him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world. It will not suffice, in this day at least, to take religion upon trust, to accept the popular faith, just because it is popular. Such belief will not stand in the day of trial; it certainly will exercise no constraining influence upon our hearts and lives. Whether for our peace or for our usefulness, Christ must live within us; the reasonable mind must apprehend Him, the heart must cleave to Him. Thus our lives will tell upon the world around us. There will be a living power within, full of holy joy, and peace, and comfort; whilst a living power will go forth from us, and act silently, it may be, but effectually, upon the world without. (Emilius Bayley, B. D.) ([The Biblical Illustrator](#))

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**F B Meyer - It pleased God ... to reveal his Son in me** - O soul of man, has this revelation ever been thy experience? Dost thou know that Christ is in thee? If thou truly believest in Him, there is no doubt of it. "Know ye not as to your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" And yet thou mayest be in ignorance of this transcendent possession. Ask God to reveal His Son in thee, to make thee know experimentally the riches of the glory of this mystery. He will rend the veil of the inner life in twain from the top to the bottom, and in the most holy place of thy spirit disclose the Shekinah of His eternal presence. Two conditions only must be fulfilled. Thou must be prepared to yield thine own will to the cross; and to wait before God in the silence and solitude of thy spirit.

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**Life in the revelation of Christ** - A man often passes through many stages before he becomes truly converted to God. When he is first awakened to serious impressions, and sees the folly of intently pursuing worldly things, to the neglect of the more durable riches, he resembles a boy emerging from childhood, who throws aside his trifles and playthings for amusements of a higher and more intellectual kind. He now sets himself with all diligence to working out his own salvation in his own strength; multiplies his religious duties, and reforms his bad habits; yet all this while he is like one who has been employed in new painting and varnishing a wooden statue--it has no life within. But when the Holy Spirit influences his heart, and reveals Christ in him, he is in the state of one who has awakened from a dream, in which he has been acting a fictitious part, to live and move and use all his faculties in reality, and enter on the great business of life. (H. G. Salter.)

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**The inner revelation of Christ** - Education refines and elevates but does not save and sanctify the soul; law civilizes but cannot change the heart and the will; science and philosophy give power and endless resources to enlarge the faculties of the mind, but they leave the problems of sin and pardon unsolved. The revelation of Christ fills the soul with light, and life, and joy; is the only solution of the problems of our moral being; the only deliverer from the law of sin and death; the only pledge of everlasting life, and indeed the beginning of a Divine education which ennobles and saves, and the dawn of a heavenly day which brings wisdom, and righteousness, and peace. (T. Goadby.)

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**John Eadie - Revelation unlike reasoning** - Revelation is opposed to knowledge gained by prolonged and patient thought. It is unlike the common process by which an intellectual conclusion is reached, the inference of one syllogism forming but the premise of another, till by a series of connected links, primary or abstract truth is reached. For it is sudden and perfect illumination, lifting the receptive power into intensest susceptibility, and so lighting up the whole theme disclosed, that it is immediately and fully apprehended in its evidence and reality. We know not, indeed, what the process is, what the waking up of the higher intuition is, or what the ecstasy which throws into momentary abeyance all the lower faculties. It may resemble that new sphere of vision in which genius enjoys gleams of unutterable beauty, or that "demonstration of the Spirit" which gives the truth new aspects of richness and grandeur to the sanctified soul in some mood of rapt meditation. But still it is different and higher far both in matter and purpose. It was God's revelation of His Son,--not glimpses of the truth about Him, but Himself; not merely summoning His attention to His paramount claims, so as to elicit an acknowledgment of them,--not simply presenting Him to his intellectual perception to be studied and comprehended,--nor even shining an image of Him in his heart to be loved and cherished,--but His Son unveiled in living reality; and in him--in his inner self, not in any distinct and separate realm of his being--with the conscious possession of all this infallible and communicable knowledge which was given, perhaps, first in clear and vivid outline, and then filled in surely and gradually. ([The Biblical Illustrator](#))

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**Oswald Chambers** - When in doubt, haul yourself up short and concentrate on God and every time you do, you will find that God will engineer your circumstances and open the way perfectly securely, the condition on your part being that you concentrate on God...You feel amazed at the sense of God's call, and in your eagerness you talk to someone else about it, and you find that they much prefer to talk about their breakfast. Then comes the danger that you are apt to become contemptuous. Keep that profound relationship between your soul and God.

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**F B Meyer - Galatians 1:15–16 It was the good pleasure of God ... to reveal his Son in me.**

If you have truly believed in the Son of God, it is certain that He, by the Spirit, has taken up his abode in your heart. But perhaps He is hidden in the deeps of your nature, as the young Joash in the heart of the Temple. He is, therefore, unable to exert that influence on your inner thought and outward life that He should. Is it not befitting that you should ask the Father to reveal his Son in you? He has been revealed to you as the Divine Substitute, but not in you as the source and spring of holiness,

Beneath the body with its physical existence, and the mind with the play of intellect, lies the spirit of man, like the most holy place in the Temple of old. That is the shrine in which the Shechinah of Christ's presence shines, and in which we can hold fellowship with Him face to face. Alas, that so heavy a veil of unbelief, of absorption in the world around us, of inattention, hangs between Him and us! Would that the strong hands which rent the veil in twain when our Savior died would rend in twain all that deprives us of this inspiring and most helpful vision of the Son, so that we might anticipate the eternal years!

But such revelations are only given that we may better help others. Not for selfish enjoyment, but for ministering help. Hence the apostle says, "that I might preach Him among the Gentiles." Be pleased, O Father, to give us that revelation, that we may speak as those who have seen the great sight, and need no further conference with flesh and blood! Then, like the apostles of old, we shall go forth among men, saying, "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." (Meyer, F. B. Our Daily Homily)

**Galatians 1:17 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.**

Amplified - Nor did I [even] go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles (special messengers of Christ) before I was, but I went away and retired into Arabia, and afterward I came back again to Damascus.

Wuest - neither did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia, and again returned to Damascus. ([Eerdmans Publishing](#))

NET Galatians 1:17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before me, but right away I

departed to Arabia, and then returned to Damascus.

GNT Galatians 1:17 ο δὲ ἄλλοθεν ἐξ ἑρσλυμα πρὸς τοὺς πρῶτους ἀποστόλους, ἀλλὰ πρὸς ἄλλοθεν ἐξ ἑρσλυμα πρὸς τὴν πύλιν πρὸς τὴν Δαμασκῶν.

NLT Galatians 1:17 Nor did I go up to Jerusalem to consult with those who were apostles before I was. Instead, I went away into Arabia, and later I returned to the city of Damascus.

KJV 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.

ESV Galatians 1:17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia, and returned again to Damascus.

ASV Galatians 1:17 neither went I up to Jerusalem to them that were apostles before me: but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned unto Damascus.

CSB Galatians 1:17 I did not go up to Jerusalem to those who had become apostles before me; instead I went to Arabia and came back to Damascus.

NIV Galatians 1:17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before I was, but I went immediately into Arabia and later returned to Damascus.

NKJ Galatians 1:17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus.

NRS Galatians 1:17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were already apostles before me, but I went away at once into Arabia, and afterwards I returned to Damascus.

YLT Galatians 1:17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem unto those who were apostles before me, but I went away to Arabia, and again returned to Damascus,

NAB Galatians 1:17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; rather, I went into Arabia and then returned to Damascus.

NJB Galatians 1:17 or to go up to Jerusalem to see those who were already apostles before me. Instead, I went off to Arabia, and later I came back to Damascus.

GWN Galatians 1:17 I didn't even go to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before I was. Instead, I went to Arabia and then came back to Damascus.

BBE Galatians 1:17 And I went not up to Jerusalem to those who were Apostles before me; but I went away into Arabia, and again I came back to Damascus.

- **but I went away to Arabia:** Ga 1:18 Ac 9:20-25
- **returned once more to Damascus:** 2Co 11:32,33
- Galatians 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Martin Hengel "Paul in Arabia," Bulletin for Biblical Research 12.1 \(2002\): 47-66.](#)

## PAUL'S THREE YEAR "DESERT SABBATICAL"

**Nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me** - Paul again is emphasizing that his call and his subsequent "seminary course" as an apostle was not the result of other men teaching him but that ultimately it was God Who taught him during the three year "desert sabbatical." Ponder this for a moment. Paul was in the desert (alone as far as we know) with God as his Teacher and this went on for over 1000 days! I cannot wait to get to Heaven and talk with Paul about these 3 years in the desert! God could have "japped" him in a moment or in 3 days but for reasons that are unclear from Scripture, it was 3 years! Clearly God's ways are not our ways! (Isaiah 55:8)

**Go up to Jerusalem** - "Went up is from **anerchomai**. It was used especially of visiting Jerusalem which was situated in the highlands of Palestine. **Katerchomai** was used of the descending journey from the city. The religious position of Jerusalem as the seat of the Temple and the mother-city of the Church, and its geographical position on the central heights of Palestine, were the factors that suggested the expressions "going up" and "going down," when a journey was made to that city and then back to one's home." ([Wuest](#))

**Before me** (pro emou) - This short clause would intimate that Paul was then an apostle as well as those in Jerusalem, and the only

difference was in the priority of the date of their apostleship. **Robertson** adds "The Jerusalem apostles were genuine apostles, but so is Paul. His call did not come from them nor did he receive confirmation by them." ([Galatians 1 Commentary - Word Pictures in the NT](#))

As an aside it is fascinating to note Paul's self-assessment as he grew in grace and knowledge as a follower of Christ...

#### NOTE PROGRESSION IN PAUL'S ESTIMATE OF SELF:

1Co 15:9 (**55AD**) For I am the least of the apostles, who am **not fit to be called an apostle** because I persecuted the church of God.

Eph 3:8 (**61AD**) To me, **the very least of all saints**, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ,

1Ti 1:15 (**63-66AD**) It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom **I am foremost of all**.

Click Chronological Diagram to enlarge  
See Also Map of Events of Paul's Conversion and Early Ministry  
(Note: Map is copyright by Holman Publishing and not to be copied)

**But I went away to Arabia** - [Arabia](#) is the transliteration (spelling) of a Hebrew word meaning "an arid, thus a sparsely populated place."

**Guzik** adds "Paul did not travel to what we would call Saudi Arabia. The area known in that day as Arabia in his day extended all the way to the city of Damascus. Paul probably lived in some quiet desert place outside of Damascus." ([Galatians 1 Commentary](#))

**John Brown** - He went into Arabia, for the purpose, it may be, of yielding himself up in its solitudes to solemn meditation and communion with his divine Master. No proof can be derived from these words that Paul preached in Arabia. There is no trace of that in the Acts of the Apostles. ([Reference](#))

**Spurgeon** — What he did there, we do not know; but probably he had a time of quiet meditation and prayer, all alone: "I went into Arabia." The best thing we can do, sometimes, is to get away from the voices of men, and listen only to the voice of God: ([Spurgeon's Exposition](#))

**Wuest** supposes that **Paul** "needed to be alone with God. He needed time and isolation in order to think. The revelation of the Son of God had blasted away the foundations of the Pharisaic thought structure which he had been building up with such consummate skill and zeal, and it had come tumbling down in ruins about his head. This revelation also furnished him with another foundation upon which to build a new theological structure. But the replacement of the ruined structure with a new one could not be the work of a day or a month. There in Arabia, isolated from all human contact, alone with God, the great apostle restudied his Old Testament scriptures, not now with the Pharisaic traditions vitiating his thinking, but, led by the Holy Spirit, with the central fact of the Cross of the Lord Jesus as the controlling factor in his meditations. Out of all this study emerged the Pauline system of doctrine as we have it presented in Romans. ([Word Studies from the Greek New Testament](#))

**Oswald Chambers** - The nutriment of a man's life comes when he is alone with God; he gets his direction in the desert experiences.

**Dennis Egner** - As we run the race of the Christian life, we need to end well. The apostle Paul is an example of a good finisher. He received Christ on the Damascus road. He attended "seminary" in the Arabian desert (Galatians 1:17-18). He served Christ in spite of hardship and persecution. He opened Europe to the Gospel. And at the close of his life, he could say with confidence, "I have kept the faith" (2 Timothy 4:7<sup>±</sup>). What about us? What stalls our spiritual engines? What causes us to break down? When we find ourselves out of the running, we need to diagnose the problem, make the necessary repairs, and get back into the race. God needs people He can count on to cross the finish line.

**Returned once more to Damascus** - This return to the place of his first personal persecution by the Jews is not recorded anywhere else in Scripture. One might say Paul was foolish to go back to the place where his life might be threatened. But after 3 years with God, there is little doubt that Saul/Paul was led by the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:18+) to return to Damascus. We do not know what Paul did in Damascus, but given the "context" of what he repeatedly did in Acts, he must have proclaimed the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

**John Brown** comments "After continuing in Arabia for some time, he returned to Damascus, which at that time was under the government of Aretas, the king of Arabia (2 Cor 11:32). During all this time he had never met with one of the apostles, nor does it appear that he had intercourse with any individual of note among the Christians. And when, after three years, he did at length go up to Jerusalem, he received neither instruction nor authority from the apostles." ([Brown](#))

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**The significance of this episode for us** - In the busy mart, amid life's dusky lanes and accumulating cares, we lose and forget our God. Our books are too much with us; friends and social life make the hours busy with what is human; and the claims of business are of increasing urgency. We must find for ourselves a desert place, where, occasionally for prolonged seasons, and daily for a short season, we may receive the Lord's anointing. (S. Pearson, M. A.)

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**Meditation** (See Meditate or Primer on Biblical Meditation) is the life of the soul; action is the outcome of meditation, honour is the reward of action. So meditate that thou may do; so do that thou may be honored; so accept honour as to give God the glory. ([The Biblical Illustrator](#))

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**Ironside** says: Have you ever noticed how many of God's beloved servants had their finishing courses in the university of the wilderness? When God wanted to fit Moses to be the leader of His people He sent him to the wilderness. He had gone through all the Egyptian schools, and thought he was ready to be the deliverer of God's people. When he left the university of Egypt he may have said, "Now I am ready to undertake my great lifework." But, immediately, he started killing Egyptians and hiding them in the sand, and God says, "You are not ready yet, Moses; you want a post-graduate course." He was forty years learning the wisdom of Egypt, and forty years forgetting it and learning the wisdom of God, and finally, when he received his post-graduate degree he was sent of God to deliver His people. Elijah had his time in the wilderness. David had his time there. Oh, those years in the wilderness when hunted by King Saul like a partridge on the mountainside. They were used to help fit him for his great work. And then think of our blessed Lord Himself! He was baptized in the Jordan, presenting Himself there in accordance with the Word of God as the One who was to go to the cross to fulfil all righteousness on behalf of needy sinners, and the Holy Spirit like a dove descended upon Him. He then went into the wilderness for forty days, and prayed and fasted in view of the great ministry upon which He was to enter. Then He passed through that serious temptation of Satan, emerging triumphant, and went forth to preach the gospel of the kingdom.

**Galatians 1:18 Then three years later I went up to [Jerusalem](#) to become acquainted with Cephas, and stayed with him fifteen days.**

Amplified - Then three years later, I did go up to Jerusalem to become [personally] acquainted with Cephas (Peter), and remained with him for fifteen days.

Wuest - Then, after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to become acquainted with Cephas, and remained with him fifteen days. ([Eerdmans Publishing](#))

NET Galatians 1:18 Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas and get information from him, and I stayed with him fifteen days.

GNT Galatians 1:18 πειτα μετ τη τρ α ν λθον ε ς εροσ λυμα στορ σοι Κηφ ν κα π μεινα πρ ς α τ ν μ ρας δεκαπ ντε,

NLT Galatians 1:18 Then three years later I went to Jerusalem to get to know Peter, and I stayed with him for fifteen days.

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

ESV Galatians 1:18 Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas and remained with him fifteen days.

ASV Galatians 1:18 Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and tarried with him fifteen days.

CSB Galatians 1:18 Then after three years I did go up to Jerusalem to get to know Cephas, and I stayed with him 15 days.

NIV Galatians 1:18 Then after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to get acquainted with Peter and stayed with him fifteen days.

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

NRS Galatians 1:18 Then after three years I did go up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas and stayed with him fifteen days;



YLT Galatians 1:18 then, after three years I went up to Jerusalem to enquire about Peter, and remained with him fifteen days,

NAB Galatians 1:18 Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to confer with Kephas and remained with him for fifteen days.

NJB Galatians 1:18 Only after three years did I go up to Jerusalem to meet Cephas. I stayed fifteen days with him

GWN Galatians 1:18 Then, three years later I went to Jerusalem to become personally acquainted with Cephas. I stayed with him for fifteen days.

BBE Galatians 1:18 Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Cephas, and was there with him fifteen days.

- **I went up:** Acts 9:26-29 Acts 22:17,18
- Galatians 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## PAUL'S FIRST POST-CONVERSION VISIT TO JERUSALEM

**Then three years later I went up to [Jerusalem](#)** - See the diagram in preceding verse. Note this visit to Jerusalem is not his visit to deliver famine relief in Acts 11:30+ nor his trip to the Jerusalem council in Acts 15+.

**Then** - Marks time sequence (See importance of **expressions of time**).

**Three years later** - It is interesting to recall that the original apostles had been taught by Jesus for three years. This would include Paul's time in Arabia and Damascus, but how long in each location is not clear from Scripture.).

**Spurgeon** — That is, “after three years,” which showed that he did not go there to receive any commission from Peter. He had been for three years working for his Lord and Master before he ever saw the face of an apostle. ([Spurgeon's Exposition](#))

**Brown** notes that " It is impossible to say certainly whether these three years are to be dated from Paul's departure from Jerusalem to Damascus, or from his return from Arabia to that city. This is probably the visit of which we have an account, Acts 9:26, 27. His object was to “see Peter.” ([Brown](#))

**Oswald Chambers** - Think of Paul after three years in Arabia, where he was altogether broken and then re-made by the grace of God, coming to Peter and being with him for fifteen days—can you imagine what happened? How Peter would go over the whole story, beginning with the scenes on the lake right on to the Garden of Gethsemane and the Cross; and Peter would take Paul to the Communion service, and they would see widows there, made so by Paul. Think what a memory like that would mean to a man of acute sensitiveness. It takes great courage for a forgiven man to come in contact with those whom he has wronged.

**Luke** describes **Paul's first visit to Jerusalem...**

And when he had come to Jerusalem, he was trying to associate with the disciples; and they were all afraid of him, not believing that he was a disciple. 27 But Barnabas took hold of him and brought him to the apostles and described to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had talked to him, and how at Damascus he had spoken out boldly in the name of Jesus. 28 And he was with them moving about freely in Jerusalem, speaking out boldly in the name of the Lord. 29 And he was talking and arguing with the Hellenistic Jews; but they were attempting to put him to death. (Acts 9:26-29+, See also Acts 22:17-18 which could be during the first visit, although one cannot be dogmatic)

**To become acquainted with Cephas, and stayed with him fifteen days** - [Cephas](#) is Simon Peter. **Cephas** is the Greek spelling of a Chaldaic word meaning “a rock.” (Jn 1:42) As Paul had stated earlier his message was not obtained from men, but here he emphasizes that was still in the mainstream of apostolic tradition of men like Peter.

**MacArthur** adds that “obviously far too short a time to have been fully transformed from all his Jewish theology and tradition and fully instructed in the gospel.” ([MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Galatians](#))

**Acquainted** (only NT use)(2477)(**historeo** from **histor** = one who knows by inquiry; English = history) means “to gain knowledge by visiting; to become personally acquainted with. (Vincent) To visit to get to know someone, in this case not just Peter but James (Gal 1:19).

**Guzik** adds that "The word (historeo) translated **to see** (to become acquainted with) speaks of someone coming as a tourist. " 'A word used,' says Chrysostom, 'by those who go to see great and famous cities.' " (Lightfoot) The idea is that Paul was not commanded to come to Jerusalem to give an account to Peter or the other disciples, but he came of his own accord and visited as a tourist. ([Galatians 1 Commentary](#))

**Anderson** - Here was the CHIEF PERSECUTOR of the Gospel and the CHIEF PROPAGATOR, meeting together and sharing with regard to their oneness in Jesus Christ. ([Notes](#))

### Galatians 1:19 But I did not see any other of the apostles except James, the Lord's brother

Amplified - But I did not see any of the other apostles (the special messengers of Christ) except James the brother of our Lord.

Wuest - But another of the apostles I did not see except James the brother of our Lord. ([Eerdmans Publishing](#))

NET Galatians 1:19 But I saw none of the other apostles except James the Lord's brother.

GNT Galatians 1:19 τερων δ τ ν ποστ λων ο κ ε δον ε μ κωβον τ ν δελφ ν το κυρ ου.

NLT Galatians 1:19 The only other apostle I met at that time was James, the Lord's brother.

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

ESV Galatians 1:19 But I saw none of the other apostles except James the Lord's brother.

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

CSB Galatians 1:19 But I didn't see any of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother.

NIV Galatians 1:19 I saw none of the other apostles--only James, the Lord's brother.

NKJ Galatians 1:19 But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother.

NRS Galatians 1:19 but I did not see any other apostle except James the Lord's brother.

YLT Galatians 1:19 and other of the apostles I did not see, except James, the brother of the Lord.

NAB Galatians 1:19 But I did not see any other of the apostles, only James the brother of the Lord.

NJB Galatians 1:19 but did not set eyes on any of the rest of the apostles, only James, the Lord's brother.

GWN Galatians 1:19 I didn't see any other apostle. I only saw James, the Lord's brother.

BBE Galatians 1:19 But of the other Apostles I saw only James, the Lord's brother.

- **James:** Mt 10:3 Mk 3:18 Lk 6:15 Ac 1:13, James the son of Alphaeus, Jas 1:1 Jude 1:1
- **the Lord's brother:** Mt 13:55 Mk 6:3 1Co 9:5
- Galatians 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**But I did not see any other of the apostles except James, the Lord's brother-** The apostles refers only to Peter and James. Why did he not visit any of the other apostles? Was it because of fear? Some commentators thinks that was the reason or that they were not in Jerusalem at that time. Presumably Paul would have not been able to see even Peter and James without the assistance of Barnabas, for Luke records...

When he came to Jerusalem, he was trying to associate with the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he was a disciple. 27 But **Barnabas took hold of him and brought him to the apostles** and described to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had talked to him, and how at Damascus he had spoken out boldly in the name of Jesus. 28 And he was with them, moving about freely in Jerusalem, speaking out boldly in the name of the Lord. 29 And he was talking and arguing with the Hellenistic Jews; but they were attempting to put him to death.(Acts 9:26-29+)

**NET Note** - Literally "But another of the apostles I did not see, except..." with "**another**" in emphatic position in the Greek text. Paul is determined to make the point that his contacts with the original twelve apostles and other leaders of the Jerusalem church were limited, thus asserting his independence from them.

**James the Lord's brother** - James was the recognized leader of the first church of Jerusalem (Acts 12:17+, Acts 15:13,19+; Acts 21:18+, Galatians 2:9+), and also the most widely accepted author of the epistle of James (James 1:1+). He was not one of the Twelve however, since the brethren of our Lord did not believe on Him at the time of the choosing of the Twelve.

Paul confirms that **James** is one of the human brothers of Jesus. Recall that Christ's brothers ("His brothers, James and Joseph and Simon and Judas") did not believe in Him initially (John 7:5), but later joined their mother Mary in fellowship with the other disciples (Acts 1:14+). James had been among those who had seen Christ after His resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:7+). The same would then apply to Jude (Jude 1:1+) since both James and Jude are named as among Jesus' brothers (Matthew 13:55).

Recall that there are 3 men in the NT with the name of James - James, Son of Zebedee (one of "Sons of Thunder") (Mt 4:21, Mk 3:17), James Son of Alphaeus, brother of Matthew and one of the 12 disciples (Mk 3:18), and finally James, the brother of Jesus.

### Galatians 1:20 (Now in what I am writing to you, I assure you before God that I am not lying.)

Amplified - Now [note carefully what I am telling you, for it is the truth], I write this as if I were standing before the bar of God; I do not lie.

Wuest - But the things which I am writing to you, behold, in the sight of God, I am not lying. [Eerdmans Publishing](#)

NET Galatians 1:20 I assure you that, before God, I am not lying about what I am writing to you!

GNT Galatians 1:20 ὁ γρ φω μ ν, ὁ ν πιον το θεο τι ο ψε δομαι.

NLT Galatians 1:20 I declare before God that what I am writing to you is not a lie.

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

ESV Galatians 1:20 (In what I am writing to you, before God, I do not lie!)

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

CSB Galatians 1:20 Now I am not lying in what I write to you. God is my witness.

NIV Galatians 1:20 I assure you before God that what I am writing you is no lie.

NKJ Galatians 1:20 (Now concerning the things which I write to you, indeed, before God, I do not lie.)

NRS Galatians 1:20 In what I am writing to you, before God, I do not lie!

YLT Galatians 1:20 And the things that I write to you, lo, before God -- I lie not;

NAB Galatians 1:20 (As to what I am writing to you, behold, before God, I am not lying.)

NJB Galatians 1:20 I swear before God that what I have written is the truth.

GWN Galatians 1:20 (God is my witness that what I'm writing is not a lie.)

BBE Galatians 1:20 Now God is witness that the things which I am writing to you are true.

- Ro 9:1 2Co 11:10,11,31
- Galatians 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**What I am writing to you** - This refers primarily to what he had just written in Gal 1:18-19, as these were facts Paul felt clearly showed his independence from those who had been apostles prior to his call.

**MacArthur** explains that "Paul's point in this part of the letter was to affirm that he had received his gospel directly from the Lord, not from the other apostles. He only visited two of them for two weeks, and only after three years had elapsed since his conversion. Any accusation that he was a second-hand apostle, receiving his message from the Jerusalem apostles, was false." ([MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Galatians](#))

Paul speaks his oath in the sight of God, calling God to witness that he has a clear conscience in what he is recounting here following his conversion. Paul is making a detailed sketch here of his activity after conversion to show that the Judaizers are wrong in their accusations. Paul wants to absolutely contradict the false reports from the false teachers that he has received his gospel and his authority to preach from the apostles in Jerusalem.

**Campbell** adds he did this "To stress the truth of what he had just said—no doubt in the face of a Judaizer's charge that he had misrepresented his relationship to the apostles." ([The Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

**I assure you before God that I am not lying-** This was a solemn oath given "Coram Deo," before the face of God, and was a common Jewish vow. Presumably the **Judaizers** had promoted various lies and falsehoods regarding Paul's dependence of the other apostles.

**Wuest** adds that "The logical inference is that they had circulated statements to the effect that Paul had spent much time at Jerusalem with the apostles there. He denies this charge most vehemently." ([Wuest Word Studies - Eerdman Publishing Company Volume 1, Volume 2, Volume 3](#) - used [by permission](#))

**Lange** says: God is a witness of the truth, and a righteous judge of all lies. Can you in all that you say, call on God as the witness of its truth? In all cases this ought to be possible, although it is seldom needful or proper.

**Lenski** says: This solemn assurance is called forth by the insinuations and falsifications of the Judaizers who used all that they had heard about Paul in order to discredit him. Some of the Galatians might ask: "Is that really all there was to that visit in Jerusalem?" Paul gives the most solemn answer as if he were before God's own judgment seat. He is writing them the facts, the entire truth without a falsehood.

**John Eadie** - Augustine, in loc., enters into the question of the lawfulness of swearing. One can scarcely suppose that the apostle would have used this solemn adjuration, unless the statement had been liable to be questioned, or a different account of his early Christian history had been in circulation. It would seem that a totally different account of his visits to Jerusalem after his conversion, and of the relation he sustained to the elder apostles, had been in use among the Judaists, to undermine his independent authority and neutralize his teaching. And because what he now tells would contradict received opinion as to his earlier actions and journeys, he confirms what he says by a virtual oath ([Galatians 1 Commentary](#))

**John Brown** - This is a plain intimation that oaths, on proper occasions, are not unlawful. We have similar declarations equivalent to oaths, Rom. 1:9; 2 Cor. 1:23; Rom. 9:1; 2 Cor. 11:31; 1 Thess. 2:5. ([Brown](#))

Paul repeatedly stated that he was not lying, but that his teaching came directly from God (Ro 9:1; 2 Cor. 11:31).

Romans 9:1 I am telling the truth in Christ, **I am not lying**, my conscience testifies with me in the Holy Spirit,

2 Corinthians 11:31 The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, He who is blessed forever, knows that **am not lying**.

**Spurgeon** — "I did not derive my knowledge of Christ from any one of these holy men, therefore I am not an imitator of any other apostle. I was sent out by Christ himself, and instructed by him by revelation, so I am an apostle of Christ as much as any of them." ([Spurgeon's Exposition](#))

**Galeazius**, a gentleman of great wealth, who suffered martyrdom at St. Angelo in Italy, being much entreated by his friends to recant, replied, "Death is much sweeter to me with the testimony of truth than life with its least denial." ([The Biblical Illustrator](#))

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**TODAY IN THE WORD - "Staking a claim"** in the Old West was serious business. Doing so gave a person the rights over a mine or a piece of land. If a prospector found gold or silver on his claim, others would rush to stake claims nearby in hopes of striking it rich. It was not uncommon for fights to break out over who had staked a claim first or over where one claim stopped and another started. Men were known to lie, cheat, gamble, steal and even kill to get and keep their claims. "Staking a claim" is exactly what Paul is doing in today's reading: a claim to apostleship and apostolic authority. Not to elevate himself, but for the sake of the gospel, he proclaims his God-given authority. The Galatians must not take his words lightly!

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### Galatians 1:21 Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia

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Amplified - Then I went into the districts (countries, regions) of Syria and Cilicia.

Wuest - Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia, ([Erdmans Publishing](#))

NET Galatians 1:21 Afterward I went to the regions of Syria and Cilicia.

GNT Galatians 1:21 πειπα λθον ε ς τ κ λ ματα τ ς Συρ ας κα τ ς Κιλικ ας·

NLT Galatians 1:21 After that visit I went north into the provinces of Syria and Cilicia.

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

ESV Galatians 1:21 Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia.

ASV Galatians 1:21 Then I came unto the regions of Syria and Cilicia.

CSB Galatians 1:21 Afterward, I went to the regions of Syria and Cilicia.

NIV Galatians 1:21 Later I went to Syria and Cilicia.

NKJ Galatians 1:21 Afterward I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia.

NRS Galatians 1:21 Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia,

YLT Galatians 1:21 then I came to the regions of Syria and of Cilicia,

NAB Galatians 1:21 Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia.

NJB Galatians 1:21 After that I went to places in Syria and Cilicia;

GWN Galatians 1:21 Then I went to the regions of Syria and Cilicia.

BBE Galatians 1:21 Then I came to the parts of Syria and Cilicia.

- **I went:** Ac 9:30 11:25,26 13:1 15:23,41 18:18 21:3
- **Cilicia:** Acts 6:9 Acts 21:39 Acts 22:3 Acts 23:34
- Galatians 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## GOING HOME AS A NEW CREATURE IN CHRIST

After escaping danger in Jerusalem Paul heads homeward, his birthplace being in Tarsus in Cilicia. Scripture is silent about Paul's time in Tarsus which a number of commentators think was as long as 10 years. Where Paul's parents still alive? What would they have thought about his conversion? What did Paul do in these regions for up to 10 years? We simply cannot say. Won't it be a joy talking with Paul in Heaven as he describes the God glorifying details of his incredible life on earth!

As you study Acts, you note that we lose track of Saul in Acts 9:27-30 Luke recording

(**FIRST VISIT IN JERUSALEM AFTER UP TO 3 YEARS "SEMINAR IN ARABIA"**) But Barnabas took hold of him and brought him to the apostles and described to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had talked to him, and how at Damascus he had spoken out boldly in the name of Jesus. 28 And he was with them, moving about freely in Jerusalem, speaking out boldly in the name of the Lord. 29 And he was talking and arguing with the Hellenistic Jews; but they were attempting to put him to death. 30 But when the brethren learned of it, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him away to Tarsus. (Acts 9:27-30+) (See [Map for Journey from Jerusalem to Caesarea Maritima to Tarsus](#))

[Here is an ESV Timeline](#) that includes major events in Paul's life - while the dates are approximate, they do help you give you a sense of how long Saul/Paul was in Tarsus, before Barnabas searched for him (as described below).

Saul/Paul's escape from his **first visit to Jerusalem** back to Tarsus is seen in the diagram below marked as "**In Syria and Cilicia.**" The next event in this chart is "Second Visit to Jerusalem." What is not described is Paul's time at Tarsus in Cilicia, because as noted above Scripture is silent. What we do know (and this is not on the diagram below, but it is shown on the accompanying map below), is how Saul/Paul was "retrieved" by Barnabas from Tarsus, Luke recording

Then when he (BARNABAS) arrived (**FROM JERUSALEM TO ANTIOCH IN SYRIA**) and witnessed the grace of God, he rejoiced and began to encourage them all with resolute heart to remain true to the Lord; 24 for he was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And considerable numbers were brought to the Lord. 25 And he (BARNABAS) **left for Tarsus to look for Saul** (ONE OF THE SHORTEST VERSES IN ACTS, BUT WITHOUT DOUBT ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT ONES CONSIDERING WHAT HAPPENED WHEN BARNABAS FOUND SAUL/PAUL!); 26 and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch (TO THE CHURCH IN SYRIA). And for an entire year they met with the church and taught considerable numbers; and the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch. 28 One of them named Agabus stood up and began to indicate by the Spirit that there would certainly be a great famine all over the world. And this took place in the reign of Claudius. 29 And in the proportion that any of the disciples had means, each of them determined to send a contribution for the relief of the brethren living in Judea. 30 And this they did, sending it in charge of

Click Chronological Diagram to enlarge  
See Also Map of Events of Paul's Conversion and Early Ministry  
(Note: Map is copyright by Holman Publishing and not to be copied)

**Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia** - **Then** is a [marker of time](#), often identifying a sequence of events. So after meeting Peter and James in Jerusalem on his first visit, **THEN** Saul/Paul left town because of the threat of assassination.

**Into the regions of Syria and Cilicia** - Paul's birthplace was in [Tarsus](#) which was in the region of Cilicia - just north of Syria.

**Wuest** notes that "Here we have about ten years of Paul's life passed over in silence, between his flight from Jerusalem to Tarsus and his return to the former city for the Apostolic Council. These years were spent around Tarsus and Antioch, in Cyprus and Asia Minor." ([Wuest Word Studies - Eerdman Publishing Company Volume 1, Volume 2, Volume 3](#) - used [by permission](#))

**MacArthur** feels that Paul "preached there (Syria and Cilicia) until Barnabas called for him to come to Antioch in Syria." [MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Galatians](#))

**Eadie** - The apostle is not stating his tour with geographical precision, but is merely showing how far he traveled away from all Judean influence and recognition. ([Galatians 1 Commentary](#))

Have you ever noticed that the Apostle Paul went to the hardest places? From ARABIA he went to DAMASCUS where he was headed before he met the Lord. Then he goes to JERUSALEM where the center of Judaism is located. Then from there he goes HOME (TARSUS), which also would be very difficult. He reminds me of a missionary candidate who was being interviewed by a board to go to the foreign field. The question was posed to him "Where do you feel called?" And he, the candidate, simply replied that he did not feel called to any particular place. He only hoped that whatever assignment would be given him might be the toughest one that they had. (Don Anderson)

#### Galatians 1:22 I was still unknown by sight to the churches of Judea which were in Christ

Amplified - And so far I was still unknown by sight to the churches of Christ in Judea (the country surrounding Jerusalem).

Wuest - but remained personally unknown to the assemblies of Judaea which are in Christ. [Eerdmans Publishing](#))

NET Galatians 1:22 But I was personally unknown to the churches of Judea that are in Christ.

GNT Galatians 1:22 μην ὄγνωμενος τ προσπιτας κκλησ αις τς ουδα ας τας ν Χριστ .

NLT Galatians 1:22 And still the Christians in the churches in Judea didn't know me personally.

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

ESV Galatians 1:22 And I was still unknown in person to the churches of Judaea that are in Christ.

ASV Galatians 1:22 And I was still unknown by face unto the churches of Judaea which were in Christ:

CSB Galatians 1:22 I remained personally unknown to the Judean churches in Christ;

NIV Galatians 1:22 I was personally unknown to the churches of Judea that are in Christ.

NKJ Galatians 1:22 And I was unknown by face to the churches of Judea which were in Christ.

NRS Galatians 1:22 and I was still unknown by sight to the churches of Judea that are in Christ;

YLT Galatians 1:22 and was unknown by face to the assemblies of Judea, that are in Christ,

NAB Galatians 1:22 And I was unknown personally to the churches of Judea that are in Christ;

NJB Galatians 1:22 and was still unknown by sight to the churches of Judaea which are in Christ,

GWN Galatians 1:22 The churches of Christ in Judea didn't know me personally.

BBE Galatians 1:22 And the churches of Judaea which were in Christ still had no knowledge of my face or person:

- **the churches:** Ac 9:31 1Th 2:14)(in: Ro 16:7 1Co 1:30 Php 1:1 1Th 1:1 2Th 1:1
- Galatians 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**I was still unknown by sight to the churches of Judea which were in Christ**- Paul's first visit to Jerusalem did not include visits to the churches that were in Judea, the region around Jerusalem. And while we do not know exactly how long Saul/Paul was in Syria and Cilicia (up to 10 years as noted above), the fact that he was so far removed from Judea (Tarsus is about 590 miles north of Jerusalem) explains why **the churches of Judea** did not know him by face. Of course as Paul explains in the next verse these churches had heard of his reputation as a persecutor turned preacher!

**I was still unknown** (agnoeo) in the present tense signifies that Paul continued to remain unknown to them. "I remained unknown."

**By sight** (literally "by face") - Even if they had seen Paul's face, they would not have known who he was. They had not seen him "in person." This fact is distinguished from the churches in Jerusalem, many of whom had a knowledge of his person, and could recognize him if they saw him, for he had been "going in and out" among them, "speaking out boldly," having sojourned fifteen days with Peter. (Acts 9:28)

**The churches** (ekkllesia) of **Judea** - They are distinguished from the church at Jerusalem. Their only knowledge of Paul was by report, and that report was somewhat "mixed" as explained in the next verse. So what point is Paul making here? He had left Jerusalem after only a short time. Had he been there a long time under the tutelage of the other apostles, he almost assuredly would have visited the surrounding churches of Judea. The fact that they did not know his face supports his independence from the other apostles.

**In Christ** - Recall that **ekkllesia** is a general word for **assembly**, and so here Paul points specifically to the **ekkllesia in Judea** who were "**in Christ**" and thus composed of believers, in contrast to assemblies of Jews who did not believe that Jesus was the Messiah and Redeemer.

**M. D. Dunn** on **the churches in Christ** - The closing verses of this first chapter provide a key to an understanding of Paul's ardent commitment, his freedom, and his total commitment to the centrality of Christ. A prepositional phrase is the key to his thought: "in Christ." Whereas normally this phrase designates the experience of an individual, here Paul uses it in relation to the church—"the churches of Judea which were in Christ." This mystical quality of the fellowship makes the church more than a human institution. When the fellowship is in and with Christ, the church is the body of Christ, a divine institution against which the gates of hell cannot prevail. ([Preacher's Commentary - Vol. 31- Galatians/Ephesians](#))

#### Relation of Churches to Christ:

- I. They are **FOUNDED** on Christ (Mat 16:18; 1Co 1:2).
- II. They are **BUILT** by Christ (Eph 4:16).
- III. They are the **BODY** of Christ (Eph 1:23; Eph 4:12).
- IV. They are **REDEEMED** through Christ (Act 20:28; Eph 5:25).
- V. They are **CONSECRATED** to Christ (Eph 5:26).
- VI. They will be **GLORIFIED** in Christ (Eph 5:27). ([The Biblical Illustrator](#))

**Galatians 1:23 but only, they kept hearing, "He who once persecuted us is now preaching the faith which he once tried to destroy."**

Amplified - They were only hearing it said, He who used to persecute us is now proclaiming the very faith he once reviled and which he set out to ruin and tried with all his might to destroy.

Wuest - Indeed, they only kept on hearing, The one who used to persecute us at one time now is announcing the glad tidings of the Faith which at one time he was ravaging. ([Erdmans Publishing](#))

TLB - All they knew was what people were saying, that "our former enemy is now preaching the very faith he tried to wreck."

NET Galatians 1:23 They were only hearing, "The one who once persecuted us is now proclaiming the good news of the faith he once tried to destroy."

GNT Galatians 1:23 μ νον δ κο οντες σαν τι δι κων μ ς ποτε ν ν ε αγγελ ζεται τ ν π σtiv ν ποτε π ρθει,

NLT Galatians 1:23 All they knew was that people were saying, "The one who used to persecute us is now preaching the very faith he tried to destroy!"

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

ESV Galatians 1:23 They only were hearing it said, "He who used to persecute us is now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy."

ASV Galatians 1:23 but they only heard say, He that once persecuted us now preacheth the faith of which he once made havoc;

CSB Galatians 1:23 they simply kept hearing: "He who formerly persecuted us now preaches the faith he once tried to destroy."

NIV Galatians 1:23 They only heard the report: "The man who formerly persecuted us is now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy."

NKJ Galatians 1:23 But they were hearing only, "He who formerly persecuted us now preaches the faith which he once tried to destroy."

NRS Galatians 1:23 they only heard it said, "The one who formerly was persecuting us is now proclaiming the faith he once tried to destroy."

YLT Galatians 1:23 and only they were hearing, that 'he who is persecuting us then, doth now proclaim good news -- the faith that then he was wasting;'

- **he who:** Acts 9:13,20,26, 1Co 15:8-10 1Ti 1:13-16
- Galatians 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## RAVAGING SAUL BECOMES PREACHING PAUL

**But only, they kept hearing** - In the [present tense](#) indicates that the churches in Judea were hearing continually about Paul. "Our former persecutor is now our preacher!" Luke records Paul's response after conversion as well as the reactions to his radical conversion...

(REACTION FROM ANANIAS) Acts 9:13+ But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he did to Your saints at Jerusalem;

(RESPONSE OF SAUL/PAUL) Acts 9:20+ and immediately he began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues, saying, "He is the Son of God."

(REACTION OF SAINTS IN JERUSALEM) Acts 9:26+ When he came to Jerusalem, he was trying to associate with the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he was a disciple.

**He who once persecuted us** - The [present tense](#) indicates persecuting ([dioko](#)) saints was Paul's continual modus operandi prior to meeting Jesus face to face where our Lord accused Paul of "**persecuting**" ([dioko](#)) Him (Acts 9:4-5+) an encounter that changed his life and something he never forgot (Acts 22:7-8+, Acts 26:14-15+ - [dioko](#) used in all 4 verses)! The persecutor ceased persecuting Christians and began to follow hard after, to "persecute", to "**press on** ([dioko](#)) toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." ( Phil 3:14+, [dioko](#) also in Phil 3:12+)

By his own admission Paul wrote "I am the least of the apostles, and not fit to be called an apostle, because I **persecuted** ([dioko](#)) the church of God." (1 Cor 15:9+) In Acts 8:3+ Luke records this **persecution** as "Saul began ravaging the church, entering house after house, and dragging off men and women, he would put them in prison." Paul later testified "I **persecuted** ([dioko](#)) this Way (NAME FOR CHRISTIANS) to the death, binding and putting both men and women into prisons." (Acts 22:3+). And again in Acts 26:9-11+ he confessed "I had to do many things hostile to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. And this is just what I did in Jerusalem; not only did I lock up many of the saints in prisons, having received authority from the chief priests, but also when they were being put to death I cast my vote against them. And as I punished them often in all the synagogues, I tried to force them to blaspheme; and being furiously enraged at them, I **kept pursuing** ([dioko](#) in [imperfect tense](#) = again and again) them even to foreign cities." And in his letter to the Philippians he wrote of his former way of life "as to zeal, a **persecutor** ([dioko](#)) of the church." (Phil 3:6+)

**Persecuted** (1377)([dioko](#) from [díō](#) = pursue, persecute) means to follow or press hard after, literally to pursue as one does a



fleeing enemy. **Dioko** is a vivid word which gives us the picture of going after something (or someone), like hounds pursuing a fox. **Dioko** was also used for chasing down criminals. And so **dioko** meant to chase, harass, vex and pressure with the intention of doing harm, even hunting down Christians like animals, so that in any way whatever they might be harassed, troubled, molested or even physically harmed.

**Is now preaching the faith which he once tried to destroy-** **Tried to destroy** is in the [imperfect tense](#) indicating that over and over Paul was wreaking havoc.

**Preaching** (2097)(**euaggelizo/euangelizo**) in the [present tense](#) indicates Paul was continually brought good news, announced good news, proclaiming the glorious message of salvation available to sinners! **Euaggelizo** is a [key word](#) (6x in 24v) in Galatians 1 -- clearly Paul wants to make sure his readers understand he was preaching good news because others were preaching "bad news!" **Euaggelizo** in Galatians - Gal. 1:8; Gal. 1:9; Gal. 1:11; Gal. 1:16; Gal. 1:23; Gal. 4:13;

**The faith** - **Wuest** favors this as **the faith** which they had in Jesus, whereas **Robertson** says **the faith** is "used in the sense of "the Gospel" as in Acts 6:7+." **Wuest** emphasizes the subjective aspect of faith (the act of believing) whereas **Robertson** favors the objective sense (that which is believed). For more discussion see [the faith \(pistis\)](#).

**Donald Campbell** agrees with **Robertson** on the meaning of **the faith** writing that "This would of course include the doctrine of justification by faith apart from circumcision or works." ([The Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

**Destroy** (making havoc) (4199) See preceding discussion of [portheo](#).

**Warren Wiersbe** sums up Paul's refutation of the accusations of his opponents and the opponents of his divinely delivered Gospel by reminding us that "Modern-day "Judaizers," like their ancient counterparts, reject the authority of Paul and try to undermine the Gospel which he preached. In Paul's day, their message was "the Gospel plus Moses." In our day it is "the Gospel plus" any number of religious leaders, religious books, or religious organizations. "You cannot be saved unless..." is their message (Acts 15:1); and that "unless" usually includes joining their group and obeying their rules. If you dare to mention the Gospel of grace as preached by Jesus, Paul, and the other Apostles, they reply, "But God has given us a new revelation!" ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

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**Paul**--I. The persecutor--full of pride--false zeal--bitterness--destroying the faith. II. The preacher--full of humility--devotedness--love--glorying in the crucified Jesus. (J. Lyth.)

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#### ILLUSTRATIONS of radical conversions...

**Conversion reverses men's lives** - There was a man, while Messrs. Moody and Sankey were in London, who got out a little paper called "The Moody and Sankey Humbug." He used to have it to sell to the people coming into the meeting. After he had sold a great many thousand copies of that number, he wanted to get out another number; so he went into the meeting to get something to put into the paper; but the power of the Lord was present, and the arrow of conviction went down deep into his heart. **He went out, not to write a paper, but to destroy his paper that he had written, and to tell what the Holy Ghost had done for him.** (Nye.) ([The Biblical Illustrator](#))

**The scoffer turned preacher** - One evening a young man who had been educated for a barrister was seated with some merry making companions in a London tavern, when his companions, knowing he was a clever mimic, requested him to go and hear Mr. Wesley preach, and then come and mimic the whole affair for their amusement. He went. The text, "Prepare to meet thy God," (Amos 4:12) frightened him like a bursting shell, and conviction deepened during the sermon. On his return to his friends they inquired, "Well, have you taken him off?" He replied, "No, gentlemen; but he has taken me off." **He left his companions, gave his heart to God, and became one of Mr. Wesley's most useful preachers.** ([The Biblical Illustrator](#))

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#### Galatians 1:24 And they were glorifying God because of me.

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Amplified - And they glorified God [as the Author and Source of what had taken place] in me.

Wuest - And they were continually glorifying God [for that which they found] in me. ([Eerdmans Publishing](#))

NET Galatians 1:24 So they glorified God because of me.

GNT Galatians 1:24 καὶ ὁ ἑξαζὼν ἐν μοίᾳ τῆς ἐν ἐμοί.

NLT Galatians 1:24 And they praised God because of me.

KJV Galatians 1:24 And they glorified God in me.

ESV Galatians 1:24 And they glorified God because of me.

ASV Galatians 1:24 and they glorified God in me.

CSB Galatians 1:24 And they glorified God because of me.

NIV Galatians 1:24 And they praised God because of me.

NKJ Galatians 1:24 And they glorified God in me.

NRS Galatians 1:24 And they glorified God because of me.

YLT Galatians 1:24 and they were glorifying God in me.

NAB Galatians 1:24 So they glorified God because of me.

NJB Galatians 1:24 and they gave glory to God for me.

GWN Galatians 1:24 So they praised God for what had happened to me.

BBE Galatians 1:24 And they gave glory to God in me.

- Nu 23:23 Lk 2:14 7:16 15:10,32 Acts 11:18 Acts 21:19,20 2Co 9:13 Col 1:3,4 2Th 1:10,12
- Galatians 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### THE CHIEF END OF MAN: TO GLORIFY GOD!

The most famous question in the [Westminster Shorter Catechism](#) is "What is the chief end of man?" The answer is "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever."

**And they were glorifying God because of me - Glorifying** (doxazo) is in the imperfect tense signifying that over and over they **were glorifying God**. Note they were not **glorifying** Paul but Paul's God! Paul was obeying Jesus' command in the Sermon on the Mount to "**Let** your light **shine** ([aorist imperative](#) - Command to "Do this now!" "Don't delay!") before men in such a way (THIS IS KEY - "SUCH A WAY" THAT THEY DON'T GIVE US THE ADULATION AND PRAISE! BE CAREFUL HERE!) that they may see your good works (THESE ARE "GOD" WORKS - VISIBLE SUPERNATURAL WORKS THAT GIVE CLEAR TESTIMONY TO THE INVISIBLE GOD, OUR FATHER), and glorify ([doxazo](#)) your Father who is in heaven."(Mt 5:16+).

**THOUGHT** - How did Paul obey this command? He was continually filled with and supernaturally empowered by the Holy Spirit. There is no other way to obey Jesus' command except by depending continually on the enabling power of the Spirit.

#### Related Resources:

- [Discussion of the Need for the Holy Spirit to obey NT commands](#)(or "How to Keep All 1642 Commandments in the New Testament!")
- [Filled with His Spirit/Richly Indwelt with His Word](#) - Chart Comparing the almost identical "fruit" of filled with Spirit and Word - Do you want to be filled with the Spirit? Then fill yourself with the Word, keep short sin accounts (Not grieving, not quenching the Spirit).
- [Paradoxical Principle of 100% Dependent and 100% Responsible\(100/100\)](#)
- [Spiritual Paradoxes in the Christian Life](#)

Any man touched by Jesus Christ  
is good publicity for the gospel.  
-- Vance Havner

**To glorify God** is a favorite Pauline phrase:

Acts 11:18 When they heard this, they quieted down and **glorified** ([doxazo](#)) God, saying, "Well then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life."

Acts 21:20 And when they heard it they began **glorifying** ([doxazo](#)) God; and they said to him, "You see, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews of those who have believed, and they are all zealous

for the Law;

Romans 1:21 For even though they knew God, **they did not honor** ([doxazo](#)) Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

Romans 15:6 so that with one accord you may with one voice **glorify** ([doxazo](#)) the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 15:9 and for the Gentiles to **glorify** ([doxazo](#)) God for His mercy; as it is written, "THEREFORE I WILL GIVE PRAISE TO YOU AMONG THE GENTILES, AND I WILL SING TO YOUR NAME."

1 Corinthians 6:20 For you have been bought with a price: therefore **glorify** ([doxazo](#)) God in your body.

2 Corinthians 9:13 Because of the proof given by this ministry, they will **glorify** ([doxazo](#)) God for your obedience to your confession of the gospel of Christ and for the liberality of your contribution to them and to all,

**Donald Campbell** comments "This was a telling blow to the false teachers. The Jewish Christians in Judea rejoiced in the same gospel the Judaizers sought to undermine." ([The Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

**Bickel & Jantz** say that "Another strong confirmation of Paul's authority is the way his message was received among the **churches in Judea**. The Jewish Christians in this region, who didn't know Paul personally, gave glory to God because Paul was now preaching the gospel of grace and faith, the "very faith he tried to destroy." ([Galatians: Walking in God's Grace](#))

**John Calvin**: This was an evident proof that his ministry was approved by all the churches of Judea, and approved in such a manner, that they broke out into admiration and praise of the wonderful power of God. Thus he indirectly reproves their malice, by shewing that their venom and slanders could have no other effect than to hide the glory of God, which, as the apostles admitted and openly acknowledged, shone brightly in the apostleship of Paul. ([Galatians 1 Commentary](#))

**Eadie**: Not only did his conversion give them occasion to glorify God, but they glorified God working in him, and in him changing their malignant and resolute persecutor into a bold enthusiastic preacher. They were thankful not simply because persecution had ceased, but they rejoiced that he who did the havoc was openly building up the cause which he had laboured to overthrow. On hearing of a change in so prominent and terrible an adversary—a change not leading merely to a momentary check or a longer neutral pause, but passing into unwearied activity, self-denial, and apostolical pre-eminence—they glorified God in him, for in him God's gracious power had wrought with unexpected and unexampled might and result. ([Galatians 1 Commentary](#))

**Hendriksen** - They were not suspicious, as those of Jerusalem had been at one time. (Acts 9:26), nor indifferent (cf. Rev. 3:16), nor unforgiving, nor even merely happy. On the contrary, fully realizing that whatever comes from God must be returned to him in the form of praise and thanksgiving, and that this circle must never be broken, they declared the glorious character of God's marvelous attributes: power, sovereignty, wisdom, grace, mercy, etc., shown in saving a wretch, a relentless persecutor, and transforming him into a flame-tongued herald of the gospel! What depth of feeling must have overwhelmed Paul's soul as he wrote these last words: "They were glorifying God on my account (literally "in me")!"

**Vine** comments that "they ascribed the credit for the transformation of an erstwhile persecutor into a zealous advocate, not to the man in whom the change had been wrought, but to the One Who had accomplished it, God, to **Whose Name the emphasis is given** by its position at the end of the sentence (καὶ ὁ ἑξαζὼν ὑμῶν **τὸ θεῶν**.)"

**Jamieson, Fausset & Brown** - "Having understood the entire change, and that the former wolf is now acting the shepherd's part, they received occasion for joyful thanksgiving to God in respect to me" [THEODORET]. How different, he implies to the Galatians, their spirit from yours!

**Lenski** says: Instead of running down Paul as the Judaizers in Galatia did all these churches went on glorifying God "in connection with me," . . . All these, mark it, were Jewish churches who also had received all their news about Paul from Jerusalem itself, the very seat of the Twelve. What more can the Galatians ask? Thus by a simple recounting of the historical facts Paul sets before the Galatians what they should never have allowed anyone to make them doubt: he had his gospel directly from God and Christ, by revelation and not at secondhand, the identical gospel of all the other apostles, of all the churches in Judea.

**Glorifying** (1392)([doxazo](#) from [doxa](#) = glory) has a secular meaning of to think, suppose, be of opinion, but generally is not used in this sense in Scripture. **Doxazo** means to praise, honor or magnify (Mt 5:16; 6:2; Lk 5:25f; Ac 11:18; Ro 11:13; 1 Cor 12:26; 1 Pt 4:16) and to clothe in splendor, glorify (John 8:54; 13:31f; 17:1, 4; 21:19; 2 Cor 3:10; 1 Pt 1:8; of life after death John 12:16, 23; Ac 3:13; Ro 8:30)

**Glorifying** ([doxazo](#) in the imperfect tense = over and over and over they were glorifying) **God** - Paul fulfilled his purpose to bring

glory to God and so should we (cf Mt 5:16+, Php 2:14-15+).

**THOUGHT** - To whom does your ministry draw attention? Yourself? God? See **F B Meyer's** [story below](#).

**Swindoll** - To give glory to God is to believe in Him and to regard Him as the only wise, righteous, merciful, and almighty God. It means acknowledging Him as the only Source and Donor of every good and perfect gift. "Worshiping God," Luther believed, "is nothing else than glorifying God," and glorifying God is to be the chief aim of Christians. (Understanding Christian theology)

As **Dunnam** says "To the degree that we are as Christ, to that degree God can be glorified in us."

**Because of me** (literally "in me") - This prepositional phrase is translated with a causal force ("because of me") which conveys the sense of on account of what God had done to Paul, and was doing through Paul.

**THOUGHT** - Paul's life gave powerful testimony of the **power (dunamis)** of the Gospel to save from the "uttermost to the guttermost" which stimulated the saints to give all the glory to God! Is your (my) life giving testimony to others (both lost and saved) of the power (**dunamis**) of the Gospel to save (Ro 1:16+), not just at the point of conversion (**justification** - Past tense salvation), but to save daily, even moment by moment (**sanctification** - Present tense salvation)? Applying Acts 1:8+ to our lives, even as Jesus called His 11 followers to be witnesses, so too He calls us to be witnesses of His glorious Gospel but realizing that we can only obey our Lord by continually acknowledging our absolute [100%] need for the enabling power of the Holy Spirit to live such radiant Gospel centered, Christ exalting lives that God is greatly glorified (cf Mt 5:16+).

**John Eadie** comments on the phrase "**in me**" - The change wrought within him, with its marvelous and enduring effects-they glorified God. Not only did his conversion give them occasion to glorify God, but they glorified God working in him, and in him changing their malignant and resolute persecutor into a bold enthusiastic preacher. They were thankful not simply because persecution had ceased, but they rejoiced that he who did the havoc was openly building up the cause which he had laboured to overthrow. On hearing of a change in so prominent and terrible an adversary-a change not leading merely to a momentary check or a longer neutral pause, but passing into unwearied activity, self-denial, and apostolic pre-eminence-**they glorified God in him**, for in him God's gracious power had wrought with unexpected and unexampled might and result. They did not exalt the man, though they could not but have a special interest in him; but they knew that by the grace of God he was what he was (1Cor 15:10). If the churches even in Judea were so grateful to God for His work in Paul, were they not a rebuke to the **Judaizers**, who now questioned his apostleship and impugned his teaching? ([Galatians 1 Commentary](#))

**David Guzik** sums up this section noting that "After his conversion, Paul was an anonymous Christian for many years. Paul's status as unknown is certainly different from our own habit of puffing up any prominent convert as soon as they come to Jesus. Paul was happy and well served to spend many years in obscurity before God raised him up.. In this whole section, Paul showed that there was enough contact between him and the other apostles to show that they were in perfect agreement, but not so much that it showed that Paul got his gospel from them instead of God.. Paul's whole point in the second part of this chapter is important. His gospel was true, and his experience was valid, because it really came from God. It is fair for every Christian to ask if their gospel has come from God (**ED: VIA HIS WORD OR HIS GOSPEL MESSENGERS OF COURSE**), or if they have made it up themselves. Each should examine if their Christian experience has come from God, or if they have made it up themselves. The questions are important because only what comes from God can really save us and make a lasting difference in our lives." ([Galatians 1 Commentary](#))

**Spurgeon** — Brothers and sisters, may you and I so live that Christian people may glorify God in us! May they often wonder at the mighty grace which has wrought such a change in us; and as they see us zealous and fervent, may they marvel at the amazing grace of God which has brought us to be so consecrated to Christ! ([Spurgeon's Exposition](#))

**Barnes** comments on their **glorifying God because** of Paul - We may still glorify and praise God for the grace manifested in the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. What does not the world owe to him! What do we not owe to him! No man did so much in establishing the Christian religion as he did; no one among the apostles was the means of converting and saving so many souls; no one has left so many and so valuable writings for the edification of the church. To him we owe the invaluable epistles—so full of truth, and eloquence, and promises, and consolations—on one of which we are commenting; and to him the church owes, under God, some of its most elevated and ennobling views of the nature of Christian doctrine and duty. After the lapse, therefore, of eighteen hundred years, we should not cease to glorify God for the conversion of this wonderful man, and should feel that we have cause of thankfulness that He changed the infuriated persecutor to a holy and devoted apostle. **Let us remember that God has the same power now.** There is not a persecutor whom he could not convert with the same ease with which he changed Saul of Tarsus. There is not a vile and sensual man that he could not make pure; not a dishonest man that his grace could not make honest: not a blasphemer that he could not teach to venerate his name; not a lost and abandoned sinner that he cannot receive to himself. Let us then without ceasing cry unto him that his grace may be continually manifested in reclaiming such sinners from the error of their ways, and bringing them to the knowledge of the truth, and to a consecration of their lives to his service. ([Barnes' Notes](#))

**Ridderbos** makes an excellent point: The final thought, namely, that these churches glorified God in Paul, incidentally suggests that these churches did not doubt the genuineness and integrity of Paul's calling and preaching. And that, if you please, from those who had suffered so much on his account! How different the attitude in the churches of Galatia, even though these had experienced only good from him, and had not the slightest reason to doubt his apostolic calling and authority! ([The Epistle of Paul to the Churches of Galatia](#))

### **To God Be the Glory - Fanny Crosby**

([Choir Vocal](#))

To God be the glory, great things He hath done,  
So loved He the world that He gave us His Son,  
Who yielded His life an atonement for sin,  
And opened the life gate that all may go in.

#### **Refrain:**

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the earth hear His voice!  
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the people rejoice!  
Oh, come to the Father, through Jesus the Son,  
And give Him the glory, great things He hath done.

Oh, perfect redemption, the purchase of blood,  
To every believer the promise of God;  
The vilest offender who truly believes,  
That moment from Jesus a pardon receives.

Great things He hath taught us, great things He hath done,  
And great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son;  
But purer, and higher, and greater will be  
Our wonder, our transport, when Jesus we see.

**John Brown** aptly summarizes this section of Galatians...

It appears, then, from these statements, that Paul was engaged for three years in preaching the gospel before he had any intercourse with a Christian apostle; that, when he did see them, he saw only two of them; that he went, not to learn from them as a scholar, but to visit them as an equal; that he was only fifteen days in Jerusalem upon that occasion; that he then went into Syria and Cilicia, where there were no apostles, and where he exercised all the powers of an apostle—planting churches; and that the churches of Judea, though he stood in no peculiar relation to them, and was not even personally known to them, glorified God on account of his being converted from one of the most furious persecutors, into one of the most devoted supporters, of the faith of Christ, and of course considered him as having a title to the name and place he occupied in the church: all which particulars were obviously fitted to answer the apostle's object—the assertion of his dignity as an apostle, and of his integrity as a man. ([Brown](#))

**Cyril Barber** on John Brown's commentary on Galatians - A refreshing treatment of Paul's letter that has been called the Charter of Christian Liberty. By all means buy it.....First published in 1853. A thorough, comprehensive exposition. Explains Paul's concern for the converts in Galatia and desire to see them established in the faith. Notes at the end of the book clarify issues not treated extensively in the text. Recommended.

- [Galatians 1:1-5 Inscription of the Epistle](#)
- [Galatians 1:6-10 Introduction to the Epistle](#)
- [Galatians 1:11-2:21 The Apostle's Historical Defence of Himself and His Office](#)

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**God Glorified in You and Me** - It should ever be the end of the Christian man, not only to promote the glory of God by his works, but to illustrate the glory of God in his character; in this, as in nothing else, are the goodness and power of God seen most strikingly. An architect rears a building. It is admired for its beauty in detail, and its grandeur as a whole; but the praise belongs not to the building, but to the builder. A tutor takes a youth under his care, and sends him forth to attain eminence and distinction in the early struggles and in the highest positions of life, but the tutor is glorified in the pupil. So the creation is the result of the Almighty hand, and He is glorified in it. Impressions of His glory are left upon the largest and upon the least; upon the stars in their courses discovered to the telescope; and on the minutest specimens of organized life which the microscope opens to our startled eye. And

shall my God be less glorified in the new creation than He is in the old? Shall He not be glorified by the humblest Christian, just as He was glorified by the great apostle? All stars shine by His will, and one star differs from another star in glory, for this is His will; but each renders to Him its measure of praise. God, who is glorified in Saul of Tarsus pre-eminently, must be glorified in each of us, as Christians, according to our position and opportunity. If we have a Christian's hope, it is to the glory of His name; if we have a Christian's life, it is to the glory of His cross; if we have performed a duty, it is to the glory of His grace; if we have borne a trial, it is to the glory of His support; if we have overcome a sinful habit, or the lust which led to it, it is to the glory of His power which gave us self-mastery. (C. J. P. Eyre, M. A.) ([The Biblical Illustrator](#))

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**F B Meyer** - Some young men belonging to the Salvation Army came to old Andrew Bonar, and they said:

" Dr. Bonar, we have been" all night with God. Can't you see our faces shine? "

The old man said: "Moses wist not (was not aware) that his face shone,"

When you have got the real article you do not need to advertise it, the public will come for it; but the man who has got what we call in England, Brummagem ware, a sham, must puff it. If you have got Christ in you, people will not glorify you, they will glorify Christ in you, and they will say: "Teach us about Christ who has made you so fair."

"They glorified God in me." Dear brother ministers, when you get this, they will not glorify your sermons, they will not glorify your intellect, and they will not glorify your eloquence; but they will glorify God who shines through you as the Shekinah shone through the temple of old.