



Last week we heard a very clear presentation of the gospel.

The gospel - Means "Good News"

The Message that Jesus paid the penalty for our sins and that all we need to do for eternal life is believe that His sacrifice was enough to pay for our sins.

Verses 6-10

⁶I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, ⁷which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. ⁸But 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. ⁹As 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. ¹⁰For 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.

Paul would always end his greeting with a prayer or something, but in Galatians he skips the formalities and he goes STRAIGHT to the subject matter at hand. verse 6 says it, "I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you in the grace of Christ. It means they're deserting God and opening themselves up to a "different gospel".

The law brought no promise of eternal life. It was given to make us aware of our sin. Romans 3:20 is very clear in stating that by the works of the law no human being will be justified. So the message of Paul was something very different. It brought a promise of eternal life.

We must be careful to not mix the law with the gospel. The law measures how fallen we are, but it doesn't help us in our fallen nature. The law is like a bathroom scale. It tells you your condition, but it doesn't help you lose weight. The law tells us how unrighteousness we are, but it doesn't help us in taking care of the problem.

We must read these words because otherwise we start adding thing upon thing with a "works based" program. It is the good news because you can know today right now that your sins are forgiven. But, when you introduce works into the equation, you can never be sure of your salvation. When you can contribute to your salvation, you'll never know if it is enough. It is finished and that is why He said on the cross that it is finished.

Grace brings confidence that it's all done. Works brings a burden. One reason I never ask people to be re-baptized when they come to Union Grove is because we don't have a corner on baptism. The work is done through the work of Christ so there is assurance of forgiveness. When we have insecurity about our salvation, it is NOT GOOD NEWS.

In verse 7, Paul calls it a "distortion". Sunday I read in the New King James and it is called a "perversion". A perversion is when you mix something with the original and make something no longer pure. The Greek word is **μεταστρέψαι** *metastrapsai*..... that means a "great turn". Paul is saying you've made a HUGE TURN away from the real thing.

I spoke on Sunday about Mormonism, but it's not just Mormonism that adds stuff to the gospel. It happens in Christian groups that just add stuff: penance, confession, water baptism, etc. Sprinkle baptism got started because people were on their death beds and someone told them they had to be baptized to go to heaven. None of that was necessary. The simple gospel is that "JESUS IS ENOUGH" and nothing else is required for salvation.

Let's now look at verse 8, Paul says, "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.*"

Paul is saying if anyone adds to the gospel, basically they should just be separated from God and sent to hell.

Then in verse 9, Paul says, "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.*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.*"

Paul was just super serious about all this. This desire to add something to the gospel is what is sometimes referred to as "legalism". Legalism is exactly what it sounds like. It is a bunch of laws and requirements that we attach to the simple gospel. I once heard someone say that legalism has only two children: 1) pride, and 2) self-defeat. If someone is good at "keeping the rules" they will be proud and boastful of their attitude. If they can't keep the rules they'll just feel demoralized and self-defeated. Neither of these attitudes is helpful to us as we are becoming more conformed into the image of Christ.

So Paul is saying that even if an angel from heaven comes and gives you a message, if it doesn't measure up to the pure un-adulterated gospel it is not to be listened to. In fact, it is to be cursed. Obviously, also Paul was answering some kind of criticism, that he was somehow trying to pander to someone in the church. You know how Paul really felt about the gospel? Turn with me over to Romans 1.

¹⁶ *For I am not ashamed of the gospel ^[G]of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. ¹⁷ For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."* (Romans 1:16)

Paul is saying that the gospel is "the power of God to salvation". If you mix it and distort it, it is no longer the power of God. It is diluted with the power of man. The righteousness of God is by FAITH. It is NOT by works. It is by FAITH that we are declared righteous in God's sight.

Boy, don't we need the gospel in the world like we've never needed it before. Jesus said, "This gospel will be declared to all the nations, and then the end will come." (Matthew 24:14) This is

happening. It is happening on the internet. All of the nations are hearing the gospel. The prophecy is that "this gospel will be heard in all the earth in the last days". Guys, that is happening right now before our eyes.

The world is only presenting lies. The gospel is simple: JESUS IS ENOUGH That's it. All that is to be done is that it is to be received. He did all of the work so we can have assurance.