

## GALATIANS 1:1-24: In Defence of the True Gospel

→ *What are your preconceptions about the book of Galatians? Have you ever studied it before? What would you like to get out of this series? Have you ever read anything from any of those five commentators?*

### THE BIG ISSUE (v6-9)

Many Galatian believers had turned away from the teaching of their SPIRITUAL FATHER, Paul, and were now following legalistic FALSE TEACHERS, known as JUDAISERS.

THE DECEPTION: To be considered a true believer, first one had to CONVERT to JUDAISM.

THE TRAP: False teachers were trying to LURE them away from the TRUTH & FREEDOM of the TRUE Gospel, and back into LEGALISM & BONDAGE.

→ *Why was this such a big issue? Why was it such a big issue for Paul? What damage might it have been causing to the churches in Galatia and, indeed, to the individual believers?*

→ *Are there any such traps the Enemy attempts to use to lure you from grace to legalism or freedom to bondage? [We'll come to this in future studies]*

### THE TRUE GOSPEL (v3-5)

1. CHRIST came to DIE for our SIN & SALVATION

- \* Jesus is not just a TEACHER, but a RESCUER.
- \* He didn't just TELL US WHAT TO DO; He came & DID IT HIMSELF.

→ *"The Gospel is not spelt D-O, but D-O-N-E." Discuss!*

2. Salvation is by GRACE alone, through FAITH alone, in CHRIST alone

- \* Christ PLUS ANYTHING ELSE is a different gospel, and, in fact, not really a gospel at all.

→ *What sort of 'pluses' were the false teachers trying to add to the Gospel salvation plan?*

3. Not a SYSTEM of salvation or new way of being RELIGIOUS, but the way God ADOPTS you into His FAMILY

- \* The Crux: It's not JEWS at one table & GENTILES at another.
- \* You don't need to BECOME JEWISH to be a Christian, a child of God or Abraham's heir.

→ *How was reverting to Old Testament Judaism leading people away from the true gospel?*

→ *Tim Keller wrote, "The gospel calls us out of religion as much as it calls us out of irreligion." What does he mean and is he correct?*

4. FREEDOM is a POSITION in which we now stand in Christ, not one we EARN through good works or religious observance

- \* True relationship with God comes through FAITH, TRUST & GRACE, not ritual, rules & ceremonies.

→ *How do we unwittingly try to 'earn' our relationship with God and how can this take us from freedom back into religious bondage?*

### IN DEFENCE OF PAUL'S APOSTLESHIP & GOSPEL (v11-24)

1. This Gospel is not a product of the EVOLUTION of my own thinking (v11-13)

- \* What I preach is not the culmination of STUDY, RESEARCH & REFLECTION, but is GOD-REVEALED and actually a radical, unplanned TURNAROUND.
- \* Paul was headed in completely the OPPOSITE DIRECTION until Jesus 'ARRESTED him.'

2. This Gospel is not the result of my response to the teaching of OTHERS (v16-20)

- \* In Paul's mind it had been GOD-BREATHED (2 Tim 3:16) and hadn't been PERVERTED or CORRUPTED by what he'd heard from human teachers.

→ *How was the possibility that Paul had received his teaching from other teachers a potential opening for the legalistic false teachers?*

3. While I didn't receive the gospel directly from the APOSTLES, it does LINE UP with their teaching (v18-24)

- \* The false teachers had been trying to convince the Galatian Christians that Paul's message was in some way DIFFERENT to the teaching of the APOSTLES at 'Gospel HQ' in Jerusalem.

→ *Why was it significant that Paul's teaching lined up with Peter & James'?*

4. I, myself, am a wonderful TESTIMONY to the VALIDITY of the true Gospel (v13-16)

- \* The great irony was, Paul had once been as ZEALOUS as ANYONE for the very matters of the LAW the Judaisers were trying to PULL the Galatian converts back into.

→ *How was Paul's new relationship with grace such strong evidence both of the power of the Gospel and its ability to pull you out of from legalistic, religious bondage into freedom in Christ?*