

# a different gospel

Galatians



## Sermon Series Notes

### "Taking A Stand For Truth" (Galatians 1-2)

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Intro: This little letter had a tremendous influence on Martin Luther and John Wesley. It has a twin theme: faith & freedom (2:16; 5:1). Originally Gaul was present day France, then the people migrated south, settling in an area of present day Turkey. Cities in this region included Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe (see Acts 14). Paul first preached the gospel in Galatia due to an illness (4:13).

#### I. THE TEXT

1:6-7 Just as false teachers crept into the church at Corinth, so they slither into the church of Galatia. What are they teaching? A works based righteousness, that one must be circumcised according to the law of Moses to be saved...

1:8-9 Why is Paul making such a big deal of this?

1:11-23 Paul had a personal encounter with Jesus Christ, then it took years to purge him of religious tradition, Pharisaism, and legalistic righteousness.

2:1-5 Paul takes a stand for the truth, refusing to have Titus circumcised.

\* He did have Timothy circumcised, but that was a matter of practicality. Here the issue is the purity of the gospel.

2:6-10 Some "big wigs" in the church evidently put a lot of pressure on Paul, refusing to have fellowship with him, and looking with disdain upon him and his ministry. Thankfully Peter, James and John gave him the right hand of fellowship. He now heads to Antioch, which if you will remember became the "sending church" of Paul and Barnabas in their missionary work. Peter will make a personal visit to Antioch, but it would not be a pleasant one!

2:11-14 If Peter was the first pope, he really blew it here! This kind of ruins the Catholic doctrine on papal infallibility. Paul confronts Peter publicly, face to face...that's courage, that's conviction!

2:15-21

#### II. LESSONS IN THE TEXT

##### A. The Gospel Truth

\* Saul of Tarsus grew up in religion, but he never had a personal relationship with God...After his personal encounter with Jesus Christ, God had to strip him righteousness by law, legalism, religious tradition that had no basis of truth behind it. His whole life had up to this point been dedicated to achieving righteousness through obedience to The Law of Moses, a righteousness that only one human being has achieved.

\* What is the essential truth of the gospel? (see Rom.3:21-24; 4:1-14).

##### B. The Importance Of Maintaining/Defending The Gospel Truth

1. Because it is the only way for someone to be saved (see Rom.3:20; 10:1-4).

2. Adding anything else to it ruins it

\* Adding anything to the simple gospel produces legalism (based on law/religious tradition), and legalism produces spiritual pride, and spiritual pride breeds hypocrisy. The hypocrisy here is the suggestion/belief that Peter and the other circumcised believers are more holy than the uncircumcised believers. As a result they withdraw from having fellowship with them.

\* Note: When church leaders fall to this kind of hypocrisy, they lead others into hypocrisy with them!

\* Is there anything about you that you think makes you more holy than someone else? Hair length on men; styles of music; worshipping on Saturday; KJV Bible or NIV, how often I attend church, whether I am Baptist, Methodist, Catholic, whether I was sprinkled, dunked, or spit upon because I sit in the front row, whether I drink, smoke, chew, or dip (my grandmother dipped)...

\* Note: Please do not misunderstand. My faith in Christ will be a factor in determining some of the things I've just mentioned. But I am not righteousness based on any of those things.

\* Do you really think you are more holy because you wear a necklace with a cross? Do you think this building is more holy now that we have a cross on the stage?

\* I Corinthians 1: 30 It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God--that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.

3. It is the only way for me to be truly "free"

\* Law brings guilt/condemnation; I never "measure up" to God's standard of righteousness. My conscience is never clear.

4. If I lose the essence of the gospel, I lose my joy (Gal.4:15).

- Ever seen a Mormon or Jehovah's Witnesses just bubbling over with joy? Ever seen anyone caught up in any religion that is based on a works righteousness or a dependence on religious tradition that has no foundation in truth bubbling over with joy?

- You strive for righteousness, rather than from righteousness!

- See II Cor.5:21

5. I limit God's ability to do miracles (Gal.3:5).

C. The Importance Of Standing For Truth (Period).

\* We must take a stand for "the gospel truth," and that is the main message in the text, but it is not the only message...

\* We need to take a stand for truth, whatever that truth might be.

- Evolution or Creationism? homosexuality; fornication/adultery...

- Matt.14: 3 Now Herod had arrested John and bound him and put him in prison because of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, 4 for John had been saying to him: "It is not lawful for you to have her."

- Nathan the prophet confronting David; Moses confronting Pharaoh; Samuel confronting Eli (over Eli's failure to confront his rebellious sons!); Elijah confronting the false prophets on Mt. Carmel; Daniel standing against the kingdom of the Medes; Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah standing against Nebuchadnezzar; Timothy confronting the false teachers (Paul's exhortation – God has not given us a spirit of timidity...); Jesus confronting the Pharisees...

D. Becoming A God Pleaser Verses A Man Pleaser (2:20;1:10)

\* What was Peter afraid of?

- The same thing Nicodemus received (John 7:52)

- John 12: 42 Yet at the same time many even among the leaders believed in him. But because of the Pharisees they would not confess their faith for fear they would be put out of the synagogue; 43 for they loved praise from men more than praise from God.

- See Acts 11:1-3 (context)

\* See Mark 14:3-9

- Persecuted by the church for an act of worship!

\* See II Sam.6:16-22a