

II Corinthians: Lesson #30: Paul and the Gospel

Notes for Parents to Study with Their Children

For Sunday, August 10th

Read Gal. 1:1 – 2:21 (a simplified explanation of the text is supplied at the end of these notes).

Memory Verse: Gal. 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..”

People Were Teaching that You Had to Follow the Law of Moses

- We remember that in the Old Testament the Jews were under the Law of Moses, but in the New Testament we trust Jesus to save us.
- Even after they became Christians, some Jews kept parts of the Law of Moses.
- When Gentiles started to be converted, some Jewish Christians insisted that they keep the Law of Moses, too -- Things like circumcision, resting on the Sabbath, and not eating certain kinds of food.
- Many Jewish Christians began to go out to the churches to teach that Gentile Christians had to keep the Law of Moses.
- Some of these came to the churches that were in the region of Galatia. Paul and Barnabas had already helped start those churches. Now these Jews had come and told the Gentiles that they must start keeping the Law of Moses.
- Paul knew that Christians, Jew or Gentile, did not have to follow the Law of Moses in order to please God and be saved.
- Christians are to let Jesus live in their lives. We die to sin. We die to the Law of Moses. But we live for Christ.

These Were Teaching a Different Gospel

- We don't follow the Law of Moses, we follow Christ. He said, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you...” (Matt. 28:18-20) We follow what Christ commanded.
- We remember that when Jesus told men to go preach the gospel He said, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.” (Mark 16:15-16). That doesn't say anything about keeping the Law of Moses.
- Now if we started preaching that you have to do other things than what Jesus said, that would not be the gospel Jesus taught us.
- Paul said that if we started preaching a different gospel we would be accursed, which means we would be condemned by God.
- Paul even says that if an angel came down and preached another gospel, he would also be accursed.
- Paul reminded the churches of Galatia that he had never been told by any of the other apostles that he should preach anything different from what he had preached.

Don't Ever Believe a Different Gospel

- If someone preached that Jesus is not the Son of God, would that be the true gospel? NO!
- If someone says that you can just believe in Jesus, but don't have to be baptized, is that the true gospel? NO!
- If someone says that you can just be baptized, but don't have to believe in Jesus, is that the true gospel? NO!
- If someone says that it doesn't matter what church you are a member of, is that the true gospel? NO!

Simplified Explanation of the Text

Paul Writes to the Churches of Galatia

Gal. 1:1-2 Paul (who did not become an apostle through men or by men, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father who raised Him from the dead) and all the brethren who are with me to the churches of Galatia.

3-4 Grace and peace to you from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins to take us out from of this evil age we live in, which is exactly what God, our Father, had planned.

5 Let both the Father and Jesus be glorified forever and ever. Amen.

The Churches of Galatia are Listening to A Different Gospel

6 I am astonished that you are so quickly going away from your call into the gospel that gave you the grace of God, and are moving in the direction of another gospel.

7 Of course, it really isn't another gospel. It's just that some who are disturbing your work there want to change the gospel of Christ into something else.

8 But even if one of us, or even an angel from heaven, came and preached a gospel contrary to the one which has been preached to you, let them be accursed.

9 I said it before, now let me say it again: Anyone who preaches any other gospel to you other than what you was originally taught to you, let that person be accursed.

10 Now am I saying this to win the approval of people or to win God's approval? Or am I trying to please people? Because if I were still trying to please people, I would not be Christ's servant.

The Gospel Came From the Lord

11 But I want you brethren to know that the gospel which I preached didn't come down from human beings.

12 I didn't receive it from anyone. No one taught it to me. But it did come through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

13 Now concerning that, I know that you've heard about how I at one time lived in Judaism and how extremely I persecuted God's church trying to destroy it.

14 As far as Judaism went, I pushed ahead over many of those my own age among my people, becoming increasingly filled with zeal for the traditions that were handed down from our fathers.

15 But after this it pleased God (who had set me apart from the time I was about to be born) to call me through His grace.

16-17 He called me to reveal His Son in me, so that I would preach Him among the Gentiles. Right away, I went to Arabia, and then came back to Damascus. During that time I never laid this out before any human beings to get their opinion. I didn't even go to Jerusalem during that time to those who had been appointed apostles before me.

18-20 Then three years after that I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and stayed with him 15 days; but I didn't see any of the other apostles. I only saw James, the Lord's brother. (Listen carefully: Before God I promise that these things I am writing are not a lie.)

21 After my visit to Jerusalem I went to the regions of Syria and Cilicia.

22 The churches of Judea that are in Christ didn't even know what I looked like.

23 They only knew what they had heard about me: That the one who persecuted us in times past now preaches the faith he once tried to destroy.

24 And they praised God because of what had happened to me.

When Paul Visited Jerusalem the Apostles Knew His Work Was Important

2:1 Then 14 years later I returned to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and we took Titus along, too.

2 But I went up because of a revelation from God. And at that time I explained to them the Gospel that I preach to the Gentiles. But I explained this in a private meeting to those who were thought of as highly regarded, just in case I was "running my course" or had been "running" for no worthwhile reason.

3-4 But during all this, even Titus who came with me, though he was a Greek, was not compelled to be circumcised – not even after false brethren crept in secretly to spy on us and plot against our liberty, so that they could enslave us.

5 But we didn't give in to them, not even for an hour so that the truth of the gospel might always stay with you.

6 And those who were so highly regarded (really, those kind of things don't mean much to me since God doesn't judge you appearance); these who were thought of as important laid nothing out before me that I ought to be doing.

7-9 But instead, they saw that the gospel for the Gentiles had been committed to me, just as the gospel for the Jews had been committed to Peter (for the same Lord that worked through Peter to be an apostle for the Jews, worked in me toward the Gentiles). And when men like James, Cephas and John (who were thought of as pillars in the church) realized the grace God had given to me, they gave Barnabas and me the right hands of fellowship. They understood that we would go to the Gentiles, and they to the Jews.

10 The only thing they asked was for us to remember the poor, which was something we were eager to do.

Paul Knew That We Are Saved By Faith in Christ, Not by the Law of Moses

11 But later on when Peter came to Antioch, I had to oppose him face to face because he was wrong.

12 Earlier on when Peter had come, he would eat with the Gentiles, but after certain men came from James, he stayed away from the Gentiles, fearing the Jews.

13 Other Jews there also started acting like hypocrites along with Peter, so much that even Barnabas was caught up in their hypocrisy.

14 When I saw how these weren't walking uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I told Cephas in front of everyone, "If you being a Jew, live like Gentiles do, and not like Jews do, why are you compelling Gentiles to live the way Jews do?"

15 We are Jews by nature, and not people devoted to sin like Gentiles are.

16 Be we have come to realize that people are not justified by works of the Law, but by believing in Jesus Christ. That we were made righteous by faith in Christ, not by works of the Law, because no one will be made righteous by works of the Law.

17 But if we who are seeking to be made righteous in Christ, are found to be sinners, does that make Christ one who serves sin? Absolutely not!

18 If I started rebuilding the very things I have torn down, I would be breaking the law.

19 For I, by the Law, am dead to the Law, so that I can live for God.

20 I am crucified with Christ. And I live; still it's not really me, but Christ living in me. The life I live now in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me.

21 I refuse to reject the grace of God; for if righteousness came by keeping the Law, then there was no reason for Christ to have died.