



The Authenticity of Paul's Gospel  
Gal 1:1-2:10 October 1, 2017

I. Introduction:

- A. I remember during my early years at Moody being a younger believer who still lacked a lot of Bible knowledge, being confused about just what was the Gospel, how was someone saved. I heard teachers and pastors saying they had to make Jesus Lord to be saved. Others said: you have to ask Jesus into your heart, others give your heart to Jesus and still others commit your life to Jesus. and still others said you had to trust Jesus plus be baptized to be saved, this totally confused me.
1. If you stop and think of it that is actually 5 different ways to be saved!
  2. Actually it more than confused me, it created great turmoil in my heart as it made me question my own salvation and my going in the ministry because I wondered how could I ever help someone else understand what the truth about the Gospel was when I was uncertain myself.
  3. I could not turn to man on something this big because I already saw that men had differing opinions on it. It was one of those times I knew I needed to hear from God on this. So while not having the tools of a seasoned Bible scholar, I began a journey of digging into the Bible, trusting God to settle this issue for my head and my heart. And He graciously did!

- The 1st Passage God used was the first 2 chapters of Galatians.

II. Galatians 1-2

- A. This is the section that Paul is using to say that the Gospel he preached is the authentic Gospel, the real thing, the genuine Gospel of God!
- B. As you turn to Galatians, I remember the situation of the book was that the Judaizers were telling them that faith in Jesus Christ alone was not enough; you must also convert to Judaism – the religion of the Jews – and keep the laws and customs of the Jews so you can be saved and share in the inheritance God promised to the Jews.

- C. In v6-7 We see they are in the process of walking away from God for a “distortion” of the glorious Gospel, a total misrepresentation of the Gospel of grace. Read 6-7
- D. Now in v8-9 we see the Spirit of God through Paul put the strongest of spiritual curses upon anyone that would preach “any kind” of gospel different than the one that Paul preached, different than the one they originally received from him.
1. Read v8-9
  2. “Accursed” or “anathema” simply means to “be set apart for destruction or cursed by God”. Like ‘holy’ means be to be set apart to be used by God ‘; so anathema’ means to be set apart to be destroyed or cursed by God.
- E. But most importantly the Word of God is declaring in the strongest manner that the Gospel that Paul preached was the “one and only way” of salvation, and to preach any other gospel message different than the one Paul preached, let that person be set apart for destruction or cursed by God.
- F. Some of you may be thinking “this is heavy stuff”. Yes, it is, but Paul’s desire was to please God rather than man.
1. Read v10
  2. Our God is a loving, merciful, kind and loving God, but one thing you do not mess with is the message about what Jesus has done for us (Gospel)!
- G. In verse 11 Paul starts the defense of his Gospel message as he says my Gospel message was not a man-made message, and he was neither told nor taught his Gospel message from another man. Rather Paul received His message directly from Jesus Christ. Read v11-12
- H. So from v13-2:10 Paul tells the story of how he received this Gospel message from God and not man.
1. v13-14 he starts his story by reminding them of his former life in Judaism. Read v13-14
  2. v15-17 He tells them when God called him to this ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, he did not go and consult with man about this but rather went away to Arabia be alone with God, and then he returned to Damascus, the place he was saved, to preach about Jesus Christ. Read 15-17.
  3. Then in the next verses he speaks of his first contact with any of the apostles as being 3 years after God revealed this message to him. Read 18-24.

4. Now he continues the story to underscore the authenticity of his Gospel message by telling them of the time 14 years later that he finally went to Jerusalem to talk to the apostles about the message he was preaching, ‘to make sure’ he was not off target on his message.
    - a) Now before I read this, remember who the apostles were. They are the ones who walked with Jesus while He was here on earth. The ones who heard the message that Jesus proclaimed day in and day out. The message that Jesus commissioned them to take to the world! Pretty good source to check your message with!
    - b) Read 1-5.
- I. Then we see in v6-10 the response of the top apostles in Jerusalem to Paul’s message.
1. Not just some of the apostles but pillars of the church. The leaders of leaders of the first church
    - a) Peter and John – part of Jesus inner circle of 3 who spent the most time with Him and in situations not even the other apostles joined in with.
    - b) James was the Lord’s half-brother who grew up in the same home with Him
  2. Note the 4 things the apostles did
    - a) Contributed nothing to his message he had submitted to them– they did not add anything or delete anything or change anything in the message Paul had been preaching. Read v6
    - b) They recognized that God had entrusted to Paul the ministry of taking the Gospel message to the Gentiles. Read v7-8
    - c) They publicly identified with and endorsed Paul’s message and ministry by giving them the ‘right hand of fellowship’ Read 9
- J. So in this section Paul has established that his message came straight from God with no human influence at all, and on top of that the chief apostles themselves affirmed that his message was the same message that Jesus gave them to preach to the Jews! So anyone preaching a different message than his is worthy to be set apart for destruction by God.
- At that time back at Moody, I was feeling the weight of this passage in my heart and could not help but wonder – “what was the Gospel that Paul preached, what was the message that people received from him by which they were saved?” The answer to that question is the answer to the conflict and doubt that I was feeling!

- It was later that I learned that Paul gives the answer to that question in the rest of chapter 2-4 But at the time of my struggle God led me to...

### III.1 Cor 15

#### A. Please turn to Read v1-2

1. Gospel I (Paul) preached, you received, stand, saved,
  - a) Right away this got my attention as I thought of Gal 1 when Paul said, “Anyone who preaches a gospel other than the one he preached and they received from him is to be set aside for destruction.”
  - b) Now I am going to find out Paul’s Gospel message, which the apostles who walked with Jesus also confirmed as the authentic Gospel Jesus commissioned us to preach!
2. Let me do a quick side bar on verse 2 as many get confused about the idea believing in vain.
  - a) hold fast = believe – picture holding close to chest
  - b) Believe in vain = hanging onto a gospel other than the one Paul preached (show in the verse)-
  - c) In that case they may have faith but their faith in the wrong gospel. That makes it a vain faith, a faith good for nothing!
  - d) We are not saved by faith, but rather faith in Jesus and what He did for us!

#### B. In V 3-4 tells us just what that Gospel is! Read.

1. Christ died for our sins – buried and raised
2. In v5-10 he refers to the many different eyewitnesses, including himself, of the resurrected Lord. Do not read

#### C. Look at v11 now. Read – it does not matter who preached that Gospel. The important thing is that you ‘believed’ it.

#### D. As we look at this passage there are 3 elements that stick out we see over and over again when the Gospel is presented in the rest of Scripture

1. v3 – Our sins –Our problem is sin, and the first element of the Gospel is that our sin has separated us from God.
2. v3-4 Christ died for our sins, was buried and rose again– 2<sup>nd</sup> element of the Gospel is the substitutionary work of Christ in his payment of our sin at the cross and raised for our justification; in other words that we may be declared righteous by God!

3. v11 – We saw this in verse 2 already but we see it even clearer here in v 11 – believe.
- E. In Scripture we see the Gospel message presented over and over again in many different ways, but at the heart of the Gospel message, no matter how it is presented, are these 3 elements: 2 of them are facts, and 1 is the response to those facts.
1. Facts:
    - a) Man is a sinner
    - b) Jesus paid the penalty for man's sin
  2. Response: believe - faith.
  3. The heart of the Gospel in 3 words, or in other words the 3 topics/issues you want to address with others when sharing the Gospel are: sin-Jesus-faith.

#### IV. Communion

- A. And this is the message that Martin Luther fought for and other reformers died for!
- B. This is the message that cleared up my confusion, settled the turmoil in my heart, removed my doubt and has been the heart of the message of my ministry!
- C. So the question for you this morning is: Is this the message you are trusting in for your salvation and is this the message you are bringing to others when talking to them about their salvation! Are you believing in vain, trusting in something else?
  1. If that is the case and if you find yourself confused, in turmoil, and full of doubt about if you are saved --
  2. This morning transfer your trust from what you have been trusting to Jesus Christ and what He did for you regarding your sin!
- D. Pass and consider where your faith is.
- E. And if your faith is in the right place and your heart is settled, then thank God that He would send Jesus as your substitute to take upon Himself what He did not deserve (that is our sins) to give us what we do not deserve (His righteousness and salvation).