



World Christian Fellowship

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Galatians

Lesson 05 Destined for Divine Destruction

Galatians 1:6-10

Three statements which are very crucial for us to hear, believe, and apply in our life. Because there is no change between Paul's day and ours.

1. When a person hears and believes the gospel but afterward turns away from it stand cursed (Verses 6-7).
2. If a person rejects the gospel, he stands under God's curse, whether he is an angel or an apostle (Verses 1:8-9).
3. The slave/servant of the gospel seeks to please God alone, not men (V 10)

There is a word repeated twice in these four verses, which is, "accursed." The Greek word 'anathema'. It means devoted to God for destruction to God for destruction. This is where I titled as Destined for Divine Destruction.

The Gospel is the good news about salvation. Anyone who distorts the Gospel of salvation is cursed.

This is the severe language apostle Paul used. It is as harsh as the Word of God ever gets, pronouncing a damning double curse on anyone who distorts or alters the gospel.

The gospel, the good news of salvation in Christ, by

- grace alone
- through faith alone
- in Christ alone,

This is the only way that sinners can escape hell and enter heaven by believing the true gospel.

Satan, wanting to hold onto those that are in his kingdom of darkness, wants to confuse and deceive and distort the gospel. The biggest weapon Satan used and even now uses is to distort the true gospel, so that people are believing something that is not true, which does not save them, and they end up in hell.

The text what we read does not define the gospel but the rest of the book of Galatians does. So, our focus for this lesson will not be on the content of the gospel but on its cruciality.

The underlying truth of the passage:
Only one gospel.

This passage is a radical and forthright denial of a *pluralism*, which says that we are all on different roads to heaven, but our destination is the same.

There are popular forms of this *universalism*, and there are technical, but there is no biblical universalism — that is, no biblical teaching that a person can go on rejecting the gospel of Christ and still be saved.

There are other religions besides Christianity, and there are other leaders besides Jesus Christ, but there is no other gospel, no other good news of salvation.

Clear doctrine requires thought based on the scripture. There is the widespread sense that the Holy Spirit will guard the church from all error. This made people to ignore the rigorous study of the scripture and anchor their faith in the biblical doctrine. This is what happened in Galatia and even now in our midst.

The result over a generation is the emergence of a people whose understanding of biblical teaching is so hazy and vague that people are walking away from God and His church.

Rigorous attention to doctrinal clarity and faithfulness is crucial in the long run of church life.

Apostle Paul makes this statement to the elders of Ephesians church.

Acts 20:27, *For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.*

I have not withheld but I explained the whole counsel of God then gives the warning. This is my earnest prayer that I should declare to my people whole counsel of God not part of it!

Acts 20:30, *Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves.*

The time we live is known for tolerance and being politically correct. Now they call post-modern mind to decide that you can believe on anything. There is no absolute truth. You have your truth and I can have my truth! Nobody should condemn anybody for anything they believe or any religion that they adhere to.

The apostle Paul here has no hesitation, no reluctance, and no tolerance on acceptability from everyone. He starts with these severe, very fierce declaration of divine punishment without any reservation.

- Very direct,
- Confrontational,
- Explicit, and
- Forceful pronouncement of damnation.

We don't hear such preaching or preachers preach today. This is absolute necessary, because salvation is at stake, and it only happens through belief in the true gospel.

Turn away from the Gospel is astonishing/ Wonder

Paul doesn't offer any greetings or praise he just launches into attack. Because he knew the gospel is under attack and his heart pumped up.

Paul made three trips to this region and he had spent valuable and quality time out there. He is astonished.

First, they deserted from God: V6,

This deserting of the gospel happened in Galatia so quickly and easily. They did not desert the message, but they have deserted God Himself.

1 John 2:18-19, *Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour. ¹⁹ They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.*

So, if they were false believers in the Galatian churches, they would potentially totally defect, because they never did belong.

Secondly, they are turning away from the grace.

Galatians 5:4, *You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.*

Paul is stunned that so soon after his beautiful portrayal of Christ crucified for their sin they would begin to turn to another gospel.

Galatians 3:1, *O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified?*

What about true believers which makes up the congregations in general?

Galatians 3: 2, *This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?*

What happens when a person is saved?

When a person believes the gospel and is justified and converted and God gives that believer His Holy Spirit.

So, he's talking about people who have received the Holy Spirit, the believers.

Galatians 3:3-4, *Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?⁴ Have you suffered so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain?*

They are believers.

So, what's the danger?

They are not going to lose their salvation.

To be precise this is where the evangelical church is today.

It isn't that people in those churches aren't saved, it is that they were saved by grace through faith alone.

They received the Spirit by faith, but they tolerated the false gospel which let them down to,

- add words to faith,
- add baptism to faith,
- add certain rituals to faith,
- add morality to faith,
- add something you must do to play your role to qualify for grace.

Apostle Paul will not tolerate many of the denominations they call themselves as Christians in our present day.

Paul says that you are deserting Him for a different gospel.

You are deserting God, who called you by the grace of Christ.

God – “who called you.”

Romans 8:30, *Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.*

That's a saving call.

2 Thessalonians 2:13-14, *But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth,¹⁴ to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

2 Timothy 1:9, *who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began,*

Galatians 5:7-10, *You ran well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth?⁸ This persuasion does not come from Him who calls you.⁹ A little leaven leavens the whole lump.¹⁰ I have confidence in you, in the Lord, that you will have no other mind; but he who troubles you shall bear his judgment, whoever he is.*

Jeremiah 2:13, *Be astonished, O heavens, at this, And be horribly afraid; Be very desolate," says the Lord. "For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, And hewn themselves cisterns—broken cisterns that can hold no water.*

“Why would you do that, turn from me to false teaching?”

So, this is what concerns Paul, not that you lose your salvation, but you will not personally accept something other than what saved you. That’s his amazing wonder at the Galatians’ defection.

V7, That different gospel

There is no such thing as a small variation of the gospel.

Gospel is simply,

- ✓ True Christ,
- ✓ True God,
- ✓ It is grace,
- ✓ It is faith alone without works
- ✓ Christ work on the cross

Do not tamper with any of these absolutes!

The issue is that those who have come from Jerusalem, they are adding something to the Gospel don’t let them tamper the work of Christ.

The Galatians were being thrown into confusion by the teaching of the Jerusalem Jews that salvation by grace plus works and by faith plus works. This is a distortion.

Galatians 5:2-4, *I am emphatic about this. The moment any one of you submits to circumcision or any other rule-keeping system,*

at that same moment Christ's hard-won gift of freedom is squandered. I repeat my warning: The person who accepts the ways of circumcision trades all the advantages of the free life in Christ for the obligations of the slave life of the law. I suspect you would never intend this, but this is what happens. When you attempt to live by your own religious plans and projects, you are cut off from Christ, you fall out of grace. (MSG)

Paul, say to you, if you receive circumcision, Christ will be of no benefit to you. If you have that because you believe there's some small contribution that circumcision makes to your salvation, Christ is useless to you. You've just cancelled your salvation."

Substitute the word baptism instead of circumcision??
The church must be on guard for false doctrine.

Warning of Divine Destruction

V 8 & 9

V7, But even if we,

V7, an angel from heaven,

should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed!"

It doesn't matter who they are, if they do they are damned.

Why do people lean towards the false gospel?

Because of the appearance of the people who spread it.

- ✓ They look religious,

- ✓ they sound religious,
- ✓ they act religious,
- ✓ they outwardly affectionate,
- ✓ they may be nice people,
- ✓ they may be kind people and
- ✓ they are philanthropic

Paul's response to them is that I don't care who and what they are.

Don't pay attention to the outside.

Even in our age there are so many false gospel people buy into it, do you know why?

Because the packaging is pleasing.

Paul repeats himself in **V 9**

He is furious here, not over any personal offense because the gospel is under assault.

The people in church were going to lose their clarity on the gospel, and they are going to be tolerant of lies.

When the church does that, tragedy happens.

There are curses in the Old Testament, again, and again God was pronouncing curses on people who turned against Him.

In the New Testament, Jesus going into Jerusalem in **Mark 11** and seeing a fig tree and cursing the fig tree. When the disciples come back the next day it is dead, and this is a symbol of the

divine curse on the nation Israel for its rejection of God and the Messiah. There is a curse from God when God is not pleased, and they are severe and everlasting.

Some may think, there were curses in the Old Testament and also from Jesus but then He had carried all the curses on the cross, so what about today?

Is God still in the business of cursing, consigning to judgment? Is God still pronouncing destruction and devastation people today?"

1 Corinthians 16:22, *If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed. O Lord, come!*

Paul uses the same word, anathema.

Damnation is pronounced on anyone who does not love the Lord Jesus Christ. Whatever your religion, if you do not love the Lord Jesus Christ you are cursed.

Now what does it mean to be cursed?

Romans 9:3, *For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh, Paul defines what it means curse, separated from Christ, forever!*

Matthew 25:41, *“Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels:*

Out of the presence of God, out of the presence of Christ, and in an eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

That is where the curse sends the people.

- Those cursed in the Old Testament are there now.
- Those cursed by Jesus in the nation of Israel at the time they rejected Him are there now.
- Those propagating a false gospel during the apostles are there now.
- Paul wrote here in Galatians that the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels and separated from God and Christ now.

Throughout all human history, those who do not come in faith to the Lord Jesus Christ to love Him, acknowledge Him as Lord and Saviour are cursed and are sent to eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. There is NO change at all!

- People who dishonoured God in the Old Testament were cursed.
- People who dishonoured God in the gospels were cursed.
- People who reject Jesus Christ are cursed.
- People who pervert the gospel are cursed.
- People substitute a false gospel are cursed.

Paul's curse is very severe, and it applies to anyone who perverts the gospel.

Because evangelical Christians claim to represent Scripture and will not take a stand on the issues biblically, they have aided and abetted every conceivable corruption that has occurred in this culture.”

So, what are the lessons here?

Don't nullify the work of Christ.

Don't make Christ's death of no effect.

Don't think that somebody's going to be converted by works. You put any work into the gospel of grace and you have undone it.

Christ's work was sufficient, and He did it all.

- We cannot allow the truth to be masked.
- We cannot allow it to be bent.
- We cannot allow it to be expanded.

Seeking to please God, NOT man

Assaults on the gospel are relentless they have been, now in the present, since the very beginning.

Galatians is likely the second New Testament book written within two decades from the church was born.

Already widespread distortion of the gospel, spread by Satan, his demons, and his human agents it's been going on to this very day, and will always be Satan's greatest effort.

Paul write to the church in Corinth,

2 Corinthians 11:2-4, *For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.³ But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.⁴ For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted—you may well put up with it!*

I know how Satan operates, started deceiving Eve by his craftiness and he will do the same with you, and your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.

Paul says to Corinthians

You are just accepting

- a false christ,
- a false holy spirit, and
- a false gospel.

You're enduring this beautifully.

This is staggering, and I am afraid.

2 Corinthians 11:13-15, *For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. ¹⁴ And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. ¹⁵ Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.*

They are disguised as servants of righteousness will be cursed.

2 Peter 2: 12-20,

Peter warns with the strongest kind of curse and condemnation for the false prophets who are already at work.

Jude repeats that in his letter.

Lord Jesus Christ sent letters to the churches in **Revelation 2 and 3**. Those letters details the way in which the false teachers have crept into church and what they done.

The leaders of the church in Jerusalem, the apostles, met together in the book of Acts for the last time.

They were making some final decisions about the essence of the gospel and what they were going to preach when they scattered around the world.

Meeting debate:

Acts 15: 1, *And certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved."*

Answer by Peter

Acts 15:6-10, *Now the apostles and elders came together to consider this matter. ⁷And when there had been much dispute, Peter rose up and said to them: "Men and brethren, you know that a good while ago God chose among us, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. ⁸So God, who knows the heart, acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He did to us, ⁹and made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. ¹⁰Now therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?*

God knows the heart and testified to the reality of their salvation by giving them the Holy Spirit.

Now the people from Jerusalem came and spreading the false gospel. In response Apostle Paul here in Galatians used the strongest language he ever used are pronouncement of eternal damnation on who perverts the gospel. Their message was that Jesus is Saviour and you need to be circumcised to be saved.

Other words they preached that you need to observe the law of Moses in spite of having faith in Lord Jesus Christ. Paul sees that big threat to the clarity of the gospel. He doesn't see that as a minor detail.

- What harm if they want to be circumcised?
- What harm if they want to keep the Sabbath?
- What harm if they want to follow the ceremonies and rituals and dietary laws, et cetera?

Deadly harm and damning harm, because if you add any work of any kind to the gospel, you have undone grace. So, they are cursed.

Paul says to Titus also about this.

Titus 1:10-11, *For there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, ¹¹ whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain.*

There's only one way to God, and it involves

- no rites,
- no rituals,
- no ceremonies, and
- no works of religion.

That's the message Paul wants to deliver here!

There are many false gospels preached by lying agents of Satan. They must be exposed. They must be consigned to a divine curse.

Faithful men throughout church history have been warriors, fighting for the true gospel against the counterfeits.

Why don't we hear that today?

Who would step up and plant a curse squarely on all the false gospel?

Two things are at stake when the gospel is perverted.

1. The glory of Christ
2. Salvation of sinners.

If the gospel is twisted, the all-sufficiency of Christ's work is dishonoured, and the way to salvation for sinners is blocked.

Therefore, in order to serve Christ and to advance His glory and achieve His saving purpose, Paul must oppose the perversion of the gospel with all his might, whether it pleases people or not.

For the glory of Christ (Galatians 6:14) and for the good of those who may yet believe the gospel (Galatians 2:5), Paul is willing to speak unpleasant truth.

There's no salvation in any other message. So, the church must fight for the gospel.

We need to tell people that if they do not love the Lord Jesus Christ, they will be cursed forever, that's the truth. And that's why the gospel is such the good news.