

## GALATIANS: ONE-THIRD RECAP PART 2



### 1. Back-Story = (Origin, Occasion, Theme)

1.1. The origin of the Galatian letter is the Apostle Paul (1:1) writing to churches in the Galatian region (1:2) while on his way to Jerusalem Council from his home church in Antioch in 49 A.D. There were least 4 cities where Paul had planted churches within the Galatian region: Psidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe. They were planted during Paul's first missionary journey (Act 13-14). This and the book of Revelation are the only books in the NT specifically addressed to multiple churches (1:2 – "To the churches of Galatia"). However, we can be fairly certain that each church did not contain the term "Galatia" in their name (i.e. 1<sup>st</sup> church of Galatia, 2<sup>nd</sup> church of Galatia, etc) but rather took the name of the city where they ministered since this is the pattern found in the NT). This is also the reason we took the name "Denver...Sound Church" – to follow the pattern we see in the NT.

1.2. The occasion which prompted Paul to write this letter was the outbreak of a false gospel message that had infected the Galatian churches and was now at pandemic levels. The false gospel message was a distortion of Jesus' and Paul's gospel (1:7-9). This message however was not promoting a works-based salvation. Nobody in the bible ever promoted a works-based salvation-even the Pharisees (e.g. Luk 5:21). What the Pharisees did promote was the observance of the OC clean laws –even the Pharisees converted to Christianity in the Jerusalem church. Christ however is our clean law under the NC (1Jo 1:9) making the necessity of the OC clean laws impossible, heretical and damning. This was the false gospel message infecting the Galatian churches (2:15-16, 5:4, 6:11-15; Act 15:1-9). The Galatian churches were not the only ones – it had also infected the Jerusalem church (2:11-12 = Peter was the "carrier" of the disease!). At the time, this represented at least 70% of the churches in existence and spanned a geographical area of over 600 miles (i.e. it was pandemic v. epidemic). This false gospel plagued the church for the majority of Paul's ministry (e.g. Rom 3:20-31 = 57 A.D.; Phi 3:1-9 = 60 A.D.)

Knowing that such a threat to the true gospel could exist this early in the church gives perspective as to what our expectations should be today (Act 20:28-29; 1Ti 4:1ff; 2Ti 3:1ff; 2Pe 2:1-2; Jud 3-4).

1.3. The theme of Galatians is **Getting The Gospel Right** (GTGR). This then is also the goal of his writing and the instruction established by this inspired letter (Rom 15:4). However, the strategy Paul employs to accomplish his goal is not a rehashing of the gospel 's historical facts (as has become popular today when considering this theme). It was instead to establish principles that would function as a set of timeless "checks and balances" for the Church in her endeavor to determine and defend the true gospel message.

### 2. Chapter-Study = (1-3:7)

2.1. (#1) GTGR is mandatory to getting right w/God (1:3-6a).

2.2. (#2) GTGR means realizing there is only one true gospel and many false gospels (1:6b-7).

2.3. (#3) GTGR involves seeing all false gospels as damning (1:8-9).

2.5. (#5) GTGR demands the support of all of God's Word (1:11-12).

*(discussed)*

2.6. (#6) GTGR expects death to self and a willingness to boldly embrace it no matter the cost (1:13-24).

Though Paul was once a rock-star within Judaism, his new life in Christ came with no such expectations. And that because he knew that death to the selfish pursuits of popularity, likeability or acceptability by the religious world - along with a willingness to embrace the truth no matter the level of suffering (socially, relationally, mentally or physically), were among the minimum requirements of all those seeking to GTGR (13-22; Mat 16:21-27; Luk 6:26). Such death to self and embracing of the truth includes also unashamed proclamation and the possibility of family separation (Mat 10:26-39).

## 2.7. (#7) GTGR depends on the church (2:1-10).

To say that the gospel is not a popularity contest (or dependent upon what the Christian rock-stars of the day think) is not the same as saying that the gospel is not dependent upon the Church. Paul knew the Church had been given the “keys to the kingdom” for determining who was “bound” or “loosed” from their sin (Mat 16:19, 18:18-20). As such he knew that GTGR depended upon the authority and ability given solely to Christ’s church (Eph 4:11-16). This is why he went to Jerusalem the first time (2:1-2) and why he was going back now (Act 15:1-2). This (btw) shows that Paul rejected “Solo Scriptura” (though not Sola Scriptura). The Word is the final authority whose teaching is identified/interpreted (but not invented) by the Church (e.g. Consider: how we got our bibles). And the same is true as it relates to the identification of those who are truly Christians (Mat 16:19, 18:18-20). This is why so many throughout church history have proclaimed, “Without the church as your Mother, you cannot have God as your Father”. That being said, having “c-h-u-r-c-h” on the door does not make one Christ’s church. To be a legitimate church and Body of Christ requires meeting the criteria found in Scripture (Act 11:19-26).

## 2.8. (#8) GTGR includes public opposition against those who preach a false gospel (2:11-14).

Paul was very opposing to Peter (11). Paul was also very public in his opposition to Peter (14). Our attitude and disposition is to be no different today (2Jo 1:9-11; 1Co 5:11; Jud 3-4 = Notice who we are to be contending against – those preaching a false gospel! The OT basis of these NT commands = Deu 13:1-9).

## 2.9. (#9) GTGR requires saying “no” to hypocrisy and antinomianism, and “yes” to faithful obedience and God’s justifying grace in Christ alone (2:15-21).

Paul’s endorsement of Christ alone as the only required clean law for justification was not - at the same time, a license for sin (i.e. hypocrisy) or living without the commands of God (i.e. antinomianism). If Christ were to benefit anyone, it would mean not only repentance and faith in Him, but also a life committed to obeying to all of God’s commands (17-20; Heb 5:9). In other words, our justified state is not immutable, we must maintain by faithfulness, what we gained by faith (Jam 2:14-26; 1Co 10:1-12; Gal 5:4). This has always been true for those GTGR (e.g. Exo 24:1-8 w/1Pe 1:1-2; Amo 5:20-27; Deu 29:18-20 w/Heb 10:19-30). Unfortunately, the evangelical gospel has rejected the necessity of such obedience by their view of immutable justification (or their view of justification and salvation as synonymous terms).

## 2.10 (#10) GTGR demands logical thinking (3:1-7).

Paul is flabbergasted by the lack of logical thought currently being exercised by the Galatians (1) and demands that they begin thinking logically if they are to discern their way back to the true gospel. As such he uses all 4 laws of logic to engage and challenge their current position (Law of Identity = 1; Law of Non-Contradiction = 2-4; Law of Excluded Middle = 5-6; Law of Rational Inference = 7). What this tells us is that though the gospel is clear it is not simple. It also demonstrates that the spiritual things are discerned through the intellect not the emotions. GTGR takes using the spirit (i.e. intellectual minds) that God has given us and putting them to work (Rom 12:2). This is what makes us different than the animals—and allows us to have dominion over them and this world. This is also how we are commanded to live in contrast to the animal kingdom – lest we be eternally destroyed (Jud 10).