

**GETTING THE GOSPEL RIGHT (GTGR) (GAL 4:8-11)**

The book of Galatians is all about getting the Gospel right. Here is what we have learned thus far:

1. GTGR is mandatory to getting right w/God (1:3-6a).
2. GTGR means realizing there is only one true gospel (and many false gospels) (1:6b-7).
3. GTGR involves seeing all false gospels as damning (1:8-9).
4. GTGR is not dependent upon the approval of Christian rock-stars (1:10).
5. GTGR demands the support of all of God's Word (1:11-12).
6. GTGR expects death to self and a willingness to embrace it no matter the cost (1:13-24).
7. GTGR depends on the church (2:1-10).
8. GTGR includes public opposition against those preaching a false gospel (2:11-14).
9. GTGR requires not only gaining our just. by f-a (2:15-16 = 3:1-5:12), but maintaining it through f-o (2:17-21 = 5:13-6:18):
10. GTGR means understanding that justification gained by f-a is supported by historical proof, precedent and prophecy (3:1-14).
11. GTGR requires understanding the purpose and place of the "works of the law" (or the OC) within redemptive history (3:15-24).
12. GTGR means understanding the biblical doctrine of adoption (3:25-4:7)

13. GTGR requires leaving behind any and all lifestyles incompatible with our new life with Christ (4:8-11).

Two are the focus of Paul's teaching in these verses:

13.1. The satanic realm ((8)).

"Formerly, when you" = Consistent with its prior use throughout the letter, the "you" refers to the Galatian Gentile believers – Paul's primary audience and original recipients of the letter. Before becoming a Christian, they **"did not know God"** = They did not have a saving relationship with God. As a result they lived in bondage.

"(you) were enslaved" (ἐδουλεύσατε) = in the position of a slave; to be in bondage to the service of another. Most often the idea being communicated is spiritual/religious rather than economic/social. And so it is here. In this case it was bondage **"to those who by nature are not gods."** = demons or the satanic realm (1Co 8:5 w/10:20). Paul is simply stating the consistent position of the NT regarding those outside of a saving relationship with God: they are "enslaved to" (and therefore serving) the satanic realm (Eph 2:1-3; 2Ti 2:24-26; 1Jo 5:19). Paul's words (however) also imply that this kind of bondage was no longer true of the Galatians (**"Formerly, when you were..."**). This means the Galatians were "performing deeds in keeping w/their repentance" (Act 26:20) v. deeds of repentance (Mat 13:21-22 v. 23). As such, their freedom from such bondage/enslavement tells us three things about it:

13.1.1. It is incompatible with new life in Christ.

Becoming a Christian (i.e. entering into a saving relationship with Christ/God) requires that He become our only Master/Lord and we *His* slave only. IOW: We must become "enslaved" to Him alone (Mat 6:24; Rom 10:9; 1Co 6:20; 2Co 6:15a; 1Co 10:21; Eph 4:4-5). This is why (then) we have stern warnings to avoid/fight against those who teach Christ's Mastery/Lordship as unnecessary (Jud 3-4; 2Pe 2:1). Likewise, Jesus must also possess our greatest affections (Luk 14:25-35).

13.1.2. There are certain behaviors/habits/activities associated with the satanic realm that we must be free of (i.e. no longer practicing) because they too are incompatible with new life in Christ.

This is ultimately how we show our allegiance to someone (by actions associated with/for them – e.g. Joh 14:15).

IOW: ACTIONS INDICATE ASSOCIATION!

How we recognize behaviors/habits/activities associated w/the satanic realm:

13.1.2.1. It is something the Bible directly identifies as sin (since sin is associated w/Satan.

(Mat 7:15-27; Luk 13:22-27; Joh 8:44; 1Jo 2:28-3:10).

13.1.2.2. It is something the Bible sees as good - yet it is keeping us from faithfully serving our new Master, Christ.

"When good things become the ultimate things, then the good things become god (and the sin of idolatry)."

This is at the very core of Satan's agenda! We don't have to be doing something that is sin (in and of itself) to be serving the Evil One, all that is necessary is to be doing something (good or bad) that keeps us from our priority as Christians to faithfully serve Christ in those ways He has commanded (Col 3:17; e.g. Work: working regularly on Sundays during church, taking a job that causes you to be away from your family most of the week, taking a

job in an area where there is no church - Jam 4:13-17; Wealth: choosing a lifestyle which leaves nothing to share w/your brothers and sisters in Christ - Gal 6:9-10; Jam 4:3).

This (by the way) is what John is referring to when he warns against loving this world – or the things of this world (1Jo 2:15-17). In this light, consider also Paul's words in (Rom 1:18-23 w/2Co 9:11 = a thank offering; Lev 7:11-12; Psa 50:14, 23, 107:19-22).

*How this is not a violation of the doctrine of Abundant Life = the key to AL is LBS! IOW: only when we (first) make Jesus our priority (first love) do we experience the blessings of not only this world-but the world to come.

**How "loving the things of this world" creates/leads to other perversions (or direct sin) = Essentially, this (rightly understood) is the reason behind every sin (i.e. the good things becoming the ultimate things). It means that we will pursue them even when the context for possessing them is not wrong.

13.1.3. Our new life in Christ liberates us from satanic/sinful bondage and gives us the power to remain free (Luk 4:18; Rom 6:1-7; Tit 2:11-12; 2Pe 1:3-4 – notice that to possessing God's "divine power" is the key to the "promise", "becoming partakers of the divine nature" and escaping "the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire"; Joh 8:31-36 – notice that remaining free requires remaining - or "abiding" in Christ, i.e. continuing in faithful obedience to His word).