

Gal 1:6-9

Paul in this section is defending and promoting the only true Gospel

Here he is doing so by warning against and attacking false gospels

In general, the best tool against false gospels is to promote the true Gospel

But in some cases, like this one, people also need to be defended against false gospels

This is what Paul does in this section- almost a theme for the whole book

- I. I am flabbergasted that you turned so quickly to another ‘gospel’ 6
 - In the place of the epistle where a thanksgiving was expected, Paul says he is shocked by them “uniquely occurring anathema” Silva quoted in Beale 785
 - A. I am astonished/disturbed 6a
 - B. Reason: You have turned so quickly 6b
 1. You have quickly turned from the One Who called you by the grace of Christ
 - So quickly – possibly within weeks or months of Paul’s evangelizing them
 - Turned away from
 - Changed allegiance, deserted
 - Completely abandoned, not slightly off course, but U-turn abandonment
 - ABSOLUTELY SERIOUS – more important than life or death, ETERNAL life or eternal death
 - From the One Who called you
 - cf. 1:15
 - Called you by the grace of Christ
 2. You have turned toward a different ‘gospel’
 - “What the Galatians were doing was not adding some interesting new insights into the meaning of Christianity but denying the essential Christian message. They were substituting Jewish teaching for the truth of the gospel.” CMM 298
- II. Disclaimer: it is not really a gospel, but rather an evil lie that should be rejected 7-9
 - A. It’s not actually another ‘gospel’ 7a
 - There are two different words for “another”
 - They are turning to a gospel that is not another of the same kind, but another of a different kind, dissimilar in class, which makes it to not truly be good news
 - B. It’s only certain people trying to turn you away from the real gospel 7b-9
 1. The real situation 7b-c
 - a. Certain people are troubling you 7b
 - Disturbing you/throwing you into confusion cf. 5:10
 - Cf. Eph. 4:14 tossed about like waves by every false wind of teaching
 - Great book title – “the cruelty of heresy – false teaching really does ruin lives
 - BTW – there are some people with perfect theology and ruined lives because their life and passion does not match their theology
 - We need both/and – theology and obedience
 - b. Specifically: They are wanting to change/alter/pervert the the Gospel of Christ 7c
 - To change it into something it is not – like sun turning to darkness, Acts 2:20
 - What they are doing is not adding to it, teasing out its inferences, debating on non-essential matters (we can debate and disagree on non-essentials)
 - But they are rejecting the Gospel and offering a substitute
 - Some things we can disagree on in brotherly love
 - Some things are fighting matters
 - It takes wisdom and maturity to know the difference
 - Even in fighting matters, we do not wage war like the world, but fight in love and giving our bodies to be crucified

2. How you should respond 8-9

Any other gospel from any other source is to be cursed

a. First round 8

1) If even we or an angel from heaven preaches a gospel to you which is not in accordance with or contrary to the Gospel which we proclaimed to you... 8a

We – Paul puts himself in this category

Paul is subservient to the message, not the messenger is important

It is not true Gospel because Paul said it

If Paul says different, it is false

Or even an angel from heaven

No matter what class the messenger, the message is the key

BTW, this is why we can hold human teachers in esteem, even high esteem

But we can never believe anything JUST because they said it

Respect human teachers and use their track record to discern their trustworthiness

But never COMPLETELY rely on human teachers or human wisdom

Evangelizes to you

Greek word is verbal form of “Gospel,” there is no English equivalent

If anyone preaches good news to you

People proclaim things all the time touted as good news - advertising

That which is contrary to/which does not correspond to that which we preached to you

Compare the content with the original – preached by Paul

These people believed that Jesus was the Messiah, believe the same as Paul in many, many areas

But Paul says some things are so important that there can be no compromise on these issues

Our unity is around the Gospel –

beware of false unity that forces you to compromise in order to be unified

In that case, the others are the ones breaking unity by not being orthodox

You are keeping unity by being orthodox

It is not the delivery, but the content

Not the packaging, but the goods

Beware of propaganda and bright lights

Don’t look at the outside, but the inside

Don’t worry as much about your ability to package stuff as having good stuff in the package

That which they were to compare was not good JUST because Paul preached it

Remember that if he how says different, they should reject it

2) Then let him be anathema/cursed/destroyed 8b

Cursed/accursed – from the OT idea of given totally to destruction

Cherem, like Jericho

Paul is not playing around – strongest terms because the very Gospel is at stake

Don’t play with, buddy up with, have unity with people who pervert the Gospel or you will share in their deception and punishment -cf. 2Jn 10-11

Unity is desirable, but has limits

Athanasius against the world

Luther – “Here I stand”

Peter – “Should we obey you or God?”

Paul – “Let them be cursed”

b. Second round 9

So important, he says it again

1) I'm saying the same thing again for emphasis 9a-b

a) Just as I said earlier 9a

b) I am now saying it again 9b

2) What I'm saying again 9c-d

a) If anyone preaches a gospel to you which is not in accordance with or contrary to that which you received... 9c

2 Differences from the first time:

“Anyone”

– wide to include every possibility (including Galatian false teachers)

“what you received”

– again the emphasis is on the content

But now from the readers' point of view

It is not true because they received it/accepted it

But what they did receive is the truth with which to compare others

b) Then let him be anathema/cursed/destroyed 9d

Same result

Paul draws a line in the concrete, no compromise here

Absolutely serious, because absolutely important

Matter of eternal life and death

Some things can be compromised, some cannot

Some things can be amicably disagreed upon

Others cannot

Even then, we must love and respect those others

While honestly telling them to their face that they are wrong

Much wisdom, humility, fear and trembling is needed

It is not “my truth” vs. “your truth”

But God's truth

And if anyone deviates, they do so at their own risk

A VERY strong warning to the Galatians

v. 10 can be seen as the conclusion to this section

Paul has been accused of being a man-pleaser and waffling

He asks for the conclusion whether this is so based on the foregoing evidence

v. 10 is better seen as the topic statement of what follows