

~ NOT OF MEN NEITHER BY MEN....

GALATIANS 1:1

~~~~~

~ Our Spiritual Safari leaves Job behind in the ancient oriental city of Uz in this report, somewhere out in the Syrian desert, probably. Frankly, we don't know where we were just at as we said good-bye to Job – not spiritually nor physically; and we're coming into a magnificent, miraculous and marvelous meadow of mind-boggling meditations in Galatians. It is a delightful climate in Galatia along the Mediterranean and Aegean Seas as we catch back up with Paul on his third missionary journey; in a very beautiful country. Unfortunately, Paul has learned that the Judaeizers were following him around, teaching against what he was teaching; so this letter is written to counteract their false reports. Paul is going to make the Gospel unmistakably clear to the Galatians.

This epistle was nailed to the masthead of the Reformation that took place in England during the time of John Wesley. Wesley was deeply moved by this letter. Wesley asked, "*.... I came to America to convert Indians; but who is going to convert John Wesley?*" Well, there was a subsequent miraculous revival in that day. That was the time of the Industrial Revolution; and profound changes came about for the working man. Those concepts of a fair capital and labor is completely gone today, although mankind won't acknowledge the failure. Well, let's move on. Galatians will have more of an affect on our lives than, literally, any other book of the Bible.

Galatians is an interesting book with a remarkable history. If there is ever to be a worldwide revival, it is going to have to be based on the Word of God and the Lord Jesus Christ — and nothing else; and I believe it will also have to be Galatians-centered. That's just how important this epistle really is. In Galatians, it is easy to misuse and misquote verses. The abuse of the epistle to the Galatians has led to extreme apostasy in the church. However, when taught and understood properly, correctly, and completely, this epistle is an unimaginable occasion for rejoicing. It is deeply and directly spiritually connected to Jude's epistle; a relation we will develop later. If we can get

the book of Galatians fitted accurately in our minds and in our hearts, it will certainly bring us the most meaningful message we have in Scripture.

The destination of this epistle has given rise to what is known as the North Galatian and South Galatian theories. It seems more reasonable to simply suppose it was sent to all of the churches in the area Paul visited on his first missionary journey; but that does not preclude the possibility that it had a much wider circulation, even as far north as Pessinus, Ancyra, and Tavium. This was a huge population of wealth and affluence. Many churches had been established by Barnabus, Peter and Paul. The word “*Galatians*” could be used in either an ethnographic sense, which would refer to the nationality of the people, or it could be used in a geographic sense, which would refer to the Roman province by that name. Hence, a north and south theory.

Regardless of any position taken on that, there is a common blood strain which identified people in that area. It was a mixture of ethnicity. The people for whom the province was named were Gauls, a Celtic tribe from the same stock that inhabited France. In the 4th century B.C., they invaded the Roman Empire and sacked Rome. Later they crossed into Greece and captured Delphi in 280 B.C. At the invitation of Nikomedes I, King of Bithynia, they crossed over into Asia Minor to help him in a civil war. They were warlike people and soon established themselves in Asia Minor. They were blonde Orientals.

In 189 B.C., these Celtic tribes were made subjects of the Roman Empire and became a province. Their boundaries varied, and for many years they retained their customs and language. The churches Paul established on his first missionary journey were included, at one time, in the territory of Galatia, and this is the name Paul would normally give to these churches. These Gallic Celts had much of the same temperament and characteristics of the American population; referring to the original founders of the United States who came largely from England and Europe.

Caesar had this to say about these people: “... *the infirmity of the Gaul’s is that they are fickle in their resolves, fond of change, and not to be trusted.*” That description is about as accurate as we could get of the everyday

average American – and the world at large. Any little device or gadget that comes along — we go for it. People want the latest and greatest model of everything. Frankly, it amazes me that our system of government has survived as long as it has.

Another description of the Galatians is: *“frank, impetuous, impressible, eminently intelligent, fond of show, but extremely inconstant, the fruit of excessive vanity.”* Those who believe they know everything today have the fruit of excessive vanity. Remember, they wanted to make Paul a god one day, but the next, they stoned him in Acts chapter fourteen. Surely the Epistle to the Galatians has a message for us of like temper, who are beset on every hand by cults and isms innumerable that would take us, likewise, from our moorings of the Gospel of grace.

The epistle to the Galatians is a stern, severe, and solemn message. Our Safari will drive furiously in this epistle. Galatians does not correct conduct, as the Corinthian letters do, but it is corrective — the Galatian believers were in grave peril. Because the foundations of their belief were being attacked, and everything was threatened. The epistle contains no word of commendation, no word of praise or thanksgiving. There is no request for prayer, and there is no mention of their standing in Christ. No one with Paul is mentioned by name. Compare this with the other epistles of Paul, and you’ll discover this one is just a little bit different. The heart of Paul the apostle is laid bare to the Galatians; there is deep emotion and strong feeling in his words. This is his fighting epistle — he has on war paint. He has no tolerance of legalism. Someone has said Romans comes from the head of Paul; while Galatians comes from his heart. *“Galatians takes up controversially what Romans stated systematically.”*

Galatians is the declaration of emancipation from religious legalism on any level. The legalist won’t abide on our safari for long now, I can promise you that. The rebuke will be too overwhelming for them. This was Martin Luther’s favorite epistle, Luther said, *“... I am wedded to it.”* It has been called the Magna Charta of the early church, the manifesto of Christian liberty, the impregnable citadel, and a veritable Gibraltar against any attack on the heart of the gospel. *“Immortal victory is set upon its brow.”*

**Galatians** is going to be the strongest declaration and defense of the doctrine of justification by faith in or out of Scripture; and if revival is going to come to this world, it is going to come by the Word of God – period. This is God’s polemic on behalf of the most vital truth of the Christian faith against any attack. It will revolutionize our lives! Not only is a sinner saved by grace through faith, but the saved sinner lives by grace. Grace is a way *TO* life and a way *OF* life; and in that order those two are inextricably intertwined, by the way.

Galatians teaches and is uncompromising on the Gospel of grace unto salvation. Paul is this kind of apostle — no parenthesis is necessary; but the law is not disregarded, discredited, or despised in any way, either. All of the demands and purpose, fullness and integrity of the Mosaic System are totally maintained in this letter. Even so, the qualities required under the law make it utterly *IMPOSSIBLE* for man to come to God according to the Mosaic Law. We have another way for man to be justified before God open to us which entirely bi-passes the law; it’s called faith. Justification by faith is the theme of Galatians – emphasizes on *FAITH*.

**Habakkuk 2: 4** ....*behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith ~*

**Romans 1: 17** ...*for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith ~*

**Hebrews 10: 38** ....*now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him ~*

**Galatians 3: 11** ....*but that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith ~*

There are two methods used by apostates and atheists to attack the credibility of the Gospel. Some attempt to add to it. Others slander and discredit the man who handles Scripture by teaching sound doctrine. I am absolutely sure most people think I am an intellectual obscuramus – whatever that is; I know it doesn’t sound good. Well, a frontal attack in warfare is not always the best strategy. Superior forces must be had. So,

Satan tries to sneak a subtle side attack on growing Christians. This will always be the way the devil attacks the man who deals honestly and sincerely with the Word of God. This is the way Satan is making his attack upon Paul – and on his apostleship itself — and Paul’s authority – and that’s the way this type of thing always starts out, too, by the way....

***Galatians 1:1 Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead)***

The word “*Apostle*” is used in a twofold sense:

1. One of the Twelve (Acts 1:21-26):
  - a. With Jesus during His 3-year ministry (Acts 1:21);
  - b. Witness of His post-resurrection ministry (Acts 1:22);
  - c. Chosen by Christ (Acts 1:22, 9:15, 26:17).
  
2. One sent forth, used in a wider sense. Paul, in our judgment, took Judas Iscariot’s place as we saw on safari in Acts chapter fourteen verses four and fourteen. “*Not of men*” — the preposition ‘*apo*’ conveys the meaning of “*not from men;*” that is, not legalistic, not by appointment or commission after having attended a school or taken some prescribed course. “*Neither by man*” — the preposition ‘*dia*’ indicates that it was not through man.

One extremely important aspect of this study in Galatians is the people to whom it was sent. That is not always true in Paul’s other epistle’s. It certainly is true here. Our Spiritual Safari is not from man; and I’m not here to answer the higher critic. My credentials to you are directly from the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. If you doubt me, ask Him. These reports are not produced by hocus pocus and abra cadabra; God the Father called me directly to this task, my beloved.

The resurrected Christ made Paul an apostle. That’s pretty important to get right here at the beginning. You’re not going to learn the Bible by attending a certain school or taking a prescribed course – it’s just doesn’t happen that way. Our expedition likes to keep this as simple as possible – really simple – if we can. In closing, I would like to disclose that we follow the Through the

Bible Radio program with Dr. J. Vernon McGee closely. Some of this first report has been taken directly from their Notes and Outlines for Galatians ~

~~~~~