

Another Gospel – Galatians 1:6
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Galatians Chapter One

I think today will be my last Sunday with you this year. The fellows have told me that they would take the last two weeks. I look forward to the time off to shut down some of my daily routines and instead concern myself with what I'll preach next time. I'll just read and pray as if no duties were on me. Both of those are duties though. I expect you to be here. And I would be very disappointed in you if you did not support them with your presence and with your prayers. They will be just like Larry said he was this morning—empty and having trouble getting up here. So, support them with your prayers and your presence. Something else I was supposed to have told you.

Galatians Chapter One. I want to read, and you follow along with me, the first nine verses. In verse six, you will see the last two words in that verse, 'another gospel.' There are three times in these nine verses that Paul speaks about another or any other gospel or another gospel. So that is what I will deal with this morning, Lord, helping. If you're there before we read, would you once again unite your hearts together as we approach the throne of grace.

Our Father, we come again this morning to Thy word. We come, I hope, as learners, as disciples, as followers. And as the brother said, some of you might be getting close to the wicket gate, that entrance into glory, that place where the burdens of sin roll off your back. I pray that you might help them continue to draw and enable them to follow.

Father, give us hearing ears, but if you do that, we need fitting words to hear. And these dear souls do not need to hear a man. Gracious Lord, they need to hear Thy voice. Thy voice as we read the word. And hopefully, Thy voice in their hearts as they hear. Give help, give wisdom, unction, and set before them these truths. And glorify your son, exalt him in Thy great name, O Lord, by Thy Spirit. In Christ's name we pray, Amen.

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”*. Paul is stating his calling and authority from God, meeting personally the risen Savior.

Verses 2-8 *“... and all the brethren which are with me and to the churches of Galatia, grace be to you and peace from God the Father and from our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins that he might deliver us from this present evil world”*. Children, that will happen—dying to deliver us from our sins and this present evil world according to the will of God and our Father. *“To whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. I marvel that you are so soon removed from him that called you unto the grace of Christ, unto another gospel, which is not another; but there be some that trouble you and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed”*.

There are only two things I want to bring out in these verses. Number one is the uncertainty of the great apostle; one used the most in all scripture. Though we preach any other gospel, let us be accursed, is what he was saying. If I come before you again in my travels, and I bring with me a gospel different than that which I previously proclaimed, then let me be accursed. And folk, that

word means given over to the direst of woes. It is the most serious consequence that a man could face at death. Let them be accursed.

That has to be the entrance to glory as Paul breathed that last breath that he found the door shut. You must continue. It is said when Judas hung himself that he went to his **own** place. There was a special place in hell for him. And those who heard the gospel and turned away, that would be the darkness of dark in hell. There were five foolish virgins that continued with the wise, but the foolish, having not much all workings of the Spirit of God, found the door shut.

"And the one certainty that we all know based on scripture is that once an individual is saved, that is eternal. But I hope that there is no one here foolish enough to think that this happened to me back 20 years ago or five years ago, so I'm eternally saved. There is a twin doctrine that goes with eternal security, and that is the perseverance of the saints. All who have gone through the door will overcome. In the end, they will overcome all things and will never be overcome.

Paul was aware of that. If ever there was a man aware that he had to finish the race, it was Paul. That was the uncertainty that he lived with and ministered to. In 1 Corinthians 9, "*But I keep under my body and bring it into subjection, lest when I preach to others, I myself might be a castaway*"; 'reprobate.' I can preach all these years, but if I don't keep my body, and bring it into subjection to the will of God, and follow him wholly and completely, this doctrine of eternal security will mean nothing to me.

So, I can beat my body black and blue, do whatever. Now, I did not say that you are to go out and take a whip or a chain like some folks have done in years gone by. And they would punish their old flesh because of its evil ways. No, you punish your old man by following the word of God, and that still small voice of God within the new man.

And folk, the person or the people that trouble me the most are not those filled with doubt. From time to time, they might express that 'I do not know if I'm saved. I wonder whether or not I was actually saved, when I said I was.' That doesn't bother me. The ones that trouble me are those that are never concerned. They go through life with this positive attitude. 'I am a Christian. I was saved eternally. So, I am secure.' They never doubt. They go on as if that is a given in their life. And they wonder at times at me, why I am not certain all the time. Every true child of God knows that you are not yet completely saved. It is an ever-ongoing process.

"And there are only a couple of places. The first one is in Hebrews towards the end of the book to the Revelation. You'll run into it. Same apostle, chapter 10, verses 38 and 39. "*Now the just shall live by faith. But if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.*" God talking through the apostle to leave this, that you might read it this morning. It goes on in verse 39, "*But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe.*"

"Paul, were you not saved on the Damascus road? If not, maybe when you met the one God sent you to, that laid his hands on you, and your eyes were open? Were you not saved in either of these two times or in between them? Yes. "*We are not of those that draw back unto perdition but of them that believe to the saving of the soul*" (v. 39). Paul, it seems to me that you are speaking with a double tongue there. Were you saved when you met Christ? Yes, I was introduced to him. I repented. I was given faith to believe. But the faith that I was given when I met Jesus has continued to increase and develop. And I believed then as I believe today to the saving. That's the future tense. I'm not yet in glory. I'm not yet saved.

But the people that trouble me are those that, they just never doubt, 'I'm certain.' And I don't meet too many of God's children like that. Sometimes we all get under the juniper tree like Elijah. But we are revived, and we're brought back. And we continue with the Spirit of God who continues working in us *that believe to the saving of the soul* (v. 39). So, to every child of God if you don't know that this morning you should. That you are not completely saved. It's an ever-ongoing process. You don't have to fret yourself about, 'Am I offending or grieving the Holy Spirit because I feel like I might not be saved this day?' I don't know how many times I've come to the passage Larry read and another. Lord, I don't know. But this I do and am certain that you said all that come to you that you would receive and turn none away. I've been there many times and quoted that to others who are there.

So, in Galatians and Corinthians 9:27, I quoted Paul. And here in Hebrews, you've heard what the great apostle said about being saved. Now, what about the disciple with the utmost confidence in himself? And he looked the Lord Jesus directly in the face and he said to him, "*Though all men shall be offended because of thee ...*," (Matt. 26:33b). I will not. Never.' Jesus said, "*... before the cock crows, you shall deny me thrice ...*" (v. 34). And he looked again and said, 'Though everybody should deny you, I will die with you and never deny you.' How much later before Peter had his feet knocked out from under him, and he wasn't so almighty eternally secure of who he was in himself.

Now, the next one is in 1 Peter chapter 1:3-5b. "*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. To an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith...*". And here he's using the language of the apostle, "*through faith unto salvation*" (v 5). Peter, weren't you saved? Yes. Were you not a disciple? Did you not say that you would follow him all the way to death, no matter if everybody turned? Well, I did back then. That night when he looked at you in the judgment hall, never said a word, you just glanced over saw his eyes and you went out and wept bitterly. Peter was that the same man that said, 'though all deny you. I won't be in the crowd?' And now you come to his closing out his life, and he writes these two epistles, "*... who were kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time*" (v 5). Though we are all traveling, including myself, every one of us have within us the possibility of falling away.

"*Though we are an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel than that which has been delivered to you, let him be accursed*' (Galatians 1:8, 9). And you're sitting there saying that no angel in heaven could fall. Are they created beings? How do they exist? How do they remain faithful to God? In the same way that you do. The work of God in you, keeping you, prodding you on and upward. Paul didn't take it lightly. He knew what was in him. I have that possibility of falling away. He had seen others. He certainly heard about Judas. He even saw Demas walk away from him. Well, no, the angels in heaven will not fall because the Lord already threw out a third that followed Satan. But we have that possibility. And I hope there's none of you this morning sitting there thinking I will never deny him. That's as certain within you as the next breath you take unless he upholds and sustains you. You in the judgment hall and him being beaten. You're not going to be in that company. You know if they got the Master they're going to get all his disciples. 'I don't know him. Man, I don't know him. I said, I don't know him.' Peter even cursed to prove. A child of God doesn't talk like that.

If you hear another gospel, children, there is but one true gospel. I hope you can go out with a sound mind, I don't know. I hope they'll sit me down if my mind goes. But there's one gospel. And if I ever preach anything contrary to the pure, true gospel of Christ, woe is me. And what is the gospel? Well, it is the power of God unto salvation. The gospel includes the person and the work of the Lord Jesus.

He left, and we are in that season when every once in a while you'll hear a mention of Jesus's birth. He left the portals of glory. Birthed there in that stable. Unfit to be with human beings; more fit to be with the animals. For there was no room for his mother in the inn, and she could only find that place. Birth, having laid aside all his glory, and all his wisdom, eternal, infinite wisdom, he controlled, he brought everything into existence by the word of his power. He lay all that aside, that royal garment. Those angels flew around there in glory with their faces covered. That's that little baby over there in Bethlehem covered in strips of cloth that they usually would bury folks in, similar to that. All she could find, tearing up shreds of cloth, because he came into the world as a dying human being. And that's the only way you'll ever get to know him. If you're still so full of self, you won't ever know him. You have got to be emptied. He emptied himself of power, strength, and intellect. He came about that by listening and hearing the adults talk and hearing them read what scripture they had. Taking him up to the synagogue and there listening for that word from his father. I don't know what happened when he was three or four years of age. But I know when he was 12, he realized that God was his father. Because he said to his mother, "Didn't you know I must be about my father's business?" (Luke 2:49)

That's that little baby there that knew nothing. That's that little infant whose head was stabilized by his mother. He was totally dependent upon another human being. Then throughout life as a dying man, fulfilled the law of God in its entirety without sin. And yet in death, every sin of every child of God that will be with him in eternity was laid on him. And until you come to know that realization, you don't know the gospel yet. My sins laid on that holy being who died as a sinner with his father's face turned until that last breath that he drew. After that he cried out, "*It is finished*" (John 19:30). Then he saw his father's face that had been turned from him again. And he said, "Father." Previously it was my "God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Well, he turned his back on him because he was made to be sin. And you will never know that weight. If you don't go to heaven, you'll be paying that debt throughout eternity.

And in two or three days of scourging, pain, insult, and agony he paid your eternal debt. If you go to glory, hanging on that cross was that man who paid your debt. I don't care what you know about anything else. You can know all the doctrines here, describe, and talk with anybody, but until you find out your sins were on that man, you're either a baby in Christ or you don't know Him at all. The true gospel sits all alone. That's what Paul was talking about. If I don't preach that, then God curse me.

If I ever come back to you with some other form of the gospel, and children you're talking about form, just turn on your radio or your television and you can hear just about whatever you want to. No, it's not just about. You can hear almost anything. Just keep searching. But the child of God is looking for that one that will open the book and show him or her their place in this book, and declare Christ unto them as the only way of forgiveness of sin. And it's such a sad, sad state that this land is in when salvation has been reduced to an act that a sinner can perform. If never before in your life you haven't cried out, 'Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner,' see if you can find that place.

Paul didn't take it for granted that he would be in glory. He said if I don't keep my body down under and let the new man direct my steps by the Spirit of God, I'll wind up a reprobate. That was his uncertainty. The only certainty that Paul ever found was in those dying moments when he could look into the face of God and see Him smiling at him and say, enter in my child. And I come to the certainty of Paul in those verses that I read to you. He was a man raised under the Jews' religion, maybe as a child taught from childhood up. And if there ever was a human being that could have confidence in the flesh, Paul said, that's me. If any man might have "*confidence in the flesh, ... I*

more" (Philippians 3:4). And he begins to list why. I was "*circumcised the eighth day*" (v. 5). You remember God giving that to Abraham for those eight-day-old boys? I've heard, I know that methods are different now, but I've heard that blood does not begin clotting in an infant until at least eight days old. So, they had to wait. I was circumcised as God gave it to Abraham and as Joshua renewed it before they entered into the land of Canaan. "I was a *Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee*; (v. 5); There wasn't anybody on earth that could point their finger at Paul, or Saul, and say he didn't obey the law there. "Touching righteousness in the law, blameless" (v. 6). And if ever there was an exceptional student, it was Saul of Tarsus. In that aspect, he is like Saul the first king of Israel, head and shoulders above anybody else. That was Saul. He sat at the feet of the greatest teacher Israel had in his time. And if he was not certain that the gospel of Christ was the only way to glory, folks he had nothing. Because he gave up all things and counted everything that he had been taught and how he had been raised as wrong. Do you know what it takes for a man or a woman to get up in age and they have to do away with everything that they were taught? You're not gonna let it go easily. And this was Saul of Tarsus. But he met Christ. He felt the free pardon of sin and the grace of God bestowed upon him. And he felt the weight of that sin and that burden roll off when he met the Lord Jesus.

No one could ever be so dynamic, Dogmatic is the word I should have used. I remember. This is off the subject. But I remember Spurgeon telling about hearing a man. A learned man in the pulpit and he went to hear him. And he said the man got to a certain point in his message and he stopped, and he put his hand on his chin as if he was there thinking. And just out of thin air, he pulled a word out. Spurgeon said, "That man is brilliant". And the next time he heard that he was going to be close by, he said, I've got to go hear him. And the same message, got to the same place, and he stopped again, and he pulled out that same word. Spurgeon said he was nothing but a hypocrite and a showman in the pulpit. Well, we've got many of those. God help that I'm not. Well, I don't have that problem. But I did mean to say dogmatic. And how could he be that convinced to give up everything that he previously hailed as righteousness? Now he proclaims that all will be accursed that hold to a gospel different than the one he was now preaching. You know, the world hates those that are dogmatic, unless they're on their side. 'If you don't agree with me, then you have no right to be so dogmatic in saying what you believe.' But a Christian becomes just that. I don't care what the news says. I don't care what is out there in the other places called churches. It doesn't matter. We, if we have been saved, we're dogmatic. Jesus Christ did for me what no one could do. And that's Paul's certainty here.

But now you're talking about somebody being dogmatic in religion. Or one that follows a path no matter if all the world might be against it yet they journey on because they're certain Jesus Christ is God in the flesh. They've met him and are certain that he is the way, the truth, the door. And any others that come along are all imposters. And the God Saul of Tarsus served, he thought was the God of the Old Testament. Now, can you imagine you're 40 years old, or 20, and you denounce everything that you were taught as a child? That'd be a hard thing to do except if you were taught correctly. And Paul had no problem. He never had a second thought when he met Jesus the resurrected Christ. You want to know about the God of the Old Testament that he was serving?

David didn't seek from the scripture the proper way to bring the ark back into the city. The Philistines had gotten away with putting it on a cart to let oxen pull it. David went and put the ark on a cart. There was this young man, when the cart began to shake because the cow stumbled, that put out his hand to stabilize it, and to keep the ark from falling. And God smote him like that. Do you know how accurate they had to be on everything? David took the ark over there to a man's house, and he wasn't going to move it again until he found out how to do that.

The Pharisees prided themselves on doing everything right, focusing solely on outward deeds without considering the motives of their hearts. They believed all that God said in the Commandments. *“Thou shalt not commit murder. Thou shalt not commit adultery (Exod. 20).* But Jesus comes along and causes them to understand where sin originates. It’s in the heart. *“If you even look upon a woman with lust in your heart you’ve committed adultery already.* He knew what was in the hearts. They had formed a God from their own perception. Much like we see today in those bringing another gospel.

Years ago, we used to see funny drawings in the newspaper, where they made a big nose or big ears stand out in a cartoon of a famous person. That's called a caricature. It was to make you look at one part of that person. For the past 75 years, when talking about God, many have focused a lot on just one thing about Him – that He is loving. It's like making a cartoon of God with only one big feature: His love. People often say, "God is love," and that if you love God, you're going to heaven. It's like looking at a cartoon version of God with only one big quality. But God is more than just love. This is what America believes to be the Gospel. Paul said, 'I'll end up in hell if I depart from what I've preached to you and bring one aspect of God.'

Just like a person is more than just a big nose in a cartoon. It's important to understand God in all His amazing qualities, not just one. Those preaching another gospel have made a caricature of God. America serves the God of love only. Thinking, therefore, I'll go to heaven. Paul said, 'I'll end up in hell if I depart from what I've preached to you and bring another gospel'. Just like Paul warned about not deviating from the true message he preached. Religion sometimes focuses too much on just one part of God, at the expense of neglecting the whole picture in the whole council of God.

Paul, who was once a top-tier Pharisee of the Pharisees used to think that following the law outwardly was enough for eternal glory. *“... touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless”* (Philippians 3:6b). He mastered the do's and don'ts of the law. It was do this and live. Don't do this and die. And he never could do enough. Everything he did left him with the uncertainty of failing. He's going to get rid of the name of Christ, if he has to kill every Christian that's in the world in his lifetime. But he met him—the imposter. The 'imposter' Jesus comes along. And, when Jesus came Saul of Tarsus realized that redemption was only in that name he tried to stamp out. This life-changing encounter with Jesus transformed Saul into Paul. Now, Paul understands that redemption is found solely in Jesus Christ. His certainty about this truth is unwavering. How could he not be certain? Having spent a lifetime trying to please the God of the Old Testament. He discovered that the gospel of Christ is true, real, and certain. No longer burdened by uncertainties, he staked his eternal soul on Jesus Christ. The gospel became his anchor, and he gave up everything for it. Now, the only uncertainty in his life is the fear of deviating from this gospel.

In closing, Paul echoes the sentiment of 1 John 4:18, *“saying there is no fear in love”*, and if there were ever men in love with Christ, it was Paul, John, and Peter. Christ's love for them is not just any love; it is perfect, complete, and lacking nothing for its completeness. There is no fear in love. It is perfect and abolishes torment. I want you to leave here asking yourselves whether your love for him is being brought to completeness. Is your love for him casting out fear that has torment?

Now, there's a story about Vashti. She had no dread in disobeying the king and was removed as queen. Esther is brought to the throne in the providence of God to save the Jews. The king loved her very much and said, 'Ask what you will up to *“half of the kingdom”* (Esther 5:6b). Paul, just like Esther the bride, believes that God will not withhold any good thing from him because he to is a member of his bride.

There's another story and it's about an old Puritan named Thomas Brooks. He was sitting at the dinner table one evening. Others saw him crying and asked him why. He answered, "Because I can't love Jesus any more than I do. Have you ever wept because you ought to love him more? I'm weeping because I can't love him more." You've got to be a child first to know that. But great is your loss if you do not know the love of Christ.

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