

July 21, 2019 ▫ Galatians 1:6-10

Questions for Littles: What does the apostle marvel at in v6? From whom are they turning away? What has God done for them? In what has He called them? To what are they turning? Is it really even a gospel (v7a)? How are they being turned? What are these troublemakers doing to the gospel? What does Paul say about any who preach “another” gospel alongside the one that Paul had already preached to them (v8)? What about if it is Paul himself who does this? What about if it is an angel from heaven? What does v9 do, following v8? Whom is Paul not trying to please? Whom is he trying to please? Whose bondservant is he?

The apostle is SURPRISED, shocked even. We want to know—what is so surprising that it shocked even the apostle Paul? That someone should turn away. That they should commit treason. That they who had begun well should “so soon” (v6) be turning away. The gospel is so good. How could someone turn from it? Let us learn to be wary of ourselves and not think that what befell these Galatians could never happen to us. Would we be shocked for ourselves to turn away? Would we be surprised? The apostle Paul was surprised. This was the surprise of the Galatians’ turning.

Then there is the SERIOUSNESS of the Galatians’ turning. What they are turning to was a different gospel (though the apostle explains that this was not a gospel at all—there IS no other). But look closely at what it was that they were turning *from*. It’s a what question with a Whom answer. They were turning from *Him who called you*. They were turning from a Person. What Person? God Himself. God who had planned to love and save sinners from all eternity. God who sent Christ to live and die in their place, when what they deserved was not mercy but Hell. God who had put that Hell on His Son. God who had then “called you in the grace of Christ.” What a God of love and mercy and power and forgiveness!! To turn from the gospel of Christ isn’t just to “nuance one’s theology.” It is to turn from God! That’s the seriousness of the Galatians’ turning.

Finally, there is the SEVERE penalty of the Galatians’ turning. What is at stake is eternal punishment. Paul cares to be approved of God (v10) because the alternative is to come under God’s condemnation (anathema/accursed—vv8,9). The stakes for the Paul are very high. For those who preach a counterfeit gospel—and the closer the counterfeit the more dangerous!—there is literally Hell to pay. And so too for any who believe the counterfeit, since without God and His grace in Christ, Hell has not been paid, and must.