**Galatians 1-2: Why is this Recorded**

**Introduction**

We have begun to study the book of Galatians in our Bible Study. The problem in the book is that people are teaching the Galatians they have to keep the law of Moses and the Jewish requirements in order to be saved. In the process, these false teachers were apparently saying that Paul was not a real apostle. Paul writes to the churches he helped established and begins his book by defending his apostleship and stating the Gospel comes from God. Of all that God has recorded for us why leave us with a large portion of a small book which highlights a very specific problem back in the 1st Century? I have meet some people who doubt Paul’s apostleship so these passages are valuable if you encounter that but how does Galatians 1-2 call us to a closer walk with the Lord?

Galatians 1-2 reminds us the importance of standing firm and not compromising the truth of the gospel in anyway.

**A Summary of the Gospel**

* Gal 1:4
* See also 1 Cor 15:3-4; 1 Tim 3:16

Jesus came to this earth and took on human flesh. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He lived a sinless life and accomplished might deeds which show that he was spent from God. He died for our sins, was buried, and was raised on the 3rd day.

Obviously, there are other ways to summarizes the gospel (it is good exercise to summarizes what you belief briefly since it highlights what is important) but we are not free to change or distort the gospel in anyway.

**1. The Gospel does not change**

Once again people are teaching the Galatians they must keep the Jewish feast days (Passover, etc.), sabbath, and food laws in order to be saved. This is an addition to the Gospel! Jesus fulfilled the Law of Moses and Christians are under a new covenant.

This is the gospel of Christ (1:7). The origin of the Gospel is God and it contains absolute truth (2:4, 15). We cannot change it!

* Man cannot change it or add to it (1:6-7; 2:4)
* Angels cannot preach a different gospel (1:8)
* We cannot waffle on the truth for a moment (2:5)

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Heb 13:8) and his gospel does not change! The contents of the gospel are not up for debate, nor can they be changed through democratic vote, it remains constant. Since the gospel has Divine origin (it was given by God) then our task is to faithfully present it.

**2. A False or distorted Gospel**

There are many problems with a false gospel but from the text of Galatians I just want to highlight four briefly but focus on two.

a) False/Distorted Gospel hurts our fellowship

* 2:11-13: Peter and Jews do not eat with Gentiles

Christians are supposed to be a family in the Lord (brothers and sisters). One of the marks of the early church was their strong fellowship and unity. However, Peter will not eat with his brother and sisters in the Lord because they are Gentiles. We are supposed to bear each other’s burdens which is hard to do when we are unwilling to associate with each other (Gal 6:2).

b) False/Distorted Gospel results in hypocrisy

* 2:13

The true gospel holds us to the same standard. However, here the Jews are holding the Gentiles to a different standard… a standard they are not willing to hold themselves to.

c) False/Distorted Gospel prioritizes pleasing humans not God

* 2:12: fearing the party of the circumcision
* 1:10: Paul lives to please God not man

The gospel’s goal is not to offend but we cannot change what God has taught just because man does not like God’s standard. But people are listening to this false gospel in Galatians 2:12 because they are looking to please a certain group of people. Paul is striving to please God. f

d) False/Distorted Gospel leads to eternity away from God

* 1:8-9
* A false gospel leads to false hope

The truth of the Gospel is worth fighting for!

**3. The Gospel, True Gospel, is transformative**

What transformed Paul? The gospel of Jesus Christ! The gospel meant that Paul had to give up several things and to change his way of life, but he did. The gospel reminds us that God can work on the hearts of the most hardened people and change them into effective workers for Him! Where the gospel is proclaimed faithfully, there is true hope for humanity.

Note the transformation of 2:20. **I have been crucified with Christ…** This is carrying one’s cross (Mt 16:24-28). This is putting to death the old man. **It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me…** Christ dwells inside of me and guides my life. This is what Paul wants for the Galatians (4:19) and us! **I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me…** I live life through the lens of God’s love of me and sacrifice for me. Because of what he has done I MUST live by faith (Hab 2:4; Gal 3:11).

Paul once persecuted Christians (1:13-14), but now is willing to be persecuted for the truth of the gospel (5:11; 6:17). The gospel transformed his life, mission, and direction. Only God can truly and lasting transforms us.

The truth of the Gospel is worth fighting for! Satan trying to pull us away (5:7-8)

Truth (2:5, 14; 4:16; 5:7)

Cross (2:20; 3:1; 5:11, 24; 6:12, 14)