

2026_09_27_Galatians

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[0:00] All right, hey, by the way, I see some visitors, and I think maybe there's some folks here to see the documentary, but welcome to the folks here from Tip Community Bible Church.

I'll just say this, my son's mother-in-law. All right, so Jackie and Amelia are here. They were out here for a wedding out in Columbus, and so they're joining us this morning.

But this is Claire's mom and her sister, so welcome. We're glad that you're here with us this morning. Like I said, before we get started into Galatians, I wanted, there was one question I didn't get to, and it was written down, so I wanted to make sure I actually got to it.

So I thought about doing a whole other service with Q&A, but I thought, well, there's just really one question that didn't get answered, so let's go ahead and just kind of put it in at the beginning.

Here's the question, and it's about really the rapture or when the rapture will come or when Jesus will return to take away his church.

[1:18] It says this, I know we are not to set dates, but we are commanded to be watchful. Given all that is happening globally, do you think that the rapture is likely to happen in our lifetime, say in the next five to ten years?

Things that seem to line up with the prophecies that are happening now, and there's a list of a few things. We are coming to the end of the third and the last 2,000 year age. I'll talk about that in a second.

There's a beast system that appears to be setting up things like AI and increasing global surveillance and control. You think it's really bad here in the U.S.?

Think about China and what's going on in China. People are being watched. They have like a social credit system, and you'll get social scores based on what you're doing on your phone or what they see you doing on cameras.

And you can be prevented from traveling to another city because of things that you might be doing that the government doesn't think you ought to be doing online.

[2:23] Digital dollar, digital currencies being implemented. You know, talk about the economy seems to be precarious. There's a growing hatred of Israel, which is very, very true.

And then even war with Russia, things going on with Russia and Ukraine and tensions with China, things going on in the Middle East there with Iran.

There's just a lot going on that seems like it could point to, you know, future events that are prophesied unfolding. One of the things with that 2,000-year comment, so it really is interesting.

If you look at history, you can kind of divide it up into, really, if you look at biblical history, most scholars say, well, it's been about 6,000 years since creation. There are some different views, but that's kind of a general idea.

But the first 2,000 years from creation landed on Abraham. So Abraham, God calling Abraham to form a special group of people, today we call Israel, was about 2,000 years from creation.

[3:30] And then from Abraham until the time of Christ is another 2,000 years. And then from the time of Christ to right about now is about another 2,000 years. And really, if you look at the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, we're looking at, and the people are not sure totally about the dates, but in the next few years, three to five years, let's say, three or four or five years, is kind of the 2,000-year anniversary of Jesus dying for the sins of the world.

And so that, I think, you know, if Jesus or the Father chose that time as the time for Jesus to return, I think it would be pretty neat. And a lot of other people think the same.

Also, if you think about it in terms of the seven-day week, you know, the Bible says God created six days, and on the seventh day he rested. And so you think, well, there's six days of work, and then there's this last thousand-year reign of Christ in the seventh of the millennium.

You know, you've got six millennia of works, and then that thousand-year reign of Christ, you can think about as a day of rest, you know. And Peter, even Peter says, you know, to the Lord, a day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years is a day.

So what should we do with all that? You know, I think all those things could. And one of the things I think is that Paul does not ever say that there are signs that we ought to look for with the rapture.

[5:08] Now, Jesus, when talking about the tribulation for Israel, as he was preaching to Israel and preparing them for a tribulation that would come, did talk about signs that would happen at least at the start of the tribulation.

And so a lot of people have said, well, these things that are happening could be kind of part of the setup, if you will, for the tribulation, that seven-year period of tribulation actually happening.

And that could be true. But kind of here's how I think about it. I don't, I'm reticent to put any kind of stake in any kind of really timeline at all.

The Bible says that we ought to be prepared or ready for Jesus to return at any time. And like I mentioned in the past, there have been people in the past who have pointed to things going on in the world.

And by the way, this has happened not just in the more recent past, but World War I. There were lots and lots of people who were convinced that this is a sign of the end times, and Jesus is coming right around the corner.

[6:19] World War II was the same thing. Even back during the time of, you know, Middle Ages, I think the time right around 1,000 A.D., 1,000 years after the time of Christ, people thought, well, this is quite a significant, you know, time.

It's exactly 1,000 years after the time of Christ, and they thought maybe this is it. So while we might have our suspicions, I am kind of reticent to really, I'm careful not to really, even if I have those suspicions, to share them with any kind of certainty anyway.

You know, it does say to watch, and this is the passage which talks about the rapture in 1 Thessalonians 5. It says this, And that word watch is the same word for awake.

Stay awake. Don't sleep. As we wait for the Lord, we do not want to be like things that happen in the night.

And what happens at the night? Usually not anything good, right? We want to be people of the day, where people are working, they're doing productive things. At night, people tend to do what?

[7:46] Not carouse and get drunk and party and those types of things. So we need to be people of the day and not people of the night. We need to be sober. In Romans 13, Paul says this.

He's talking about love and how love fulfills the law. In Romans 13, and then verse 11, he says this, And do this. And do this. He's talking about loving your neighbor.

Do this, knowing the time, that now it is time to awake out of sleep. For now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. Now, we're saved now, but there is a salvation that will come when Jesus comes.

Like a finalization of that salvation when Jesus comes. And our salvation, he says, is nearer than when we first believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore, let us cast off the works of darkness.

Let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy, but put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh to fulfill its lusts.

[8:52] And so, as he talks about us waiting for the Lord, he's saying, hey, live the Christian life the way that God meant it to be lived. Put on Jesus.

And don't make any provision for your flesh. Don't get off into fleshliness. Don't get off into the sins of the world. One of the concerns I do have with, and I've seen this over the years, with putting too much into Jesus' coming really, really soon, is that there can be a failure to plan for the future.

As Christians, whether it's parents in your family, whether it's a church or a denomination or a business, whatever it might be, it's important to make plans for our future.

Whether it's a five-year plan or a ten-year plan, or really we should have 20-year plans and 40-year plans and long-term plans for our lives and then also for the lives of our children, how we might set them up for the future.

And so we could, we could, if we put too much weight in our kind of view of Jesus coming really soon, neglect to make those important plans that we ought to make for the future.

[10:13] But Jesus, but, you know, we are going to see the Lord either way, whether it's through our death, and then we raise up to meet him in the air, or he comes while we're still alive.

That's what Paul was talking about there in 1 Thessalonians. Either way, we are going to see the Lord. And the most important thing that we do, the most important thing that we do, is that we wait for it, wait for that time with anticipation.

In 1 Corinthians 1, Paul says this, concerning this, he says, I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God, which was given to you by Christ Jesus, that you were enriched in everything by him, in all utterance and knowledge, even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you, so that you come short in no gift.

And he says this, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will also confirm you in the end, that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. We eagerly wait for the Lord.

We are eager each and every day, hopeful that he'll come today, tomorrow, next week, but if we have to wait, so be it.

[11:26] But we continue to maintain that eagerness. Another passage that I think about is that one in the book of Job. And Job talks about a day that will come when he will actually see the Lord.

And this is somewhat prophetic, right? Because that wasn't really clear in the Old Testament scriptures, that there was a day when people would see with their eyes the Lord. I mean, God has, he was the invisible God in the Old Testament, right?

And in the New Testament, he's revealed as the visible God, the God that people saw with their eyes and heard with their ears and touched with their hands. But Job said this, Job 19, 24, he said, And so that is the expectation, that earnest expectation that we should have of the Lord, where our heart is constantly yearning within us to finally see the Lord and meet him on that day, whether he comes today, tomorrow, or if it takes a thousand years.

Well, I hope it doesn't take a thousand years. I don't think it'll be a thousand years. But it very well may be longer than we think. So, we'll leave it with that. Okay, we're going to get into Galatians. Galatians is one of my, my favorite books in the Bible. Are you allowed to have favorite books of the Bible? If you are, then I'm going to put Galatians somewhere near the top of that list.

[12:55] I'm not sure if it's number one, but it's definitely in the top of the list. I want to start with a story, though. This is a story that begins over 500 years ago.

In the late 1400s, there's a man, his name was Martin. Martin was preparing for life as a lawyer. His, his father was really interested in him getting an education and becoming a lawyer, and he was working towards that end in his studies towards becoming a man of law.

And one day, he got caught in a thunderstorm. Has anybody ever been caught in a thunderstorm where you were outside and the lightning was just striking all around you?

I remember, and this wasn't, I wasn't caught outside, but we used to live in Virginia, and I remember this night, there was a horrible thunderstorm, and this bolt of lightning, it seemed like it hit our house.

It felt like the lightning was inside our house. And later on, the next morning, we found this tree that had been seared by a lightning bolt, and it was at least 100 yards away.

[14:02] I mean, it was quite a distance. But even at that distance, the power and strength of that lightning was so intense. Well, Martin got caught in this thunderstorm, and lightning struck, who knows how close it was, but it was so powerful that it knocked him off of his feet.

He was afraid for his life, and he cried out, and he said, help me, Saint Anne. You know, Martin was a good Catholic, and like good Catholic, he had a patron saint, and his patron saint was Saint Anne, and he prayed to her, help me, Saint Anne, and I will become a monk.

Now, he survived. The lightning didn't get him that day, and he survived to live another day. And you know, most people who would make a vow like that, a rash vow in a time of dire fear, would forget about it, and just move on with their life.

Martin did not. Within two weeks, he had sold all of his legal books, and entered into the monastery to become a monk.

This is the life of Martin Luther. You know, most people don't really think about eternity. A lot of people just think about the here and now, and what I can get out of life here and right now.

[15:32] Eternity seems so far away, and you know, for a lot of people, I'd rather not think about God, and things of God. That might make me feel guilty about how I'm living in my life, and I'd really

like to enjoy my life and living it the way that I want to.

God kind of gets in the way of how we want to live our lives. But you know, Luther had this very close glimpse of death, and I think it really heightened his sense of his own mortality, that there was one day, his life is going to come to an end, and would he be prepared for eternity?

And he knew the importance of seeking those things which are eternal, those things which last forever. And he wanted to live a good life.

He wanted an assurance that he would have eternal life. He wanted to know that his sins were forgiven. He wanted peace with God.

But he couldn't find it, even in the monastery. As a monk, he was more fervent in his religious duties than just about anybody in that monastery.

[16 : 42] Many people even thought of him as fanatical. He was trying to, in some way, merit God's favor by doing everything that he was told that he ought to do, everything that he thought would maybe please God.

He would fast for days on end, even beyond what he was required to do as a monk. He would only eat plain food, would not enjoy any kind of feast.

He would even reject blankets while he slept, even through the wintertime. He would sleep without blankets. His bed was just a hard palate.

He didn't enjoy the comfort of a soft bed, not that many beds are all that comfortable back 500 years ago. He would wake up very early in the morning, even at 2 a.m.

to do his morning vigils, much earlier than was required, and would spend hours and hours and hours in prayer every day. And still, he had no peace, no assurance.

[17 : 52] He would spend hours in confession. He actually exasperated the priests that he would confess to because he would spend hours confessing his sins to them in every little detail, every little sin.

But constantly and daily, he felt the weight of sin in his life, and he could not find any assurance of forgiveness. Then one day, he was preparing to teach through the book of Romans.

He was a teacher, and you might call today a Bible college or a university, really. And he read a passage, and something happened.

I'm sure he had read the passage many times before, and maybe you have experienced this, but on that day, he was actually studying in a tower in this monastery. He calls it his tower experience.

And he read this verse from Romans 1.17. It says this, that the just shall live by faith. And those words jumped off the page to him.

[18 : 57] And for the first time ever, he realized something about being righteous before God. That he didn't have to earn or merit righteousness.

That he could receive righteousness as a gift from God through faith alone. Martin Luther, just as he was fanatical in his monkish work in the monastery, he became fanatical about this new idea, this new thing that he had found in the Bible.

And he studied the scriptures more and more. And he started to preach the grace of God. That justification, that being made righteous, that being forgiven, does not require any kind of works or merit, but is all through faith alone because of what Jesus Christ accomplished.

And he would preach it to anyone who would hear. It got him into lots of trouble, by the way. But he left the monastery, he left his robes behind, he began living a life that was free of the guilt and despair that he had experienced for so many years.

He started sleeping on a soft bed. He actually used warm blankets at night. Eventually, he found a nun to marry. That was somewhat scandalous.

[20 : 22] And he had children. And you know what? He even would occasionally feast and even brew his own beer. Now why do I tell this story?

I tell this because I have this quote from Luther about the book of Galatians. It was a book that was very dear to him.

Here's a quote. This is what he says. The epistle to the Galatians is my epistle to which I am betrothed. If you don't know what that means, it means married.

To who I am married. It is my Katie von Bora. What in the world does that mean? Well, that was that nun who he married. Her name was Katie Catherine who he called her in a term of endearment Katie von Bora.

And he said the book of Galatians was like his wife. He found so much comfort in the book of Galatians and that letter to the Galatians just like he found comfort in the arms of his wife.

[21:31] And it's really strange because if you read the book of Galatians, this is one of the most confrontational books that you'll find in the New Testament. Intensely confrontational.

But it was a book that was dear to him because of what it taught, what it revealed to him about the grace of God. And just like Luther, this book is also special to me because I felt, feel like in many ways my life early on as an early Christian, as a young Christian was like Luther's.

And I struggled intensely with a guilty conscience. Not necessarily questioning whether I was saved or not, but really questioning God's favor in my life.

Whether God was really for me. And spent many months, years even, trying to improve my standing before God with acts of devotion or spiritual activity.

But just like Luther, there was a day, and I remember it so clearly, I don't remember necessarily where I was. I think it was in my bedroom in my house when I was reading through the book of Galatians.

[22:47] And I read Galatians 2.21. And this, just like for Luther, jumped out at me for whatever reason. I had read it, I'm sure, dozens of times before. But it says this, Galatians 2.21, I do not set aside the grace of God.

For if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain. If righteousness comes through the law, then the death of Christ was worthless.

It's meaningless. It's fruitless. It bears no fruit. And so Paul says, I'm not going to set aside the grace of God for anything.

I'm going to hold on to it, hold on to it ever so tightly. And that, that verse awakened my soul in a lot of ways to God's grace and helped me to see God's grace everywhere in Scripture and made it more clear to me.

That's what this book of Galatians is about. You know, we did a series a few months ago on the Ten Commandments talking about the law. It's God's law, the law that he gave to his people.

[24:02] A law that was meant to be obeyed and had some conditions with it. If you obey these things, you will live. You'll be blessed. But if you don't, you'll be cursed.

And then we spent the last, what is this, eight weeks, nine weeks, talking about this concept of kind of dispensationalism because I thought it was important that we look at, you know, people read the Bible through different lenses and one way to read the Bible is that it's all the same thing, all the same people throughout history and the same message and they're just little tweaks here and there.

But the dispensational framework says, hold on, actually there's a very distinct difference between the law and grace.

They're not the same thing. There are many people out there, many Christians out there that they say that when Moses came down from the Mount Sinai with those tablets of stone, that he came down with two tablets of grace.

They will teach that. That could not be further from the truth. But we live in an age of grace. God has set apart a new people, a people of both Jew and Gentile, a people we call the body of Christ.

[25:21] And he has given them this gift, this gift of grace. Paul calls it the dispensation of the grace of God. And Paul here, this whole book of Galatians, and here's the context, he was raised up as a missionary, an apostle, to go specifically to the Gentiles.

And he went all over the world at that time, parts of Asia, most of the parts of Asia, preaching Jesus Christ, preaching a gospel message, good news.

And then he hears back about this church or these series of churches that he had started in this region called Galatia. Galatia. And he hears that they have gotten off track, and not in a little way. They didn't get off onto some little tangent. They were undermining the very foundation of what it was that he had taught them.

And so because of the gravity of the error that they are being led astray by, he writes this letter that is very, very confrontational.

[26:33] In fact, I'm going to, just a few quotes from the book. About the Galatians, he calls them foolish Galatians. He says this about them, I am afraid I have labored for you in vain. He says, I think maybe I wasted my time with you because of where you're going.

He said of them, do you not listen? He said of the people who were leading them astray, he wishes that they would emasculate themselves.

You know what that means? Cut themselves off. Remember the context, well, maybe you don't know this, but the context is circumcision. He's talking about cutting off some very important members.

And that's quite a shocking thing to say. He also says about these people, let them be accursed. And then probably most shocking of all is that in this letter, Paul describes a confrontation that he has with Peter, the apostle, in which he must confront Peter because he's being a hypocrite. And he says in that letter, I opposed him to his face. Paul opposing Peter to his face? And by the way, this was in public, not in private.

[27:54] It was before everybody. What in the world is happening there? This is a very confrontational book.

It starts off with rebuke about how they have gotten off track. And just a quick little outline to kind of outline the whole rest of the book. One of the other things that Paul does is he asserts his authority very clearly.

He is asserting that the message that you got from me, I was given the authority to preach. You're hearing from other people, but I have a unique authority that they don't have.

And you need to pay attention to it. He also gives lots of evidence from the Old Testament that the gospel of grace that he has preached to them is true, and it's actually verified by the Old Testament. Because as we'll find out, these people were being led astray not by the books of the pagans, they were being led astray by the Bible scriptures that were given to them.

[29:03] They were given to the Jews. He speaks of Abraham and Hagar and Sarah and even speaks of the law of Moses and how they pointed to this gospel of grace.

He gives illustrations about the difference between sons and slaves and illustrates the difference between Mount Sinai and the city of Jerusalem. He talks about the value towards the end.

He talks about the value and the purpose of God's grace and the liberty that God wants Christians to live in. And then he finally ends with just some basic instructions like he usually does, some very practical instructions on how to live the Christian life.

With the time that we have left, we're going to just get started here, going verse by verse through the book of Galatians. So if you've got your Bible, please open up to Galatians chapter 1. I'm going to start by reading through the first nine verses here and then we'll go through each verse one at a time.

It says, it's Paul, an apostle, not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised him from the dead and all the brethren who are with me to the churches of Galatia.

[30:18] Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ who gave himself for our sins that he might deliver us from this present evil age according to the will of our God and Father to whom be glory forever and ever.

Amen. I marvel that you are turning away so soon from him who called you in the grace of Christ to a different gospel which is not another but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ.

But even if we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you let him be accursed. As we have said before so now I say again if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received let him be accursed.

Wow he starts to get into it pretty quickly here. But let's start with verse 1 here. Paul an apostle. Paul is giving like he does in most of his letters.

First he introduces himself. You know in our current modern era when we write letters what do we start with? Dear Dan. Dear Susan. Dear so and so.

[31:37] We start with who the letter is being sent to. Well you can see how that's actually maybe not quite the best thing to do. You have to wait till the end of the letter to find out who is this even from? I know who this is to but who is this even from?

You'll see in Paul's letters that he does the from and to both of those at the beginning but he's saying hey this is a letter from Paul. Your father in the faith. So he starts off with who he is the sender but then he identifies his role his authority as an apostle.

And you see this in just about every letter if not every letter. I didn't go through and look but that Paul writes he identifies his authority as an apostle. And what is an apostle anyway? Well the word just means a sent one somebody who is sent. And so there are some ways in which anybody can be an apostle. In fact sometimes people will say well missionaries today who are sent to other places whether it's a local missionary or a foreign missionary they can be thought of as apostles.

They are sent to go somewhere. And that is true in a sense. Those would be like an apostle because they are a sent one. But I think there's also a term and I think this is what Paul was getting at.

[32 : 49] There was an apostle with a capital A. An apostle that has a specific authority that other sent ones other missionaries do not have.

And we see this Paul talks about I can't remember if it's in Romans but he talks about that the church was founded on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets.

And so there were specific apostles and prophets people with that title if you will who founded the church. And is the church still being founded?

No. The church has the foundation has been laid. And we as Christians whether it's pastors or whatever leaders in the church just regular Christians we are building on top of that foundation. But God gave special authority to individuals gave them special titles like apostle to start and build that foundation. But then there's this parenthetical phrase this aside.

[33 : 50] Paul an apostle and then he has this aside he says well not from men nor through man but through Jesus Christ and God the father who raised him from the dead. Now this is quite strange.

Why would he make a point that he's not an apostle from men? I mean that's kind of a common thing right? In fact we have ordination in churches or in denominations where somebody will be ordained by other leaders.

And that's a good and proper process to raise up leaders and to give them authority. But as we'll find out and Paul gets into this in explicit detail that he wants nothing to do with people thinking that his authority comes from some group of men.

We're going to see that he's specifically going to point back to Jerusalem. But that his authority comes directly from the revelation of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ himself appeared to him and gave him revelation and gave him authority to preach the gospel of the grace of God to the Gentiles. We're going to get more into that in our next couple messages. verses 2. And to all the brethren who are with me to the churches of Galatia.

[35 : 07] You know, Paul's writing this, but he's saying, hey, this is from all of us, really, all the companions that I have, wherever he's writing this from, we don't know for sure. But he's writing to the churches of Galatia. Now, this has actually caused some confusion, just a little bit of kind of theology or tidbit here.

You actually don't see the term Galatia anywhere outside of the book of Galatians. And you look in the book of Acts, that's where the record is of most of the places that Paul went to, but there's no indication or no reference to him going to Galatia.

And Galatia is different from the other, like you think about Ephesus and Philippi and Colossae. Those are cities where Paul wrote to the church in that city.

Galatia is not a city. Galatia is a region. And so, you know, we might have a church in Springfield, but Springfield is part of a larger region.

And correct me if I'm wrong, but I think one region we might use is the Miami Valley, right? We have the Miami Valley area. And so you have the churches of the Miami Valley.

[36 : 10] You can think about it that way in kind of modern terms. And that's who he was writing to. Many churches that he had gone to in this region called Galatia. Some people debate about exactly where that was, but we won't get into that.

But if you're interested, you can ask me and I can kind of tell you what I know. Verse 3, grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. This is a common greeting that Paul would start his letters with.

It's not a standard greeting. It's not like he was using a greeting of the culture of the day, even of the Jews. This was a unique greeting that he had when he would write his letter to the churches.

And really this phrase is a declared blessing. Grace to you, peace to you, from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.

I want to look at those two words, grace and peace. These are the unique properties of the gospel of grace that Paul is preaching and has been preaching to these Gentiles.

[37 : 18] That God has poured out his grace. He has offered his grace, a free gift, not anything that you have to work for, but something for free. God's grace to you, and along with it comes what?

Peace. Peace. Under the law, was there peace? No, under the law, there was conflict and hostility and really an expectation of a judgment to come.

Even though there was an offer of peace if you would keep the law, ultimately so many failed and they never could quite have a full peace anyway.

Maybe, well, I'm doing pretty good but am I doing enough? But under grace, we have favor and peace with God based on our faith alone regardless of what we do.

Paul speaks about this peace in Ephesians chapter 2 verse 14. He says this, for he himself, talking about Jesus, is our peace, who has made both one and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in his flesh the enmity.

[38 : 29] When he says made out of both one, he's talking about Jew and Gentile. He's taking all people of the earth, whether Jew or Gentile, and make them into one people for those who are willing to trust in Jesus Christ.

And he took down the middle wall of separation. That was the law. In fact, he says it there, that is the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in himself one new man from the two, thus making peace.

He's talking about the body of Christ, this new group of people that he has identified to pour his grace into and to give them peace. But notice there's a funny word, it's not something we use every day, but it's the word enmity.

It says he took away the enmity. Another way to maybe translate that word is the hostility or conflict. Because that is what the law brought in.

You don't keep the law, well, you are in hostility to God. That's the law that you are supposed to keep. And when that law is taken out of the way, so is the hostility, the enmity, so that we can live a life of peace with God.

[39 : 41] One more reference to that peace, and it's all over. You'll find this reference to peace with God all over the scriptures. But Romans 5, 1 says this, Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Because we have been justified by our faith, we have peace with him. Peace is the hallmark of a Christian life.

Peace with God. Let's go on to verse 4. He describes this, and he's talking about grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now he's going to talk about Jesus Christ, who he just mentioned, who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father.

He says, this Jesus Christ, he gave himself for our sins. Jesus, from what it may appear to others, onlookers, it looks like Jesus' life was taken from him.

[40 : 49] Right? But the Bible is clear that Jesus gave up his life willingly as a gift. He submitted himself. He didn't have to. He could have called down the angels of heaven to rescue him at any time.

But this was actually part of the plan of God, that he would suffer these things. He gave himself for our sins on that cross, that he might deliver us from this present evil age.

Oh, by the way, this little phrase, who gave himself for our sins, you know what that is? We'll look at this more in a second. That is the gospel. That's the gospel message. In what?

Six words? And that's all it takes. It's not a complicated message. It's a very simple one. There's a lot more you can add to it, but at the very core, that's what it is.

Jesus gave himself for our sins. To deliver us from this present evil age, you know, we might think our age is especially evil. Well, not really.

[41 : 56] It's just been evil all over everywhere for millennia since the fall. And it will continue to be until the end comes. But notice that he says this, according, so he gave himself for our sins, and then we can maybe skip to the next comma, according to the will of our God and Father.

You know, it's obvious that Jesus gave himself, right? He's the one who actually died. But, you know, a lot of people have this view that God the Son and God the Father are kind of different. You know, Jesus is nice and God the Father is kind of mean and cruel and not a very happy camper. But, Paul is making clear here that this wasn't just Jesus' plan.

I mean, Jesus was at the core of it. He was the one that actually accomplished it. But, this was the will of the Father. Jesus was following along with the plan, the instructions that the Father had given to him.

And, going back to verse 3, Paul talks about the peace. He said, this is a peace that you have with the Son and with the Father. It's not just the gift that Jesus gave.

[43:09] This is according to the will of our God and Father as well. Then, he says this, to whom be glory forever and ever. And, God, regardless, even if he didn't provide his Son, he would deserve glory, wouldn't he?

But, especially in light of what he accomplished through Jesus, we ought to give him glory forever and ever. Then, things get interesting.

Verse 6 here. You know, in his other letters, after he finishes with kind of his introduction and greeting, he goes into, like, here's an example from Philippians 1, verse 3.

I thank my God upon every remembrance of you. He gives his greeting and then he tells him how affectionate he is toward the Philippians. He says, I've heard so many great things about you.

The Colossians, the third verse of Colossians, we give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of your love for all the saints.

[44:15] He's just showing this affection. In this letter, there are no such words of affection. The nice formalities are over. Imagine you get a letter from Paul.

This is your spiritual father. He led you to the Lord. You get a letter from him. You open it and there's these nice pleasantries about this is from Paul and grace and peace and all that.

You can't wait to read it and you start reading and then you get to verse 6. It says, I marvel that you are turning away so soon from him who called you in the grace of Christ to a different gospel.

What? Uh-oh. This is not a nice encouraging letter. This is a letter of a different kind. And so this is what the Galatians were hearing from Paul.

I marvel, he says. Paul is shocked. He is utterly shocked at how quickly, we don't know exactly how much time it was, but a matter of a few years, probably at the most, that they had turned from the message that he preached.

[45:18] And notice that he says, turning away so soon, not just from a message, but from him. He said, you're turning away from Christ himself, the one who called you in the grace of Christ.

Notice, he called you in what? It's the grace of Christ. And he's doing that, he's making a distinction. It's not the law of Christ, it's the grace of Christ. And then he says this, to a different gospel. What does the word gospel mean?

Gospel just means a good news. See, I gave you some good news, and now you're turning away to something else, a counterfeit. Something that I didn't teach you, that I didn't give you.

You know, there are many counterfeits today when it comes to religion and Christianity specifically. You got Mormonism and Jehovah's Witnesses, you got all kinds of, those are kind of the big ones, you got all these other small groups that kind of get off into bizarre things.

You have social justice Christianity where Christianity is all about just doing good deeds and trying to make the world a better place. But you know what's interesting here is that this counterfeit gospel, this other gospel that Paul is warning them about, that they have gotten turned aside, they've gotten off track with, it's not really like something they got from the pagans, it's something that was actually taught to them from the Bible.

[46:54] As we'll find out, they got caught up in circumcision, keeping the law of Moses. Where does that come? Does that come from Thor and whoever the pantheon of gods was for the Greeks?

No, that comes from the Jewish scriptures. believers. The other gospel that they got pulled away from is the law of Moses and the Bible itself.

And you know what? In a lot of ways, that law of Moses, was that a gospel? Was that good news? If you are a people who do not have a relationship with God and God offers from Mount Sinai, if you will do these things then I will make you my people.

Is that good news? Yeah, it is good news. God is offering to make us his people. Now there are some conditions involved. But one of the things we'll find out later on in Galatians, I think it's chapter 4, Paul talks about the law.

He says, the law was like a tutor and it was good and helpful for the time. He says this, but he says, when faith came, we are no longer under a tutor.

[48:13] When faith comes, when faith alone, when you have grace from God that doesn't require doing anything, like keeping a law, that makes the old good news like bad news.

It was good for the time, but now with the cross of Christ, what Christ offers, it is no longer good news. It is bad news. Verse 7, which is not another, but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ.

You know, when he says which is not another, you know, people have different ways of kind of interpreting that, but it's not like this isn't something that was coming from far off. This is something that was coming from within.

In fact, he's saying there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the cross of Christ or the gospel of Christ. Who is he talking about? Who is he talking about? Well, we mentioned earlier, this was not the pagan Greeks or the Romans or some other people group.

This wasn't even the Jewish people who rejected the Messiah. Jesus is their Messiah. this was coming from believers in Jesus as Messiah.

[49:34] And they were teaching these Galatians, these Gentile, new Gentile believers, that Christ is not enough. That here's this law of Moses, and if you want to be a really good Christian, then you will keep this law starting with circumcision.

Later on, he says, of these people that trouble you, he says, Galatians 5.12, I could wish that those who trouble you would even cut themselves off in the context of circumcision.

He says that they pervert the gospel of Christ, because the gospel of Christ is about what God has accomplished for you, but the law is about what you do for God.

When you mix those two, you get a pollution, and it perverts the purity of the gospel. Paul says this in Romans 11.6, and if your salvation, and if your salvation, he's talking about salvation, and if by grace, then it is no longer a works.

Otherwise, grace is no longer grace. grace. But if it is works, it's no longer grace. Otherwise, work is no longer work. It's either one or the other.

[50:53] We can't mix the two and think, well, we're doing a good job. We can have grace, and we can have works, and we'll just put them together, and that'll be great. No. If you add works to grace, you ruin the whole thing.

He says this, but even if we, or in verse 8, even if we or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. Even if we, he says, even if I come to you, or an angel from heaven, he says, listen, this is, don't be deceived by even me.

This gospel message is so important. Let that person be accursed. This is a word of condemnation. I mean, this is probably the most, the most serious word that Paul could use, and he uses it several times.

He even uses it of himself. He said, I could wish that I were accursed from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my countrymen, according to the flesh. And then in verse 9, he says this, as we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.

It's like, Paul, you just said that in the last verse. Why are you repeating yourself? Well, what you'll find in this book of Galatians is that Paul repeats himself over and over and over and over and over again.

[52:14] The repetition is nauseating. It is annoying. But Paul is going to make sure that these people hear over and over and over again and that they get what is going on.

I'm going to wrap up with this. What is he talking about? What is this gospel message? Well, turn to 1 Corinthians chapter 15. Paul gave it in verse 4, who gave himself for our sins and that is the gospel message.

The gospel is not God is great, God is holy, God is our creator. Those things are all true but it's not the gospel message. The gospel message is a very specific message and Paul lays it out very succinctly and clearly in 1 Corinthians 15.

Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preach to you, which also you receive and which you stand, by which also you are saved if you hold fast that word which I preach to you, unless you believed in vain.

For I deliver to you, first of all, that which I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, that he was buried and he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.

[53:23] The gospel is that Jesus died for your sins. That's it. And that is the message that we are to believe. Jesus died for our sins.

The law says, do this and live. Keep this law and you will have life. The gospel says, do nothing. Jesus did something for you.

Just trust in him. I'm going to finish up with this. You know, this happened so quickly to the Galatians.

They quickly, he says, veered off away from the grace of God into legalism. And did it stop happening? Did Paul's letter to the Galatians kind of end that whole thing?

No. It continued on and on with other groups of people at that time and then on and on and past the apostles into centuries and centuries and centuries and centuries of continuing to happen.

[54:25] And there is this tendency within Christianity for this constant to be this leaning towards this straying towards a works based religion.

And that's why we must always stay vigilant and guard the grace of God and preach and teach it constantly because it is so easy to get led astray into putting our confidence not in Jesus and what he accomplished but putting it in our own merit and the things that we do for him.

So that's my mission in this church is to continue to stand on God's grace. It should be all of our mission as Christians and people might think you're annoying because you always talk about it just like they thought Paul was annoying because he always talked about it.

Can you talk about something else? Yeah, I'll talk about other things but I'm going to sneak in a message about God's grace along the way. Let's pray and ask God to help us stay on track.

Father, help us to stay on track when it comes to this message of grace. We love you so much and thank you for what you offered, the gift that you gave us that we didn't have to earn or merit.

[55:38] I pray that you would open up our eyes if we don't see or understand the vastness of and the wonderful wonderfulness of your grace that you would open our eyes to see it more and better that you would give us the power the courage to always stand up and defend the grace of God wherever we see it being undermined and we thank you for that in Jesus name amen we'll go ahead and stand up on your feet we're going to sing the doxology Marv we'll go ahead and have you come up so you can share here directions but we've been ending our service with the doxology we talked about somebody doing a note to try to keep me in tune well I don't know this is