

2026_10_11_Galatians

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Date: 11 October 2026

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[0:00] Open up your Bibles to Galatians chapter 1. That's where we're going to be this morning. That's actually very helpful.

I forgot to dismiss the kids. I think that happened, though, without me remembering to do that. Any of the kids that are going to the kids' class. All right, I want to start by mentioning something that I came across in the last few weeks here on social media.

It was a video. I can't remember what platform it was on, YouTube or Facebook or something like that. But it was an interesting video about the Apostle Paul. And it was a video that was very negative towards Paul.

It was from a Christian of some sort. And I can't remember all the details of the video. But basically, the video was saying Paul was a fraud. And Christians should not pay any heed or attention to the writings of Paul, any of his letters, or the things that Paul taught or said, you know, that we find in our Bibles.

And I did a little bit of research. There are some fringe groups out there that I'm not sure if they have a particular label. I don't know that there's a particular label for this group of people.

[1:49] But they believe that Paul was some kind of saboteur when it came to the Christian message. They deny that Paul has any kind of credibility as an apostle, as a teacher of the faith.

They think that he was a fraud, that all of his letters should be ignored. They should be tossed out of our Bibles. These fringe groups typically exist within what you might call a Hebrew roots or Torah observant groups among Christians.

You may be familiar with that. There are certain Christians out there that think that Christians ought to observe the Torah, the law of Moses, to a certain degree. Usually, there's some moderation there, not completely, but to a large degree.

And you know what? That really makes sense that this fringe group that denies the credibility of Paul would come from a group that insists that it is important for Christians to observe or follow the law in some kind of way.

Because Paul himself preached very loudly against keeping the law, observing the law, doing the law, and very much for a life of liberty from the law and a life of grace.

[3:14] And really, that is what this book of Galatians, this letter to the Galatians, is really focused on, is making that distinction between law and grace.

And Paul, the person of Paul, actually plays a very important role. Knowing his story, his history, tells us a lot about the difference, the distinction between law and grace.

Last week, we introduced the letter to the Galatians and introduced it as a quite confrontational letter that Paul wrote to the Galatians.

It doesn't have the same warmth and niceties that other of his letters have to other churches. And it's because he had found out that this church, or the churches here, multiple churches actually, in the region of Galatia, had succumbed to, had been seduced by a different message than the one that he had given to them.

And by the way, this was a message, the message that they were seduced by was one that was found in the Bible itself, in the Jewish scriptures.

[4:33] But this wasn't a small infraction, a small turning away. He actually uses the phrase, accusing them of turning from Christ himself.

It's a big deal. He warns them against perverting the gospel of Christ. These ideas that have been introduced into their midst, into their churches, is perverting the gospel of Christ, that good news that he preached to them about Jesus Christ.

And he is so serious, he's so grave regarding this perversion of the gospel that he says, of those that teach this, let them be accursed.

It's a big deal. And so, Paul introduces this battle here that he's having with the Galatians themselves to some degree, but then also the people that he calls those who would trouble you. That's the phrase that he's used, at least up to this point. Today, we're going to start in verse 10 here. We're going to get to the end of the chapter.

[5:50] But after putting kind of a laser focus on the Galatians and what they're believing, he's now going to turn his focus to himself.

He's going to look more at his own life. He's going to look at the, or detail out his own personal history. And address his own conversion.

And then the events that led to him later becoming an apostle. Now, this is all interesting information, you know, getting somebody's backstory is always interesting, right?

Whenever you meet somebody new, finding out where they came from and how they got to where they are now. All that is interesting information. But it seems somewhat odd for Paul to, in this conflicting, confronting letter to the Galatians, for him to pause for a moment and give his backstory. What's the reason that he's doing that? We should really ask the question, why is he sharing all these details about his backstory? And that's the big question that I want to answer today as we go through this passage, is to answer the question, why, why is Paul telling his story?

[7:11] Let's start by reading this passage together. We're going to start in verse 10 and go down to verse 24, the end of the chapter here. Galatians 1.10. For do I now persuade men or God?

Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ. But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ. For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it.

And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through his grace to reveal his son in me, that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me.

But I went to Arabia and returned again to Damascus. Then after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter and remained with him 15 days. But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother.

[8:31] Now concerning the things which I write to you, indeed before God, I do not lie. Afterward, I went to the regions of Syria and Cilicia and was unknown by face to the churches of Judea which were in Christ.

But they were hearing only, he who formerly persecuted us now preaches the faith which he once tried to destroy. And they glorified God in me.

Now let's just go verse by verse here, starting with verse 10. Paul says, remember he's, he just got finished talking about the importance of the gospel and how there's one gospel and not another. And he says this, for do I now persuade men or God? Or I guess I should do the intonation right. For do I now persuade men or God? Or do I seek to please men? Now notice again that he has made a quick turn here from you, you, you Galatians.

[9:38] Now he's saying, I, I, I. He's turned to talking about himself. He's turned his attention to himself. And what he's doing here is he's starting to speak to his motivation.

The motivation for the message that he originally gave to the Galatians. The first thing before we get into that though is this sentence. And this is in my New King James translation.

So when I first read this, I was a little bit confused. For do I now persuade men or God? It sounds like Paul is trying to either convince men or trying to convince God of something.

That sounds kind of weird. What's he talking about? Trying to convince men or convince God? Are there many times where we're trying to convince God of something? Probably not. But this, this word persuade is a Greek word that is translated persuade in the New King James and the Old King James.

And I think it's a bad translation. You know, it's appropriate, I think, in some context. But I don't think that's an appropriate translation in this context. By the way, no translation is perfect.

[10:49] You know, I know some people disagree with that. Some people think there is a perfect translation. Almost exclusively that would be, would be declared as the King James Version. But there is no perfect translation.

The NASB, which are pew Bibles or chair Bibles, as we call them, here in the church are NASB. And the translation is this.

For am I now seeking the favor of men or of God? The ESB says, for am I now seeking the approval of man or of God?

And I think that is the better translation. Because that's what Paul is getting at. He's getting at his motivation. Am I seeking man's approval? Am I trying to please men with the message that I'm preaching?

Or am I seeking the approval and the pleasure of God? That seems like somewhat of an odd question. Well, why is he bringing this up?

[11:49] Why does that matter? And it seems that Paul is addressing, there's an accusation about him or against him, or at least an insinuation.

That, well, that thing, that message, or at least parts of that message that Paul gave to you originally, you Galatians, well, there's parts of it that aren't right, and it's probably because Paul was just trying to win your approval.

He wanted to make you happy. Paul can be somewhat of a man pleaser. He just wants to please men. You know, and people-pleasing can be an issue in, and is an issue in the modern church.

Do you think that that's true? Yeah, absolutely. I think we can all think of churches, or maybe church leaders, or pastors that have tended to be people-pleasers.

And by the way, this isn't something unique to modern church history. This has been something that has been a problem for the entire history of the church, just like any sin is.

[13:08] But there has been, over the years, the past several generations, we might call it, what we call the seeker-sensitive movement.

Are people familiar with that term? It's not used, I think, as much these days, but back in the 90s, maybe 80s, 90s, early 2000s, it was a common term. And seeker-sensitive movement, the idea, in fact, there are two churches that I can think of, one that's kind of older, started back in the 80s, I think, called Willow Creek Church in Chicago.

And their story is that they went out, and there's another church that's done the same thing, probably more in the 90s or early 2000s, Crossroads Church here in Cincinnati, closer to us.

But both of these churches kind of did the same thing. They said, well, we want to build a big church, and what we're going to do is we're going to survey our communities and ask them what they are looking for in a church.

And based on that survey, we're going to build a church that is the kind of church that people want to go to. And so that's what they did. And both of these churches swelled huge in numbers, thousands and thousands and thousands of people.

[14:22] Now, hopefully, both of these churches, and I'm not too familiar with them, but they are evangelical, gospel-preaching churches to a large degree.

And hopefully, they have kept some semblance of the gospel message that Jesus Christ died for the sins of the world. But is that how you should build a church based on what people want?

And what do people want? And here's the three things that always come up. Here's what people want. They want a fun kids program to drop their kids off into. They want great music that they can enjoy in the church service, and they want an encouraging or inspiring message.

Now, is there anything inherently wrong with those? There isn't. Those things are fine in and of themselves. But because the focus of your church is on pleasing men, it tends to cause those same churches to avoid controversial biblical topics, topics that are in the Bible but might cause controversy among the congregation.

And it also tends to avoid real Christian discipleship that might include reproof or confrontation. So a lot of times, these churches will avoid talking too deeply or too specifically about sin or cultural issues that might be controversial.

[15:56] So having a church or having leaders who have a desire to please man is not a good thing. Paul himself even warns about this kind of approach to ministry.

He says to Timothy in 2 Timothy 4.3, For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own

passions.

The people themselves will not tolerate people who just teach the Bible and exactly what it says. They're going to find teachers who will just teach them what they want to hear. Paul says that's not a good thing.

But Paul says that he's not a man pleaser. Continuing on in verse 10 here, he says, For if I still please men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.

Notice, by the way, he says, if I still please men. He kind of makes this insinuation, I guess, that he used to be interested in pleasing men, but now it's obvious that he does not.

[17 : 15] So he's kind of saying, you know, I may have been motivated in the past by pleasing men, but I am not so now. And he says, and to kind of prove that, he says, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.

And if you know anything about Paul's story and many of his other letters to the churches, he tells lots of stories about all the nonsense, all the grief that he has to go through as part of an apostle of Christ.

And so he's saying here, you know, if I wanted to please men, if I wanted to curry their favor, I'd get a different job. Not this one. I'd do something, I'd do something else. I'd be an amazing musician. Everybody loves a good musician, right? But no, this is the job that he's got and it's proof positive that he's not doing this for the approval of man.

The other thing is, his gospel is grace-focused, grace-centered, not law-focused. And you would think, and many people even teach that, well, when people who teach grace, they're just doing that because that's a people-pleasing message.

[18 : 34] That's what people like. People don't like the law. They like grace. And there is a certain amount of truth to that. But, and so, they would say, you know, that's why Paul's preaching grace is because, well, it's people-pleasing.

you think that that would be a case. I mean, you've got a religion where you can have all of your sins forgiven, you can join God's family, and you can inherit eternal life without doing anything to earn God's favor.

But yet, what do we see? There is a constant battle throughout all of Christian history to preserve the purity of the grace of God.

and that is because there is a powerful seduction that comes from the inside of man towards having the ability or the right to boast in what I have done.

To boast in your own religious works and your own moral efforts. And Paul was more familiar with that than any of us because he came across this all the time and would get constant grief for his message of grace.

[19 : 56] So Paul is not out here doing this to please man. Verse 11, But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man.

For I neither received it from man nor was I taught it but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ. Now he's talking, he was talking about his motivation, now he's talking about the message and how the message came down to him.

And that's important, that's an important part of the story. Because Paul is contrasting his gospel with this other gospel that has kind of soiled his own.

And his intent with the Galatians here is to provide a contrast. There is a difference between my gospel and this other gospel that you received which by the way he said is not really another.

His gospel is what? And he'll get to this later on when we get to the end of chapter 2. His gospel is this, justification by faith alone without any works required.

[21 : 11] That is his gospel that you, any person in the world can come to Jesus, trust in Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection for their sins and they can be justified, made righteous simply through trust in what Jesus did.

And that's it, through faith alone. No good works required. No moral improvement right where you stand no matter what kind of state of your life may be in now. that is the gift of salvation.

But the other gospel that he is competing with here with the Galatians is a gospel in which there is justification that requires works.

Now the very specific thing that he's dealing with is circumcision. That is a work. But he'll continue as he goes on to detail the rest of the law. It's not just circumcision but the whole law trying to earn your justification through the works of the law is another gospel.

But I make known to you brethren that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. Now here he's not simply saying that the gospel that he preaches is of heavenly origin versus an earthly origin.

[22 : 31] And we know that because the gospel that he's competing with is also of heavenly origin. He's talking about the law of Moses.

Circumcision comes, well it started with Abraham but it was a big part of the law of Moses. The covenant that God made with the people of Israel. The message of works of the law, the message, the law that says do these things and live, are they from earthly origins?

Moses? No, came from the finger of God. God revealed it to Moses. And Paul continues in this verse, for I neither received it from man nor was I taught it but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Paul's point is this, my message is not from a revelation from 2,000 years ago or I guess it was trying to think of how many over 1,000 years ago from Moses that was passed down through men through multiple generations.

My message that I gave to you was something that was more recent, a more recent revelation, something that was given to me directly, a fresh revelation given directly to me from Jesus Christ himself.

[24 : 03] You know, every divine message that we find in the Bible, they all come from heaven. They all come from God. But then they continue to be taught usually by men.

In fact, that's exactly what the old covenant taught that you should do. God spoke to Moses, Moses wrote it down, Moses delivered it to the people, and then he told the people to do what with the message from heaven.

He says, pass it on to your children and to your children's children. Teach them diligently. That's how messages from God are supposed to be spread across the world and across time and across generations.

That is appropriate. even in Paul's day, that is how things usually worked. You know, there were other apostles that taught the gospel message.

I think about Apollos. Apollos is a character that kind of comes into play in the book of Acts. This is in Acts chapter 18. There were some Christian leaders in Paul's group that heard Apollos preaching a message about God.

[25 : 26] But as they listen, they're like, well, this is pretty good, but you know what? This is not exactly right. It's not accurate. It's close, but it's not accurate.

In fact, it says later, they took him aside and taught him God's message more accurately. And it was because this, they said that he, the last thing that he had heard, the revelation that he had received, he had heard from John the Baptist about this baptism of repentance and preparation for the kingdom that was to come.

And so that was the message that he was preaching. But this Priscilla and Aquila came by, they heard him, and they said, all right, this guy needs an update. He's a few years behind.

He's on the right track, but he's behind. We need to update him. And so they did. And Apollos was grateful and thankful. He says, thank you for getting me up to date about Jesus and his ministry on the earth and his death, burial, and resurrection, and where things are at right now.

And so he began to preach the updated message that he received from Aquila and Priscilla. And he became, by the way, a big-time messenger of the gospel. We see him later on.

[26 : 38] Paul even kind of is a little bit upset because there are some churches that say, well, I'm actually, our church is of Apollos. Because he was such a big deal. He was a very eloquent speaker, the Bible says.

He's like, guys, stop labeling yourselves with the names of men. But Apollos was a big deal. But Apollos never received any direct revelation about the gospel message from God.

He got his message from other men. And so there's nothing wrong with that. In fact, Paul himself later teaches that this is how he wants others to spread the gospel message.

In 2 Timothy 2, he says this to Timothy, And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

That is the standard way in which the gospel is preached. Not every single person gets a direct revelation from heaven and then we go and spread that abroad. No.

[27:40] We pass on a revelation that someone else received and pass it down to us and we pass it down to others. But Paul is saying, that's not how it worked with me.

And this is important, Galatians. He insists that the message that he got was not secondhand. He got it as, you know, in a figure of speech, from the horse's mouth, from Jesus Christ himself. And it is vitally important that they understand that Paul did not get his message from somebody, from someone else. And specifically, he wants them to know that he did not get his message from that same group that has been troubling you.

That is his major point. And so now, he is going to tell the history of his becoming a believer. believer, starting when he gets saved and is called until the time where he becomes an established apostle or leader in the church.

And he's going to share the places that he went and the people that he interacted with. But he also makes a very big deal about the people that he didn't interact with and the places that he didn't go.

[29:03] It's a very interesting account. So let's start to look at this account. First, he establishes that he started out not just as not a Christian, but as an anti-Christian.

You know there's a difference? There's some people that just aren't familiar with Christianity or they're not really interested. But then there are other people, there's a lot of them in this country, that are anti-Christian.

They are out to destroy Christianity, to stop people from believing in Christ, to be evangelists against Jesus Christ. The Bible uses a term anti-Christ, somebody who is anti-Christ.

There is ultimately an anti-Christ figure that will come in the future, but Paul actually talks about there are many anti-Christ even today. These are just people who are against Jesus Christ and the faith of Jesus Christ.

He says this, verse 13, for you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it.

[30:07] And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers. Paul started out as a certified Christian-hating Jew.

He says he persecuted the church, not just like all the other Jews. He says, I did it beyond measure. I did it beyond what even others were doing.

He was a skeptic that turned into an agitator against Jesus and against his people. He mentions that he advanced in Judaism. When it came to this law-keeping religion, law-keeping faith of Moses, he was rising fast in the ranks.

And by the way, under Judaism, he certainly did have the favor and the pleasure of men. He was doing a great job. He was getting a lot of accolades from the Pharisees and the leaders of Israel. But then something happened, verse 15. God calls him. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through his grace to reveal his son in me, that I might preach him among the Gentiles.

[31:25] You see, God specifically called Paul. Called him to do what? To reveal his son, to have a message about his son, Jesus Christ.

To preach Jesus to a specific group of people. The Gentile people. That was very different, by the way, from the message of Moses.

The message of Moses was to a specific group of people. Not Gentiles, but to Jews. To the people of Israel. And also, by the way, that didn't change when it came to the 12 apostles.

The 12 apostles continued to preach to the Jewish people only. Now, there is one exception with Cornelius.

The house of Cornelius. We'll talk about that more next week. Now, with the 12 apostles, they also received a special calling from Jesus himself.

[32:34] From God the Son. Paul was called specifically, and so were the 12. But as the early church grew, there were more leaders and more evangelists or messengers added.

But they were not called by Jesus. There are two that I can think of that get some press in the early book of Acts.

Stephen and Philip. There's no indication that they were called by Jesus Christ or by God through some kind of revelation, a dream, or an angelic visitation or something like that.

In fact, the Bible tells us how they were called. They were looking for leaders to help with the distribution of food. And so they found seven able men who they thought were worthy to be leaders

of some kind among the church.

And so among those seven men were Stephen and Philip. And they became mighty evangelists, both of them. And by the way, that's perfectly legitimate. You know, there are lots of people today who will talk about God's calling.

[33:49] And in a very specific way, I think it's a common misconception in Christianity that God intends to call each and every one of us to some kind of specific role or ministry or vocation in life.

That is not true. And that can actually cause a lot of misery in someone's life when they're, especially a young person, they're waiting for God to tell me what to do with my life.

And you know what? For most people, for the vast majority of people, you're going to be waiting a long time. Because God wants you to do what you want to do with your life.

Now, God wants you to do it within the boundaries of what he has called every Christian to do. But he gives freedom and liberty for us to do whatever it is that we want to do in life.

For Paul, that was different. Paul said, woe to me if I preach not to the gospel. Paul was required to do the role that he did. So we shouldn't seek for or expect God to call us to specific things.

[34:59] You know, you don't wait for a call to be a missionary. If you want to be a missionary, go. If you're not interested in becoming a missionary, do something else. It's fine. Sometimes people will ask me about my call to being a pastor.

And I'll tell them, God didn't call me to be a pastor. And sometimes people would be shocked.

They're like, what? I thought, you know, that's how it worked. No, now there were elders of this church that called me to be a pastor, a pastor here at this church.

And by the way, that's exactly what Paul taught you should do. Hey, let's raise up leaders. Find people who, you know, are equipped and also qualified to be in that role and raise them up to be elders in a church.

That's appropriate. That's fine. And that is, by the way, the normal way that things ought to work in this life. So this is a very clear distinction. Paul received a call, which is very different from how it works for almost every other Christian.

And this is what he's making a big deal about. Verse 16. I did not immediately, or back to somewhere in verse 16. I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood.

[36:13] So he says, God called me. But as soon as he did that, he's saying, this is what happened after God called me. I didn't immediately go and confer with flesh and blood.

He's talking about any human being, any person. Nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me. But I went to Arabia and returned again to Damascus.

After being called, he insists on what, not what he did, but on what he did not do. And where he did not go. He didn't confer with flesh and blood.

He didn't, like, show up at some Christian leader's house and say, hey guys, God called me to join you. Hey, tell me what to do. That's not what happened. Is there, that sounds like a reasonable thing to do though, right?

If you received a call to some kind of mission, you'd go find somebody who's already kind of equipped and a leader and you'd say, hey, equip me. Tell me what I should do. That's like a reasonable, practical thing to do.

[37:11] Paul said, that's not what happened with me. And why not? Because God's plan for him was not to join some other group's ministry, but to start a new one based on some very different priorities.

He also says, I didn't go to Jerusalem. Huh? Why does that matter? Why is that important? That's important because Jerusalem was the center and the hub of the Jewish Christian church.

This was the headquarters of the 12 apostles and their ministry to Israel. And Paul is insisting here, and that's why he's telling all this story, that my ministry is different.

It's separate from the ministry of the 12 apostles. Instead, he says, you know what? I went to Arabia and Damascus. He doesn't really tell us what he did there, but he mentions those places.

Why? Because those are not in Judea. Those are part of the Gentile nations. Those were outside of Israel and far away from Jerusalem. Verse 18, he says, then after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter and I remained with him 15 days, but I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother.

[38:31] Now concerning these things which I write to you, indeed before God, I do not lie. Wow, he's really serious about this one. So he says, you know, finally after a few years, I did go to

Jerusalem.

Now I wasn't there that whole time, but I finally went up to Jerusalem. And why is he telling them about his visit to Jerusalem? Is it to detail all the cool things that he did?

No, it's primarily to tell them all the things that he didn't do and all the people he didn't meet. He says, I spent 15 days, only 15 days with Peter. Why would he say that?

Why would he tell how many days he spent with Peter? Well, because they might think, well, hey, Peter, is it possible for him, right? And so Peter must have trained Paul.

Can you train somebody to be a church leader in 15 days? No. So that's the point he's trying to make. And then he says, the only other person I saw was James. It was just kind of brief.

[39:28] I didn't even see any of the other apostles. And then he says, now concerning these things which I write to you in deed before God, I do not lie. He is making an oath.

He is swearing on the name of God that what I am telling you is the truth. This is so important to him that they understand his history. Why does any of this matter?

Why does it matter that Paul didn't see any of the apostles? He continues, verse 21, afterward, I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia.

Again, these are Gentile cities, not anywhere in Judea. And I was unknown by face to the churches of Judea which were in Christ. But they were hearing only he who formerly persecuted us.

now preaches the faith which he once tried to destroy. And they glorified God in me. His point is, hey, I spent a little bit of time in Jerusalem, but then I went right back into the Gentile territory.

[40:32] And he insists that among all the believers of the Jewish church at that time, people didn't even know who he was. Now they heard about him.

He was famous. This is the guy that was killing Christians and then he turned to Christ. That'll make you famous among Christians, right? So they heard about him, but he said, people wouldn't recognize my face because I was not part of their group.

I wasn't there. They didn't train me. I didn't get my message from them. I got my message from Jesus Christ himself. And I spent years and years and years away from that ministry and that group of people.

all of this history has a purpose. You see, Paul is dealing with a competing message. And it's coming from a group of people that he says are troubling you.

We'll find out later that these people are from the Christian churches in Judea. Acts 15 says this, and certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren that unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.

[41:42] There were men coming from Judea, Christian men from these churches of Judea that were perverting Paul's gospel. These men were believers, not unbelievers, followers and disciples of Christ.

But they were also members of the nation of Israel and they were partakers of God's covenant to who? To Israel.

Israel. Their message, the message of the twelve apostles, was to the people of Israel to preach that Christ has come, Jesus himself is their Messiah, calling them, the Jewish people, to turn to God to receive their Messiah so that God can bring about the culmination of his covenant with them, with the Jewish people, by bringing to pass the messianic kingdom.

And by the way, this message that the twelve preached didn't say anything about ending the keeping of the law. That was a continuation.

And so, Paul, to distinguish his ministry and his calling and his authority and his message to the Galatian people from that of the people that are troubling them, tells this history.

[43:11] He wants them to know that, hey, there's a difference here that you need to understand. It's not a completely black and white difference, something completely opposite.

We're actually, we're on the same team. We're on the Jesus team. But I'm focused here on a message to the Gentiles that does not include the law, whereas these guys are, they're focused on preaching Jesus to the nation of Israel that does include the law.

And that is important to understanding why you, as Galatians, as Gentile believers, need to not fall prey to this message that they say that you need to believe, that you need to be circumcised, and you need to keep the law.

Paul is the messenger of grace. He received a fresh revelation from God about what God wanted to do among the Gentiles that was different from what he was doing among the Jews.

Grace is different. It's different from the law. It's different from what was happening with the Jewish people. And it's important. it's vitally important.

[44 : 25] Vitally important to our salvation and to living the Christian life in this age of grace in which we live. And we can't mix it with Israel's covenant of law.

We're going to finish up there. Next week, we're going to pick up, he's going to continue the story 14 years later where he is officially an apostle.

apostle. And there's going to be this crucial meeting between him and the other Jewish apostles there in Jerusalem. And there will be a clarification of the differences between his ministry and their ministry.

A clarification about the differences between their people or their audience and his people or his audience. The people that he's trying to reach and the people that they're trying to reach.

And the difference between the messages that they preach or the message that they preach and the message that he preaches. So part two, or I guess it's part three next week.

[45 : 24] Let's end in a word of prayer. Father, this story, this history is so crucial. To Paul, he says, listen guys, this is the truth, I am not lying.

This is an important message for the Galatians to get and so likewise is an important message for us to get. Help us to understand this clearly so we may know the distinction.

We can understand the gospel clearly for ourselves and pass on that message in purity so that the purity of your grace is seen and understood by all men around us.

We thank you for that. In Jesus' name, Amen.