

Paul and His Gospel

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- [0 : 0 0] This is just an incredibly important and key passage that has been shared with you. And I would that ministers everywhere would be willing and able to give serious examination to this passage and even expound on it with their congregations.
- I am convinced, and those of you who've been here for the last 40 years, know that I am committed to an exposition of Scripture verse by verse because this is the way it was written and this is the way it ought to be expounded, but so very often that is not the case.
- And when ministers, whether it is I myself or someone else, just goes to Scripture texts and cherry-picks certain verses or limits himself to certain passages that would perhaps be more popular or go over better with the audience, you neglect so much that has a great deal to offer.
- And that is true with this passage here. I just cannot understand how anyone can possibly expound on these verses that have just been read and not come to the conclusion that there is something really unique and special and different about the ministry and calling and message of the Apostle Paul.
- To me, it is just so obvious that it is inescapable. And I do not know of any passages that set this forth more clearly than what we are talking about here in Galatians 2, Galatians 1, and Ephesians 1.
- [1 : 5 2] And in the passage that was read earlier that you helped us with by reading responsibly, you will note that the Apostle uses the term the gospel in a possessive way.
- He calls it my gospel. And then on occasion he used a plural and called it our gospel.
- What made it Paul's? And when he said our gospel, no doubt he was talking about himself and Barnabas and Silas and others of his compatriots who were proclaiming and engaged in ministry like he was.
- They personalized this gospel. And some, no doubt, have great difficulty with that. It's almost as if Paul doesn't have the right to do that.
- What gives him the right to say my gospel? Why would he use that kind of term anyway? Would you not be suspect if I talked about the gospel and called it my gospel?
- [3 : 0 6] Marv Wiseman's gospel? What would you think of that? Well, you shouldn't think very much of it, that's for sure. Because I'm not in a position to particularize the gospel.
- Now, nobody has any problems at all if you talk in terms of the proclamation of the gospel. But, that can also convey the idea that there is only one gospel.
- And you would be surprised how many people are convinced of that. There's only one gospel. No, there isn't. There are many gospels.
- That's one barrier that needs to be gotten out of the way right at the outset. There are many gospels. The word gospel simply means good news.
- [4 : 0 8] Good news. That's all it means. Good news. Good message. Good tidings. That's what the word gospel means.

And it isn't until you add what is there in the context that tells you what kind of gospel you're talking about. To say that there is only one gospel is the same thing as saying, well, there is only one item of good news.

Well, that isn't true. There's all kinds of good news. There's thousands of items of good news out there. Anything that's good news.

About anything. If you win the lottery, that'd probably be good news, wouldn't it? You got a promotion in your job. You got married. You had your first grandchild.

Whatever. Those are all good news. There are all kinds of good news out there. But when we use the word gospel, we narrow it to a confine that locks us in and keeps us from thinking about the gospel in a biblical way.

[5 : 16] And be aware of this. The first time we ever hear the word gospel is, interestingly enough, in the gospels.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. That's the first time you hear the word. It isn't in the Old Testament. Now, do you think that that became a brand new concept when Matthew opens the New Testament and starts proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom of God or the kingdom of heaven?

Do you think people were saying, what's he talking about? What is this word gospel? What does that mean? No, no, no, no. It's a word that was in use long before the New Testament ever started using it.

The word gospel was not a Christian word. It was taking an ordinary, everyday, garden variety word and associating it with a different context.

It is the good news about what? It isn't just good news. It is good news about the gospel.

[6 : 26] The good news about the grace of God. The good news about the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. That's what particularizes it. Now, when Paul takes what seems like an ownership of the gospel and calls it my gospel, and he does that a number of places in the references that we read, and our gospel, that raises some eyebrows, but it shouldn't.

And he even talks about, in Galatians, I am amazed. I am amazed that you are so soon removed from the gospel, which I preached unto you, to another gospel.

Well, right there, you've got two gospels. You've got the one that Paul preached, and you've got another gospel that these Judaizers were preaching. And Paul says, I am dumbfounded.

I am shocked. I am dismayed. I am really ticked off at you people. That you have deserted the gospel that I proclaimed to you when I was there for another gospel, which is not another at all.

What he means is this. I am shocked that you are so soon removed and have turned your backs on the gospel that I preached to you, on the good news that I preached to you, for another good news, which in reality is not good news at all.

[8 : 06] That's what he's saying in Galatians 1. And he takes them to task for that. Because they had allowed the gospel which Paul proclaimed, which was a gospel of pure grace, no hoops to jump through, no extraneous requirements made.

Simply believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. By grace, through faith, plus nothing. That's the good news.

That's the gospel. They had abandoned that and had instead opted for another kind of good news, which Paul says in reality isn't good news at all, because it comes with a bunch of hoops to jump through, a bunch of requirements, a bunch of add-ons.

But they are add-ons that men make, not add-ons that God made. And that's where we are today. You know, Paul's gospel is in very most instances completely submerged.

And there is still all about us in denominations, large and small, all over the world, grace attempted to be mixed with law, performance-based, law-keeping, you've got to do this, you've got to do that, and all the rest of it.

[9 : 36] The gospel is so veiled, so cluttered up, so obfuscated, that people cannot see the real truth of the gospel, and what they do see is not good news at all.

The real good news of the gospel is liberating. It is exciting. It sets the soul free. It provides assurance. It provides salvation. It provides certainty.

It provides all kinds of wonderful things that no other gospel or no other good news can provide. And yet, because Paul particularizes this and calls it my gospel, some demean and depreciate it.

And where their real problem lies is they have a problem with the doctrine of inspiration. They actually believe that the four gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, are somehow more authoritative than what Paul wrote.

Because after all, in the gospels is where you find the words of Jesus. In Paul's writings, you find the words of Paul, but he was just a man. So, when it comes, push comes to shove, what are you going to take?

[10 : 45] Oh, well, I go with Jesus. You must understand that the words Paul wrote were the words of Jesus through Paul.

The words that John wrote were the words of Jesus through John. The words that Matthew wrote were the words of Jesus through Matthew.

The words that Luke wrote were the words of Jesus through Luke. The words that Peter wrote are the words of Jesus through Peter. The words that Moses wrote are the words of Jesus through Moses.

Are you with me so far? Do you have a problem with any of this? Then let me ask you, the words that Paul wrote are the words of Jesus through Paul. Folks, it isn't that hard.

Inspiration requires authority, the authority of God across the board. And the same people who decry Paul's authority saying that you grace people make too much of Paul.

[11 : 54] It's Paul this, Paul that, Paul said this, Paul said, well, in defense of Paul, to whom was he writing? He was writing to the Corinthians, to the Romans, to the Ephesians, to the Galatians, to the Philippians.

Well, who were they? They were churches. They were churches. They're called church epistles. They set forth what a church is and what a church is supposed to be doing.

But none of that information existed. None of that concept existed before Paul came on the scene. Because what was everything?

Everything was Jewish. Everything was Jewish. The whole Old Testament is Jewish. The four Gospels are Jewish. The early chapters of the book of Acts are all Jewish.

So, when Paul comes on the scene and begins addressing an element that is not Jewish exclusively, but includes the Jews and adds on Gentiles to the Jews, caused an uproar.

[13 : 12] Caused an uproar. The Jews had a corner on God. Now, Paul is saying that God is reaching out to Gentiles?

Why? How can that be? And you know, when it comes to the Old Testament, so many times, particularly in the books of Moses, do you know Jesus even refers to them as what Moses said?

Well, now, seriously, who cares? Who cares what Moses said? Well, the reason we should care what Moses said is because Moses did not originate it.

Moses was simply the vehicle. Who originated it? God originated it. So, when you read in the Gospels numerous times and in the Epistles where Moses is referred to as the authority, please understand, and I don't think anybody would really dispute that, that the authority was not Moses.

The authority was God. And God was pleased to use a human vehicle and in this case it was Moses. And Moses did write Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

[14 : 32] He wrote them, but he didn't author them. Moses was the writer, not the author. The author was the Holy Spirit.

So, who was the author of what Paul wrote? Same Holy Spirit, same authority, same level, no different. Same is true with what John wrote, with what Nehemiah wrote, with what Daniel wrote.

All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, instruction, and righteousness to the end that the man of God may be truly furnished, fully equipped, outfitted to every good work.

No part of the Bible is more the word of God than another part. not even what Jesus said, because what Jesus said was behind all of it, from Genesis to Revelation.

If you understand that, you won't have any problem with Paul's authority, because Paul's authority is Christ. Daniel's authority is Christ.

[15 : 40] Moses' authority is Christ. Peter's authority is Christ. That's the originating point of all of it. Now, when Paul talks about my gospel, my good news, all he is saying is the message that I proclaim that was given to me to proclaim, and he makes it very clear this wasn't my idea.

I didn't think this stuff up. I didn't originate this. Come with me, if you will, to Galatians. Let's return there. Galatians chapter 1 and verse 11.

Galatians 1.11 For I would have you know, brethren, that the good news, the gospel which was preached by me, is not according to man, that simply means no man originated it.

No man thought this message up. This was not concocted by any human being. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

For you have heard of my former manner of life in Judaism, how I used to persecute the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it. And he goes on and gives a little bit of his testimony, and he says, when he, verse 15, who had set me apart, that is, God who set Paul apart, even from my mother's womb, and called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his son in me, that I might preach him, this Jewish son, Jesus, among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood.

[17 : 46] That simply means that after he was converted, when he came to faith in Christ, this was the Damascus Road experience, when he came to faith in Christ, he did not immediately turn to other Christians and say, what is this?

What has happened to me? What is going on here? What is this all about? Jesus, death, burial, and resurrection? How does that relate? He didn't do that. Now, that would have been a perfectly logical thing to do, because that's one of the things I did.

After I came to faith in Christ, I immediately wanted to know more about this thing, this faith, this belief, this Christianity, this Bible stuff.

I wanted to know more about it. So, where am I going to get the information? Where am I going to find out more about it? You ask somebody who is one.

You ask somebody who is a Christian, and has been a Christian for a long time, hoping that they've got all kinds of answers that you don't have. Paul said, I didn't do that. I didn't do that. I didn't turn to someone else and ask them, what is this all about?

[18 : 56] But what he says is, he did not consult with flesh and blood, that simply means he didn't talk to any other human being about it, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me.

Boy, that's what I would have wanted to do. I could have made a beeline for Jerusalem. That's where all the big shots are. that's where the guys are who were with Jesus from the very beginning of his earthly ministry.

I would want to seek out Peter and James and John and Matthew and Thomas and talk with those guys. I want to pick their brain. I want them to tell me everything they knew about Jesus. He said, I didn't do that.

What did he do? Well, he went away to Arabia and returned once more to Damascus. Why did he do that?

What's in Arabia? Why go to Arabia? That's desolate, God-forsaken place. Many are of the opinion that it was there that Paul received direct communications from the risen Christ and he refers to those when he writes to the Corinthians and he calls them an abundance of revelations that were given to me.

[20 : 33] Personally. Individually. Think of it in terms of Paul going to seminary for three years in Arabia where he was a single student and Christ was a single faculty member.

I went away to Arabia and returned once more to Damascus. Then, three years later, I went up to Jerusalem to become acquainted with Cephas, that's Peter, and stayed with him 15 days.

If ever I would have loved to have been a fly on the wall, it would have been then. Can you imagine listening in on a conversation like this between these two, Peter and Paul?

And he says, I was with him for 15 days. I imagine they were just exchanging information just back and forth and Paul had all kinds of questions because Peter, Peter was Jesus' right-hand man for three years.

And we have no reason to believe that Saul of Tarsus even saw Jesus during the three years that he was here on earth.

[21 : 52] At least he never indicates that he ever did. So I can imagine him having a jillion questions to ask Peter. And Peter is giving him all kinds of information, telling him, oh yeah, the feeding of the five thousand.

And then there was that time we were out in the boat and man, we thought we were goners. We thought for sure we were going. You know, we've been fishing our whole life and we've seen some really bad storms on Galilee, but I'm telling you, Paul, this one took the cake.

I thought we were going down and everybody was concerned and someone says, somebody talk to Jesus, where is he? He's sleeping? He's sleeping?

Well, wake him up! We're going down! And they woke him and said, don't you care that we're about to sink? And then he said, oh, you of little faith, and he said, you should have known that you were in no danger of sinking because I told you when we got in the boat, we're going to the other side.

I didn't say we're going out in the lake and drowned. I said, we're going to the other side. So, if you'd have believed me, there wouldn't have been any problem, but they woke him and they were all panicky and everything. And I think Peter is telling Paul about all of this stuff and the feeding of the five thousand.

[23 : 06] And he said, I never could figure out where those loads of fishes came from. They were just there. And the more we passed out, the more there were. And we ended up having 12 baskets full left over.

And Paul was just drinking all of this in because he wasn't privy to any of that. I didn't see any of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother.

Now, in what I am writing to you, I assure you before God that I am not lying. Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia and was still unknown by sight to the churches of Judea which were in Christ.

But only they kept hearing, he who once persecuted us is now preaching the faith he once sought to destroy. And they were glorifying God because of me. this is just revolutionary stuff.

Then, after an interval of 14 years, now, Paul has been a Christian for a long time.

[24 : 10] Well over 14 years. And he hasn't even made his first missionary journey yet. After 14 years, I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas.

taking Titus along also. And it was because of a revelation that I went up. Now, all that means is going up to Jerusalem 14 years later was really not my idea.

Maybe he didn't even want to, I don't know. But he said, the reason I went is because God told me to go. So, he went up to Jerusalem with Barnabas and took Titus along.

And Titus was a Greek. Titus was not circumcised. That's really very important.

If you were a Jew, you were circumcised. if you were not circumcised, you were not a Jew. It didn't make any difference what your biology was.

[25 : 24] It didn't make any difference that you had the genealogy of being a Jew. If you were a male and you were not circumcised, you were not a member of the covenant.

Your mommy may have been Jewish and your daddy may have been Jewish, but if you were born a boy and you were not circumcised, you're not a Jew. You're an outcast. And no respectable Jewish parents would even consider not circumcising their son on the eighth day.

To refuse to do so would have been considered gross child abuse and gross irresponsibility on the part of the parents. Titus was not a Jew and he was not circumcised.

And Paul said, it was because of a revelation that I went up and I submitted to them the gospel, the good news which I preach among the Gentiles.

Why? Why would he do that? I went up and I ran by them the gospel that I preached.

[26 : 45] But now wait a minute. Isn't there only one gospel? No. There are many gospels.

As Matthew opens up and Luke opens up, John the Baptist begins preaching his message prior to the arrival of Christ. And the message is to the nation Israel, repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Repent and believe the good news, the gospel of the kingdom. What's that? That's not the gospel of the grace of God.

That's a different gospel. It's a gospel that has to do with the coming of the Messiah and the establishing of the rule and reign of God here on the earth.

And God is committed to doing it through the instrumentality of Israel. That's why John was preaching the message and that's why he was preaching it exclusively to Israel. They were to be the catalyst for that kingdom of heaven.

[27 : 55] That's not what we preach today. We preach a different gospel today. we have a different good news. And our good news is Jesus Christ died for our sins.

That's the good news. And by placing your faith and trust in Jesus Christ, you receive his forgiveness, his eternal life, his salvation, a standing before God that is perfect and complete.

That is good news. That's the good news of the grace of God. That's the gospel of the grace of God. It's not the gospel of the kingdom. It's different.

Now, where the confusion comes in is that Jesus Christ is at the center of both of those messages. He is the core person, both for the gospel of the kingdom and the person of the Messiah, the Redeemer, and for Gentiles and Jews and the gospel of the grace of God.

He is the center of that in that he is the Redeemer. He is the one who died for our sins. But there are two different good news. They both focus upon the person of Christ.

[29 : 11] But if you try to make them equal, you've got mass confusion. Mass confusion. Listen, this is why Paul is intent on the apostles who were preaching the gospel of the kingdom to know what he, Paul, is preaching because, here it comes, he's not preaching the same thing.

He is preaching a different good news. How is that going to set with these fellows? That's what he's concerned about.

because who had all of the recognized authority in the population of Israel? Who had all the recognized authority when it came to the person of the Messiah?

Was it the twelve apostles or was it Paul the apostle? Hands down. It was the twelve. Why?

Because the twelve were on earth specifically handpicked by Jesus. Promoted from discipleship to apostleship.

[30 : 32] And he gave them special authority to cast out demons, to heal the sick, to raise the dead. And they did all of those things. They were with Jesus for the whole three year ministry plus that he was here on earth.

They walked with him. They talked with him. They were by the wayside. They got all the instruction. They got everything that he had to communicate to them. They were the authority. There's twelve apostles.

Now, who is Paul? Well, he wasn't there for those three years. He didn't walk with him by the wayside. He didn't witness the miracles.

Paul was a Johnny-come-lately. He came on the scene after Christ had risen from the dead and even ascended to heaven. And here is Paul. Paul, sometime later, confronted by Christ on the road to Damascus and appointed an apostle to the Gentiles.

Folks, this is so completely contrary to everything that had gone on. This is really out of the ordinary. This makes Paul not only a Johnny-come-lately, but it makes his authority and his message very suspect.

[31 : 47] who is this guy, anyway? He just came out of nowhere. And now he's an apostle? And who said he's an apostle? We know the twelve. They've got their credentials. They were here for three years.

We witnessed their miracles. We heard them. We talked with them. We know all about them. But all we know about this guy, Paul, is that he used to hate anybody that believed that Jesus was the Messiah and did his best to put an end to him.

And now he is on our side? Really? Can you not see from the get-go how Paul's authority was questioned?

And let me tell you something. It still is. It shouldn't be. But it still is. I can't tell you how many Christians and even some pastors I've heard people say things like that.

Well, Paul. Well, that's what Paul said. Take it with a grain of salt. Well, that's Paul. I go with Jesus.

[32 : 56] Oh, give me a break. Paul spoke with the same authority as Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and Jesus was behind all of it.

What Paul had to communicate was a later word that was not given to the twelve because they were locked into this kingdom concept and that's right where they were supposed to be.

But that's not what Paul's preaching. You don't preach the kingdom of heaven is coming to a bunch of Gentiles. They're not looking for the Messiah.

They don't even know there is a Messiah. That's not their need. That's for Israel because the promises were for Israel. And that's exactly the distinction that is made between Paul and the twelve.

And no, Paul was not the thirteenth apostle. He was a special apostle, altogether different credentials.

[34 : 11] Just as authentic and just as real as the twelve, but different. And the difference stood out like a sore thumb.

That's why he went to the apostles who were before him in Jerusalem to inform them as to what he had been preaching. Why did he do that?

Because he didn't want to create a conflict. He's not preaching what they're preaching. People are going to raise eyebrows and say, well, now, wait a minute. That's not what Peter, James, and John said.

What's Paul saying here? This is different. Was it different? Absolutely it was different. If it was the same, there wouldn't be any reason to run it by them and to tell them about it.

He would just say, well, you know, of course, I'm preaching the very same thing. You guys, oh yeah, we know that's what you're preaching. Paul, there's only one gospel and we're all preaching the same thing, right? Yeah, right, we're all preaching. No, they weren't. No, they weren't.

[35 : 11] And let me tell you, dear friends, this is where a lot of the confusion comes in among Christians and the interpretation of the New Testament.

It is right here at this sticking point because so many want to take Paul and just make him an add-on apostle so that he's doing the very same thing with the same message that the twelve were he just added later.

No, no, no. He's entirely different. He is a singular apostle for an entirely different mission and a different ministry with a different message.

That's why he was content to run it by them and see what they had to say about it because what do you think would happen if word got to the twelve?

Well, Paul's out there. You know what Paul is doing? Paul is actually saying you don't have to be circumcised. What?

[36 : 12] Paul's telling people you don't have to be circumcised? Oh, kill that guy. That's heresy. He is telling people you don't have to become a Jew in order to be accepted by God.

You can remain a Gentile. Not only do you men not have to be circumcised, you Gentile women, you don't even have to keep a kosher kitchen. Oh, oh.

What? You see, the Jews were so convinced that the law of Moses that God gave to them was perfect and it in reality ought to be imposed upon everyone.

But that was never the purpose or the intent of the law. And when Paul began preaching his gospel, it was a good news of salvation through Jesus Christ without circumcision, without Sabbath keeping, which was just a real super sacred cow for all of his, oh, you've got to keep the Sabbath.

Jesus had more conflicts with the religious establishment over the keeping of the Sabbath than anything else. And now, Paul the apostle is saying, hey, if you are a believer in Christ, every day is the Lord's day.

[37 : 35] Every day is the Sabbath day. Do you see what conflict that could create? and this is exactly what Paul means when he says here in Galatians chapter 2, I submitted to them the gospel, the good news which I preach among the Gentiles, and I might just inject here, which did not contain any of the Jewish elements, but I did so in private.

He's not doing, he's not announcing what he is preaching at a big public meeting. He comes into town, he gets into Jerusalem, and he contacts the twelve apostles, and he says, fellas, I'd really appreciate it if I could have a meeting with you guys.

We need to get together. I need to bring you up to speed as to what I am proclaiming to the Gentiles. Is there someplace, is there a nice restaurant on the other end of town where it's got a private room where we could get together and talk about these things?

Sure, I know a place, you know, Smokin' Joe's. Okay, we'll meet at Smokin' Joe's. And we'll sit around the table and we'll talk about all these things. And it says, Paul says, I did I did it in private to those who were of reputation.

What's that mean? He's talking about the people who had influence, the shakers and movers, key people. He got these guys together, and I think that consisted of the twelve as well.

[39 : 19] and he said, I did so for fear that I might be running or had run in vain.

What does that mean? Paul recognized that the twelve had all of the recognized authority. they had the credentials, they had the confidence of the people. He knew that the people would listen to the twelve a lot more quickly than they would listen to him.

They were established. They had the credentials and the reputation. He didn't. And even though he was commissioned by God to preach the gospel of the grace of God that he had been preaching, he knew full well that if the twelve really disapproved of what he was preaching and came out against it, saying, oh, you can't listen to what Paul says in the first place, he's not even a legitimate apostle, and he is telling people that they don't have to keep the law of Moses, and that they don't have to be circumcised.

Write that guy off. Don't believe anything he says. Write him out of town. Don't listen to him. You think they thought that he was proclaiming heresy, that's what they would have done.

[40 : 56] And Paul says, I don't want my ministry to be neutralized so that my preaching and my efforts and my travel and my gospel communication is going to be undone because these guys shoot me down and say, well, he's not a real apostle, he's not preaching, he's not preaching the law of Moses.

So he says, I've got to get these guys together and tell them what I've been preaching and they need to know where I'm coming from and what's going on. And this is exactly what he did. And he says, but not even Titus who was with me, though he was a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised.

Well, why should he be compelled to be circumcised if he was a Greek? Because circumcision is incumbent only upon the Jews. Titus wasn't a Jew. Ah, yes, but Titus had bought into and had believed in the Jewish Messiah.

And doesn't that make you kind of like, you know, Jewish? And aren't you supposed, don't you have to become a Jew in order to be accepted by God?

Surely, you can't go straight from Gentilism into God's acceptance, you've got to go by way of Judaism, right? Wrong! And you don't have to be circumcised, and you don't have to keep the Sabbath, and you don't have to have a kosher kitchen.

[42 : 29] Wow! Can you not see this blockbuster news? Can you not see the conflict? Can you not see the confusion? What's going on here?

And this is all taking place during this first century within just years after Christ ascended. And Paul said, it was because of the false brethren who had sneaked in to spy out our liberty.

These false brethren are Jews, Judaizers, legalizers, which we have in Christ Jesus in order to bring us into bondage. What's the bondage? The bondage is the law. And Jesus told the Pharisees and the scribes, you have put the people, the Jewish people, you have put them under a burden and in bondage which they are not able to bear and you yourself aren't able to bear it and yet you make these demands on them.

And that's what he's talking about here. The law ties up, binds, makes all these requirements. But we did not yield in subjection to them for even an hour.

Now let me tell you what this is saying. It's saying no compromise, no negotiations.

[43 : 58] You do not negotiate the truth. truth. You just insist on it and you stand for it and you fight for it and if you have to, you die for it.

But you don't negotiate truth. And we wouldn't kowtow and give in to these guys, not for an hour, not for a minute.

It's non-negotiable. And in our refusing to do so, we made the uncorruptible gospel of the grace of God available to you.

We're not going to shackle it with do's and don'ts. It is pure grace or it is not grace at all. We would not yield in subjection to them, not even for an hour, so that the truth of the gospel might remain with you.

what would have happened if he had? You said, well now, now let's be reasonable. You can't have it all your way. You've got to be flexible.

[45 : 08] Yeah. You are flexible about procedures, about methodology, about application.

You are flexible. You are not flexible regarding principles. Principles must stand inviolate.

You don't negotiate them away. If this makes you hard-headed and stubborn, so be it. It's for the right cause.

from those who were of high reputation, what they were makes no difference to me. God shows no partiality, while those who were of reputation contributed nothing to me.

What he's saying is, you know, I have great respect for Peter, James, and John, and Andrew, and all those guys, but you know something? They didn't give me anything I didn't know.

[46 : 15] They couldn't enlighten me because Paul had received a later up-to-date word from the risen Christ that the twelve never got when Jesus was here on earth because he didn't reveal it.

And this is what Paul was talking about when he wrote to the Ephesians and said, which in times past was not made known to the sons of men, but is revealed now. And the conclusion of this is just dynamite.

With this I want to end. On the contrary, verse 7, seeing, agreeing, understanding that I, Paul, had been entrusted with the good news to the uncircumcised, which is just another word for Gentile, just as Peter had been to the circumcised, which is the Jew.

And to whom did Peter go? Peter went to those to whom he was told to go. Jesus said, don't go to the Gentiles. Don't go to the Samaritans.

Go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And that's what Peter did. And so did James and John and all the rest. the twelve were apostles to the house of Israel.

[47 : 46] For he who effectually worked for Peter in his apostleship to the circumcised effectually worked for me also to the Gentiles. And all Paul is saying is, listen, the same God who was behind Peter's calling and sending him forth to the Jew is the same God who was behind my calling and sent me forth to the Gentile.

So which one is legitimate? They're both legitimate. They're just for a different constituency and a different time.

The twelve were to go to Israel exclusively. Paul is called to go to the Gentiles. He's the apostle to the Gentiles.

And then recognizing the grace that had been given to me. And all this means is that the twelve is saying, Paul, we hear what you're saying and we support you.

We buy it. We believe it. We see the authenticity of your ministry as being just as valid as ours.

[49 : 03] We accept you as an apostle to the Gentiles. We're not going to fight you on this. We're not going to oppose you. We're not going to tell people not to listen to you.

We believe you've been called of God the same way we have. You've got a different message to a different people. Recognizing the grace that had been given to me, James and Cephas, that's Peter, and John, who were reputed to be pillars, that's just a metaphor for people who hold things up.

They are the stabilizers. They are the pillars. Vance Habner used to say, every church needs its pillars. People who support the ministry, and people who hold it together, they are pillars in the church, and then there are caterpillars.

They're just those who crawl in and out. Pillars and caterpillars. they were reputed to be pillars. They gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship.

What's that mean? That means complete acceptance. It means they embraced them. It means Peter and James and John are giving the apostle Paul a big hug and are saying, yeah man, go for it.

[50 : 17] We're for you. We're supporting you. We're with you in this. We recognize your ministry. Go get them boy. And that's what he had hoped for by way of endorsement.

But where would he have been if they had fought him on this? If they said, Paul, you can't tell that to, you've got to come in with the law of Moses after, because the Jew considered the law of Moses eternal.

Scripture makes it very, very clear that it was the first covenant and it would be replaced with a new covenant that Jesus ushered in.

But they never recognized that. They saw the law of Moses in perpetuity. And you know something? Jews today still do. They still do.

At least the Orthodox do. And they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship that we might go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised or the Jew.

[51 : 32] Now I've got a penetrating question that I want you to mull over between now and next week. if they are saying God raised up Paul to go to the Gentiles, he raised us up to go to the Jews.

Hmm. What happened to the twelve and what is called the Great Commission and the twelve are to go into all the world preaching the gospel to every creature?

Not just the Jew, but every creature? Why didn't they? And how long ago had that been?

Do you realize that when Jesus gave them what is generally considered the Great Commission, it was over 15 years earlier and the apostles had never gotten out of Jerusalem?

What are they still doing in Jerusalem? That doesn't qualify for all the world. They never got out of their hometown. What are they still doing there?

[52 : 51] Who's going into all the world? Paul the apostle. One lone apostle against the whole world. And here are the twelve still perched in Jerusalem.

Why haven't they gone? And you shall be witnesses unto me in Jerusalem and Judea and Samaria and the uttermost parts of the earth. They never got there.

They're still in Jerusalem. Who's going to the uttermost parts of the earth? Paul the apostle to the Gentiles. What is going on? And we will pick up this next week.

I think you will find it to be extremely enlightening. Thank you father. For the text before us we pray that understanding and appreciation of it will be forthcoming.

We thank you for the clarity and the purity of your word. We only beg of you for enlightenment to understand it and to be able to apply it.

[53 : 54] Thank you for the clarity with which this passage comes and for just being undeniable. Our prayer is that many others will come to see this valuable, important, and really breakthrough understanding even as we've come to love it and appreciate it.

We pray in Christ's name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.