

Ga 1:1–5 (ESV) Paul, an apostle—not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead—⁽²⁾ and all the brothers who are with me, To the churches of Galatia: ⁽³⁾ Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, ⁽⁴⁾ who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, ⁽⁵⁾ to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

BACKGROUND

1. We've started our study on Paul's epistle to the CHURCHES in Galatia

- A. Galatia was located in the region of Asia Minor (Modern day Turkey)
- B. Paul had traveled there on his first missionary journey (Acts 13-14)
 - 1). Out of that trip at least 4 churches were started: Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe
 - 2). This is a circular letter – to be read in one church - passed on to next church in Galatia

2. The purpose of the letter

- A. After Paul had left Galatia a group of legalistic Jews had come in
 - 1). They were saying Paul's message of faith in Christ alone wasn't from God
 - a). They taught God still expected them to adhere to the Jewish law
 - 2). So it was a message of faith in Christ PLUS your own works – your own performance
- B. To get this message across they were attacking Paul and his message
 - 1). They **attacked his calling**: Claiming he was not called by God at all
 - a). Just another – self-appointed – false apostle – like so many others
 - 2). They **attacked his message**: It wasn't from God – was something Paul came up with
 - a). He just wanted to gain a following so he's teaching an easy message that removed the law

Point: So Paul is a liar and a phony – you can't trust him AND you can't trust his message

- 1). It was working –Galatians were turning away from Paul and the message of grace
- C. In this epistle Paul fights back – proving he was an apostle commissioned by God – Why?
 - 1). Because if he can prove his calling as a true Apostle
 - a). **THAT** will also verify that the message he preached was from God
 - 2). So he defends himself to protect the purity of the gospel

Thought: I think we get a nice principle here for when a minister should defend himself

- A. You always have people talking about you - slandering – gossip

When do you let it go and when do you step in and defend yourself
- B. We defend ourselves **WHEN** the ministry is being affected and people could be hurt
 - 1). If these false teachers win this fight – it is huge
 - a). Heresy is promoted – the **ONLY** message that can save is destroyed
 - b). People are drug back into the slavery of legalism
 - 2). So Paul rolls up his sleeves and fights back

4. Outline

- A. Paul's **AUTHORITY** – to teach the message of grace
- B. Paul's **MESSAGE** – an introduction to what he taught
- C. Paul's **MOTIVE** – the reason he taught the message of grace

I. PAUL'S AUTHORITY

Intro: In the first three words Paul powerfully strikes back – claiming for Himself the very title they were denying him

Ga 1:1 (ESV) Paul, an apostle...

1. The **MEANING** of a NT Apostle

- A. A very common word that meant = a special messenger with a special status
 - 1). An apostle was one who was commissioned by a superior
Then given authority to represent them
- B. But this common Greek word became very unique when you added "of Jesus Christ"
 - 1). Now it became a very small and very exclusive group of men
 - a). Men who were personally chosen and commissioned by our Lord Himself
Sent out to be His representatives and proclaim the message He'd given to them
 - 1a). A message that was divinely inspired = God's message
 - 2). They also had authority set up and supervise churches – disciplining them when necessary

Transition: The legalists were claiming Paul wasn't an Apostle – he claims he is

- A. The legalists were claiming his calling came from man or himself but not from God
 - 1). So Paul now tells us who commissioned him
- A. The legalists were claiming that Paul wasn't called by God – he was called by man – or self-appointed
 - 1). So he writes to explain where his calling came from

2. The **MANNER** of Paul's calling

His Commissioning Was Not from Man

Ga 1:1 (ESV) Paul, an apostle—*not from men nor through man...*

- A. His commissioning didn't come from a man (himself) or through man (such as some church)

Transition: Man had nothing to do with this at all

- A. He goes on to show where his calling did come from

His Commissioning Was from God

Ga 1:1 (ESV) Paul, an apostle—not from men nor through man, *but through Jesus Christ and God the Father*, who raised him from the dead—

- A. His calling came directly from Jesus Christ and God the Father
Puts it this way in Eph 1:1 (ESV) Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus *by the will of God...*
- B. Remember – Paul was personally commissioned by Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus (Acts 9)

Point: These false teachers were saying that Paul was not sent by God – self-appointed

- A. Paul argues back – man had nothing to do with this – my call comes from God

Transition:

- A. We have the **MEANING** of a NT Apostle of Jesus Christ
- B. We have the **MANNER** of his call to be an Apostle
- C. Paul now adds one more thought to confirm his authority

3. The **MEN** who were with him

Ga 1:2 (ESV) and all the brothers who are with me, To the churches of Galatia:

- A. Here we see a distinction between Paul and these men
 - 1). They are all brothers but Paul is more – He is a brother but he is also an Apostle
- B. Here he brings them alongside as witnesses – they would confirm his call
 - 1). They had seen his life and how God was using him
All the evidences of being an Apostle were there

Summary: Paul defends his authority as an Apostle of Jesus Christ

- A. Commissioned and sent by Him to proclaim His message to the church

- 1). His authority did not come from man it came from God

Therefore (why this is important) his message came from God

Thought: What this means for us – as we begin our study

- A. This sets the tone for our study in this book – how we are to approach it

- 1). These are not the words of an ordinary man – just expressing his opinions – as some say today

- B. This is a letter written by an Apostle of Jesus Christ

- 1). Therefore the very words he wrote are the words of God

2Ti 3:16 (NASB) All Scripture is inspired by God...

- 2). Peter put it like this

2 Pet 1:20-21 (NIV) Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. (21) For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

- C. Therefore we come to this book ready to submit to what is written in it

- 1). We must approach this book ready to submit our lives to its teachings – every verse

For every line carries divine authority

Donald Grey Barnhouse: “The shortest road to an understanding of the Bible is the acceptance of the fact that God is speaking in every line.”

Transition: Paul defends his position and his message

- A. He is an Apostle appointed by God and sent to proclaim His message

- B. In v. 3-4 we get a brief hint at what the message is all about

- 1). We will see 5 things hinted at in these 2 verses

II. PAUL'S MESSAGE

Ga 1:3-4 (ESV) Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, ⁽⁴⁾ who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father,

Grace and Peace

1. The two great words of the Gospel

- A. Grace = the source of salvation

- B. Peace = the result of salvation

2. Grace defined

“God's undeserved kindness towards ungodly sinners”

- A. Rather than asking man “to do” – Grace teaches us what God has done

- 1). And it offers man salvation as a gift based on THAT

Scofield said: “Instead of looking for good men whom it may approve, grace is looking for condemned, guilty, speechless, and helpless men whom it may save, sanctify, and glorify.”

3. Peace = the result of salvation

- A. When the sinner is drawn to the Savior and embraces Him by faith

- 1). The result is that he now enjoys a two-fold peace

- B. First he enjoys *“Peace with God”*

- 1). That alienation and enmity that existed between God and him is finished

- a). Replaced with a relationship characterized by love and intimacy

- C. Then he discovers he is enjoying the *“Peace of God”*

- 1). Peace **WITH** God – will result in the Peace **OF** God

- a). As we begin to rest in knowledge that the penalty for our sins has been paid

That we now stand before God cleansed, forgiven – never to be condemned again

- 1a). The threat of hell is finished – I have a wonderful future waiting for me
- b). As we begin to experience God's love and faithfulness
 - As we begin to learn the promises and start applying them to our lives
 - As we begin to see that He really is in control of all things – sovereignty
- c). There is this growing peace we experience!
 - 1a). Peace with God has opened the door to all these things that bring the peace of God

Point: That's result of the Gospel –result of viewing our state before God through Christ's finished work

- A. That makes all the promises mine – that allows us to expect His loving help – to anticipate blessing
- B. Moment you turn from grace to basing all this on your own works – you lose all this
 - 1). Grace draws us near to God – knowing we are accepted through Christ's perfection
 - 2). Works push us away from God – knowing we fall short – result is condemnation
- C. That is why Paul is calling these Galatians back to grace – What we're going to see in Galatians

Transition: So the gospel is a message of unmerited favor "*grace*" – when embraced it produces peace

- A. In v. 4 we see that free gift given to us was bought at a great price

The Gospel cost

Ga 1:3–4 (ESV) Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, ⁽⁴⁾ *who gave himself for our sins...*

1. The good news is built on the willing sacrifice of Christ for our sins

- A. He voluntarily gave Himself – going to the cross to bear the judgment our sins deserved

Thought: This message of the cross is absolutely devastating to the false Gospel of works being taught

- A. Listen to how Paul will argue later on in regard to the death of Christ

Ga 2:21 (ESV) I do not nullify the grace of God, *for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose. (NASB "Christ died needlessly")*

- B. What is he saying? If you could earn salvation through your own efforts
 - Then would The Father have sent His Son to die on the cross – that would just be cruel

- 1). Those who claim the cross was cosmic child abuse would be right
 - a). If there was any other way man could earn heaven
 - The Father would have never put His Son on the cross and crush Him there
 - b). If you could have been good enough Jesus would have never been crucified
- 2). But the fact there was a cross proves there wasn't any other way
 - a). The only way to escape hell and be accepted into heaven was through Christ work
 - b). So Paul says don't pollute what He has done by adding your own works

Is 64:6 (ESV) We have all become like one who is unclean, *and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment.*

- 1a). You really think they will add to the immensity of what Christ did?

Transition: The Gospel is based on grace – unmerited favor – it is a gift

- A. When that gift is received the result is peace with God and then the peace of God
- B. The cost to God to make that gift available was immense = the cross
 - 1). If there were any other way – man being good enough – the cross would have never happened

The Purpose of the Gospel = Rescue

Ga 1:4 (ESV) who gave himself for our sins *to deliver us (rescue us) from the present evil age...*

1. Christianity is a rescue operation and it worked brilliantly

Question: Rescued from what? *“this present evil age”*

A. Greek word for “age” doesn’t refer to a period of time but an order or system

1). In this case it is the current world system ruled by Satan

1 Jn 5:19 (ESV) We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.

B. We were slaves – held captive by sin and Satan – powerless too free ourselves

1). But through the work of Christ we are rescued from the devastating power of sin

Thought: He didn't remove us from this present evil system – we still live in it

A. But we have been freed from its mastery in our lives

1). We’ve been rescued from its mindset & its attitudes that are hostile towards God

2). We’ve been freed to love God and say No to this worlds ways

a). Freed to live according to a different set of values – heaven’s values

B. Here we see the present power of the Gospel – it delivers people – rescues them

1). How many have been delivered from drugs – alcohol – sexual sins – prejudice - hatred

2). The Gospel message is the most powerful message on earth!

Christ exalting – hell defeating – joy producing power

C. There is also the future power of the Gospel that is glorious

1). We will be rescued from the destiny of this evil system

That will one day be totally destroyed and eternally judged

Transition: Grace and peace – sacrifice and rescue – one more. Whose idea was it?

The Origin of The Gospel = God The Father

Ga 1:4 (ESV) who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, *according to the will of our God and Father,*

1. This places the credit for salvation where it belongs – God gets the glory

A. This rescue from the *penalty* of sin and the judgment I deserve

This rescue from the *power* of sin that held me in bondage

B. And the means by which all that came about – the death of Christ

1). *That ALL happened because God the Father WILLED it to happen*

Point: It was not according to man’s will – so we get some of the credit

A. It was not JUST according to Christ’s will – He was willing but the Father was reluctant

B. From the **BEGINNING** of time salvation was part of the Father’s plan

1). 1 Pet 1:18-20 God the Father chose Jesus to be the Savior

2). Eph 1:4 God the Father chose those us - who would be His

3). Even that grace that brings about salvation was given to us before creation

Turn: 2 Ti 1:8–9 (ESV) Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God, ⁽⁹⁾ who saved us and called us to a holy calling, *not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began,*

a). Not according to our works but His grace

b). Notice that grace was placed upon us before the ages began

1a). You have always been in God’s mind – He always wanted to adopt you

Point: So this whole plan of salvation was no afterthought – a reaction to man’s sin

“What do we do now? Hey maybe this will work”

A. This plan was set before man was ever created

- B. God is the cause of salvation – and the source of salvation
 - 1). Therefore He gets the credit and all the glory for salvation

Transition: Paul's authority – Paul's message – one more

III. PAUL'S MOTIVE

Ga 1:4–5 (ESV) who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, ⁽⁵⁾ *to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.*

1. When you preach the true Gospel God is glorified

- A. The Gospel of grace leaves no opening for man to slip in and steal the credit
 - 1). It tells us salvation is a free gift given to those who don't deserve it & can't earn it

2. The gospel of works (Mere religion) glorify man

- A. It turns God into man's debtor – who owes us salvation and blessing

3. The difference illustrated

- A. It is the difference between somebody walking up to a destitute beggar
Who has done absolutely nothing to earn any favor
 - 1). And out of the goodness of their heart ALONE they hand him some money

- B. And your boss at work – at the end of the week giving you a paycheck

Point: The destitute beggar could do nothing to earn the money so he receives none of the glory
It was a free gift done simply out of the goodness of the giver's heart

- A. But the worker worked and therefore deserves his wages
 - 1). The boss is not graciously giving him anything – he is obligated to give it
The worker is simply getting what he has earned – he gets the credit

Question: What does God owe us? Romans 6:23 tells us that we have earned something

Ro 6:23 (ESV) For the *wages* of sin is death...

- A. But by *grace alone* He has reached down into our destitution
And has given us what we didn't deserve and what we couldn't earn

Ro 6:23 (ESV) For the wages of sin is death, *but the free gift of God is eternal life* in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- 1). God has saved us by grace – made us His children – given us a future that's secure
 - a). For a wretch like me! He gets the glory I get none...

Summary: When the Gospel of grace is preached properly God is glorified

- A. When works are added to it – man earning God's acceptance – Man is glorified
 - 1). Works will come – but not to be saved – because you are saved!
They are the fruit of that change that happens to you at salvation
 - a). Not saying works aren't important – we must get them in the proper order

CONCLUSION

1. Paul defends his authority

- A. He is an Apostle of Jesus Christ – therefore His message came directly from God not man

2. Paul introduces his message – the good news

- A. It is a message of grace – and the result of embracing it is peace
- B. The cost of the Gospel is immense – built upon foundation of Christ's sacrifice for sin

- C. The purpose of the Gospel is rescue – rescuing us from this present evil age
- D. The origin of the Gospel is God the Father – The whole plan of salvation came about because He willed it to come about – no afterthought

3. Paul gives us a look into his motive

- A. He preached in a way that brought glory to God – Grace always does
 - 1). The legalist message of faith PLUS works to be saved steals God's glory and gives it to man
 - a). God ends up being a debtor to man – owing them salvation and blessing

4. The application

- A. This sets the tone – how to treat this book as we study it – God's WORD
- B. This sends a warning – Do not mess with the message of Grace
 - 1). It is not faith PLUS works – when you add works you abandon grace

5. The call

- A. You may have come in here beat up by sin – you feel lost and hopeless
 - 1). The Gospel has the power to rescue you – surrender your life to Jesus
Let Him cleanse you of your sin – free you from that bondage
 - a). He is a wonderful Savior and a rescuer