

GALATIANS 1:1-10

Pray as you begin your study. From your heart express to God your Father your dependence on Him to open your soul to His truths from His Word. Thank Him that He will do this for you because you are His beloved child.

*Almighty God, whose word is authority and power and whose way is love, grant unto us today clear minds, understanding hearts, and willing spirits so that we may wisely appropriate your word of truth. In the name of Christ. Amen. (From A Guide to Prayer for Ministers and Other Servants, p. 71.)*

Read Galatians through at one sitting, using a different translation from your first reading if you have one.

1. Jot down any themes or ideas that seem important to you at this reading. Also note where in Galatians your ideas came from.

"The devil disturbs the church as much by error as by evil. When he cannot entice Christian people into sin, he deceives them with false doctrine. Reading Galatians 1, you may be surprised to see how the Galatian people have allowed themselves to be turned away from the true gospel by false teachers. Paul's reaction was one of astonishment. Yet this pattern of distorting the gospel continues today...(and)...converts relax their hold of the gospel which they seemed to have so firmly embraced. It is...as if someone has cast a spell over them. By being aware of these dynamics we can keep ourselves from being led astray." *Experiencing the Grace of Christ*, John Stott, IV Press.

2. There are many voices today claiming to speak truth: radio and television teachers and gurus, people at your door, public figures, pastors and other Christian teachers. HOW do you "test" the truth you hear?

Read again Galatians 1:1-5.

Jesus called a few from among His many disciples to be invested with special authority and status for teaching what was shown them by revelation from God. These were the apostles and they were unique. Paul was called and set apart for this position in a private (Damascus road) yet binding encounter with Jesus.

3. How does Paul support his position as an apostle in verse 1?

4. Why do you think Paul elaborated on the issue of his apostleship in this letter when he didn't in other New Testament letters?
  
5. From verses 3-5 what is the true gospel or good news? (You might want to list the different elements or put the ideas in your own words.)
  
6. In a dictionary look up the word *doxology* and tell what it means.
  
7. What was it about this real good news, this gospel, that led Paul to break out into his doxology in verse 5?
  
8. What is the relationship of grace and peace to the things Jesus Christ had done for them and for you?

Read Galatians 1:6-10.

9. Instead of words of commendation, thanksgiving or praise, what does Paul now say to these folks to whom he is writing?
  
10. What were the Galatians doing that called forth Paul's reaction to them?

11. What led them to this desertion?
  
12. Why does Paul react so strongly to these other teachers? (Look closely at verse 7.)
  
13. How could Paul say "let them be accursed" (NASB) or "eternally condemned" (NIV)? Think about what these false teachers were advocating in this distorted gospel. The Galatians were forsaking the good news of grace and faith to a non-gospel of works. Think about where that leads. (See Galatians 2:15-16; 3:10-12, 22; 5:1-3; 6:12-13.)
  
14. Do you think Paul was upright in his indignation or do you think he was speaking from personal pique? (Also see Philippians 1:15-18 and Romans 9:1-3.) Explain.
  
15. Seeking to please others and caring what they think can cause us to compromise and to become cowards when it comes to doing and saying what is right. Paul says in verse 10 he is not seeking to please others.
  - a. Why not? (Think about Galatians 1:1 before you answer.)
  
  - b. Does this help you in any way?
  
16. From these first 10 verses in chapter 1 of Galatians, what is the difference between the gospel of grace and the non-gospel of works as you see it?

17. Which of the above is really good news to you and why?
18. Circumcision was the works issue for the Galatians. What are some of the add-ons to the good news and true gospel we today believe will make us more acceptable to God as His own beloved child?  
Examples: 1. I am more acceptable to God when I look a certain way.  
2. I am more acceptable to God when I read my Bible and pray every day.
19. Using Paul as a pattern, write down the steps that led *you* to grasp the good news, the true gospel. Thinking about this, write your own doxology - praise - for what God has done for you.

**Note:** Do you want to more fully grasp all it means to be God's beloved child through His grace and by faith? Read *Abba's Child: The Cry of the Heart for Intimate Belonging* by Brennan Manning, published by NavPress. This book has opened doors of understanding and freedom for many.