

Galatians 1:6-10, The Presenting Conflict
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A. Introduction

1. Brief summary of the conflict in 1:6-10, corresponding to 6:11-17. Will be developed more fully in the central part of the book.
2. Summarizes both of the errors--the false teaching (6-9), and the rejection of Paul's authority (10).

B. The False Teaching, 1:6-9

1. Where they are (called by God in the grace of Christ)
 - a) Called
 - 1) Agent: always the Father in Paul.
 - 2) Efficacious, Rom. 8:28-30
 - 3) Falling away of the called? "Let him that thinks he stands, take heed lest he fall." 1 Cor. 10:12; 1 Cor. 9:27; 2 Cor. 13:5. NOT "eternal security," BUT "perseverance of the saints."
 - b) Grace of Christ
Defined in 2 Cor. 8:9. Four components:
 - 1) Christ's wealth (of righteousness)
 - 2) Our poverty (no merit)
 - 3) He sacrifices himself
 - 4) We profit from it.
 - c) Relation between the two.
 - 1) Not means or instrument: that would be *dia*, cf. 1:15. Grace is the foundation of our call, but that is not Paul's point here.
 - 2) Not destination. We are called so that we might live lives equipped by God's grace, 2 Cor. 12:9. But that would be *eis*, 1 Cor. 1:9; 1 Tim. 6:12.
 - 3) Rather, it characterizes our calling in a more abstract way as "a calling characterized by the grace of Jesus Christ." The very call itself is the grace of Christ to us. It is our first experience that we are any different from the rest of humanity; thus Paul in 2 Thes. and Peter call it "sanctification of the Spirit," being set apart by God's Spirit.
 - 4) usages (not in sermon):
 - a> *kalew* with *en*--favors "sphere."
 - 1> These four might all be destination, or perhaps source. Better yet, they all characterize the calling itself. The very circumstances of life are part of

God's calling to us, sovereignly ordained by him to bring us to himself. Thus *kl8sis* in 7:20 is parallel to uncircumcision in 7:18 and slavery in 7:22. Cf. 1:26.

a: 1Cor 7:18 Source (uncircumcision)

b: 1 Cor 7:20 Source (calling)

c: 1 Cor 7:22 Destination or means (Lord) (or Source, if *kuriw* refers here to the secular owner).

d: 1 Cor 7:24 Source (which)

- 2> 1 Thes. 4:7 For God did not call us *epi akaqarsia*, *all' en hagiasmw*, cf. Luke 1:17 for possible equivalence of *en* and *epi*. Better: the calling itself was a *hagiasmos*, cf. Rom. 8:30 with 2 Thes. 2:13.
- 3> 1 Cor. 7:15 But God has called us *en eir8n8*. Perhaps: God established his unity with us in a peaceful way; our unity with our spouses, which is intended to mirror that unity (Eph. 5), should also be maintained in an attitude of peace.
- 4> Col. 3:15 Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, *eis h8n* you were also called *en heni swmati*
- 5> Eph. 4:4 as you were called *en mia elpidi* of your calling
- 6> Cf. Phil. 3:14, *kl8sis ... en XI*

b> *xaris xristou*

1> 2 Cor. 8:9 though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor

2> Rom. 5:15 if by the transgressions of one many died, much rather the grace of God, and the gift in the grace that is of the one man, IC, has abounded unto many.

3> 2 Cor. 12:9 my grace is sufficient for you

4> The grace of LJC be with you

a: Rom. 16:20 The grace of our LJC be with you.

b: 2 Cor. 13:14 the grace of the LJC ... be with you all

c: Gal. 6:18 the grace of our LJC be with you all

d: Phil. 4:23 the grace of our LJC be with you all

e: 1 Thes. 5:28 the grace of our LJC be with you

f: 2 Thes. 3:18 the grace of our LJC be with you all

5> Salutations: Grace (mercy) and peace from God and the LJC

c> *en xariti*

1> Gifts:

a: 2 Thes. 2:16 God ... who loved us and gave eternal comfort and good hope in grace

b: Rom. 5:15 if by the transgressions of one many died, much rather the grace of God, and the gift in the grace that is of the one man, IC, has abounded unto many.

2> Conduct:

a: 2 Cor. 1:12, not in fleshly wisdom but in God's grace ... we have had our conversation in the

- world
- b: 2 Tim. 2:1 be strong in the grace that is in CJ
- 3> A gift
 - a: 2 Cor. 8:7 in order that you might abound in this grace
 - b: 2 Cor 8:19 to travel with us in this grace, which was ministered by us
- 4> Speech and communications
 - a: Col. 3:16 singing in grace in your hearts to the Lord
 - b: Col. 4:6 let your word be always in grace
- d> kalew ... xaris
 - Only in 1:15 and 1:6.

2. What has happened to them (removed...troubled)

- a) Illustration:
 - 1) 2 Kings 18:28-35, Rabshakeh's speech to the Jews.
 - 2) Acts 20:30
- b) The source of this problem
 - 1) "Trouble you," 1:7--cf. Acts 17:5-8, just like Rabshakeh. Inciting sedition.
 - 2) 6-7, "A different gospel, which is no alternative." It is distinct from the true gospel, thus no partner to it.
 - 3) 7, "Pervert the gospel of Christ." Change it completely; as the sun to darkness, or the moon to blood (Acts 2:20), or laughter to mourning, or joy to heaviness (James 4:9).
 - 4) "other than"--the problem is not replacing the gospel, but adding to it. Specifically, bringing in works.
- c) v.6, "are deserting."
 - 1) Not just passive, but middle. They are deserting, like soldiers.
 - 2) Present tense. Going on right now. Could be stopped if they wanted to.

3. The proper attitude toward it

- a) The warnings--differ in three significant ways.
 - 1) Time
 - v.9 is a restatement of an earlier warning, probably delivered while he was with them. In this case, v.8 is a quotation of that earlier warning. We see confirmation of this in the two other comparisons. POINT: Paul warned his converts from the very first of the danger of false teaching

and falling away.

Cf. Acts 20:28-31, where v.31 indicates that this warning now repeated just before he leaves them for the last time echoes earlier warnings.

2) Hypothetical vs. reality.

v.8 states a hypothesis: "Even if we or an angel should...", which is of course very unlikely to happen, but emphasizes the gravity of the offense, not to be excused by the status of the speaker. Appropriate to Paul's first visit with them, when the problem of false teachers had not yet arisen.

v.9 states something that is assumed true: "If, as in fact we understand is the case, someone is" Now the false teachers have come, and Paul must warn against an actual fact.

3) Their relation

v.8 identifies the gospel as "that which was preached to you," which they heard from Paul. No statement as to their acceptance of it.

v.9 states that "you received" this gospel. Reminds them that they have made a commitment that he expects them to uphold.

b) The word "accursed"

1) "Accursed" is *anagema*, the Greek reflex of the Hebrew *xerem*. Occurs frequently in the history of Israel's wars of conquest. Has two characteristics:

a> (Men:) Utter destruction. (Wealth:) Sometimes destroyed, sometimes enters the temple treasury. Cf. Deut. 20:16-18.

b> No one is allowed to have anything to do with the devoted stuff. Deut. 8:25,26.

c> Danger of touching: Achan, Joshua 6:17-19; 7:1,10-12.

2) Sense in this passage:

a> These false teachers are in danger of utter destruction under the Lord's judgment.

b> The Galatians must avoid any contact with them, lest they fall into their condemnation, like Achan.

c> Cf. Deut. 13:12-18 for OT parallel! *xerem* in 17 "cursed thing," verb in 15 "destroying it utterly".

C. Paul's Authority, 1:10

He sets forth the relation that he holds both to man and to God. In obedience to God, he persuades men what God says, rather than calculating a message to please men, and then persuading God that it is right. Contrast much modern theology, designing a message to please men, then twisting the Scriptures to try to get it to fit. (This verse may be better as a heading to the next section; at any event, it is strongly transitional.)

1. He persuades men, not God.

The answer to this is found throughout Acts and the epistles

- a) Over and over he is said to persuade men (Ac 13:43; Ac 18:4; Ac 19:8; Ac 28:23; 2Co 5:11).
- b) Never said to persuade God (nor is anyone else in the NT)
 - 1) Jos. Ant. 4.123, Balaam tries to persuade God to bind Israel with a curse
 - 2) Jos. Ant. 8.256, Rehoboam and the people try to persuade God to turn the Egyptian army away, but to no avail.

2. He pleases God, not men.

- a) Not pleasing God is a mark of the unbeliever: Rom. 8:8; 1 Thes. 2:15.
- b) The Christian's duty is to please God, 1 Thes. 4:1.
- c) We do not seek to please men, 1 Thes. 2:4 (in contrast with God).
- d) When there is no conflict, it's OK to please men, and even necessary to get the gospel out, 1 Cor. 10:33.

D. Conclusion

We face these same two challenges today.

1. Depreciating the authority of God's messenger, the inscripturated word of God. Modern wisdom humanizes it and makes it all relative to man's experience, just as Paul's opponents argued that his preaching was determined by the people he was trying to please. We need to recognize that this Word is unchangable and eternal.

2. Changes to the gospel.

- a) Buy salvation for money (indulgences in the 16th century)
 - b) Good works (Mormons, JW's, modern "Christianity")
 - c) Man's free will (most evangelicals)
- Those who compromise the gospel are anathema, and we are to have nothing to do with them.