

Dont turn back on god's Revelation: Galatians 1:11-24

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[0 : 00] Bibles, go with me to Galatians chapter 1. Galatians chapter 1. It's the third week in Galatians.

First week we talked about the first five verses. Paul talks about being an apostle. And we talked about what it meant to be an apostle. And he was an apostle who taught a message of grace and peace.

And he was one who taught that Jesus gave himself for our sins, verse 4. And we should glory in him, verse 5, because of that. Last week we talked about verses 6 through 10.

And we talked about the fact that there are those coming into the churches at Galatia trying to teach another gospel. He talks about another gospel and he says there is no other gospel.

There is only one gospel. It's the gospel of Jesus Christ and what he did for us. And Jesus Christ, when he did his work, did it all by himself. There was no help from us.

[1 : 10] We can't do anything to earn our salvation. He says it's all Christ and what he has done. Today we're going to talk about don't turn back on God's revelation.

He says we know what Jesus Christ did because the Bible tells us. Because God's word tells us what he did. And we put our trust in God's word.

You know, we've learned that Jesus is the only way. There's no turning back. We've learned that there are false teachers out there who are trying to teach us to go the wrong way. And Paul today is going to show us that, look, these people are trying to attack God's word, his revelation.

And he says do not turn back. Do not go against what God has said. Trust in what Jesus has revealed to you. Which is our first point. The claim about the revelation that God has given.

The claim about the revelation that God has given. Look with me at verse 11 and 12. He says, but I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after men.

[2 : 17] For I am neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by revelation of Jesus Christ. Let's have a word of prayer. Father, this morning I pray that you would help us.

As we look at this passage of scripture, Lord, this end of Galatians chapter 1, Lord, that we would understand that the Bible that we have in our hands, the scriptures that we have.

You say all scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction and righteousness. That the man of God may be perfect. Thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Lord, you have given us this word so that we might know you. So that we might know how we should live. That we might know the way to heaven. Lord, may we trust in this word that you have given to us.

And Lord, when others come in and try to teach something else, may we, like Paul said earlier in this book, in this chapter, may they be accursed. We trust in the living word of God, Jesus Christ.

[3 : 25] And we trust in the written word of God. It was given to us by Jesus Christ. Lord, help us this morning to understand that your word is supreme above everything else.

Thank you for the way you're going to work in our hearts. In Jesus' name, amen. The claim of divine revelation. And Paul starts off by saying, look, this revelation that I have, this thing, it did not originate with men.

It did not originate with men. He says, I certify. That word certify. He guarantees. He says it's a declaration of a true thing. Very accurate.

Very certain. You can take it to the bank. This word that I'm preaching to you came from God himself. Not from me. Not from others that I got it from.

He says it came from God. He says it's totally true from God himself. He said these other people are trying to come in. Remember last week we talked about the Judaizers.

[4 : 27] The Judaizers were those who came in and they preached. If you want to believe in grace, that's fine. You believe that Jesus died for you and all this. But you need to add to that the Jewish law.

You need to add to that the Jewish traditions and the Jewish rituals and things. It's okay to say, yes, Jesus saves. But he saves as long as you keep doing these things. And Paul's going, no, no, no.

That's not how it works. He says these man-made traditions and things, no. Jesus paid it all. We've sung that during this time.

Jesus paid it all. He says, look. It didn't originate with men. It didn't originate with these things. He says it originated with God. Verse 12 talks about that.

It originated with God. It's but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. Do you remember when Paul got saved? Everybody, if you know anything about the Bible, remembers Acts chapter 9.

[5 : 29] Acts chapter 9, Paul's on his way to arrest Christians, take them bound back to Jerusalem, to put them on trial, to put them in front of juries, and then have them condemned so that they could put them to death for blasphemy.

Then on the way to Damascus, Paul has an encounter with Jesus Christ. And as he has that encounter, that special revelation of Jesus Christ to him on that road to Damascus taught him some things he had not known before.

He sees Jesus in a whole different light, shall we say? He sees Jesus as the one who lived and died and rose again for him and for all of us.

As a matter of fact, when Paul writes to the Thessalonians, in 1 Thessalonians chapter 2, verse 13, he says this. For this cause also, thank we God, without ceasing, because when ye receive the word of God, which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

He said, you received it in the right way. You received it as the word of God, not of men. And he says, because you received it as the word of God, it had an effective work in your life.

[7 : 11] It changed your life. And Paul's going, it changed my life. When I had that encounter on the road to Damascus, I met Jesus Christ. I changed completely.

180 degree change. See, when we're saved, when we come to know the Lord Jesus Christ as the Savior, when we ask him to come into our life, cleanse us of our sin, to come live within us, he says, we begin to understand scripture then.

The Bible term for it is illumination. We understand. God's spirit helps us to understand the things that we are reading here in this book.

You know, some people read it and they go, what is that all about? What is it? I don't get it. Ask Jesus Christ to come into your life. Ask him to save you. Then go back and read it.

See if it doesn't make a whole lot more sense than it used to. In 2 Corinthians, Paul wrote to them as well. 2 Corinthians chapter 3, beginning at verse 14, it says this, But their minds were blinded.

[8 : 17] For until this day we made it the same veil untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament. Which veil is done away in Christ? We cannot understand because we don't have the proper equipment.

When Jesus comes into our life, we have the author of the book explaining it to us. The one who wrote it is explaining it to us. He goes on and he says, But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart.

Nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away. For the Lord is that spirit. And where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

He said, when the spirit of the Lord comes in, you will begin to understand. When the spirit of the Lord comes in, you're not going to be bound by the things of this earth. You're going to understand the things of what God's word is saying.

And when you understand what God's word is saying, it is going to free you. It's going to give you liberty. You're not going to be bound by sin. You're not going to be bound by the traditions of this world.

[9 : 19] You're not going to be bound by the law. You're not going to be bound by anything other than Jesus Christ and your love for him. He says, you have liberty in that.

So then he goes on and he says, let me show you. He's going to do a comparison to what the Jewish teachers were teaching. Paul's going to say, look, I know what they're teaching you.

I used to be there. I used to be one of you. Before I was saved, I did all kinds of things against these Christians.

You know the story of Paul's life and what it was like. Notice what he says in verse 13. He says, for ye have heard of mine own conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God and wasted it.

I persecuted it. Paul gives us two things here. Paul was a very religious person. As he's living his life, he was very religious.

[10 : 22] Because he talks about the fact that you heard about my time past in the Jews' religion. He followed it to the T. We'll talk about that some more in a minute.

Not only that, did he follow the Jewish religion to the T. He was intolerant of anything else. You cannot believe anything other than this.

Because he goes on there in verse 13 and says, And how beyond measure I persecuted the church of God and wasted it. He said, I used to go out and I would go like I was on that road to Damascus.

I would go. I would arrest people for being Christians. I would take them bound back to Jerusalem. We would put them on trial for blasphemy.

And then we would kill them. And he was okay with that. That was what he did. Matter of fact, he was so okay with it. Notice verse 14.

[11 : 23] And profited in the Jews' religion, above many mine equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my father.

How zealous was he? Well, if you go back, you don't have to turn there, but if you go back to the book of Acts, I've got them up here. Acts chapter 8, verse 3. As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and hailing men and women committed them to prison.

He was after them. And it was a, a, what's the word I want? I mean, it was, he, full force.

He was going after people. He did not back down whatsoever. It was his driving ambition. To go and get Christians. In Acts chapter 26, verse 11, it says this, And I punished them often in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme, being exceedingly mad against them.

I persecuted them, even unto strange cities. I would go find them wherever they were, and I would persecute them. This is what Paul's life was like before he was saved.

[12 : 44] This is what Paul's life was like before he met Jesus on that road to Damascus. It was all about persecuting Christians. Can you imagine that your driving force in your life is to hate people?

I mean, we have people in the world who do that. We see it every day on the news. There's driving forces that we just hate people because of what they believe. Paul was like that.

Paul had a passion for Judaism. Paul had a passion for Judaism. He looked in verse 14 there again. He profited.

It's an interesting word. He profited. He got rich doing this. He made money doing this. He got notoriety. He got fame.

He got all kinds of things for doing this, going against Christians. It says that he excelled there. He profited. He was zealous, it says later on there. He was exceedingly zealous in doing these things.

[13 : 51] He was not just a casual, like the average Christian today. I show up on Sunday morning for an hour and then I go the rest of the week and I'm good. No.

It was his driving passion. He was so wrapped up. How wrapped up? Notice that he uses the word traditions there. The word traditions.

Paul was taught at the feet of a man called Gamaliel. The Bible talks about that in Acts. He learned from Gamaliel.

Gamaliel was the number one Jewish teacher at the time and Paul learned from him. And what did Paul learn? He learned all the oral traditions.

Remember we talked in the Sunday school, we talked about the Ten Commandments. Well, the Pharisees actually had like 626 of them. And he knew them all. He learned from Gamaliel.

[14 : 52] He knew them all. And he endeavored to keep them all. I'm going to keep every law there is. And then he also learned about the interpretations of the Torah.

The Torah is the first five books of the Bible. Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy. Those books were written by Moses. They lived their life according to what Moses had. The Mosaic system.

The Mosaic covenant. He knew it. Every which way. If you ask him any question, we think in our mind, Genesis is good.

Exodus is good. Leviticus. Okay, Leviticus. He could have told you. You ask him any question about Leviticus, he would have told you.

He could have answered it. He also knew all the ceremonial regulations. Paul knew everything about Judaism there was to know.

[15 : 51] He was a Pharisee. He was going to learn it all. In Philippians chapter 3, verse 4, it says, Though I might also have confidence in the flesh, if any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more.

Circumcised the eighth day of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, and Hebrew of the Hebrews, as touching the law, a Pharisee.

There was no question about his Jewish background. He was a Jew 100%. Touching the law, a Pharisee. As I said, they were the extreme sect of Judaism.

They held the law like nobody's business. Others, Pharisees, you had better know every law, every way it could be fulfilled, every jot and tittle, as the Bible says, about it.

He knew it. Concerning zeal, the next verse says, persecuting the church. He went out. He persecuted the church. He did everything he could. Touching the righteousness, which is of the law, blameless.

[17 : 05] You could not find one thing that Paul had done contrary to the law that he knew. He kept it all. But, what things were gained to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

He says, I profited. But, when I came to know Jesus, I understood that meant absolutely nothing. Without Jesus, life means nothing.

Let me give you an illustration of that. God's grace is so, when we understand the grace of God and it comes into our life, it changes us. It changed Paul.

Let me tell you another guy changed. A guy by the name of John Newton. John Newton. Most of you know him because you know the hymn, Amazing Grace.

How sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me. And when he wrote that, John Newton, he completely understood. He was like Paul. He completely understood. Because John Newton had grown up doing internship on a slave ship.

[18 : 26] He later became the captain of a slave ship. He would go to Africa. He would pick up slaves, bring them to England, bring them to the United States, bring them wherever. And he would sell slaves.

He wanted nothing to do with God. He didn't care about God in the least. He was making good money running a slave ship. But then one day, John Newton met Jesus.

He understood about the grace of God when it comes into a life. This was written on John Newton's tombstone. He's buried in Olney, England.

And here's what's written on his tombstone. John Newton, clerk. Once an infidel and libertine, a servant of slaves in Africa, was by the rich mercy of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, preserved, restored, pardoned, and appointed to preach the faith which he had long labored to destroy.

He says, I got to preach about Jesus Christ. Something I tried to destroy. Something I cared nothing about. Sounds like Paul, doesn't it?

[19 : 44] Paul fought against it. John Newton fought against it. But when they encountered the grace of God, you know, we often talk about grace, God's riches at Christ's expense or God's redemption at Christ's expense.

When we understand what Jesus Christ did for us, the fact that he died on the cross, the fact that he was buried and rose again and ascended back into heaven and he did it for us so that we could have forgiveness of sin and that we could someday have a home in heaven, when we come encountered with that, that someone loved me that much, that he would do that for me, it changes our life.

It changes the way we view things. And it did that for Paul. What it did for Paul, number three, was it changed the calling of his life. The calling.

He now had a calling to fulfill God's purpose. How did this zealous follower of Judaism, this man who would go out and persecute the church, become the apostle to the Gentiles?

A man who loved Judaism so much that he did all this, now is going to take the gospel of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles.

[21 : 04] Not to the Jews, but to the Gentiles. And you notice how I'm saying that? That's how Paul and Jews would have said that. To the Gentiles? Really?

I'm going to go to them? Look at me, verse 15. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me by his grace to reveal his son in me that I might preach him among the heathen.

Stop there. He says, God saved me. God changed me. Dana? Dana? He says, God was making a difference in my life.

How did God make a difference in his life? First of all, God's man was sanctified. Sanctified, what does that mean? Set apart. Changed and set apart.

What does it say there in verse 15? It pleased God who separated me from my mother's womb and called me by his grace. God had a plan for Paul from the very beginning.

[22 : 23] It took a while for Paul to catch up on what the plan was, but God had a plan for him. God has a plan for each one of us. You remember Jeremiah, the prophet Jeremiah?

In Jeremiah 1.5, it says this, Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee. And before thou camest forth out of the womb, I sanctified thee and ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.

God had a plan for Jeremiah's life before he was ever born. God has a plan for you. Now, whether we're going to catch up and see his plan and follow his plan, that's another story.

But God wants to use every one of us. He wants us to go out and fulfill a purpose that he has designed us for. According to grace, and again, grace, another definition, God's unmerited favor.

I get God's favor without ever earning it. God loved me before I ever loved him. God cared about me before I ever even knew who he was.

[23 : 32] He says, God's grace, Paul was converted, and according to God's plan, he was going to go and reveal and preach the gospel.

He was going to go and reveal and preach Jesus Christ. God had a specific purpose for him. He has a specific purpose for you and I.

Are we living our lives according to what God has for us? 1 Corinthians 15.10, it says, But by the grace of God I am what I am.

And his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain, but I labored more abundantly than they all. Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

Paul says, I am what I am because of the grace of God. I am what I am and I'm doing what I'm doing because of the grace of God. God has come into my life.

[24 : 32] God has changed me. God has made me what he wants me to be. And I serve him. Peter said basically the same idea.

1 Peter 2, verse 9, verse many of you know, But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

He says, God has made you Christians. You're not a nation like the Jews. You don't have a background like that that keeps you all together. but I've made you a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people.

And what is your purpose? To show forth the praises of him. To show Jesus Christ to a world. To take, called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Go out and tell others and show others that light. He was sanctified. Second, God's man was strengthened. God's man was strengthened.

[25 : 40] The end of verse 17, verse 16, the end of verse 16 says, Immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood. Neither was I up, neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me.

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

Now the things which I write to you, behold, before God I lie not. Afterward I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. And I was unknown by faith unto the churches of Judea which were in Christ.

Stop there. Paul says, let me give you a little history about me. He said, I was strengthened in the Lord. How was I strengthened? He says, first of all, I did not confer with flesh and blood.

I didn't go meet up with the apostles. What did I do? Well, you remember after he had the vision there on the road to Damascus, he went into Damascus and a man named Ananias came and ministered to him.

[26 : 56] After that, Paul says, I went to Arabia and spent time there. What did he do in Arabia? Look with me over, it's just a couple pages over, Ephesians chapter 3.

Ephesians chapter 3, beginning of verse 2. Ephesians chapter 3, verse 2. For ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God that was given to me, given me to you, word.

God gave me grace to share with you. Okay, so he's about to do that. How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery, as I wrote afore in a few words, that would be Galatians, whereby when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge of the mystery of Christ, which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit, that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs and of the same body and partakers of the promise in Christ by the gospel, whereof I am made a minister according to the grace of the great gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.

He says, God gave me a ministry. God showed me I'm going to minister to the Gentiles. I'm going to minister to those who are considered heathen.

You notice he used that word there? They're considered heathens. But I'm going to have a job ministering to them. After that, he returned to Damascus again.

[28 : 45] He talks about that in verse 17 there of chapter 1 of Galatians. He went back to Damascus. While he was there, after learning all the things that he had learned from God, he is there ministering.

He is there preaching. And remember, he was going to Damascus to take people prisoner to take them back to Jerusalem to be killed because they were Christians. Now he's in Damascus as a Christian preaching the word of God to those people.

And guess what? They wanted to kill him. So much so that they had guards by the entrances to the city waiting for him to come through.

So that finally they had to let him go over a wall. Acts chapter 9, verse 22. But Saul increased the more in strength and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this one is very Christ.

And after that, many days were fulfilled. The Jews took counsel to kill him. But their laying of weight was known of Saul and they watched the gates day and night to kill him.

[29 : 57] Then the disciples took him by night and let him down by the wall in a basket. He went over the wall in a basket to get out of there so he could escape. What did he do then?

He went to Jerusalem. He saw Peter, spent 15 days with Peter. After his encounter with Peter, he goes to Cilicia and Antioch, which is in Syria. Tarsus is in Cilicia.

What's so big about Tarsus? That's where he's from. Remember you see him referred to as Saul of Tarsus? That's where he's from. That's his hometown. He goes back to his hometown, taking the gospel with him.

And then, while he's there, a man by the name of Barnabas comes and finds him. Acts chapter 11, verse 25. It should be up on the screen. It says, Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus for to seek Saul.

And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. And it came to pass that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.

[31 : 01] So here's Paul's life story. He says, Here's what I have done. Here's what has gone on. I did not learn about the Lord Jesus Christ from people. God revealed himself to me.

God showed me who he was. God led me in the things that I have learned. And then, God prepared him to be that minister to the Gentiles.

God prepared him to go out and share the gospel that he had heard. Third thing. God's man was submitted.

Here's what God wants for you. Here's what God's trying to help you with. Here's what God is teaching you. Are you ready to go do it? Paul's man was submitted.

Look at verse 23 and 24. It says, But they had heard only that he which persecuted us in times past in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed and they glorified God in me.

[32 : 09] He says, I submitted to preach the gospel. That that I had fought against, I submitted to preach. 1 Corinthians chapter 1 verse 18.

For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. He says, you know what?

People think you preach the gospel. People think you share the gospel with other people. You teach them about who Jesus is. That's just dumb. But he says, but to those of us who are saved, those of us who know Jesus Christ, it is the power of God.

Do you view what you're doing as God's power on your life? I wouldn't get up here every Sunday if I didn't think it was God's power on my life. If I didn't think it was God doing the work.

I get up here and I say all kinds of things. And most of the time people ask me afterwards, you know, you said this. I'm going, I did. I don't remember everything I say up here. But God is and God takes it and God uses it.

[33 : 19] It's the power of God to do things. He says, to preach. He submitted to preach. And he also submitted to God's glory.

To God's glory. Do you see verse 24? And they glorified God in me. He didn't say they glorified me.

They glorified God in me. Paul, persecutor, destroyer, executioner. Remember the Bible tells us that when Stephen was stoned, who was there?

Saul, Paul. He was there. He watched the coats while they stoned Stephen. Executioner. But now, he's a minister of the gospel to the Gentiles.

To God be the glory. What he can do in somebody's life. He made a change in his life. And God gets the glory. You know, God has revelation for people.

[34 : 33] And he helps people to see. He brings others into their life so that they can see the gospel. Hear the gospel. See it lived out in people's lives.

As you go out, you can tell people the gospel, but they also need to see it lived in your life. They also need to see what you're doing and that you're following God and what he has for you. We look at the life of Paul here and we see that through his salvation, through his separation to God, through his persecution himself.

He faced persecution. Not only did he give it out, he faced it himself. He says, everything that's happened in my life, I have one purpose. God gets the glory.

It all goes to him. If you're here this morning and you're a Christian, what is your purpose in life? He gets the glory.

If you're here this morning and you do not know the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior, he says, look, Jesus Christ came, he died, buried, rose again, so that he might pay the price for your sin.

[35 : 54] Rose again to heaven that he might go and make intercession for you. He might go and help you through the power that he has. Have you ever yielded your life to Christ to see the difference that he will make in your life?

Paul says, Christ made all the difference in my life. It is a totally 180 degree different direction in my life than what it used to be.

As a Christian, Paul went out, not only did he talk it, he lived it. As a Christian, are you living it?

Are you people seeing it? They may hear it from your lips, but are they seeing it lived out day by day? Jesus Christ lives in me. Are they seeing it in everything they do?

This morning, we're going to close with 513. 513.