

Live in Gospel Freedom

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[0:00] If you would please take your Bibles and go to the book of Galatians. Galatians chapter one. If you're visiting with us and needing a Bible, if you go to the chair in front of you, there's a black Bible.

Go towards the back. They renumber the New Testament. Find page 147, 148. There you'll find Galatians chapter one.

Go eat popcorn. Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians. Way to remember that. Galatians after first Corinthians and second Corinthians chapter one.

I'm gonna do the first 12 verses and I had said I think maybe, I don't know. Maybe I didn't, I don't remember. Anyway, so I think I said we were gonna go through Philippians but I decided as we're coming towards the end of the year, what a better way than to focus on the gospel and the emphasis on the gospel.

Not that Philippians doesn't do that but Galatians really emphasizes the gospel and so I'm like this would be good for us as a body to focus ourselves on the gospel.

[1:08] So that's what we're gonna do. I think it's 13 weeks in the book of Galatians. We could probably go longer than that but we'll just do 13. It'll take us to the end of December. Galatians, we'll go through that 13 weeks, 13 or 14.

Excuse me, so Galatians chapter one this morning. Excuse me, chapter one, verses one through 12. Galatians one, one through 12. Let me read and then we'll jump in.

Paul, an apostle, not from men nor through the agency of man but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised him from the dead and all the brethren who are with me to the churches of Galatia, grace to you and priests from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ who gave himself for our sins that he might deliver us out of this present evil age according to the will of our God and Father to whom be the glory forevermore.

Amen. I'm amazed that you're so quickly deserting him who called you by the grace of Christ for a different gospel, which is not another.

Only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. But even though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed anathema.

[2:45] As we've said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to that which you received, let him be accursed. For am I now seeking the favor of men or of God?

Or am I striving to please men? If I was still trying to please men, I would not be a slave of Christ, for I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man, for I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it.

But it was through a revelation of Jesus Christ. It's known as the shot heard round the world.

At least that's how Ralph Waldo Emerson, American poet, called it, described it. The first shot at the old North Bridge in Concord, Massachusetts 1775, started the Revolutionary War.

This year was the 248th anniversary of that shot of freedom for the 13 colonies. In two years it would be 250.

[4:05] Wow, crazy. Another shot has been heard around the world as well. But it wasn't a shot from a gun, but a shot of news. It was news of freedom.

It was news that would upset whole religious systems. It was good news. No, no. It was great news. No.

It was the, as the song goes, the best news ever. What is it? What is our news of freedom? This is our news. We are justified by grace alone, through faith alone, in Jesus alone.

So live in this gospel freedom. This is the heart of the gospel. That you can be justified.

You can be made right with God as by His grace, His undeserved favor alone. Through faith alone, your trust in one man, the God man, Jesus Christ alone.

[5:14] So live in this gospel freedom. There's key verses that bring this up. Chapter 2, verse 20 of Galatians.

You're probably familiar with that. I've been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by faith, and the Son of God who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me.

Even verse 21, I do not nullify the grace of God. That's the gospel, what he just said. For if righteousness is through the law, then Christ died needlessly. Even in chapter 5, verse 1, Paul said, it was for freedom that Christ set us free.

Therefore, keep standing firm and do not be subject again to yoke of slavery. This is the gospel. Justify by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.

Live in this gospel freedom, and if we could title Galatians in any way, we can title it this way, live in gospel freedom. Live in this gospel freedom.

[6:30] You can be made right with God, a right standing with God, as an act of His grace alone, and it's received through faith alone, trusting in Jesus alone.

Live in this gospel freedom. This letter was written to a number of churches in southern Galatia, which is modern day Turkey.

And Paul had to come in. He had to deal with some things that were happening. We're gonna look at that in a moment, a distortion of this truth, of this gospel truth.

Because you don't add to the gospel. You don't take away from the gospel.

You can't gain God's approval. You can't gain God's love. There's nothing that you can do to get God's love. There's nothing. He loves.

[7:35] He decides to love, and yet the great part is, as Paul says in Romans 3, he is still just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. So Paul had to write to these churches, a number of churches there in southern Galatia, to protect them from the Judaizers.

These guys called Judaizers, they wanted to add to the gospel by making Gentiles, and Jews too. But Gentiles, to keep the law specifically, you had to be circumcised to be saved.

You had to keep the law, and then you can gain God's love. This is bogus. Yet, these churches were buying into this nonsense.

So what did Paul have to tell them? And tell us about this news of the gospel? What did he have to defend? Well, we can bring up, split up the book in these three different ways, three different aspects of this book can come up.

And we're going to look at this holistically today because Paul brings this up in the opening 12 verses. First, we're going to notice how this gospel freedom news is divine.

[8:57] It's from God. And that's the reason Paul defends this good news and defends himself. This gospel freedom news is divine.

Second, this gospel freedom news is vital. It's significant. It's of high significance.

It's of high importance. And then he goes on from chapter 2 verse 11 to chapter 5 verse 12 to tell us why it's so vital.

So this news is divine. This news is vital. And third, this gospel news is relevant. And he shows us how to live in this freedom.

How do you live in this gospel freedom? He shows you from chapter 5 verse 13 to chapter 6 verse 18. And you might say, wow man, I didn't get those, I didn't write those down.

[10:02] It's divine, vital, I didn't get that. That's okay because in the 12 opening verses of this letter of Galatians, Paul actually summarizes what he's going to say and the rest of the letter to these Galatian churches.

He starts out with the first point. This news is divine. Look at verse 1. Paul, an apostle, not from men, not through the agency of man.

Paul, fully clothed with the authority of the one who sent him, equal to the latter, the other 12, he had the right to speak for God as his delegate.

He was in the office of apostle. He had the gift of an apostle and notice he says, not from men, nor through the agency of man.

It's not of human origin. He's not from a human medium. It's from God. This is divine. This news is divine.

[11:10] It's from God. God. His apostleship was genuine. So this news, this gospel news is from God, derived from God. Its origins is from God. Not from man.

He's driving this home. And then notice, that's the negative, the positive. Again, verse 1. but through Jesus Christ.

The agency of Jesus Christ and God the Father. God gave Paul this news through Jesus.

Through the Messiah. So this reject Paul and this news, this gospel freedom news, you're not rejecting Paul.

You're rejecting Jesus. You're rejecting God the Father. Because it came from them. And every time Jesus comes up, Paul makes it clear, he is from God.

[12:17] Jesus sent me. I didn't come up with this stuff on my own, people. So this gospel freedom is news from God.

It's divine. We didn't make this up. It comes from God himself. And that's what we tell people. I didn't make this up.

I didn't come up with this on my own. This is from God. If you disagree with this, it's fine. But you're not disagreeing with me.

You're disagreeing with God. This news is divine. It's from God. It's from God himself. So, number one, this news is divine.

Number two, notice, this news is vital. Still in verse one all the way to verse four. Notice he says, God the Father who raised him from the dead.

[13:20] Now this is vital. No pun intended. This is the only direct mention of Jesus' resurrection this whole letter. So it makes it extra vital, extra special.

This displays God shouting out that the sacrifice of his son has fully and perfectly satisfied his just wrath.

and Paul proclaiming this news was living proof that Jesus' resurrection truly happened. It was an historical fact. Notice he says, verse two, Paul, and then verse two, and all the brethren who are with me to the churches of Galatia, the apostles' fellow workers, including Barnabas, the churches that Paul started on his first missionary journey, those in southern Galatia, that's modern day Turkey.

verse three, grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Notice, grace, peace, grace, unmerited favor.

As Rick Collins said, I heard this this past week, grace is giving us what we want and peace is giving us what we need. We want God's favor and we need God's peace, don't we?

[14:47] We want God's favor and we need peace with God. So grace and peace comes from this news. That's why it's vital. That's why it's so significant. Do you want grace?

Do you need peace? This gospel news is vital for that. It's the only way to get that. And then look at what he says, grace to you and peace God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Look at the terms Father which anticipates our adoption as sons of Abraham. Lord calling Jesus sovereign.

Jesus he saves. Yeshua means God saves. Christ he's the Messiah the King who will come again. He's using these terms on purpose to make a point.

this news is vital because of who these men are but who Jesus is who the Father is who Paul is as their representative.

[15:49] And notice what he says as well verse 4 talking about the Lord Jesus Christ the sovereign one who saves us the King the Messiah who gave himself for our sins.

Jesus willingly gave himself for those who would repent and trust in him alone for salvation.

Voluntary deliberate intentional substitutionary the final sacrifice the ultimate sacrifice by Jesus the Lord Jesus Christ it was his sacrifice that satisfied the righteous demands of an absolutely holy God.

He reconciled sinners and provided redemption provided adoption for you because he gave himself for our sins.

This is vital. He gave himself for all our sins. This is vital. Jesus had to die in our place.

[17:12] And that's why Paul says this in Romans chapter 5 verse 9 much more than having now been justified by his blood we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Jesus.

How are you justified? What's the means to faith? Faith in what? Jesus died for your sins he gave himself for all your sins past present future.

So we are justified by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone who died for us so live in this gospel freedom.

The only way you can be made right with God is because Jesus died. and it's this very news upon which churches stand or fall.

It's the news through which everything else flows or should flow music music Bible studies fellowships counseling I was in a counseling conference virtual conference we do biblical counseling not doing EMDR not doing cognitive behavioral therapy that's not biblical counseling membership evangelism a worship service everything this news is vital because really it's the only way by which we can be saved it's the only way you can be saved if you're here and you don't know the Lord Jesus you haven't trusted in Jesus you're listening to his message you haven't trusted in Christ this is the only way you can be saved you must trust

[19:22] Jesus turn from your sin trust Christ he'll receive you come he'll be more than happy to receive you he loves to save sinners who humble themselves saying Jesus I need you Jesus I believe you died for my sin I turn away from sin I repent and I trust in you he welcomes that he welcomes that this news is divine this news is so vital and three it's relevant it's relevant you can take it away do do something with it today now notice what he says in verse four who gave himself for our sins in order that he may deliver us out of this present evil age this news is relevant this news brings freedom

Jesus gave himself Jesus gave himself to rescue us out of the present world which is dominated by evil it's emancipating news remember lincoln's emancipation proclamation abraham lincoln he proclaimed all slaves to be free you're setting news they were freed i'm not a slave anymore that's relevant isn't it that's real jesus self sacrifices what brings us out of slavery to sin into freedom he's already showing us a key theme in this letter a new age comes in fulfillment of god's promise we're saved by this gospel truth and we live in this gospel truth that's how we treat each other he's going to bring that up that's how it's relevant and notice according to the will of our god and father this is what the father wanted to happen it was in his plan so if one makes light of the son's work then that one makes light of the father's plan the father's work this was not an accident it was all according to the father's good pleasure to strike his son and notice

Paul goes into doxology goes into praise and thanks verse five to whom be the glory forevermore amen so great so marvelous is this work that God deserves all the praise never ending praise Paul pondered the great love of God for sinners his awesome grace and mercy to us this great work of Jesus according to the father's plan leads us to praise at least it should right leads us to giving thanks at least it should and we praise him for being so merciful for being so gracious to us and then it leads us to worship and praise and thanks to him and then it spurs us on at least it should spurs us on how we treat each other you'll see that because it'll say serve one another in love in chapter five but continuing on so this news is divine it's vital it's relevant and from the text so so because it's divine it's vital it's relevant so first don't desert

God's news look at verse six I'm amazed that you well hold on a second hold on a second stand by do you notice something there's no giving thanks for the churches there's no nice greeting he went straight to the issue at hand even in Corinth he says I thank my God for you blah blah blah and then he gives an issue but here he doesn't do that he doesn't give any type of thanks notice he starts in I'm shocked I have overwhelming amazement I have painful perplexity serious urgency is at hand I'm dumbfounded you've done this that you're so quickly deserting him who called you by the grace of

Christ for a different gospel what are you thinking they say that Southern California right dude what's your problem deserting the word denotes military desertion political strife the one who brought the effectual call into their lives is the one to whom they're being disloyal they had abandoned grace and really this separation don't desert God's news this separation is not just from grace but from the one who gave them grace the grace which is from Christ which could affect our destiny you've abandoned grace you've abandoned Christ you've abandoned Jesus what are you thinking you're not thinking we're a different gospel he says there's only one gospel but these disturbers we'll look at that in a moment we're making this other news the gospel which is not a gospel a good news at all there's only one good news yet they were deserting this wonderful news he was shocked what are you doing don't do this verse seven we're going to get into this what he says which is not another there's only some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of

[26 : 14] Christ so first Paul saying don't desert this good news God's news don't desert it it's divine it's vital it's so significant it's relevant don't desert God's news and don't be disturbed by distorted news different gospel which is not really another gospel only there are some who are disturbing you shaking you stirring you up troubling you agitating you throwing into confusion manifesting itself in tumultuous terror they're disturbing you they're shaking you up and want to distort the gospel of Christ where it means turn around or pervert the true gospel and what's this distortion

Paul slowly works his way through the letter telling us what it is chapter 2 verse 3 verse 21 oh yeah look at 2 21 we read this earlier he said I do not nullify the grace of Christ for if righteousness is through the law then Christ died needlessly this distortion as you can gain God's righteousness through doing stuff chapter 3 verse 2 I want to find out for you did you receive the spirit by the works of law or by hearing with faith chapter 4 verse 10 chapter 4 verse 21 chapter 5 verse 2 3 and 4 verse 6 verse 11 chapter 6 12 13 verse 15 he's going throughout he was referring to these Judaizers who said you must be circumcised for salvation look at chapter 2 verse 16 with me he says he says this very clear nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but through faith in Christ

Jesus even we have believed in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law since by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified you can't gain it by what you do you can't gain it by circumcision but this is what they were saying these Judaizers these had willfully perverted this God given news and then they wanted to draw others into this fatal error Paul would call them to reject anything that contradicts this gospel that he preached so that it comes down to this verse 8 and 9 but even though we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we preach to you let him be anathema you can't even get any more stronger than this and notice how he includes himself we or an angel from heaven should preach another gospel and his fellow workers

Paul was not excluded from this warning the gospel was at stake doesn't mean I me Jim can be anything different from that or any of you the gospel was at stake so he gave the harshest warning ever and he says it again we'll look at that in a second so he's saying if a divinely appointed apostle and that includes me y'all or even an angel from heaven alters this gospel news then that one should be eternally damned because it's not true wow wow anathema means to be given over to God's wrath to be cursed by God that's what it means so anyone who alters or changes or modifies or slightly tweaks this divine vital relevant gospel good news from God deserves damnation that's what he says now notice on a practical level this clearly goes against the cult of

Mormonism latter day saints LDS they are not Christians can you say that they LDS are not Christians they're not Christians don't think of themselves as Christians Jehovah Witnesses not Christians no this goes against Islam you know there's no they're trying these missionaries trying to connect and merge Christianity with Islam Muslims do not believe in the same God as us they do not Muslims do not believe in the same God they do not there's no other news no other gospel than what we proclaimed so any addition shows complete repudiation of the all sufficient Jesus Jesus is completely and totally sufficient take a beverage this is not coffee by you know that right this is just water it's a good thing if it was coffee

[32 : 25] I'd really be hyper I mean you don't I mean I'd really be you think I'm hyper now I'd really be hyper just take a beverage I'd take a my wife loves those Celsius you ever had those Celsius drinks they're wonderful they have 200 milligrams of caffeine in them I mean they're kickers right but they got good stuff in them too caffeine is good for you right sure it is of course it is let's take a Celsius okay let's do something more up your alley take a latte okay just Starbucks over there a venti latte please so you get your coffee you show me wow this is great coffee here I got this poison in here it's just one drop it'll be fine one drop of poison you're good no you're not good you put one drop of poison in your coffee your latte lights out right bye bye you put one drop of poison that's not gonna no no that doesn't work that way and yet that's what people think you put one drop of poison in the gospel but it's fine it's okay no it's deadly and Paul speaks so strongly about this he says it again verse 9 as we've said before so I say again now if any man is preaching to you a gospel now any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary that which you received let him be anathema goes further and is warning anyone who proclaims a different news or message the same result may she be eternally damned may he be eternally damned there is no gray with the gospel huge major implications here first you gotta get the gospel right right it's gotta make sense and it's the members

of local bodies are responsible to maintain the pure gospel notice he didn't just talk to elders to the elders no to only the leaders no he says to the churches all the members members of churches it's about you maintaining that the gospel is pure your responsibility and it's about the gospel it's not about politics or a particular political party

Donald Trump's not the savior don't think that he's not gonna turn this country around Jesus is gonna turn this country around let's get things right right it's not about your job your social status social media health it's about Christ the gospel this gospel is divine it's vital it's relevant we gotta get it right here's some other gospels God means for you to be happy it's self centered you can get get what you want from God the Bible is merely your therapy book God wants you to recover from your habits that's AA or even celebrate recovery that's what they emphasize too it's work based you can gain his approval by your works your identity is placed on your struggle on your gender your sexual orientation that's another gospel you can find unity in a group identified with your struggle that's a gospel you need a greater self esteem those are other gospels proclaimed today that's not this gospel that's not the one true gospel so he started out with don't desert

God's news it's news divine it's vital it's relevant so don't desert God's news don't be disturbed by distorted news but know that this good news it pleases God this news this gospel freedom news pleases God verse 10 11 and 12 look at verse 10 for am I now seeking the favor of men or of God or am I striving to please men if I were still striving to please men I would not be a slave of Christ now what he just said in verses 8 and 9 that would have shocked his readers so Paul justified what he said by pointing out his motives because apparently he was accused of conducting ministry to gain converts someone like Paul came up with this himself maybe he's trying to get rid of circumcision they accused him of teaching freedom from the law so he could get Gentiles on his side they said he was trying to win human approval they said he was trying to please men that's why he brings these questions up look would a popularity seeker throw out anathemas like this if you're seeking popularity you want to say hey guess what you're preaching of the gospel you're a curse you're a curse too you and you and you you're a curse that's not a popularity contest you're not winning a lot of popularity contests saying that to people he's not seeking man's favor he's not seeking to please God this good news pleases not seeking to please men this good news pleases God he wants to please God notice to end again of verse 10 I would not be a slave of Christ if I'm trying to please men his purpose was ultimately to please God not man his sole aim in life was to be true to this true revelation from God he was God's slave so think about that for a moment as a slave you do exactly what your master says that's how Paul viewed himself and of course he viewed himself in other ways in relation between him and the father him and the Lord Jesus Christ but here he says of Christ one of the aspects of my relation with him is I'm his slave so if he tells you to do this I'm going to do it and he he expands this notice in verse 11 and 12 verse 11 for I would have you know brethren that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man for I neither received it from man nor was it taught was I taught it but it was through a revelation of Jesus Christ look at what he's saying here his gospel this gospel was not from men it must not be altered in any way look at these three phrases that Paul uses to emphasize this truth he says it's not according to man it's not received from man it wasn't taught to him by man you see that he's trying to emphasize the importance that this news is divine it's from God in other words it doesn't go back to how he grew up have you ever had some people do that to you oh yeah yeah well you grew up here in this gospel that's why you're a Christian you ever heard somebody tell you that to you no not so with Paul this gospel was not taught to Paul he did not sit under the feet of teachers who explained the vital truths of the gospel no it didn't happen notice what he says the end of verse 12 through revelation of Jesus

[40 : 50] Christ God revealed Jesus Christ to Paul it was from God the father who revealed Jesus to Paul this is connected to the appearance of the resurrected Christ on the Damascus road in Acts chapter 9 friends that's why this news this gospel pleases God because it's directly from God it's God's gospel this gospel belongs to God it's his it's not yours it's his and he's telling us to proclaim this and to live in it because it's from him it's vital it's relevant and Paul was driven he would not allow some other gospel to be proclaimed this pleases God it's the only one these other gospels please men

God's gospel pleases God God's gospel so by way of introduction for the book of Galatians we've looked through these first twelve verses this news is divine this news is vital this news is relevant and we're going to truck through now next week you're going to see this news is divine this news is

vital this news is relevant he's going to do that in his letter so don't desert it don't be disturbed by other gospels this gospel pleases God we are justified by grace alone through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone live in this freedom live in this gospel freedom living in gospel freedom that's what Galatians is all about let's stop and let's thank him for his gospel and father we stop and we pray thanking you for your gospel thanking you for saving us lord Jesus thank you as we read you gave yourself for all our sins so you can deliver us rescue us out of this evil world so we can respond to each other the way you responded to us we can serve one another in love help us to live in this gospel freedom help us to live in the freedom of the gospel help us not to take it lightly but to take this seriously use your people for your glory we pray and help us because it is the evil one he's called the accuser on purpose he accuses us you sinned

God shouldn't save you you did this and you call yourself a Christian how could you do that oh God bring us back to the gospel we say yes I did do that and that's why Jesus needed to die for me he did because I'm a sinner and Jesus is gracious and he saved the sinner and so I encourage you to do that speak gospel truth to yourself it was Lloyd Jones who said don't listen to yourself talk to yourself tell yourself the gospel truth if you listen to yourself you might listen to lies if you taught yourself gospel truth it will be truth tell yourself gospel truth speak the gospel truth remind yourself of the grace of God it's found only in

Jesus God because it's the grace of God that changes us it's the grace of God that saves us it's God's grace that changes us we want his favor we need his peace so take this time a few moments pick a little bit with my guitar just you can between you and the Lord just relish in this time between you and the Lord just to speak the truths of the gospel please do that now