

Live in Gospel Freedom! This News is Divine!

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[0:00] please take your Bibles and go to the book of Galatians Galatians we started down this road of Galatians closing out this year with the gospel which is most appropriate even most appropriate in what's happening in our world today with Israel with things taking place this is what our world needs this is the only thing that will bring peace is the great news of Jesus Christ that's how there's freedom that's how there's liberty that's how there's joy it's found in Jesus alone live in gospel freedom Galatians in that Bible in the chair in front of you if you need to go to that Bible 146 starting new numbering of the New Testament page 146 in that black Bible in the chair in front of you 146 to 147

Galatians chapter 1 Galatians chapter 1 we're actually gonna do verses verse 11 of chapter 1 all the way to chapter 2 verse 10 a large chunk but much needed for us to look at together collectively Galatians chapter 1 verse 11 to chapter 2 verse 10 let me read Galatians 1 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 I taught it but through a revelation of Jesus Christ for you've heard of my former manner of life in Judaism how I used to persecute the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it and I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my countrymen being more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions when he who had set me apart from my mother's womb and called me through his grace was pleased to reveal his son in me that I might preach him among the Gentiles

I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me but I went away to Arabia and returned once more to Damascus then three years later I went up to Jerusalem to become acquainted with Cephas that is Peter and stayed with him 15 days but I did not see any other of the apostles except James the Lord's brother now and what I am writing to you I assure you before God that I am not lying then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia and I was unknown by sight to the churches of Judea which were in Christ but only they kept hearing he who once persecuted us is now preaching the faith which he once tried to destroy and they were glorifying God because of me chapter 2 and after an interval of 14 years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas taking Titus along also it was because of a revelation that I went up and I laid to them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles but in private to those who were of reputation for fear that I might be running or had run in vain but not even Titus who was with me though he was a Greek was compelled to be circumcised but because of the false brethren who had sneaked in to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus in order to bring us into bondage but we did not yield in subjection to them for even an hour so the truth of the gospel might remain with you but from those who were of high reputation well they were makes no difference to me God shows them partiality well those who were of reputation contributed nothing to me verse 7 but on the contrary seeing that I have been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised just as Peter to the circumcised for he who effectually worked for Peter in apostleship to the circumcised effectually worked for me also to the Gentiles and recognizing the grace that had been given to me James and Cephas and John who were reputed to be pillars gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship that we to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised only to remember the poor the very thing

I also was eager to do when I was a kid I used to watch the three stooges black and white probably explains a lot doesn't it took you a while to get that right okay there's this one episode in the three stooges they're in a courtroom and Curly he's told to take off his hat his cane is in his left hand took off his hat then raise his right hand so he put his hat back on and put his left hand on the Bible so he put his left on the Bible put his cane in his right hand but then he's told to take off his hat so he took off his hat raise his right hand put your right hand on the Bible take off your hat so he did going back

it's pretty funny so you've probably seen that episode anyone who's like 50 and over you've probably seen that all of you like 50 and under you're like what are you talking about the three stooges by life motto of course anyways no no no

[5:49] I digress but the Bible is used in court as a way to say that that person is telling the truth you tell the whole truth nothing of the truth nothing of the truth nothing of the truth God would say in that three stooges episode so she or he swears on the Bible because it is the truth the highest truth the perfect justice as God is my witness so I put your hand on the Bible because the Bible represents God it's not from man that's why you do that so this gospel message represents God this gospel message is from God it's divine as we're trucking through the book of Galatians we started that last week live in gospel freedom and today we're gonna see this news is divine this news is from God this gospel freedom news is divine it's from God we didn't come up with this

Paul didn't come up with this twelve guys didn't get together and say let's come up with this great idea no that's not what happened and here's the the bulk of what we preach this news we're justified by grace alone through faith alone in Jesus alone so live in this gospel freedom you can be justified you can be made right with God it's grace it's by his grace you don't add anything you don't contribute anything it's through trusting Jesus alone who came died and rose from the dead so you can be free you can live in this gospel freedom this is the news that's divine we're justified by grace alone through faith alone in Jesus alone so live in this gospel freedom so this news is divine it is God given and grace driven it's God given and grace driven God is the one who gave this message and it's a message driven by his grace alone so it is of God and by grace and you some of you most of you will probably truly identify with this message in this way when God's grace came to you in the gospel God did a huge overhaul and change in your life his grace broke in right and opened your eyes and all the credit is to God it's not to you it's not because you were smarter it's not because you're educated or uneducated or you're at the right time no it's all of God he gets all the credit so it's God given and grace driven so we have no need to be ashamed fearful deterred anxious or embarrassed by this news of freedom we can proclaim it boldly knowing that those who disagree with us they disagree with God they disagree with God but also something else no need not just to be ashamed fearful deterred anxious or embarrassed but also under this gospel freedom we are one there's unity in the gospel there's unity amongst brothers and sisters in Christ unity amongst brothers and sisters in Christ can only be found in Christ in the truth of the gospel so we're gonna truck our way through this large section of Galatians and I do want to make mention at the get-go chapter 1 verse 11 and 12 is really key to understanding really the rest of the of the epistle of this letter to the Galatian churches but specifically today it's key for you to understand chapter 1 verses 13 to chapter 2 verse 10 it's those two verses 11 and 12 we'll look at it in a second let's let me give you some points that you're tracking with me this gospel freedom news is divine it's divine it's God given and grace driven

Paul emphasized the gospel is divine origin is of God his free sovereign loving grace so notice what he says he told them this gospel don't get distorted by those who are preaching some other gospel is not some other gospel this is what the gospel is and he goes right here chapter 1 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 nor was I taught it but through a revelation of Jesus Christ so notice his gospel was not from men so it must not be altered anyway we talked about this last week notice the three phrases that emphasize this truth it's not according to man it's not received from man it wasn't taught to him by man the gospel was not taught to him he didn't sit on the feet of teachers who explain these vital truths of the gospel this is key he's trying to say it's God given Paul revealed God revealed Jesus Christ to Paul it was revealed to him it was from God the father who revealed Jesus to Paul that's what he says here through a revelation of Jesus Christ this connects us to the appearance of the resurrected Christ on the Damascus road talked about in Acts chapter 9 now from these two verses he launches into what he means by this he's going to explain this now how it's God given and it's driven by grace so God given and grace driven how so first look at my former way of life Paul says chapter 1 verse 13 and 14 look at my former way of life look at how I used to be look at verse 13 for here's the reason you've heard of my former life manner of life in Judaism how I used to persecute the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it so in the past

[12:53] Paul was a faithful and zealot Pharisee who persecuted the church yet this remarkable change showed God's remarkable grace so the works of the law to gain acceptance with God

they're meaningless as far as Paul was concerned you don't need man's approval before all this though he was antithetical and hostile toward the gospel look at my former way of life I used to persecute the church Paul had a hatred of the gospel in God's church it was beyond measure he says savagely violently off the charts man he thought he was doing God's service he says I tried to destroy it so hatred was his so deep was his hatred for

God's church and with all his heart he persecuted them to destroy them and then look at what he says verse 14 and I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my countrymen be more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions he progressed in his pharisaic zeal as a Pharisee they made laws to keep the law they made laws to keep the laws to keep the laws to keep the law laws upon laws upon laws upon laws and he was committed to the traditions of his fathers so trying to destroy and wipe out the church and then he's progressing in the Jewish oral law he was fully committed to persecuting Christians and exterminating the church he was fully committed to being a better Pharisee than anyone else even the ones who were attacking the gospel that he will address the Judaizers way better than them so this this shows his dire drastic desperate critical extreme need for a change a grace driven change you see only God's gracious intervention could explain this revolution in Paul's life because he says look at my former way of life there's no way that this is of men there's no way that I came up with this on my own and that's true not just Paul but even of us we were all God haters until the revolutionary change of God's grace in us by his spirit maybe you remember maybe somebody gave you the gospel and gave you the gospel maybe they gave you the gospel five billion times and there was that one time when you heard it and all of a sudden it just clicked and you went wait a second wait a second wait a second God should judge me I should be condemned and then you read the Bible and you're reading how Jesus dies for sinners in their place as their substitute and we say wait a second you mean he died for my sin and it all just makes sense and then everything it just clicks you go wait

Jesus I want to turn from my sin I want to put my trust in you you probably experienced that that revolutionary change of God's grace in us that's what happened to Paul see this is why it's not of men Paul's point is it's God given and grace driven how so he says look at my former way of life look at this I used to persecute the church I hated Christians and also how else look at God's gracious change in me now he says this is what I was now look at the change chapter 1 verse 15 and 16 and chapter 1 verse 22 to 24 look at verse 15 but here's God's good pleasure God showed sovereign kindness and love to this terrible awful jerk of a guy when he had set me apart from my mother's womb and called me through his grace was pleased to reveal his son to me that I might preach him among the

Gentiles he set him apart marked him before birth like Jeremiah chapter 1 verse 5 he called him by grace alone revealed God's son was revealed to Paul he gloried in the gospel proclaiming triumphant grace in contrast to his former evil life I mean who Paul was and what he did to God's church made his call to this grace even more remarkable this is why he totally loved the gospel this is why in sovereign freedom God displayed his awesome grace to Paul look at my former way of life and now look at his grace is changing me a man who hated the church loved his pharisaic traditions he's highlighting the absolute sovereignty and good pleasure and was pleased

[18:31] God was pleased the good pleasure of God in his life and then notice what he says that I might preach him among the Gentiles this was willed by God himself that Paul even before he was born would preach to the Gentiles this gospel of grace which he tried to destroy he was specifically marked out by God to be this apostle tell you anyone who comes to God comes to him because of God's initiating sovereign free grace we did not choose God God chose us that is why we choose him that order is vital so no human no human can persuade another human to embrace this grace driven news of Jesus it needs to be an act of

God's grace that's why I say it's grace driven it's grace driven Paul changed from a man who breathed murderous threats against Jesus body to breathing praises when he thinks of God's love for him and Jesus go to verse 22 you see this hallmark to this emphasized again and I was I was unknown by sight to the churches of Judea which were in Christ but only they kept hearing this guy who once persecuted us he's preaching the faith which he once tried to destroy remember the guy who used to kill us can you just imagine this okay so you remember that guy who was like crazy freaky psycho dude oh yeah I remember him he's like preaching the gospel no yes no yes really yes that's what I say no no way yes it's the same guy can you imagine that conversation people having

this is a guy he once tried to destroy us now he's preaching this gospel in verse 24 and they were glorifying

God because of me they didn't see his face and he was not dependent upon them for this news that he was preaching but all they heard that the one who hated this news of grace and tried to destroy this news of grace he became a recipient of this grace and because of his allegiance to this news of grace he defended it showing his first and foremost concern the sovereign grace in his life that was his priority not really his apostolic authority it was the priority of grace so Jewish Christians who heard of this great display of God's grace and Paul could do nothing but glorify God wow well praise God praise God there's no other explanation right Paul was a devoted Pharisee pursuing Judaism far beyond others he had no love for Jesus no love for his followers persecuted God's church thought he was serving God yet from this huge error he shifted to total reliance upon God's grace in Christ God displayed his power his sovereignty his wisdom his grace his love his mercy and saving this wretched relentless jerk persecutor of his people transforming him into a powerful spokesman of this divine news so again he's saying it's God given grace driven look at my former way of life look at God's gracious change in me here's a third of how this is God given and grace driven look at God's gracious revelation because he says in verse 16 to reveal his son in me that I might preach him among the

Gentiles I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood so he did not go visit the apostles at the first he didn't consent with any person he didn't consult with any person flesh and blood he says this accentuates that this news flows from God this news is God given that's his point he insisted upon the God origin of this news God revealed this to me free from the Jewish community free from any type of influence and then he says in verse 17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem he didn't go to Jerusalem I didn't go there those who were apostles before me but I went to Arabia and returned once more to Damascus he went to the region surrounding Damascus Arabia the apostles were not around Peter James John so they did not give some hearty approval of

[23:43] Paul preaching what he was supposed to preach this was all done by God's guidance and look at what he says in verse 18 then three years later I went up to Jerusalem to become acquainted with Cephas Peter I stayed with him 15 days this was his first visit to Jerusalem where he stayed for a short 15 days from Acts chapter 9 but he only met with Peter or Cephas and then he says verse 19 I did not see any other of the apostles except James the Lord's brother he did not come under the influence of the apostles no instruction notice he's saying he was equal to them and then he gives a solemn oath verse 20 now when I'm writing to you I assure you before God that I'm not lying he gave this solemn oath before God he was telling the truth Paul took what he was saying very seriously because the truth of the gospel that saved him was at stake and then

I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia that was Tarshish these regions were not Jerusalem and that's important because he's trying to say I'm not dependent upon the apostles or the believers of Jerusalem it's revealed by God so this news that's driven by grace it's not some concept that Paul came up with you're you're disagreeing with the apostles with we're going to see this in a moment with those of high reputation you're disagreeing with them Paul saying no it was revealed to me by God his life and preaching showed a new and different relation with God that's why he didn't deviate at all because of God's sovereign grace that was shown in his life he defends this news with his apostolic authority he did not need man's approval for the news that was supernaturally given him by grace

I mean think about it if this news of grace needed approval by leaders of Jewish Christianity then guess what the Judaizers may be right but but if this news and mission he was given was by revelation standing independent of Jewish leadership then it truly is of grace with no need for a supplement Paul demonstrated that the leadership of Jerusalem preached and approved of the same gospel he proclaimed we're going to see that in a moment more emphasized in chapter two so this news is God given grace driven it does not need human validation so here he's saying this is God given it's grace driven look at my former way of life look at how my life has changed look at the revelation given to me so so there's no need for human approval that would break into chapter two look at verse one and two then after an interval of fourteen years

I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas taking Titus along also and it was because of revelation that it went up and I laid before them the gospel which I preached among the Gentiles but in private to those who have reputation for fear that I might be running or had run in vain Paul's point is his gospel was independent of any type of human approval after fourteen years Barnabas

picked up Paul neither in this time nor the previous time did Paul receive his authority from the apostles Barnabas and Titus came with him and he came not because he was called to account for this nonsense that's not why he came notice he says God said revelation and I think the new American standard translate this here in verse two I was it was because of a revelation I went up and I submitted to them the gospel probably a better translation which I did it for you when I was reading laid before them the idea is not that

Paul submitted it to them for their approval that's not the idea but he laid it before them in a private meeting with no lack of confidence and I believe this is not referred to the council of Jerusalem some take this view I think this is something else it seems that Paul spoke about his famine visit to Jerusalem from Acts chapter 11 but here this would hit the Judaizers hard because it showed their distortion that Paul submitted his teaching to the apostles see his point was this gospel preached by Paul was not from men but from God it needed no authorization from these Jerusalem leaders or anyone else and notice this word where he gives in the middle of verse 2 I did it in private to those who were of reputation and Paul was not targeting these I'll call them the three big guns

[29:00] James Peter and John he's not being disrespectful here he's saying this because of the Judaizers and I believe the Judaizers they were the ones who were saying these three were of reputation they have a name they were the three big guns that's how they viewed them and that's why Paul spoke to them privately James Peter and John and it all will come to a head in Acts chapter 15 but notice what he says here the end of verse 2 for fear actually better would be to make sure that I might be running or had run in vain so what's his point his work for spreading the gospel grace among the Gentiles would be in danger if the Judaizers were approved and given a thumbs up Paul preaching this gospel free grace did not depend upon any human leadership in Jerusalem not even from the big three so

Paul preaching this gospel of grace apart from the works of law circumcision it didn't need a supplement both Jew and Gentile were saved by grace alone but the Judaizers were attempting to mingle grace and works grace plus circumcision grace plus law so he's saying it's God given and grace driven look at my former way of life look at the change that God has done look at this revelation so it needs no human approval why because there is one gospel with Jew and Gentile look at chapter two verse three but not even Titus who was with me though he was a Greek was compelled to be circumcised Titus was kind of like the guinea pig if you will what would they do that same leadership did not drive Titus a

Greek to be circumcised they didn't do it so nothing should be added to this gospel of grace we're preaching the same gospel to the Jew as to the Gentile unity amongst brothers in Christ can only be found in Christ in the truth of the gospel this gospel is one and the same it's one gospel for every age for every person for the Israeli and for the American for the Arab and for the Russian for the Chinese for the North Korean and for the South Korean it's the same gospel it's one gospel so no supplement is needed to be accepted by God it's by grace alone and then Paul continues verse four but because of the false brethren who had sneaked in to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus in order to bring us into bondage notice there's no verb there's no verb in the Greek it's why it's hard to translate it but it seems that this is saying that not even these false brothers they didn't even compel Titus to be circumcised as hard as they tried he knew the gospel truth notice he says they sneaked or they spied it out they had a motive of stealth they wanted to ambush Paul Paul Paul and his companions from liberty the truth of the gospel set sinners free merits don't gain favor with God it's all based on Jesus work on the cross and notice he says in order to bring us into bondage they were trying to ambush them and bring them under slavery the Judaizers wanted to add circumcision to the gospel what do you add what do we add to the gospel bible reading did you read your bible this morning if you didn't prayer did you go to church are you a good person are you patriotic you gotta be a trump supporter are you nice to people what do we add to the gospel do we add those things to the gospel

I'm gonna gain more favor from God because I am because I just because I did no no you don't add a supplement to the gospel it's by grace alone our works do nothing to add to this gospel nothing look at what Paul says in verse 5 but we did not yield in subjection for even an hour not even a second away in submit he didn't humble himself under this lie for even a moment when the truth of the gospel was at stake Paul was adamant so that the truth of the gospel might remain with you he says he did not want the Galatians to be in danger of a false gospel that would put them in change through keeping the law no and look at what he does here in verse 6 but from those who were of

high reputation he's not disrespecting the three guns here's the issue the gospel and his ministry weren't subject to them because

[34:44] God shows no partiality it was not subject to them not subject to them God shows no partiality it says here what they were makes no difference to me God shows no partiality well those who were of reputation contributed nothing to me God does favor one over another because of prestige influence money rank does not determine truth and remember that word reputation is probably a name given by the Judaizers and the three made no attempt James Peter John made no attempt to require Paul to accommodate the gospel to the Judaizers false claim made no attempt there's no pressure to supplement it that's Paul's point notice the contrary verse seven on the contrary seeing that I have been entrusted with the gospel to the circumcised just as Peter to the uncircumcised for he who effectually worked for Peter in apostleship to the circumcised effectually worked for me also to the

Gentiles look at what Paul is saying here he showed that the Jerusalem leaders approved the same gospel as Paul it's one gospel they sustained encouraged and confirmed what he preached the gospel was one and the same and look at that's why he says effectually worked for Peter and his apostleship to the circumcised as he worked for me also to the Gentiles Paul was to the uncircumcised Peter was sent to the circumcised the Lord worked through both of them with one message of grace Peter would go to the Jews Paul to the Gentiles it's not a different message it's a different target group so recapping again God given grace driven how Paul says look at my former way of life look at the God changed me look at the revelation so it doesn't need human approval because it's one gospel meaning there's gospel unity verse 9 and 10 and look at this word verse 9 recognizing not approving it's different when you say

I recognize that I recognize that spider that's on the wall right now no there's no spider there I'm just kidding but it doesn't mean it just appeared there you just didn't see and I didn't see but now I see it right you recognize you see it it's always been there you just didn't recognize and notice he says and and recognizing the grace had been given to me James Cephas and John who reputed to be pillars gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship the three big guns I call them they call them they're the pillars I think the Judaizers called them that it was God's grace given to Paul they had mutual respect and equality for God's calling upon Paul and his life so there was no disunity among them there was gospel unity there is one gospel James the Lord's brother Peter and John and not that the other positive mean anything but designation given probably by the Judaizers they falsely claimed support by these three guns oh these guys support us no no these three gave Paul the right hand of fellowship what does that mean in the ancient world it was the widespread way of showing friendship not subjection but fellowship partnership we're together we're unified it was a sign of agreement they trusted in and endorsed Paul a confirmed solemn covenant that's what that was no changes to his message no changes to his ministry no changes to this gospel of grace but gospel unity an interesting interesting fact for you you have the four men James the Lord's brother Peter John and Paul out of the four 21 of the 27 books of the New Testament was written by them 21 out of the 27 Paul wrote 13 John wrote 5 Peter wrote 2 actually maybe a third one if you want to count Mark's gospel because that's from Peter's perspective and James wrote 1 interesting and then the last part Paul says they give us the right hand of fellowship that we to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised only to remember the poor the very thing I also was eager to do I'm going to go to the Gentiles Paul we know we confirm you're going to the Gentiles to preach the same gospel grace that we are we're going to go to the circumcised we're going to the collection that he gave for the

[40:15] Christians in Jerusalem that's why it became an important part for Paul because it was a great way for Gentile Christians to reach out to their Jewish brethren just as you have that opportunity even today now you get to pray for your Jewish brethren who are in Israel right now and pray for them it helps to promote unity and love amongst Jews and Gentiles it prevented misunderstandings the very thing undermining the gospel in the churches of Galatia we're all disciples of Christ we're all Jesus disciples it's gospel unity so this gospel news is divine it is God given and grace driven God is the one who gave this message and it's a message driven by grace alone it's of God and by grace our merits count for nothing you're good works do not sustain your faith your good works do not add to your faith our good works do not give an extra sugar coating a sugar topping to our faith it's by grace alone through faith alone in

Jesus Christ alone that's the divine news it's given by God that's all by grace so let's thank him for his grace would you pray with me father there is one gospel that you're just God we're sinners Jesus died in the place of sinners repent and believe turn from sin and trust Christ may this gospel message be the hallmark of your people be the foundation be that which they cling the foundation what's established in your church amongst your people help us to be so easy to look to ourselves and add to this gospel of grace which makes no sense because then it's not grace it's undeserved unmerited favor so help us we praise your people to cling to and to hold to and passionate in our clinging passionate in our holding to this gospel of grace and let us be people of grace you change Paul you can change us change us by your grace that we will be a people who display grace to each other and proclaim this grace to the world take a few moments if you would please have a moment of silence and I'll just be playing a little bit of my guitar fill your mind with this gospel of grace with the truth that we've seen from God's word let this be a time between you and the Lord to remind yourself of the truth the news of the gospel which unifies God's people together there's one gospel there's one great news so fill your mind with scripture fill your mind with the gospel do that now please get to do in place we will please do you good for to pom to fall and depois Cheryl everything It was ■ it is you gonna anything I believe