

The Gospel's Origin

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- [0 : 0 0] I want you to open your Bibles to Galatians chapter 1. We're going to look at verses 11 through chapter 2, verse 10. So we're going to go over a chapter break.
- Just so you know, when Paul wrote Galatians, as well as all of the other writers of the Bible, they didn't say chapter 1, verse 1, and write chapter 1, verse 2, and write.
- The verse and chapter markings came into the Bible around the 1400s, 1200s, depending upon who you listen to, as a way for us to know where to go and so we can talk to each other and know what we're looking at.
- So sometimes the chapter and verse markings are a bit misleading because you need to kind of see the big picture. And really, I think the end of chapter 1, first of chapter 2, is something that needs to be kept together because it's all about one thing.
- So, and this morning, what we're going to do is a little bit different. We're going to pray, and then after we pray, I'm going to do two things this morning. Number one, we're just going to read the passage.
- [1 : 0 6] Since it's a lengthy passage, I'm going to take my time. I'm going to break it up for you, make a few comments about it. That won't take very long. And then from that, I'm going to draw two lessons that we need to learn, okay?
- It's a little bit more lengthy reading, so I want to take my time and help you sort of see how Paul's arguments kind of laid out here. So with that, let's pray.
- Father, thank you for your word. Thank you for the privilege it is to preach your word, to hear your word preached, and we pray that your spirit would be with both of us.
- Give me the ability to speak in such a way that your people hear, and give them the ability to listen and obey what your word says.
- And we pray all this in Christ's name. Amen. So we're going to break this reading into three sections. The first section is verses 11 through 17 of chapter 1, and I've titled that section, The Divine Origin of the Gospel Stated.
- [2 : 1 1] You know what? Actually, maybe I should... Nah, we'll just jump right into it, okay? So this is the divine origin of the gospel stated, and you'll notice there in verse 11 he says this, 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 I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ. Now let me pause right there. This is the theme of the whole section.
- Paul is trying to say, listen, I didn't get this from someone else. I didn't get this from another man. Jesus Christ himself gave this to me.
- That sounds so simple. We get it. But it has massive, massive important implications for us that we'll get to in just a moment. That's his theme then.
- So what he's going to do in verse 13 is he's going to lay out how this is true. He's going to basically show you his life and how there's no way he could have learned it from somebody else, okay?

- [3 : 18] So verse 13 he says, For you have 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.
- But when God, who had set me apart even from my mother's womb and called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood.
- So there's the first part of that, right? I was a terrible person, tried to kill the church. I was growing in Judaism, not Christianity. And when God saved me, I didn't consult any person about what all this meant and what all this was about.
- Verse 17, 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.
- [4 : 31] So there's that section, right? And if you were to outline this, this is very simply just the divine origin of the gospel stated. He's just saying, I got the gospel from God.
- Right? Pretty simple. Now, let's take a look at this second section. And this starts in verse 18, goes through verse 24. And if I were to title this section, I would call it the divine origin of the gospel unchallenged.
- Unchallenged. Okay? Look at verse 18. He says, Then three years later, I went up to Jerusalem to become acquainted with Cephas. Now, let me pause there.
- First of all, he's waited three years to do this. So he's already been doing a little bit of ministry, a little bit of studying on his own. But he goes to see Cephas.
- Cephas is another name for Peter. So if you know the apostles, you know the disciples of Jesus, Peter and Cephas, that's the same person. So he's going to go stay with him for 15 days.
- [5 : 34] Now, verse 19. But I did not see any of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother. And just to let you know, Jesus had half brothers and sisters. Right?
- He had half brothers. They all shared the same mother, but they had different fathers. Just so you know who we're talking about here. Verse 20. Now, in what I'm writing to you, I assure you before God, I am not lying.
- Verse 21. Then I went to the regions of Syria and Sicily, and I was still 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 verse 24. And they were glorifying God because of me. What he's stating here is that he goes to see Cephas. He goes to these other places that know the gospel.
- And as he goes there, nobody challenges him and tells him, hey, you got this wrong, Paul. As a matter of fact, they glorify God because of him.
- [6 : 39] So not only did he get the gospel from God himself, but he's got the gospel right because nobody's challenging him and saying, listen, you've got the gospel wrong.
- All right. This leads us to our last section. This is a little bit longer. We're going to get to why we're reading all this in just a second. This last section starts chapter 2, begins in verse 1.
- If I were to title this section, it would be the divine origin of the gospel confirmed, confirmed. And here we go with verse 1. Then after an interval of 14 years, I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along also.
- Now, let me pause and just say, this is not necessarily important for our discussion, but the first section or the second section says, after three years and then after 14 years, don't think to yourself what that means is 17 years.

These are actually parallel tracks. The grammar tells you all this, but also many commentaries will tell you this. If you put 17 years, it messes up some of the chronology of the Bible of Paul's life.

[7 : 47] So that's the way that that would look. So he's got Barnabas, who's a Jew. He's got Titus, who's a Greek. And they've gone to Jerusalem. Verse 2. It was because of a revelation that I went up and I submitted to them the gospel, which I preach among the Gentiles.

But I did so in private to those who were of reputation for fear that I might be running or had run in vain. Now, here's what he's doing.

He's been preaching the gospel for 14 years. He received this gospel from a revelation from Jesus Christ. And now, after 14 years, he goes to these apostles in private and says, hey guys, listen, this is what I've been preaching.

Is this what you're preaching to? He goes to see and make sure that we're all on the same page. Verse 3.

But even Titus, who was with me, though he was a Greek, he was not compelled to be circumcised. Okay, I read that very badly, but you get the idea, right?

[8 : 51] But not even Titus was compelled to be circumcised. That's the point, okay? Sorry about that. So here's why he's telling us this. That sounds like a strange little detail to put in there.

But the Galatian churches, the problem is that someone's telling them, okay, yes, you want to be a Christian, you Gentiles? That's fine. You can believe Jesus. That's great.

You just need to do one more thing. Be circumcised. So Paul is saying, listen, I had a Greek with me. This Greek went into the private chambers of the apostles, the people who walked with Jesus.

And I said, listen, this is the gospel I'm preaching. Is it okay? And they gave me the thumbs up, and they didn't even look at Titus and say, but he's got to be circumcised. So in other words, this gospel he's been preaching has been confirmed.

Verse 4, But it was because of the false brethren secretly brought in who had sneaked in to spy out our liberty we have in Christ Jesus in order to bring us into bondage.

[9 : 53] But we did not yield in subjection to them for even an hour so that the truth of the gospel would remain with you. But from those who were of high reputation, and what they were makes no difference to me because God shows no partiality, those who were of reputation contributed nothing to me.

There is the big key right there, right? Contributed nothing to me. On the contrary, seeing that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised just as Peter had been to the circumcised, then they have a parentheses, for he who effectually worked for Peter for his apostleship to the circumcised effectually worked for me also to the Gentiles, and recognizing the grace that had been given to me.

So here's what happened. He goes into this private meeting. He says, Guys, here's my gospel I'm preaching. I got it as a revelation. Is this the right gospel?

And they said, Thumbs up. You got it. They added nothing to him. They changed nothing of what he was saying. And they gave him their approval even. God has given you the gospel for the uncircumcised.

God has given you this gospel. And so James, Cephas, and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship so that we might go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised.

[11 : 23] So, in other words, the gospel he received was from God. Now, this is my point this morning. This is the only point that I really have, even though we're going to look at a couple of lessons.

The point is this. The gospel is from God. And that's a very simple thing to say, but it is such a monumental truth in our world today.

And I want to give you what I think would be two lessons or two implications or two things that we really need to think about if this is true. The first is this.

The gospel is the only divine message from the only God in existence. Let me say that again.

The gospel is the only divine message from the only God in existence. First of all, we need to understand there is no other God but the triune God of the Old and New Testament.

[12 : 38] There is not another deity. There is not another sub-deity. There is not another spirit plane in which there happens to be some other divine person. There is one God and one God only, and that God is the God of the Old and New Testament.

The second thing that we need to grasp from that is that there is no other message, there is no other story, there is no other news, there is no other revelation that we have other than what has been given to us in the Old and New Testament, the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is his story of who he is resting upon all 66 books of the Old and New Testament. Paul is saying that the gospel that he preached comes from God.

There is nothing like it in the world. Now, right there, when I say that, there are some who raise an objection. And some of you may have heard this objection.

Some of you may have even made this objection yourself. If you haven't heard it yet, you will. Because when we say it's the only divine message from the only God that there is, it is unique and special, the world around us begins to say, no, no, no, no, no.

[13 : 56] Christianity has borrowed from all kinds of religions. The fact of the matter is, is that's just not true. One of the most popular ways that people put forward that is that they put the idea out there that really Christianity borrowed from the Roman soldier cult called Mithras.

They worshipped Mithras. There's only one problem. Well, there's a lot of problems, but I'll just give you one. In 100 A.D. or in the first century A.D., the Mithras cult was underground and nobody really knew about it.

It has no writings. It only has paintings and carvings on walls of temples that they found. It didn't become public and mainstream until the second century A.D.

That's 150 years after Jesus. There is no way. There is no way that Jesus borrowed from Mithras.

And we could go on and on. We could look at all the mythological stories and all the things that are in all the cultures of all time, even going all the way back. There is nothing and there is no God like our God.

[15 : 16] He is the only God there is and this is the only message that there is. And so here's the thing. If this is true, if it is true that this is the only divine message from the only God that there is, then here's what you need to do.

You must. It's a must. It's a must. You must believe the gospel.

There is no two ways about it. You must. It's the only divine message from the only God that's in existence. You know, if I were to make a claim like that, let's just say that I said to you, you must eat eggs.

Well, besides trying to find them, that's a claim that you could come back to me and say, well, no. No, no, no, no, no, no.

You must eat eggs. Eggs, they're good for everyone. You must eat eggs. But you could make a claim and say, well, I'm allergic to eggs. Eggs. Or you could say, well, but you know what?

[16 : 28] I don't like the taste of eggs. Or you could say, well, you know what? Eggs really just, they don't do it for me. And you know what? You would be right. The problem is, is that so many people want to put the gospel as something like eggs.

That it's something that might work for you, but it doesn't work for me. But if this is the only divine message from the only God there is, then the gospel is not like eggs. The gospel is like oxygen.

You must have oxygen to live. And I don't care if you breathe it through your own lungs, you've got scuba gear, or you're on a ventilator, you must have oxygen. Without oxygen, you die.

The gospel is like that. If you do not have the gospel, you have nothing. You must believe the gospel.

And it doesn't matter. It doesn't matter if you were born a U.S. citizen. It doesn't matter if you were born in a foreign country. It doesn't matter if you were born in some bush area that's never seen the light of day.

[17 : 31] It doesn't matter who you are. Every single person on this planet has a duty to believe the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Because there is no other God and there's no other message to believe. You must believe it.

The second lesson that we learn from this, if this is the only gospel from the only God that is in existence, then this means that this gospel is the only hope there is.

This gospel is the only hope that there is. Now, what do I mean by hope? How am I using this word?

Well, let me tell you a little story. I'm pretty sure that this story actually comes from one of my friends who's a missionary. And I'm pretty sure that I know who, but I'm not gonna say just in case I get some of this a little off.

[18 : 42] But the gist of the story is this, that as he was overseas and he was in another country, he happened to see this family across the street from him. They lived across the street and they were of a different religion.

And their little girl had gotten sick. I don't know exactly what she was sick with, but every day before the sun came up, the family would go into the kitchen and they would create the most splendid meal that they could possibly fix.

They would go out to the front of their house and they had set up a table. It had their nicest china. I'm sure it wasn't china, but they had their nicest of everything that they could afford.

And they laid out all of this food. And the hope was that whatever God was out there, whatever spirit might be passing by, whatever ancestor might be there close to them, they would get down and they would pray and they would be like, someone please heal our daughter.

Someone please, please listen. Look at the offering that we have for you. Please be pleased with this offering. Please heal our daughter. They get up.

[20 : 07] They get dressed for work. They go to work. They leave their offering out all day long. They come home. Fold up.

They throw everything away. They get up the next morning and they do it again. Pleading. Pleading.

Hoping. That's not hope. That's actually hopeless. You see, the thing about hope is that hope is about a certainty.

Hope is not a wish, but hope is an absolute assurance. Hope is that I know this is true. Hope is a certainty.

And I just want you to imagine for a second that in order to be with God forever, you had to do something like that family. That you had to lay out some sort of offering to whatever God might be there to hopefully please them in some way so that they might eventually do something blessing your life in some way either here and now or there and then.

[21 : 22] And that every day you had to beg and plead and plead and beg in order to have something for you. What if that's how you had to come to God?

That's hopeless. And the truth of the matter is that every single religion in the world, every, and there's some people, there's some people, but they don't follow any religion.

They make up their own religion. They put together and cobble together some Frankenstein religion of their own making brought from ancestors, brought from what they hear, brought from what they observe in life, and they cobble together.

But every single religion on the face of the planet cannot answer three questions with any certainty. And that's this. They have no idea where they're going. They have no idea how to get there.

And they have no idea if they're going to be good enough to get there. But with the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, we know where we're going. We know how to get there.

[22 : 28] And we can know today with certainty that we're going. The gospel is the assurance that God has promised to save and nothing gets in his way.

Here's what the gospel tells us. The gospel tells us that we're wicked sinners that deserve death and hell and eternal punishment from the hand of the Lord Almighty. The gospel tells us that in love, this same God sent his son to take our punishment on the cross for us.

In a moment, the infinitely worthy son paid the infinite punishment that our sins deserved. And if we will trust in this son, if we will trust his death and his resurrection that it was for us, then God promises to count the death, the resurrection, and the righteousness of Jesus to us.

That what he has done will stand for us. Hope is this, that God is the God who counts the death and the resurrection and the righteous life of Jesus to the account of wicked sinners like us.

That's the hope of the gospel. And it is hope. And it is a hope that cannot be undone. Listen, God does not promise to bring physical healing in this life.

[24 : 28] God does not promise to take away suffering in this life. God does not promise to make you successful in this life. God does not promise that your children, your grandchildren, your great-grandchildren are all gonna turn out Christ-loving, God-following children.

But God promises you this one thing that he will save you and he will keep you saved to the uttermost. The hope is that God promises that if you will turn from your sin and trust in Christ, he will save you and that salvation is for here and now and there and then.

So Christians, I wanna challenge you with two things. As we come down here to the end, I wanna challenge you with two things. Christians, number one, rest in the hope of the gospel.

Christians, rest in the hope of the gospel. Here's what I mean for Christians. What I mean is this, your failures and your success in marriage, that is not what God looks at to say that you're his child.

your success, your failures as a parent is not the acceptance that God gives to you.

[26 : 15] Your success and failures in your finances, in your job, with your friends is not what God looks at to give you the acceptance that we need in salvation.

So, you don't have to sit there and look at your failures and go, he's just never gonna accept me. No, no. What you do is you say, I trust Christ and when you stand before God and he says to you, Christian, why should I let you into my heaven?

Your answer is this, because I am covered by the righteousness of Christ. I am under the blood. He's not gonna look at you and say to you, no, no, no, no, no, I'm sorry, the blood wasn't enough.

You actually yelled at your son a lot when you were a father. No, no, no, no, I'm sorry, no, the blood is not enough because you really weren't the kind of husband that you ought to have been.

He's not going to look at that, but instead, it is the righteousness of Christ. that's the hope that you as a believer need to rest in.

[27 : 32] And yes, it should challenge you to live a certain way. Yes, it empowers you to live a certain way, but your hope is not that you keep it together, but that you're covered by Christ.

But the second thing that I wanna challenge you to do, if this gospel is of divine origin, it is the only divine message from the only God that exists, and it's the only hope of the world, then don't stop telling the gospel to the world.

So I wanna give you five things. Ready? Here we go. Number one, I want you to think of somebody right now that you know or that you don't know if they're a Christian or not. That's okay, I'll wait.

You think of them. I want you to get that name in your head. I want you to commit to praying at least one year for them.

Pray. And pray, and don't be, don't be, don't be scared to pray, right? Prayer, we're asking God things. Don't be saying things like, well, God, I just hope that they're, that they'll get saved.

[28 : 46] Don't say, God, I hope they'll get saved. That just sounds like I wish they would. No, you're coming to ask God for something. So go to him and say, God, save them.

Please, save them. Open their eyes. Give them faith. Convict them. Save them. Bring them. No matter what it takes. Save them. That's the first thing.

Number two, tell them your story of how you got saved. Go back to Acts chapter nine. Look at Paul the apostle, the story of his conversion, the story of how he went from being a church persecutor to a church planter.

The story involves right there in the middle of how Christ changed him and called him. What's your story? Do you know your story? Have you written your story out? Tell this person your story.

Number three, invite them to hear the gospel. That means invite them to come here to hear the gospel. If you don't want them to hear me preach because I'm not doing a good job, then call me and I'll find you some preachers that you can give them audio to.

[29 : 55] I'll give you money so you can go take them to another church so they can hear the gospel clearly if I'm not preaching it clearly because I don't care if they hear me. That is not the point. The point is that the gospel needs to be preached.

So you need to take them and let them hear the gospel. Let them be convicted by the Holy Spirit so that they might call out to Christ. Fourth, ask them to read the gospel of John with you.

Read it section by section, chapter by chapter. Just read it. Just read it. I don't know everything. That's okay. You don't have to know everything. Listen, you don't have to have a seminary degree.

You don't have to know Greek and Hebrew to open up the Bible and read it and kind of figure out what it says. It's right there. It's in plain English. Can you read the newspaper? Well, you can read this and you can understand it.

Read the gospel of John with them and if some of you, you have trouble with reading, make them listen to it. Make them listen to it. The fifth thing, get a gospel tract and give it to them.

[31 : 03] I'm giving you extremely practical steps to take. These are easy. They're baby steps. The reason I call them baby steps is not because it's for those who are immature but because sometimes we're so afraid and it feels like such a big deal and it feels like we're going to fail but we're not going to fail.

You can't fail following after the Lord. Their salvation isn't built on you. Their salvation is not built on how much knowledge you know.

Their salvation is not hinged upon how smooth you are with answering questions. Their salvation is hinged upon God and God alone. He's the one that convicts hearts.

So if this truly is the only hope of the world then don't stop telling people about the gospel. And here's my final statement on that and then I'm going to move to my last point.

if you're still breathing it doesn't matter how old you are you need to share the gospel.

[32 : 19] It's why you're still here. Share the gospel. And if you're not a Christian then we just end today by inviting you to come.

We end today by saying that if this gospel message is true you need to believe it you must believe it and we want you to believe it. I beg you to believe it. I want you to come to Christ but I want you to understand something about this gospel message.

It cuts across everything that you might hold up to be something that says well but I have this thing in my life. And I'm just telling you it doesn't matter if you've experienced trauma or abuse.

It doesn't matter if you've experienced massive amounts of death in your life. It doesn't matter if you come from a different culture if you speak a different language if you have a different skin color if you have a different political ideology it doesn't matter if you've had COVID or not had COVID it doesn't matter if you're rich or poor it doesn't matter anything this is for you and the reason it's for you is because you're human and you've sinned and Christ saves sinners.

So would you come today? Would you come and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ today?

[33 : 50] Every head bowed and every eye closed let's pray together. Let's pray together.