

A GOSPEL OR THE GOSPEL?

GALATIANS 1:8-9 • TV-049A

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By

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Galatians 1:8-9

“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.”

Our message today will be taken from the book of **Galatians, chapter one**. I’m going to read two verses.

Now I’m speaking to you on the subject: **“A GOSPEL OR THE GOSPEL.”**

Now this is an important message and I hope you’ll sit down and listen to the entire message and follow in the Scripture if you will. I’m reading from **Galatians 1:8-9**. Now listen to Paul writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit:

“Though we or an angel from heaven preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached; let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other Gospel unto you than that you have received, let him be accursed.”

Now these are strong words. They couldn’t be any plainer. And I’ll be honest with you; if these words were not inspired, if they were not in the Word of God, if they were not God-breathed; they wouldn’t disturb me.

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But since they are God-breathed, since I read them in the infallible, inerrant, verbally inspired Word of God; they trouble me, they concern me greatly. You listen to it: *“If any man preach any other Gospel than that which we have preached, let him be accursed.”*

Now Paul speaks that way in **1 Corinthians 9:16**; he says: *“Woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel,”* not a Gospel, the Gospel. He said in **Romans 1:16**: *“I am not ashamed of the Gospel.”*

Now my friend; it’s my business and it’s your business to find out what the Gospel is, what’s the Gospel. This Gospel Paul is talking about here in **Galatians 1:8-9**; this Gospel which he preached, this Gospel about which he said: *“Woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel,”* and it’s my business and it’s your business to find out what the Gospel is.

Now in **1 John 4:1** John says this; *“Beloved; believe not every spirit.”* There’s a lot of religion, there’s a lot of preaching, but he says; *“Believe not every spirit but try the spirits whether they are of God because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”*

And Paul in **2 Corinthians 11:4** says this; *“They will come preaching another Jesus. They will come preaching another spirit and another Gospel.”* So it’s your business and my business to find out what is the Gospel.

I don’t want to preach “a Gospel.” I don’t want to trust in “a Gospel.” I don’t want to rest in “a Gospel;” I want to know “the Gospel.” I want to believe “the Gospel.” I want to preach “the Gospel.”

Now here’s a problem too; having heard the Gospel, if you hear the Gospel, if you read the Gospel, if you discover the Gospel, will you believe it? The question comes, Will I receive it? Will I be saved by it? Do I have the courage to preach the Gospel? Do I have the courage to receive and to stand by the Gospel?

Now listen to Paul in **1 Corinthians 15**; *“Brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel, (not a Gospel, the Gospel) which I preached to you (the Gospel is good news), which you received, and wherein you stand and by which you’re saved.”*

I like the words of the great preacher Martin Luther who stood before all of his persecutors and all of those who hated him and despised him and threatened him. And they told him not to preach what he was preaching.

And he once again stated what he believed, the Gospel of the Son of God. And he said; “Men; here I stand, I can do no other.”

But our Lord tells us; He tells us to, *“Count the cost.”* Now I want to find out what the Gospel is and I want to preach it. And if you’re a wise person you’ll want to find out the Gospel and you will want to believe it and you’ll want to receive it.

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But our Lord warned us; He said, *“You count the cost.”* If you receive the Gospel, if you believe the Gospel, if you’re saved by the Gospel, if you have the courage to preach the Gospel, and if you have the courage to stand by the Gospel, it’ll cost you.

Now you’ll face and you can expect some great opposition and it’ll come from some unusual directions. Our Lord said you’ll get opposition from those of your own household.

Now listen to the Scripture in **Matthew 10:34**: *“Think not that I am come to send peace on earth. I came not to send peace, but a sword. I am come to set a man at variance against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law and a man’s enemies shall be those of his own household. But he that loveth father and mother, brother or sister, husband or wife, yea, his own life more than me, is not worthy of me.”*

So, if I receive the Gospel and dare to preach it, dare to believe it, and dare to have the courage as Paul said in **1 Corinthians 15**, to stand right there, unwilling to be moved, but to stand for the Gospel, I can expect great opposition.

Our Lord said: *“Marvel not my brethren if the world hate you; it hated me before it hated you.”* It hated Him without a cause, but it hated Him.

And then He said in **John 16:1-2**; now listen to this; He said, *“These things I’ve spoken unto you that you should not be offended. They’ll put you out of the synagogue (for believing the Gospel).”*

They’ll put you out of the church, out of the chapels, out of the tabernacles, out of organized religion, and try to put you out of the ministry. If they could they would. *“They’ll put you out of the synagogue and the time will come that whosoever killeth you will think that he does God a service.”*

Now that’s hatred. Christ said, *“In this world, you shall have tribulation. (In this world you shall suffer persecution). But be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”*

But I’ll tell you this, if I find the Gospel, if God is pleased to reveal to me the Gospel, or if I read or some preacher preaches it and I deny it; to deny His Gospel is to deny Him. It’s to deny Him just as much as Peter denied Him when he sat by that fire and said, *“I don’t know Him.”*

And to sell out to the enemies of the Gospel is just as wicked as to betray Him as Judas did for \$18.00. Now people sell Him out for a lot more than that today but that’s what Judas sold Him for, 30 pieces of silver (or \$18.00). He sold his Lord and he sold his soul.

And I say this, to deny the Gospel is to deny Christ and to sell out to the enemies of the Gospel is to sell Christ and to sell your soul.

Now this is a serious inquiry, this is a serious question; what will it be a Gospel or the Gospel? Well preacher; what is the Gospel? Will you listen?

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First of all: The Gospel is the Gospel of God. Turn in your Bible to **Romans chapter 1 verse 1**, now turn over there and listen to this; *“Paul a bond-servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the Gospel of God.”* That’s the Gospel I preach, it’s the Gospel of God; the Gospel which we preach, and which you received and wherein you stand and by which you are saved; the Gospel is the Gospel of God.

It’s the Gospel of God because it came from God, it originated with God. God almighty planned it. Paul said after he was converted; *“I didn’t receive this Gospel from man. I wasn’t taught it by man but I received it from the Lord.”*

This Gospel came from God. *“For God so loved the world He gave His only begotten Son.”* He’s the one that gave Christ. He is the one that sent Christ. *“Christ is the lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”*

“Whom He foreknew He predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son. And whom He predestinated He called. Whom He called He justified. Whom He justified He glorified.” It’s all of God from Alpha to Omega, from beginning to end.

The Gospel is the Gospel of God because He planned it. *“Christ is the lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”* Paul said in **2 Thessalonians 2:13**, *God hath from the beginning, chosen you unto salvation, (in the beginning).”*

It’s the Gospel of God because He planned it. And I’ll tell you this, it’s the Gospel of God because He executed it. Now I know wicked men sent Christ to the cross and wicked soldiers nailed Him there and wicked men mocked and laughed while He died, but if you’ll turn to **Isaiah 53:10** you’ll read these words *“But it pleased the Lord to bruise Him.”*

His death on Calvary’s cross was planned from the foundation of this world. It was in the plan of the Father, it was in the purpose of the Father, it was in the providence of the Father, and it was in the good pleasure of the Father.

Peter said at Pentecost, *“You crucified Christ, but God almighty determined for it to be done.”* And you carried out His sovereign will. Yes sir, God almighty executed that sacrifice on Calvary’s cross.

“When the fullness of time was come God sent His Son into the world.” It’s the Gospel of God not only because He planned it and not only because He executed it but He applies it. *“Salvation is of the Lord.”*

You are the called of Christ Jesus. Our Lord said; *“Whom do you say that I am?”* Peter said, *“Thou art the Christ.”* Well He said, *“Flesh and blood didn’t reveal that to you but my Father which is in heaven.”*

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God is the one who revealed Christ to you. Paul giving his testimony in **Galatians 1:15** said; *“God separated me from my mother’s womb and called me by His grace and He was pleased to reveal His Son in me.”*

“Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered the heart of man the things God has prepared for them that love Him. But He hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit.” If you know the Gospel God revealed it to you. If you know Christ God revealed Him to you.

He said to the disciples, *“Blessed are your eyes, they see and blessed are your ears, they hear. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.”* What is the Gospel? The Gospel is the Gospel of God. Read **Romans 1:1**; *“Paul, a servant (bond-servant) of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the Gospel of God.”*

Second: And I’ll tell you another mark of this (the Gospel), and that is the Gospel is not only the Gospel of God but it’s the Gospel of God’s glory.

Now if you will look at **1 Timothy 1:11**; I learned this many years ago; this was revealed to me many years ago, 25 or 30 years ago; **1 Timothy 1:11**; this is the correct translation of that verse. Paul’s talking about the Gospel he preached.

He said, *“It’s the Gospel of the glory of God.”* It’s the Gospel of the glory of God. The true Gospel will never glorify man. The true Gospel will always glorify God. The true Gospel will not glorify a preacher, a messenger, a church, a denomination, or anyone; it’ll glorify God.

Listen to **1 Corinthians 1:30**; *“But of Him are you in Christ Jesus.”* It’s God’s will that put you in Christ. It’s God’s work that put you in Christ. *“Of Him are you in Christ Jesus who is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, that as it is written, he that glorieth let him glory in the Lord.”*

Moses one day said; *“Lord, show me your glory.”* And God said; *“I’ll cause all my goodness to pass before you. I will be merciful to whom I will be merciful. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious. (Moses; this is my glory.)”*

So, this Gospel first of all is the Gospel of God. It’s the Gospel of His glory!

Now stay with me, the Gospel:

Thirdly: It’s the Gospel concerning His Son!

Now here’s where most people miss the Gospel. I want you to listen. Will you listen carefully? *“It’s the Gospel concerning His Son.”* Look at **Romans 1** again, **verses 1-3**: *“Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the Gospel of God, which He promised afore, by his prophets in the Holy Scripture, concerning His Son.”*

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Now I wouldn't offend you for the world, but now you listen to me; the Gospel of God, the Gospel of God's glory, the good news of redemption, the glad tidings of eternal life, is not a plan; it's a person. It's concerning, not a plan, but a person.

It's not a proposition; it's a person. It's Jesus Christ. The Gospel is Jesus Christ, His person, His offices, and His work. The Gospel tells us who He is. "He is very God of very God."

The Gospel tells us who He is. Thou art the Christ, thou art the Messiah, thou art the Redeemer, thou art that Prophet of whom Moses wrote; *"God will raise up from among the brethren a prophet, Him you shall hear."*

The Gospel is that Gospel of a person to whom Abraham looked and for Abraham looked, and whose day Abraham saw and rejoiced and was glad. The Gospel is a person, *"This is my beloved Son, you listen to Him,"* the Father said. *"I and my Father are one,"* Christ said. *"God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself."*

Baptism is not part of the Gospel. It's a response to the Gospel. It's a confession of the Gospel. It is an obedience to the Gospel, but it's not the Gospel. Christ is the Gospel. The Gospel has nothing to do with you or with me or with anybody on this earth. The Gospel is concerning Jesus Christ. Do you see what I'm saying?

The Gospel was here before you were ever here. The Gospel was designed. The Gospel was planned. The Gospel was purposed before God ever made the world. The everlasting covenant of grace was conceived in Christ and was made with Christ.

Now watch this:

Fourth: The Gospel tells us not only who He is; the Gospel tells us what He did.

He was made of a woman as our representative. He was made under the law as our substitute, as our surety. He bore our sins in His body on the tree. *"He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him."*

The Gospel tells us not only who He is, "very God of very God," God in the flesh, but the Gospel tells us what He did. He came down here to the earth in human flesh. God robed himself in human flesh. He was made in the likeness of sinful flesh. *"He who knew no sin was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."*

We don't contribute anything to that. No one else does; Christ did it all:

**"He paid it all
All the debt I owe
Sin left a crimson stain
He washed it white as snow."**

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Now, the Gospel tells us not only who He is and what He did but it tells us why He did it. In **Romans chapter 3** it tells us that *“Christ died that God might be just and justify the ungodly.”* That God might be righteous and merciful, and that He might be truth and that He might be love. And the Gospel tells us where He is now.

Now my friend; I heard a story one time about a wagon train that was moving West back many, many years ago. And as this wagon train was moving west the wagon master saw smoke bellowing to the sky.

They were right out on a prairie and it was covered with this grass about waist high or shoulder high. This prairie grass was everywhere, dry and brittle and sun scorched, and so easy to burn. He saw the smoke just bellowing towards the sky.

And he told the people; “Now there’s a prairie fire and the wind’s blowing our way.” So they went behind them and they set the grass on fire behind him and burned out a huge place, just a great big place, a place big enough to hold all the wagons and all the people.

And then when they had burned this place completely out and the ground was black with the ashes they put all of the wagons right in this circle, right on this burnt ground. And all the people got in the middle of the wagons and here the fire swept down upon them.

And as the fire swept around them one little boy was sitting in his father’s lap and he was just trembling. And his daddy said, “Son, why are you, why are you trembling?” He said, “I’m afraid, I’m afraid.”

His daddy said, “Son; you don’t have anything to fear. You are standing on burnt ground. And where the fire has burnt once it cannot burn again.” And that’s what Christ did. That’s the Gospel.

We who trust Him and believe Him and receive Him are standing on burnt ground. The wrath of God has fallen upon Christ. And if I’m in Him it can’t hit again. The judgment of God has descended upon Christ. If I’m in Him it can’t descend on me.

Christ bore my sin and paid my debt and died my death and bore my hell and satisfied God’s justice and God’s justice can demand nothing of those who are in Christ. That’s the Gospel and that’s the reason I say it hadn’t got anything to do with what you do or what you say or what you accomplished; it’s what He did. That’s right! It’s the Gospel concerning His Son.

What is the Gospel? It’s the Gospel of God; it’s the Gospel of God’s glory. It’s the Gospel concerning God’s Son.

Fifth: It’s the Gospel of God’s power. *“I am not ashamed of the Gospel; it’s the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”*

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What am I saying? I am saying this, salvation which comes as result of believing the Gospel is more than a decision; it's more than the adopting of a doctrine. It's more than uniting with a church.

Salvation that comes from receiving and believing the Gospel is a new creation. It is regeneration. It is a resurrection from the dead. It is a new life. *"If any man be in Christ he is a new creature."* Christ wore my crown of thorns that I might wear His crown of glory.

Christ took my nakedness that I might wear His robe of righteousness. Christ bore my shame that I might bear his glory. Christ took my weakness and gave me strength. He was numbered with the transgressors that I might be numbered with the redeemed.

God almighty gave me a new heart when he saved my soul, a new nature and a new family. That's the Gospel.

You say, "Well why is that so offensive Brother Mahan? Why is it offensive to the natural man? It is offensive. Christ said, *"They hate it."* It's called *"the offense of the cross."* Paul said, *"The preaching of the cross is foolishness, (sheer nonsense) to them who are perishing."*

Why is this Gospel so offensive, this Gospel of God, this Gospel of His glory, this Gospel of His Son's substitutionary work, this Gospel of His power; why is it offensive? I'll give you four reasons. Now write these down and look at them later.

First of all: The Gospel of Jesus Christ addresses all men as sinners. It comes to us not as good people. It comes to us as bad people. It comes to us as lost people. That's right! In **Romans 3:19** it says: *"What the law saith; it saith to them that are under the law that every mouth may be stopped and all the world become guilty, guilty."*

Romans chapter 3:10 says; *"There's none good, there's none righteous, there's none that understandeth, and there's none that seeketh after God."* And if you come to God you'll come as a sinner or you won't come at all.

If you come to Christ, you'll come empty handed or you won't come at all. No one's too bad to come. A lot of people are too good to come, and this offends man's dignity.

He doesn't like to be addressed as a beggar. He doesn't like to be addressed as a criminal. He doesn't like to be addressed as a traitor. He doesn't like to be called a rebel. He doesn't like to be referred to as ungodly.

But let me tell you something; *"Christ died for the ungodly. Christ died for sinners. Thou shalt call His name Jesus; He shall save His people from their sins."*

Secondly: I'll tell you why it offends people; it offends them because it addresses all men as sinners. I'm talking about all preachers, and all people in the pew. I'm talking about people in the prison and people in the White House. I'm talking about people in the mansions and people

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in the ghettos. I'm talking about all people. *"There is none that doeth good, no not one. All we like sheep have gone astray. We've turned everyone to his own way."*

Thirdly: It presents a doctrine of atonement, an effectual atonement, a sufficient atonement by Christ alone without any works or any cooperation from man. *"For by grace are you saved through faith and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God."* And that offends man's pride. He wants to contribute something to the redemption of his soul, even if it be just a jot or a tittle but let him have a little part.

Now tell him that Christ did all that He can do and now it's up to him. Tell him that Christ has done all He can do; now he must take the first step. Just give that man something to do to appease a holy God or make himself acceptable to God and he'll take that road rather than the way of grace because the way of grace and the way of atonement and the way of substitution is offensive to his pride.

Fourthly: It presents salvation as a gift. *"The wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life."* And that offends man's fancied idea of saving himself, salvation is a gift. "Let me serve God and let God pay me in return. Let me do my best for Jesus and let Jesus reward me in the sweet by and by but let me have some part in it."

Fifthly: Coming as a revelation from God offends man's wisdom. Coming as a revelation of God, not the results of human wisdom, not the results of human reason, not the results of human logic, but coming to us as a revelation; God reveals Himself in Christ to the heart; that offends man's wisdom.

All right my friend; there's the Gospel. There's the Gospel of God's glory. There's the Gospel of God's grace. There's the Gospel of God's Son. There's the Gospel of God's power. What will it be, what will it be?

Will we stand with those who believe the Word, who preach the Word, or will we stand with those who deny the Word? Will we stand with those who preach salvation by grace alone plus nothing, minus nothing, through Christ or will we stand with those who preach works?

I think I can say with Joshua of old, *"But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."*

As for me and my house we'll preach the Gospel, the saving Gospel of God.