DON’T TURN BACK

**DATE: 6/3/2015 Wed.**

**TEXT: Galatians 1:1-5**

**INTRODUCTION**

**The Time and Place of the Writing**

The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Galatians is thought by some to have been written during his last visit to Corinth in about 60 A.D.

Galatia was a region in what today is call Asia Minor or the country of Turkey

It included the cities of Iconium, Derbe, Lystra, and other places Paul had visited on his first and second missionary journeys

It was called Galatia because the stock of people there were Gauls (not Greeks) which had migrated there in the third century before Christ

**To Whom it was Written**

The Book of Galatians is the first of 12 epistles Paul wrote

As **v.2** tells us, Galatians was written to a group of Local Churches in this Roman province

***“And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia:”***

This is the only epistle where Paul writes to a group of Churches

The rest of Paul’s epistles were written either to individuals or to a single local church

**Purpose**

Paul writes this epistle with the deep concern for the Galatian believers who were being confused by false teachers and being drawn away from the Gospel of Grace

**Theme**

The Theme of the epistle is *“No Turning Back!”*

When Satan is unsuccessful in stopping an individual from trusting Christ …

He still does all he can to cause them to Turn Back

One of his primary methods to fight the message of God is to deny the authority of the one who gives the message

In the case of the Churches of Galatia, that meant Satan would undermine the validity of the Apostle Paul and his message

This was taking place through false teachers who were Jews teaching the churches in this area that they had to keep the Law to keep their Salvation

**The Message**

Throughout the Book of Galatians,

Paul emphasizes the Pure Message of the Gospel

That it is by Grace through Faith and not works

**Ephesians 2:8, 9 – *“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:” “Not of works, lest any man should boast”***

He exhorts the Galatian believers to hold to the Truth and rejoice in the Grace of God

We begin our study of this epistle with Paul’s opening words to these churches

And the exhortation – ***“Don’t Turn Back”***

**~~~Prayer~~~**

**I. THE “MAN GOD CALLED” – v. 1**

This is Paul’s Salutation (greeting) to the believer’s in Galatia

***“Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead;)”***

As Paul identifies himself as the writer of this epistle,

He notes 2 facets of his relationship to these churches -

**A. Paul the ‘Apostle’**

***“an apostle,”***

An apostle is someone who is sent with a commission...

…and a witness of the Resurrected Christ

The original 12 apostles were called out by Jesus

Paul is considered an apostle because of his calling on the road to Damascus when he saw the Resurrected Christ

**Acts 9:15, 16 – *“But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto Me,* *to bear My Name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:” “For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for My Name's sake”***

There is no biblical precedence for the perpetuity of the office of apostle (that is its continuance)

**Revelation 2:2 – *“I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:”***

Paul saw himself as the lest of the Apostles

**I Corinthians 15:9 *– “For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God”***

**I Corinthians 15:8 – *“And last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time”***

Paul was truly the 12th apostle

**Paul the ‘Apostle’**

**B. Paul the ‘Called’**

**1.** Not of / by Men

***“not of men, neither by man”***

Paul was not self-appointed

He was not man -appointed

But rather he was appointed by God Himself

**II Timothy 1:1 – *“Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus,”***

**Example:** Churches often ordain young men entering the ministry

This ordination is not *“the church”* calling a man to the ministry

Rather it is simply recognition of the fact that God has already called him

We will see this in **Acts 13:1, 2** in just a minute

Not of Men, but …

**2.** By Jesus Christ

***“but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father”***

Jesus called Paul on the road to Damascus

The church at Antioch confirmed Paul’s calling

How? Let’s look at **Acts 13:1, 2** and see …

The God who appointed Paul is the same God who resurrected Christ on the 3rd day!

**THE “MAN GOD CALLED”**

**II. THE “METHOD GOD USED” – v.2**

***“And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia:”***

God has given responsibility for the spread of the Gospel to local churches

This was Paul’s focus in ministry as well

Thus, he addresses this epistle, not directly to the *Christians* of Galatia

But to the *Churches* of Galatia

**A. ‘Planting’ Local Churches**

Besides being an Apostle …

Paul was a Church planter / evangelist / missionary

Starting new churches is the work of missions

He labored throughout this region starting new works

The work of a Missionary in starting and then caring for new churches is not easy

Paul experienced many difficulties in his ministry

He listed many of those difficulties in **II Corinthians**

**II Corinthians** is the most biographical of all his epistles

Turn to **II Corinthians 11:23-28 …**

Paul cared for churches all over the region

- Cyprus

- Perga

- Antioch of Pisidia - chief military town

- Iconium - town of pleasure seeking Greeks

- Lystra – superstitious town at first embraced and then stoned the Apostle

- Derbe

**‘Planting’ Local Churches**

**B. ‘Preparing’ Local Churches**

Throughout Paul’s ministry, he was heavily invested in caring for these churches

He visited them, wrote to them, prayed for them and continued to train their Leaders

The purpose of this epistle was to prepare and warn

Paul used God’s Word to Love, Warn & Prepare these Churches

**1.** His Word

**II Timothy 2:2 – *“And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also”***

**2.** His Warning

**Acts 20:29, 30 – *“For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock” “Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them”***

**THE “MAN GOD CALLED”**

**THE “METHOD GOD USED”**

**III. THE “MESSAGE GOD SENT” – vs. 3, 4**

***“Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ,” “Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:”***

What was the message God used Paul to send to the spiritually struggling churches in Galatia?

Was it a Rebuke, a Condemnation?

No, it was a expression of Grace and Peace and an Exhortation to enjoy their freedom in Christ (3 thoughts)

**A. The Message of ‘Grace’ – v. 3**

***“Grace be to you”***

**1.** Our Position in Christ

**Ephesians 1:6, 7 – *“To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved” “In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace;”***

God’s Grace extends to all People

- Rich or Poor

- Child or Adult

- Red, Yellow, Black or White

It doesn’t matter your back-ground

At the marriage supper of the Lamb, people of every race, age, and social status will sit down together because of the unprejudiced Grace of God!

**Revelation 5:9 – *“And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;”***

**2.** Our Disposition toward Believers

Because of our Position in Christ through His Grace

Our Disposition toward others should also be one of Grace

**Ephesians 4:29 – *“Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers”***

**John 1:16 – *“And of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace”***

**The Message of ‘Grace’**

**B. The Message of ‘Peace’ – v.3**

***“and peace”***

The Result of God’s Grace is Peace with God

**Romans 5:1, 2 – *“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:” “By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God”***

**The Message of ‘Grace’**

**The Message of ‘Peace’**

**C. The Message of ‘Deliverance’ – v. 4**

***“Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:”***

The Grace and Peace of God are through Jesus Christ

God provides every man, woman, boy, and girl with deliverance from sin through the sacrifice of Christ

**1.** Jesus *gave* Himself

***“Who gave Himself for our sins”***

Jesus became our sin offering

**Galatians 3:13 – *“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:”***

**2.** Jesus *delivers* those who trust Him

***“that He might deliver us from this present evil world”***

Salvation is Not earned; it is Received!

Christ paid the payment for our sin

The lost person most simply receive His free Gift of Salvation

**I Peter 2:24, 25 – *“Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by Whose stripes ye were healed” “For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls”***

As the Shepherd leaves His fold to rescue a lost sheep

So Jesus came to rescue Sinners

**CONCLUSION – v.5**

***“To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen”***

**v.5** is a Doxology fitting the One who saved us

A similar passage of Praise is found in **I Timothy 1:17** –

***“Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen”***

Notice the word ***“Amen”*** closing out both

This word is a word of Affirmation- *a declaration that something is true*

At the end of this passage, the Apostle Paul reaffirms …

… That what he just said about the Glory due to the One who has Delivered us is Good and True

Let me just reaffirm with Paul this great Truth

Amen and Amen!!

**THE “MAN GOD CALLED”**

**THE “METHOD GOD USED”**

**THE “MESSAGE GOD SENT”**