

Galatians Part 1: Introduction

Note:

In this teaching, the following terms are used: “new creation”, “new man” or “new self”, “Christ in You”, “holy spirit” and “gift of holy spirit”. All these terms refer to that which is received and born in a person when he or she becomes born again.

Turn to Deuteronomy 29

It is beneficial to be reminded of, and remember the purpose of the written word of God. God is the author of His word. He is the first one who wrote His word, which He recorded in the stars and then in tablets of stone. The tablets of stone were given to Moses on mount Sinai.

The original purpose of the old testament – those writings and recorded events which occurred before the day of Pentecost in the 1st century, is given in Deuteronomy.

Deuteronomy 29:29

29 “The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.

This verse of scripture is addressed to the believers who lived before the day of Pentecost in the 1st century. These scriptures existed for the purpose that they “may do (*perform*) ALL the words of this law”.

God organized the children of Israel in 12 tribes, 12 extended family groups. One tribe, the tribe of Levi, was devoted to the work of learning and teaching the law and the written scriptures. In Levi, there was one major extended family out of which came the priests. The spiritual leaders of the children of Israel were to come from the tribe of Levi.

Deuteronomy 31:24

24 When Moses had finished writing the words of this law in a book to the very end,

25 Moses commanded the Levites who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD,

26 “Take this Book of the Law and put it by the side of the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there for a witness against you (*the spiritual leaders*).

27 For I know how rebellious and stubborn you (*the spiritual leaders*) are. Behold, even today while I am yet alive with you, you (*the spiritual leaders*) have been rebellious against the LORD. How much more after my death!

28 Assemble to me all the elders of your tribes and your officers, that I may speak these words in their ears and call heaven and earth to witness against them (*all the leaders and administrators*).

29 For I know that after my death you (*the spiritual leaders*) will surely act corruptly and turn aside from the way that I have commanded you (*the spiritual leaders*). And in the days to come evil will befall you, because you will do what is evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking him to anger through the work of your hands.”

Turn to John 5

The written word of God was to be a witness against the spiritual leadership of the children of Israel. This purpose was in effect from the days of Moses until the day of Pentecost in the 1st century.

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In John 5, Jesus is speaking to the Levitical leadership in his day and time; those who were supposed to be the spiritual leaders of the children of Israel.

John 5:45

45 Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. There is one who accuses you: Moses, on whom you have set your hope.

46 For if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me.

47 But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?"

Moses would accuse them and the written word would be a witness against them.

The words that Jesus spoke and are recorded in John are addressed to the religious leaders of the Hebrews, the children of Israel. These verses are not addressed to anyone living today.

So, while the law of Moses was in effect, the written word of God was provided so that the believers could do all the words of this law. It also existed as a witness against the spiritual leaders of the children of Israel.

Turn to Romans 15

There is a third purpose of these scriptures. This purpose was hidden in God before the beginning of the world, which was not revealed until after the day of Pentecost in the 1st century. So, this purpose was not known until it was revealed to the apostle Paul.

Romans 15:4

4 For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

These writings were written for our instruction! The laws contained in ordinances and everything pertaining to them are not written to us, or written so that we can do the law, but it is written for our instruction!

God is the author of His word. Since He is the author, He could have Moses and the other men of God write for our instruction, without those writers knowing about the ultimate purpose.

Turn to 2 Timothy 3. Here is recorded the purpose of the scriptures which were written after the day of Pentecost in the 1st century.

2 Timothy 3:16

16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,

17 that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

The man of God is God's spokesman, a person speaking for God. The scripture is profitable for teaching doctrine, for reproof, for correction for instruction in righteousness so that the man of God can be completely outfitted with whatever is needed for every good work. This man of God IS NOT referring to clergy or the officers of religious organizations, or those who have gone through specialized religious training.

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Ephesians 1 informs us that each one of us has been called by God before the world began. Each of us, individually have been sealed with the promised gift of holy spirit.

Ephesians 2:10 says that

10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Our new spiritual self is created in fellowship with Christ Jesus for good works which God prepared for us to do. The purpose of the scriptures is so that we are completely outfitted, equipped to perform every good work. Within the new self created in Christ Jesus, we have all the spiritual equipment needed. However, we need to learn about what we have received and how all this equipment works. That is some of the instruction contained in the scriptures. These good works begin to be accomplished as we mature and function within the body of Christ.

This 'equipping for every good work' is not how to perform every good work. Here is an allegory of building a house to explain.

As a carpenter, you may have every tool needed to build a house. You may know how to use every tool in the tool box. Having the tools and knowing how to use them gives the carpenter the ability to build a house. Building a house starts *after* a design is produced by an architect, and a contractor decides how the work is to proceed.

The specific details of how each individual member of the body of Christ is to function and minister is not to be found within the written scriptures.

The written word of God does not exist as commandments contained in ordinances. It is not a law for us to perform. It is not a collection of recipes of how to become righteous before God or how to have a "good" life. It is not a collection of recipes of how to handle the details of every situation we will confront in life.

Turn to Acts 26

The writing of the epistle to Galatia is one of the "good works" which Paul was to perform as he served in the body of Christ as an apostle. When Paul was called as an apostle, he was given some information about the work he was to perform. Galatians was produced as part of the fulfillment of this work.

Acts 26:13

(Paul is witnessing about his experience on the road to Damascus; what he saw and heard. He is speaking to king Agrippa)

13 At midday, O king, I saw on the way a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, that shone around me and those who journeyed with me. **14** And when we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew language, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.' **15** And I said, 'Who are you, Lord?' And the Lord said, 'I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. **16** But rise and stand upon your feet, for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you as a

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servant and witness to the things in which you have seen me (*this present event*) and to those in which I will appear to you, **17** delivering you from your people and from the Gentiles—to whom I am sending you **18** to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.’

Turn to Ephesians 4

Paul was sent to his people (*the Hebrews*) and to the Gentiles. He was to open their eyes – this required the exercising of holy spirit. Their eyes were to be opened so that they could turn from darkness to light, from the power of satan, the god of this world, to God and HIS power. This required the exercising of the power of holy spirit in Paul and in the believers after they were called.

Another goal of all those functioning as visionaries within the body of Christ is recorded in Ephesians 4

Ephesians 4:11

11 And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers,
12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,
13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,
14 so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.

The saints are to be built up and equipped so they can do their work. We all are to mature so that we are not tossed and carried about by different doctrines. These doctrines are propounded and promoted by human cunning and spiritual craftiness in schemes to deceive the believers. These involved in these schemes have secret motives and do their planning in secret under cover of darkness. These works are to be exposed, as it is recorded in Ephesians 5.

In Galatians we will see the ministry of Paul in operation as he works to confront these winds of doctrines, exposing the deeds of exercised darkness, the deceitful schemes which promote the false doctrines. He works to instruct the wavering believers, equipping and strengthening them so that they can continue to stand, free of the spiritual bondage that once held them captive.

I was also reminded this week of the ingrained doctrines from the religious realm that somehow equate spiritual discernment and judgment with being unloving. In other words, “...its not loving to expose and confront evil or discern truth from error in our beliefs and practices...”. In Galatians Paul is very bold to expose the deeds of those who were moving doctrines of devils among the believers in Galatia. Remember, by revelation Paul encourages us with the benefit of following his example in

Philippians 4:9

9 What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me – practice these things,

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and the God of peace will be with you.

Turn to Galatians 1

Galatia was located in what we know today as central Turkey. E. W. Bullinger states that some of the cities in Galatia probably included Antioch of Pisidia, Iconium, Derbe, and Lystra. This region was visited by Paul in 48AD. This epistle was written around 58AD while Paul was in Macedonia, before he traveled to Jerusalem.

In Galatians is recorded a wonderful example of a spokesman for God fighting for the freedom of the believers in the body of Christ. This is truly LOVE in action!

Galatians 1:1

1 Paul, an apostle—not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead—

Paul's calling as a son of God and his calling as an apostle did not originate with men. His calling was not initiated, planned, organized, or brought forth by any efforts or resources of the flesh within the senses realm. Nor was his calling instigated by the devil spirit realm or the god of this world.

Paul's calling as a son of God is the same as ours. God is the one who called him to salvation through Jesus Christ. God is the one who called us to salvation as well. We can testify with Paul that we were not called by men or through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father. Paul's calling as an apostle was through Jesus Christ. God personally calls who he wants through Jesus Christ.

Galatians 1:2

2 and all the brothers (can refer to brothers and sisters) who are with me, To the churches (*plural*) of Galatia:

This epistle is from Paul and all the brothers and sisters who are with him. It is addressed directly to the churches, plural, of Galatia.

Galatians 1:3

3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,
4 who gave himself for our sins to deliver (*or rescue*) us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father,
5 to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

God's Grace and the Peace of God from God and the Lord Jesus Christ is declared and ministered to the believers. It was and is God's will for us to be delivered, rescued from the present evil age. As it says in Colossians 1:13, 14

13 He has delivered us from the domain (*exercised power*) of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son (*where he rules and exercises power*),
14 in whom we have redemption (*our release is secured!*), the forgiveness of sins.

We received our salvation by grace, it was a gift – no one can boast of working hard enough or being good enough to be saved. It is through the complete works of Jesus Christ, our substitute,

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that we were redeemed. Our release from the exercised power of darkness has been secured because Jesus Christ paid the price for our release.

Galatians 1:6

6 I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning (*turning away, deserting God*) to a different gospel—
7 not that there is another one (*not that there are other gospels*), but there are some who trouble you and want to (or by trying to) distort the gospel of Christ.

Remember Paul's calling? He served as an apostle among the believers in Galatia. He “opened their eyes so that they could turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to (*the power of*) God”. By the operation of the gift of holy spirit in Paul, their spiritual blindness was removed. They were strengthened, turning from darkness to light and to the power of God.

There does not exist a multitude of different genuine gospels to choose from. There is only one true, genuine gospel and that gospel was preached by Paul in Galatia. Now there are other people, acting as apostles who are preaching a specific message as if it is a gospel of Christ. However this message is a twisted, distorted, counterfeit of the gospel of Christ. The impact the promotion of this counterfeit gospel is to turn people away from God.

Turn to Acts 13

There is a record in Acts 13 about a man of belial, a son of the devil, attempting to turn away someone from the faith.

Acts 13:4

4 So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit (*by revelation; God told them to go*), they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus.
5 When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. And they had John to assist them.
6 When they had gone through the whole island as far as Paphos, they came upon a certain magician, a Jewish false prophet named Bar-Jesus.
7 He was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus (Roman governor of Cyprus), a man of intelligence, who summoned Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God.
8 But Elymas the magician (for that is the meaning of his name) (*he was an exorcist, exercising devil spirit power*) opposed them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith.
9 But Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him
10 and said, “You son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, full of all deceit and villainy, will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord?
11 And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you will be blind and unable to see the sun for a time.” Immediately mist and darkness fell upon him, and he went about seeking people to lead him by the hand.
12 Then the proconsul believed, when he saw what had occurred, for he was astonished

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at the teaching (or doctrine) of the Lord.

The means by which Elymas worked to turn the proconsul away from the faith involved the energized functioning of devil spirit power. He exercised spiritual power against Paul and his companions to obstruct his work in the Lord. However, Paul was there by revelation; he was moving by spiritual believing. Spiritual discernment was given to Paul so that he could remove the obstruction by the power of God working in him by spiritual believing.

The proconsul had the opportunity to see doctrine in action. Doctrine is not mental ascent, a dry lifeless statement of theological teachings that people consent to agree with. Doctrine is the accurate living word of God in a man or a woman which is brought forth powerfully with an impact!

Turn to Romans 1.

In Galatians, those endeavoring to turn the believers away from God were operating the same devil spirit power as Elymas. However, the spiritual discernment and guidance to minister to the believers in Galatia was different than the guidance given to Paul as recorded in Acts 13. In both spiritual attacks, Paul is obedient to the revelation given to him and he moves with the same spiritual believing to invoke and impart the power of God. Spiritual attacks from the devil require a spiritual counter attack from the believers.

To distort, twist, and pervert the gospel, means that the genuine gospel was changed. Enough of the genuine gospel remained so that it *sounded* like the genuine, but in fact it was a worthless counterfeit. A counterfeit exists as a lie. A lie is a deception which depends upon the truth. Another way of putting it is that “a lie exists as parasite on the truth”.

Romans 1 says more about this.

Romans 1:18

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. **19** For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. **20** For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. **21** For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened (*spiritual blindness*). **22** Claiming to be wise, they became fools, **23** and exchanged the glory (*exercised power*) of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things (*no glory, no exercised power*).

Men were deceived into exchanging valuable truth for a worthless lie. This happened because they were, and are, deceived.

Romans 1:24

24 Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity (*foul devil spirits*), to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves (*sensual devil spirits*), **25** because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie (*what was the result, the impact?*) and

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worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever!
Amen.

Turn to 2 Corinthians 11

The idolatry is the result of the operation of devil spirits of whoredom, deceiving spirits, spirits of error and spirits of bondage.

2 Corinthians 11 provides more instruction on how the deception in the course of the world works.

2 Corinthians 11:3

3 But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning (*he set the standard of deception*), your thoughts will be led astray (*this requires leaders*) from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ. **4** For if someone comes and proclaims another Jesus than the one we proclaimed, or if you receive a different spirit (*a devil spirit*) from the one you received (*holy spirit*), or if you accept a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it readily enough.

2 Corinthians 11:12

12 And what I do I will continue to do, in order to undermine the claim of those who would like to claim that in their boasted mission they work on the same terms as we do. **13** For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ.

In order for the deception and disguises to work there must be the exercising of devil spiritual power.

2 Corinthian 11:14

14 And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. (*remember verse 3?*) **15** So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds.

The twisting of the truth has to be disguised and hidden so it can be held forth as the truth. Those who move and declare this counterfeit doctrine must be disguised and twisted into servants of righteousness. All this twisting, counterfeiting and disguising is accomplished by spiritual power which originates and is orchestrated by satan, the god of this world.

Turn to Galatians 1

This distorting, twisting, and perverting of the gospel of Christ was troubling and agitating the believers.

At times when confronted with a twisted, perverted counterfeit, by false ministers, believers can perceive that something is horribly wrong with what is being promoted. Lacking the confidence in their spiritual perception they can fall prey to the deception. Then someone like Paul comes along and puts words to what they were perceiving. He exposes the error, the counterfeit in detail by teaching and instruction. Thus believers grow in their understanding, confidence and ability to walk by the new spiritual self instead of succumbing to the spiritual attacks.

Galatians 1:8

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8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed.

9 As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed.

Paul makes it very plain that there is no other genuine gospel other than the one which he preached to them. The appearance, stature, credentials, reputation or nature of the messenger does not and cannot change the nature of the counterfeit. A counterfeit stays a counterfeit no matter who or what it is that is working to present it as the truth!

Paul uses this word 'accursed' about himself in Romans 9:3 when he writes:

3 For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh.

The Revised English Bible uses the word “outcast” instead of “accursed”.

In Galatians 1 Paul is saying that such preachers are to be outcasts, cut off and banned from associating with the believers.

Galatians 1:10

10 For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant (*slave*) of Christ.

Paul's preaching, his serving as an apostle is motivated by his love for God. He is seeking God's approval. Remember Hebrews 11:6, that without (*spiritual*) believing it is impossible to please God. Paul seeks the approval of God as he walks by the spirit.

If Paul seeks to please man by preaching another gospel contrary to the one he preached to them before, he would be trying to please man. In that work, he would not be functioning as a servant of Christ. In that work he would be functioning in opposition to God's guidance. As a result, he would cease operating spiritual believing and imparting the power of God.

In this opening section of Galatians, Paul is not communicating to the believers as a judge or prosecuting attorney of the law. He was not accusing them of an infraction of religious commandments or ordinances. Rather, he is lovingly instructing the believers, exposing the spiritual attack that has been troubling them. He is exposing the unfruitful, secret works of darkness and the false ministers of righteousness which have been working among the churches of Galatia. This exposure negates the operation of the deceiving spirits, spirits of slumber, spirits of error that are working to bring the believers into bondage.

A spiritual attack from the devil requires a spiritual counter-attack by the power of God.

This epistle is written by revelation and spiritual believing, which invokes the power of God to re-open the eyes of the believers so they can return to God and His power. Paul is loving and serving the believers of Galatia, as God would have them loved and served.