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WHY IS THIS STUDY TOOL SO VALUABLE?

Recently I heard on a Christian radio station that a survey was given to people who believed that the Scriptures were God's infallible Word to man. They concluded that 65% of the people in the survey had never even read the entire New Testament, much less the entire Bible.

The Apostle Paul said to Timothy, *"Until I come, devote yourself to the **public reading of Scripture**, to preaching and to teaching. Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you. Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. **Watch your life and doctrine closely**. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers"* (1 Timothy 4:13-16, NIV).

The Greek word for "reading" in this passage is *anagnosis* and means reading, especially the public reading of Holy Scriptures. In 1 Timothy 4:13, it refers to the public reading of the Scriptures (including the letters of the apostles) appointed to be read in public in the New Testament worship service (Colossians 4:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:27). The readers in the church whose duty it was to read, expound or give application to the passage were called *anagnomstai*, the public readers.

*"The word for 'Scripture' in Greek is graphe. In the New Testament this term is used exclusively of Scripture and is used in such a way that **quoting Scripture (or reading) is understood to be the same as quoting God** (See John 10:35; Romans 4:3; 9:17; Gal. 4:30)"* (Expository Dictionary of Bible Words, p.544).

"The Scriptures were formally constituted into a canon (a rule of measure that established them as being the true Word of God). The reading of them was, along with prayer, the chief part of the service of worship from the time of Ezra onwards. Indeed, it seems that the reading out of the law (the Word of God) gave the motivation [and pattern] for the first meetings for worship (in the New Testament church), where the word of God was heard. The first Christians were Jews among Jews." (Dictionary of N.T. Theology, Vol.3. pgs. 485, 493).

It was always the **practice of God's people to have the Word of God read aloud** in the congregation. This is true whether it was the Old Testament or the New Testament (Ex. 24:7; Deut. 31:11; Josh. 8:35; 2 Kings 23:2; Neh. 8:7-8; Luke 4:16; Acts 15:21; Col. 4:16; 1 Thess. 5:27). In the book of Revelation it states, "Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy (usually in the New Testament the epistles were read aloud) and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it" (that is, the blessing comes to those who obey and apply its words) (Rev. 1:3). There was also a warning that what was read was not to be added to or taken away from (Rev. 22:18-19).

To illustrate the point I am trying to make, I wrote a fictitious letter to my friend Jeff and his family.

Dear Jeff and family,

I thank God that your faith is being spoken of everywhere. You are an inspiration to all that meet you. I long to see you and be encouraged by your faith. You are the object of God's love called to be His very own.

I remember you in my prayers often especially regarding the information we have received that in December the local shopping mall will not be safe to attend. Our reliable source tells us to beware of that place. Take heed and tell others.

I am confident that you are doing well at this time and prospering in all that you do. Greet your wife and family for me. I pray to see you and your family very soon.

***God bless you!
Don Krow***

Later, I heard that Jeff was in the hospital. He had lost a leg when an explosion went off at the local mall and a friend with him was killed.

When I visited Jeff at the hospital I inquired, "Didn't you get my letter, it contained a warning about the mall?" "Yes," he replied, "But I was too busy listening to my favorite TV preacher to read all of it. The TV preacher had also received the letter and he didn't say anything about a warning." As important as the apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher is (Eph. 4:11-12), to depend on them instead of the Scriptures for your guidance is like eating predigested food that has already been chewed and spit out for you to eat. There may be some nutrition in it but it could also contain some deadly germs (2 Peter 2:1-2). We need to learn to commit ourselves to the Scriptures **first**, they contain the more sure word of prophecy, even more dependable than an audible voice from heaven (2 Peter 1:17-19).

There is several ways that Jeff could have responded to my letter (just as there are several ways that we can respond to the Word of God). **1.** Jeff could have avoided reading it altogether and just relied on his favorite teacher, tapes, CD's and books to tell him what it says. In a sense these things have replaced the Word of God as the ultimate source in Jeff's life. (See Acts 17:11). **2.** Jeff could have read only the section or verses of my letter that he liked, not heeding to my entire letter, missing my warning altogether. **3.** Upon reading the whole letter, Jeff could have said, "Don did not mean December, he must have meant July because everyone shops in December for Christmas." This letter interferes with Jeff's doctrine so he is unable to receive the warning. He goes to the mall in December and encounters the explosion. Jeff changed the letter by bringing his own private interpretation to its meaning. His doctrine would not allow him to see the truth of the letter. **4.** Upon reading the whole letter, Jeff could have said, "Don could not have meant I can't go to the mall in December. It could not be about what I do whether I go to the mall or not. He is being legalistic, he is wrong." Jeff test the word. He goes to the mall December 7th and 10th and nothing happens. He

returns on December 15th and is met with an explosion. He friend dies and he is severely crippled. **5.** Jeff could read all of the letter, heed to what it says and prosper in his doing of the word (James 1:22; 2 Peter 1:4).

My suggestion is: Take the Scriptures as a whole, they were written as letters to be read as letters (Col.4:16; 1 Thess. 5:27; Rev. 1:3, 18-19). Take advantage of the last 100 years of scholarship by reading a whole letter from many translations. Remember that correct doctrine always leads to godliness (1 Tim. 6:3-4; Titus 1:1; 2:1). There is a tension in the Scripture that must not be disturbed. For example, no one is saved apart from the grace of God, without grace it leads to legalism, false grace leads to lasciviousness, and true grace teaches to deny ungodliness (Gal. 2:21; Jude 4, Titus 2:11-12). ***Without all the Scriptures we will be led to wrong conclusions, resulting in wrong doctrine.***

Without instructions, boundaries and warnings there is no protection from Satan's deception (Hebrews 3:13). If we were in a perfect world and didn't have what the Bible calls "the flesh" (drawn away by our own lust), then we would not need instructions, boundaries and warnings. But since we are in a fallen and imperfect world we must guard our hearts, and look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, so that we may lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us (Heb. 12:1-2; Rom. 8:13).

The goal of all Biblical study is a revelation of God the Father and His Son Jesus the Christ (Jn. 17:3; 5:39; Lk.24:27). The New Testament is a revelation of His Person. The New Testament reveals who He is and what He looks like. For example, Jesus is not a fornicator, adulterer, liar, thief, blasphemer, covetous person, etc. Instead of looking at the New Testament instruction as law to be obeyed, we must look at it as Christ to be expressed. To depend upon Christ to express Christ is the heart of New Testament teaching (Gal. 2:20; Rom.7:24-25; 8:2). The apostles revelation of Scripture led them to a life of faith, a life of dependence, that renounced one's own ability and turned to Christ and His ability. This is the life of grace, this is the life of faith.

May God's blessing be upon you as you seek not the black and white letter of His book, but His Spirit behind the letter of His book. The Word was God, and the Word is God, the revelation of His Person (Jn. 1:1).

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IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS FOR RIGHTLY DIVIDING GOD'S WORD OF TRUTH

1. Each book of the New Testament was given as a letter, to be read as a whole.
2. Consider each chapter & what it contains.
3. What is the unit of thought that each paragraph contains?
4. What is the unit of thought that each verse contains?
5. Consider the meaning of each individual word in its own context.

A. You must consider (first of all) that Galatians was written as a letter (just as you would write a letter to your family or friends). You must consider it as a whole, as a unit, to be understood in its whole context of thought. There is 3,098 words that fit into a complete unit of context. The context is that which proceeds and/or follows any part of a discourse. The context often affects the meaning of a verse.

B. A few hundred years ago this letter was divided into chapters. Galatians has six chapters. I encourage you to back away and look at the unit of thought that each chapter contains. The New Living Translation, as well as many other translations further breaks these chapters down by supplying headings. Headings break the chapter into units of thought or subjects. For instance, the New Living Translation has the following headings in Galatians chapter one: Greetings from Paul (verses 1-5), There Is Only One Good News (verses 6-10), Paul's Message Comes from Christ (verses 11-24).

C. Within this last century the letter of Galatians was also divided into paragraphs. Some translations divide the paragraphs differently. Before looking closely at each verse, consider the unit of thought that is found in each paragraph. The symbol ¶ shows you where each paragraph begins and ends.

D. Each individual word has a meaning within its own context. For example, the word "grace" may mean "the undeserved favor of God, the divine influence of God upon the heart, or the free liberality of giving, etc." The context (that which proceeds or follows any part of a discourse) determines which definition would be appropriate.

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USING VARIOUS TRANSLATIONS FOR BIBLE STUDY

By Don Krow

Although I personally adhere to the Western Text family of the Greek manuscripts, which is the foundation for the King James Version, New King James Version, Young's Literal Translation, Tyndale's Bible, etc., why not use a full set of tools for our Biblical studies? A Greek word may require several or even several dozen English words to render it adequately. The Greek scholar A.T. Robertson points out one reason for this: *"Language was originally pictographic... Words have never gotten wholly away from the picture stage... There is no single Greek word that has an EXACT equivalent in a single English word"* [A Beginner's Reader-Grammar for N.T. Greek].

No translation can ever hope to reproduce completely all the shades of meaning found in the Greek New Testament. As Kenneth Wuest points out: *"In a translation which keeps to a minimum of words, that is, where one English word for instance is the translation of one Greek word, it is impossible for the translator to bring out all the shades of meaning in the Greek word"* [Untranslatable Riches from the Greek N.T.].

This is why I have sought in the letter of Galatians to use the various translations and paraphrases to help build and see a complete picture of that which the Apostle Paul was trying to portray in his letter. The primary reason for a translation in the first place is to help readers understand God's Word. I have used the Authorized King James Version as a foundational translation while using the various translations and paraphrases as a kind of commentary on the passage. By reading various translations I believe a person will acquire a fuller understanding of the thought and content of the original Greek. **Why not take advantage of hundreds of the most gifted scholars of the past one hundred years communicating the same message in different words?**

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CREATING A GROUP DISCUSSION:

After you have read these instructions, continue to the next page where you will find instructions for reading the entire book and each chapter.

As you continue to proceed you will come to a section where you will find verses from several translations. In your group read aloud all the translations as you would a paragraph. Read also the "additional information" provided. The "additional information" is not meant to be an interpretation of the scripture, but rather to help you understand more clearly the meaning of words or phrases that you may be unfamiliar with. Remember when reading the verses to consider the context. The context is that which proceeds and/or follows any part of a discourse. The context often affects the meaning of a verse. As a group discuss the insights you see from the verses.

After you have read and discussed an entire chapter, which may require several separate sessions, the leader of your group should go to the section that is called "Questions and Answers." The leader should read the questions to the group and ask them to answer each question according to that which is stated in the Scriptures. This should reinforce what you have already seen and discussed in your group discussions.

This biblical discussion program is designed to make the scriptures themselves the final authority of one's life. God bless you as you seek Him in the pages of the scripture. *Don Krow*

THE LETTER TO THE GALATIANS

Introduction to the Book

DATE OF WRITING: Galatians was written to churches in the southern area of the Roman province of Galatia. Paul and Barnabas had visited the cities of Iconium, Lystra, Derbe and Pisidian Antioch and established churches. This was Paul's first missionary journey recorded in Acts 13:1-14:28. Galatians may have been sent from Antioch around 48 A.D. before Paul's visit to Jerusalem to attend the apostolic gathering recorded in Acts 15. If this is true, Galatians would be the earliest of the apostle's letters.

BACKGROUND: Judaizers (although this word is not used in Scripture) were a sect of Jewish people who were not willing to accept the teaching of the apostles recorded in Acts chapter 15. They continued to insist that Christians must come to God by keeping the law and other Jewish ceremony. They made it their business to visit and unsettle the Gentile churches. If observance of the law for the purpose of salvation had been imposed upon the Gentiles, the Apostle Paul's work of the gospel would have all been in vain. Paul's letter to the Galatians was to correct the misconception of these false teachers.

GENERAL INFORMATION: Galatians is the forty-eight book of the Bible. It contains six chapters, one hundred and forty-nine verses, and three thousand ninety-eight words.

GALATIANS

As a Student, Read the entire Letter of Galatians several times before you come together as a group. Read each chapter in various translations (at least four translations if possible). What were the thoughts and ideas that the writer or apostle was trying to express? Take a notebook and summarize your thoughts of the book. What is the book saying as a whole? Share these thoughts with your group.

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GALATIANS CHAPTER 1

In Your Group Read Galatians chapter one (aloud) in a modern translation or read it in the King James Version (below). As a Group, Discuss the general content of the chapter.

THE LETTER OF GALATIANS CHAPTER 1 King James Version

GALATIANS 1: [1] Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;) **[2]** And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia: **[3]** Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, **[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: **[5]** To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. **[6]** ¶ I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: **[7]** Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. **[8]** 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. **[9]** 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. **[10]** ¶ For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. **[11]** But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. **[12]** For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. **[13]** For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: **[14]** And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers. **[15]** But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, **[16]** To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: **[17]** Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. **[18]** Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. **[19]** But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother. **[20]** Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not. **[21]** Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria, and Cilicia; **[22]** And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judaea which were in Christ: **[23]** But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed. **[24]** And they glorified God in me.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE GROUP: Read and Discuss each verse and translation along with the “Additional Information” in each box provided.

**GALATIANS CHAPTER 1
VERSES 1-2**

Galatians 1:1 Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;) [2] And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia: (King James Version)

1 From Paul, an apostle. I was not chosen to be an apostle by human beings, nor was I sent from human beings. I was made an apostle through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Jesus from the dead. ² This letter is also from all those of God’s family who are with me. To the churches in Galatia: **(New Century Version)**

[1] From Paul to the churches of Galatia, **[2]** and from all the brothers who are here with me, an apostle who does not owe his authority to men or his appointment to any human being but who has been appointed by Jesus Christ and by God the Father who raised Jesus from the dead. **(Jerusalem Bible)**

[1] This is from Paul, a messenger – not a messenger sent by men, nor by the authority of man, but by Jesus Christ and by God our Father who raised Him from among the dead. **[2]** Greetings to all of you in the churches in the province of Galatia in Turkey. All the Lord’s followers with me send their greetings as well. **(The Last Days Bible)**

1 *From:* Paul the missionary and all the other Christians here. *To:* The churches of Galatia. I was not called to be a missionary by any group or agency. My call is from Jesus Christ himself and from God the Father who raised him from the dead. **(The Living Bible)**

1 ¹⁻² From the apostle Paul and from all the Lord’s followers with me. I was chosen to be an apostle by Jesus Christ and by God the Father, who raised him from death. No mere human chose or appointed me to this work. To the churches in Galatia. **(Contemporary English Version)**

[1a] This letter is from the apostle Paul **[2]** and all the brothers who are with me. And I’m writing to the churches in the province of Galatia. **[1b]** I wasn’t sent out by any man or group of men, or appointed to be an apostle by any man. I was appointed by Jesus Christ, and by God, His Father, who raised Him from the dead. **(New Testament in Everyday American English)**

[1] From Paul, an apostle. I was not chosen to be an apostle by men. I was not sent from men. No! It was Jesus Christ and God the Father who made me an apostle. God is the One who raised Jesus from death. **[2]** This letter is also from all the brothers in Christ who are with me. To the churches (groups of believers) in Galatia. **(The Easy-to-Read New Testament)**

Additional Information: (Verse 1) - The word “**apostle**” (Strong’s number 652) in the Greek, is *apostolos* and means **a delegate; specially an ambassador of the Gospel; officially someone**

commissioned by Christ, with miraculous powers. *Apostolos* comes from two words, APO – “from” and STELLO – “to send,” thus referring to the act of sending someone on a commission to represent the sender (Word Studies in Greek, p.28). It is translated in the KJV as: **apostle, messenger, and he that is sent.** (Verse 2) - **“the churches of Galatia.”** Paul uses the plural “churches” in addressing the Galatians. This was a circular letter that is not going to a city but rather to a Roman province. There were 4 major cities in this province: Antioch Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe. Paul had established churches here on his first missionary journey recorded in Acts 13:1-14:28.

GALATIANS CHAPTER 1

VERSES 3-5

Galatians 1: [3] Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, [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: [5] To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. (King James Version)

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

³May grace and peace be yours from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴He died for our sins, just as God our Father planned, in order to rescue us from this evil world in which we live. ⁵That is why all glory belongs to God through all the ages of eternity. Amen. **(New Living Translation)**

³I pray that God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ will be kind to you and will bless you with peace! ⁴Christ obeyed God our Father and gave himself as a sacrifice for our sins to rescue us from this evil world. ⁵God will be given glory forever and ever. Amen. **(Contemporary English Version)**

Grace and peace to you from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, who sacrificed himself for our sins, to rescue us out of this present age of wickedness, as our God and Father willed; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. (verses 3-5) **(New English Bible)**

[3] God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ send you their love that no one deserves, and their peace. [4] And Jesus is the one who gave himself for our sins, so that He could rescue us from this present evil world, just as God our Father wanted and planned. [5] Therefore the glory and honor belong to God forever and ever. Yes, it really does! (New Testament in Everyday American English)

[3] May God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord grant you all the blessings of the Christian life, including peace of mind and heart. [4] In obedience to what our God and Father wanted Him to do, Jesus gave Himself as a sacrifice on the cross for our sins, in order to rescue us from the evil influences and dreadful future of those whose god is this present evil age. [5] May our Father be praised and revered throughout all of endless eternity! Indeed, may it ever be so! (The Last Days Bible)

GALATIANS CHAPTER 1
VERSES 6-9

Galatians 1: [6] ¶ I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: [7] Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. [8] 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. [9] 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. (King James Version)

[6] I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel-- [7] which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. [8] But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned! [9] As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned! **(New International Version)**

⁶I am shocked that you are turning away so soon from God, who in his love and mercy called you to share the eternal life he gives through Christ. You are already following a different way ⁷that pretends to be the Good News but is not the Good News at all. You are being fooled by those who twist and change the truth concerning Christ. ⁸Let God's curse fall on anyone, including myself, who preaches any other message than the one we told you about. Even if an angel comes from heaven and preaches any other message, let him be forever cursed. ⁹I will say it again: If anyone preaches any other gospel than the one you welcomed, let God's curse fall upon that person. **(New Living Translation)**

⁶I am shocked that you have so quickly turned from God, who chose you because of his wonderful kindness. You have believed another message, ⁷when there is really only one true message. But some people are causing you trouble and want to make you turn away from the good news about Christ. ⁸I pray that God will punish anyone who preaches anything different from our message to you! It doesn't matter if that person is one of us or an angel from heaven. ⁹I have said it before, and I will say it again. I hope God will punish anyone who preaches anything different from what you have already believed. **(Contemporary English Version)**

⁶I am amazed that you are turning away so soon from God who, in his love and mercy, invited you to share the eternal life he gives through Christ; you are already following a different "way to heaven," which really doesn't go to heaven at all. ⁷For there is no other way than the one we showed you; you are being fooled by those who twist and change the truth concerning Christ. ⁸Let God's curses fall on anyone, including myself, who preaches any other way to be saved than the one we told you about; yes, if an angel comes from heaven and preaches any other message, let him be forever cursed. ⁹I will say it again: if anyone preaches any other gospel than the one you welcomed, let God's curse fall upon him. **(The Living Bible)**

I can't believe your fickleness – how easily you have turned traitor to him who called you by the grace of Christ by embracing a variant message! It is not a minor variation, you know; it is completely other, an alien message, a no-message, a lie about

God. Those who are provoking this agitation among you are turning the Message of Christ on its head. Let me be blunt: If one of us – even if an angel from heaven! – were to preach something other than what we preached originally, let him be cursed. I said it once; I'll say it again: If anyone, regardless of reputation or credentials, preaches something other than what you received originally, let him be cursed. (verses 6-9) **(The Message)**

[6] I am surprised at you! In no time at all you are deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ, and are going to another gospel. **[7]** Actually, there is no "other gospel," but I say it because there are some people who are upsetting you and trying to change the gospel of Christ. **[8]** But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel that is different from the one we preached to you, may he be condemned to hell! **[9]** We have said it before, and now I say it again: if anyone preaches to you a gospel that is different from the one you accepted, may he be condemned to hell! **(Today's English Version)**

[6] I am astonished at the promptness with which you have turned away from the one who called you and have decided to follow a different version of the Good News. **[7]** Not that there can be more than one Good News; it is merely that some troublemakers among you want to change the Good News of Christ; **[8]** and let me warn you that if anyone preaches a version of the Good News different from the one we have already preached to you, whether it be ourselves or an angel from heaven, he is to be condemned. **[9]** I am only repeating what we told you before: if anyone preaches a version of the Good News different from the one you have already heard, he is to be condemned. **(Jerusalem Bible)**

[6] I am amazed that you are so readily turning away from Him who called you by the grace of Christ, to another gospel, **[7]** which is really not another; except that some are troubling you and want to distort the good news concerning Christ. **[8]** But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel that differs from what we have preached to you – a curse on him! **[9]** As we said before and repeat right now, if anyone evangelizes you with a gospel that varies from what you have received – a curse on him! **(Berkeley Version)**

[6] I can't believe that you are turning away so quickly from the one who called you by the undeserved love of Christ, and are turning to a different kind of "good news." **[7]** It really isn't another message of Good News at all. But there are some people who want to change the Good News about Christ into something else, and these people are getting you all mixed up. **[8]** But even if we ourselves, or an angel from heaven, were to bring you a message of "good news" which is different from the one we have already brought to you, that person has to be under God's curse to be destroyed. **[9]** We have said it before, and now I'm saying it again. If anyone is bringing you a message of "good news" which is different from the message you received from us, that person has to be under God's curse to be destroyed. **(New Testament in Everyday American English)**

I am astonished that you are hastily shifting like this, deserting Him who called you by Christ's grace and going over to another gospel. It simply means that certain individuals are unsettling you; they want to distort the gospel of Christ. Now even though it were myself or some angel from heaven, whoever preaches a gospel that contradicts the gospel I preached to you, God's curse be on him! I have said it before

and I now repeat it: whoever preaches a gospel to you that contradicts the gospel you have already received, God's curse be on him! (verses 6-9) **(Moffatt Translation)**

[6] I am surprised and astonished that you are so quickly turning renegade and deserting Him Who invited and called you by the grace (unmerited favor) of Christ (the Messiah) [and that you are transferring your allegiance] to a different [even an opposition] gospel. **[7]** Not that there is [or could be] any other [genuine Gospel], but there are [obviously] some who are troubling and disturbing and bewildering you [with a different kind of teaching which they offer as a gospel] and want to pervert and distort the Gospel of Christ the Messiah) [into something which it absolutely is not]. **[8]** But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to and different from that which we preached to you, let him be accursed (anathema, devoted to destruction, doomed to eternal punishment)! **[9]** As we said before, so I now say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel different from or contrary to that which you received [from us], let him be accursed (anathema, devoted to destruction, doomed to eternal punishment)! **(The Amplified New Testament)**

[6] But I'm utterly shocked and amazed at you people! How is it that you've so quickly deserted our God, who called you to Himself by means of the undeserved love and mercy He so graciously offers you thru Christ? Instead, you are now accepting a different "great news"! **[7]** But there's no great news at all connected with what you're now accepting. Those who are confusing you want only to twist and destroy the Great News about the Messiah. **[8]** But even if I myself or an angel from Heaven were to preach a different great news to you than the Great News I already brought you, may he be damned! **[9]** So you will know that I mean what I've just said, I say it again: If anyone preaches any great news to you other than the Great News I already brought you, may he be damned! **(The Last Days Bible)**

[6] A short time ago God called you to follow him. He called you through his grace (kindness) that came through Christ. But now I am amazed at you people! You are already turning away and believing a different gospel. **[7]** Really, there is no other true gospel. But some people are confusing you. They want to change the gospel of Christ. **[8]** We told you the true gospel. So if we ourselves or even an angel from heaven tells you a different gospel, he should be condemned! **[9]** I said this before. Now I say it again: You have already accepted the true gospel. If any person tells you another way to be saved, he should be condemned! **(The Easy-to-Read New Testament)**

GALATIANS CHAPTER 1

VERSE 10

Galatians 1: [10] ¶ For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. (King James Version)

[10] (Does that make you think now that I am seeking man's approval or God's? Am I trying to please men? If I were trying to win human approval I should never be Christ's servant. **(Phillips Translation)**)

Additional Information: Consider the context of verses 6-9.

GALATIANS CHAPTER 1
VERSES 11-12

Galatians 1: [11] But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. [12] For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. (King James Version)

¹¹Dear brothers and sisters, I solemnly assure you that the Good News of salvation which I preach is not based on mere human reasoning or logic. ¹²For my message came by a direct revelation from Jesus Christ himself. No one else taught me. **(New Living Translation)**

¹¹My friends, I want you to know that no one made up the message I preach. ¹²It wasn't given or taught to me by some mere human. My message came directly from Jesus Christ when he appeared to me. **(Contemporary English Version)**

¹¹Dear friends, I solemnly swear that the way to heaven that I preach is not based on some mere human whim or dream. ¹²For my message comes from no less a person than Jesus Christ himself, who told me what to say. No one else has taught me. **(The Living Bible)**

Know this – I am most emphatic here, friends – this great Message I delivered to you is not mere human optimism. I didn't receive it through the traditions, and I wasn't taught it in some school. I got it straight from God, received the Message directly from Jesus Christ. (verses 11-12) **(The Message)**

[11] Let me tell you, my brothers, that the gospel I preach was not made by man. **[12]** I did not receive it from any man, nor did anyone teach it to me. Instead, it was Jesus Christ himself who revealed it to me. **(Today's English Version)**

[11] You see, brothers and sisters, I want to tell you something about this Good News I have been telling people about. It isn't the usual kind of news, **[12]** because I didn't get it from any human being, and I didn't learn it from any human teacher. It was shown to me in a special way by Jesus Christ. **(New Testament in Everyday American English)**

Additional Information: (Verse 11) – “the gospel which was preached of me.” The word “preached” being a **verb** is often rendered in a way that indicates continuous action, that is, the gospel which I am in a **custom of preaching**.

(Verse 12) – “the revelation of Jesus Christ.” The little preposition “of.” that is, the revelation OF Jesus Christ could mean two things: (1) The revelation of the gospel was FROM Jesus Christ to Paul. (2) The content of the revelation, which was from God, WAS JESUS CHRIST (UBS Handbook, p.18).

GALATIANS CHAPTER 1
VERSES 13-14

Galatians 1: [13] For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: [14] And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers. (King James Version)

[13] 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; [14] and I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my countrymen, being more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions. (New American Standard Version)

¹³You know what I was like when I followed the Jewish religion—how I violently persecuted the Christians. I did my best to get rid of them. ¹⁴I was one of the most religious Jews of my own age, and I tried as hard as possible to follow all the old traditions of my religion. **(New Living Translation)**

[13] You have been told of the way I used to live when I was devoted to the Jewish religion, how I persecuted without mercy the church of God and did my best to destroy it. [14] I was ahead of most fellow Jews of my age in my practice of the Jewish religion. I was much more devoted to the traditions of our ancestors. (Today's English Version)

[13] You have heard about my past life in the Jewish faith. I violently persecuted God's called-out people. I tried to destroy them. [14] In the Jewish faith I was becoming a leader, doing better than most Jews my own age. I tried harder than anyone else to follow the traditions which came from our ancestors. (The Simple English Bible)

[13] You have heard of my previous career in Judaism, how violently I persecuted the church of God and devastated it; [14] how in devotion to Judaism I went further than many of my age among my people, so fanatically zealous was I for the traditions of my ancestors. (Berkeley Version)

[13] You've heard how I behaved in the past as a zealot of the Jewish religion, how I angrily and violently persecuted the Church of God and did my best to destroy it. [14] Because I was so very devoted in upholding the traditions of our ancestors, I was advancing in the Jewish religion far ahead of many my own age in Israel. (The Last Days Bible)

[13] After all, you have heard about the way I used to live when I was following the Jewish religion. You know that I fought like a crazy man against God's Church and tried to destroy it. [14] And you know that I got farther ahead in the Jewish religion than most of the other Jews my own age, because I had a much greater love for the things that were handed down to us by my forefathers. (New Testament in Everyday American English)

[13] You have heard of my earlier career and former manner of life in the Jewish religion (Judaism), how I persecuted and abused the church of God furiously and extensively, and [with fanatical zeal did my best] to make havoc of it and destroy it. [14]

And [you have heard how] I outstripped many of the men of my own generation among the people of my race in [my advancement in study and observance of the laws of] Judaism, so extremely enthusiastic and zealous I was for the traditions of my ancestors.

(The Amplified New Testament)

[13] You have heard about my past life. I was in the Jewish religion. I persecuted the church of God very much. I tried to destroy the church (*believers*). [14] I was becoming a leader in the Jewish religion. I did better than most other Jews my own age. I tried harder than anyone else to follow the old rules. These rules were the customs we got from our ancestors. **(The Easy-to-Read New Testament)**

Additional Information: (Verse 13) - In the Greek the imperfect tense is used of both words "persecuted" and "wasted." This implies the persecution that Saul persecuted the church with was consistent, in excess, without mercy and continued for some time. (UBS Handbook, p. 19).

(Verse 14) - In the Greek the word for "profited" literally means "to drive forward {as if by beating} i.e. to advance" (Strong's). Paul is speaking of his youth when he advanced and drove himself forward in the Jewish religion beyond many of his own age (Acts 22:3).

**GALATIANS CHAPTER 1
VERSES 15-17**

Galatians 1: [15] But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, [16] To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: [17] Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. (King James Version)

¹⁵ But then something happened! For it pleased God in his kindness to choose me and call me, even before I was born! What undeserved mercy! ¹⁶ Then he revealed his Son to me so that I could proclaim the Good News about Jesus to the Gentiles. When all this happened to me, I did not rush out to consult with anyone else; ¹⁷ nor did I go up to Jerusalem to consult with those who were apostles before I was. No, I went away into Arabia and later returned to the city of Damascus. **(New Living Translation)**

¹⁵ But God had special plans for me and set me apart for his work even before I was born. He called me through his grace ¹⁶ and showed his son to me so that I might tell the Good News about him to those who are not Jewish. When God called me, I did not get advice or help from any person. ¹⁷ I did not go to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before I was. But, without waiting, I went away to Arabia and later went back to Damascus. **(New Century Version)**

¹⁵ But even before I was born, God had chosen me. He was kind and had decided ¹⁶ to show me his Son, so that I would announce his message to the Gentiles. I didn't talk this over with anyone. ¹⁷ I didn't say a word, not even to the men in Jerusalem who were apostles before I was. Instead, I went at once to Arabia, and afterwards I returned to Damascus. **(Contemporary English Version)**

But then in his good pleasure God, who had set me apart from birth and called me through his grace, chose to reveal his Son to me and through me, in order that I might proclaim him among the Gentiles. When that happened, without consulting any human being, without going up to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before me,

I went off at once to Arabia, and afterwards returned to Damascus. (verses 15-17)
(New English Bible)

[15] But God called me through His gracious love. Even before I was born, He had special plans for me. God wanted me **[16]** to tell the Good News about Jesus to non-Jewish people. So He revealed His Son in me. I didn't receive advice or get help from any human being. **[17]** I didn't go up right away to see the apostles in Jerusalem. (These men were apostles before I was.) No, I went away to Arabia. Afterward, I went back to the city of Damascus. **(The Simple English Bible)**

[15] But God set me apart from the time I was born. He showed me his grace by appointing me. He was pleased **[16]** to show his Son in my life. He wanted me to preach about Jesus among those who aren't Jews. When God appointed me, I didn't talk to anyone. **[17]** I didn't go up to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before I was. Instead, I went at once into Arabia. Later I returned to Damascus. **(New International Reader's Version)**

[15] But even before I was born, God had set me apart to be His messenger. **[16]** And though undeserving of his kindness and mercy, it pleased Him to call me to Himself and introduce me to His Son, and then send me to tell people in all nations that the Great News about Jesus is for them too. But I didn't then immediately go and talk this over with others who are as human as I am. **[17]** No, I didn't even go to Jerusalem to talk with those who were messengers of Christ before I was. Instead, I went to Arabia, and then returned to Damascus. **(The Last Days Bible)**

[15] But God chose me to be an apostle before I was ever born; and when He decided the right time had come, He called me because of His love that no one deserves. **[16]** And he showed me all about His Son in a special way, so that I could spread the Good News about Him among the people of the other nations. And when He did this, I didn't go right away to talk it over with any other person. **[17]** I didn't go up to Jerusalem either, to see the men who were apostles before I was. Instead, I went off to Arabia, and then I went back to Damascus. **(New Testament in Everyday American English)**

GALATIANS CHAPTER 1 VERSES 18-20

Galatians 1: [18] Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. [19] But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother. [20] Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not. (King James Version)

¹⁸It was not until three years later that I finally went to Jerusalem for a visit with Peter and stayed there with him for fifteen days. ¹⁹And the only other apostle I met at that time was James, our Lord's brother. ²⁰You must believe what I am saying, for I declare before God that I am not lying. **(New Living Translation)**

[18] It wasn't until three years after my conversion to Christ that I went up to Jerusalem to meet Peter. I stayed with him at that time for 15 days. **[19]** Even then I didn't see any of the other messengers, except James, the Lord's brother. **[20]** I assure you before God that what I'm writing you here is the truth! **(The Last Days Bible)**

GALATIANS CHAPTER 1
VERSES 21-24

Galatians 1: [21] Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria, and Cilicia; [22] And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judaea which were in Christ: [23] But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed. [24] And they glorified God in me. (King James Version)

[21] Later I went to Syria and Cilicia. **[22]** I was personally unknown to the churches of Judaea that are in Christ. **[23]** They only heard the report: "The man who formerly persecuted us is now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy." **[24]** And they praised God because of me. **(New International Version)**

²¹ Then after this visit, I went north into the provinces of Syria and Cilicia. ²² And still the Christians in the churches in Judaea didn't know me personally. ²³ All they knew was that people were saying, "The one who used to persecute us now preaches the very faith he tried to destroy!" ²⁴ And they gave glory to God because of me. **(New Living Translation)**

²¹ Later, I went to the regions of Syria and Cilicia. ²² But no one who belonged to Christ's churches in Judaea had ever seen me in person. ²³ They had only heard that the one who had been cruel to them was now preaching the message that he had once tried to destroy. ²⁴ And because of me, they praised God. **(Contemporary English Version)**

Then I began my ministry in the regions of Syria and Cilicia. After all that time and activity I was still unknown by face among the Christian churches in Judaea. There was only this report: "That man who once persecuted us is now preaching the very message he used to try to destroy." Their response was to recognize and worship God because of me! (verses 21-24) **(The Message)**

Later, I visited districts in Syria and Cilicia, but I was still unknown by sight to the churches of Judaea. All they knew of me, in fact, was the saying: "The man who used to persecute us is now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy." And they thanked God for what had happened to me. (verses 21-24) **(Phillips Translation)**

Next I went to the regions of Syria and Cilicia, and remained unknown by sight to Christ's congregations in Judaea. They only heard it said, 'Our former persecutor is preaching the good news of the faith which once he tried to destroy'; and they praised God for me. (verses 21-14) **(New English Bible)**

[21] After my visit in Jerusalem I went to the provinces of Syria and Cilicia, **[22]** and during this time the Christian churches in Judaea never saw my face. **[23]** However they kept on hearing that "the man who was hunting us down like animals a little while ago is now spreading the Good News about the faith which he was once trying to destroy." **[24]** And they were praising God because of me. **(New Testament in Everyday American English)**

[21] Then I went into the districts (countries, regions) of Syria and Cilicia. **[22]** And so far I was still unknown by sight to the churches of Christ in Judaea (the country surrounding Jerusalem). **[23]** They were only hearing it said, he who used to persecute

us is now proclaiming the very faith he once reviled and which he set out to ruin and tried with all his might to destroy. [24] And they glorified God [as the Author and Source of what had taken place] in me. **(The Amplified New Testament)**

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QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

(Galatians Chapter 1)

Instructions for Group Leader: Do not let the group read the following questions and answers. The leader of your group should ask the group the following questions and encourage the group to discover the answers by going to the appropriate Scriptures. **Discuss and answer (as a group) the questions correctly by using the Scripture(s). Turn to Galatians Chapter 1.**

1. **Read Galatians 1:1.** Paul was chosen to be an apostle by: a. his local church. b. a Christian agency. c. Jesus Christ and God the Father.
2. **Read Galatians 1:2.** Paul's letter to the Galatians was a circular letter that was not going to a city but rather to a Roman province. True or False.
3. **Read Galatians 1:4.** Jesus gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from: a. this present evil world. b. this present evil age. c. this present age of wickedness. d. the evil influences and dreadful future of those whose god is this present evil age. e. all of the above.
4. **Read Galatians 1:5.** May God our Father be praised: a. during our morning worship service. b. when good things happen to us. c. for ever and ever.
5. **Read Galatians 1:6.** The Apostle Paul was astonished, shocked, amazed, and surprised that some were turning away so quickly from: a. the apostle's creed. b. the Sunday service. c. GOD, and turning to another way of salvation (gospel).
6. **Read Galatians 1:7.** Some false teachers are: a. perverting the gospel. b. throwing people into confusion. c. twisting and changing the truth. d. showing others a different way to heaven, which doesn't go to heaven at all. e. trying to change the gospel. f. preaching a version of the gospel that is different from the apostles. g. distorting the gospel. h. opposing the gospel. i. all of the above.
7. **Read Galatians 1:8-9.** If anybody is preaching a false gospel they are to be: a. accursed. b. eternally condemned. c. punished. d. condemned to hell. e. under God's curse to be destroyed. f. anathema, devoted to destruction. g. all of the above.
8. **Read Galatians 1:10.** Paul sought to preach the gospel correctly and thus please God. True or False.
9. **Read Galatians 1:11-12.** The Apostle Paul was taught the gospel: a. by using human reasoning and logic. b. in school. c. through the traditions of men. d. by other human beings. e. by his favorite teacher. f. straight from God, revealed from Jesus Christ.

10. **Read Galatians 1:13.** The Apostle Paul in his past violently persecuted Christians. True or False.
11. **Read Galatians 1:14.** The Apostle Paul in his past: a. was a Baptist. b. was a Catholic. c. followed the Jewish religion.
12. **Read Galatians 1:15-16.** What happened to Saul, who later became Paul? a. God's Son was revealed to him. b. God chose to reveal his Son to Paul and through Paul. c. God revealed His Son in Paul. d. God introduced Paul to His Son. e. God showed Paul all about His Son in a special way. f. all of the above.
13. **Read Galatians 1:18-20.** Paul met Peter: a. 3 days after his conversion. b. 3 years after his conversion. c. 30 days after his conversion.
14. **Read Galatians 1:21.** For a period of time, Paul was personally unknown by the Christian congregations in Judaea. True or False.
15. **Read Galatians 1:23-24.** When the Jewish believers heard of Saul's (Paul's) conversion they glorified God as the author and source of this miracle. True or False.

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