

Sermon Discussion Guide

Transformed by the Gospel - Galatians 1:11-24

Guided Prayer: Pray asking for the Holy Spirit's guidance in understanding and applying the truths discussed and for wisdom and discernment against the false gospels of this world.

Recap

Paul begins this next section of Galatians by defending the source of the gospel by rooting it in Christ. The gospel is not man-made and it was revealed to Paul by Christ Himself. He further proves this point by speaking of his former life in Judaism as a Pharisee and how he violently persecuted the church. Paul claims there was no way he could have invented the gospel on his own because of the zeal he had for the traditions of his fathers. But God set him apart before he was born and called him by His grace by revealing His Son to Paul. He further proves the source of the gospel was from Christ by detailing his travels after his conversion. Paul had no interactions with the apostles for several years. When Paul finally did go to Jerusalem, He only saw Peter and James and wasn't there long enough to be trained by the apostles. The gospel of Christ changed Paul's life. This was evident because Paul went from a persecutor of the church to a bold proclaimer of the gospel of Christ immediately after his conversion—and they glorified God because of it.

Understanding the Text

1. Why does Paul spend so much time defending the source of the gospel?
2. Why does Paul care so much about defending his apostleship? How are the gospel and Paul's apostleship linked?
3. What does Paul mean when he says that he received the gospel through a "revelation of Jesus Christ"? (V. 12) How does this relate to his experience on the Damascus road in Acts 9?
4. How does Paul's former life in Judaism strengthen his claim that the gospel he preached was not man-made? (Vv. 13-14)
5. What is Paul's purpose in detailing his travels after his conversion?
6. Why is the resurrection of Jesus essential to Paul's understanding of the gospel? Why does Christianity hinge on the resurrection?
7. How do verses 23-24 show that the ultimate purpose of the gospel is the glory of God rather than man?

Practical Application

1. What are the false gospels in our day? Which ones have you believed? How can you guard against them?
2. How does Paul's conversion story challenge our thoughts about our friends and family we think may never be saved? How does this relate to your own conversion?
3. How does understanding that salvation is entirely the work of God—from start to finish—shape our prayers and how we live our life?
4. What circles has God placed you in to proclaim the truth of His gospel? How can you better proclaim the gospel in these circles?
5. What is different about your life now than before Christ?
6. How can you help others to glorify God instead of you through your transformed life?

God Has More to Say

- **Acts 8:1-3 & Acts 9** - *Paul was responsible for Stephen's death and ravages the church and his conversion.*
- **1 Corinthians 2:10** - These things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.
- **Isaiah 49:1b** - The LORD called me from the womb, from the body of my mother he named my name.
- **Matthew 16:17** - And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.
- **Mark 7:3-4** - *Explains some of the man-made laws and traditions of the Pharisees.*
- **Hebrews 13:7** - Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith.
- **Romans 5:6 & 8** - For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly... But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
- **2 Corinthians 5:21** - He made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.
- **Ephesians 2:4-5** - But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—
- **Titus 3:3-7** - *Explains how we once walked but have been made new through Christ alone and not our own efforts.*