

## “Jesus Only”, Part 1 – Galatians 1:1-9 – July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2017

- By way of introduction to Paul’s letter, I would like to point out a couple of things that are germane to a better understanding.
- This letter was written to several churches in the area of Galatia, which we know today as the modern day country of Turkey.

- The purpose of this letter to these churches is to rebuke them and remind them of their freedom from the law in Jesus Christ.
- Interestingly that on this 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend, Galatians has been called the “Declaration of Independence of Christian liberty.”
- This because the Judaizers came into these churches and confused them with another gospel of faith in Christ “AND” works.

- Sadly, they were met with some measure of success such that they discredited the message, by discrediting the messenger.
- This is a textbook case of demeaning the simplicity of the gospel message of justification through faith alone in Christ alone.
- It’s for this reason the Apostle Paul begins his letter by defending his apostolic authority as coming from only Jesus, not man.

- As such, I decided to take a little different approach to teaching this series by asking several questions having only one answer.
- Namely, that of Jesus only! Not Jesus and, Jesus when, Jesus if, or Jesus but, just Jesus and the “finished” work on the cross.
- My hope and prayer for this series is that all of us, myself included, would return to the simplicity of our liberty in Jesus Christ.

### 1. Who is the authority in my life? (Verses 1-5)

1 Paul, an apostle—sent not from men nor by a man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead—2 and all the brothers and sisters with me, To the churches in Galatia: 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.

- Paul establishes his apostolic authority by telling them it did not come from man, but only by Jesus Christ and God the Father.
- He then goes on to greet the churches in Galatia by saying, grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus.
- Paul says it’s only Jesus Who gave Himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age according to the will of our God.

- If you’re anything like me and I believe you are, you’ve come to appreciate this about the Apostle Paul; Jesus was everything.
- It reminds me of the saying you’ll never know that Jesus is all you need until you come to the place where Jesus is all you have.
- To me it’s an apt description of Paul, in that, everything centered on, came from, pointed to, and ended with Jesus Christ only.

- While I realize asking the question of who’s the authority in my life seems like a rhetorical question, it needs to be answered.
- I suppose another way to ask the same question would be, “who calls the shots in my life?” or, “who is on the throne of my life?”
- If we’re really honest with ourselves, what we’ll find is that self is on the throne, and I myself am the one who calls all the shots.

### 2. Who am I being influenced by? (Verses 6-9)

6 I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you to live in 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 them be under God’s curse! 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 them be under God’s curse!

- Paul expresses astonishment at how quickly they had deserted Christ by turning to a different gospel, which is no gospel at all.
- He then tells them that it’s evident some are throwing them into confusion in their efforts to pervert the true gospel of Christ.
- He then twice tells them anyone; even an angel from heaven, who preaches a different gospel, should be under God’s curse.

- Couple of thoughts on this most interesting passage, the first of which has to do with Paul’s reference to an angel from heaven.
- Oh how I wish every Mormon would take heed to these verses by virtue of the fact that Moroni, appeared as an angel of light.
- According to Doctrine and Covenants, in September of 1823, Joseph Smith received visitations from Moroni, an angel of light.

2 Corinthians 11:14 (NKJV) — 14 And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.

- By the way, let me parenthetically say that like Joseph Smith and the angel of Moroni, Mohammed was also visited by an angel.
- Actually, some suggest that there are eerie similarities between Mormons and Muslims, chief of which is the angel’s visitation.
- In addition to this, both claim that the Bible was corrupted, and that their books are the final authority as being inspired by God.

2 Timothy 3:16–17 (NKJV) — 16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

- By the way, I don’t know if you noticed this, but conspicuously absent from the beginning of this letter is any mention of thanks.
- Paul’s letters to the Romans, Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians and even the Corinthians all began with words of praise.
- The question becomes one of why? I would suggest it’s because of the seriousness of this situation in the Galatian churches.

- You’ll forgive the abrupt closing, but I don’t know if it’s possible to overstate the paramount importance of this one simple truth.
- Specifically, that of the different gospels and with them, the different Jesus that is confusing and perverting the only true gospel.

2 Corinthians 11:3–4 3 But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. 4 For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted—you may well put up with it!