



river west church

The Gospel in Galatians – Part 2

The Truth of the Gospel: Revealed by God Himself

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Why Trust “Paul’s Version” of the Gospel?

If you want to discredit a message, one of the easiest ways is to discredit the messenger. That’s exactly what happened in the churches of Galatia. Paul had proclaimed the Gospel in the cities of Galatia and established vibrant new churches there. But soon after that, false teachers came. They proclaimed a different gospel. They took the core message of the Gospel and distorted it, all the while talking about how they loved and followed Jesus. They didn’t like Paul and they didn’t like the Gospel as he presented it, so they wanted to discredit Paul’s message. They did this by speaking out against Paul himself. They said his version of the Gospel was an invention of his own mind. He made it up. They said he got his ideas from other Christians and then twisted them all up. They said Paul shouldn’t be trusted. And if Paul couldn’t be trusted, then “his version” of the Gospel couldn’t be trusted either.

In Galatians 1 and 2, Paul is basically telling us why we should trust him when he tells us about the core message of the Gospel. Paul is writing as a loving pastor who has given his life to bring these people the good news of Christ and the truth of the Gospel. He cares. This isn’t just about defending his reputation. This is about building up Christians and giving them absolute confidence in the message of the Gospel so that they can fully enter into its true power for their lives.

What Paul Claimed

What Paul claims is huge, see Galatians 1:1 & 1:11-12. Paul claims the message of the Gospel was given to him by a supernatural revelation from God. Paul says, no, I didn’t make this up!

This is the theme of “revelation” as it relates to the truth of the Gospel. By revelation, we’re not talking about the Book of Revelation in the New Testament. We’re talking about God himself, acting to reveal the truth of the Gospel to the Apostle Paul. This is a big claim! And it is crucial. It establishes the basis on which we can fully trust what Paul tells us about the message of the Gospel and how it applies to our lives.

Backing It Up

Paul backs up his amazing claim in two powerful ways. First, he tells the true story of his own life. We find this in Galatians 1. The story of Paul’s conversion is one of the most amazing stories you will ever hear. Paul wants us to know that this is a true story. This is HISTORY. And, the only explanation that holds water is that he actually did encounter Christ the risen Lord. It was Jesus Himself who taught Paul the Gospel!

Secondly, Paul tells us that Peter and the other apostles proclaimed exactly the same Gospel he did. We find this in Galatians 2. Paul compared notes with the other apostles. What they found was an exact match! This is really important because it proves that Paul didn’t take the original message of Jesus and change it to suit his own ideas. Yet, this is the very accusation that people are still bringing against Paul even to this very day. Why do they do this? The answer is simple. They want to deny or distort the true Gospel. To do so, the easiest thing they can do is to discredit the Apostle Paul.

It’s Time to Fully Trust the Message

Here is the point of it all. You need to fully trust the message of the Gospel. It is not some “made up” religious idea by Paul or by anybody else for that matter. Its source is God Himself. The truth of the Gospel has been supernaturally revealed by God and recorded in the New Testament. The message of the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) and the Gospel message proclaimed by Paul are one and

the same. There IS only ONE true Gospel. The Gospel is a clear message too. The Gospel is not a vague religious philosophy that no one can really figure out for certain. We don't need to be tentative or apologetic about saying that we know and believe the truth of the Gospel. We need to trust it fully. Trust the letters of Paul. Trust the New Testament. Trust the Bible. Grasp the core message of the Gospel and learn how all of the scriptures, both Old and New Testament, fit into it's core affirmations. Then, we need to apply it to life. This is what Paul is striving for in Galatians. This is what we are striving for at River West Church too!