

THE HEART OF A GOD'S MESSENGER

GALATIANS 1:10-16

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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:*

What is on the heart of a true messenger of God? What is bound up in his heart? Why does he teach? Why does he preach? The reality of the world we live in is that many preach and teach "a false gospel" out of a desire to have a following, to be popular. In this particular section, Paul is talking soberly and seriously to the saints in Galatia, and also those that are opposing him. Some are claiming that Paul is a false teacher or a false proclaimer...and if his witness can be discredited the complete work of God is affected.

When Paul was placed under attack...he didn't mince his words, or hide his words...but spoke boldly under the direction of the Spirit of God. One sobering thing must be understood...that true legitimate preachers and teachers will be targets of false witnesses and false testimony. Since Paul was attacked, and even Jesus was attacked claiming to be preaching by the power of the devil, the reality is that, true genuine preachers of the Word of God will fall under harmful vicious attacks by the workings of Satan. Therefore it is vitally important to know about the message preached, but about the messenger himself.

1. **THE HEART OF GODS' MESSENGER IS TO PLEASE GOD THE FATHER.** In the very attacks launched at Paul...the heart of the attacks were that Paul was attempting to: seek the favor and approval of man, striving to please man rather than God, living a double life...doing one thing with one group of people and another thing with another group of people. The point clearly made by those accusing Paul was that he was a "man-pleaser" rather than one that lived to "please God". There is no greater charge that could have been leveled at Paul, and there is no greater charge that can be leveled against the man of God that the charge of living, behaving, and preaching to please mankind.

While Paul did live at one time to please mankind, to please the religious leaders, to live a life pleasing to the religious system that he was in...that point in time is past. After Paul received the charges leveled at him...he became quite clear and bold in his response...making it clear before all listening that he was not speaking to please them, or to pacify them, for to please them would result in the very reality that he was not pleasing the Lord. It was very clear and evident in the heart of Paul that he didn't live to please anyone other than the Lord God...and that is the very heart of the servant of the Most High God. While there are preachers that live to please people, to please the congregation, to please those within a denomination, THAT IS NOT the heart of a servant of God. Paul realized that there was a point in time that he could not please his religious system and go on in obedience to God the Father. To please his religious system would have meant: keeping the laws, rejecting Jesus Christ as the Messiah, following rules and regulations as the means of a relationship with God...when that is not the way pleasing to the Father.

Paul quickly found that there was no possible way that he could be the messenger of God and follow the system of Jewish religious belief...for it denied the very incarnation of Jesus Christ. A true messenger of God SEEKS FIRST a relationship with the Father, and he makes it quite clear that there is no other life that is pleasing to God other than living in relationship with God. Sadly, there are countless men in religious systems that are living to please a congregation, a group of people, a religious denomination...but in the end it will be before the Lord God that we stand. Since a true messenger of God lives to please the Father, he urges all who

listen to a life abandoned to self to please God.

1 Corinthians 10:31 Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

Matthew 6:33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

2. **THE HEART OF GOD’S MESSENGER IS TO MAKE KNOWN THE “GOSPEL”.** Paul made it clear that the message that he was preaching was not based on “some human whim or dream”. If there was one thing that Paul desired to make perfectly clear it was the “heart of the gospel”. The gospel is heavy in the heart of God’s true servants, and God’s true believers. While we will always live in a world of disbelief and rejection, it is only in the “gospel” that there is power in salvation.

Paul was not preaching something made up in the mind of someone, or some wonderful ideas, or some false hope that passed with death, or some fanciful idea. The gospel originates from the very heart of Holy God, and it bound in the heart of Paul was a yearning to preach the gospel. It is through the preaching of the gospel that souls are liberated from hell. It is through the preaching of the gospel that lives are bought back from a life of sin, slavery, and bondage to Satan.

It is through the gospel that there is liberty, hope, and eternal life. The gospel is not a clever invention, but the **GOSPEL IS THE POWER OF GOD UNTO SALVATION**. Without the preaching of the gospel, no soul can be saved, rescued from the domain of darkness. The gospel that Paul preached, and that all true preachers preach has been revealed from God above through Jesus Christ. Paul made it clear that the message he preached comes from no one other than Christ Himself. When anyone declares the gospel to another person...they are sharing what has been divinely given. While mankind believes that he can approach God through... “works”, “goodness”, “deeds of the flesh”, the divine truth of heaven is that God yearns to pardon all who will place their faith in Him through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. Salvation is free through the blood of Christ. Sadly, it is totally possible for a preacher to preach apart from preaching the blood of Jesus Christ. However, that preacher is not true to the kingdom of God.

3. **THE LIFE OF GOD’S TRUE MESSENGER HAS BEEN ALTERED RADICALLY THROUGH THE GOSPEL.** One sobering reality about the gospel of Christ...is that it brings about a change in the “complete life” of God’s servant. Paul lived a life that was once away from God, persecuting His church, and hurting believers deliberately. Paul made it clear what he “was like”. He was one that breathed out threatening against the disciples of the Lord. He journeyed to Damascus for the purpose of doing the church harm, but through the glorious power of the gospel, and the transformation of Christ...he was changed. Though he was one of the most faithful Jews in religious activity, it was Christ that brought him to realized that all was vain, apart from Christ.

Paul realized and experienced the radical “new birth” from above, by the Spirit of God. Paul at one time was violent against the church...hurting the church...but Christ changed his life, his outlook, and his purpose in life. In the very heart of Paul before conversion, it was his desire to bring havoc to the church, but after his salvation, his yearned was to help “all the church of God”, through teaching, preaching, and ministering. Paul’s life exemplifies the life of a true messenger of God. Prior to conversion, Paul’s confidence was in religion, after salvation, his confidence was in the gospel. Paul realized that if the gospel could change him, the gospel could change any person that chose to believe. For the true servant of God, the true church of God, and the true people of God, there is strong significance placed on the gospel...for there is no other way where by a person can be liberated from sin, Satan, and eternal death, than through the person of Christ.

In the change of the life of Paul, there are four wonderful realities...1) God set Paul aside for the purpose of the gospel, 2) God called Paul as a vessel to reveal Christ, therefore his lie would become closely identified with Christ in life and in suffering, 3) God called Paul to preach Christ (believers are not only to know Christ but to make Christ known to others) 4, God called Paul to seek His gospel alone. Though mankind has always appeared to have “a gospel”, the only gospel that brings liberation is the “gospel of God through Christ”.

