



## NG Study Guide: Galatians 1:10-24, "Freedom to Worship" [1.20.19]

### Love God + know the Bible better:

1. Read the passage cited above, and try to answer the questions below before your group meets.
2. *Leader note: Please review the brief instructions for leaders at the bottom.*

### The Study

**Thesis: The gospel is the good news about Jesus Christ. This wonderful message isn't man-made, but instead revealed by God through His Son. It is perfectly true and complete; therefore, nothing should be added to it or taken from it. The true gospel is the power of God to change people's lives and eternities. All believers are called to share the gospel, and as we do, God is glorified.**

#### **I. the gospel is from Jesus (vv. 10-12)**

In defense of his message and calling before his critics, Paul assures them he is not living to please people, but God. As evidence of this, he reminds them of how zealously he defends his message, the gospel of Jesus Christ (vv. 8-9). He then explains to them that the message he proclaims wasn't from men, that he hadn't been taught it by men, but that he received it as a revelation from the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

What is Paul's gospel? His letter to the Romans explains the entire message in detail; however, reviewing highlights from this letter provide a solid understanding it's essentials:

3:23 - we have all sinned and fall short of God's glory

6:23 - the consequences of our sin is death (physical and spiritual/eternal)

5:8 - God proved His love for us in that while still sinners, Jesus died for us

10:9 - if we confess our faith in Jesus, we are saved

8:1 - there is no longer any condemnation for those who place their faith in Jesus

Paul condemned anyone who tried to add anything to this gospel, i.e., taught that something else has to be done in addition to believing in Jesus Christ to be saved. The same is true today- anyone teaching that in order to be saved one needs to do something in addition to having faith in Jesus is teaching a man-made, false gospel.

#### **II. the gospel has the power to change people (vv. 13-16a)**

Judaism was the religion of the Jewish people, and Paul had been an ardent follower of it. In his zeal, he had actively pursued and imprisoned Christians in an effort to destroy anyone who professed faith in Jesus.

However, God divinely intervened in Paul's life and changed him dramatically (see Acts 9:1-9). In His perfect time, according to His eternal plan, solely by His merciful grace, Jesus came into Paul's life, and Paul was changed from persecutor to preacher!

This is why Paul would later write,

*"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes..."* (Romans 1:16).

Everyone who responds in faith to the gospel and believes in Jesus Christ is changed, and continues to be changed throughout life, as Jesus, through His Holy Spirit, works to make us more like Him.

### **III. the gospel glorifies God (vv. 16b-24)**

Paul recounts what he did after he was saved in an effort to prove his calling wasn't from men, but instead from God. He shares how after Jesus changed him, he didn't immediately confer with other apostles, nor did he go right away to meet with the church leaders in Jerusalem. Instead he went far away to Arabia, where he spent three years. Finally, after that period of time, he did go up to Jerusalem, but he only spent 15 days there, briefly seeing Peter and James. Afterwards, he again went far away.

Paul was simply proving his point: his calling wasn't from men, and he hadn't been trained by men; rather, he was called and prepared for his ministry by the Lord Jesus Himself.

Paul continued to explain that although people didn't know him by face, they had heard about how he used to persecute believers was now doing all he could to encourage people to become believers. And, Paul celebrates the fact that God received the glory in what He had done, and was doing, in and through Paul's life. The highest calling for all believers is to bring God glory, and one way this is accomplished is by sharing the good news about Jesus with those around us.

#### **Study Guide Qs**

***Q1: If someone asked you to explain the good news (gospel), what would you say?***

***Q2: What are some things some people today say you have to do, in addition to believing in Jesus, in order to be saved?***

***Q3: How has your faith in the gospel, and the fact that Jesus Christ has come into your life, changed you?***

***Q4: As people look at your life, for what reasons might they glorify God?***

**“Digging Deeper” (optional or alternative study)**

1. To understand Paul’s message more completely, read his letter to the Romans. Make note of any insights you receive which expand your understanding of the gospel.
2. Using the Blue Letter Bible web site ([www.blueletterbible.org](http://www.blueletterbible.org)) or another resource, do a search on the word “gospel,” read through the resulting verses, and create a more thorough description of this wonderful truth.

**Love your neighbor *outside* the group better:**

1. Who would like to share how they sought to befriend or build relationship with their neighbors where they live, work, study, or play this past week?
2. Are there some needs that can provide us an opportunity to love our neighbor outside the group?
3. Here is a neighboring idea(s) for us to consider for the week(s) ahead:

**Pray for opportunities to share with your neighbors how Jesus has changed your life. Look for opportunities God may open up for you, and be ready to share the good news when He does.**

**Love your neighbor *inside* the group better:**

1. Are there some needs in our group that can provide us an opportunity to love our neighbor within the group?
2. What might we do about that need to help?

**Prayer [Loving God and Neighbors better]:**

Close the NG meeting with a time of group prayer. Encourage each participant to pray, but don’t force anyone to pray. Encourage the group to keep their prayers brief so that each person can pray.

**Leader Notes:**

1. **Seek to involve as many group participants as possible.** A good group discussion time allows people to get to know the passage and one another better.
2. **Feel free to pre-select the discussion questions that you want to focus on** in case there isn’t enough time to answer them all.
3. **The “Digging Deeper” section provides some optional or alternative study and discussion activities.** As a group leader, you can choose to focus on the “Digging Deeper” section, include part of that section in your group meeting, or not use it at all. Try to give the group sufficient notice so they can be prepared for the meeting.
4. **Every time you meet consider asking:**

**a. What about this passage is particularly exciting, challenging, or confusing?** If a leader is uncertain about a question of doctrine or theology don't hesitate to follow-up with your coach during the week. Then revisit the issue(s) when the group gathers next time.