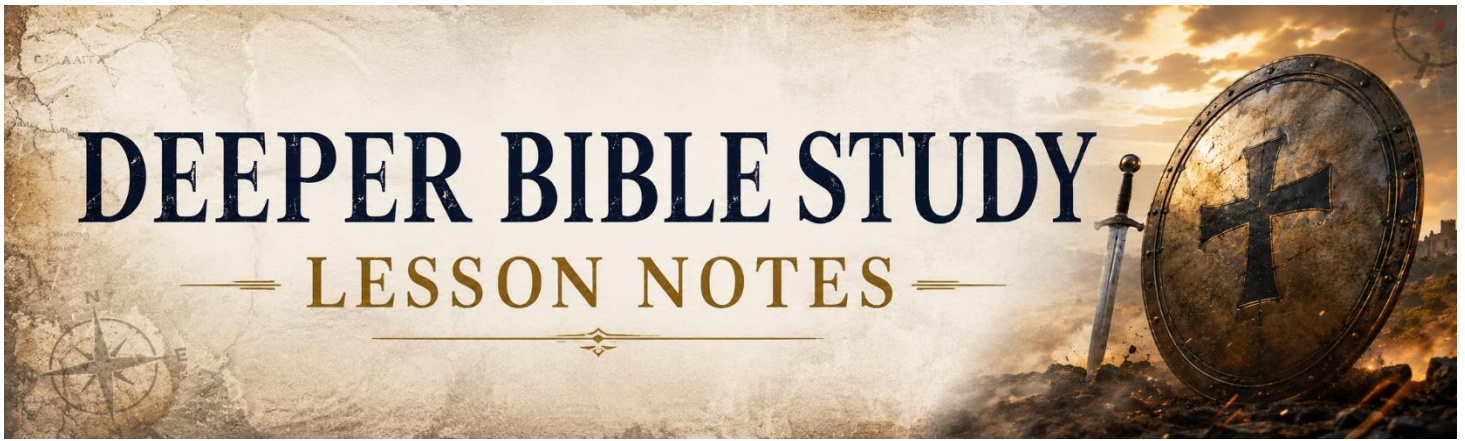




NO OTHER GOSPEL (GALATIANS 1:1-2:14) | PASTOR ADAM AZIZ

THE TONE OF THIS LETTER

- Paul wrote Galatians hot.
 - He opens with the word **shocked**... and he pronounces a curse on false teachers **twice**.
- Paul comes in hot not because he's mean or hard — but because he's a **shepherd**.
- This is not a study about 1st century Galatia... It is about **us today**.

PAUL DEFENDS HIS CALLING

Galatians 1:1 (NLT)... This letter is from Paul, an apostle. I was not appointed by any group of people or any human authority, but by Jesus Christ himself and by God the Father, who raised Jesus from the dead.

- Before Paul defends the gospel, he defends **himself**.
 - The men who came into Galatia after Paul left did not attack his **message** — they attacked his **credentials**.
- His calling did not originate in a committee room. It originated on the Damascus road. **(Acts 9:15)**
- There is a difference between being **CREDENTIALLED** and being **CALLED**.
 - **CREDENTIALLED** = conferred by people. Nothing wrong with them — but they cannot manufacture a call.

- **CALLED** = conferred by God. The absence of credentials cannot cancel it.
- If your sense of assignment came entirely from somebody's approval... then somebody's disapproval can take it from you.

Galatians 1:3-4 (NLT)... May God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace. Jesus gave his life for our sins, just as God our Father planned, in order to rescue us from this evil world in which we live.

- **GRACE AND PEACE** are the first two things religious legalism always steals.
 - It never comes for your doctrine first... It comes for your rest.
- **JESUS GAVE HIS LIFE FOR OUR SINS** — not to supplement our efforts or top off what we accumulated... He gave His life to rescue us.

THE MISSING THANKSGIVING

Galatians 1:6 (NLT)... I am shocked that you are turning away so soon from God, who called you to himself through the loving mercy of Christ. You are following a different way that pretends to be the good news

- Sometimes the loudest thing in a passage is the thing that is missing.
 - Every other letter Paul wrote to a church begins with thanksgiving. (*Philippians 1:3; 1 Corinthians 1:4*)
 - Corinth had a man sleeping with his father's wife (*1 Cor 5:1*) and people getting drunk at the Lord's Table (*1 Cor 11:21*)... Paul still opened with thanksgiving.
 - **Galatians has NONE.**
- Paul found something to thank God for in Corinth's immorality... but not one thing in Galatia's religious legalism.
- They are not turning from a position, but turning away from God, who called you.
 - Religious legalism is not primarily an intellectual error. It is relational departure.
- Notice the timeline — **SO SOON**. Paul is stunned at how quickly they slipped back into religion.
 - Over time the gospel they were standing on became a performance they were maintaining.
 - Paul calls this: a different way that pretends to be the good news.

A DIFFERENT GOSPEL — WHICH IS NOT THE GOSPEL

Galatians 1:7 (NLT)... but is not the Good News at all. You are being fooled by those who deliberately twist the truth concerning Christ.

- These people were **JUDAIZERS**.
 - **JUDAIZERS** = Jewish **believers** who taught that Gentile converts had to be circumcised and keep the law of Moses to be genuinely saved.
 - *Acts 15:1 (NLT)... some men from Judea arrived and began to teach the believers: "Unless you are circumcised as required by the law of Moses, you cannot be saved."*
- Here is the anatomy of the deception...
 - They never **subtracted** Christ... They **added** to Him — and the addition was the poison.
- The Greek is worth knowing here...
 - **HETEROS** (vs 6) = another of a **different kind** — a different species altogether.
 - **ALLOS** (vs 7) = another of the **same kind**... and Paul says it is **not** this.
 - There is no such thing as a slightly different gospel.
- Notice their method — They **TWIST** the truth. Not **delete** it. **TWIST** it.
 - The danger of a counterfeit is not in its **differences**... It's in its **similarities**.
- Here is the mathematics of it...
 - Any **addition** to the gospel is actually a **subtraction from Christ**.
 - *Galatians 2:21 (NLT)... For if keeping the law could make us right with God, then there was no need for Christ to die.*

LET HIM BE CURSED — TWICE

Galatians 1:8-9 (NLT)... Let God's curse fall on anyone, including us or even an angel from heaven, who preaches a different kind of Good News than the one we preached to you. I say again what we have said before: If anyone preaches any other Good News than the one you welcomed, let that person be cursed.

- **PAUL INCLUDES 2 CATEGORIES NOBODY EXPECTED...**
 - 1. **Including us** — Paul puts himself under the same judgement.
 - 2. **Even an angel from heaven** — Paul puts the angels under the same judgement.

- **He's establishing something under oath.**
 - The gospel is not his — or anyone else's — to revise.
 - The message is not subject to the messenger — no matter how impressive the messenger is.
 - An encounter that contradicts the written Word is not a higher revelation — it's a counterfeit.

Galatians 1:10 (NLT)... Obviously, I'm not trying to win the approval of people, but of God. If people were my goal, I would not be Christ's servant.

- **"If I were STILL trying to please people (NKJV)"... STILL. That word is a confession.**
 - There was a version of Paul who lived for approval — star pupil, applauded in every room, advanced beyond everyone his age. (*vs 14*)

NOT A HUMAN MESSAGE

Galatians 1:11-12 (NLT)... Dear brothers and sisters, I want you to understand that the gospel message I preach is not based on mere human reasoning. I received my message from no human source, and no one taught me. Instead, I received it by direct revelation from Jesus Christ.

- **Paul puts everything on the source of his gospel — not the skill of his preaching.**
 - He received it by direct revelation of Jesus Christ... and it was the same gospel the 12 were already preaching.

THE RÉSUMÉ HE RENOUNCED

Galatians 1:13-16 (NLT)... You know how I lived when I followed the Jewish religion — how I violently persecuted God's church. I did my best to destroy it. I was far ahead of my fellow Jews in my zeal for the traditions of my ancestors. But even before I was born, God chose me and called me through his marvelous grace. Then it pleased him to reveal his Son to me so that I would proclaim the Good News about Jesus to the Gentiles.

- **Paul was the finest legalist of his generation.**
 - He did not leave the law bc he failed at it... He left it bc he succeeded at it — and it left him empty and murderous.
- **Look at the order of vs 15 — BEFORE I WAS BORN.**
 - His calling preceded his conversion. His conversion did not create the call on his life.
 - *Jeremiah 1:5 (NLT)... I knew you before I formed you in your mother's womb. Before you were born I set you apart.*

- Look at the order of vs 16 — REVELATION came before PROCLAMATION.
 - God works in you before He works through you.

ARABIA & THE HIDDEN YEARS

Galatians 1:17-18 (NLT)... Nor did I go up to Jerusalem to consult with those who were apostles before I was. Instead, I went away into Arabia, and later I returned to the city of Damascus. Then three years later I went to Jerusalem to get to know Peter, and I stayed with him for fifteen days.

- Everybody wants a platform... Almost nobody wants the wilderness that qualifies you to stand on one.
- He did not run to Jerusalem to get credentialed — He went to Arabia.
- Being hidden is not rejection. It's preparation.
 - Moses had the back side of the desert. (*Exodus 3:1*)
 - David had the cave. (*1 Samuel 22:1*)
 - Jesus had 30 years in a carpenter's shop before only 3 years of ministry.

Galatians 1:23-24 (NLT)... All they knew was that people were saying, "The one who used to persecute us is now preaching the very faith he tried to destroy!" And they praised God because of me.

- They could argue with his ordination and his credentials... They could not argue with his before and after.

JERUSALEM: TITUS & THE FALSE BROTHERS

Galatians 2:4-5 (NLT)... Even that request was made only by some so-called Christians there — false ones, really — who were secretly brought in. They sneaked in to spy on us and take away the freedom we have in Christ Jesus. They wanted to enslave us and force us to follow their Jewish regulations. But we refused to give in to them for a single moment.

- Titus is a living exhibit... and Paul refused to give in for a single moment. (*vs 5*)
 - Paul circumcised Timothy for the sake of mission access. (*Acts 16:3*)
 - Paul refused with Titus because it had become a matter of doctrine.
 - There is a difference between flexibility in METHOD and compromise in TRUTH.

- Religious legalism's goal never changes — to make you a slave again while calling it maturity or righteousness.
- James, Peter, and John had nothing to add to what Paul was preaching. They recognized God had called him to the Gentiles.
 - It was RECOGNITION — not ORDINATION.

PAUL REBUKES PETER TO HIS FACE

Galatians 2:11-12 (NLT)... But when Peter came to Antioch, I had to oppose him to his face, for what he did was very wrong. When he first arrived, he ate with the Gentile Christians, who were not circumcised. But afterward, when some friends of James came, Peter wouldn't eat with the Gentiles anymore. He was afraid of criticism from these people

- The reason Paul rebuke Peter — HE WAS AFRAID.
 - This was not doctrinal ignorance. Peter knew better.

Galatians 2:13 (NLT)... As a result, other Jewish believers followed Peter's hypocrisy, and even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy.

- Even Barnabas — the man who vouched for Paul when nobody else in Jerusalem would.
 - Hypocrisy is a contagion. It spreads.
- How to confront biblically...
 - Go with facts, not feelings.
 - Go for restoration, not victory.
 - Be willing to be the only 1 standing there.
 - Confront privately if you can... **But when the error is public and it touches the gospel — the correction is public too.**
- Peter received it...
 - Years later he wrote about "our beloved brother Paul". (2 Peter 3:15)
 - The mark of a real leader is not that he never gets corrected — it's how he takes it.