

## 1. Protecting Our Children from Another Gospel

Today, we are beginning a new series of topics. The purpose of these topics is to help our children develop godly boldness. Many Christians are controlled by fear in their lives. That is not the plan of the Lord. Instead, the plan of the Lord is to help our physical and spiritual children learn to be led by the Holy Spirit and to yield to the Holy Spirit so that their lives will be filled with boldness as they serve the Lord. We will be developing that topic in this series which will come from the book of Galatians.

In Galatians 1:6-9, we read, “I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.” The Galatians had only been Christians a short time. However, we see here that false teachers were already coming along and trying to deceive them with another gospel. Today, we still have false teachers who will try to do the same with our physical and spiritual children.

The word that is translated “turning away” was the military word that was used to describe a person that deserted from the military. In the time of the New Testament, desertion from the military caused a person to receive the death penalty. As a result, Paul said that the new Christians were deserting the gospel of grace and were turning instead to a gospel that taught that people must earn their salvation by keeping the Jewish law. There are still many groups that have this same or a similar false teaching. That is why it is so important to help our children understand the dangerous consequences of being deceived by false teachers who teach a salvation based on works.

In Galatians 1:3-5, we see that Christ came to deliver us from this present age. Those verses say, “Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.” In order to deliver us from this present age, Christ gave Himself as the sacrifice for our sins. That message is designed to set our children and all others who accept that message free from the bondage of sin. That is why Satan works so hard to try and deceive young Christians with another gospel. For this reason, it is important that we help every new Christian develop a clear understanding of the true Gospel.

Paul began the book of Galatians and many of the other books that he wrote by speaking of the grace and peace that the Father and the Son have given to us. Since Paul wanted to warn the Galatians about false teachers that were teaching another gospel, it was important for him to begin by speaking about the grace of God. Grace speaks of the loving-kindness and favor of God that caused Him to send Christ to die and pay the penalty for our sin so that God could freely forgive our sin. We want to help our children understand that we cannot earn our salvation by works or by the keeping of rules of some religion.

The false gospel that was being taught by the false teachers that had come to the area of Galatia was that salvation was received by being circumcised and keeping the Jewish law in addition to believing in Christ. Galatians 1:6-7 says, “I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ.” These verses show us that adding anything to the message of repentance and faith perverts the gospel of Christ. Here, we see that Paul said he was very surprised that these new Christians would turn away from the grace of God and seek to add works as a part of their salvation.

Here, Paul wrote that adding anything to the grace of God changed the message and made it a different gospel. Paul said that in fact this false teaching was not another gospel at all. Instead, it was a perverted message that denied the gospel of the grace of God. Such a perverted message could never produce peace in the life of new Christians because their lives would continue to be driven by fear. That is why 1 John 4:17-18 tells us, “Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the Day of Judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love.” Every new Christian that is controlled by fear still lacks inner peace.

In order to help protect our physical and spiritual children from false teachers, who will teach a false gospel, we need to help them clearly understand the true gospel. We help them begin to understand the true gospel as we memorize with them and then explain verses like Ephesians 2:8-9 where we read, “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.” These verses point out the fact that we are saved by grace. This happens through the fact that God gives us grace as a gift. These verses make it clear that works have nothing to do with our salvation. They also explain why many people want to include works in the message of salvation. The reason people want to include works is so that they can boast. The sin that caused Satan to rebel against God was pride. Satan tries to use that same pride to deceive people with a false gospel.

We also want to help our children understand the meaning of repentance. The statement in 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10 give a good summary of the meaning of repentance. Those verses say, “For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.” True repentance means that we turn to God. It means that we turn from idols. Idols can include anything that is more important to us than God. As a result of true repentance, we see that we will also want to serve the living and true God and wait for Christ to return from heaven for us. We are also reminded that God raised Christ from the dead and He delivered us from the wrath to come.

Paul also warned that those who are preaching a false gospel are not Christians at all. Galatians 1:8 says, “But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.” The word that is translated “accursed” means

*something that is facing eternal destruction.* Paul said that any person that would try to make certain works a part of salvation was still facing eternal judgment. He said that would be true even if the one teaching such a false teaching would be an angel. In fact, Paul said that if he started teaching such a false teaching it would mean he was still facing eternal judgment.

Then, in verse 9, Paul points out the fact that he had already given the Galatians a warning about such false teachers. Since that warning is not in the first few verses of this book, it meant that Paul had given this warning to the Galatians when he had originally brought the true Gospel to them. Acts 14 records the visit of Paul to Galatia, which was when Paul had shared the Gospel with the Galatians. Acts 14:2 tells what happened when many people had believed. That verse says, “But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brethren.” Here, we see that the false teachers were unbelieving Jews. As we study the book of Galatians, we will see that these unbelieving Jews were trying to teach the Gentiles that in addition to believing in Christ they needed to be circumcised and keep the Jewish law in order to earn their salvation.

As a result, Paul had spent much time helping these new Christians grow so that they would not be deceived by these false teachers. Acts 14:21-22 says, “And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, ‘We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.’” We see three things that Paul had done to help these new Christians in their growth and prepare for false teachers. Paul spent time strengthening the disciples. Paul spent time encouraging them to continue in the faith. Paul spent time preparing them for much tribulation.

These are the same three things that we need to do to help our physical and spiritual children be prepared to recognize false teachers so that they will not be deceived by another gospel. First, we need to strengthen them. “To strengthen” or “confirm” our children means *to help them become more certain of what they believe by helping them to understand more and more of the teaching of Christ.* Second, we are to encourage them to continue in the faith. To “continue in the faith” means *to hold fast to the faith* so that they will not be deceived by those who would try to add laws and rules in order to try to turn the new Christians from faith to works. Third, we are to prepare our children for tribulation because false teachers will turn against them when they do not accept the false teachings.

Here, we see that we protect our physical and spiritual children from another gospel by helping them to know the truth of the gospel. We help them to understand that we receive eternal life by grace and not by works. Salvation is a free gift that was paid for by the death and resurrection of Christ. As a result, salvation cannot be earned by any works. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your physical and spiritual children learn to understand the true gospel.