

2

whatever happened to the Gospel?

Galatians 1:1-2:10

In the last study we saw that the gospel Paul preached in Galatia wasn't enough - at least, according to some. They wanted to add Jewish ritual and law. Surely, the Galatians won't let go of the gospel? They heard it clearly preached by Paul, they've been touched by God's Spirit... why listen to anything else?

Starting Point:

How and when did you first come to understand the "gospel"?

Have there been times you've been forced to re-evaluate your understanding of the gospel?

If you have ever been challenged by "another gospel," what principles have you used to decide "true" from "false"?

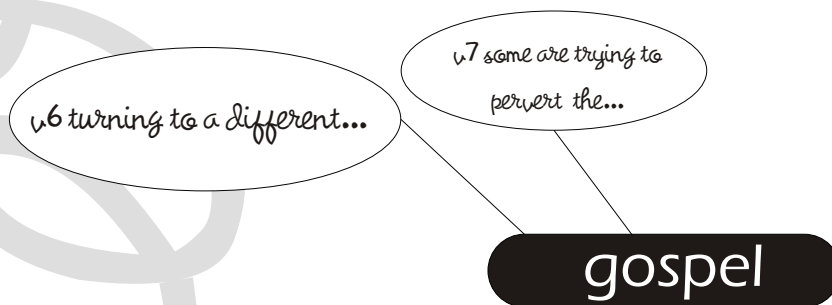
Read through Galatians 1:1-2:10

a) There are some key phrases in verses 1 to 4 that bring to mind the gospel Paul preached when he was in Galatia (see last study). What are the phrases?

b) In summary, what has happened since Paul preached this gospel to them?

c) Make a mind map...

Work through the passage again, and on the diagram below, attach the words and ideas that Paul associates with the word "gospel." Some are positives, some are negatives... maybe you could arrange them so that similar ideas are in the same general area. Think freely. Associate as many ideas as you can.



d) How does Paul feel about what's happened to the gospel?

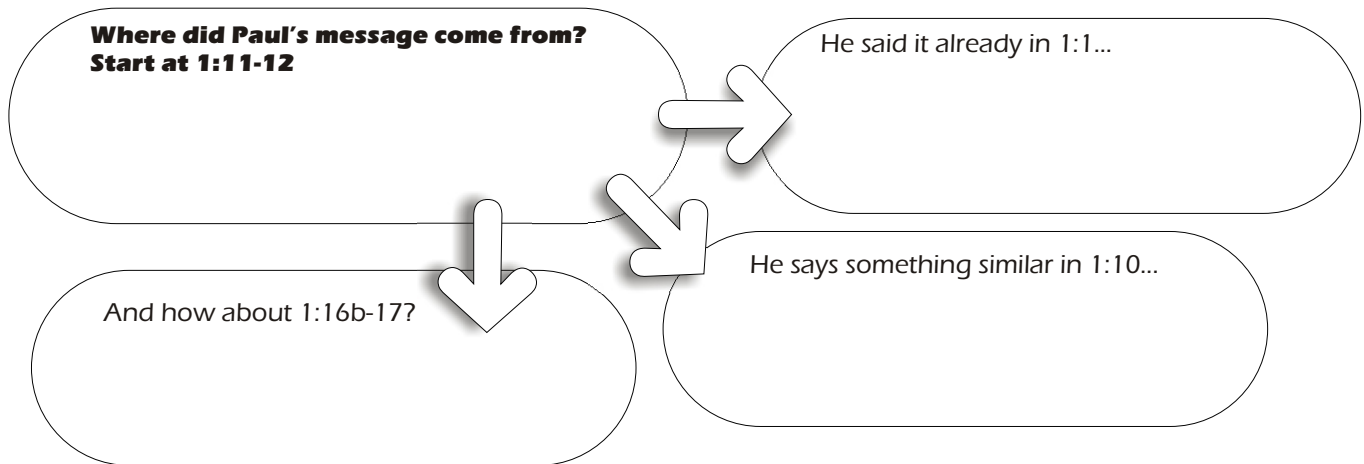
e) Imagine an angel appeared in the centre of the room while you're doing this study, and announces that there's a whole new way to get right with God. What are you going to say, and why? (Would you REALLY say this? Be honest. Why not?)

f) Why would "another gospel" be "no gospel at all"?)

g) What are the effects of the different gospel that's being preached in Galatia?

made in heaven

Romantic types might tell you their marriages are “made in heaven.” But Paul’s not being romantic when he tells us where his gospel comes from. It’s “made in heaven” too. In fact, it’s because of the origin of his message that it’s so important that we don’t mess around with it! This point is so important to Paul that he restates it over and over again...



The made-in-heaven gospel may not be very popular with earthly-minded people. What would Paul say to the suggestion that we should change our message to make Christianity more popular?

A Dramatic Turnaround...

a) Paul tells the story of the dramatic change in his own life from verse 11 to 24. You can read the details in Acts 9:1-19. What does it prove? (v12)

b) Paul, who used to persecute Christians, is suddenly one of them. He meets with Peter (v18), James (v19), and other church leaders “who appeared to be important.” What was their verdict on Paul’s message?

c) How did James, Peter and John validate Paul’s ministry and message? Remembering where the false teachers originally came from (see previous study), how will this help validate Paul’s message?

Compelled to Object

d) According to 2:4, the issue of whether Titus (a Greek) was circumcised was raised by the “false brothers.” What were they concerned about?

e) Why did Paul object so strongly to their demands?

f) Why would giving in to the demand for Titus to be circumcised “make us slaves” and prevent the “truth of the gospel” from remaining with the Galatians?

g) For Paul, anything that was added to the “truth of the gospel” actually subtracted from the truth of the gospel. If the false brothers wanted to **compel** people to be circumcised, Paul was **compelled** to object. Can you think of extra things that people want to add to the gospel today? How should we respond?

h) How is “the freedom we have in Christ Jesus” (v4) expressed in your Christian life?

