

Defending the Gospel

Galatians 1:1-10

Why defend?

- Christian Science, Jehovah's Witness, online Christian courses

Church of Christ, Scientist in
Boston, MA





- Christian Science was founded by Mary Baker Eddy 1879
- Teachings...Science and Health with Keys to Scripture
- Believe in God, not the Trinity
- Deny the Deity of Christ

Galatians 1:1-5

- Paul, an apostle—**sent not from men nor by a man**, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead—² and all the brothers and sisters with me,
- To the churches in Galatia:
- ³ **Grace and peace** to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, ⁴ who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, ⁵ to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Galatians : introduction

- Paul the apostle
- Churches in Galatia – circular letter
- Theme : defense of the gospel of Grace
- Problem: Two-pronged attack...the message of the Gospel and the messenger

Paul's defense

- Call to defend the gospel
- What is the gospel defended
- How to defend the gospel

Gospel

- Good news of salvation
- Historical ...we cannot do without the work of Christ, and
- Experiential...nor can we do without the witness of Christ's apostles...to enjoy the benefits of the gospel.

Call to defend

- Paul, an apostle—**sent not from men nor by a man**, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father
- Apostleship questioned
- His defense...received the gospel direct from Jesus Christ and God the Father,(v 1)
(not in other epistles of Paul)

Not from man nor by man

- ¹¹ I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel I preached is not of human origin. ¹² I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ.
- Not of human origin (source) but by divine revelation

Very unlikely convert

- For you have heard of my previous way of life in Judaism, how **intensely I persecuted the church of God and tried to destroy it.** ¹⁴ | ... was extremely **zealous for the traditions of my fathers.**

Staunch enemy of the church

Now Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest



Acts 9:1

Knowing-Jesus.com

By Revelation

- ¹⁵ But when God, who **set me apart from my mother's womb and called me by his grace, was pleased ¹⁶ to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles**, my immediate response was not to consult any human being.



- Divine encounter
- No human consultation
...they were scared to meet him (21-23)

Early years

- ¹⁷ I did not go up to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before I was, but I went into Arabia. Later I returned to Damascus.



Arabia : Meditated on

- OT scriptures (expert)
- Stephen's sermon (Acts 7)
- Jesus encounter on Damascus road (Acts 9)

Preaching Jesus in Damascus (Acts 9:22)

- ¹⁸ Then after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to get acquainted with Cephas and stayed with him fifteen days. ¹⁹ I saw none of the other apostles—only James, the Lord’s brother.

- First visit after 3 years
- get acquainted...only Peter and James

- ²¹ Then I went to Syria and Cilicia. ²² I was personally unknown to the churches of Judea that are in Christ. ²³ They only heard the report: “The man who formerly persecuted us is now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy.”

No more visits to Jerusalem till the Jerusalem council (Acts 15)

Not from men

- Unlikely conversion by revelation
- Early years in spent in Arabia, Damascus, Syria and Cicilia
- First contact with apostle Peter in Jerusalem after 3 years
- No more visits to Jerusalem till the Jerusalem council (Acts 15)

- Certain people came down from Judea to Antioch and were teaching the believers: “Unless you are circumcised, according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved.” (v1)
- Dispute and debate
- Paul and Barnabas sent to Jerusalem (v2)

Challenge to the Gospel



HIS WORDS

**NO! WE BELIEVE IT IS
THROUGH THE GRACE OF OUR
LORD JESUS THAT WE ARE
SAVED, JUST AS THEY ARE.**

ACTS 15:11, NIV

Peter concluded

Landmark decision

- Salvation was by grace through faith alone. (If that decision were reversed, then Christ's sacrifice...made invalid)
- **Gospel of Grace was confirmed by the Jerusalem council**

- It is a marvelous thing...to teach Christians to ignore the Law and to live before God as though there is no Law whatever. For if you do not ignore the Law and thus direct your thoughts to grace as though there were no Law... you cannot be saved

Martin Luther (1535)

- Lectures on Galatians:
- Active righteousness...rely on own fulfillment of the Law for justification(natural bias)
- Passive righteousness...permitting God to bring about justification (by faith)

What is the gospel?

- ³ Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, ⁴ who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father,

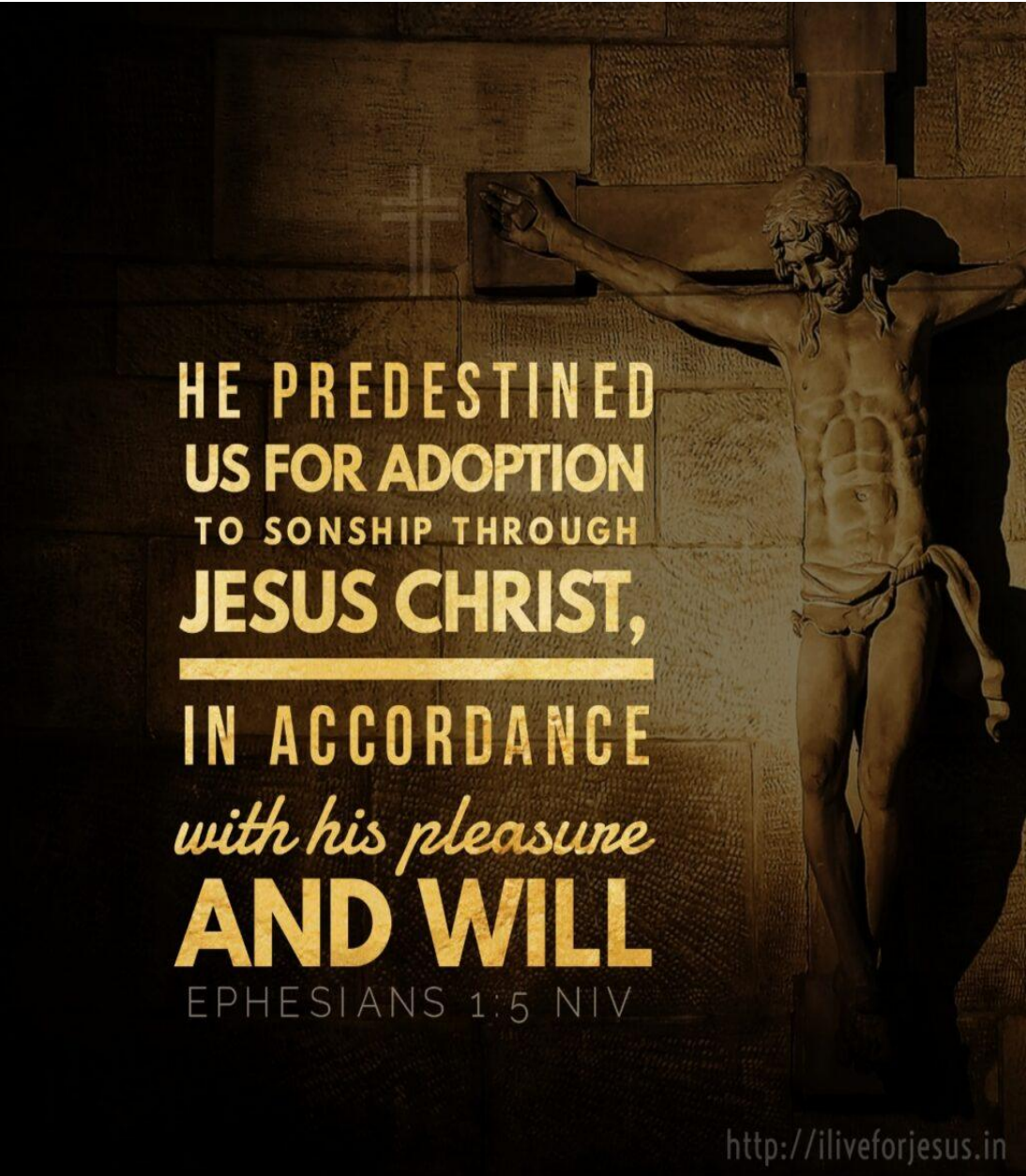
Divine origin

- From God the Father and Son
- Son gave himself...voluntary, not coerced or forced reluctantly
- God's will from before Creation (Ephesians 1:4-5)

FOR HE *CHOSE*
US IN HIM
BEFORE THE
CREATION OF
THE WORLD TO
BE *HOLY* AND
BLAMELESS IN
HIS SIGHT.

EPHESIANS 1:4

iDisciple



HE PREDESTINED
US FOR ADOPTION
TO SONSHIP THROUGH
JESUS CHRIST,

IN ACCORDANCE
with his pleasure
AND WILL

EPHESIANS 1:5 NIV

<http://iliveforjesus.in>

Grace

- Unmerited favor and love
- 150 times in NT
- **Reason** for salvation...by grace you have been saved

**FOR IT IS BY GRACE YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED,
THROUGH FAITH AND THIS IS NOT FROM
YOURSELVES, IT IS THE GIFT OF GOD NOT BY
WORKS, SO THAT NO ONE CAN BOAST.**

EPHESIANS 2:8-9 NIV

HIS WORDS

**BUT GOD DEMONSTRATES HIS
OWN LOVE FOR US IN THIS:
WHILE WE WERE STILL
SINNERS, CHRIST DIED FOR US.**

ROMANS 5:8, NIV

**Died for undeserving
Sinners (Romans 5:8)**

THEN HE SAID,
"JESUS, REMEMBER
ME WHEN YOU
COME INTO YOUR
KINGDOM." JESUS
ANSWERED HIM,
"I TELL YOU THE
TRUTH, TODAY
YOU WILL BE
WITH ME IN
PARADISE."
LUKE 23:42-43

Criminal was unworthy



We are unworthy to be saved

Through Faith

And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

HEBREWS 11:6 NIV

**Faith is God's
way to salvation**

Peace with God

"Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ"

- Romans 5:1; NIV

FaithGraceJesus.com

Reward

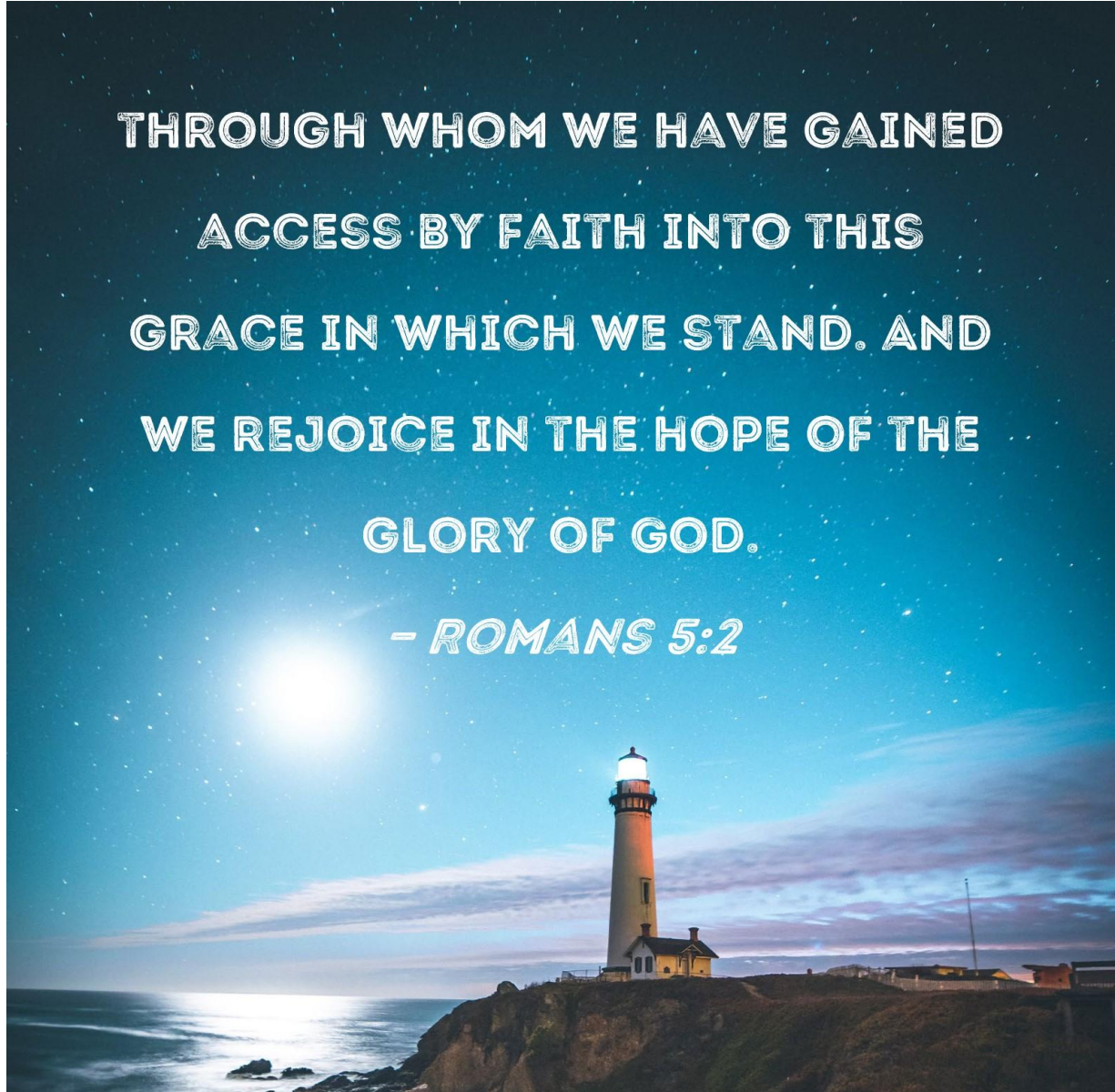
- Justified...though guilty, are made right with God(legally)
- Christ died for our sins (penalty) and removed the wrath of God on the cross
- We received Peace

Goal of salvation

Peace with God

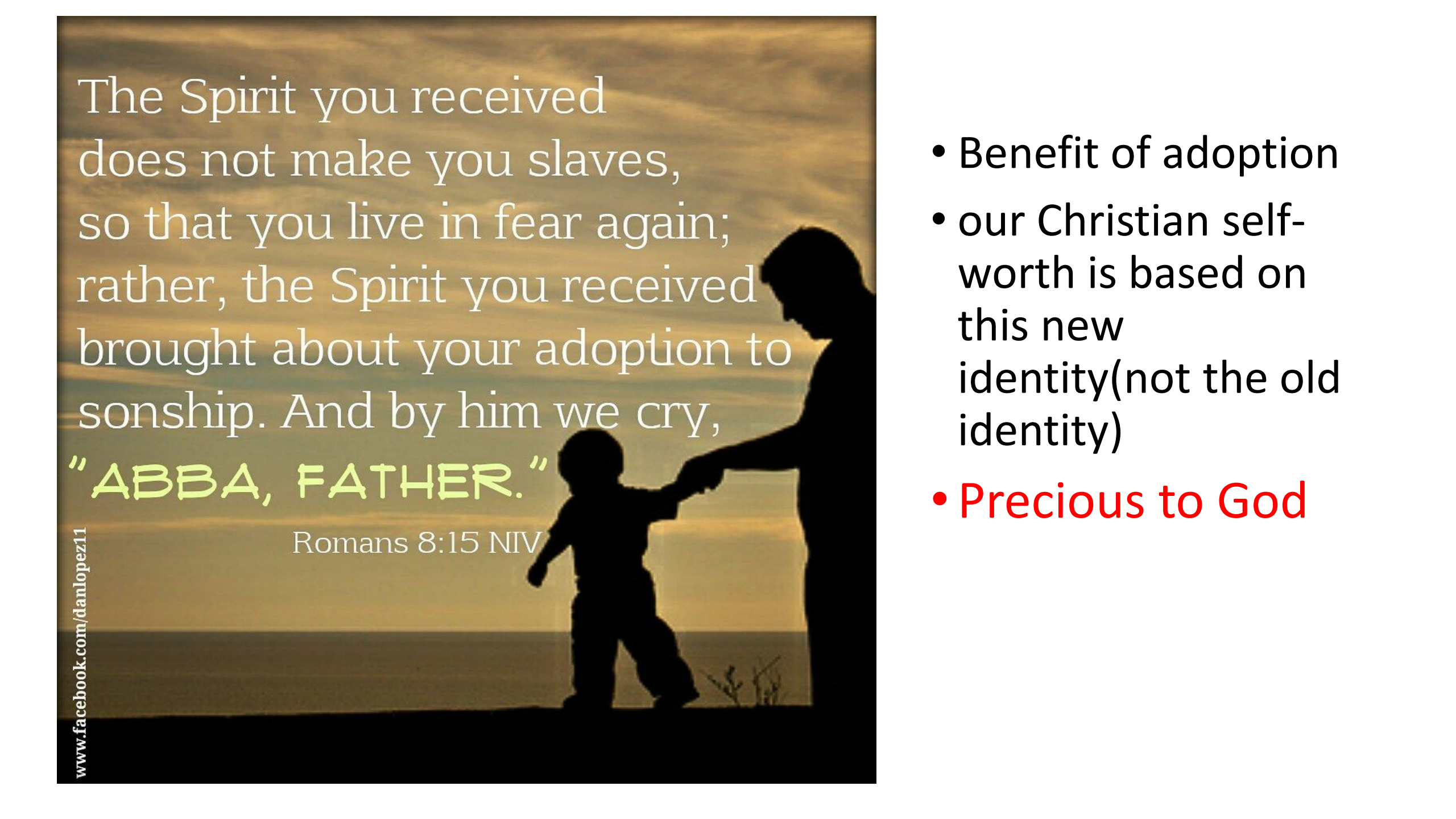
- Access into God's presence (5:2)

We rejoice

A lighthouse on a cliff at night with a starry sky and a bright light source.

THROUGH WHOM WE HAVE GAINED
ACCESS BY FAITH INTO THIS
GRACE IN WHICH WE STAND. AND
WE REJOICE IN THE HOPE OF THE
GLORY OF GOD.

- ROMANS 5:2


The background of the slide features a silhouette of a man and a young child walking on a beach at sunset. The man is on the right, holding the child's hand, and they are walking towards the left. The sky is a mix of orange and yellow, with some clouds. The overall mood is peaceful and intimate.

The Spirit you received
does not make you slaves,
so that you live in fear again;
rather, the Spirit you received
brought about your adoption to
sonship. And by him we cry,

"ABBA, FATHER."

Romans 8:15 NIV

- Benefit of adoption
- our Christian self-worth is based on this new identity(not the old identity)
- Precious to God



Let us approach the throne of grace with confidence so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

-Hebrews 4:16

findingpurposebeyonddtoday.com

- Privileged access to our heavenly Father
- (children of Presidents and Prime Ministers have direct access to them)
- Receive mercy and find grace in our time of need
- What a privilege!

How to defend the Gospel: Rebuke...

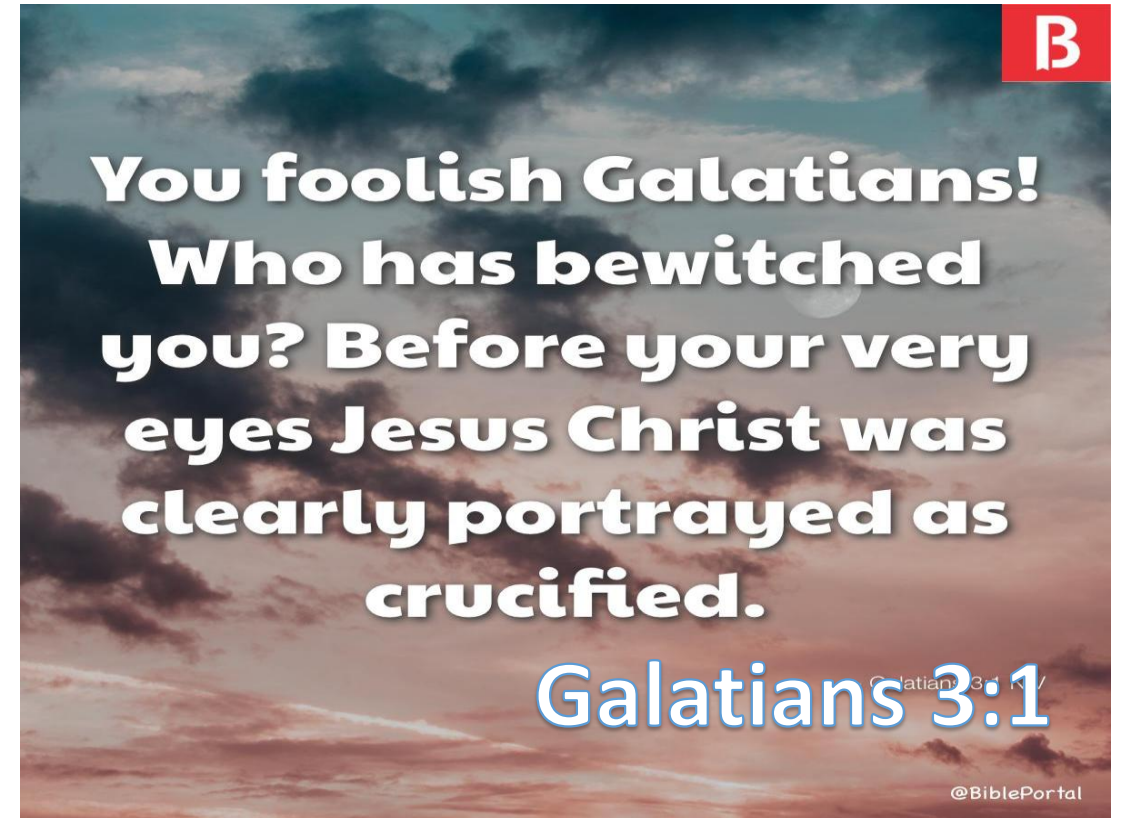
- ⁶ I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you to live in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— ⁷ which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ.

Some people...confusion

Some Men Came Down
From Judea To Antioch And
Were Teaching The Brothers:
“Unless You Are Circumcised,
According To The Custom
Taught By Moses, You Cannot
Be Saved.”

Acts 15-1

BibleWordings.com



Deceived

False Gospels

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.

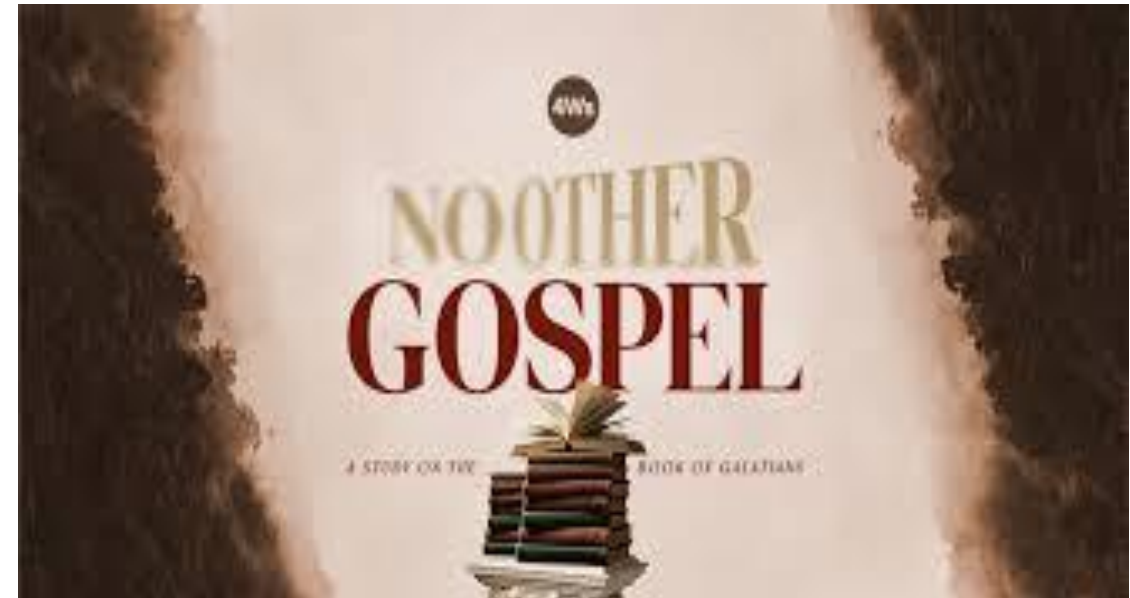
Galatians 1:8-9

- let him be accursed (2x)
- Why so harsh language?
- They perverted the gospel!

Pervert the gospel of Christ

- Pervert (change) the gospel...made it untrue
- Not just leaving a religion, but deserting Jesus Christ who is their Savior and Lord
- No gospel at all
- False gospel...no salvation

Grave consequence



Why so harsh?

- The word 'accursed'
 - ...seriousness of this matter
- showed his passion for the gospel

Danger of

- indifference...accept a false gospel
- the lack of passion (lukewarm)

Mary Baker Eddy

- Congregationalist Church.. father a strict Calvinist.
- Personal misfortune and ill health...tried alternative healing: Homeopathy/aqua-therapy and spiritualist healing
- Personal experience of healing led her to study the healing accounts by Jesus.. her teachings
- Believe in God but **not the deity of Christ**
- Healing by prayer is the focus
- Reading the textbook Science and Health (together with Bible)...gain the mind of Christ incrementally...reach a spiritual divine status like Christ

Beware

Convinced of the Gospel

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

2 Timothy 3:14-15



- Important to know the message / messenger
- Beware of false teachings
- Salvation is at stake

Motivation...approval ratings?

- ¹⁰ Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a **servant of Christ**.
- Approval of God, not men
- **Servant of Christ**...rightly translated as **slave of Christ**

Slave to Christ

“But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed.”

Romans 6:17

 PlainBibleTeaching.com

You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.

Romans 6:18

Slave of Christ

- Defending the gospel is a duty, not optional
- Preach with zeal and passion
- Be ready (2 Timothy 4:1-2)

In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage - with great patience and careful instruction.

2 Timothy 4:1-2



- Be prepared to share the gospel anytime (in church or outside...home/workplace)
- Careful instruction...preach the true message

Summary

- Gospel is historical(divine origin) and passed on through faithful messengers
- Experience benefits of the gospel, Grace and Peace.

Benefits of the gospel

- By Grace, through faith we are justified (made righteous in Christ)
- received Peace with God and adoption as His children
- giving us access to Him and a precious new identity (self worth)

- Be alert against additions and subtractions that lead us astray
- Defend the gospel passionately

- Be prepared to preach the word in and out of season... in all situations
- Be a faithful witness

Reflection

- Do you know the gospel?
- Are you defending the gospel truth against threats?
- Are you sharing the gospel all the time?

