

Small Group Study Questions – Feb 12/13

Fickle Faith

Q. Fun – in what things in your life are you fickle?

Verse 6 -The unfaithfulness of the Galatians

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—

- Paul addresses their fickleness and instability
- Deserting – turned so quickly away, transferring one's allegiance, a soldier who revolts or deserts, turn coat.
- This section Paul explores their true allegiance to Christ

Q. How had the Galatian church shocked Paul & today how do you think we would shock a modern day Paul?

Three Struggles:

1. The struggle is over a Gospel
2. The struggle over the fact that God is father of the World.
3. The Struggle It's about building family a worldwide family.

Q. The false teachers wanted to create inner circles, do inner circles exist in our church today and are they negative or positive?

Talk: think about ways we can create the feeling of family within a large church. Feed ideas back to Brian / Phil

In other words, you must let Moses finish what Christ has begun. Or rather, you yourself must finish, by your obedience to the law, what Christ has begun. You must add your works to the work of Christ. You must finish Christ's unfinished work.

They are turning away, but the truth is that it is impossible to forsake the gospel without forsaking him.

The idea that you can have Christ, but without the gospel is wrong, the reality is that Christian faith and the Christian life work together, or Theology and experience.

Troublesome Teachers

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.

These teachers had the effect of creating trouble, to shake or agitate.

There was a level of intellectual confusion taking place.

What J. B. Phillips calls, "a travesty of the gospel of Christ", to reverse the whole process.

Q. As the Gospel is central, what is so attractive about the Gospel in the 21st century?

You cannot modify or supplement the gospel without radically changing its character.

These people were troubling the church and changing the gospel. The best way to serve the church is to preach the gospel.

1. Paul's reaction is one of utter astonishment; the devil disturbs the church as much by error as by evil.
2. Indignation - *⁸ But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let them be under God's curse! ⁹ As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let them be under God's curse!*

Q. What do you think Paul means by the word curse and how practically does this work?

- They bring a curse not a blessing / deviation / separation / division

In the Old Testament we have the story of Achan – the spoils of Canaanites were under a ban, but Achan stole it and took for himself what should have been destroyed.

You cannot steal what God has given and take it, change it for yourself.

Is Paul showing personal venom towards rival teachers?

No; Paul desires that a curse would fall on him, should he be guilty of perverting it. The fact that he includes himself clears him of the charge of personal spite or animosity.

John Brown, the nineteenth century Scottish commentator, writes: "the apostle repeats it to show the Galatians that this was no excessive, exaggerated statement, into which passion had hurried him, but his calmly formed and unalterable opinion."

People's Praise

Talk: about ways we try to gain man's approval and how does the fear of men affect our openness of the message and building a strong Christian community?

Winning Approval

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.

Paul did not live for man's pleasure neither was he paralysed by the fear of men. In his heart there was no room to serve two masters.

Why did Paul use such strong language?

1. The glory of Christ was at stake – his work was unsatisfactory – the cross was therefore redundant.
2. Men's souls were at stake – no trivial doctrine

Romans 9:1

Mark 9: 42

Prayer :

Take time to pray that as a church we will effectively communicate the Gospel. Pray that we will build a loving family and a welcoming community. Pray for a openness to the faith in Kelowna