

Riverview Baptist Church  
Sunday School Teaching Plan  
October 11, 2015  
Galatians 1:8-12  
“A Revelation from Jesus Christ!”

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### Memory Verse:

Galatians 1:10 NIV - *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.*

### The Big Idea:

Sermon Scripture: The sermon will be the fourth in a series of expository sermons on Galatians. Galatians 1:8-12 will be studied in Sunday School today.

Sunday School Scripture: Galatians 1:8-12

Sunday School Title: “A Revelation from Jesus Christ”

ESS: Christians must continue in the true gospel of Jesus and reject all false gospels no matter who presents them to us.

### Preparation:

Spend some time getting familiar with material on the website: <https://carm.org/jehovahs-witnesses>, <https://carm.org/mormonism>, <https://carm.org/islam>, <https://carm.org/universalism>.

### Scripture:

<sup>8</sup> 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! <sup>9</sup> 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!

<sup>10</sup> 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.

<sup>11</sup> I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel I preached is not of human origin. <sup>12</sup> I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ.  
Galatians 1:8-12 (NIV)

### Presentation:

Think about a time you were led to believe something that proved to be untrue. How did you realize it wasn’t real and how did you feel about it later. If you were intentionally deceived, how did it feel? How did that change the way you related to the one who misled you?

Some people mislead others about the nature of Christian faith. Some believe all types of non-Christian ideas about God. But the reality is that anyone, even if they claim to be Christian, if they add to the gospel of Jesus in the Bible, is guilty of teaching a false gospel. Jesus + Anything = False gospel. The Bible teaches that we are saved through Jesus not, men, tradition, religious works, etc. Jesus is the gospel.

**Read:** Galatians 1:8-12.

1. **The curse of God is upon the messengers of any false gospel.** Verses 8-9
  - a. The cursed gospel is any gospel that adds to the true gospel given by God!

- b. Give a quick review of the gospel. Review last week's lesson if needed.
- c. Paul seems to have in mind the solemn curses pronounced by God upon those who break His covenant (Deuteronomy 27). For Paul, it wasn't enough to say, "Don't listen to these people." It was more than just not listening to them. Paul declared them as cursed!
- d. Paul pronounces the curse of God twice: There was no possible way to more strongly condemn the message and the messenger of this false gospel.
- e. Paul is not unloving! Paul's love is for souls that are in danger of hell. If a gospel is false, and not "another good news" at all, then it can't save someone.
- f. Trusting in a false gospel is like a drowning man boarding a sinking ship for his salvation. The man's end is the same either way. Illustration by David Guzik

**2. The approval of God is reserved and available for any who believe and teach the true gospel.** Verse 10

- a. Whose approval are you trying to gain?
- b. Can others tell this by the way you live your life?
- c. God is our real judge, not people! Galatians 6:7 We are under an obligation to please God.
- d. We cannot please two judges. Matthew 6:24
- e. Few people choose to live for God's approval. Matthew 7:13-14
- f. The way of people is not the same as the way of God. Isaiah 55:9
- g. Most false gospels are built around the idea of pleasing people.
- h. Whose servant are you? We must move beyond the idea of trying to have it "both ways" in life. We must really submit to God's will.
- i. **Servant** perhaps is not the best translation here; it may be better translated *slave*. "It is unfortunate that ... our English translations should so consistently fail to give this word its true meaning, thereby encouraging the false conception of Christian 'service' (as something essentially voluntary and part-time) so characteristic of modern religious idealism. The 'bond-servant of Christ' is not free to offer or withhold his 'service'; his life is not his own, but belongs entirely to his Lord." (Duncan, cited in Morris)

**3. The true Gospel comes from God through Jesus Christ!** Verses 11-12

- a. Paul taught a gospel from God, not himself!
- b. Paul did not create, or discover a way to God.
- c. No other man discovered it and gave it to him. Galatians 1:1, It is important that Paul is able to stand against all men, even, Peter and the other apostles, but especially those who are meddling in their names. Paul's message is not dependent upon approval from other men.
- d. "The gospel preached by Paul is not the true gospel because it is Paul who preaches it; it is the true gospel because the risen Christ gave it to Paul to preach." (Bruce, cited in Morris)
- e. Not even an angel can change it, or amend it. Galatians 1:8
- f. Contrast this with the human founders of other world religions! Muhammed, Joseph Smith, Cult leaders
- g. Paul received the gospel through direct revelation from Jesus. Refer to Acts 9. He received the gospel in a dramatic, direct revelation when He encountered Jesus on the road to Damascus. While there is sometimes disagreement about when Paul believed the gospel (I believe the testimony of Acts 9 suggests that Paul's conversion and call is accepted after Ananias' testimony), the fact that he encountered Jesus on the Damascus road is clear. Jesus, not the Apostles, nor angels, nor tradition is the source of his gospel! Jesus is the revelation of the gospel to Paul!

## Apply:

- **Write down the basic facts about the way you came to believe the gospel.**
- **Think about anyone in your life who might be trying to influence you away from the true gospel.**
- **Decide to live for the approval of God not men!**
- **Thank God for your salvation and your walk with Jesus!**

➤ **Spend time in prayer for anyone you know who is caught up in false religion.**

**NOTE!!!** All definitions unless otherwise noted are from Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

The following notes are taken from Blueletter Bible Commentary by David Guzik.

[http://www.blbclassic.org/commentaries/comm\\_view.cfm?AuthorID=2&contentID=20170&commInfo=31&topic=Galatians&ar=Gal\\_1\\_9](http://www.blbclassic.org/commentaries/comm_view.cfm?AuthorID=2&contentID=20170&commInfo=31&topic=Galatians&ar=Gal_1_9)

(8-9) A solemn curse upon those who bring a false gospel.

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.

- a. **But even if we, or an angel from heaven:** Paul doesn't care who brings a false gospel. Even if it is himself, or an angel from heaven, it is to be rejected. Any person who spreads a false gospel is worthy only of a particular curse from God (**let him be accursed**).
  - i. "The gospel preached by Paul is not the true gospel because it is Paul who preaches it; it is the true gospel because the risen Christ gave it to Paul to preach." (Bruce, cited in Morris)
- b. **Let him be accursed:** Paul seems to have in mind the solemn curses pronounced by God upon those who break His covenant ([Deuteronomy 27](#)). For Paul, it wasn't enough to say, "Don't listen to these people." It was more than just not listening to them. Paul soberly thought that they should be cursed!
- c. **So now I say again:** The curse is repeated for extra emphasis; it is really impossible for Paul to express this idea with any more strength than he does here.
- d. It might be fair to ask, "Where is Paul's love?" He asks for a "double curse" on people - people who spread a false gospel. He doesn't just ask God to curse the message, but to curse the people who spread the message. So, where is Paul's love? Paul's love is for souls that are in danger of hell. If a gospel is false, and not "another good news" at all, then it can't save someone.
  - i. Think of a sinking ship, and the waters fill with people about to drown. Two ships come to rescue people in danger, but one of the rescue ships carries a load of dynamite, and for some reason you know that that ship will explode before it reaches port, and everyone on it will be killed. The most loving thing you could do is help everyone to get on *the right rescue ship!* Getting on the wrong rescue ship would seal your doom! Paul looks at this false gospel, this perverted gospel, and says, "That is a rescue ship about to sink! It can't save anyone! I want to do everything right before God to warn people away from the wrong rescue ship!"

C. The Divine source of the gospel Paul preached.

1. (10) Paul's gospel did not come from a desire to please man.

For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.

- a. **For do I now persuade men, or God?** Paul's idea is *not* "I want to persuade God to my point of view." The idea is God is his *audience*. When Paul speaks, he speaks first to *God*, not to man.
- b. **Or do I seek to please men?** Paul's first obligation was to *please God*, not to *please men*. He would not fashion and shape his message just to please his audience. He was more concerned about pleasing God.
  - i. Though it is not specifically said, we sense that Paul is making a contrast between himself and those who brought the *different gospel*. Apparently, in some way, that *different gospel* was built around the idea of pleasing man.
  - ii. "There have always been preachers who have sought popular acclaim above all else, and there are some still. It is part of fallen human nature that even those charged with the responsibility

of proclaiming the gospel can fall into the trap of trying to be popular rather than faithful.”  
(Morris)

- a. **For if I still pleased men, I would not be a servant of Christ:** For Paul, it was one or the other. He could not direct his ministry towards pleasing men *and at the same time* direct it to pleasing Jesus Christ. And if his concern is not first to please Jesus Christ, then he is not a **servant of Christ**.
  - i. **Servant** perhaps is not the best translation here; it may be better translated *slave*. “It is unfortunate that ... our English translations should so consistently fail to give this word its true meaning, thereby encouraging the false conception of Christian 'service' (as something essentially voluntary and part-time) so characteristic of modern religious idealism. The 'bond-servant of Christ' is not free to offer or withhold his 'service'; his life is not his own, but belongs entirely to his Lord.” (Duncan, cited in Morris)

## 2. (11-12) The Divine source of Paul's gospel.

But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught *it*, but *it came* through the revelation of Jesus Christ.

- a. **The gospel that I preached to you:** “Paul makes a play on words when he refers to ‘the gospel that I gospelled to you.’” (Morris)
- b. **Is not according to man:** In contrast to the different gospel brought by others, Paul's message was a revelation from God. Paul's message was not a man's attempt to reach up and understand God; it was God's effort to bow down and communicate with man.
  - i. Men may have many marvelous things to teach us, but God's revelation has *all things which pertain to life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3)*; now more than ever, the world does not need the good advice and wisdom of man, it needs a revelation from God.
  - ii. Did Paul's message - the message of the Bible - really come from God, or is it a fine achievement of man's spiritual and moral search for God? If Paul's gospel, the message of the Bible, really came from God, then it is the most important fact in the world. If it is just a human invention or achievement, then it is the most dangerous lie in the world.
  - iii. There isn't any shortage of people who claim that they have a revelation from God. But we have to be careful to not regard a message as being from God if it isn't. How can we know that the Bible is really from God and not man?
  - iv. First, we know that the Bible is reliable, accurate and trustworthy as an ancient document. We know this because the text itself is reliable (we know this from the study and comparison of ancient manuscripts). And we know this because archaeology has consistently confirmed and supported the Biblical record, and has never contradicted the Bible. People, places, and events in the Bible are repeatedly verified by archaeology.
  - v. Second, we know that the Bible is unique, and special among all books ever written. It is unique in its *continuity*, being written over 1600 years, over 60 generations, by more than 40 authors, on three different continents, in different circumstances and places, in different times, different moods, in three languages, concerning scores of controversial subjects, but it speaks with one united voice. It is unique in its *circulation*, being the most published and popular book ever. It is unique in its *translation*, being the first book translated, and having been translated into more languages than any other book. It is unique in its *survival*, having survived the ravages of time, manual transcription, persecution, and criticism. It is unique in its *honesty*, dealing with the sins and failures of its heroes in a manner quite unknown among ancient literature. It is unique in its *influence*, having far and away a greater influence on culture and literature than any other book in existence.
  - vi. Third, the Bible is a book of predictive prophecy, literally fulfilled. For example, there are some 300 prophecies concerning the Messiah that were exactly and literally fulfilled by Jesus, such as His birth at Bethlehem, His manner of death and burial, and so forth. Another example is that the Bible describes the rise of four successive world empires (Babylonia, Persia, Greece, Rome) with such accuracy that all critics can do is claim that the passage was actually written after the events happened.

- vii. Fourth, the Bible is a book that has profoundly changed the lives of millions, irrespective of their race, class, era, sex, locale, age, or social status.
  - viii. One might look at all this evidence and still say, "It doesn't *prove* that the Bible came from God." The point is granted; but it does give us a *reason* to believe that it did. In the end, believing the Bible is from God is a step of faith. But it is a step of *intelligent and informed faith*, not a leap of blind faith.
- c. **I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ:** Paul's own relationship to this gospel was unique. Most everyone hears the gospel from someone else; this is God's "normal" way of communicating the gospel ([Romans 10:14-15](#)). But Paul was not "normal" in this respect. He received the gospel in a dramatic, direct revelation when He encountered Jesus on the road to Damascus.
- i. [Acts 9:1-9](#) describes this remarkable incident. The Lord Jesus spoke to Paul directly on the Road to Damascus, and then Paul spent three days without sight, before a Christian named Ananias came to him. It was probably during this time - either on the road or during the three days - when Jesus brought His gospel to Paul. Paul certainly had the gospel right away, because he was both saved and began to immediately preach the message Jesus gave him ([Acts 9:20-22](#)).