## BELIEVERS BIBLE FELLOWSHIP September 25, 2011

Lesson No.2



Synagogue Letters Acts 9:1-2







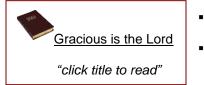
Key Verse: Galatians 1:8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

INTRODUCTION: After the brief introduction Paul gets busy with the main message. He can not hide that which is burning in his heart, his indignation at the Galatians fickleness. Who were the Galatians? They were migrants from France who settled in Northern Asia Minor. Early Roman writers characterized them as warlike, mercenaries who lived in the southern province called Galatia. Galatia means *"the country of the Guals"* thus, they became known as Galatians:

- Sharp and quick minded characterized by prompt vigorous actions, inconstancy, treachery, quarrelsomeness, of being very impressionable people and ease of discouragement.
- They were driven by a desire for change.
- It is this feature of the Gauls that manifest itself in Paul's letter to the Galatians.

What some are saying: The combination of *warm-hearted impulsiveness and fickleness* speak of the Americans as the Galatians among the nations. Click the title to read the USA Today report <u>America's Religious Beliefs and Practices Shift</u>.

The AMAZEMENT of Paul over their condition vv. 6-9 Paul was amazed for two reasons:



- The Galatians believers were turning away from the truth; lit. deserting *"as in a military desertion"*
- Their desertion was happening so quickly after his first visit with them: see Galatians Study Guide, Key Points of Interest, churches of Galatia, page 3.

I. The DEPARTURE from the gospel of grace v.6-7 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel.

1. It was a Surprise: I marvel, lit. "astounded" or "bewildered"

- We are inclined to think that if a person stands up and preach the accurate gospel, people will hear and be saved. A man may preach the gospel in the purest way that it is possible to preach it, and the whole congregation may rebel against him, and stone him to death i.e. Stephen, Acts 7
- People get so familiar with attending church, sitting in the congregation, listening to somebody talk, and sooner or later the whole thing becomes something that we move through as if it were custom.

2. It was Sudden: It's as though they have become spell bound under the allurement of false teachers. Chapter 3:1 O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you?

• A person has not truly responded to the gospel until they enter into a relationship with Christ; and when that person turn from the gospel of grace, they turn from him.

3. It was a Switch: they were *"turning renegade"* toward another gospel, which was not another. Paul uses the word *"another"* twice, but with different meanings.

- First Case: turning to "another" of a different kind: Greek heteros, eng. heterodoxy, a false or different opinion (doxy). Heterodoxy is a false doctrine, contrary to orthodoxy which is "straight thinking"
- Second Case: turning to "another" of the same kind i.e. John 14:16 their turn was not to something of the same kind, but of a different kind, a counterfeit message i.e. currency, jewelry, clothing, etc. The difference between a counterfeit and the real thing: The counterfeit lacks authority, it lacks quality, it is not genuine, it is worthless.

II. The DANGER to those who preach a false gospel vv.8-9 there is no other gospel of the same kind.

- 1. The Source of the Message: those who pervert the gospel of Christ.
- Anyone who perverts the gospel of grace, by adding to or taking away from the "finished work" of Christ is unauthorized by God; therefore, the message does not have any authority to save the sinner. John 3:16; Romans 3:24; Titus 3:5

2. The Consequence of the Messenger: "*let him be accursed*" Greek anathema, lit. "*let him go to hell*"

- Any variation from the truth of the biblical gospel brings a person under "the divine curse" because:
- A counterfeit message invalidates the conception of grace in the plan of salvation.
- It insults the work of Christ, He declared "it is finished" John 19:30

Conclusion: To preach a different gospel is the worst thing that a teacher of the word of God could possibly do. And to receive a false gospel is the next worst thing that a person can do.