

THE CHURCH AT GALATIA

Gal. 1:2

INTRODUCTION:

The message to the Galatians begins with - "And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia,"

Some one has said Paul took his text Habakkuk 2:4 "The just shall live by his faith"
"The just" same Hebrews - "shall live" theme of Gal. - "By faith" theme of Hebrews.

Now to the church at Philippi and to the church at Jerusalem, we had a definite church to which the message was sent. We discovered last week some of the wonderful characteristics in the development of the church.

When we consider the churches of Galatia, we have a question of dispute as to whether the churches of Galatia were in political or geographical Galatia as some argue.

Sir Wm. Ramsey argues from the objective Galatian - Acts 16:6 - for the Roman province embracing Galatia proper and part of Pisidia and Lycaonia. This territory was made a Roman province by Augustus in B. C. 25.

It extended across Asia Minor.

Now if Sir Wm. Ramsey is correct in his position, then the churches of Galatia were Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, and Pisidian Antioch. These were evangelized or established during the first mission of Paul. And they were revisited on his second and third missionary journey.

There is another theory that is maintained by Lightfoot which holds to a smaller track of country - about 200 miles in length, in the central district of Asia Minor. The gauls came as invaders from France. And they occupied this section and parcel of land, which was spoken of by Caesar. The churches

according to this theory were three in number in the central city. Ancyra and Pessinus, and Tavium.

Now whichever theory of the territory one accepts - it is inescapable that they were the churches of Galatia. And not the church of Galatia.

Now we have said that the New Testament knows nothing of a provincial or territorial church.

The only reference in the New Testament to a territorial church is in Acts 9:31 and there is controversary as to whether the text should read church or churches. If church be the correct text, then it is reasonable to suppose it means the local church of Jerusalem whose members had been scattered abroad by persecution, which killed Stephen. Acts 8:3.

We read later of the churches of God which are in Judea. I Thess. 2:14.

And I was unknown by face to the churches of Judea. Gal. 1:22.

So we conclude the place was Galatia. And of course the meaning of Galatia, like the date, is debatable. Probably it means the Roman province of Galatia, that contained these churches in the cities where they were located.

By way of introduction we find an interesting note about the people. The inhabitants of this ancient kingdom of Galatia were a Celtic race who lived originally in what is now northern and central France. Their physical features resembled the Germans. Men of large stature, fair skin, blue eyes.

They were restless and impulsive.

There are those who believe that they were the same people who settled Wales and Ireland.

Dr. Carroll says in his history, that he believes that an Irishmen is a Galatian. Fickle, etc. Because we have in this letter to deal with a class of people unlike any other people that the Gospel has yet reached. The letter shows when Paul first preached to them how impressionable they were. Quick and deep emotioned. It was easy he said to get a foothold among them. And it was also easy to lose it.

Now the uncertain temper of the Irish, as spoken of by Mr. Lloyd George, cited their record in the World War in 1914. He said every Irish representative in parliament approved the war. And there were English and Scotch representatives who disapproved - but no such Irish representatives. In 1916 he said they were shooting down British soldiers not yet recovered from the wounds of the war.

In 1917-18 they were conspiring with Germany.

In 1919 they declared Ireland to be an independent republic.

Somebody has suggested at that point, it would have certainly been wonderful if there would have been a Paul there ready to write a letter to the Irish. Surely one who studies this message to the church in Galatia must bear in mind their temperment if he was to understand the Galatian Churches.

So much for the people. Now let us look at Paul. The place is Galatia and the people were very tempermental. And now the missionary and preacher, Paul,

was one who aided in the establishment of this work.

Acts 16:6.

Acts 18:23.

Now in these verses Paul lets us know that he was the founder and that it came about as a result of a physical infirmity. This caused Paul to preach in the Galatian country. In those days, Paul had a bodily infirmity. And these words were written from Corinth on the third journey, about 58 A. D. Though Paul was divinely chosen and inspired - the apostle to the Gentiles - he was (not exempt from disease.)

Neither were his companions he left Trophimus at Miletus sick.

Ephaphroditus was sick unto death at Rome.

Jesus was never sick. He himself took our sickness. He bore our sins without becoming himself a sinner. He bore our diseases without becoming diseased. But he was exceptional and unique. (Christian Science) denies sickness saying that it is unChristian and unscientific. But denying the facts does not change the facts.

Jesus healed the sick by his power. He never denied the reality of sickness. The mind has power over the body. Faith is a mighty force. Some physical ills are imaginary. Disease, sin, and death are terrible and ever present facts. Christian Science contradicts Jesus and Paul. It contradicts human experience. And it really results in tragedy.

In Chicago a large gentlemen arose and inquired - are there any Christian Scientists here. A small shallow faced woman who sat on the second seat from the front, thinking her faith was being challenged - arose and said, I have the honor sir of being a Christian Scientists. Well, said the man, please exchange seats with me - (I'm sitting in a draft and don't want to take cold.)

I read once the story of Mark Twain about a Christian Scientists in Switzerland. And Mark imagined himself climbing the Alps - he fell and rolled to the foot of the mountain. The flesh was lacerated and an arm was broken in two places. They brought him to a hotel where a surgeon set the arm. A Christian Science Healer came and spoke all of his theories. Mr. Clements, you are not hurt at all. There is no such things as pain, I am amazed that such an intelligent man as you should be under such a delusion. Madam, said Mark, I am in agony. My arm is broken in two places. And suffering as I am, you would have hysteria. Day by day the Healer came by - but Mark kept his decision. In due time he was ready to leave the hotel. The Healer sent him a bill for her professional services. Where upon said Mark, (I paid her with an imaginary check.)

Now God, who makes all things work together for good to those who love him. And he used Paul's (providential affliction) to plant churches in Galatia. You will remember the apostle wished to preach in Asia and Bithynia. But the Holy Spirit forbade him and shut him up by illness to Galatia.

Now ministers cannot choose their field of labor. The Holy Spirit who inaugurated the missionary enterprise at Antioch and makes men overseers of the flock, directs Paul in a path which he did not choose. And by means which he himself could not control.

There may be some reference here in Galatians 4:15 - in that Paul's

thorne of the flesh was an infection of the eyes. Had it been possible you would have torn out your own eyes and given them to me. He never fully recovered from the effects from that light that shown upon him on the Damascus Road. And thrice he prayed for the removal of that infirmity.

Dr. Henson had a glass eye. A deluted sister once asked him, why don't you pray God to give you another good eye. He detected that the sister had false teeth. Quickly he reported, why don't you pay God to give you another set of teeth. And when he does that, I may follow your advice.

Paul and Henson were supplied grace to bear their infirmities. It was some kind of physical ailment and it was distressing to Paul - and it could have well affected his sight. And it seems to have been more than a temporary affliction that clung to him for several years. But it seemed to have been of a benefit and design to assist Paul rather than to hinder him.

I think sometimes modern churches put too much emphasis on the minister's appearance. There are some who today would put all the emphasis on minister's dress. Or on physical things. An enthusiastic church member remarked concerning his handsome pastor, that it was worth his salary to see him walk down the street.

Now Paul was of ^{small} stature - sore eyes, ungameley form. In fact, he could not be called to the fashionable modern church today.

Soccrates was known as the ugliest man in Athens. Paul was the most humble of the Apostles. But considering the inner man and estimating the preacher's worth was by what he carried in his head and heart. Rather than what he had in the way of hair on his head or clothes on his body.

Four times in the New Testament, Paul gives an account of his conversion. First, by Luke in Acts 9. Second, by Paul from the stairs in Jerusalem - Acts 22. Third, in a speech by Paul in Acts 26. Forth, of his apostleship to the Galatians. He includes in this some history not otherwise recorded. He says his Gospel came by direct revelation from Jesus Christ. That it was founded upon the personal appearance to him from Jesus. He declares that he did not receive it from any other apostle.

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I read this week an account of Dr. E. F. Hallock, who was for 46 years pastor of the First Baptist Church in Norman, Okla. When he preached the trial sermon there, he was 35 years of age. And of course, he preached until he was beyond 80 years of age. But the most remarkable thing about the history of his ministry was this -- that it came out in a discussion in the business meeting - in fact the man who made the motion said this. (This preacher is the homeliest man I have ever seen in my life and he can't preach a lick.) But I am going to make a motion that we call him anyway. And they did. And of course, he proved by his knowledge of the Scripture and the Word, by his Christian manner of life to be God's man in their midst.

Now Paul was a master in making opportunities. While he was a prisoner in Rome he preached the Gospel until it reached with convicting power those of Caesar's household. Phil. 1:13.

Unable to travel from Galatia, he was useful and won hundreds to the truth by his fervent appeal. His message sounded the note of the final and carried conviction.

Now this is something that we should settle when we think about Paul - that he accepted the authority of the Gospel. And he did not look upon with patience the fads, the fancies, and new theology that passed by his way.

I spoke with a woman the other day who was quite distressed about her own minister. She said, it disturbs me. He is a very good man but he always goes to all these new things that come through. And he wants to go and find out about them. And thinking that they have something that he has missed. To every new thing that comes along - he wants to go and take part in it. Any kind of new experience. Now this was just the opposite from Paul. And Paul preached among

The marvel here in reference to the church at Galatia is that in 3 short years the foolish Galatians were led astray. Ye did run well, who hath hindered you. Gal. 5:4. Now many take this as a doctrine of falling from grace. But Paul uses here the expression to describe those who have abandon grace as a system of salvation and adopted works who ceased to rely on the gracious favor of God and sought to conform their lives to the requirements of the law. The idea was abandoning pardon for sin. Whosoever of you are justified by law, ye are falling then from grace. This is inevitable - if salvation is by works by whole or in part. If what a man does saves, he must keep on doing to keep saved.

There are two plans of being saved. The possible way by grace and the impossible way by law. Rom. 10:3. The way by law is impossible because no man can keep the holy law. The Christian is preserved. His inheritance is kept and it is imperishable. And fadeth not because he is kept by the power of God. He is bound to grace by the fore knowledge, the calling, the justification, and the glorification.

Now Paul contended for this faith which he had once delivered to the saints. Gal. 4:17. And this was one of the main issues in the message to the church here that men has left the Gospel. Men who over throw whole houses teaching things which they ought not for filthy lucar sake. Titus 1:11. This is one of the most serious things against the false teachers of modern times. Mrs. Eddy accumulated an enormous fortune. Spiritualism requires medium - and goes for fraud and seeks financial gain.

How unlike Jesus who had not where to lay his head. And Paul who owned not a foot of land. Are these founders of false religions.

them and he was too sick to travel from one place to another.

The abounding grace saved these Galatians who were formerly slaves to false Gods.

Gal. 4:8 - God thought of them before they thought of him. And salvation always begins with God. From Him it flows through Christ to man. We are not sons of God by nature. But by faith in Jesus Christ. Thus these Galatians became sons of God. And if a son also and heir through God.

Grace means free unmerited favor and goodness. And the grace of God became available to them through faith.

Long ago Habakkuk 2:4 declared "the righteous shall live by faith". And Paul quotes that prophet to show how the Galatians were saved. The law has its value - its purpose is to define sin. The law comes to the knowledge of sin. The law is the teacher to instruct the man. The law is that which leads a man to enlightenment - to Christ. Gal. 3:22. And grace prompts a man. Now these Galatians churches began their Christian career with deep enthusiasm. And there was bright promise - but they soon cooled off. And they failed to realize the early prospects.

Four times in the New Testament, Paul gives an account of his conversion. First, by Luke in Acts 9. Second, by Paul from the stairs in Jerusalem - Acts 22. Third, in a speech by Paul in Acts 26. Forth, of his apostleship to the Galatians. He includes in this some history not otherwise recorded. He says his Gospel came by direct revelation from Jesus Christ. That it was founded upon the personal appearance to him from Jesus. He declares that he did not receive it from any other apostle.

Two men were disgussing one day the starting of a new religion. One said to the other - I will tell you how to succeed. First, you launch it. Second, you live it. Third, you sacrifice for it. Fourth, you die for it. Fifth, you rise from the dead - then he said, you will succeed.

And now let me see if I cannot analyze this message for you. I. The problem of pollution. II. Permanent success is impossible. III. Premeditated false teachings. IV. A profound principle.

Now all of these are found in the church of Galatia, or the churches of Galatia - whichever you prefer.

I. The Problem of Pollution - Chapter 1:6

"I marvel that you are so soon removed from him who called you into the grace of Christ unto another Gospel." Here was the problem of profaning the Gospel - polluting the Gospel with their own fickleness, and that of human nature.

1:6 - 3:11, 3 - 4:9, 15, 16 - 5:15 Testify to This.

If I might make this illustration which may make the point for many people today who are familiar with football, or baseball. There are fans that idolize the team when they win today. But they will be most critical when they lose tomorrow. Here is the witness of the rise of the ebb and flow of the tide and these people followed the popular applause of the public. Now this is the same way that it happened to politicians and public leaders. Public leaders today - millions of people will turn out and applaud, to shout, and to honor them. And then in a very short while they will be throwing rotten apples at them.

The Galatians embraced Christianity eagerly and they welcomed Paul enthusiastically on his first visit. And yet, they were ready to run after any new teacher and to adopt any other doctrine that passed by.

Now I think this is why Dr. Carroll called them Irishmen - because of their temperament. And I think this persists and this thrives even to this modern day in which we live. Converts are made in the evangelistic meetings. They come into the churches in large numbers. They attend the regular services and there is an immediate increase. Now a few months pass, and there is enthusiasm - there comes a lagging of energy and a drifting back into the world. And the whole situation is filled with pollution. You watch it when you will. A new preacher enters a new church or a new field of labor. And the members will fight over who is going to honor him. They will dine him and his praises will be sung by the people all over the community. And in about 2 1/2 years - time cools them off. And there are other preachers that they like better. And they will say that this one was a misfit - he should never have been called in the first place.

Gal. 4:15. Paul says then, where is the blessedness then that ye spake of. For I bear you record if it had been possible ye would have plucked out your own eye. And would have given them to me. Paul says they were so attentive to him that they would have given him their own eyes. But now, look! Yes, the new preacher comes. At first they loved him so much that they almost ate him. But later on, they wished that they had. So here is a lesson. The problem of pollution which comes from human nature - the fickleness of individuals. The unsteadiness in their loyalties.

II. Permanent Success Impossible

Now with this sort of situation, no one can really produce stability.

a good work. And here was Paul.

Now I am not trying to justify the failures where the Preacher is at fault.
It is admitted that this is often the case. And maybe Preachers do fail. But
however here, the history of the Galatian churches proves conclusively that the
best of preachers sometimes fail and through no fault of their own.

There is an admonition here for the churches and of course, there is a

*in the Preachers.
comfort for the Preachers*

course, there is a
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It is very (disheartening) for the man of God to preach and to minister to individuals, to Christians, and then seek the results of his hard work. They turn around and go in the opposite direction. It is impossible to build a successful minister on people who are of this nature.

Lacking in Spiritual Discernment & Steadfastness

III. Premeditated False Teachings - Chapter 3:1

Oh foolish Galatians who have bewitched you that ye should not ^{obey} ~~obey~~ the truth before whose eyes Jesus Christ has evidently set forth, crucified, among you.

It seems that here in Galatia there were those teachers who planned, who resolved, who if you will - pre-designed their false teachings and doctrines. And they were very careful to undermine the foundations layed by the Apostle Paul, in Galatia. *They claimed Paul not an apostle*

Now mark this, they were not skeptics. They were religious teachers. They professed to be in full accord with the Scriptures. They claimed to be the true people of God.

There are people today who claim to be the people of God. They are people who will destroy churches, disrupt families, who will distract minds by liberalism, or who will get off-key on spiritism which now plagues some churches in our country. These mental, moral, practical dangers lurk all about us.

There is Satan worship today. You remember under the law of Moses, the

Truly here is a prohibition - against a permanent success in any field of labor. Think about this. Paul was the best educated man of his day - he was a diligent student. His teacher was the most renown at that time. His scholarship was known abroad. He mastered thoroughly what he studied. He studied many subjects, languages, literature, philosophy, religion. His experience of grace was rich and rare. His training fitted him for the Lord's work. And he gave diligent attention to the Galatians.

After his first visit on the second missionary journey - Acts. 16:6.
He made them a second visit on his third missionary journey - Acts 18:23.

Timothy and Silas labored with him in Galatia.

Surely it was not because of the lack of ability or the diligence of the preachers that this work failed in Galatia. The thought of having bestowed labor in vain has always been one of the trials of a faithful messenger of God.

It was the case of Elijah - he preached. But there seemed to really be no permanent success. Isaiah had the same frustrations. Jeremiah - and Jesus many times - because they ordered him out of their country when he sought to do a good work. And here was Paul.

Now I am not trying to justify the failures where the Preacher is at fault. It is admitted that this is often the case. And maybe Preachers do fail. But however here, the history of the Galatian churches proves conclusively that the best of preachers sometimes fail and through no fault of their own.

There is an admonition here for the churches and of course, there is a comfort for the preachers.

And of course we know that when the righteous die, they go to rest. And of the six people raised from the dead in the Bible, not one word is recorded of their experiences. When Moses and Elijah returned from the realm of the dead, they did but remember - they spoke no message for living people. But they spoke to the three Apostles who were present with Jesus in the mountains. was not true because Saul did not die on the morrow - he died three days later. had departed from him. And the prophesy that was supposed to come from Samuel attempted to do was contradict her. It was a time when the spirit of the Lord

Now we do (not need) to visit mysterious mediums to learn about our dear departed ones. The voice of our Lord is sufficient. I am the resurrection and the life. "He that believeth on me, although he die, he shall live. And whosoever liveth and believeth on me, shall never die." Today thou shall be with me in paradise. "In my Father's House are many mansions - if it were not so, I would have told you. This is eternal life, to know thee. The only true God, is Jesus Christ, whom I sent. And he that believeth on the son hath eternal life. The final authority for the Christian is Christ. Now these people were teaching that which was false. You remember Paul says that he was an apostle - that his ministry, he was not sent from man nor through man - but he was sent from God and commissioned of God. And he had received that authority from God. Of course, the burning issue here was the matter of freedom, as it is in our time. And Paul had founded these churches and had left them with Pastors and lay leaders. But these people began to persuade the Galatian Christians to follow the law of Moses. And they worked out their own plan. And they brought up questions in the church. The requirement, of course, was faith in Christ - to make a man a Christian, Paul said. And life today is ever changing but the basic principles do not change. However, people today think that things are shifting but the law of God still stands. The most serious danger is thinking that goodness is something that one can achieve by his own acts. And these Galatians long ago began to renounce the faith in Christ, and began to shift into focus from Christ to self. Now the faith in Christ is centered upon the cross. Now upon me and my goodness. This is the question in which we find that these false teachers *were planning to teach.*

Now the word grace is the key word here. Grace is what we say before meals. The prayer before eating, is man's gratitude for God's gift. Gracious, gratefulness - means free and generous. To they had changed the whole focal

Israelites were forbidden to try to gather information from the dead through a wizzard. If a man or a witch, if a woman, turned you not unto them which have familiar spirits. I am the Lord your God. Lev. 19:31.

Even in Mal. 3:5 he says that he will be swift to witness against these sourcers.

Now the reason for this in the Old Testament is that it is (a discredit) to man and it is (an abomination) to God.

What is proper to know, God will make known. Hidden things belong to him. And some of these people prying into God's knowledge in this way will be disappointed. It is wicked and unnecessary. The secret things belong unto the Lord, our God. Deut. 29:29.

Once a man in Hell prayed that his spirit may be sent to warn his five living brothers. Now the petition was refused. If they had not heard Moses and the (Prophets), neither would they be persuaded though one arises from the dead. Now there are people today - they think they have to have a miracle of healing performed before their eyes before they are going to believe. You remember Saul went to converse with Samuel through the witch. Now what Saul attempted to do was contradict her. It was a time when the spirit of the Lord had departed from him. And the prophesy that was supposed to come from Samuel was not true because Saul did not die on the morrow - he died three days later. And of course we know that when the righteous die, they go to rest. And of the six people raised from the dead in the Bible, not one word is recorded of their experiences. When Moses and Elijah returned from the realm of the dead, they did but remember - they spoke no message for living people. But they spoke to the three Apostles who were present with Jesus in the mountains.

They challenge Paul's message -
" Contradict Paul's message -
" Corrupt Paul's converts -

point from Christ and his cross - to me and my efforts. The Galatians wanted peace but they wanted to work it out in their own way. And of course they had sinned - which meant they had missed the mark. Consistently day after day they were not hitting the target.

Ch. members became removed from Paul - 1:6 Were Bewitched 3:1 - Placing Confidence in Flesh - 3:3
Observing days that were obsolete - 4:10 Desired to be under law - 4:21 Took Yoke of bondage 5:1, 3

Are you being the kind of person God created you to be. Not all are
Cared to run well - 5:7 Disobedient to truth - 5:7 - Troubled 5:10, 12.
criminals - but all are sinners.

IV. A Profound Principle - Gal. 6:14

" But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. By whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world." The necessity here is an uncompromising contention for the truth. Their ought to be a priority of doctrine. A superiority found in the truth which has been planted.

Now this is a lesson that Paul tries to get across. As debating and compromising as these people were - Paul did not encourage this sort of thing. In fact, I don't think that Paul would have much to do with denomination strife - or would he have much to do with people who stir up strife within a congregation. The thing that Paul is emphasizing here is that a man needs to be loyal to the truth. Now he may have to state his belief - but these teachers of false doctrine - Paul says you do not need to compromise with them. The truth demands that we stand for it. And it will condemn the error.

The heart of a Christian is prompted to praise the true and the good.

Now Paul was severe on the Galatians - but not unnecessarily so. Many were drifting from the truth. Many lost their anchorage.

The faith itself was in danger of being corrupted fatally.

Men crept into the churches who were proverting the disciples with erroneous doctrines.

Now they were more dangerous because (they were inside) the churches. The truth of the Gospel was at stake. And it was no time to cry - peace, peace. Paul risk the enmity of Galatians by telling them the truth.

Gal. 1:7 - Paul says which is not another - but there is some that trouble you and would provert the Gospel of Christ. An though we are an angel from Heaven preach any other Gospel unto you, which we have preached unto you, let him be cursed.

There are some things worth standing for - worth living for. Worth contending for and worth dying for.

The Gospel is first among those things. When the Gospel is lost - all is lost. Which gives a church a right to exist.

History tells us that seven crusades were launched and several hundred thousand lives were lost during two centuries that were drenched in blood by those who made an effort to rescue the sepulcher of the Lord, from the infidel Turk. The gold was not worth the long quest and the bloody cost. Those Christian warriors were religiously consecrated knights.

A living faith is worth more than an empty tomb. Proverts of the most holy faith are more dangerous to society and to true religion than an empty tomb. Contenders for the faith are the real knights.

✓ Let us determine to give ourselves to the profound principle of the Gospel. I remember reading a story of a woman who with her little baby was on a train going through one of the Eastern states. It was a winter day - outside a terrific storm was blowing and snow was falling. The train made it's way along slowly because of the ice on the tracks, and the snow plow went ahead to clear the way. The woman seemed very nervous - she was to get off at a small station, where she would meet some friends. You will be sure to let me off at the right station, won't you, she said to the conductor. Certainly, he said, just remain here until I tell you the right station. She sat rather nervously and again spoke to the conductor, you won't forget me. No, just trust me, I will tell you when to get off.

A commercial man sat across the aisle and leaned over and said, pardon me. I see you are rather nervous about getting off at the right station. I know this road well. Your station is the first stop after such and such a city. These conductors are very forgetful. They have a great many things to attend too - but I will see that you get off alright. I will help you with your bags.

Oh thank you, she said, and she leaned back greatly relieved. By and by the name of the city she mentioned was called and he leaned over and said, the next stop will be yours. As they drew nearly to the station she looked around anxiously for the conductor, but he did not come. You see, said the man, he has forgotten you. I will get you off and he helped her with her baggage. And as the conductor had not opened it, so he opened it, and when the train stopped he stepped off, lifted her bag, and helped her off. And in a moment, the train moved on. Later the conductor came and looked all about and said - that is strange, there was a woman here that wanted to get off at this station. I wonder where she is.

The commercial man looked up and said, you forgot her - but I saw to it that she got off alright. Got off where, the conductor asked. When the train stopped.

But that was not a station, that was an emergency stop. I was looking after that woman. Why man, you have put her off in a wild country district. In the midst of this storm - where there will be nobody to meet her.

There was only one thing to do and although it was rather dangerous, they had to reverse the engines and go back a number of miles. And they went out to look for the woman and finally somebody stumbled over her. She was frozen on the ground with the little baby dead. She was the victim of wrong information.

If it is such a serious thing to give people wrong information in temporal things, what about the man who misleads men and women in regards to salvation of their souls. Men believe a false Gospel - if they put their trust in something that is contrary. Their loss will be not for time only - but for eternity.

And that is why Paul is speaking by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and uses strong language here regarding the wickedness and the awfullness of misleading souls as to eternal things. These Galatians were living in their sins. In the darkness of pagan superstition. When Paul came to them and preached the glorious Gospel and tell how Christ died for our sins - I Cor. 15:3-4 - they were saved. For you know the Gospel and grace of God's work. But these Galatians after Paul had used them to bring them into the liberty of grace, were being mislead by false teachings. Men who had come down from Judea - who professed to be Christians but had never been delivered from legality. They said to these young Christians - you have only a little touch of the Gospel. You need this message - you need to receive more. You just have part of the Gospel.

You need some extras - you need to go a little further. And thus, they threw them back on self effort - turning their eyes away from Christ and fixing them upon themselves and their ability to keep the law, to do this, that, and the other. Paul says this thing will ruin men who depend upon their own self efforts to get to Heaven. They will miss the gates.

No matter how earnest they are - if they depend upon their own works - they will never be partakers of their inheritance. Paul says I marvel that you are so soon to leave this grace of God and resurrect another Gospel. They had turned aside from God's free grace. And they had tried to build another Gospel. But you may go all the way from Genesis to Revelation, and there is only one Gospel. And this is the profound principle that Paul tried to tie them too. This was first preached in the Garden of Eden - when the message was sent forth that the seed of the woman should bruise Satan's head. That was the Gospel. Salvation is coming to Christ, the son of God - born of a woman. And that's the same Gospel preached to Abraham. And this is the same Gospel that was proclaimed by Isaiah. This is the same Gospel proclaimed by John the Baptist. Here is the lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world.

Now I am losing my temper as Paul, and what I am declaring unto you is not unkind, but I am saying to you that there is one Gospel and this is the one question - and if you have any other Gospel, then you are false.