

I. Introduction and review – Are we to be tolerant?

II. Those straying from the gospel are guilty of gospel treason. v. 6-7

- A. I am amazed and appalled that you are so quickly turning away from God. v. 6a 3:1**
- 1. How could you have fallen so quickly? Acts 13:43,48-49 14:1,11-13,21 Ex. 32:8**
 - 2. To abandon the gospel is to desert the Lord who called you.**
 - 3. Yet there is still hope for you.**
 - a. You are (in the process of) deserting (but have not yet fully deserted). 5:10**
 - b. He called you by the grace of Christ. 1:15 5:8,13 Ro. 8:30 9:11 2 Ti. 1:9**
- B. These troublers of the church proclaim a counterfeit gospel. v. 6b-7**
- 1. They preach a different kind of gospel which is not really another gospel at all.**
 - 2. What is the gospel (good news)? 2:16 3:6 Gen. 15:6 Eph. 2:8-9 2 Ti. 1:8-9
1 Co. 15:1ff 3:11 Titus 3:3-7 Ro. 5:1,6 3**
 - 3. How are the false teachers corrupting the gospel? 5:2-4 6:12-13 Acts 15:1,5**
 - 4. Both “gospels” cannot be true! Rom. 11:6**
- C. How does this warning apply in our day?**
- 1. Though we don’t have many who try to force new converts to submit to the Mosaic law and to be circumcised, there are many who corrupt the gospel by trying to add human works and ceremonies to the work of Christ. Ro. 10:3**
 - 2. The differences between the true gospel and a counterfeit can be very subtle.**
 - 3. Anyone who says that you must add your works to the work of Christ corrupts the gospel and disturbs the church.**
- D. We can also implicitly deny the gospel.**
- 1. By thinking that our status with God is based upon our performance. 3:3 Phil. 3:9**
 - 2. When we focus on lesser things.**
 - 3. The gospel must be at the core of all that we are and do.**

III. A curse is upon those who pervert the gospel. v. 8-9

- A. Anyone who preaches a different gospel is under God’s condemnation.**
- 1. The hypothetical – even if an apostle or an angel from heaven preaches another gospel he is accursed. v. 8**
 - a. Satan deceives people by appearing to be an angel of light. 2 Co. 11:13-15**
 - b. Some false prophets claim to have received new revelation from an angel.**
 - 2. The reality – those who are actually disturbing you are accursed. v. 9**
- B. Paul uses the strongest possible language – anathema. Rom. 9:3 1 Co. 12:3 16:22**
- 1. They are under God’s wrath, subject to total destruction. 2 Th. 1:9 Lev. 27:28-29 Josh 6:17 Num. 21:2-3**
 - 2. Their sin is compounded because they lead others astray. Luke 17:2 Mt. 23:15 Deut. 13:1ff**
 - 3. Is Paul being too harsh? Is he just defending his turf?**
 - a. Paul is very tolerant of people abusing him personally. Phil. 1:15-18**
 - b. Paul is also very tolerant of secondary differences. Rom. 14-15 1 Co. 8-10**
 - c. He cannot be tolerant when the gospel is at stake.**

- C. Application: Anyone who corrupts the gospel is accursed.**
1. Religious leaders who don't preach the gospel are doubly damned. Luke 17:2 Mt. 23:15 Mark 13:22
 2. The lie of religious pluralism denies the gospel and is accursed. Mt. 7:13-15 John 14:6 Acts 4:12
- D. What should we do about those who preach a false gospel?**
1. While it is not our place to punish outsiders, we must diligently maintain the purity of the church. Acts 20:28-31 2 Jo. 1:10-11 2 Ti. 3:1ff 1 Co. 5:6
 2. Churches and denominations have been ruined because the gospel has been compromised for the sake of "unity".
 3. We cannot make common religious cause with gospel deniers. 2 Co. 6:14ff
 4. Is it proper to "go negative" and name names of those who corrupt the gospel? 1:7 5:10 2:11 1 Tim. 1:20 2 Tim. 4:14
 5. Be prepared to be cursed by the world for your stance for the gospel of grace.
- E. Questions and clarifications.**
1. It is possible for a true gospel-believing Christian to be in a church whose official doctrine denies the gospel.
 2. What should someone do if he finds himself in a church which denies gospel?
 3. We need to distinguish between people who are guilty of gospel treason and those with whom we differ on less important issues.

IV. My agenda is to please God, not men. v. 10

- A. The false teachers accused Paul of crafting his message to gain the favor of men.**
- B. Paul, as the bond-servant of Christ, is simply seeking to please God. Mt. 6:24**
- C. Application.**
1. The preaching of the gospel of Christ will always produce opposition. 1 Co. 1:18ff
 2. The church of today is being corrupted by man-pleasing leaders. 2 Tim. 4: 3 Pr. 29:25 Jo. 5:44 12:42-43
 3. We need to be God-centered in our ministry.
 4. We should make it our goal to please God in every aspect of our lives. 2 Co. 5:9 Prov. 3:5-6 Pr. 29:25

V. Concluding applications: Guard and proclaim the gospel. Rom. 1:15 10:15

Discussion questions

1. What kind of tolerance should we practice?
2. In what way are many who advocate religious tolerance actually very intolerant?
3. What is the gospel?
4. How did the false teachers corrupt the gospel?
5. How is the gospel being corrupted in our day?
6. Why are many people attracted to the idea of adding our works to faith in Christ's work?
7. What is God's judgment on religious leaders and teachers who corrupt the gospel?
8. How should we treat those who promote religious error?
9. Why are preachers tempted to please men?
10. How can we all overcome our temptation to seek approval from other people?