

“AM I THEREFORE BECOME YOUR ENEMY BECAUSE I TELL YOU THE TRUTH?”

Gal. 4:16

INTRODUCTION:

[Consider the text!]

This letter was written by Paul to the different congregations in Galatia in order to root out erroneous doctrines introduced by Judaizing teachers. ALSO, his purpose was to **REAFFIRM them in their earlier faith**. Some were still trying to be justified by the Law of Moses [**Gal.5:4**] and were being seduced to recognize circumcision as a principle of the Christian's faith! **Gal.5:2, 6**-*"Behold I, Paul, say to you that if you receive circumcision, Christ will be of no benefit to you. 6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love."*

He describes their perverted state at different times throughout the epistle, such as **Gal.1:6-7**- *"I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel; 7 which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you, and want to distort the gospel of Christ."* **Gal.3:1**- *"You foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified?"* **Gal.4:9**-*"But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how is it that you turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again?"* **Gal.5:7**-*"You were running well; who hindered you from obeying the truth?"* Some of them had deteriorated so much that he was afraid for them, he said in **Gal.4:11**- *"I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain."*

I. THE QUESTION OF THE TEXT PROVES THAT EVEN CHILDREN OF GOD NEED TO BE REBUKED AT TIMES.

- A. We are aware that MOST of the NT is written to CHRISTIANS!
 - 1. Christians are to be instructed/ rebuked/ encouraged. cf. **2 Tim.4:2**.
 - 2. According to the examples of the NT Apostles, much of our teaching responsibility is to those who are all ready members of the body of Christ! They're all ready Christians!
- B. Peter rebuked Simon, even though he was a new convert to Christianity. **Acts 8:18-23**.
- C. And "status" in the church didn't seem to matter when one was at fault, because Paul even rebuked Peter, whom, he said, "was to be blamed"! cf. **Gal.2:11-12**.
- D. And John, much to the chagrin of some of us today, even CALLED NAMES of those who were opposing Christ's way. **3 Jno.9**-*"I wrote something to the church; but Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, does not accept what we say."*
- E. Paul gave instructions to Timothy that sinners shouldn't be allowed to continue in their pernicious ways without objections; that if they couldn't be GOOD examples at least they could serve as BAD examples! **1 Tim.5:20**-*"Those who continue in sin, rebuke in the presence of all, so that the rest also may be fearful of sinning."*

II. THE QUESTION ALSO REVEALS THAT PREACHING THE TRUTH, EVEN WITH LOVE AND TENDERNESS, WILL MAKE ENEMIES OF SOME!

- A. Moses, **acting** and **speaking** for **GOD**, told the truth to Pharaoh in a tender and pleading way, but was hated and rebuked for it, because it called for action on Pharaoh's part he was unwilling to do! **Exod.10:28-29**- *"Then Pharaoh said to him, "Get away from me! Beware, do not see my face again, for in the day you see my face you shall die!" 29 And Moses said, "You are right; I shall never see your face again!"*
- B. Elijah was pursued by the wicked queen Jezebel, whose heart was filled with hatred and enmity because he "gave no quarters" when proclaiming the word of God. **1 Kings 18:17-19:3**.

- C. And her husband, Ahab, said of another prophet, Micaiah, in **1 Kings 22:8**- *"And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "There is yet one man by whom we may inquire of the LORD, but I hate him, because he does not prophesy good concerning me, but evil. He is Micaiah son of Imlah."*
1. Some today hate gospel teachers/ preachers today for the same reason!
 2. Only difference with those today and Ahab is that AHAB WAS MORE HONEST!
 3. Few today are honest enough to say they don't want to attend services or class or hear a particular teacher **"because he tells me the truth and I don't like it!"**
- D. Herodias so despised John the Baptist for preaching the truth that she caused her daughter Salome to ask for John's head on a charger! **Matt.14:1-12.**
- E. Christ's enemies were so afraid that Jesus might rise from the dead and give credence to all His teachings that they bribed the guards to lie about their allegiance to their duty. **Matt.28:11-15.**
- F. And Jesus even warned His apostles that because of their association with Him and teaching the gospel of Christ they would be persecuted. **Matt.10:22**- *"And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake."*
- G. Israel's cry from the days of Isaiah has been heard in every generation since then! **Isa.30:10**- *"Who say to the seers, "You must not see visions"; And to the prophets, "You must not prophesy to us what is right, Speak to us pleasant words, Prophecy illusions."*
1. We must be honest with ourselves/ with God/ & with the sincere teachers of His word if we're going to profit from it and reach heaven!
 2. Greatest fault in the religious world is when WE **[mankind]** try to change the Bible to fit **US**, instead of changing **US** to fit the Bible!

III. THERE ARE TWO PRIMARY REASONS WHY PEOPLE OPPOSE THE TRUTH:

- A. **Some fight against God in ignorance, not realizing that they're unconsciously enemies of the truth!**
1. This would be anyone today who would fall into the same category that Saul of Tarsus did. **Acts 26:9**- *"So then, I thought to myself that I had to do many things hostile to the name of Jesus of Nazareth."* **1 Tim.1:12-13**- *"I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service; 13 even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. And yet I was shown mercy, because I acted ignorantly in unbelief;"*
 2. But even today, those like Saul who SEEK the truth will find it! **Matt.7:7-8**- *"Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. 8 "For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it shall be opened."*
 3. But those who WON'T SEEK AND ACCEPT the truth remain spiritually blind --- and it's just because they don't love the truth enough to grasp it! **2 Thes.2:10-12**- *"and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. 11 And for this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they might believe what is false, 12 in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness."*
- B. **Then, on the other hand, there are those who KNOWINGLY fight against the truth of God!**
1. Jesus ably explained WHY in **Jno.3:19**- *"And this is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their deeds were evil."*
 2. The creatures of darkness, both physically and spiritually, despise the light and will turn away from it!

3. Illus. Did you ever roll over a rotting log in the forest and see little creatures scurrying in every direction? They hate the light! They're trying to find a hiding place in darkness! **SOME ARE LIKE THAT SPIRITUALLY!**

IV. THE QUESTION OF THE TEXT, ALONG WITH THE CONTEXT, CONFIRMS THAT TRUTH MUST BE PREACHED, EVEN IF IT MAKES ENEMIES!

- A. A compromising attitude toward preaching will lead into apostasy every time!
- B. Paul gives the steps in the development of apostasy in **2 Tim.4:3-4:**
1. ***"Will not endure sound doctrine"*** - An attitude, to begin with!
 2. ***"Heap to themselves teachers..."***- Segregation of teachers!
 3. ***"Turns away ears from the truth..."*** - Won't allow truth in their heart or lives!
 4. ***"Shall be turned unto fables..."*** - Out and Gone, and it all began with an unholy attitude!
- C. WHAT, THEN, are we to do? Some attitudes today, if universally accepted, would completely destroy the church!
1. **"PREACH THE BIBLE AND JUST LET EVERYBODY ALONE!"**
 - a) ***This is an utter impossibility!*** First verse in the Bible refutes the atheist! **Exod.20:3-** condemns the heathen; **Heb.11:6-** put's down the moralist; etc.
 - b) A few years ago one of the "leaders" in a particular congregation said, **"The trouble here is that our preacher's a professional ballplayer. He winds up every Sunday morning and throws a curve around everybody in the house!"**
 - 1) It's mighty poor preparation by the instructor and it's mighty poor preaching that doesn't urge us to change or strengthen or increase our activities!
 - 2) Reminded of a preacher who wouldn't preach on heaven or hell either one; said it was because he had friends in both places!
 2. **"DON'T PREACH A NEGATIVE GOSPEL!"**
 - a) Always amazes me that one who says such as this is **making a negative statement!**
 - b) It's also a statement that indicts God, ***because EIGHT of the 10 Commandments are negative!***
 - c) Paul's charge to Timothy about preaching is 2/3 negative!
 3. The final thought concerns the attitude of **SOME WHO WANT PEOPLE TO BE PLEASED INSTEAD OF BEING SAVED!**
 - a) Paul's statement is very appropriate and important that he sets forth in **Gal.1:10-** ***"For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ."***
 - b) This is reason many moral standards have been lowered today! Trying to offer a religion with no requirements -- **"just continue to do your own thing"!**
 - c) It's the DENOMINATIONAL perception that has entered the mad race to see who can make religion the EASIEST instead of the SAFEST!

CONCLUSION:

"As the twig is bent, so the tree shall grow!" This principle is especially true in the church of the Lord! **"AS THE LEADERSHIP GOES, SO GOES THE CHURCH!"** That's why it's so imperative to DEMAND the TRUTH of each and every teacher and preacher! **DO YOU DO THIS?**

