

LET HIM BE ACCURSED!

“Let him be accursed.” Paul, tell us how you really feel! To be accursed means “to be cut off”, “to be damned”, “to be eternally condemned”. In Galatians 1:6-7 Paul calls “the gospel of Christ” the “grace of Christ”. The true gospel is a gospel of GRACE! What Paul says next is SHOCKING! These are some of the strongest verses in the New Testament! Pay attention!

Galatians 1:8–9 (NKJV)

8 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.

9 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.

Paul in verse 8 speaks in hypothetical language to dogmatically emphasize how serious it is to alter the gospel message in any way. The all-important thing is that the content of the message of GRACE not be changed. It is essential to get the GOSPEL RIGHT! To be in error here is to bring down the curse of God upon you.

Paul here uses an “*editorial we*”, referring to the apostles themselves. Paul says even if we apostles, or if even an angel from heaven preaches a gospel contrary to the gospel of grace that had been preached to them, “**let him be accursed**”.

Now, that is strong language. It is hypothetical language, because it was not possible that the true apostles or an angel of God from heaven could ever do such a thing – but if it were possible, Paul says, “**let him be accursed**”.

“If any angel should appear on my window sill I would tell him to wait a minute while I got my Bible to check out what he says.” – **A.W. Tozer**

Paul has no tolerance for false teachers who pervert the gospel of grace – only a curse. Why is he so harsh? Well, because heaven and hell are in the balance. To promote a false gospel is to ensure the damnation of those who buy into it. Nothing could be more serious!

The word “accursed” means to be “delivered to God for destruction”. It means to be damned, to be doomed to destruction, to be cut off from Christ forever (cf. Rom. 9:3, 1 Cor. 16:22). It doesn’t get any more serious than this!

This was not a new emphasis with Paul! He constantly emphasized that there is **NO OTHER GOSPEL** other than what they had initially received. It was the measuring stick and if anyone preached any other gospel, he says, **“let him be accursed”**.

The repetition here drives home how serious this is.

“In the first century, many added circumcision and obedience to the Mosaic law to faith in Christ as conditions for entrance into heaven. On this day, there have been other substitutions (e.g., baptism, confirmation), but the principle has remained the same: they are trying to be saved by faith and works. Paul attacked this doctrine tenaciously. Legalism can never provide justification or sanctification. The principles of grace must always govern salvation and service.” – **Robert Gromacki**

The ultimate issue when someone preaches is this: Is the message completely consistent with Paul’s gospel of grace? If not, it is a false gospel and the one proclaiming it is under the curse of God. Paul concludes the letter with essentially the same emphasis with which he started.

Galatians 6:14 (NKJV)

14 But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

Paul absolutely sees no grounds for boasting in anything whatsoever EXCEPT for the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is Paul’s motive. He champions the cross. He champions what Jesus has done. This is everything to him. He brags on Jesus and His finished work and not on anything that he has done.

Galatians is sometimes called **“The Crucifixion Epistle”** because of its strong emphasis on the cross. In this short letter, it directly mentions either the cross or the crucifixion 7 times (cf. 2:20, 3:1, 5:11, 24, 6:12, 14).

Note that in Galatians 6:14 Paul links the finished work of Christ on the cross with His Person as **our Lord Jesus Christ**. A proper study finds that the PERSON and WORK of Christ are always linked in the New Testament. To believe in one is to believe in the other. We must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ (cf. Acts 16:31). His death highlights the reality of Him being our Savior; His resurrection highlights the reality of Him being our living Lord.

The cross is the great separator. Crucifixion depicts death. The world is dead to Paul, and Paul is dead to the world. **Death** means “separation”. The world and Paul have forever parted ways. The cross is the great divider. Those who embrace the cross of Christ (GRACE) no longer have a “live” relationship to the world. Relationship with Christ has forever altered the believer’s relationship with the world.

True believers glory in the cross of Christ alone. Jesus is EVERYTHING to us! Nothing avails anything before God except for being a new creation in Christ which is based on salvation by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone (cf. 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 2:16).

Being born of God is God’s work entirely. You can’t cause yourself to be born physically, and you can’t cause yourself to be born again spiritually. This is exclusively God’s work. For this reason, people are never commanded to be born again. Human responsibility has nothing to do with it. It is God’s doing.

However, we are commanded to believe on Jesus. Our responsibility is to believe. And when we believe, God makes us a new creation (cf. Gal. 5:6; 6:15; also John 1:12-13; 3:18).

Galatians 5:6 (NKJV)

6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love.

Galatians 6:15 (NKJV)

15 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation.