

# Something That Money Can't Buy!



## A Study in the Book of Galatians

**It has been said that when something is given free, it is not worth having.**

**Another statement, “Free Stuff is Not Free at All!”**

**Do these statements ring true to you?**

### ***PAUL, THE SLAVE OF CHRIST***

*Galatians 1:6-10, “I am amazed that you have so quickly deserted him who called you by the grace of Christ, and that you have so soon gone over to a different gospel, a gospel which in point of fact is not another gospel at all. What has really happened is that certain men are upsetting your whole faith and are aiming at reversing the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven were to preach a gospel to you, other than that which you have received, let him be accursed. Is it men's favor I am trying to win, or is it God's? Or am I seeking to curry favor with men? If after all that has happened to me I were still trying to curry favor with men, I would not be bearing the brand; of the slave (servant) of Christ.”*

**Fact behind Paul's epistle to the Galatian churches is that Paul's gospel was a gospel of free grace.**

*Free Grace Theology is the name given to a certain view of salvation theology, or soteriology. Its opposite is Lordship Salvation. Free Grace Theology and Lordship Salvation are both relatively recent terms, but they illustrate an issue that Christians have been dealing with since the beginning: are we really and truly saved by faith alone, or are works necessary to salvation? Free Grace Theology would basically say yes, faith is all that is necessary. Lordship Salvation theologians would disagree, saying that works must be in evidence. In a way, they are both correct. It is also true that both camps can take their interpretation too far and become unbiblical in their assertions.*

***Paul believed with all his heart that:***

- *Nothing a man could do could ever **earn** the love of God;*
- *All a man could do was fling himself on his mercy in an act of faith.*
- *All a man could do was take in wondering gratitude what God offered;*
- *The important thing was not what we could do for ourselves but what he had done for us.*

***It was this gospel of the free grace of God that Paul had preached. After him there came men preaching a Jewish version of Christianity.***

**Jewish version of salvation:** They declared that:

- *If a man wished to please God, he must be circumcised and then dedicate his life to carrying out all the rules and regulations of the law.*
- *Every time a man performed a deed of the law, so they said, that was a credit entry in his **account** with God.*
- *It was necessary for a man to earn the favor of God.*

***To Paul that was utterly impossible.***

***Paul's opponents declared that he was making religion far too easy and doing so to ingratiate himself with men. In fact that accusation was the reverse of the truth.***

Paul denied that he was trying to ingratiate himself with men. It was not men he was serving; it was God. It made no difference to him what men said or thought about him; his master was God.

**The unanswerable argument:**

**"If," Paul said, "I were trying to curry favor with men I would not be the slave of Christ."**

What is in his mind is this--the slave had his master's name and sign stamped on him with a red-hot branding iron; he himself bore on his body the marks of his sufferings, the brand of the slavery of Christ. "If," he said, "I were out to curry favor with men would I have these **scars** on my body?"

***The fact that he was marked as he was the final proof that his aim was to serve Christ and not to please men.***

**If our faith costs us nothing, men will value it at nothing.**

## THE ARRESTING HAND OF GOD

*Galatians 1:11-17, "As for the gospel that has been preached by me, I want you to know, brothers, that it rests on no human foundation. For, neither did I receive it from any man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through direct revelation from Jesus Christ. If you want proof of that you heard of the kind of life I once lived when I practiced the Jewish faith, a life in which I persecuted the Church of God beyond all bounds and devastated it. I was making strides in the Jewish faith beyond many of my contemporaries in my nation, for I was zealous to excess for the traditions of my fathers. It was then that God who had set me apart for a special task before I was born, and who called me through his grace, decided to reveal his Son through me. That I might tell the good news of him amongst the Gentiles. Thereupon I did not confer with any human being, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before I was; but I went away to Arabia; and then I went back again to Damascus.*

***It was Paul's contention that the gospel he preached was no second-hand tale; it had come to him **direct** from God. That was a big claim to make and it demanded some kind of proof.***

***For that proof Paul had the courage to point to himself and to the radical change in his own life:***

- 1. He had been a fanatic for the law; and now the dominant center of his life was grace.*** This man, who had with passionate intensity tried to earn God's favor, was now content in humble faith to take what he lovingly offered. He had ceased to glory in what he could do for himself; and had begun to glory in what God had done for him.
- 2. He had been the arch-persecutor of the Church. He had **"devastated"** the Church.*** He had tried to make a scorched earth of the Church and now his one aim, for which he was prepared to spend himself even to death, was to spread that same Church over all the world.

***Every effect must have an adequate cause.***

***When a man is proceeding headlong in one direction and suddenly turns and proceeds headlong in the opposite direction; when he suddenly reverses all his values so that his life turns upside down; some explanation is required.***

***For Paul the explanation was the direct intervention of God.***

***God had laid his hand on his shoulder and arrested him in mid-career, found him guilty, and provided a way out (a gift that cannot be bought).***

**He has two things to say about that intervention.**

- 1. It was no unpremeditated thing; it was in God's **eternal** plan.***

God sends every man into the world with a part to play in his purpose. It may be a big part or it may be a small part. It may be to do something of which the whole world will know or something of which only a few will ever know.

- 2. Paul knew himself to be chosen for a task. He thought of himself as chosen not for honor but for service, not for ease but for battles.***

***It is for the hardest campaigns that the general chooses his best soldiers and for the hardest studies that the teacher chooses his best students.***

***Paul knew that he had been saved to serve.***

## **THE WAY OF THE CHOSEN**

*Galatians 1:18-25, "Then, three years after that, I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and I stayed with him a fortnight. I saw no other apostle except James, the Lord's brother. As for what I am writing to you--before God I am not lying. Then I went to the districts of Syria and Cilicia. But I remained personally unknown to the Churches of Judaea which are in Christ. The only thing they knew about me was that they were hearing the news--our one-time persecutor is preaching the faith which once he tried to devastate and they found in me cause to glorify God."*

**What did Paul do when the hand of God arrested him?**

- 1. First, he went away to Arabia.***

***He went away to be alone...for two (2) reasons.***

- ✓ *First, he had to think out this tremendous thing that had happened to him.*
- ✓ *Second, he had to speak with God before he spoke to men.*

***There are so few who will take the time to face **themselves** and to face God!***

2. ***He went back to Damascus.***

*That was a courageous thing to do. He had been on the way to Damascus to wipe out the Church when God arrested him and all Damascus knew that. He went back at once to bear his testimony to the people who knew best what he had been.*

3. ***He went to Jerusalem. Again he took his life in his hands.*** His former friends, the Jews, would be out for his blood, because to them he was a **renegade**. His former victims, the Christians, might well ostracize him, unable to believe that he was a changed man.

**Paul had the courage to face his past.**

***We never really get away from our past by running away from it. We can deal with it only by facing it and defeating it.***

4. ***He went to Syria and Cilicia.*** Tarsus... (He went where he grew up; they knew him from his youth). They would no doubt regard him as quite mad; they would meet him with anger, and, worse, with mockery (just as Jesus was thought of in his home town).

***But Paul was quite prepared to be regarded as a **fool** for the sake of Christ.***

***In these verses Paul defended and was trying to prove the independence of his gospel, the gospel of Christ. He got it from no man; he got it from God. He consulted no man; he consulted God.***

***Are you a defender of the faith in which you hold as key to your salvation?***

***Are you willing to stand up and say, "I know whom I have believed...and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed to Him against that Day?"***

