

# Preaching Christ Crucified #1

## In the Fight Against False Gospels



\*Preach in large doses to prevent ...

- Fuzzy thinking, lazy thinking, careless thinking
- Ignorance, indifference, spiritual myopia

**#1 APOSTLE RECOMMENDED** for overcoming the evil influences and complications from works salvation exposure in the church.

**#1 APOSTLE RECOMMENDED** for the early and late stages of chronic or persistent disorder of the spiritual processes caused by overexposure to human reasoning and gospel additives.

### Excerpts from ... *Live in Liberty: The Spiritual Message of Galatians*

To journey into the book of Galatians is to venture into a hostile and confused mob, where outbursts of anger, jealousy, and bitterness are vented in a chaotic cacophony. **One voice cuts through the bedlam—“Back to the gospel.”** All stop to listen, but will all hear?

That voice is Paul’s, and his announcement is broadcast to us no less than to the churches in southern Galatia ... and it’s charged with an emotional intensity we can’t afford to miss. While the letter is profoundly pastoral, Paul isn’t trying to be particularly “pastorally sensitive.” He’s confronting something extremely dangerous. *[Bush, D., & Due, N. (2015). Live in Liberty: The Spiritual Message of Galatians (p. 2). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.]*

**How do we discern that opinion, tradition, culture, or our own preferences aren’t ruling the roost?**

Only centering on the gospel is what prevents us from drifting into opinions, tradition, culture, trends, or our insecurities. Paul doesn’t shrink from reproving the Galatians with bold intensity—seeking to disrupt them, to disturb their patterns of misplaced faith, and unsettle their comfort—because they were shrinking back from grace. They were supplanting gospel-centered living with legalism. Reproof is right only when its primary concern is with him who is himself the Way—when what we’re seeking to address has to do with the articulation, understanding, and practical application of the gospel. *[Ibid.]*

#### **THE TWO TYPES OF UNITY**

We’re faced with two types of unity here. The one, from Paul’s side, is **the unity of the gospel.** Its genesis is grace; its currency,

love; and its power, the Spirit of Jesus. **The other is the unity of conformity.** Its genesis is the flesh; its currency, the law; and its power, coercion leveraged on fear. *[Ibid.]*

Like attorneys trying to discredit a witness, the personal attack was aimed at discrediting Paul’s testimony: justification by grace alone, through faith alone. These agitators insisted that in addition to faith in Jesus, God required circumcision, kosher eating, and Sabbath observance. In other words, salvation required Christ plus the law of Moses. This was no mere difference of opinion. **Paul’s aim, then, is to take the Galatians back to the true gospel, to liberate them from the agitators’ lies.** Their message might have sounded good, but it actually led to a devilish combination of thought and action that would have negated grace and established Pharisaic legalism at the heart of the church. *[Ibid.]*

A heart seeking to be justified by works of the law is always a man-pleasing, ego-stroking, legalistically aligned blowtorch. It not only identifies its righteousness before God with the respect garnered from its human audience, it also redirects its insecurity as emotional oxyacetylene, cutting down any detractors.

Paul knew this deadly concoction personally, and he wanted to liberate the Galatians from it. As they turned from grace to law, their joy had evaporated, their insecurity had increased, and their love for Paul had turned to hatred. They had lost all spiritual discernment. Paul’s bold reprimand was a thump to the heart aimed at defibrillating their fluttering spirits, at restoring their consciousness. *[Ibid.]*