

Chapter 1

v. 1-2

Paul declares his apostleship

- Being an apostle wasn't something that someone could choose to be. .
- Apostleship was bestowed upon men by God and Jesus specifically chose His 13 apostles and another was chosen by the originals. His name was Matthias. (Acts 1)
- The originals: Peter, James, John, Andrew, Philip, Judas Iscariot, Matthew/Levi, Thomas, James the lesser, Bartholomew/Nathanael, Jude/Thaddeus, and Simon the Zealot.
- Those eligible for apostleship to replace Judas had to: Candidates needed to have been with Jesus during the whole three years that Jesus was among them. That is, he needed to be an eyewitness of Jesus' baptism when the Heavenly Father validated Jesus' person and work. He needed to have heard Jesus' life-changing teachings and been present to see His healings and other miracles. He needed to have witnessed Jesus sacrifice Himself on the cross and to have seen Jesus walk, talk, and eat among the disciples again after His resurrection.
- Jesus personally chose Paul months after His death, resurrection, and ascension to round out His group of specific apostles.

v. 3-5

The Present Evil Age

- The age Paul is talking about is the age between the fall of man and Christ's second coming.
- We are currently living in that "present evil age" and will until death or Christ returns.
- Paul tells us that the sacrifice of Jesus is to deliver us from this age.
- As believers we get to taste the new kingdom before it gets here.
- This is manifested most effectively in the body of the local church. We worship together, we fellowship together, etc as we will in the coming kingdom.
- We will be finally delivered from it upon our death or the return of Christ.

v. 6-10

No Other Gospel

- Paul is addressing a group of people who are mixed in ethnic makeup. Some of them are ethnic Jews, some of them are descendants of the Gauls from France, some are of African descent and there is a heresy that is being spread.
- Heresy: belief or opinion that is contrary to orthodox Christianity.
- They were being told by Judaizers that in order to be saved in Christ you must also turn back to obedience to the whole Old Testament law.
- This is contrary to what Christ said about salvation in Him; Repent and believe.

Let them be accursed

- Paul makes it clear that if anyone brings a new spin on the Gospel that takes away from the doctrine of justification by faith alone is cursed.
- It doesn't matter if it is a person or an angel/demon.

Justification

- Justification is the action of declaring or making one righteous in the sight of God.
- In order for us to be in right standing with God we must deal with the fact that we have broken His law and are under the sin curse.

Federal Head

- The federal head is someone who represents a group of people under them.
- As humans we are all born under the federal headship of Adam.
- What does that give us? Our sin nature.
- In order to be placed in right standing with God we must be under a new federal head and that is Christ.
- What does that give us? Broken bonds of sin, uninhibited access to God, eternal life.
- The way that we move from one federal head to the other is through faith in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Justification by Faith

- This is the doctrine that stirred Martin Luther to examine the teachings of the Catholic Church thereby kicking off the Protestant Reformation.
- Justification by faith is the core principle of Christianity.
- Eph. 2:8-9
- In order for us to be justified in God's sight we must have our sin dealt with and the only way to do that and be on good terms with God is through the work of Jesus Christ.
- Just like we inherit the sin of Adam, in Christ we inherit His righteousness.
- When God the Father sees His people He doesn't see our sin but instead sees the righteousness of His Son. (Rom. 8:1-2)
- Just like we talked about earlier, we are only able to move out from under the headship of Adam when we are granted faith in Christ.
- This is the work of the Holy Spirit.
- He is the One who makes people alive to their sin and gives them the ability to repent and believe.
- If we add any works to this principle then we fall into heresy and outside of correct doctrine.

Small Group Questions

- 1) What was the big deal about Paul's apostleship?
 - He was specifically chosen by Jesus AFTER His death, resurrection, and ascension. No one else was chosen in that manner. All of the others were during the life of Christ or chosen by lot. (Matthias in Acts 1)
- 2) What is the present evil age Paul refers to? When will it end?
 - It's referring to the time in which the sin curse is still enforced. It will be finally and ultimately broken at the return of Christ.
- 3) Who do we inherit our sin nature from?
 - Adam. Just like we inherit our physical traits from our parents we inherit the sin nature that was given to Adam upon the fall of mankind in Genesis 3.
- 4) What is justification?
 - Justification is the action of declaring or making one righteous in the sight of God.
- 5) How are we justified in the sight of God?
 - By faith in the person and finished work of Christ.
- 6) How should we model our lives knowing that we have been made right in the sight of God by the work of the Holy Spirit?
 - It should drive us to want to be obedient to God. It should give a sense of freedom and confidence knowing that He is the One who began the work of salvation in us and will finish that work. We should not live in fear but rather live in thankfulness to God for what He has done for us.