**Live free – Galatians wk 1 – True or False**

**Drums / marching band / march of freedom / the cadence / the rhythm**

**Short 6 chapters - possibly the most significant book in the NT - The reading of it has affected and changed the world like no other letter by Paul. This book lead Martin Luther and the protestant reformation**

**\*\* Read at your own risk - straight forward and sometimes harsh.**

**This is a letter about being free! (Braveheart - Freedom!)**

**Free from guilt, from fear, doubt, from sin, failure, and wanting to quit.**

**Galatians 5:1- It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.**

**Freedom in Jesus is compared to a slave set free – like a person in an oppressive state of mind, impoverished spirit…**

**The urgency - at the end he writes this -**

**Galatians 6:11 - See what large letters I use as I write to you with my own hand!**

**(Ever notice when you write you start off neat - after a while it gets sloppy and bigger? That’s what’s happening. So pressing & urgent, Paul through the HS writes this letter not even taking time to rest his hands.)**

**Usually Paul writes w/ a scribe, but this is so important /urgent he is writing it himself. An emergency letter!**

**With that we start… Galatians 1:1 - Paul,**

**Paul - Who is this guy?**

**Birth name Saul, tribe of Benjamin, born in Tarsus during Christ life, named after King Saul. He despised & persecuted Christians (mean) until Jesus came to have a little talk.**

**You know you’re in trouble when the ascended Lord gets off his throne to come back to talk w/ you. Jesus goes Fight Club on him. Knocks him blind, he is healed, spends 13 yrs serving.**

**As you can imagine, Christians did not trust him (responsible for many of their family’s murders, torture and imprisonment)**

**Today he would be a #1 sought out speaker / ie. ex-mafia**

**Paul was completely transformed. He knew firsthand the power of the cross to save, heal, & redeem. He knew how God forgives and makes people new. He knew grace. God sent Paul and he changed the world!**

**Galatians 1:1 Paul, an apostle (delegate sent with authority by Jesus) - sent not from men nor by a man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead 2 and all the brothers and sisters with me (Sent with the authority of Jesus the resurrected Lord himself - reject me = rejecting God)**

**Degree do not give you authority or calling, it must come from God**

**Paul did not go looking for ministry – God came looking for him**

**What was Paul’s job description? He told Corinth (2 Cor 11) he was beaten, homeless, shipwrecked, stoned, stripped, hated, left for dead in the open sea - that’s our job description for ministry. You earn the right to have sleepless nights & be beaten up. He tells the Galatians that he bears the marks of Christ on his own body… Leadership is not for the lighthearted.**

**2 (Paul) To the churches in Galatia: (Modern day Turkey / a metroplex / churches in a region –The only letter of Paul not written to a specific church)**

**The Galatians – who are they?**

**History of warriors & hired mercenaries/ The Gaul’s were Celtic settlers forced into roman rule (considered barbarians) Pagans = followed rural tribal gods, practiced magic and the occult – Independent province**

**Paul’s & mentor/friend Barnabas went there on 1st missionary trip - 45AD (Acts 13&14). They preached, God moved, people responded, they planted churches, stayed a while & moved on.**

**But, Jewish Christian converts (Judaizers) followed Paul and add Jewish laws & rules to salvation (bondage) claimed Paul was a phony.**

**Want to be a Christian? Do this, follow us, the “isms”- Like bumper stickers over Jesus. Jesus plus this… Jesus Plus anything is a false gospel. We are under God’s word not over it**

**This letter is an angry, personal, passionate response…**

**He cuts to the chase and starts out with the gospel – Gal 1:3 Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, 4 who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, 5 to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. (Amen, that’s the gospel!)**

**The Gospel – what is it?**

**The only sovereign and holy God see’s our sin. But good news, as a loving Father He sends Jesus to rescue us from our sin through the cross. (no one and nothing else – just Jesus)**

**In three verses he settles the issue - Jesus came, lived, died, buried, rose again and we are free! Why? For our sins. We are sinful. You will not have an understanding of the gospel without understanding sin.**

**Remove sin and there is no good news – churches try to be tasteful with this - to make is easy to swallow – reality check**

**God loved us first, sought us out, came for us to take away sin**

**Difference between the true Gospel and a false Gospel**

**1 - A False Gospel: Hope is found in here and out there**

**There’s hope in here (self) / man is good / look inside / follow your heart / tap your goodness / and in the world / or great political system**

**State Prisons started in Pennsylvania - prison like a church were - an attempt to rehabilitate by putting people in solitary confinement - they will find goodness inside and be penitent – The result was that it drove men more violent and crazy…**

**Gal 1:3 Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, 4 who gave himself for our sins (the in here) to rescue us from the present evil age, (the out there) according to the will of our God and Father…**

**\*\* The True Gospel says: We are evil in here and out there**

**Is the world evil? You tell me - that’s why we sign contracts / Infant murders, genocide, slavery, abuse, corruption, etc.**

**But Good news - JESUS! - We have freedom! - He rescues us from our sin (the In Here) And rescues us from this evil world (the Out There)**

**2 - A False Gospel: Promotes Man**

**I should be wealthy, healthy, happy, attractive, successful, feel good – with self help / self love / self actualization / self esteem / looking out for my needs – Come to Jesus and you will get these things…**

**FG - You don’t exist to glorify God – God exist to glorify you**

**FG - Jesus is the means and way to my full potential**

**We can achieve it through our works / our efforts / The lie in the garden – you will be like God / Look what you can accomplish. Pull up yourself up by your bootstraps – but the Bible says we don’t even have boots!**

**\*\* The True Gospel: Reduces man (lowers)**

**It reduces us to a place of humility – we are depraved – sinful – selfish - That God would have mercy, kindness, grace, on us?**

**Well Ted, what do I get out of it? If that’s your perspective, you follow a false gospel. Here is the deal - If God gets the glory – you get the joy – if we die to self / we live / if we lose our life, we find – Freedom!**

**3 - A False Gospel: Diminishes our sin - and sinfulness**

**Which diminishes God – God is not that Holy – he will let it pass**

**I am not that bad – others are worse than me.**

**\*\* The True Gospel: Elevates God**

**It reveals that God is good and we are not - and the distance is infinite - The only hope is a rescue mission from God himself.**

**Think about it - God is holy and eternal – any sin we commit is an eternal sin = eternal punishment is justice. Therefore, only an eternal sacrifice can pay it – JESUS!**

**The gospel is Jesus – it’s the beat of the drum – the cadence – the march - Paul sets it straight – we are not the answer. Hope is not in here or out there – Jesus the only hope for freedom!**

**Can you talk about something else? I will never get tired of the gospel Every time I come home Nikol says, “I love you.” Do I ever say– “gee, you say that every time…” No, it never gets old. I like to hear it. It sounds good every time, every day- because everyday I need to hear it.**

**That is the gospel – God loves me & sent Jesus to die for my sin! I like to hear it – I need to hear it – I need to remember it. Paul says, remember the gospel – It’s about Jesus alone!**

**1 Corinthians 15:1Now, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. 2 By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. 3 For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, 5 and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve. (then more sightings)**

**2 By this gospel you are saved, (the true gospel) if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.**

**This was the problem in Galatia and some churches today – they wandered from the gospel.**

**(The letter to the Galatians is unique- it’s the only one that does not contain a word of thanksgiving. In every other letter he does - But not this time…) Gal 1:6 I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you to live in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel, (a tradition, agenda, cause, movement) 7 which is really no gospel at all. (It’s not good news at all) Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert (twist) the gospel of Christ. 8 But even if we (even me) or an angel (so called) from heaven (many false movements start with a vision or visit from an angel) should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let them be under God’s curse! (“anathema” - Eternally condemned without hope)**

**Well, it was big angel - Ask him about Jesus. Joseph smith was visited by an angel – I have a diff gospel. No, you’re a demon. But the angle has verses - Satan is a great Bible prof. He’s on faculty at more than one seminary. He likes to twist scripture. =**

**If I preach another gospel, push a diff cause, or agenda other than freedom in Christ alone, run away or run me out**

**Then he says it again just in case you went to public school and missed it –**

**9 As we have already said, so now I say again: (If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let them be under God’s curse! (Cursed - “anathema” - Literally – let them go to hell!) Does your version of the gospel determine your eternal destiny? Absolutely.**

**What’s the greatest threat to the gospel? Satan, world religion, cults, atheists, govt, culture? The greatest threat is you – those in the church**

**For Jesus, the greatest threat was always sitting at his diner table – Judas**

**Acts 20 – Paul describes three types of people in church**

* **The Sheep – people who love the Lord and live the gospel**
* **The Shepherds – church leaders to oversee them**
* **The wolves – false teachers who will pervert the gospel**

**Paul says - “I warned you day and night with tears about them…”**

**Galatians 1:10 Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? (Some preach to please people - That is the real question. The gospel forces us to decide between people you love and Jesus. Are you going to please this person or Jesus? Somebody will not be happy…) If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ.**

**If your goal is to be liked, you will not be very faithful to Jesus.**

**A few thoughts about this section of Galatians:**

**1. Even well-taught Christians can be led astray by false doctrine**

**Be alert / look out for your friends / those next to you**

**2. Sometimes the truth demands we expose errors**

**There are things we can differ on, debate, and not divide over - The Gospel is not one of them / Jesus and who he is not one**

**3. Not everyone who claims to be a Christian is one**

**Even those of you watching this today – some of you.**

**Matt 7:21 “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?’ 23 Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’**

**4. There is only one true Gospel and all others are cursed**

**One God / one way / one gospel / one Lord / one salvation / Only one will give you FREEDOM!**

**Paul declares the true gospel up front / true freedom: Jesus was crucified, buried, rose again and rescued me from my sin and self.**

**How’s your marriage, family, job, relationships? You need salvation in those areas – you need freedom? What’s the answer? Can you hear the march - The Gospel.**

**Paul wrote this - Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes…**

**The Gospel unleashes the power of God and brings salvation**

**It’s not a marriage problem – it’s a gospel problem.**

**Beat of the drum - I will never be ashamed of it for with it freedoms marches to all who receive him.**