

Sunday, August 21, 2022—Galatians 1:6 Why Marvel Has Nothing to do With Comic Books

Galatians 1:6

- **I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:**
- **I marvel**—is an expression that means to cause wonder, astonishment, or intense surprise. The verb is in the present tense, active voice, and indicative mood. The verb is expressing Paul’s thoughts and feelings while he is penning the epistle.
- Noah Webster’s *American Dictionary of the English Language* defines “marvel” as follows:
 - [Noun] A wonder; that which arrests the attention and causes a person to stand or gaze, or to pause.
 - Wonder; admiration.
 - [Verb] To wonder. It expresses less than astonish or amaze.
- The Greek word rendered “marvel” in Gal. 1:6 is elsewhere translated “wondered” by the King James translators.
 - Luke 2:18, 4:22, 8:25, 9:43—“wondered”
- Paul says that he is astonished at how soon the Galatians were removed from him and the gospel that he preached.
- **ye are so soon removed**—the perversion of the gospel in the churches of Galatia happened quickly. Paul had not been gone very long before they began to depart the faith.
- Acts 14:21-25—we have already seen in previous studies that Paul preached his gospel and established churches in the region of Galatia on his first apostolic journey.
- According to Galatians 1:6, very soon after Paul left, people followed Paul into the region and began to preach a message that included Law keeping and religious works for salvation. When did this occur? Recall our discussion from the “Introduction” to this series about when the book of Galatians was written.
 - Acts 16:22-23—Paul and Silas are beaten in the City of Philippi.
 - Galatians 6:17—Paul bears in his body “the marks of the Lord Jesus Christ” when he wrote Galatians.
 - Acts 16:6—Paul was just in Galatia earlier in the chapter during his second apostolic journey.

- Galatians 1:6—the Galatians departed Paul’s gospel shortly after he left the region thereby promoting the writing of the epistle. This fits perfectly with the book having been written around the time of Paul’s beating recorded in Acts 16:22-23. This accounts for the proximity in time between when Paul was in the region (Acts 16:6) and when he wrote the letter (around Acts 16:22-23). Paul could not have written Galatians after his first apostolic journey because the Jerusalem council of meeting of Acts 15 discussed in Galatians 2 had not yet occurred.
- The quick departure of the Galatians from Paul’s gospel occurred between Acts 16:6 and Acts 16:22-23 when the book was written.
- **removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ**—the verb rendered “removed” is 2nd person plural and corresponds with the “ye” earlier in the verse. Note that the action of being “removed” was taken by the Galatians themselves. This corresponds to the middle voice in Greek i.e., a structure that “represents the subject as acting in some way upon himself for concerning himself.” (Zodhiates, 866) Paul is marveling because the Galatians allowed this to happen to themselves. Put another way, their removal from Paul was brought upon themselves via their own choices.
 - Galatians 4:15
- Who called the Galatians into the grace of Christ? Paul.
- Paul is upset with the Galatians for essentially two reasons:
 - They had departed from the grace of Christ.
 - They had removed themselves from Paul’s ministry.
- Therefore, removing oneself from Pauline authority is synonymous with being removed from the grace of Christ. The reason Paul could talk like this is because the gospel that had been committed to him was the Gospel of the Grace of God.

What Was Paul’s Gospel

- Acts 20:24—Paul preached a gospel that fundamentally had something to do with the grace of God.
- Remember that the term “gospel” is a generic term meaning “good news.” The specific good news that is being referred to is determined in the context.
- Romans 3:24, 28—Paul teaches today that men are justified freely (that is totally apart from human effort) by grace and not by the works of the Law or human performance.
- Ephesians 2:8-9—once again, we are saved by grace through faith, which is the only way salvation can be considered a free gift.

- Titus 3:5
- Romans 11:6—works and grace are mutually exclusive. As soon as you add works of any kind, you have frustrated the grace of God.
- Galatians 1:6—the Judaizers had come and confused the issue of justification by grace through faith without works by telling the Galatians they needed to be circumcised and follow the Law of Moses to be saved.
- **unto another gospel**—I now know something about what Paul considered another gospel, anything that diminished from the grace of God by adding works.

Works Cited

Zodhiates, Spiros. *The Complete World Study New Testament*. Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 1992.