

2. Only One Gospel

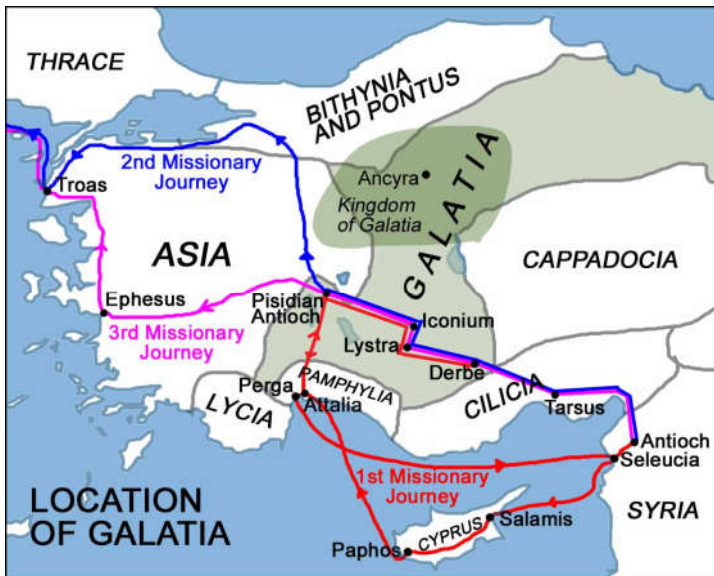


Only one way? Is that fair? This is a common response to the “Exclusiveness” of the Gospel. Jesus clearly claims that there is only one way to the Father (John 14:6), that way is through Him exclusively. This claim has consequences on other religions that claim to provide the way to God, it means they are false. This would include billions of adherents to these other religious systems, Hinduism (1 billion), Islam (1.5 Billion), Buddhism (300 million) just to mention the largest.

Many usually respond, it's not fair to claim one way is right and other wrong, how can it be that one group is right? All we really have to do is examine the very definition of “Truth”, truth by its very nature claims to be exclusive, since the opposite of truth is false. For example the statement, “There is NO TRUTH” is an exclusive claim of truth, meaning the opposite is false. For something to be true, something must be false.

When Paul came into the region of Galatia, this is the message he presented, those who believed formed into churches in the region of Galatia. After Paul left, others arrived Jewish believers who taught in

addition to believing in Jesus, you also needed to follow the law of Moses to be saved.



One Gospel

Gal 1:1-10

- (1) Paul, an apostle—not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead—
(2) and all the brothers who are with me, To the churches of Galatia:
(3) Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,
(4) who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father,
(5) to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.
(6) I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—
(7) not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ.
(8) But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed.
(9) As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received,

let him be accursed.

- (10) For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.

(1) Paul...an apostle: Paul brought the Gospel to the cities of Galatia as an apostle of Jesus Christ, later his authority was questioned by the Judiazers. What authority did Paul have? He was not one of the original 12, so how could he establish the nature of the Gospel? This is one of the major subjects of Galatians, Paul is not representing his own views, he is representing the “Doctrine” (teaching) of Jesus Christ. **Through Jesus Christ:** Paul was an enemy of the Gospel, persecuting the believers (Acts 7:58,8:1-4), Jesus is the one who called Saul, later renamed Paul, to be His special representative of the Gospel, to suffer for the sake of the Gospel. Paul asserts this authority to the Galatians, He lets them know his authority does not come through Peter, James, John or the other disciples but from Jesus Christ directly.

Act 9:15-16

(15) But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel.

(16) For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name."

(2) Brothers with me: In his first missionary journey Paul, Barnabas and Luke traveled together before the Jerusalem council (Acts 13:2). During this missionary period is when Paul would have first traveled to the Galatian area to deliver the Gospel. After the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15) Paul traveled to the area of Galatians with Silas and Luke (Acts 15:40) to deliver the message of the council, affirming salvation by faith in Jesus Christ alone.

Churches in Galatia: The subject of the letter is the group of churches that were part of Paul's *First Missionary Journey* including Pisidian Antioch, Lystra, Iconium and Derbe. (Acts 13-14). Paul and Silas returned to the area in the *Second Missionary Journey* (Acts 16:1-6) and would traveled north of southern Galatia into Phrygia near Pontus.

(3) Grace to you: Paul's salutation to the churches applies to all believers, **Grace** (χάρις *charis*) the gift of God, enjoying his pleasure. **Peace:** The Christian is at peace with God, through the work of Christ, because Jesus' death removed the wrath of God from the believer. Peace is the absence of conflict, the conflict between the believer and God, because of sin was taken care of on the cross.

Joh 3:36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.

(4-5)Gave himself: Jesus saved us, from the wrath and judgment of God. Salvation comes from the meaning of the act of saving. So we need to ask, save from what? We were saved from the judgment of God. Jesus took the wrath of God on Himself, so we might not have to pay the penalty for our sins.

Present evil age: From the fall of Adam, the age (αἰών *aiōn*) became fallen. There is a pervasive evil in the world, Jesus called Satan the ruler of this world. When Adam and Eve fell, they turned over their dominion to Satan who tempted them. Jesus came to restore what Adam lost and redeem fallen humanity from the judgment of God, by his death on the cross.

2Co 4:3-4 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. (4) In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

Joh 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out.

(6) I am astonished: The Galatians who understood the Gospel, were now turning from the truth, Paul had received word of the spiritual conflict taking place in the churches. His response was the letter to the Galatians.

So quickly deserting: The churches of Galatians were deserting the doctrine of salvation they received from Paul, who delivered the Gospel given by Christ. The Greek word is *metatithēmi*: meaning to change sides, to exchange. **Grace of Christ:** Salvation was a gift to the believers of Galatia, they were now exchanging the gift of Christ for something different. This is the subject of Galatians, what did the Galatians, have that they were abandoning? The simple Gospel, was delivered to them, they were now choosing to add complexity to the words of Christ.

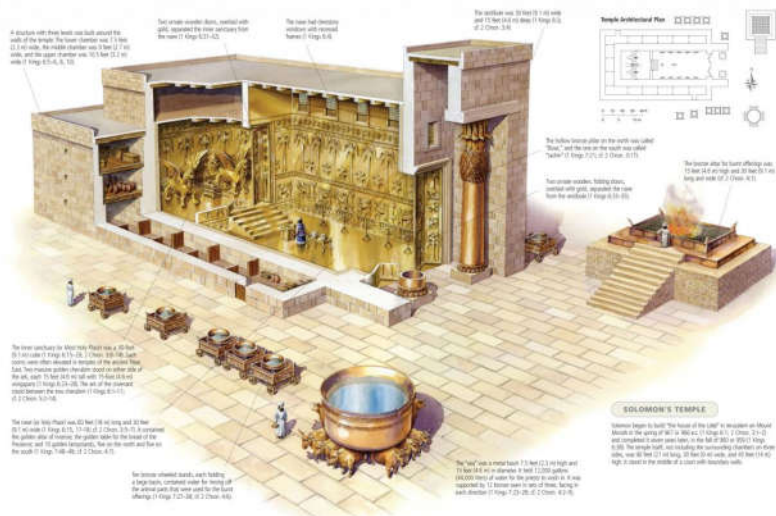
Different gospel: Before we can understand the different Gospel we need to understand the Gospel they received at the start.

The **Gospel** (εὐαγγέλιον, euaggelion, Good News) of Jesus Christ is the proclamation of the fallen, lost nature of humanity in need of salvation. The "Good news" is that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, died on the cross for the sins of humanity offering salvation to all who believe on Him. This is the *Good News* or the Gospel presented in scripture.

Joh 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

The Gospel, the Good News, was that Salvation is attained by faith in Jesus Christ alone, apart from works. We do not attain salvation by our human effort, but by faith in Jesus Christ.

Eph 2:8-9 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, (9) not a result of works, so that no one may boast.



Rom 3:21-26 But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— (22) the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: (23) for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, (24) and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, (25) whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. (26) It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

Different Gospel: The message of the *Judaizers* was that in addition to faith in Jesus Christ, one was required to keep the Law of Moses to be saved. This conflict began at the start of Christianity, this is at the heart of the conflict in Acts 15. The early Church consisted of Jews who followed the law of Moses, before the death of Christ on the Cross. After Jesus died on the Cross and completed the Law in his death, what was to be done with the regulations of the Old Covenant? Jews who believed Jesus was the Messiah, were conflicted, how could they abandon traditions established by Moses? What were they to do? To them the answer seemed simple, believe in Jesus and follow the Law of Moses.

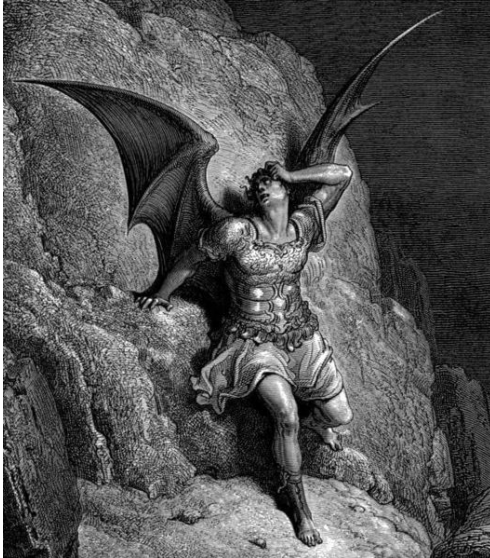
Act 15:1-6 But some men came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved." (2) And after Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and the elders about this question. (3) So, being sent on their way by the church, they passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria, describing in detail the conversion of the Gentiles, and brought great joy to all the brothers. (4) When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they declared all that God had done with them. (5) But some believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees rose up and said, "It is necessary to circumcise them and to order them to keep the law of Moses." (6) The apostles and the elders were gathered together to consider this matter.

This is the same subject addressed in the Epistle to the Hebrews, how were Jewish believers to conduct themselves in relation to the Old Covenant? The answer was we are under a "New Covenant", the focus of the Mosaic Law was fulfilled in Jesus Christ, animal sacrifice and ordinances were no longer necessary since Jesus fulfilled the requirements of the Law of Moses.

Heb 8:1-13 Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, (2) a minister in the holy places, in the true tent that the Lord set up, not man. (3) For every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices; thus it is necessary for this priest also to have something to offer. (4) Now if he were on earth, he would not be a priest at all, since there are priests who offer gifts according to the law. (5) They serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things. For when Moses was about to erect the tent, he was instructed by God, saying, "See that you make everything according to the pattern that was shown you on the mountain." (6) But as it is, Christ has obtained a ministry that is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant he mediates is better, since it is enacted on better promises. (7) For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion to look for a second. (8) For he finds fault with them when he says: "Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will establish a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, (9) not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. For they did not continue in my covenant, and so I showed no concern for them, declares the Lord. (10) For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts,

and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. (11) And they shall not teach, each one his neighbor and each one his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. (12) For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more." (13) In speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

The different Gospel was the attempt by the Galatians to make themselves obedient to the Law of Moses, in addition to following Jesus Christ. They were being taught, and they were following the point, faith in Jesus was not enough, they needed to become obedient to the Law in order to be saved.



Gal 3:10-13 For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, "Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them." (11) Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for "The righteous shall live by faith." (12) But the law is not of faith, rather "The one who does them shall live by them." (13) Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree"—



(7) not...another one: There is no other "Gospel" good news, the Gospel is exclusive, only through the Blood of Jesus Christ can one be saved. This is focus of Satan, Satan's goal is to hide the Gospel from those who are perishing. The Gospel is the "Power of God" (Romans 1:16), Satan is opposed to this power.

2Co 4:3-4 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. (4) In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of

the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

Distort the gospel of Christ: One method of Satanic attack is to distort the Gospel, to add to the Gospel. This is what Paul is confronting here, he responding to a distortion of the Gospel. Satan has used this same system again and again. Two examples are Mormonism and Islam, both faith accept "A Jesus" but the Jesus different then the Jesus of the Bible. In Mormonism the **Mormon Jesus**:

- Is the brother of Lucifer
- One of many gods,
- He is the product of a sexual relationship between Mary and Eloheim
- He married Mary, Martha and other Mary of Cana
- Jesus was once like us and progressed to godhood
- Humans can become gods like Jesus

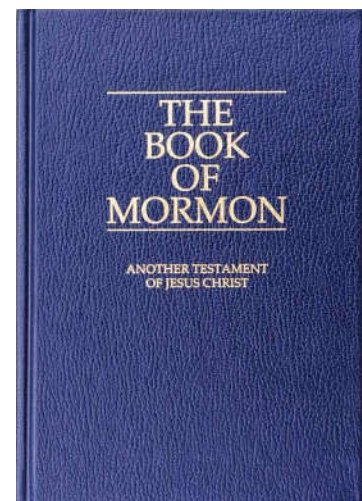
The Muslims also claim to believe in Jesus, but the Muslim Jesus is different than the Jesus of the Bible.

The **Muslim Jesus**:

- Is not the Son of God
- He did not die on the cross
- He is only a prophet
- He is coming again to get married, have children and die
- He will be buried next to Mohammad

Paul wanted the Galatians to really understand how serious their choice was,

(8) we or an angel: Paul wanted to the Galatians wanted to understand this heresy is has a much larger dimension and implications then the physical world they live in. This different Gospel is an attack from Satan himself who opposes the Gospel. The message of the Gospel was from God, through the ministry of Paul, even Paul says if "We" or an angel preached something **contrary**, let him be accursed. Paul is merely delivering the message of God, he has no right or ability to rescind what



has already been delivered. Both Islam and Mormonism claim to be angelic inspired messages. Mohammed claim the angel *Gabriel* revealed the Quran to him, while Joseph Smith claimed the angel *Moroni* delivered to him the “Golden tablets” the source of his book of Mormon.

For example Islam is clearly demonic in nature, it can actually be called the “Anti-gospel”. The Quran rejects the death of Christ on the Cross, it rejects the Sonship of Jesus, it rejects the deity of the son.

Eph 6:11-13 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. (12) For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. (13) Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.

One we preached: The message of both Islam, and Mormonism are contrary to the scriptures, Paul says let those who delivered them be accursed.

Accursed: (ἀνάθεμα anathema) cursed thing, that which opposes the Gospel should be accursed. These are severe terms, Paul includes himself, if he should preach contrary to the Gospel first preached let him be accursed.

(9) say again...accursed: This is repeated from verse 8, to demonstrate how severe the judgment is, This attack on the Gospel is demonic attack on the work of Jesus Christ.

(10) Am I now: Paul was not seeking the easy road here, it would have been easier for Paul to say nothing, so he could have no conflict with the Judaizers who also believed Jesus was the Messiah, but felt obedience to the Mosaic law required for salvation. Paul if he was **seeking the approval of man** approval could have gotten it, but Paul was interested in God’s approval, and the truth of the Gospel, bringing human opposition to the Gospel

