

about God's word is that it never changes. You never have to worry about keeping up with trends because His word will always be the same. We need to forget about trying to please men by telling them what they want to hear because they will only want to hear it for a short time and then, they will change what they want to hear. Instead, we should always preach the word of God because it is the only thing that will please God.

What we have seen in this study of Galatians 1-2 is that you can't please God by arguing with Him, trying to persuade Him to change His mind on the Law which was established through the blood of Jesus. Also, you cannot please men by trying to persuade them

of man's wisdom or by arguing with God. In the end, the only thing that is worth it is pleasing God and persuading others to do the same. I pray that we will all strive to please God by turning to the Gospel of Christ instead of away from it.

By Curtis Carwile



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Olsen Park Church of Christ

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Sunday: 9:30 a.m.
10:20 a.m.
6:00 p.m.
Wednesday: 7:00 p.m.

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Pleasing God: Galatians 1-2

If you have never read the book of Galatians all the way through in one setting, I would suggest doing so. Reading the whole content of one of the Bible letters is a great practice and study tool. You can gain so much from actually being able to keep everything in context. Also, you are able to see "the big picture" or what the inspired writer was trying to get across to the original audience. In the letter to the Galatians, "the big picture" Paul is trying to get across is how people can be pleasing to God.

Now, I'm not a bad guy and God is important to me. I want to make

Him happy. I'm sure that you do, too. Therefore, we need to be constantly asking what we can do to do in order to make God happy. Galatians 1:10 answers that for us. It tells us that the only way to please God is to persuade men. We need to persuade men of the truth of the One Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is the one Gospel for which that Paul left his obedience to the Old Law. It is the good news that Christ died on the cross and rose again after three days in the grave. It is the promise that those who believe on Him and are baptized into Him will become heirs of Salvation from God. That's how you make God happy.

As you look at the whole of the New Testament, it becomes apparent that there is no other way to please The Lord God Almighty. The rest of the letter to the Galatians deals with three different scenarios to prove this point.

1. You cannot please God by trying to persuade Him. Peter tried to do that back in Mark 8, when he pulled Jesus aside after He said that He would go to Jerusalem to die. Peter told Jesus that He wasn't going to die and that He needed to stop saying things like that. Jesus rebuked Peter for what he said. Jesus actually told him to get behind Him and even called Peter "Satan" because of the seriousness of Peter's error. Peter was trying to persuade Jesus (God) to do something which was not in accordance with His eternal purpose. The point that we need to take from this is that we can not possibly please God by telling Him that He is wrong or trying to get Him to do something else or to accept something other than what He wants. So many people in the religious world try to argue with God on matters regarding the assembly of the Saints, or on matters regarding our daily worship to God, and

even on matters regarding our salvation. God cannot be pleased when He speaks His commandments to His people and His people argue with Him. It is so important that we listen to God's word, accept it as the truth it is, and humbly obey it. It is the only way to please God.

2. You cannot persuade men by trying to please men. What I mean by this can be seen in Galatians 2:11-21 when Peter is rebuked again. This time, Paul rebukes Peter for trying to please men, namely the Jews. Peter and Paul had spent some time together teaching and worshipping with Gentile Christians and a lot of good was done because of it. However, when some Jewish Christians came to see Peter, Peter fell back into the old Jewish custom of separating himself from the Gentiles. When Paul heard that, he had to stand up to Peter and the other Jewish Christians for not pleasing God. Peter knew what he was doing was wrong. After all, it was he who first preached the Gospel to the Gentiles and fought with those in Jerusalem for the Gospel to be taught to the Gentiles. He knew better than to separate himself from the Gen-

tiles because of the Jews and yet he still did it. He did it to please those Jews. There are people that are doing what is wrong and some of them even know it is wrong and, yet, they still do it. Consequently, when these people try and persuade others to do what is right according to the Law of Christ, the people will look at the lifestyle and reject the preaching, even if it is correct. It is so important that we live a righteous life in accordance with God's will so our influence will not be diminished. Not only will God be pleased that we are obeying His will, but He will be pleased that our lives will not get in the way of His Message.

3. You cannot please men by trying to persuade God. In 2 Timothy 4:3-4, Paul tells Timothy that there will come a time when some will not endure sound doctrine and heap up false teachers according to their own desires because of their "itching ears." In Ephesians 4:14, Paul tells the Ephesians not to be tossed about by every wind of doctrine that comes along. The same holds true with Paul in the letter to the Galatians. The Galatians had fallen back into the trap of Judaism. They

heaped up teachers for themselves because they wanted to do what God didn't want them to do. What they were trying to do was persuade God that it was okay for them to go back under the Old Law. The odd thing is that many of them left other religions (like Judaism) to obey Christ. There is a curious pattern with so many people, then and now, that they will listen to something until something "better" comes along. When Paul came to Athens in Acts 17, the Athenians listened to Paul because they wanted to hear "this new thing." So many people are always looking for the next "big thing" so they can forget everything else. People like that will never be happy because they will always be arguing with God on whatever the current fad is. People like this will never be at peace because they constantly reject or try to change the real peace that God offers in His word. One of the reassuring things

