

missionary journey, and that this area would be more likely to be influenced by the Judaizers than the north. Thus, the Galatians were probably citizens of the cities of Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe.

The Greeting

Paul's opening remarks are not merely part of the form of the letter. From the very start, the Apostle sets forth his inspired argument against those that had subverted the Galatian Christians. He appeals to the great source of his authority and to the fact of Christ's atoning work.

Outline

- I. The Greeting
 - A. Source of Paul's Apostleship
 1. Negatively: What the source is not
 - a. Not from any human source
In the phrase, "not from men," Paul declares that the fountainhead of his authority is not found in mankind. He distinguishes himself from the false apostles who did not derive their authority from God.
 - b. Not through any human mediation
Some charged that Barnabas had commissioned Paul as an apostle. Thus they said he could not be ranked with the original twelve. Paul, of course, was commissioned by Christ Himself on the road to Damascus.
 2. Positively: What the true source is
 - a. From God Himself
Paul declares that the source of his authority rests in Jesus Christ and God the Father Who raised Him from the dead.
 - b. Through Divine mediation
The preposition preceding the word "man" is the same preposition that precedes "Jesus Christ." The preposition means "through" or "by means of." Thus Paul declares that he was commissioned directly by Jesus Christ. He appeals also to the fact of the Resurrection, for it was the risen Christ that commissioned him.
 - B. The Nature of Paul's Doctrine
 1. His doctrine was based upon the Grace of God
 - a. He says "Grace to you and peace from God ..."
Grace means unmerited, unearned favor. It is the source of the peace of which Paul speaks. Luther said of these two words: "These two words comprehend whatever belongs to Christianity. Grace releaseth sin, and peace makes the conscience quiet."
 2. His doctrine was centered in the atoning work of Christ
"Who gave Himself for (on behalf of) our sins that He might deliver us from this present evil world (age), according to the will of God our Father: To Whom be glory forever and ever. Amen."

The Galatians had forgotten the atoning work of Christ. They had departed from beneath the cross of Jesus. If we truly see the spotless Lamb of God suffering the pain and humiliation of the cross for us, we should never desire to go back to the bondage of a legalistic system. Christ has delivered us, Hallelujah!