

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE GALATIANS  
Part Two

II. The Denunciation

"I marvel that ye are so ready to revolt from God Who called you, so reckless in abandoning the dispensation of grace for a different gospel. A different gospel, did I say? Nay, it is not another. There cannot be two gospels. Only certain men are shaking your allegiance, attempting to pervert the Gospel of Christ. A vain attempt, for the Gospel perverted is no gospel at all. Yea, though we ourselves or an angel from heaven (were it possible) should preach to you any other gospel than that which we have preached hitherto, let him be accursed. I have said this before, and I repeat it now. If any man preaches to you any other gospel than that which ye were taught by us, let him be accursed."

- paraphrase by Lightfoot of Galatians 1:6-9

A. The Apostasy of the Galatians

1. It occurred "quickly"
  - a. either - quickly after Paul's visit
  - b. or - quickly after the attack by false teachers

2. It was voluntary

The word translated "removed" in verse 6 means to "change from one thing to its opposite. It is sometimes used to refer to a turncoat, traitor, or renegade. The Galatian Christians were voluntarily deserting that which they had been taught.

3. It was not complete

The verb implies that they were in the process of turning. Many were "halting" between two opinions. There was still hope that the apostasy could be stopped in the early stages. Apostasy is compared to cancer in II Timothy 2:17, "a canker." If this disease can be treated in the early stages, there is hope. Sometimes part of the body must be removed to insure the health of the rest of the body. This is equal to church discipline. Heretics sometimes must be removed to insure the purity of the whole. If not treated, cancer reaches the stage when the vital organs of the body are affected. There is little hope at this stage. When a church body has become apostate to the point that it is impossible to remove the source of cancerous unbelief, the church is in a hopeless condition.

4. It consisted of a turning away from God and His grace, as revealed in Jesus Christ

- a. "From him" is not a reference to Paul, but to God. The Gospel call proceeds from God the Father. Compare: I Corinthians 1:9, Romans 8:30, I Thessalonians 2:12.
- b. This calling was into grace, not bondage. Here again Paul emphasizes the true nature of the Gospel.

5. It was a turning to a different gospel, which was no gospel at all, "unto another gospel: which is not another..."

Here the original is much clearer than the English translation. This is so because there are two different words used in the Greek which are both translated by the English "another." The first "another" is the word hetero which means "one of a different kind." The second "another" which occurs at the beginning of verse 7 is allos, which means "one of the same kind."

e.g. \*\*\* + \* = allos

\*\*\* + # = hetero