



**SERIES: We Are Free December 2022-January 2023**

**SPEAKER: NAT CRAWFORD**

**Monday, December 5, 2022**

**Scripture: Galatians 1:1-3**

**TITLE: Grace to You**

As someone who has spoken on college campuses, I've heard a lot of pushback to Christianity. As someone who has counseled many people in my pastor's office, I've heard people declare why they want to leave the faith. As an apologist, I've read many variations and distortions of Christianity.

From the very moment Jesus ascended to heaven, and the apostles began to move out to take the Gospel to all the world, Christianity, true Christianity, was at risk of being changed.

That's why we should read the book of Galatians. Changing Christianity by adding to it or taking something away was a threat 2,000 years ago and is a threat today.

The book of Galatians was written to combat the false teaching that the grace that God offers through Jesus Christ is not sufficient. There is something else that you can and must do to make it work correctly.

In Paul's day, Galatia was the name used for the original smaller region and the province of Galatia. Galatia was under Roman rule and is part of modern Turkey. Now, this letter does not identify any specific churches, but we can be confident these words are to churches that Paul had personally ministered. While in Galatia, Paul was stoned and left for dead by Jewish leaders who followed him from Antioch and Iconium to Lystra. On Paul's second missionary journey, Paul visited these churches with Silas.

Now having some background, let's begin our study of the Book of Galatians in Galatians 1:1-2.

*Paul, an apostle—not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead—and all the brothers who are with me.*

So Paul is defending his apostleship. He witnessed a risen Christ, and that changed everything for Him. An apostle was someone who saw a risen Christ. At the time of this writing, there are these false teachers who are infiltrating and influencing the Galatian churches to believe a false gospel. Their strategy is to say that Paul, whom the Galatians claim as the father of their faith and church, he's no Apostle. He is just an ordinary man who is running on his own authority and by his own commission. That's why Paul specifically says not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father.

Paul continues in verse 3.

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I think we, as humans, really struggle with this concept of grace. Grace isn't a human value. It's a God value. Grace makes no sense, humanly speaking. It doesn't make any sense religiously. Remember, religion says what you can do to achieve peace with God. Religion tells you what you can do to earn salvation or keep salvation. Grace blows religion up. It says there's nothing you can do. If you want peace with God, if you want salvation from your sins, God's going to have to do it for you. And purely as a gift.

When Paul says grace to you, he is reminding them of the true Gospel. He addresses the core issue in the book of Galatians: adding works to grace. Adding strings to the gift. And that's not grace.

Paul says to remember the grace of God. From that gift, you experienced peace with God and peace in all circumstances.

We, apart from saving grace, are enemies of God. We are out living for ourselves and sin. In our sinfulness, we are attacking Christ. It's our sin that held him to that cross.

But by grace, Jesus said, "I'm going to interrupt your life. Follow me." We may not be apostles, but we are His ambassadors. We get to go and share the Good News because Jesus Christ stopped us and called us.

My question for you today is, "where is Jesus calling you? And will you go?"