Devoted to Destruction
Scripture: Galatians 1:6-9
Code: 1651

1973

We're studying the Book of Galatians in our new study, which we began last Lord's Day evening. And this time we find ourselves in Galatians, chapter 1, verses 6 through 9. Galatians 1:6-9. And I'd like to read those verses to begin with. Galatians 1, beginning in verse 6. Paul, writing to the churches in the area of Galatia, writes, "I marvel that you are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel, which is not another, but there are some that trouble you and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."

Now, God has set certain things apart for cursing, for destruction. Whenever God sets something apart to be destroyed, it is devoted to destruction. And the word that literally means devoted to destruction is the word "anathema." And that is the word that is used at the end of verse 8 and at the end of verse 9. And throughout the history of God's dealings with man, there have been certain things which God has devoted to destruction. And I'd like to give you an illustration of that, not by any stretch of the imagination being able to cover all the times, say, in the Old Testament, that God talks about things devoted to destruction, but at least to give you an indication.

Turn in your Bible to Joshua, chapter 6, and here is an incident which will illustrate to us God's cursing. Joshua, chapter 6. And for the sake of time, we'll go directly to verse 17. Of course, the time historically here is the conquering of the Promised Land. Moses has passed on. Joshua has taken the people in. And it is around the time of Jericho and those great events.

And in verse 17 the Bible says this. Joshua 6, "And the city shall be accursed, even it, and all that are in it, to the Lord." In other words, God was devoting Jericho to destruction. There was to be nothing left. "Only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all who are with her in the house, because she hid the messengers that we sent." God spares Rahab. "And ye, in every way, keep yourselves from the accursed thing, lest ye make yourselves accursed, when you take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it."

Now here, in just two verses, the word "accursed" or "cursed" appears six times, or five times. This is something which God is cursing. And it means that He is devoting it to be destroyed. He is setting it apart for the purpose of destruction. And he says in 19, "the silver, gold, and vessels of bronze and iron," those things which are worth something, "are to be consecrated unto the Lord and come into the treasury of the Lord." The rest of it, which was worth nothing, was to be destroyed.

But in chapter 7 we find an interesting thing that happened, beginning in verse 1. "But the children of Israel committed a trespass in the accursed thing." Instead of leaving alone what God had devoted to destruction, they tried to salvage something. They tried to salvage something out of that which was anathema.

And the man who did it was a man by the name of "Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah." He "took of the accursed thing, and the anger of the LORD was kindled against the children of Israel." Now go down to verse 11, just to see what happened. "Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them, for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also, and they have put it even among their own stuff." Remember, he buried it in his tent.

"Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, but turned their backs before their enemies, because they were accursed. Neither will I be with you any more, except you destroy the accursed from among you." You see, God had devoted it to destruction. They had tried to salvage it, at least Achan had. And God said, "You'd better get rid of it or I'll turn my back on you." "Up," He says, "Sanctify the people, and say, Sanctify yourselves for tomorrow, for thus saith the Lord God of Israel, 'There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel. Thou canst not stand before thine enemies, until you take away the accursed thing from among you.'" And it goes on down to see what happened.

Well, just going over to verse 25, "Joshua said, 'Why hast thou troubled us? The Lord shall trouble thee this day.'" And this, of course, is spoken to Achan. "And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire," that's his family, and, incidentally, his animals and his tent and everything he had, "after they had stoned them with stones." So they stoned them first and then burned him.

"And they raised over him a great heap of stones unto this day," as a monument to the fact that nobody touches what God has cursed and gets away with it. "So the Lord turned away from the fierceness of His anger. Wherefore the name of the place was called, The valley of Achor, unto this day." And Achor simply means "trouble." It's always trouble when the saint of God, the child of God, fools around with a thing which God curses.

Now, apart from the Old Testament, there are some very specific things in the New Testament that God curses. There are at least two things that stand out very pointedly above all the rest that God

curses, two things that are said to be anathema, devoted to destruction, banned, if you will, by God.

The first one is false teachers. False teachers. Now, I want to talk about that tonight, because that is the context of Galatians 1:6-9, false teachers. And twice, in verses 8 and 9, God says they are anathema, they are accursed, they are devoted to destruction.

Now, God has always felt the same way about false teachers. They have always been something that God did not tolerate, even in the Old Testament. But in the New Testament God makes some very specific statements. In fact, in Matthew 24:24, it says, "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Now, in every age, there have been false prophets. And He says in the last times there are going to be false prophets who are going to be so sharp that, were it possible, they would actually deceive the very elect. Clever false teachers.

Now, keep in mind that Satan operates primarily in the area of false doctrine. In John 8:44, Jesus simply and very, very pointedly classified Satan as the father of lies. He operates on false doctrine. To give you some illustrations of that, I only need to take you to just a few passages in the New Testament. Some will be reminders to you, because we've studied them in the Book of Acts.

In the 13th chapter of Acts, we run into one of Satan's Class A false prophets. And this man's name was Barjesus. And if you look down at verse 10, he speaks to Barjesus, does Saul, or Paul, and says, "Oh, full of all deceit and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?"

Now, if you want a classic definition of a false prophet, there it is. One, full of deceit and mischief. Two, child of the devil. Three, enemy of righteousness. Four, perverter of the ways of the Lord. There's a fourfold definition of a false teacher. Whether he comes into the category of Christianity or the occult, it all comes out the same. He's full of deceit and mischief. He's a child of the devil. He's the enemy of righteousness. And he's a perverter of the right ways of the Lord. That's a classic verse defining false prophets. And giving us an example in the character of Barjesus, and he's not the first example. Previous to this there was Simon, the sorcerer.

Now, in II Thessalonians, chapter 2, and verse 9, Paul talks about the end time, the time of the Tribulation, and he says there's going to come a great man, the man of sin, called in verse 3, the son of perdition, the antichrist, if you will. Verse 9, "Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs," now, watch, "and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish."

Now, another characterization of a false prophet, the ultimate false prophet, the antichrist is, again, he deceives. Satan functions in the area of false doctrine. He is from the beginning a liar and a deceiver,

and he started that way in the case of Eve, and he has never changed.

The classification of Satan comes in Revelation 12:9, that points this out. "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, who deceiveth the whole world." That's his business. His business is to be a deceiver, and it implies, you see, it implies the concept of a wolf in sheep's clothing. Deceit is that which is not supposed to be obvious on the surface. He's a deceiver.

In chapter 13 and verse 14, the antichrist sets up this image, and it says, "He deceives them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do." You would be amazed throughout history how many people have believed that God was doing something because it was miraculous. And in our society and in our day in which we live, people tend to see something miraculous and assume that God did it. It is not necessarily the correct assumption.

And later on, in chapter 20, just in case you might've forgotten when you finished up reading the Bible, you're reminded again of what Satan's been doing. Chapter 20, verse 2, and here this angel lays hold on this dragon, the old serpent, Devil, and Satan, bound him a thousand years, cast him into the bottomless pit, shut him up, and set a seal on him, "that he should deceive the nations no more, till a thousand years should be fulfilled." That's what he's been doing all along. And then in verse 10 of the same chapter, after the kingdom is over and he's cast into the lake of fire, it says, "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire."

So you notice that it is characteristic of the mention of Satan that he is always mentioned as a liar and a deceiver. And, incidentally, all those who propagate his lies and propagate his deceit will be damned along with him. And if you read Revelation 21:8 and 22:15, you'll find that all those who reject Christ, all those who accept Satan's lies, wind up in the same lake of fire that he winds up in.

Now, Satan, then, is a liar. He is a deceiver. And he is a counterfeiter. And he doesn't work alone. He has lying spirits that work with him, demons, fallen angels. And they usually work, now, watch this, they usually work through human beings, through human beings. And, listen, I'll go a step further. They usually work through religious people. They usually work through religious people. In fact, I would say far and away the preponderance of all of the activity of Satan is directly through religion and religious people.

And he's subtle. You see, if Satan is going to pervert the truth, he's got to get inside the truth. Right? He can't stand on the outside and just yell at the truth. He's got to get in and corrupt it from the inside. And that's where he operates. And so, to pervert the truth, Satan comes across and he appears very godly and very religious. And all the time he's sowing the seeds of damnable heresy.

Now, lest you think I've put myself on a limb that can't be supported, in II Corinthians 11, we have a classification of Satan's lying spirits and how they operate. II Corinthians 11, verse 13. Paul says,

"For such,," and he's been talking about false teachers, "For such are false apostles." Now, watch, here is the first characterization of a false apostle. Here it comes. They are what kind of workers? "Deceitful workers, transforming themselves into," what? "The apostles of Christ."

Listen, Satan wants to be as much like a Christian as possible. That's the deceit. That's the subtlety. And he says, in verse 14, no wonder. "No marvel." Don't be surprised at that, "for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no big thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness." And then Paul can't resist this. "Whose end shall be according to their works."

Now, you see, Satan is a liar, and he is appearing as an angel of light. As I've said many times, I don't believe Satan fools around with bars and he fools around with sex and he fools around with Playboy magazine. I don't believe he's fooling around with that stuff. I believe the lust of the flesh takes care of that whole operation. I think where Satan works is in false religious systems. And in our system, and in our culture, I believe he works mostly, and I think this has been true in the past history, I think mostly he works through the framework of Christianity.

Now, lately he's been really getting into the occult and a lot of other Eastern religions that have been imposed on our culture. But up until recent days he worked through Christianity. And that's why today we have what we know as liberalism and modernism. Because Satan for years and years took what began, say, in the Great Awakening in America, and under the great preaching of men like Whitfield and Jonathan Edwards and others, and great ones even like Moody, and he began to pervert that and pervert it and pervert it until all of a sudden we woke up at the end of the 19th century and said, "We've got a world here in America full of modernism," and the Bible Institute of Los Angeles was founded to react against that. And the fundamentals were put in print. And men started saying, "We've got to get back to the Word."

And what had happened? Satan had infiltrated America's Christianity and turned it into liberalism, and sucked the very life blood out of it. Well, now, that's long past, so Satan's exploring new avenues, the occult, the Eastern religions, the whole thing. But Satan operates within the framework of the church yet to this day.

Now, I want to show you something about this particular chapter that might help you to see. Go back to verse 1 of II Corinthians 11. And Paul really expresses concern over false teachers. He says, "Would to God that you could bear with me a little in my folly, and indeed bear with me." You know, every teacher and preacher at one time or another says to his audience, "Now, hang in there and bear with me. I'm going to do something I don't like to do, but just, you know, grin and bear it. Because, you see, he just has said that you shouldn't glory and you shouldn't praise yourself. And in verse 17 back in chapter 10, he says, "Don't glory in anything but the Lord. For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth." And now he's going to do the

opposite of that. So he says, "Now, I know I just said that, but bear with me until you get the point."

False teachers had followed Paul into Corinth when he wrote this letter. And they had tried to undermine confidence in Paul. They had told the Corinthians that Paul was not worthy of his claim to apostleship, and they shouldn't listen to the guy, because he was a half-baked, self-made apostle. And they had undermined the people's confidence in him. So he's got to assert his apostleship.

And he says, "Now, I know I'm not supposed to establish myself, and I'm not supposed to commend myself," in verse 18, but then he says in verse 1, "But bear with me, because I've got to express a little bit of foolishness at this point." And he has two reasons. First of all, verse 2, "I am jealous over you with godly jealousy, for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." "The reason I want you to know that I'm speaking the truth and that I don't want you to believe false teachers is because I'm jealous for you. I love you. And I've taken you to present you to Christ, and I don't want you spotted and fouled up." So first of all is godly jealousy.

The second reason he wants to defend his apostleship is fear. Verse 3, "But I fear." What are you afraid of, Paul? "Lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his craftiness, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." Isn't that a powerful statement? One of the things that false teachers always want to do is steal the simplicity of salvation. And so Paul says, "I want to defend my right to speak, because I'm jealous, and I'm afraid for you, because somebody is liable to come along and corrupt your minds from the simplicity that is in Christ."

And verse 4, "For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus." Did you know there's a lot of Jesus being preached, man? There's a Jesus for every different kind of preacher. Everybody's talking about Jesus. There's all kinds of Jesus. When somebody says, "I believe in Jesus," I ask him, "What one?" "For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if you receive another spirit, which you have not received, or another gospel, which you have not accepted, you might well bear with him."

You say, "Wait a minute. What does that mean?" We'll go to verse 5. "For I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles." All through life, Paul fought for truth. And it finally cost him his head. And he's saying here in sarcasm, he's saying, "I suppose that if somebody came along and preached another Jesus, or somebody offered you another spirit, or somebody gave you another gospel, you might well bear with that guy. You might even buy that stuff. Have you forgotten that I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostle? Listen, if you're going to believe every fly-by-night, would-be prophet that comes along, what's the matter with believing me?" He's sarcastic.

He says, "Here comes some guy along, and he gives you some new Christ, some new Holy Spirit and some new gospel and you run after him. What's wrong with me? I wasn't behind the chiefest of the apostles. Oh, yeah, I don't have any great vocabulary. I might be rude in my speech," verse 6, "but

not in my knowledge. Not in my knowledge." And so Paul defends himself. Why? Because he saw what false teachers were doing. And he saw they were coming in to deceive the church. Well, you know, the false prophets always attacked Paul at the same two places. One, they attacked his right to speak, his credentials. Two, they attacked his gospel of grace. They attacked his credentials and his gospel of grace.

Now, with that as just kind of an initial thought, keep in mind that Paul had visited the area of the southern portion of Galatia, and he had gone there with Barnabas and he had returned there with Silas, and he even went back a third time. And he founded and nourished the infant churches. And they were so much a part of his life. He loved them. But as you come to the Book of Galatians, these false teachers have done essentially in Galatia what they did in Corinth. They have gone into Galatia, and they have sowed the seeds of false doctrine.

First of all, they tried to undermine Paul's credentials. Remember how last week we saw how he defended his right to speak as an apostle not chosen by men, but by God and Christ. And they had tried to undermine not only his credentials, but his gospel of grace. They tried to add legalism to grace. And that's why he wrote Galatians, because of what these false teachers were doing.

Listen, I don't think in the life of Paul that there was anything that he feared as much as false doctrine. And I hope I have a little bit of that same fear in me. When he was leaving Ephesus, he said in Acts 20:29, "For I know this," just imagine, he spent three years there night and day teaching, taught for three years night and day, and he's ready to leave, and he said, "I know this. I know it." "You know what, Paul?" "That after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock." He knew. He knew no sooner did he get out of town than false teachers would come right in the back door. Why?

Because he knows Satan, and Satan always operates as an angel of light. He always operates in deceit. And he always moves in where God is at work. And he says that the sad part of it is, here's how Satan works. You ready for this? Verse 30, "Also of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." Satan comes in and he infiltrates the church to deceive it. To deceive it. The only thing that can stop it is verse 32. "I commend you to God and the Word of His grace, which is able to build you up." So Paul had this tremendous, tremendous fear of false teachers. And he knew Satan, and he knew how Satan operated. And so he wrote the Book of Galatians.

Now, the primary target, now, watch this, the primary target of all false teachers, hang on, the primary objective of all false teachers is to attack the doctrine of salvation. You know why? Well, it's the only way they can guarantee that the soul is damned and kept from God. Right? I don't think Satan spends all of his time teaching the wrong view of church organization. Or I don't think that Satan spends all of his time with a slanted view on some doctrine of the Christian life. I think Satan concentrates on

messing up the doctrine of salvation. That's what damns men.

Because if you never get to the truth of salvation, the rest of it doesn't mean anything. And if you do get to the truth of salvation, whatever else Satan might try to do really doesn't get the job done, because you're already belonging to God. And so he concentrates primarily on the method of salvation.

Now, what was Paul's message about salvation? Salvation is by grace, period. Now, what do you think the false teachers are going to say? "Well, salvation is not by grace. Absolutely not. It is by works." No, you're wrong, they wouldn't say that. They would say, "Yes. It's by grace and..." See? That's deceiving. Subtle.

And you turn on your radio, and you hear some guy, and he sounds real good. He talks about grace. And all of a sudden at the end comes a whole bunch of law, see. That's the amazing thing about the cults, you know, that they're right about eight out of ten times. It's those other two times that damn people. False teachers may err in many areas, but primarily they attack the doctrine of salvation. Now, false teachers may teach false doctrine about the church, false doctrine about the Christian life. They may teach false doctrine about anything and everything. They usually do. But dominantly they're after a false doctrine of salvation, to keep men out of God's kingdom.

And we're going to get to Galatians in a minute, but go to II Peter. You know, that's a wonderful thing, and if any of you are working on developing lessons in being a preacher or something, the wonderful thing about always using Scripture to illustrate Scripture is that whatever you're using, you can teach with. If you just illustrate Scripture with little stories, you're not teaching. You're just telling stories. But if you illustrate Scripture with other Scripture, you're teaching while you're illustrating. Well, I understand that. Okay.

All right, II Peter, chapter 2, verse 1. "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you." See, it's just from the beginning until the end of man's day there's always going to be false teachers. And here's what they do. "They will be false teachers attacking you." Is that what it says? False teachers where? "Among you." And no church can stand up and say, "We're so secure. We've got our doctrine set. There's nobody here that's going to propagate false doctrine." Don't be too sure. Don't be too sure. Boy, we work hard to make sure there isn't. But, anyway, you never know what Satan's doing. "There were false prophets among the people. There shall be false teachers among you, who secretly shall bring in damnable heresies."

You know, that is the insidiousness of the thing. You don't discover it until it's already done some of its damage. It's secret. Satan is not about to put a big sign, a big supernatural sign on the front lawn out here, "Don't come here. They don't teach truth. Signed, the Devil." I mean, this place, people would come in here so you couldn't even contain them. He just gets people to come in here and start

teaching error from the inside. He never gives away himself unless he is discovered. And that's why the Bible says that we need to be careful to discern what? "Discern the spirits, to see whether it be of God."

Well, and one of the things that he does, of course, in his damnable heresy, is "deny the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction." Now, one thing he does is deny the Lord that bought the church. In other words, he denies the deity of Jesus Christ. Inevitably, false teachers will get back to that fact.

Whether you're standing on a corner arguing with a guy who wants to try to argue over John 1:1 that Jesus is not God, he's a god, and you go through that routine for a few hours, or whether Jesus is one of many gods, or whether you can be god, too, one way or another, they usually rob Christ of His uniqueness as God in human flesh. It's inevitable. And when anybody ever does that, that's time to turn your back and walk away. That is a false system. Inevitably, in all false systems, they deny the Lord that bought them. And they bring on themselves swift destruction. But, really, the tragedy of the thing is, they always manage to have a bunch of people following them. Verse 2, "Many follow their pernicious ways." Did you know liberalism is popular? Man, it's really popular. It's popular.

Well, I kind of want to show you a contrast. I don't know if you've ever thought about this. I thought about it as I looked at verse 21. "Prophecy came not at any time by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved." II Peter 1:21. Who wrote the Old Testament, Peter says? What kind of men? Holy men. Holy men wrote it. Then he says, but watch, in contrast to holy men, chapter 2, verse 1, there's going to be some vile men. Some vile men.

Peter talks about several things. First of all, the work of false teachers. They bring in damnable heresies. And, you know, the interesting thing about false teachers is, they're more interested in popularity than truth. They're interested in getting a crowd. Truth they don't care for. They just want to get the biggest crowd they can.

In Galatians, we'll see, as we study it, the Judaizers who got to the Galatian church and tried to mess it up were interested in popularity. It says in Galatians 6:12, "As many as desired to make a fair show in the flesh constrained you to be circumcised." It was a glory thing for them, and it was a popularity thing.

I always think about the days of King Jehoshaphat, you remember, Zedekiah, the false prophet, put on those big iron horns. And he went to Israel, and he said, "Israel, why, if you attack the Syrians, you'll push them back." And he made a big demonstration and ran down the street with his little horns, see. And God had a true prophet by the name of Micaiah, and Micaiah said, "No, if you go to war with Syria, you're going to get wiped out." But you know what? You start preaching to those people, "You're invincible, boy. You'll knock them back and you'll win a victory." And they believed

Zedekiah and they went out and got wiped out. Sure, false prophets are popular. They always manage to propagate a popular kind of treatise. So they're in it for popularity.

Secondly, they're in it for money. Did you know that? They're in it for money. You say, "Where do you get that?" Micah 3:11, "The priests teach for hire and the prophets divine for money." Can you think of one in the Old Testament who was for hire? Balaam. He had a jackass that was worth more than he was. The false prophets are interested in popularity and they're interested in money.

I'll tell you something else about false prophets, and this is true, beloved, they are sinful in private life. They're sinful in private life. I always think of Jeremiah 23, where Jeremiah says, "I have seen also in the prophets a horrible thing. They commit adultery and walk in lies." You cannot live a righteous life in an unrighteous doctrine, because you don't ever get the strength to do it. Right?

Where is the only resource and the only power to live a pure life? In the truth of Christ. If you don't live within that truth, you have no resource to live a pure life. Believe me, false teachers, no matter how superficially moral they seem, are not at all righteous. And the tragic thing is, they lead men further from God. That's what verses 2 and 3 says. "The way of truth gets evil spoken of." You know, people love to knock Christianity.

"And through covetousness." Sure, they're in it for the money. "With feigned words they make merchandise of you." Man, just turn on your television and watch them go. Watch them go. Saw another one last night, Leroy Jenkins, don't mind mentioning his name. He's absolutely a false prophet. He speaks damnable lies. And he bilks people for money and makes merchandise of them.

"Whose judgment now for a long time lingers not, and their destruction slumbers not." I see those people, and I just have to say, God will judge them in such a severe way it almost scares me to think about it. And you say, "Well, why do you think God's going to do that?" "If God didn't spare the angels that sinned," verse 4, "but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness," and He didn't spare the old world around the time of Noah, do you think He's going to spare them? Not a chance.

He even tells us a little about the nature of false prophets. Go down to verse 12. And we need to go into this, because we'll never understand what's going on in Galatia until we do. In verse 12, he uses some interesting terms to speak of these people. If you want to characterize a false prophet, here are some terms you can use next time you run into one. "But these, as natural brute beasts." That's vivid. Wild animals. "Made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption." Boy, that is strong language.

And, you know, that's hard for us to realize. We see a guy who comes on, and he's so nice, and he's so syrupy, and he's teaching heresy. And Peter says, "Call him what he is. He's a beast that deserves

nothing but destruction." Verse 13, "And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to revel in the daytime." You know, most people really sin a lot at night, when it's dark. But these people live it up in vileness in the daylight.

And then these terms. I can't even hardly believe it. "Spots they are and blemishes." Do you know what that is in the Greek? Listen. The first word, "spots," is filth spots, and blemishes is scabs. Peter says, filth spots and scabs. Try that out next time. "Reveling with their own deceiving while they feast with you." See, that's the insidiousness. These false teachers move in.

I'm telling you, you know, I just can't get involved with people in false religious systems. And, you know, I think about some of the things like Mormonism and Jehovah's Witnesses and all of that other stuff, and the Rosacrucians and all these things that are going on around. But, you know...and that bothers me, but you know what bothers me worse is people within the main line of Protestantism under the name of Christianity that are false teachers.

And people have said to me, you know, "Do you belong to the local ministerial?" I tell you, if I went to the local ministerial and got up and said, "Filth spots and scabs," you know how long I'd last. Now, I'm not condemning those that love the Lord Jesus Christ. I'm condemning those that the Bible condemns for being Satan's emissaries to infiltrate the truth with error. And if I speak strongly, I speak strongly because I'm only reading you Scripture and interpreting it. These aren't my words. They're the Lord's.

In verse 14, "Having eyes full of an adulteress." You know what that means? That means they can't see a woman without seeing sexual relations with her. They're vile. "And they cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls. An heart they have exercised with covetous practices." And then he uses this, "Cursed children." There you go again. Devoted to what? Destruction. False teachers. False teachers.

"Who have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam." You know what that means? That means they are for hire. Verse 17, they are "wells without water." You go to them for a drink, you don't find it. Boy, I had a vivid illustration of this. I turned on the radio the other day, and there was one of these talk shows. And they had a guy in transcendental meditation on there giving advice. It always amazes me how those people can get on there and have all the time they want, but somebody gets on and talks about Christ, and they get censored.

But, anyway, they had this bird on there talking about transcendental meditation. Sorry about that, little slip there. That's pretty mild. They had this scab on there talking about transcendental meditation. And I was listening to him go on and on and talk about how to plug into the other levels of consciousness. And, of course, really, all it is is plugging an individual directly into the spirit world so that Satan can control his mind.

And a lady called up, and they were having people call, you know, as they always do, and this lady called up, and she couldn't control herself. She started to cry. And she just wept and wept. And the guy kept saying, "Now, you must calm down. You must calm down." And she kept saying, "I can't. And I have all of your records. And I've listened. And I've tried it. And nothing works." And she went on and on like this.

And he couldn't get rid of her off the telephone. And he knew he had to do it very gracefully, or he would've absolutely blown his entire career. See? And there was no way that he could solve that woman's problem. And I thought to myself, there's a well without water. And that lady's been there to drink over and over and over and over, and she's come away thirsty every time. And that was sad.

Well, he says there, "clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever. When they speak great swelling words of vanity," you know, big, fair speeches, "they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through wantonness," and so forth and so on. He even has some more terms for them, in case you'd be interested. In verse 22, they're "dogs turned to their own vomit, and sow that was washed who are wallowing in the mire." And so the Bible has nothing but severe invectives against false teachers.

Now, in Paul's case, now we'll go to Galatians, in Paul's case, and though we've said some humorous things, this is not a humorous subject, but perhaps to relieve the tension a little bit, in Paul's case in Galatians, he's run into false teachers. Now, I want you to catch, I hope by what I've said, you understand how Paul felt about false teaching. Because that's the reason I said all that. When false teachers came in behind him and taught all these things about legalism to his church, churches that he had established, I mean, this tore him up. It would be like if I were to go away on a missionary tour and somebody would come into this pulpit and begin to undo everything I had taught you. That's what was happening in Galatia.

And the ones who were dogging his steps were the Judaizers. Now, the Judaizers, that is a term that had to do with these people, who were Jews. They had attached themselves to Christianity, supposedly. They said they believed in Christ as the Messiah, but they believed that the only way you could ever be a Christian was to be a Jew first, and that once you became a Christian you still had to keep all the Mosaic law in order to stay saved. So salvation was by works getting in and works staying in, and Christ was sort of incidental in there. It was a situation of you're saved by faith plus works. And that was what they were teaching.

They were coming along and saying to these Gentiles, "Look, you're not really Christian. No. You can't accept the Messiah. You're a Gentile. You've got to become a Jew first, then you can accept the Messiah." And so they were trying to get them all to become Jews, and they wanted to actually take them out and circumcise them, get a knife and actually do a physical operation on them. And then

once they got in through that avenue, they had to then keep all of the Mosaic laws.

And, you know, by the time Paul wrote this letter back, they were back on a schedule of new moons and feast days and doing the whole bit. They were all fouled up in legalism. And Paul, as if he grabbed his head and said, "I can't believe it. How come you are so soon removed," verse 6, "from him that called you into grace? Where did you get fouled up from grace?" Every time I think about the name of this church, I think we were well named. I can imagine some guy coming in some day and calling it Grace Plus Works Community Church. I hope it never happens.

Now, I believe that some of these Judaizers were very sincere. I think that some of them were sincere. But they were trying to do three things. Now, get this and you'll get the pattern of the book. One, and we hit it last week, I'm just reviewing it, one, they discredited his apostleship. They shot down Paul's credentials. Why? If they could get rid of him as a credentialed speaker, they could take his place. Two, they destroyed his doctrine of grace. Three, they put all Christians under legalism. And they were contradicting everything Paul was saying. Paul preached that he was an apostle. Paul preached salvation by grace. Paul preached Christian liberty. And they were shooting it down, all of it.

And if you remember our study of Acts 15, you know exactly what the Judaizers taught. Simply stated, listen to it. "Certain men came from Judaea and they taught and said this, Except you be circumcised after the manner of Moses, you can't be saved." Now, that is ridiculous. That's what they taught. Why? They wanted to make everybody a Jew. It was a pride issue with them. "No Gentile is going to get in on the Messiah, unless he becomes a Jew." See, it was a pride issue. That's what Paul says in Galatians 6:12.

Well, it was settled at the Jerusalem Counsel, boy, believe me. Peter and James spoke, and they settled the issue. In Acts 15, they came together to talk about it. And finally they come to verse 11, and Peter says, "We believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as those Gentiles," see. Grace, and nothing more. Well, they settled it in the conference. But settling it at the conference was something different than stopping the mouths of the false teachers, wasn't it? Satan went right about doing his work. And he worked in false doctrine.

Now, the whole point of Galatians is to settle the issue raised by these false teachers. One, is Paul an apostle? Two, is salvation by grace? Three, does a Christian live under legalism or does he live under grace? And we're going to cover all three of those. The first two chapters, Paul's credentials. The second two chapters, salvation by grace. The third two chapters, the Christian and legalism.

Now, let's look at verses 6 to 9, and we're not going to take long with them, because they're very simple. But I wanted to get in that introduction. Now, Paul fires out the prime reason that he writes in these four verses. He just condenses things. And this is fiery. I mean, he's really uptight. He's tremendously upset, because of the false teachers.

And, you know, when you go back and read, read through Acts 13 and 14. Read what he went through to found these churches, and to have somebody come and undo his work, and he was upset. And there are three, really three reasons that are kind of spilled out of his words here. One, his wonder. Two, his wisdom. Three, his warning. He writes them because of his wonder, because of his wisdom, because of his warning.

First of all, his wonder. He wonders at the Galatians' defection. Mark that down. He wonders at the Galatians' defection. Verse 6, "I marvel," or I wonder, thaomadzo in the Greek. "I wonder, I marvel that you are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel." His wonder. He's writing because he can't believe they have defected so soon.

Now, that's a very dramatic, dramatic expression, and he doesn't commend them at all. This is the only letter that Paul ever wrote when he doesn't say, "Hey, you're nice people. I love you. Thanks for being who you are, and praying for you." He says nothing like that. He just fires out. He says, "I marvel." What this word really means is, "It's incredible to me. I'm astonished. I cannot fathom this. It is absolutely incredulous that you have denied grace."

Now, Paul, you see, reserved this intense word for only two uses. And the other one is the fantastic wonder that's going to be taking place in the minds of those who see Christ coming in His glory. He uses the same word concerning the wonder of the return of Christ for the shock of seeing these Galatians turn their back on the concepts of grace.

Now, you say, "Well, what was he so amazed about? Doesn't he expect Satan's false teachers to come along?" Sure. He wasn't amazed about the false teachers. He was amazed that the Galatians bought what they were selling so quickly. Look at it. It says, "I marvel that you are so soon removed." Now, that either means so quickly, in the sense of easily or readily, or else it means so soon after I've been with you. Either way, he is shocked that so soon after he's been with them, they so easily defected.

Boy, I'll tell you something, beloved. It sure says an awful lot about repetition, doesn't it? Listen, when Peter said, "I will not cease to put you in remembrance," he knew what he was talking about. Because he said, "It's not going to be long until I die, and when I leave this place I want you to remember the things that need to be remembered." You know, there's something to be said for going to church week in, week out, for establishing a teaching ministry that repeats and repeats. Why? Because so soon we forget. They had the best teacher there was. And the false prophets came along and undermined everything he did.

Now, notice the word "removed." "I marvel you are so soon removed." That is literally the word to defect. It is used in a military sense of a revolt. It is translated in old lexicons to transfer one's

allegiance. It's a defection. It's a deserter. It's the word used for a turncoat. Paul says, "I can't believe it. You're already spiritual deserters. You're turncoats."

And it's interesting, and I want you to see this, that the verb is not a passive. It should not be translated "you are so soon removed." It should be translated this way. It is a present with a reflexive. It should be translated this way. "You are in the process of removing yourselves." You see, for a Christian to buy what a false teacher is buying is his own problem. Paul blames the false teachers for what they do, but he sure blames the Galatians for what they did. They're responsible. And they're just giving up without a struggle. I can't believe so quickly you are in the process of defecting, of removing yourselves, from the gospel of grace.

You say, "What's the gospel of grace?" Well, he calls it the grace of Christ. This is the fact that God in grace gave us His Son to die. God in grace calls us to Himself. God in grace justifies us when we believe. Paul said in II Corinthians 5:18, "All is from God," and what he meant was all is of grace. Everything in salvation is grace. "For by grace are you saved through faith, that not of yourselves. It is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast." No part of salvation is yours. And this is what Paul preached, the grace of Christ. Grace simply means God's freedom to love and to grant the gift of salvation apart from anything you are or anything you do. That's grace.

Well, you know, you say, "John, that's pretty strong language here. Because, you see, these Judaizers didn't deny Jesus." No, they didn't. No, no. They even believed He was the Messiah, probably. You say, "Well, why do you get so upset? I mean, this is pretty good." Well, you see, if you take grace and add anything to it, grace is no more grace. And, don't you see, that's the subtlety of Satan? Of course he wants to make it so much like the truth that we mistake it. That's the danger, so much the danger of religion today.

Oh, they'll accept Christ, you know. Take a nice, pure glass of water. All it takes to kill you is one drop of poison. Just one drop. The right poison. And Paul isn't going to tolerate one drop of legalism in a grace salvation, not one. So he says, and I love this, look at this, keep it in mind, "I am absolutely astonished that you are in the process of removing yourselves from Him." Stop right there. Wow. Wow. You're removing yourselves not from a system, not from a religion, but from what? From a person. From God. From Him who called you into the grace of Christ.

Listen, you turn your back on a grace system and you're turning your back on God. And we're going to cover this in such depth as we go through here. To turn from the gospel of grace is to turn from God. I say this because Paul said it. You cannot, you cannot forsake pure grace without forsaking God. That's right.

In Galatians 5:4, he points that out. Listen to this. Boy, what a verse. "Christ is become of," how much effect? "No," or none, "effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law." You are fallen away

from grace as a principle. He's not saying you've lost your salvation. He's saying, "If you try to get saved by law, you've fallen away from the only principle that can save, and you've rendered the work of Christ on the cross meaningless." And so he says, "You've turned away from God, who called you." Powerful statement.

Now, notice he says, "unto another gospel." You say, "What do you mean, another gospel?" Well, the Greek word is heteron, from which we get heteros or heterodox. You know what that means? A different kind. Heterogeneous. Homogenous means the same kind. Heterogeneous means a different kind. So he says, "You are removed unto heteros, a different gospel." Yeah. Another kind of one. "Can't believe it," he says. "You've defected to another system.

In chapter 3, verses 1 to 5, he says, "Foolish Galatians, who messed up your minds, that you didn't obey the truth? Who's doing this?" Over in chapter 4, verses 9 to 15, he says essentially the same thing. He just can't believe that they have abandoned it. "But now, after you have known God, or rather are known by God, how turn you again to the weak and beggarly elements," which is the law? "You desire to go into bondage again." Verse 10. "You observe days and months and times and years. I'm afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain. What's happening?", he says. Chapter 5, verse 7, he says, "You did run well. Who hindered you? Who hindered you?" So he absolutely can't believe the defection of the Galatians.

This isn't anything new. This is something that prophets of God throughout history have dealt with. If you happen to have been a prophet in the Old Testament in the time of Isaiah or Jeremiah you would've had the same feeling, wouldn't you? People were always going after false gods. And so, first of all, Paul wonders. He just wonders at the Galatians' defection. "How could you do it?" So we see Paul's wonder.

Secondly, we see Paul's wisdom regarding the false teachers' deception. Regarding the false teachers' deception. He writes them not only to say he wonders, but to give his wisdom. He's concerned not only over their defection, but he's concerned over the false teachers' deception. And so he writes in wisdom in verse 7. Watch.

He sees the Judaizers as a different gospel. Now, of course, as I said, somebody's going to think this is narrow-minded. Boy, it isn't narrow-minded. Because to add works destroys grace. And watch verse 7. "Which is not another." Oh. Well, that's interesting. In verse 6, he just said it was another. Somebody's going to run around with a flag and say, "We found a contradiction in the Bible." No. No.

He says in verse 6, "I can't believe that you're so soon removing yourselves from Him that called you unto the grace of Christ unto heteros gospel, which is not allos. Two different words completely. Heteros means another of a different kind, allos means another of the same kind. If I held this watch up, and I said to you, "Give me heteros watch, you could give me any watch you want. Any watch in

the world. Heteros. Any old kind of watch. But if I held this up and said, "Give me allos watch," you'd have to give me this one, a Mido, which was given to me, and it's got a little inscription on the back from the folks who gave it to me, and all the little nicks and things, and all the little marks and things. You'd have to give me the exact watch, because that's the meaning of allos.

Now watch. Paul says this. "You have been removed unto another gospel of a different kind, which isn't the exact gospel." See? It's a heteros gospel, not an allos. It's a different kind, not the same one. Better to translate it "unto another gospel which is not the same gospel." And, you see, the thing that was masking the deceit of the false teachers was that it sounded like the same gospel. Why? Because it had Christ dying and rising again and being the Messiah and believing in Him. And all they did was add works at the beginning and works at the end, without changing the middle, and that was the subtlety of Satan. Do you see it? And any other gospel is a perversion of the truth. And that's why it's so important for us to be careful. To be careful.

In I John, he tells us, chapter 2, some things that usually come through in this perversion. It isn't the case in the Judaizers, but it's usually the case for modern day. And let me show you what I mean. I John 2:22. In 18, he says, "There are coming many antichrists, so expect it." But verse 22, he says, "They'll be liars and deny Jesus is the Messiah. That one is Antichrist. They'll deny the Father and the Son. Whosoever denies the Son, the same hath not the Father. He that confesseth the Son hath the Father also." Watch it. You can always tell a false system because they will always, always, always impinge upon the nature of Jesus Christ.

And then he says in 24, "Let that therefore abide in you which you have heard from the beginning." What does he mean? Don't buy their bill. Don't buy it. Verse 26, "These things have I written unto you concerning them that," what? What? "Seduce you." Boy, I'm telling you, it is subtle how Satan operates.

Well, which is not another, "but there are some," verse 7, "that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ." Listen, false teachers are lots of trouble. Lots of trouble. And these Judean Judaizers troubled the church. The word "trouble" means to shake or agitate or stir up. They literally threw them into confusion.

The word is used in Matthew 2:3 when Herod was shaken, deeply troubled, when he heard about the birth of the King of the Jews. It's used in Matthew 14:26. You remember when the disciples were in the boat and the storm came up, and Jesus was walking on the water? It's used in Luke 1:12 of Zechariah when he saw an angel. He was shook up. It's used in John 14:1, where Jesus said, "Let not your heart be troubled."

It means to be agitated, to be shaken. And this little series of churches in Galatia were rattled to the very roots, because the gospel of grace was being attacked. And they were teaching salvation by

faith plus law works. And what was it, friends? Look at the end of verse 7. It was perverting the gospel.

You want to hear something interesting? You know what the word "pervert" literally means? Reverse. You add one work to grace, and you've reversed it and turned it into a works system. They weren't just fouling up the plan of salvation. They were reversing it, and turning it into a works system. You cannot modify grace. You just destroy it.

Go to chapter 5, verse 2 of Galatians. I'll illustrate it. Paul says, "Behold, I, Paul, say unto you that if you go and be circumcised, Christ shall," what? "Profit you nothing." If you believe that you've got to add one work to your salvation, you'll undo grace. I'll tell you, whenever you pervert the gospel, you always trouble the church, and that's what happened in verse 7. They perverted the gospel and troubled the church. Boy, I'll tell you. You change the message of grace and you'll asphyxiate the church.

In Titus 1:10, "there are many unruly vain talkers and deceivers." Again, always deceiving, "specially they of the circumcision," those who think you ought to get circumcised, Judaizers, "whose mouths must be stopped, they subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake." They're in it for the money.

And so the greatest enemy of the church is not those who openly oppose it, but those who are inside, tampering with God's Word. Whenever I hear a preacher or somebody that claims to be a theologian who denies the inspiration of Scripture, it just sets me on edge. That's Satan's subtlety. Preaching and teaching the Word of God gives the church clean air to breathe, and it grows and grows and grows. And so, you see, Paul is wise. And Paul explains about the false teachers' deception. He exposes them for who they really are.

Lastly, we see his warning. His wonder at their defection, his wisdom regarding the false teachers' deception. He shows them what they were doing. Then his warning, involving God's destruction, in verses 8 and 9. Now, I'm sure that the Galatians were really impressed with the credentials that these false teachers had. They probably said, "We came from the Jerusalem church, and we came from James," although James denies, in chapter 15 of Acts, verse 24, that he had anything to do with them. They were saying, probably, "We are the official representatives of the church. We're from the Jerusalem church. That Paul, he's some fly-by-night from Antioch. What does he know?"

And so they came in and they really laid their credentials out, and they moved right in to pervert the truth. And their perversion was legalism. Now, watch. That's not the only perversion. Oh, no. There's an opposite perversion. And that's the perversion of liberalism, where you can do anything you want. We live more with that one today, don't we?

Boy, the church says, "Well, we don't want to talk about sin anymore. Oh, we don't want to talk about any of those things. We just want to cultivate love and brotherhood. See, that's fine." Well, it all turns out to be just a crazy kind of liberation that winds up without any truth. In Jude, oh, this is the other side of the fence, Jude 4. "There are certain men crept in unawares." Isn't that interesting, again? How do they do it? Always sneak in from the inside, when you don't expect it. "Before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men," watch, "turning the grace of God into lasciviousness." What's that mean? Immorality. These guys aren't imposing legalism on you. They're telling you that because you're under grace, you can live it up and do whatever you want.

And he says, another thing about them, "They deny the only Lord God, and the Lord Jesus Christ." And, bang, comes the message again. What do false teachers always deny? The nature of Jesus Christ. Whether they're on the legalism end or the libertinism end, it's always the same. And there are religions today that are super-legalistic. Super, super-legalistic. And people are flocking to them. And there are other religions that are super-libertinian. You can do whatever you want. That's modern-day Christian liberalism. They don't make any claims on anybody.

Well, watch the hypothetical possibility in verse 8. Paul says, "Though we," myself or any of my fellow preachers, "though we or an angel from heaven," that's pretty fast company, "preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be devoted to destruction." That's severe language. Paul says, "If I come back to you, if one of my buddies comes back to you, if you have an angel arrive out of heaven, not one out of the pit, out of heaven, and he deviates one iota from what you have heard, let him be cursed." Serious. Reject it. I don't care who gives it.

Have you ever noticed how difficult sometimes it is to reject a false system because the people in it are so nice? Paul says, "I don't care if it's me or if it's a beautiful angel from heaven, let him be accursed." So many buy false doctrine because the package is so nice. Don't you know Satan knows that?

Now, that's a hypothetical situation. "Though we or an angel from heaven would do that." Now, he wouldn't, neither would an angel from heaven. But he makes a hypothetical situation. He moves from a hypothetical to an actual, verse 9. "As we said before, so say I again, now if any one is preaching any other gospel unto you at this moment than that you have received, let him be accursed."

Do you see what he's saying? "First of all," he says, "I don't care if it's myself, one of my friends, or an angel out of God's holy heaven, if he preaches anything else, let him be devoted to destruction. Now," he says, to get to the actual, "if there's anybody there doing it now, let him be anathema."

Hendrickson says this, "Even if we, or a holy angel, must be the object of God's righteous curse, were any of us ever to preach a gospel contrary to the one we humans previously preached to you, then all

the more divine wrath must be poured out on those self-appointed nobodies who are now making themselves guilty of this crime." He says, "Let God destroy me and let Him destroy His own holy angels if we preach a lie." Now, what should He do to these false teachers who are in fact doing that very thing? Now, Paul really unleashes his fury. He uses the word "accursed." The word is "anathema." It was the Greek word for anything devoted to destruction.

Well, let me close with just a few thoughts. You say, "What do I do with false teachers? Do I listen to them?" Let me read you something. And you have to judge in your own heart just exactly at what point you are and how God wants to use you. If somebody's open to Christ, don't stop, I mean, if you see an opening.

But listen. II John 7. "For many deceivers are entered into the world." Here you go with that deceit thing again. "Who confess not that Jesus Christ cometh in the flesh." What do they always deny? The nature of Christ as incarnate God. Always. "This is a deceiver and an antichrist." Oh.

What do I do about him? Verse 10, "If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine," what doctrine? The doctrine in verse 9, that Christ is God in human flesh. If he doesn't bring that doctrine, "receive him not into your house, neither bid him Godspeed." That was, "Hi. I hope you have a nice day." If a guy comes with a false doctrine, don't let him in your house and don't bid him Godspeed, for "if you do that, you're a partaker of his evil deed." If you say, "God send you on your way. Have a wonderful trip." If you encourage the man, is the idea.

Listen, Christian. You have nothing to do with false teachers. People say to me, "Well, you know, John, we've come to your church, and, oh, the teaching is good. But, you know, I'm over there in the First Rank Modernist Church of So-and-So, and, oh, we think we ought to stay there, because we need to stay there, and the Lord is using us." Well, I'm not going to tell you what the Lord says. But if it were me, I would pack up my Bible and get out of there so fast they wouldn't know what hit them. You know why? Because I would never subject myself to a false teacher. Never.

Should we stay in the liberal church? Should we stay in the Roman Catholic church? I don't think there's any way you can do that. And you often see a girl who's raised in a church like this, and she comes and says, "Well, I'm going to marry this guy, and I know he goes over here to some other church you know is liberal, but...and we've decided to go to his church, because he's the husband." Disaster. Disaster. Or then you see some great evangelistic effort, or some great evangelistic crusade somewhere, and all these people are doled out to different churches, and they send new converts to liberal churches. It's like throwing them in a lion's den. Disaster.

Listen, the warning of the Word of God is, you run from false teachers. You don't subject yourself to them. Right? It's pretty clear. Pretty clear. So Paul says, "Let them be accursed."

You say, "John, what have we learned tonight?" Well, one, you learned you can't add anything to grace salvation. Right? Nothing. Lesson two, avoid what? False teachers. Avoid false teachers. You say, "John, at the very beginning, you said there were two things that God has devoted to destruction in the New Testament, two specifics. You said one was false teachers. What was the other one?" What is the other anathema? This might shock you a little bit. I'm going to read it to you. "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema." In the New Testament, that's I Corinthians 16, verse 22, in the New Testament, two things devoted to destruction: false teachers, people who don't love the Lord Jesus Christ. Let's pray.

Father, we're aware of the seriousness of what we've seen and studied tonight. And, God, we would not be unloving, even as Jesus, while condemning, yet loved. But, Father, we hate so viciously the doctrines that undermine the truth. And, God, cultivate within us that kind of holy indignation.

And, Lord, we do thank you that Jesus Christ offers Himself to every man, and the truth is available. And, Father, we pray that there would be upon the hearts of those of us who are Christians a tremendous sensitivity to the truth. God, help me, as long as I live, as long as I have breath, to always speak the truth, to always put this people in remembrance of the truth, that, after my going, they may remember the things that are true.

And, Father, we pray that we would be strong against false teaching. Protect this church. Protect these, Thy children, from every wind of doctrine. Protect them from a creeping legalism. Protect them from a libertinism that treads on grace. Help them to be balanced.

And then, Father, for those who might be here tonight who've never met Jesus Christ and have not yet expressed their love to Him in full commitment, we pray that this might be the night when they pass from being devoted to destruction to being Thy children, with a home prepared for them in Thy kingdom. To this end, we pray, Lord, for your glory. In Jesus' name, amen.

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