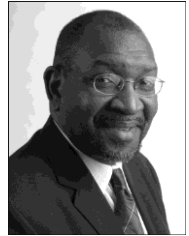


Sermon: “Practitioners of Gospel Malpractice” Galatians 1:6-10

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Greetings fellow ministers of the Gospel, brothers, and sisters in Christ.

The pastor’s current series is “God’s prescription for blessings is obedience” – faithful obedience to the revealed Word of God. God in His infinite wisdom, in His omniscience has truly done great things for us.

To lead us, to guide us, and to direct us in this obedience, God has given us His Living Word in Jesus Christ and His Written Word in the Holy Scriptures, the Bible. Together, these sixty-six books, written by over forty authors under the inspiration (*Theopneustos*) of the Holy Spirit is the prescription for blessings. He has done great things for me, for us.

Where is our struggle? Dr. Robertson McQuilken in his book *Understanding and Applying the Bible* says:

We do not believe the Bible to be true.

Or, we do not believe that all parts of it are true.

We are unwilling to obey God’s Word.

We are unwilling to work hard to search out the meaning.

In 1742 Pastor John Albert Bengel observed:

Scripture is the foundation of the Church: the Church is the guardian of Scripture. When the Church is in strong health, the light of Scripture shines bright; when the Church is sick, Scripture is corroded by neglect; and thus happens, that the outward form of Scripture and that of the Church usually seem to exhibit simultaneously either health or else sickness; and as a rule the way in which Scripture is being treated is in exact correspondence with the condition of the Church.

God's prescription for blessing is obedience to His Revealed Word. Turn with me, if you will to the book of Galatians. Recall that,

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

Now, Galatians chapter 1, verses 6-10 (ESV).

⁶ *I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel –*
⁷ *not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ.* ⁸ *But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed.* ⁹ *As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed.*

¹⁰ *For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.*

We will work from the theme of “Practitioners of Gospel Malpractice.”

The book of Galatians after the book of James is the one of the earliest writings of the New Testament. We see the understanding and the worldview that the early church had of Jesus: they saw Him as Lord, as the Pre-existent One sent by the Father and as the Changer of the current world structure. However, there were still men causing confusion, Paul was writing to the churches in Galatia to continue in the true gospel and to reject the non-gospels. This one true gospel is for all people through faith in Jesus Christ, which will deliver us from the power of sin through the illuminating presence of the Holy Spirit.

Verse 6:

Paul is amazed, astonished, he marvels, he is shocked and surprised by the lack of endurance for truth, by how quickly, how easily people were deserting the truth. This apostasy, this turning away, this rejection of God and the grace of Jesus Christ was an unbelievable action.

The fickleness of the people, who were called by God. By the grace of Christ, *charis* – unearned and unmerited favor, this grace, this gift, “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast” (Eph. 2:8-9).

We who were dead in our trespasses, living in total depravity, God-haters; we were brought back from the dead and given eternal life.

Verse 7:

Jesus voluntarily gave Himself. It is finished (vs. 4). In this evil age and world we must appropriate Romans 12:2 – “then you will be able *to test*” Philippians 2:15, crooked and perverse generation.

These practitioners of gospel malpractice, these false teachers were presenting a different, a perverted gospel. Paul is upset, his words, amazed at how quickly look here at 2 Corinthians 11:4, these are parallel passages, Scripture supports Scripture. Different (*heterous*) in another form, another kind, a rival Jesus.

Paul is not the only one to warn us about the practitioners of gospel malpractice who distorting the message of Jesus.

- Matthew 7:15 – “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves.”
- Matthew 24:11 – “For many false prophets will arise and will mislead you.”
- Matthew 24:24 – “For false Christ and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect.” (Whom God called)
- John 10:10 – “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy.”

I will give you one more reference here. I can go on and on from the God’s Word warning us about these practitioners. This is what Peter says in 2 Peter 2:1-3. These practitioners of gospel malpractice come in many ways:

- Heretics: those who openly defy the truth with their own philosophies (cults).
- Apostates: those who know truth, who have been brought up in the truth, but they reject the truth (TV Practitioners).
- Deceivers: those who will not acknowledge their deception, their falseness, their fraud. Their purpose is to hoodwink and bamboozle; they are proud, pompous and presumptuous; they seek to be popular; they seek power and prestige, lovers of self and filthy lucre.

These practitioners of gospel malpractice do not speak of a narrow road, but point to a wide road, damning people to hell. (Give examples: Jesus not God, Mormons as Christians, whatever counsel God had, Jesus did not come to bring Christianity, God will not send anyone to hell, etc.) These messages of health, wealth and prosperity, name it and claim it, illness is a lack of faith, these teachings of second blessings, or second baptisms of the Holy Spirit and teachings on certain signs and manifestations.

As Paul said, how quickly we desert the truth for a different gospel; how easily we are tossed to and fro by every wave of doctrine.

Proverbs tells us, “There is a way that seems right to man, but its end is death.” See also 2 John 7-8. Count the cost – spiritual effects.

Verse 8

Know God's Word for yourself, be able to distinguish fact from fiction, truth from lies, meditate on God's Word day and night, eat the scroll, hide the Word in your heart, let God's Word be a lamp unto your feet, Study to show yourself approved unto God, as a workman who does not need to be unashamed, rightly dividing, correctly or accurately handling the word of truth.

No matter what the credentials of the person, pastor, minister, elder, deacon, bishop, apostle or priest, no matter how many letters behind someone's name, the gospel message is still the same: 1 Corinthians 15:3, "Christ died for our sins, was buried and on the third day He rose again." The Good News.

Paul said it twice for emphasis, If anyone is preaching to you another gospel he is to be accursed – anathema. These practitioners of gospel malpractice are under God's eternal judgment; by preaching an insufficient Christ, they are confusing God's people and many people are in danger of being eternally lost.

Paul tells us in the letter to the Corinthians that these practitioners are corrupting and peddling the Word of God. Listen to what they say and what they do not say. They do not speak of repentance, of a broken and contrite heart; there is no doctrine, there is no theology, yet Christians are quickly deserting and flocking to these practitioners of gospel malpractice.

Verse 10

Remember last week in reference to King Saul for disobeying God and seeking to please people. This call to ministry is not from man but from God; this call to ministry is not a call of popularity but of faithfulness to God. Jesus said not my will but thy will be done. In verse 1 Paul called himself a bondservant, a slave of Christ, as one who is in a permanent relationship of servitude to another. Whom do you serve?

As I close, again there is only one gospel message, only one Jesus Christ, the Living Word, who sits at the right hand of the Father, who suffered for my sins for your sins, was beaten, scourged and crucified for my sins, for your sins but on the third day He rose again, He conquered death. What Adam destroyed, Jesus made right. Very simply Jesus is a liar, a lunatic or He is Lord.

Truly may the practitioners of gospel malpractice be accursed.

Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life and no one comes to the Father but through Him.