

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **Galatians 5:1-8**.
- B. Things at one time were very good spiritually for those of the churches of Galatia. But now things had turned sour.
- C. Paul uses the term of "running well" and now it seems they had quit.
- D. They were deserting the true gospel very quickly, see 1:6.
- E. Let us draw some lessons from our text.

I. YOU WERE RUNNING WELL.

- A. Under the metaphor of a runner or running, let us look elsewhere as to the Xian life being spoken of as a race to be won.
First, we must compete according to the rules (2Tim. 2:5).
And also if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not win the prize unless he competes according to the rules.
- B. *Second, we must finish the race to win.* Order of finish is unimportant (2Tim. 4:7).
I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith;
- C. *Third, we must therefore run w/endurance so that we can finish.* Not too fast or too slow, but fast enough to finish (Heb. 12:1).
Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,
- D. *Fourth, run the right speed.* To run too fast (go ahead of the doctrine), or to run too slow (leave things unfinished and undone) is to have run in vain (Gal. 2:2).
And it was because of a revelation that I went up; and I submitted to them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but I did so in private to those who were of reputation, for fear that I might be running, or had run, in vain.

II. WHO BROKE UP THE ROAD IN FRONT OF YOU?

- A. Many things can get in the way so that we might not run the race w/endurance. Let us look at some of the things hindering the Galatian Xians from obedience.
First, another gospel (Gal. 1:6-9).
I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel; which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you, and want to distort the gospel of Christ. But even though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to that which you received, let him be accursed.
- B. *Second, some were trying to bind the Law of Moses on Xians* (Gal. 2:18).
"For if I rebuild what I have once destroyed, I prove myself to be a transgressor."
- C. *Third, observance of special days* (not commanded in the New Covenant) were limiting one's freedom in X (Gal. 4:9-10).
But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how is it that you turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again? You observe days and months and seasons and years.
- D. *Fourth, the binding of circumcision on male converts to Xianity was a problem* (Gal. 5:6).
For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love.
- E. *Fifth, the deeds of the flesh* were keeping people from being spiritual (see Gal. 5:19-21).

III. OBEDIENCE OF THE TRUTH IS A CONTINUING PROCESS.

- A. Here are some of the things that Paul suggests that can be done to keep running well.
- B. *First, we are to keep sowing good seeds* (Gal. 6:7-8).
Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh shall from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit shall from the

Spirit reap eternal life.

- C. Second, we are not to become discouraged (Gal. 6:9).
And let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we shall reap if we do not grow weary.
- D. Third, we are to make use of every opportunity (Gal. 6:10; see Mt. 25:14-30).
So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.
- E. Fourth, boast not in ourselves, but in the cross of JC (Gal. 6:14).
But may it never be that I should boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

IV. **JESUS PERSUADES US TO DO RIGHT (Gal. 5:8).**

- A. God the Father or X the Son, have never done anything or have asked anything that is not in the best interest of mankind.
- B. JC offers rest for those who will follow Him (Mt. 11:28-29).
“Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and YOU SHALL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS.”
- C. JC offers freedom from sin and the human elements that bring us down (Gal. 5:4).
You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.
- D. JC offered Himself to that we might have the remission of sins (Gal. 3:27).
For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. Each person who becomes a Xian begins his race. Only to finish is necessary (be faithful unto death).
- B. Let us not be guilty of starting the race and then allowing some temptation to become sin and keep us from running well.
- C. Obedience to JC is a continual process and He persuades us to do right.
- D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians, erring Xians.