

Galatians

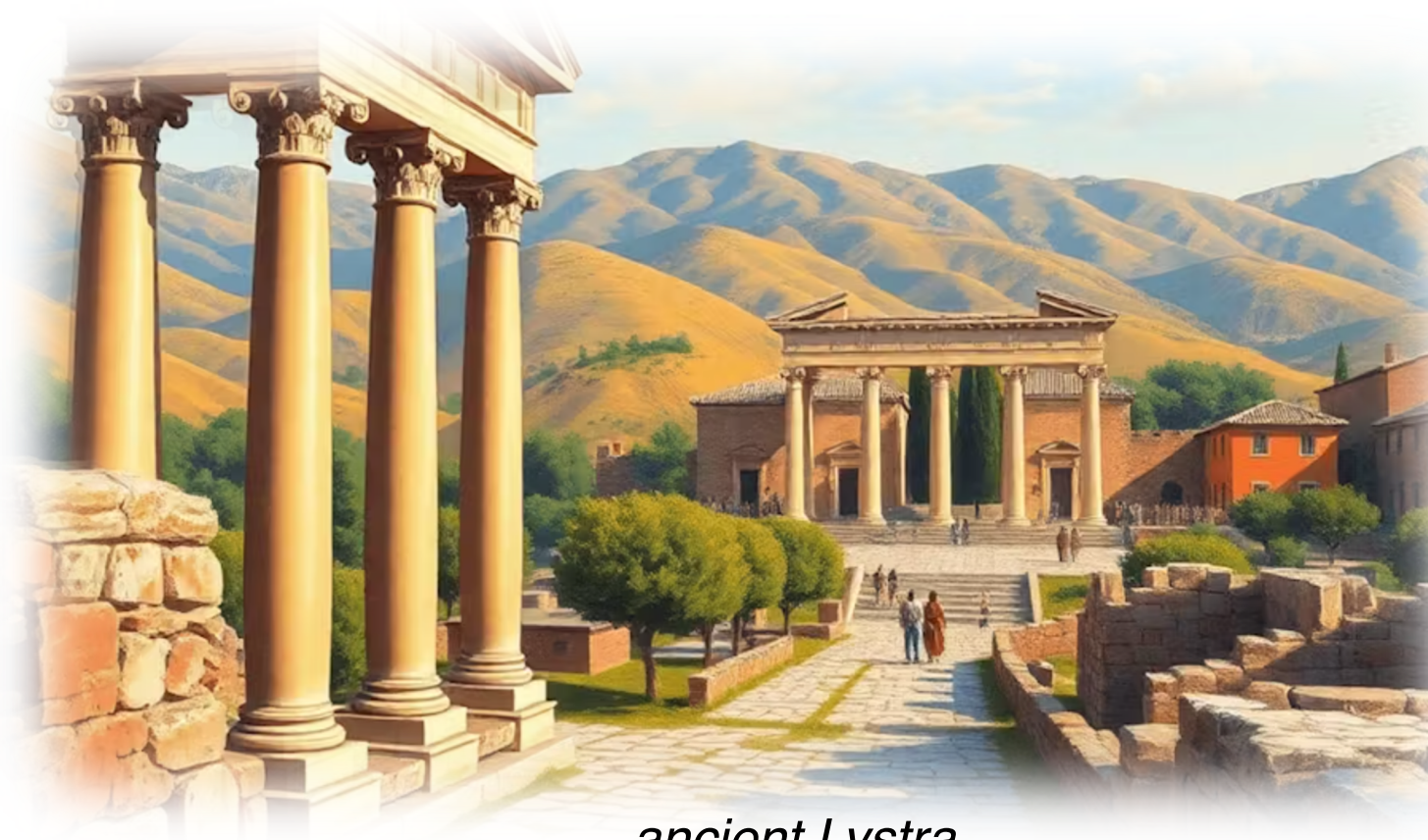
Chap. 1, vs 10:

Conclusion: 'Defection'

Holly Hills Bible Church.

27 APRIL 2025

9 a.m. Study



ancient Lystra



Galatians:

The Introduction *1:1-10*

I. Paul's Defense of His Apostleship: *Chapters 1 & 2*

II. Paul Defends Justification By Faith Alone: *Chapters 3 & 4*

III. Paul's Call to Liberty: *Chapters 5 & 6*

Conclusion: *6:11-18*

6 I **am amazed** that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel; 7 which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing 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 what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed! 9 As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed!

10 For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ.

- i. F.W. Grant: Galatians shows us how little man can be trusted to hold the blessing that he has
- ii. It has the character of controversy; its tone is caustic, Galatians is a polemic, an aggressive attack



Some observations from commentators on Galatians, I:

- iii. the tenor of Paul's letter to the Galatian assemblies is cold, and urgent, and is a legal brief as opposed to a warm, personal letter
 - In Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians, the tone is warm, glowing and loving
 - Even I Corinthians! He opens: *To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, with all who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours: I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus, that in everything you were enriched in Him, in all speech and all knowledge, 6 even as the testimony concerning Christ was confirmed in you, so that you are not lacking in any gift, awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will also confirm you to the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. . .*

In Corinth a place was given to the flesh. It was not crucified, it was sanctioned; and hence every variety of evil sprang up. DIVISIONS [I Cor 3:3]; REIGNING AS KINGS (4:8); INTERNAL DISUNION, EXTERNAL SELF-SATISFACTION (4:18); NO SENSE OF DEFILEMENT BY CONTACT, NO DISCIPLINE (ch. 5); GOING TO LAW ONE WITH ANOTHER BEFORE THE WORLD (6:1-8); EATING IN IDOL'S TEMPLES (ch. 8); PROFANE CARELESSNESS AT THE LORD'S TABLE (ch. 14); WILFULNESS IN THE USE OF GIFTS (ch 14); ENDING WITH THE DENIAL OF THE RESURRECTION (15:12) – [Ministry No. 9, p. 140, J.B. Stoney, Kingston Bible Trust, Sussex]



NOTE: Paul's concern that gospel of grace was being changed was an existential threat!

Commentators' observations on Galatians, II:



- i. Though both the Epistles to the Corinthians and the Epistle to the Galatians are corrective, it will be noticed that **the Apostle uses far greater severity of expression in writing to the Galatians.**
- ii. This is striking, for, though both evils must necessarily be condemned by the Spirit, yet *error in doctrine is more severely censured than evil in practice*. WITH MEN IT IS EVER THE REVERSE: *An easy-going age is very indifferent to what doctrine men teach, as long as their outward conduct is good.*
- iii. The reason is plain, for, as one has said, "Nature can take its measure of human conduct; but faith only can estimate the importance of the truth of God." Further, it has been truly remarked, "Laxity of walk, or worldly principle and habits, may be corrected by bringing in the light ... but when the truth is corrupted, the light becomes darkness, and the very instrument by which God is pleased to work is destroyed."
- iv. Hence the severity of tone with which the Apostle writes, for in turning back to the law we gradually lose all that is vital. ***Law recognizes man in the flesh and gives him a place in this world.*** It makes his blessing depend upon man fulfilling his responsibility, and thus shuts out God's grace, makes the work of Christ for us of no profit (Gal. 5:4), sets aside the work of the Spirit in us (Gal. 3:2), and changes Christianity into a religion of outward forms and ceremonies.

INTRODUCTION: EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS, HAMILTON SMITH; stempublishing.com

10 For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ.

He was arguing for the Lord Jesus Christ-given Gospel of Grace vs. Law-Works gospel Edition to an audience of Greeks, steeped in Greek language, culture and customs

Method used: **forensic rhetoric**, a classical Greek argumentative method focused on accusation and defense, to assert the divine authority of his gospel and condemn deviations from it. **This aligns with Aristotle's classification of forensic rhetoric, where the speaker defends their position against opposing claims, often in a judicial context.**

THE ACCUSATION (vs. 6-10): You have abandoned, have removed yourself from the gospel of grace, because you have been carried away by the persuasions of false teachers

THE VERDICT/ LEGAL REMEDY (vs. 9):

are curses- anathemas— if that is so, then the one doing that must be accursed as a legal remedy. PAUL: even pronounces the verdict upon himself in v. 8!: **‘but even if we**, or an angel from heaven’.....

Donald Francois Tolmie: 1:6-10 is a forensic method of *‘Expressing disgust at events in the Galatian churches in order to force them to reconsider their position..’*

Paul became a Greek to argue with the Greeks: Acts 17:28, he quotes Aratus *‘in Him we live and move and have our being..’* b.) in Titus 1:12, he cites Epimenides *‘Cretans are always liars’....* c.) I Cor 15:33 it's Menander *‘bad company corrupts good morals’ . . .* d.) ‘To the men of Athens’ dissertation in Acts 17

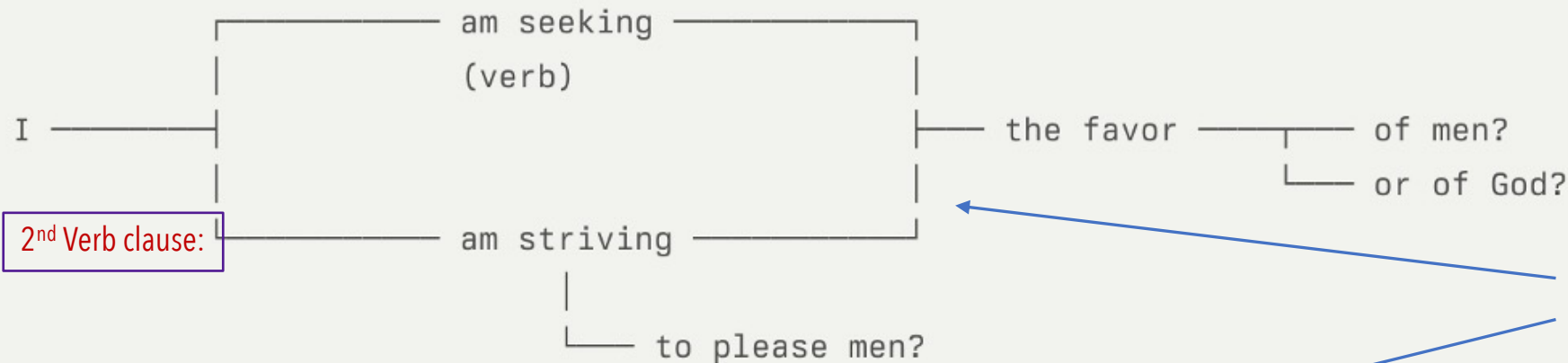
A RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE LETTER TO THE GALATIANS, DISSERTATION BY D. F. TOLMIE; scholar.ufs.ac.za/server/api/core/bitstreams/

10 For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ.

SUBJECT:

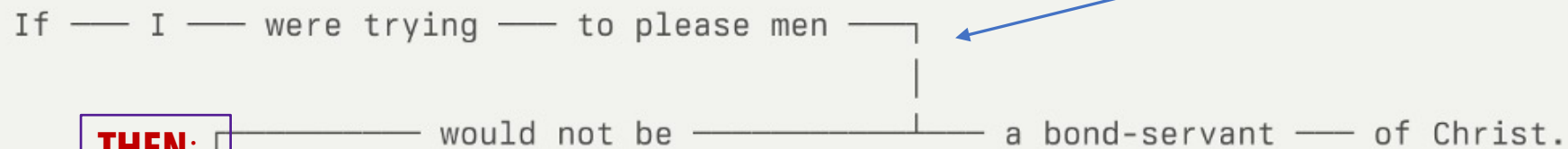
'I' = Paul, he is defending his ministry in "court". As the Judiazers have tarnished his God-given authority as an Apostle — the latter one, given the true gospel of grace commissioned directly by God the Father and Jesus Christ

text



2nd Verb clause:

Parallel statements



THEN:

Subord. CONDITIONAL Statement

10 For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ.

Paul is saying: **IF I** (hypothetically) were seeking the favor / approbation of men:

THEN:

I would find myself in favor with these Judiazers; I would enjoy their company and be in good standing with them, they would be singing my praises, I would be living in comfort—

BUT: I am saying that I strive to be pleasing God, and seeking His glory, and being true to the Gospel that Christ Himself personally delivered to me

AS EVIDENCED BY: I am a bond-servant of Christ—

PAUL's C.V. of Bondservant-hood:

Are they servants of Christ? I know I sound like a madman, but I have served him far more! I have worked harder, been put in prison more often, been whipped times without number, and faced death again and again. [II Cor. 11:23-27] Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine lashes. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep. I have been on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren; I have been in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure

10 For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ.

And further evidenced by the events pertaining to the exact Galatians he was writing to in Acts 14:

(19-23): But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium, and having won over the crowds, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing him to be dead. But while the disciples stood around him, he got up and entered the city. The next day he went away with Barnabas to Derbe. After they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and *saying*, "Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God." When they had appointed elders for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

II Cor 1:6: But if we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; or if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which is effective in the patient enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer;

Col 1:24: *Now* I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church, in filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions.

I Thes. 2:14: for you also endured the same sufferings at the hands of your own countrymen, even as they did from the Jews,

II Tim. 3:11,12: persecutions, and sufferings, such as happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium and at Lystra; what persecutions I endured, and out of them all the Lord rescued me! *Indeed, PAUL SAYS:.. all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted (!!!)*

10 For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ.

CONCLUSION: *in Paul's own words and found later in the Epistle, 5:11:*

*But I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, **[then]** why am I still persecuted? Then the stumbling block of the cross has been abolished.*

(all the verses on the previous slide being proof positive he was on the suffering side with Christ, and not on the conciliatory side with men preaching the popular gospel)

And in 6:12 he more affirms:

*Those who desire to make a good showing in the flesh try to compel you to be circumcised, **simply so that they will not be persecuted for the cross of Christ.***

Lastly, the proof from Christ Himself: *'(Paul) is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel; for I will show him how much he must suffer for My name's sake....' Acts 9:15,16*