



## Religious Perversion Part I

I want to spend some time in Galatians in this Artios. Dealing with religion and its non-biblical aspects is the subject today. I feel strongly compelled to share my heart, from God's Word, regarding our spiritual freedom and how religion suffocates it almost completely.

To begin with, please understand that I am not completely opposed to organized religion. But, I am highly critical of it all the same for one reason: much of what is taught in organized religion has little to nothing to do with God's Word. When organized religion teaches God's Word, I have no issue. When they teach doctrines of men in place of God's Word, I



am opposed to it. So, obviously, I maintain a bitter-sweet relationship therewith. *I want you to understand that it is far better to believe God's Word and to ensure that It is your sole source of spiritual doctrine, reproof and correction.* Man's doctrine may or may not parallel these primary purposes of Scripture. You need to be able to perceive and act upon this knowledge daily. What better place to start

this experience than in the book of Galatians.

The Galatian believers were challenged with these same concerns.

*(Gal 1:6-7) I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: {7} Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.*

All Biblical doctrine is spiritual in nature. It came from God, making its contamination a spiritual matter, and trouble indeed – trouble against the gospel of Christ and its very

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foundation. I expect you to sound the alarm if and when you encounter this type of perversion. The Galatian believers were undergoing a “transfer,” or removal from Christianity to religion. How many people today experience the same thing! How was this happening? Because of what other people were saying and doing regarding the gospel of Christ. Their words were perverting it.

Here’s what God thinks of those people.

*(Gal 1:8) 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.*

They are accursed. This word means, “a religious band.” The Roman Catholics call it “excommunication.” Another word in the Bible used for this

is “anathema.” In any case, it is removal of that person from your fellowship and life.

*(Gal 1:9) 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.*

Then Paul repeats these instructions. Did you know that, when God repeats something twice, it is established?

*(Gen 41:32) And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice; it is because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass.*

Pretty amazing, isn’t it? *God really wants you to be aware of perverts of the gospel of Christ.*

I want to be aware too. How about you? Does that make me

a bad guy? Does it make you the bad guy? Maybe in the eyes of religion and perversion, but not in the eyes of God!

*(Gal 1:10) For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.*

This is what Paul was talking about in verse 10. It comes down to one thing: whether you are going to be a “men-pleaser,” or whether you are going to be a servant of Christ! The choice is up to you.

*(Gal 1:11-14) But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. {12} For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of [regarding] Jesus Christ. {13} For ye have heard of my conversation in*

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time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: {14} And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.

Religion can become most brutal and violent, especially Christian religion. People can turn into vicious animals given the wrong knowledge. Paul taught the Galatians that the gospel of Christ was Godly, and that he didn't make it up. His conversation, or "manner of life and living" prior to his conversion was extremely hateful against Christians. Today, religions can also become extremely hateful against Christians. How many of you have dealt with this kind of "hate?" I have. It came from individuals, well-meaning at that, who simply hated the fact

that what I was reading from the Scriptures contradicted their beliefs. Some high-runners were and are still the trinity, life after death, key truths related to the future administrations, Biblical truths that we must adhere to, and the list goes on and on and on.

*These people became so aggressive that, on several occasions, I could have feared for my life.*

These religious folks, adamantly opposed to certain, not all, scriptural truths, can be false brethren.

(Gal 2:4-5) And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: {5} To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that

the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

"Privily" means, "to come in alongside." They act stealthily, and they do get in. Why do they come in? In order to bring us into bondage. And, that's exactly what religion does. Often, I pensively regard churches and religious organization with astute wonder. How can places like these exist, I ask? They say that they stand for God and Christianity, but seldom do they utter the gospel of Christ as it is in truth. What does this cause in their people? What kind of spiritual hunger develops, yet is never satisfied?

*These are spiritual matters for sure, for what kind of a man would desire such wanton dearth and spiritual nakedness to cloak the masses?*

I know of no man; I know of spirits. Man, in his right mind,

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is a generous and wonderful creation. Only when spirits become involved does God's man become vile and corrupt. Man, on his own, will generally reflect God's goodness, even if he or she is not Christian. Religion is a spiritual conduit enabling man's spiritual bonds and corruption. It serves no greater purpose. It is never God's method of salvation or way of building a family. *All religion is earth-bound, and will never enter through the gates of God's habitation.* God's Word is relegated to that! A God-fearing, God's Word-believing Christian, is never an outsider looking into God's family and Christian realm. Religion forever is and will be, and those who purport it are always at risk of being and remaining outsiders to God's purpose in Christ.

Whether or not a person is

circumcised was a major point of conflict among Jewish Christians in the First Century Church.

(Gal 2:12) For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.

To God, it does not matter. Entire cities, and even countries, often do battle over this subject. For a Christian, it is simply irrelevant.

(Gal 2:16) Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

How a man becomes justified within the realm of Christianity can yield yet another abrasive discussion. Is a man justified by the works of the Mosaic Law, or by the works of Christ? Christians are always and only justified by the works of Christ. I often say, "It's not done by what you did, but, rather, by what Christ did." Most religion defies this truth, forcing their participants to banter about on topics of works and actions of the same. *For the Christian, works can never gender a man's Godly acceptance – NEVER!*

(Gal 3:1) O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

For those who have fallen in battle to the circumcision issue

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and the justification issue, God tells us that they have been “bewitched.” The true definition of bewitching is “being tricked into not believing the truth.” Do you remember that this kind of trickery is spiritual in nature? When and where it takes place, spirits are at work, causing such deep-seated confusion and pain in, otherwise, generous and loving people. Don’t fall for their tricks. Demand that they leave, or you leave. But, don’t stick around for the final act. You are guaranteed trouble.

*(Gal 3:2) This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?*

We can add “how to receive the gift of holy spirit” to this list. Some contended that you could only receive something spiritual, a gift, from God, by doing things God considered acceptable. From

this, man would make up religion filled with “works,” things to do to satisfy this nervous curiosity of acceptance. It’s too bad that they wouldn’t and don’t accept the concept of “hearing of faith.” That’s far easier, and definitely more Godly.

*(Gal 3:3) Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?*

Foolish people fall for this spiritual ploy, again caused by spirits. Don’t you fall for it too.

*Decide to take a stand against any and all spiritual drunkenness at the feast tables of religion.* What is placed on

those tables may appear “tasty,” but I guarantee that it all will eventually turn extremely sour as you swallow it down. It will eventually become so bitter, that either you will morph into its

bitterness, or you will regurgitate it violently and reject any and all forms of it in the future.

*(Gal 3:11) But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.*

Get it and keep it straight. No man is justified by any law in God’s sight. Your justification can only come from the faith of Christ.

Let’s stop here and pick it up again next month for Part Two of Religious Perversion.

Much love in Christ,

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