

Living Like I Mean It!
“I’m NOT a People Pleaser
Galatians 1:1-9 July 7, 2019 Bob Szoke

Illustration: How many times do we feel like we are just coasting through life? We aren’t involved in anything significant, we complain a lot, we tire easily, not ready to take on anything new, and for the most part are just barely making it through life? Do we feel that sometimes we are just going through the motions, just showing up to keep others from complaining about us, *but our heart is apparently disengaged?* We don’t want to necessarily flaunt the idea that we are just coasting through life, going through the motions, but down deep, we know we are.

**LIVE
LIKE YOU
MEAN
IT!**

Whether it’s our jobs, school, family life, or even church, *it’s as if life is on auto-pilot and we are just doing the minimal things required.* We don’t have any goals which we are pursuing, and if asked, we’d probably struggle to make something up. We aren’t exciting to be around because when people are around us, all we do is talk about ourselves and our problems. If the word Blah! Is in the dictionary, probably our picture is next to it as an illustration of what that looks like.

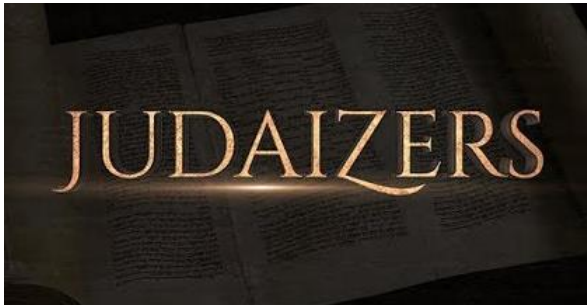
We are frustrated more than we think we should be. We find fault easily with just about everything, and we feel like life has overlooked us and left us to dwell in the tedium of boredom. There’s just not much about our lives we like. We spend the majority of our time and effort in trying to figure out how to just get by. We dare not tell anyone this unless we can trust them with this personal information.

If any of the previous is true about you, then this sermon series from the book of Galatians is for you. I’ve entitled this series, **“Living like I mean it!”** As followers of Jesus, living like we mean it will have some definite meanings and challenges. ***I pray that we will all be moved to become bolder in our faith, more involved in our relationship with Jesus, more of a worshiper, and excited about who God is and how our lives are to serve His purposes.***

Why choose the book of Galatians? Here’s some reason why I think we can take this idea of “Living like I mean it” and apply it to our study of Galatians.

- Galatians is about a people who were not living an exciting faith, instead there was a strong push to return to the old patterns of life.

- Some of the history of the people to whom the book of Galatians was written was that they had become a people that wanted to look like they were spiritual, but there really was nothing there.
- In the book of Galatians, there was **a problem with people being duped into believing that faith in Jesus was not enough**. As confusing as this might be, what was being projected was that in order to be a follower of Jesus, one must also be a follower of Moses, or as we will see later on, people believing that in order to be a good Christian, they needed to first be good Jews. Confusing? Yes!
- Let me introduce you to a term that isn't used in Scripture, but it is a word that has



been coined to describe a group of people. They are the **Judaizers**. Who were the Judaizers? Jewish Christians, likely Pharisees according to Acts 15, who, with good intentions, sought to supplement Paul's gospel by requiring that the basics of the Law be followed: circumcision and food laws. Perhaps the real issue at stake here is the status of the Gentiles within

the people of God. Could an uncircumcised Gentile be part of God's people along with Israel? Could a person be faithful to God and not keep the key elements of the covenant? <https://readingacts.com/2011/09/24/galatians-2-who-were-the-judaizers/>

- Paul will make reference that the people of Galatia can't see what they are doing to themselves, but essentially they are selling themselves back into slavery from which Christ freed them.
 - Before coming to Christ, they were slaves to sin. Before coming to Jesus for salvation, it was all about "trying to be religious, but not succeeding," at least on God's terms. Before coming to Jesus, they most likely considered themselves "good people." (People rarely measure themselves as bad people cause that title is reserved for the wicked and evil. The people of Galatia weren't wicked, evil, but thought themselves as good.")
 - **They heard the Gospel message, that Jesus is raised from the dead, that He is Lord, that in Him is forgiveness, a forgiveness that observing the Law, and just being good could never accomplish**. The people of Galatia found new life in Jesus!
 - But, since coming to Christ, a group of people who came on the scene, the Judaizers, have been trying to tell them that their lives were not complete in Christ, that is, the salvation that Jesus gives was not fully theirs unless they also observed certain Jewish Laws. **Confusing?** (It's at this stage that many know enough to be vulnerable, because on the one hand, people want to do what

they are supposed to do, but on the other hand, is simply believing in Jesus enough?) **The group of people who showed up said, “No, it’s not enough to just believe in Jesus.”** This group proceeded to give them a list of things they also needed to do, things which were rituals, observances of being a Pharisee, or a good Jew!

**IT’S NOT
ENOUGH**

- I’ll go more into this as we go through Galatians, **but essentially the issue is whether or not faith in Jesus is enough. Does one need to have faith in Jesus and do certain rituals, observe certain days, etc.?**
- It’s been also suggested that the number of people becoming followers of Jesus was quickly outgrowing the number of people who had a Jewish background.
 - There’s a little note in Acts (**Acts 6:7**) about a number of priests coming to faith. There’s the idea that when these priests became followers of Jesus, in Jerusalem, they could no longer deny the truth that Jesus was raised from the dead. They became followers.
 - What transpires after that is the idea of needing to **“control”** new believers, and thus the best and most familiar way this could be done was to mandate that the new believers observe all the food laws, the rituals, circumcision and the many traditions associated with keeping the Old Testament law.
 - These people, whom we can call **“the Judaizers,”** (which is a name used to refer to them) **were about the idea of keeping the ethical standards high, insisting with rigorous details about how to live, according to the ethical standards with which they were most familiar, the Jewish law.**
 - Add to this the prejudice that Jewish people had against others. One of the most humorous of stories that I read in the book of Acts is when Cornelius sends for Peter to hear about Jesus. Peter’s remarks upon arrival are not, “Wow, great to do this,” but rather, “Ok, I’m here, why did you send for me.” There was a huge disparity between believers. Peter himself didn’t see that the non-Jewish people needed to be won to the Lord, and he openly says, **“Why am I here?”**
 - It took the Holy Spirit to open Peter’s eyes that Jesus is for all, not just the Jewish people. Peter finally understood!
 - The Judaizers, however meant to keep following Jesus pure, and would actually track wherever Paul went. They would follow up after he left and

then “add” to what Paul had already taught them, as if Christ was not enough.

- *There is a lot of error thinking going on that Paul will correct because Galatia had been the victim of the Judaizers, their influence and false teachings.*

What does it mean to live life like I mean it? I’m going to answer that question today with the answer that Paul gives, which is, **“I’m not a people pleaser.”**

- A word about being a people pleaser: People pleasers tend to agree with everyone, don’t want others to feel bad and just want to try and get along with everyone. No hassles.
- Being a people pleaser means not saying anything that is going to cause people to argue with one another, but it’s also about getting people to think good of you!
- But, that’s not Paul, because faith is just too important. Get this: *our faith is too important not to talk about it, in spite of what we think that people shouldn’t talk about religion or politics.* Ignoring one’s faith may be what I would only call, an eternal mistake! Helping people not to make an “eternal mistake” is why I need to live like I mean it, and not be a people pleaser. I’m sure the same can be said for you.



So what we are going to do is to look at the first 10 verses of Galatians, doing a bit of Bible study and making some applications along the way. Pau’s concern is just this: **Living for Christ like I mean it!**

An Unusual Way to say “Hello”

Galatians 1: 1-5 Paul, an apostle--sent not from men nor by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead--2 and all the brothers with me, To the churches in Galatia: 3 Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, 4 who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, 5 to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.



1. As we begin with just some introductory Bible study notes, one of the major things that would catch the attention of most would be *how Paul begins this letter to the churches of Galatia.*

- a. If we were to compare it with **Romans, 1 Corinthians, Ephesians, Philippians**, etc., one of the distinguishing things would be that he isn't as gracious and as cordial as he typically is when writing to the churches.
 - b. For example: **Philippians 1:3-8** *I thank my God every time I remember you. 4 In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy 5 because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, 6 being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. 7 It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart; for whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God's grace with me. 8 God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus.*
 - c. In just doing a quick comparison with the introduction of Galatians, it's obvious that Paul is not wasting a lot of time, ink or paper in getting to the issues at hand.
 - d. In reading the opening statements of Galatians, when comparing it to how Paul will write other churches, **one has the perception that something is wrong because of the short, and right to the issue introduction he gives.**
2. Another Bible study note that needs emphasis is where Paul says **"he is an apostle not by man or by men."**
- a. Why this kind of reference? **Because there were people who were saying that Paul isn't genuine**, he's not really an apostle but someone out to dupe you, someone who is not really an apostle. They were calling him an imposter.
 - b. And, if he's an imposter, don't listen to him!
 - c. There was this argument floating around that Paul doesn't have the credentials of having known Jesus while he walked the earth, and this was an important thing.
 - i. Remember **Acts 1:21,22**? After Jesus had ascended to heaven, the disciples said they needed to replace Judas. Here is their criteria: **Therefore it is necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, 22 beginning from John's baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection."**



The Argument

- ii. Those who were opposed to Paul said that he couldn't possibly have the right to tell anyone about Christ because he didn't fit that profile. Instead of learning about Jesus, he was at that time of life out persecuting those who believed in him.

- iii. As far as this group of people who had shown up and were trying to convince the people of Galatia that believing in Jesus is not enough, **to them, Paul was an imposter!** He was not to be trusted, he was not believable, he was a fraud!

d. But, it does need to be noted that Paul did see the risen Christ, and does qualify as an apostle.

- i. **1 Corinthians 9:1** Paul will defend being an apostle by reiterating to the people of Corinth that he has seen the risen Christ, that he appeared to him. **1 Corinthians 15:8,9** will repeat this same idea, that Jesus appeared to him.
- ii. It might be helpful to again read **Acts 9** about how Lord appeared to him. While reading that account, **pay special attention to people like Ananias of Damascus who wasn't convinced either but became convinced when the Lord himself stepped in.** Anyone could go talk with Ananias and validate what Paul is here saying. Or talk with the people who were travelling with Paul, (**Acts 9:7**). They knew something happened.
- iii. Paul did see the risen Christ, and did listen to him, and did talk with him, and did interact with the risen Jesus.
- iv. **Remember: after the resurrection, Jesus appeared to Thomas.** Jesus just “showed up” and his appearance was unexplainable. Remember Thomas said, **“I need to see the nail prints in his hands, and his side.”**
- v. Paul's words about what happened, and what he was saying are right in line with what Jesus did and taught. (That is also part of what this first chapter of Galatians states).



- 3. These opening verses, while it might be a strange way to say hello, were really **a rebuttal of sorts** to those who were accusing him that he wasn't really out to win them “correctly.”
 - a. In one clear way we need to see this important thing: In his opening statements, Paul wants the people to know he is serious, and as he will say, **“he's not a people pleaser.”** He's an apostle, and proceeds to give his credentials.
- 4. Thinking about all this, it is a strange way to say hello, but **there's a lot at stake here** and it's important to stop and reflect on that. Here's what's at stake:
 - a. People believing a lie or the truth.
 - b. People perpetuating a lie or the truth.
 - c. People having hope in Jesus or in a religious system.
 - d. People understanding forgiveness in Jesus or just good ideas.

e. People living to influence friends for Jesus.

5. *It's a strange way to say "hello" but let's make this personal: Why should I care about any of this? Why should you care?*

- a. *Faith is about my witness* of who Jesus is, and I do not want to convey anything about Jesus that isn't true.
- b. *Faith is about the truth of Jesus I live out* such as living out the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. I need to demonstrate that the sacrifice of Jesus is **enough** for my salvation.
- c. *Faith is about my new life I in Christ*, about me being a "new creation" because of the forgiveness of Christ. I need to live to show what **newness** looks like as a child of God.
- d. *Faith is about my rescue by Jesus* from this present evil world.
 - i. We would do well to just pause right here. Let me illustrate. In verse 4, Paul says it was Christ who **"rescued"** us from this evil world.
 - ii. Stop for a moment and think about the theology in those few words.
 - iii. **The idea of being rescued is a violent concept.** There's the need to reflect upon the concept that this is a violent, evil world! Some may not feel comfortable with me saying that, but this is a violent world, and unless Christ rescues us, we are lied to, influenced that evil is good, fall victim to compromise and only wince at the face of evil.
 - iv. One of the great truths of Scripture that needs to be reinforced to us is that death holds us in its grip, and only Christ can pry us free.
 1. **Illustration:** Look at the world around us with all the activities that have taken place the last few weeks. **Who sees all the sinful activities of even these past few weeks as harmful?** Only a few. It was almost sickening to hear the media play up the whole pride week thing and then this week play songs about God bless America. It's about believing lies, and it's about calling that which is evil good. This is our world, and **only Christ can rescue us from it.**
 2. *Paul says clearly that the world we live in is evil. That's not just a theological statement with which we must agree, but it's the kind of statement that ought to influence us to know Christ even more.*
- e. Also needing mentioned here are these things about our salvation in Christ and God's will.



- i. **God wants us to be saved** and has done **EVERYTHING NECESSARY** for that to happen. God wants this. This is His desire!
 - ii. **God did all the work.** This is one of the fundamental issues of the book of Galatians. We are required to have faith, trust in Jesus, not go around trying to “work our own salvation by being good enough.”
6. Yes, it’s a strange way to say “hello” but **what else he said is so critical**, so important, so life changing.
- a. It’s at this moment that it’s time to but reflect a minute about our salvation through Jesus. **Here’s a few questions to prod our thinking.**
 - b. Do we listen to Scripture, such as the things Paul says, taking them seriously?
 - c. Does it matter to you that Paul was spoken to directly by Jesus and what Paul then tells us is just as binding? Do we hear these words of Scripture as Godly counsel and direction about our relationship with Jesus?
 - d. Do we want examine our lives as much as Paul is asking the people of Galatia to examine theirs, to make changes where needed, to abandon certain kinds of thinking, to strengthen our commitment, to avoid the evil of this world?
 - e. Do we believe what Paul says and receive these words with serious listening?



Obviously Annoyed

Illustration: **Annoying sounds.** I found this on the internet, the most annoying sounds in the world. See what you think. A knife on a bottle, fork on a glass, Chalk on a blackboard



A ruler on a bottle, Nails on a blackboard, A female scream, An angle grinder (a power tool), Squealing brakes on a bicycle, A baby crying, An electric drill.

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/what-is-the-most-annoying-sound-in-the-world-75317235/#HLaHOGQ81w1ka2YP.99> You may not agree with that list, cause I don’t think I do. To me, one of the most annoying sounds is that of feedback that I hear in some cell phone calls. (There is one person who calls me, and sometimes the feedback is so harsh, I have to hang up and try again with the phone call). There are things that annoy us, and as we move on to the second part of text, we do so with the idea that Paul is obviously annoyed.

Galatians 1:6-10 I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel-- 7 which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel

of Christ. 8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned! 9 As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned! 10 Am I now trying to win the approval of men, or of God? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Christ.

1. Jumping back into the text Paul is obviously annoyed that the Galatian people are like others from the Old Testament who, in spite of God's graciousness and exhibition of great power, chose to worship a god they could make, make following God what they wanted it to be, and even the idea of controlling god.
 - a. There's a bit of history here that I need to mention that I think will help clarify what's going on here. In recalling the story of the giving of the 10 Commandments, it was while Moses was up on the mountain receiving the tablets of stone that the people quickly turned away from God and made themselves an idol. **Exodus 32:7-8, Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go down, because your people,**

Historical Note

whom you brought up out of Egypt, have become corrupt. 8 They have been quick to turn away from what I commanded them and have made

themselves an idol cast in the shape of a calf. They have bowed down to it and sacrificed to it and have said, 'These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt.'

- i. The people at the foot of the mountain quickly turned away from God. We look at this an wonder, "Wow, how could they do that after all that God had already shown them? He brought them dramatically out of Egypt, opened the Red Sea to let them walk over in safety, saw Pharaoh's army destroyed, and God even supplying food and water for them." We wonder, how could they do that? Why would they do that?
- ii. **I have a reason why they could and did make the golden calf: it's because people like chasing after something, participating or having something that gives them comfort, especially religious comfort regardless of what it is.**
 1. **The Israelites at the foot of the mountain "made the golden calf fit" their needs, so they would feel comfortable being religious.**
- b. As difficult as that is for us to grasp, that's the same kind of thing going on in the churches of Galatia. **The people of Galatia were abandoning the power of the resurrection, abandoning the power of God's forgiveness in favor of following Jewish rituals, customs, circumcision and food laws, which made them feel comfortable, spiritually. It's really just this simple!**

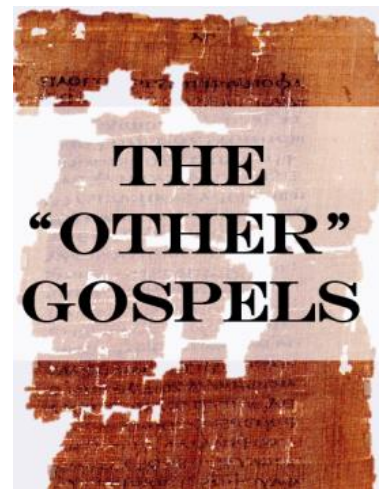
- i. People do this, that is, they return to former ways of life when things get a bit tough. It's as if the word "perseverance" were never spoken or has no meaning. When someone comes along and makes something appear more glamorous, or especially more meaningful, people jump at it. Why? Because people like things that make them "feel good and spiritually comfortable."
Let's face it, if we can feel good about ourselves by doing something that we think is religious, then we pretty well convince ourselves that we need to keep doing that.
- ii. People like to chase after things that coincide with what they already believe, so that they don't have to give up anything in what they believe about God. In fact, they'd argue that all they are doing is enhancing their faith.

**You believe what
you want to believe.**

1. Take *astrology* for example. How many people believe in this? I heard it best phrased several years ago by a friend who said, "Have you ever noticed where they put the daily astrology charts? Near the comic page!" Yet, people take this stuff seriously as if it is and should be part of life along with having faith in Jesus.
2. There's always the *Karma* idea, where what goes around comes around. I know people who say they believe in Jesus but also believe in the law of karma, where they will wait patiently for someone who wronged them to be wronged back, even more severely.
3. *Fate*. I hate this one! I had a good friend who always said, "God's must have needed another angel." Or, you can't stop fate, as if fate is God's will. One ends up putting all that one does as if he is a programmed robot, and when the battery runs out, it's fate coming true.
4. Then there's always the *glitzy idea that God won't send anyone to Hell*. There was a book out not too long ago by a Christian author who said that in end, Love wins! Everyone goes to heaven, regardless of what Jesus said, regardless of the rejection of Jesus. People like that idea in a church. It means you can live like "Hell" and still go to "Heaven."
5. These kind of ideas attract people and gives them a false sense of security and comfort, the "feel good" about who they are in Christ.

2. Obviously people in Paul's time were drawn to ideas that seemed plausible, though not biblical. Look at the language of **verses 6-9**.
- a. People are deserting the true Gospel for another "gospel" if it can be called that. I need to say a few things here.
 - b. The issue that is underlying this is found in **Acts 15**. As I've already alluded to the problem of the concept of the Judaizers, permeating the Galatian churches was that in order to be a good Christian, one needed to be a good Jew, or at least live like a Jew.
 - c. **Acts 15:5** *Then some of the believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up and said, "The Gentiles must be circumcised and required to obey the law of Moses."*
 - i. **This is in essence what the "other gospel" was about.** The "other gospel" was about those who were coming to Christ needing to learn about the food laws, about the feasts of the Jews, about the customs, circumcision, and traditions, and then practice these things.
 - ii. Thinking out loud here, one can imagine how easily this whole argument could be guilt driven. "You're not really a Christian, a follower of Jesus because you didn't observe the Sabbath." Or, "You didn't observe the food laws and you ate unclean food. You can't be a Christian and live like that! You aren't saved."
 - iii. Guilt is a powerful tool, especially when it comes to religious things. **Guilt is a huge issue that makes people do things, and after they've done them, then they are supposed to feel good and comfortable about themselves.** Lot of times, they do.
 - d. I've seen this, and let me share a few things that I've personally witnessed.
 - i. There's always been the **"you can't wear make-up"** arguments because of how it will make you look. Paul will talk about women **"not adorning themselves"** and then well intended Christians will feel driven to make people feel guilty, by making statements that **"no Christian would dress like this."**
 - ii. I heard, as I was growing up that **Christians don't** play cards, work on Sunday's, go to movies, dance, and must wear a suit on Sunday's.
 - iii. The concept becomes couched in the terminology that one is sinful, and unaccepted by God if not conforming to the standards presented by people.
 - iv. Like the Judaizers, these people are either intending to keep things pure as they understand it, or control people. Either way, it's no good!

3. Paul is obviously annoyed and he says so in one word. **“I am ‘astonished,’...** which is a word that means more than being surprised, but can also refer to being constantly annoyed. (There are things we find out, and when we find out, we are unsettled, as if we are determined to not rest until this is dealt with.) The word astonished here carries with it the sense of **being continually upset** over this. It’s as if Paul could remain quiet no longer! This is just one more reason why Paul is not a people pleaser.
4. The reason Paul is astonished, disappointed: **8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned! 9 As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned!**
- a. I want to stop here and just say a couple of things that we need to hear. What we need to hear again is Paul’s statements of **verses 8,9**. I want us to hear these things.
- b. **First, there is no other gospel, even though it wouldn’t be packaged that way.** What I’m talking about, and here are some examples:
- i. **The Gay Gospel.** Some churches teach that homosexuality is equal to heterosexuality in God's eyes. This is not the Gospel.
<https://www.exodusglobalalliance.org/howthegaychurchmisinterpretsthebi blep328.php>
- ii. The gospel of the **DaVinci Code** where Jesus was married, had children and the whole thing was a set up.
- iii. The **gospel of Universalism**: the belief that all people will be saved or that all ways lead to God and eternal life.
- iv. The **Prosperity Gospel**: the belief that God's primary concern is for believers to be healthy and wealthy. If Christians are sick, suffering or poor, it is because of sin or a lack of faith.
- v. **The New Age Movement**: a belief system of Eastern influence that emphasizes universal tolerance and doing what feels good (moral relativism). It contends that man is divine and can create his own reality and identity.
- vi. **Legalism**: the improper use of the law described in Scripture to try to attain or maintain salvation. Legalism also fosters judgment of fellow Christians for not adhering to one's own ideas of holiness rather than encouraging them to imitate Christ, obeying God's standards as explicitly outlined in Scripture.



- vii. **Hyper-grace:** the overreaction to legalism, resulting in abuse of God's grace. Believers find themselves drawn to the modern hyper-grace movement because they are looking for freedom not just from legalism, but also from God's standards.
- viii. **The Emerging Church gospel**, glorifies honesty and confession, but without repentance. <https://www.charismanews.com/opinion/62856-6-false-teachings-bringing-deceptive-darkness-into-the-church>
- c. And, let me add to this list the other gospels of the **Mormons and the Jehovah Witnesses**.
 - i. On September 22, 1823, Joseph Smith claims an angel named Moroni revealed to him, among other artifacts, a set of 40-60 pound golden plates "under a stone of considerable size" near his father's farm. Four years later - and eighteen months after being convicted for fraud and admitting in court he told people he had "necromantic" powers - Smith says Moroni allowed him to take the plates home and translate them from "reformed Egyptian" into English, thus creating the Book of Mormon. <https://www.ranker.com/list/bizarre-mormon-objects/kellen-perry> There are several ideas in the Mormon church that run completely counter to Scripture.
 - 1. Mormons claim that God the Father was once a man and that he then progressed to godhood. This is the same plan that can be for all who follow the Mormon way, "you too can be a god."
 - 2. The Encyclopedia of Mormonism teaches that there is a "Mother in Heaven," who is like the Heavenly Father "in glory, perfection, compassion, wisdom, and holiness."
 - 3. Mormons believe that Jesus Christ was the firstborn spirit-child of the heavenly Father and a heavenly Mother. Jesus then progressed to deity in the spirit world. <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/the-faqs-are-mormons-christian/>
 - 4. Just a few of the **Mormon doctrines** of "**another gospel**" which we need to stay away from.
 - ii. The **Jehovah Witnesses**:
 - 1. Jehovah's Witnesses believe that Jesus was created by Jehovah as the archangel Michael before the physical world existed, and is a lesser, though mighty, god.



2. Jehovah's Witnesses believe that when Jesus was born on earth, he was a mere human and not God in human flesh.
3. Jehovah's Witnesses believe that Jesus was resurrected spiritually from the dead, but not physically.
4. Jehovah's Witnesses believe that the second coming was an invisible, spiritual event that occurred in the year 1914.

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/justin-taylor/the-11-beliefs-you-should-know-about-jehovahs-witnesses-when-they-knock-at-the-door/>

5. Just a few of the beliefs of the **Jehovah Witnesses**, and the **“other gospel” which really is not a gospel.**
5. **Paul is not going to let people think that it doesn't matter what one believes about Jesus.** It matters, it matters greatly! The difficulty for us is that we know people, people who are our friends, relatives, and acquaintances who are involved in these false gospels. We care about them, we love them, but what are we left with?
6. These people who have taken after **“another gospel”** which really isn't the gospel at all are wrong, sincere, but sincerely wrong.
7. This issue is so strong an issue that Paul repeats the same thing twice. Let the person who perpetuated this be **eternally condemned!**

Paul taught if we had any other gospel than the one he preached, let the one who gave us this other gospel be eternally condemned.

- a. This is Paul, the guy who wishes people peace and joy in Christ most of the time. This is Paul, the same man who wrote to the churches in Galatia with a stern sense of not being a people pleaser. This is tough!
- b. All of this is said, not to make people happy, nor to bring them a sense of security, but rather a rousing challenge to see if what they believe in is true, make believe, or an outright lie!

8. **If Paul were trying to please people, this is not what to say, not how you do it!** But he says it, and the truth is presented, the lies confronted, and he retracts nothing of what he said.

Living Like I mean It!

Illustration: When I first introduce this message this morning, I said that the challenge is for us to be bold in our faith, to be effective, and to not be about the business of pleasing people. The guy trying to sell you a used car might call you intuitive and knowledgeable, but he's all about selling a car and trying to impress you of how great a person he thinks you are. After he's sold you the car, he can barely remember your name. You might remember

his, but that's as far as it goes. The used car salesman is not necessarily like he means anything but how to sell you a car.

When it comes to our faith, it's time for the truth. Let me give some practical applications from this idea of not wanting to be a people pleaser, and thus, living like I mean it.

**LIVE
LIKE YOU
MEAN
IT!**

1. ***Living like I mean it means I'm more concerned about the truth than I am being politically correct.***
 - a. If you mean this, then prepare yourself to be labeled, to be hated, to be deliberately misunderstood, to be avoided by people you thought were your friends, to be abused, and not liked.
 - b. If you mean this, also prepare your children to reap some of what you will receive because that's how this often works.
2. ***Living like I mean it means that doctrine is important to me, and I can't and won't compromise on it.*** The death, burial and resurrection of Jesus are part of my first doctrines and I'll not even the smallest way compromise on that truth.
3. ***Living like I mean it means that living a life that reflects my faith and trust in Jesus is critical to me, and I will do everything I can to influence people for Christ.*** I want what I do, how I do it, and why I do it to show people that Jesus is the Lord, the author of my salvation and upon that truth I will not compromise in what I believe or how I live.
4. ***Living like I mean it means I love you too much to pretend living for Christ doesn't matter.***
 - a. You've got to know that I love you, otherwise I know you won't listen to what I have to say. You'll just think I'm being critical, or I'm being judgmental. But if you know I love you, you'll be ready to listen.
 - b. ***This is how Paul did it. Paul could talk this way to the people of Galatia because they knew he loved them.*** Paul said of them, ***Galatians 4:15 ...if you could have done so, you would have torn out your eyes and given them to me.*** That's how people love each other.
 - c. ***When I say "I love you," the burden is on me to demonstrate that... that I do love you, that I know Scripture well enough to say what I'm saying, and that I deeply care.***
5. Living like I mean it means that I'm not a people pleaser, because there's an eternity at stake. I love you that much not to let you live a lie, and die thinking it doesn't matter.

Conclusion:

There's a statement that I like to use once in a while. "If it's not broke, don't fix it." Sometimes we think, like the people of the Galatian churches, that we need to fix things, we need to have some rules, guidelines, and regulations about being Christians. I'm sure I could easily come up with a list of what I think **should be** requirements if one wants to be a follower of Jesus. I'm pretty sure you could too! Scripture gives us the motivation to live a holy life, and that motivation is the love of Christ. Jesus said it best, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments." That statement is why we want to encourage each other, communicate with each other, and strengthen each other... because sometimes we don't do a very good job at living for Christ. We can do better, but it's our faith that moves us on, not a set of rules and regulations.



Questions:

1. Who are the people in your world that have bought into "another gospel" and you know it but have been too fearful to say anything? Who are the people we need to begin loving much deeper so that we make an eternal difference in their lives?
2. It really does matter what one believes about Jesus. Do we believe that salvation is complete in Jesus, and Jesus alone? If so, will we stop trying to appease people that "being good" equals receiving Jesus as Lord and Savior?
3. Will I today begin loving people more, especially those who are living a lie, only so that I can share the truth of Christ as Savior with them?
4. What do I need to personally do because Jesus Christ is Lord?

