



## BELIEVERS CHAPEL

6420 Churchill Way | Dallas, Texas | 75230 | t 972.239.5371 | believerschapeldallas.org

The Sermons of Dan Duncan

Galatians 1: 6-10

“Counterfeit”

Galatians 1

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] Text this morning is Galatians chapter 1. And we’re going to look at verses 6 through 10. We did begin our study – our series in Galatians – last week. And we looked at the introduction, or the salutation, which Paul gave. And now we come to that which follows, which is something of a burst of emotion from the apostle.

We read, “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 what you distort the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel in heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed.

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. 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 bondservant of Christ.” May the Lord bless this reading of his word. Let’s bow together in prayer.

[Message] Parents – and with rare exceptions this is true – parents are protective of their children. It is instinctive for a father or a mother to take care of their children. If they are good parents, they are concerned about the company their children keep, the music they listen to, the books they read. And when they are in danger, they react immediately to save them. Like a lion or a lioness who acts to save her cubs. The apostle Paul was like that with the church. In fact, Saint Augustine called him “the great lion of God”.

And to understand his words in our passage, we must see Paul in that light. We must see him in the role of a parent saving his spiritual children from grave danger. He is like a mother lion fighting for her cubs. That explains, actually, the tone of the entire book of Galatians, which the conservative scholar and apologist J. Gresham Machen called “a polemic, a fighting epistle from beginning to end”. And from the start, after Paul gives a brief greeting to the churches, he comes out swinging. It was his custom to give thanks for his readers after his introductory salutation, but instead of giving thanks, Paul states his surprise and his disappointment in the Galatians.

He had grounded these churches in the gospel of grace only to learn or shortly after he had left that they had begun moving away from the gospel and toward Judaism. And so rather than begin as he customarily did with words like, “I thank my God and all my remembrance of you,” he writes, “I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting him who called you.” His words here are sharp and his feelings were strong because the situation was just that serious. The gospel was at stake. They were deserting it. So there was no reason for thanking God. Only for expressing shock at what was happening.

They were deserting him who had called them, as Paul puts it, “by the grace of Christ”. Called by grace. That is the essence of the gospel. Salvation is a free gift received by faith alone. We are called to it. We are invited to it. We don’t earn it. We can’t earn it. God doesn’t require that we first do some great work. He doesn’t require that we first perform in order to gain his favor. He invites sinners who don’t deserve his blessing to come and to have it. He called these Galatians to receive eternal life. Freely. There’s a parable that illustrates this.

It’s the Parable of the Dinner, or the Banquet, found in Luke 14, about a man who gave a great feast, but none of the original guests came. They all had excuses for not attending. So the master sent his servant out into the streets and lanes of the city to bring in the poor and crippled and blind and lame. But that wasn’t enough. He then sent them into the highways and along the hedges to find even more and compel them to come in so that, he said, “my house may be filled.”

That’s the gospel. God gives men – the poor, the blind, the lame, those who are without anything, those who have nothing to offer him – God gives them an undeserved invitation to come into his house. And the Galatians responded to that

invitation when Paul and Barnabas visited them on that first missionary journey. In Acts 13, Luke gives us the story, how they first went to the synagogue and they preached there. And they preached the grace of God. They preached the Gospel and the Jews listened, but at the end of it all, the Jews rejected the message. And so Paul said, “Behold, we are turning to the Gentiles.”

And Luke writes, “When the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord. And as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.” As many as had been elected from the foundation of the world believed. Now that is an obvious reference to the grace of God. Those who had been appointed to believe. But the fact that they believed and they rejoice is an amazing response from these Gentiles. And it’s a response that Paul and Barnabas witnessed all over Galatia as Gentiles received the message of the gospel.

The original guests, the Jews, wouldn’t come to the banquet, so they called the spiritually blind, the spiritually lame Gentiles, and they came. And they came happily. They were overjoyed at having been invited. But now things were different. They were not rejoicing and glorifying the gospel. They were abandoning it and forsaking the very one who had called them so freely by his grace. Paul was shocked. He called them deserters, a description drawn from political jargon that has both the idea of a military revolt and a change of attitude. They were changing sides, like traitors. Bishop Lightfoot translated this, “You are turning renegades.”

It’s a terrible thing, a terrible act, when people do that politically and betray their country. But this is far worse. These people were deserting the Lord. Deserting the God of grace. The one who had called them freely out of darkness into light. The issue wasn’t that they were abandoning Paul, a true apostle. The issue wasn’t just that they were rejecting the message of the truth, that they were turning away from the truth. It is that they were deserting the Lord who had blessed them so greatly. He had, as Paul said earlier in the introduction, he had freed them from this present evil age. From the bondage of this age.

From the ignorance and the superstition of this age. From worship of dumb idols and all of the wicked corruption of paganism. He had delivered them from the fear that they had lived in, the uncertainty that they had lived in, and the certainty of the doom that will come upon this world. He delivered them from all of that. And brought them into his light and into his life. And brought them to freedom. He had

done all of that. And at no cost to them. He didn't tell them to first get sight. He didn't tell them to first begin to walk spiritually.

He didn't tell them to change themselves in order that he could accept them. He called them into their weakness, in their inability, in their death, he called them out of that into life. He brought them to himself. He made them whole. It was all his work. Blessed them infinitely. Now they were turning away from him and all those blessings from their liberty, and putting themselves under the law. What F. F. Bruce called “religious slavery.” That was astonishing to Paul. And what really amazed him is that they were ready to do it so quickly.

Paul had hardly left them and they were swept away by these new teachers who had come in behind him. But maybe that's not all that uncommon. Maybe Paul wasn't all that surprised. And maybe we shouldn't be. I'm afraid that it's really not all that common for people to do that. People are fickle in their faith. And can easily be led astray. That is why we need continually to go back to the basics. And remind ourselves of the truth of the gospel.

As Paul does in this book of Galatians. It brings us back to the fundamentals of the faith that we need to continually be reminded of and ground ourselves in. We need a firm foundation, spiritually, under us. We need solid rock under our spiritual feet in order to stand firm. And that's what this book gives us. And that's what Paul was giving them. It's what he had given them and what amazed him that they were departing from so quickly. But that was true of the Galatians because that's true, I think, of human nature. And that's true of you.

It's true of me. Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it. Prone to leave the God I love. Well as I say, that's true of all of us. Only the grace that called us can keep us. And that grace operates through the word of God. Through the truth of God's word. We need it. Now the grammar here is important in understanding the spiritual condition of these Galatians. The word “deserting” is in the present tense. Paul says, “I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting.” Meaning they were still in the process of deserting the Lord.

They had not yet completed the act of desertion. There was still some hope for these people. They had not apostatized. They were like those individuals, those Jewish Christians, dressed in the book of Hebrews in chapter 2 of whom the author of Hebrews says, “You're drifting.” They hadn't gone away. But they were beginning to

drift away from the truth and thinking of going back into Judaism. And it was the same here. They were deserting. They were drifting. But they had not completed that. That had not actually happened yet. Paul believed these Galatians were genuine believers. And he could appeal to them on that basis.

And know that his words would draw them back to the truth because a true believer cannot apostatize. He believed that they were genuinely born again. In fact, he said that God had called them. And the word for called is used of God’s effectual call to salvation. In other words, the spiritual call that the spirit of God uses to actually draw us to the Lord Jesus Christ. So he was convinced that they were genuine believers. He says that later in chapter 5, verse 10. He says, I have confidence in you in the Lord. But again, all of this reminds us of the spiritual situation and the danger that we are all in, always.

We’re never in a time of spiritual peace, in a sense that there’s no war going on around us. There’s no period when the war has ceased and we can just relax and take it easy about our spiritual life. We are constantly in a spiritual conflict. That’s always the case. We have been delivered from this present evil age, but this evil age is still present. We live in it. And it does exercise an influence upon us. Its power has been broken over us, but the influence is still there and it’s strong. It’s alluring. It’s attractive. And it’s hostile. It is against us.

Full of traps and temptations and cleverly devised errors to draw us in, suck us in, to our own harm. And we can be sure of this, that wherever this spirit of God is moving – and the spirit of God was moving in a great way over Galatia, over those churches in southern Turkey after that first missionary journey – but it’s always the case wherever the spirit of God is moving and doing a work, the devil will soon be there to try to frustrate that work.

And he has an arsenal of weapons that he can use. He tries to stir up doubts about our salvation. Stir up doubts about the reliability of God’s love. The steadfastness of God’s love. His faithfulness, or the sufficiency of Christ’s death and his atonement for us. And of course, if Christ is not sufficient – if that were the case, if we felt that to be the case, at least – then we must rely upon ourselves or something else on our own efforts, at any rate, to make up for what is lacking in the cross. And that means turning to the law and trusting in that. That’s the temptation.

That’s what the devil was seeking to draw these Galatians into through these false teachers. Luther had some insight on Satan’s tactics. He said that, “If he cannot ruin people by wronging and persecuting them, he will do it by improving them.” And that’s what he was doing with the Galatians. He was improving them. He was leading them under the law where they would try to do things that would add to Christ’s work and make themselves more acceptable to God, improve their situation, their relationship with God. So they thought.

That’s the error they had been drawn into. But Paul says that doing that was deserting Christ. Deserting the truth for a different gospel. The King James version has, in verse 7, has “unto another gospel,” which is not another. In other words, the Galatians had fallen victim to a counterfeit. The words that are translated here, “another”, are two different Greek words. One of them means different. I’m reading from the new American Standard Bible, which brings that distinction out by translating it that way. It is a different gospel. The Greek word is **heteros**.

We get some of our own words from that. We get, for example, heterodoxy, which is the opposite of orthodoxy. Orthodoxy means literally straight or correct opinion, while heterodoxy means different opinion. One who departs from the straight way, and goes off into a different way. Goes off into heresy. The other word, the other Greek word, is **alas**. Another gospel. And it means, another of the same kind. Now Dr. Johnson used to illustrate the difference between these two words, alas and heteros, both which can be translated “another”.

He used to illustrate it with a writing pen. A fountain pen. This is not the kind he used. He had a Mont Blanc, as I remember. A very nice one, but we’ll pretend that’s my Mont Blanc. It’s probably the closest I’ll get to one. But he imagined, for the sake of illustration, going to the store where he had purchased his Mont Blanc and saying to the clerk there that, “I would like another pen. An alas pen. Another of the same kind.” So he wanted another fountain pen.

The clerk looked at it, reached under the counter, and he pulled out a pen, but it was a ballpoint pen. It was another pen, but it was a pen of a different kind. It was not an alas pen. It was a heteros pen. It was not what he wanted. And that’s the kind of gospel that these Judaizers had brought to Galatia. It was a different gospel from the one that Paul had preached. But how different was it? Now some ballpoint pens are very similar to fountain pens. In fact, some people carry a Mont Blanc fountain

pen and a ballpoint pen. And if they're in their pocket, you look at the top and you see that little snowcap or start whatever it is on top.

And you think, “Well two of the same kind.” And if they pull them out, they may look like the same kind of pen at first glance, but as you study, you see that there's a difference. Well sometimes different things can appear to be – at first glance, at least – very similar. And that's the case with these different gospels. They had very much the same appearance. This gospel that the Judaizers preached was not altogether different from the one that Paul preached. Now that's not surprising. This gospel that had come in later – this gospel of the Judaizers – with a counterfeit.

And a good counterfeit always has the appearance of the thing that is copied. Good counterfeiters don't copy monopoly money. Or pass it out as real currency. They copy the real thing. And try to duplicate it in every detail, using the right paper, using the right ink, using the right lines, following the whole pattern as well, and in as detailed a manner as they can. And it was the same with this different gospel that had come to Galatia. It was very similar to the real thing. The Judaizers didn't deny Christ, as far as we know. In fact, they certainly didn't.

They claimed to be in fellowship with the apostles. They claimed to be sent out by the leaders of Jerusalem. They recognized Jesus as the Messiah and the need of faith in him. They didn't deny any of that. They said all the right things and were orthodox in many of their beliefs. All they did was add one detail to the gospel. Circumcision. One work of the law. That's all. Just one small right, and a biblical one at that. Something that Abraham had been commanded to do. Something all of the Jews had been commanded to do. So it seemed like a biblical gospel. And the addition wasn't big. Just one small ritual.

Which is done only once. Not a major adjustment. But according to Paul, it was. He later writes in Galatians 5:2, “Behold I, Paul, say to you that if you receive circumcision, Christ will be of no benefit to you.” In other words, if you believe that Christ's work on the cross is not sufficient for your salvation, that you must add your work to it, that you must improve upon it, then you have rejected the truth and are not saved. The reason is, the changes that that brings is a change to the whole nature of the gospel and salvation. It is no longer God's work that is received – it is man's work that is achieved. That's not the gospel. The gospel that Paul preached to the

Galatians, and what he will repeat in chapter 3 where he develops his argument for the gospel, is salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.

Now that’s not something that’s new. In spite of what the Judaizers might have said. In fact, they seem to have said that Paul came preaching a different gospel from the one that the men in Jerusalem preached. And they came in saying, “We’re preaching the original gospel, the pure gospel.” But that’s not the case. And Paul, as he explains in chapter 3, bases his argument for the gospel that he preached on the Old Testament texts. To chief texts that he uses in chapter 3. Genesis 15:6, and back in 2:4. The gospel Paul preached is the gospel of the Old Testament. It’s the only gospel there is.

Salvation has always been a gift that could not be earned. It is received through faith. The law was given for that purpose, to give that understanding. It was given to help Israel understand its need. To show the Jews their inability. They had been greatly blessed and privileged by being called to all the privileges they had, but they needed to realize that was all of grace. And it meant nothing about them personally that they had some personal merit that obtained that. And God gave the law to demonstrate to them that they’re sinners. That’s why the law was given. It was not given as a means of salvation. It was given to show us that we need salvation. But the false teachers who had come to Galatia were teaching just the opposite.

Teaching that obedience to the law was necessary for salvation. So Paul says they were perverting the gospel of grace. “There are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ,” he says. Distort has the idea of changing something into its opposite. The idea of turning things upside down. They wanted to overturn the gospel of grace. And this one ritual of circumcision could do that. Turn the gospel upside down. Completely reverse it. Because by adding a work to grace, ends grace. Grace is no longer grace because grace is no longer a free gift. Now it doesn’t have to be circumcision. Today it probably would not be that. It can be baptism. It can be the Lord’s supper.

Adding something – as good as the ordinances are – adding them to the gospel as being necessary for salvation makes those good thing, bad. Bad with the gospel. In fact, it destroys the gospel altogether because it makes salvation something that’s based on personal work. Grace cannot be mixed with works and still be grace. That

should be obvious. We're in the season of the year when we give gifts. And so imagine someone giving you a gift, an expensive tie or, for you ladies, say a Hermes scarf. And says, “Here is a gift. It's free.” And then adds, “Just give me 20 bucks and we'll call it even.” Well that's no longer a gift.

It may be a good deal, but it's not a free gift. And it's the same with the gospel. We cannot mix works with faith and call salvation free. We cannot improve upon the gospel. We can simply receive it by faith as a gift from God. And that's all that God asks. In fact, that's what he requires. To illustrate the point, one of the commentators compares the gospel to a chemical compound to which no mixture can be added. If you add one, you change the essential character and lose the compound. And it's the same with the gospel. We can't tamper with it. We can't improve it. Adding something to it may seem harmless – and after all, circumcision is a simple ritual done only once, only to males. But it's not harmless.

It's like a small drop of poison. It may seem insignificant, but one drop contaminates the whole glass of water and changes it. Completely. From something good, to something lethal. That is what these teachers were doing. By adding a human work to the work of Christ, they changed the gospel into a different gospel – a hetero gospel – which is no gospel at all. In fact, it's something lethal. So Paul calls these men troublers. Disturbers. It's another political term used of agitators.

Men who were subversives, who caused turmoil and confusion. That's what these teachers of the law were doing in Galatia. So Paul says, “They are disturbing you.” Throwing you into a state of confusion. Paul knew better than any man the effect of the law. There is no peace that is imparted by the law. There is no peace in legalism. No assurance of acceptance with God. All of his life, the apostle Paul – when he was a Jewish rabbi, a student of rabbinics, that whole previous life – all of that life had been one in which he had sought justification before God by law keeping. It was an endless effort and a fruitless effort, as he learned when he met Jesus on the road to Damascus.

That was when he learned the truth and first gained assurance of salvation, first gained confidence that he was truly accepted by God, once and for all, and was absolutely secure for all eternity. Now that came through faith in Christ. Not through the law, but through faith in Christ and the realization that Christ was his righteousness. And on the cross, Christ did the work that he, Paul, that you and I,

could never accomplish for ourselves. So for Paul, to see these people for whom he cared so much being sucked into error and pulled down into legalism, into spiritual slavery, to see his spiritual children being brought into this error – that moved Paul to indignation.

But his strongest language is reserved for the next verses. In fact, verses 8 and 9 may contain the harshest words in the New Testament. Paul pronounced a curse on anyone and everyone who preaches a gospel different from the one that he and Barnabas preached. And he does it in a way that anticipates their objection. These Judaizers, these false teachers who had come into the region, had claimed to have the authority of the apostles in Jerusalem behind them. Paul later shows that that was not true. But here he simply dismisses that as irrelevant because even if that were true, regardless of who it was who contradicted the gospel, the gospel is what it is, regardless of anyone else.

Paul says in verse 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.” In other words, it is the message – not the messenger – that matters. No one’s status or authority can overruled the gospel. The gospel Paul preached is not true because he preached it. Or because Peter preached it. It is true because it is the gospel that Christ gave to him to preach. So anyone who would change it in the smallest way is, in Paul’s words, “accursed.” And literally Paul means, damned. The issue is just that serious.

The reason is, by changing the message of grace to one requiring works, offers the people a road to salvation which is, in reality, a road to perdition. So Paul’s reaction is no overreaction. He says, “Let such people be given over to distraction.” Not just physical destruction. He includes angels here. And so angels can’t be physically destroyed. Angels don’t die. He doesn’t mean physical destruction. He means something beyond that. He means spiritual destruction. Given over to the judicial wrath of God. Let them be damned, he’s saying. Now we shouldn’t think that Paul here is some fiery preacher, intolerant of everybody who disagreed with him or anyone who crossed him.

Paul was actually the very opposite of that. He was very tolerant. He was understanding. He was patient. Patient with his enemies. When he was in prison in Rome, he wrote to the Philippians about men who were preaching the gospel,

preaching the true gospel there in Rome, in order to gain prominence for themselves and do him harm. They were driven by bad motives, by selfish motives, but Paul rejoiced in what they were doing, rejoiced in their preaching, even though it caused him hardship. And he rejoiced in it because they were preaching the true gospel, and the gospel gives life wherever it's preached.

Even when it's preached by men with bad motives. So he rejoiced in that. In Galatia, the gospel is not being preached. And a false gospel doesn't bring life. It brings death. That's the reason for Paul's statement. It's all about truth. It's all about life. And danger to his spiritual children. No one is above the truth. No one is above the gospel. And Paul includes himself in that. “Even if we,” he says, preach a different gospel, let us be accursed. Well to emphasize the importance of a pure gospel, he repeats this cure in verse 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.” The gospel cannot be compromised.

The life of the church is at stake. The honor of Christ is at stake. The souls of men are at stake. To preach a gospel of works is to lead a man away from the Savior. And so Paul was unyielding on this point. Now one way the false teachers try to promote their message was by attacking Paul's character. They raised questions about his motives in the ministry by claiming that he really preached two different gospels. He preached their message, they said, and advocated circumcision when he was preaching to Jews. But he eased the terms of the gospel when he was preaching to Gentiles by dropping circumcision from the message. So they accused Paul of being a man pleaser.

Of offering the gospel, making it an easy gospel, making it more appealing to the Gentiles in order to win their favor, and in so doing, gain a following for himself. Paul, they were saying, is a flatterer. We're not flatterers, they were saying. We give you the full gospel. We give you the hard gospel. We give you the gospel that really demands a commitment and is true to the Bible. We give you the gospel of faith plus works. So having defended his gospel, Paul now defends himself. And he sets the record straight, not out of personal pride to make it clear that he wasn't the kind of man they were saying. He does it to set the record straight for the sake of the gospel. Because if his credibility is undermined, then his message is undermined.

So he must defend himself in order to defend his gospel. He asks in verse 10, “For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men?” From the tone of his letter, from just these first ten verses, it’s clear that he wasn’t trying to please men. He had just pronounced a curse on false teachers. There is no flattery there. He was being blunt with the Galatians. He’s being straightforward. He had called them on their error, and he was not yielding an inch on his message. There’s no indication of being a man pleaser in that.

In chapter 3, he risks offending the Galatians by calling them foolish. He was not being a flatterer in that. His words were tough and uncompromising. But the fact of the matter is, Paul was the one who really cared about his Galatians. It was the false teachers who had false motives and were trying to win their favor for themselves. It is a far more flattering thing to do, more an act of flattery and good salesmanship to peddle a gospel of works than it is the gospel of grace. The gospel of works appeals to man’s pride and sense of personal worth and merit.

It says, you could do something to add status with God, gain favor with him. You have it in your power to do that. It offers people something to boast about, to take credit for. The gospel of grace does not do that at all. In fact, it robs men of all of that. It declares that all men are guilty of sin and have been ruined by it. There is nothing in us that would commend us to God or please him. He doesn’t see one redeemable thing in a sinner. We are corrupt through and through. Salvation is completely undeserved. It is a free gift.

Now that is not a flattering gospel. That is not what people want to hear. But that’s the gospel. God receives sinners as they are. As Paul wrote in Romans 4:5, “He justifies the ungodly.” He justifies us in that condition. And he makes us acceptable. That’s his work. He makes us into new people. He takes the ungodly and he changes it. Now that’s what the church must preach. The church doesn’t need marketers or salespeople who peddle a watered-down message to make it palatable to people. It needs people who teach the whole truth, who don’t care about the passing praises of men and want, instead, to hear the Lord lasting praise, “Well done, faithful servant.” Paul was that kind of man.

He concludes, “If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.” That word “still” in, “still trying to please men,” probably looks back to his days as a Pharisee and suggests that his great zeal for the law and as

a **debutee** of Judaism was, in part, to please men. Christ had freed him from that dishonorable desire. So that now, his only desire was to please God and serve Jesus Christ as his savior. The story is told about Giuseppe Verdi that when he produced his first opera in Florence, he stood by himself in the shadows and kept his eye on the face of one man in the audience. The Great Rossini. Didn't matter to Verdi whether the people in the hall were cheering or jeering him – all he wanted was a smile of approval from the master composer.

The same could be said of Paul. He wrote in 2 Corinthians 5:9, “Therefore also we have as our ambition to be pleasing to him.” Now that should be our ambition, too. And ultimately, those who have that as their ambition are not only pleasing to God, but pleasing to men. Pleasing to those men and women who are drawn to God's truth and grace. They want to hear about the word of God. They want to hear it explained. They want to hear about grace and its sovereignty of God. And that's what a person who truly loves the Lord will do. And will want to hear. Now love sometimes requires some stern words and hard action.

It's willing to offend for the moment in order to heal forever. And that's what Paul was doing. In the spirit of the Proverbs, “Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but deceitful are the kisses of an enemy.” Paul was a true friend to the Galatians. He was a spiritual father to them. And his message is the true gospel. Salvation is a gift. It is received through faith, not works.

We are sinners and Christ paid for our sins by his death with the promise that all who believe in him are forgiven and given life everlasting. If you've not believe in Jesus Christ, realize that you're separated from him. You need a Savior and he is the Savior. Look to him. Trust in him. And be saved. May God help you to do that. And help all of us that have to rejoice in the gospel and the good news of salvation that we have in Christ. May God help us to do that. Let us pray.

[Prayer] Father we do thank you for the gospel. We thank you for the good news that you sent your son into this world to die for sinners, and that all who believe in him have eternal life. It's that simple. It's that glorious. That you've obtained salvation for the believer. Help us to rejoice in that.

We thank you, Lord, for that gospel and for raising up men like the apostle Paul to defend it. Help us to defend it. To stand for it and to preach it. We pray these things in Christ's name. Amen.