



Sermon Notes from 2 June

Calling All Sinners: Come! (*Galatians 1*)

by Pastor Johanan Justin

'Freedom' is at the core of the book of Galatians. While our attempts at freedom tend to be superficial, the book of Galatians desires for us to experience freedom at the deepest heart-level.

Some Jewish Christians had spread wrong teachings (salvation = faith + keeping Jewish law [Ac. 15:1b,5b]), and the Galatians were living according to them. Paul was furious (Ga. 1:6a) because the wrong teachings had made the Gospel unwelcoming - exclusive, selective, narrow.

3 Invitations the Unwelcoming Gospel Makes:

1) "Calling Only Model Citizens" (v3)

The good news of Jesus tells of how Jesus brings forgiveness for *all* sinners - *even the most wicked!* But the Unwelcoming Gospel calls only those who are morally good to be part of God's Kingdom.

v3 - **Grace** is the blessing of God's kindness towards wicked people who don't deserve it. **Peace** is the blessing of a restored and repaired relationship between a Holy God and sinful men and women. 'Model Citizens' see no need for those blessings - of course they are blessed! But in order to remain blessed, there is no room for mistakes. **The Unwelcoming Gospel enslaves.** Today, we too preach the Unwelcoming Gospel through highlighting one another's flaws more than the unconditional love of God. We do this because we are ourselves living as slaves.

2) "Calling Only Good Boys and Girls" (v6)

The good news of Jesus tells us of how Jesus made a way for *all* sinners to draw near to God (Ro. 5:8, Eph 2:3c-5a - *even the losers and rejects!*) But the

Unwelcoming Gospel calls only those who feel 'good enough' to be part of God's Family. **The Unwelcoming Gospel Orphans.** It leads us further away from God (v6). Today, we preach the Unwelcoming Gospel by reinforcing the orphan identity: *until we perform, we will not belong.* We do this because we ourselves feel we are orphans.

3) "Calling Only the Strong and Determined" (v7)

The good news of Jesus tells of how Jesus brings glorious hope (Jer. 29:11, Ro. 8:18) for *all* doomed sinners - *even the weak and the addicts.* The Unwelcoming Gospel calls only those who trust themselves for their future to be part of God's Destiny. But that hopeful future depends on you remaining strong and faithful. The truth is that there are many things that we have no control over.

The Unwelcoming Gospel leads us to Despair. It is no Gospel at all (v7a)! Today, we preach the Unwelcoming Gospel by telling one another to 'try your best, and God will do the rest.' We do this because we are first in despair.

Paul once believed in the Unwelcoming Gospel (vv13-14), but God saved him (vv15-16a) through revealing the gospel (vv11-12). **God has done the rest, so now, try your best!**

3 Questions to ask ourselves:

#1 Am I a slave, an orphan or in despair?

#2 Have I been believing in the Unwelcoming Gospel?

#3 Would you believe in the One, True Gospel that welcomes you?

The true gospel of Jesus Christ is calling all sinners: "Come!"