

1 **A TERRORIST TRANSFORMED BY GRACE**2 **Galatians 1:11-14**

<sup>11</sup> But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. <sup>12</sup> For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ. <sup>13</sup> For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it. <sup>14</sup> And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers.

3 **Galatians 1:15-18**

<sup>15</sup> But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, <sup>16</sup> to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, <sup>17</sup> nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus. <sup>18</sup> Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days.

4 **Galatians 1:19-24**

- <sup>19</sup> But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother. <sup>20</sup> (Now concerning the things which I write to you, indeed, before God, I do not lie.) <sup>21</sup> Afterward I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. <sup>22</sup> And I was unknown by face to the churches of Judea which were in Christ. <sup>23</sup> But they were hearing only, "He who formerly persecuted us now preaches the faith which he once tried to destroy." <sup>24</sup> And they glorified God in me.

5 **REVIEW**

- Paul vs. Judaizers
- Their plan of attack
- Paul defends his apostleship
- The Crux of the debate: What is the gospel?

6 **INTRODUCTION**

- Subject: A Terrorist Transformed by Grace
- Christianity is a religion of conversion
- Conversion story of Saul of Tarsus
- Judaizers attacks
- How do you prove that you are trustworthy?
- The answer is . . .

7 **I. THE MAKING OF A TERRORIST**

Paul's life before his conversion

8 **A Terrorist Described**9 **The focus of terrorism**











- People who are motivated by religious, political or ideological goals and who commit violent acts to create fear (terror) against their enemies in order to achieve their goals. They deliberately target and disregard innocent bystanders in order to create maximum fear and terror.

10 **A Terrorist Developed**

Galatians 1:13-14: <sup>13</sup> For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it. <sup>14</sup> And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers.

11 **Philippians 3:3b-6**

- ". . . If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: <sup>5</sup> circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; <sup>6</sup> concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless."

- 12  **"I Found it" campaign**
- Reaction: "I Never Lost it"
  - Saul was like that.
  - Acts 8:3 says, *"As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison."*
- 13  **Acts 9:1-3**
- *"Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest<sup>2</sup> and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem."*
- 14  **Saul of Tarsus**
- A religious fanatic
  - Stop and nothing
  - Paul wants us to know:
    - He wasn't a seeker
    - No sense of his need of salvation
    - A hopeless case
    - He hated Christianity and he loved Judaism.
- 15  **1 Timothy 1:15**
- *"This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief."*
    - The former Pharisee now considers himself the chief of sinners.
    - Hymn by William McComb: "Chief of sinners though I be, Jesus shed his blood for me; Died that I might live on high; Lives that I may never die."
- 16  **II. THE MAKEOVER OF A TERRORIST**
- How Paul came to Christ
- 17  **THE MAKEOVER**
- Extreme Makeover on TV
  - Extreme Makeover on the Damascus Road
    - vv. 15-16a: *"<sup>15</sup> But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, <sup>16</sup> to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles"*
- 18  **The Great Interruption – "But"**
- Paul was a sinner - But God.
  - Paul hated Jesus - But God
  - Paul was a terrorist - But God.
  - Paul – destroy the church. But God.
  - Paul not looking for a new life. But God.
  - Paul – kill more Christians. But God.
- 19  **The Great Interrupter**
- Paul's former life
  - God moves into action.
    - God came into Paul's life without permission.
    - Paul on the Damascus Road
    - God just took over.
- 20  **The Great Intention**
- vv. 15b-16: *"separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, <sup>16</sup> to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles"*
    - Separated – "from my mother's womb"
    - Called – "called me through His grace"
    - Commissioned to preach Jesus to the Gentiles
- 21  **III. THE MISSIONARY TRANSFORMED BY GRACE**

Paul's life after coming to Christ.22  **Galatians 1:16b-19**

- *"I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, <sup>17</sup> nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus. <sup>18</sup> Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days. <sup>19</sup> But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother.*

23  **Galatians 1:20-24**

- *<sup>20</sup> (Now concerning the things which I write to you, indeed, before God, I do not lie.) <sup>21</sup> Afterward I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. <sup>22</sup> And I was unknown by face to the churches of Judea which were in Christ. <sup>23</sup> But they were hearing only, "He who formerly persecuted us now preaches the faith which he once tried to destroy." <sup>24</sup> And they glorified God in me.*

24  **TRANSFORMED BY GRACE**

- What Paul didn't do:
- What Paul did do:
- What changes were made in Paul?

25  **CONCLUSION**

- The gospel comes from God, not man.
- Conversion is a miracle from God.
- The worst sinners often make the best saints.
- No one is beyond the reach of God's grace.