



A Study in Galatians

But Saul was going everywhere to destroy the church. He went from house to house, dragging out both men and women to throw them into prison. (Acts 8:3)

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11 Dear brothers and sisters, I want you to understand that the gospel message I preach is not based on mere human reasoning. 12 I received my message from no human source, and no one taught me. Instead, I received it by direct revelation from Jesus Christ.

13 You know what I was like when I followed the Jewish religion—how I violently persecuted God's church. I did my best to destroy it.

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- 14 I was far ahead of my fellow Jews in my zeal for the traditions of my ancestors.
- 15 But even before I was born, God chose me and called me by his marvelous grace. Then it pleased him 16 to reveal his Son to me so that I would proclaim the Good News about Jesus to the Gentiles.
- When this happened, I did not rush out to consult with any human being.

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# That truth should affect the way we view others.

- ✓ We should recognize that no one is too far gone for their lives to be changed, because it is God who changes lives.
- ✓ No matter what is in your past or what you see in the lives of others, God can change it.
- ✓ God can soften the hardest of hearts and change a life in an instant.

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When this happened, I did not rush out to consult with any human being.17 Nor did I go up to Jerusalem to consult with those who were apostles before I was. Instead, I went away into Arabia, and later I returned to the city of Damascus.

- 18 Then three years later I went to Jerusalem to get to know Peter and I stayed with him for fifteen days. 19 The only other apostle I met at that time was James, the Lord's brother. 20 I declare before God that what I am writing to you is not a lie.
- 21 After that visit I went north into the provinces of Syria and Cilicia.

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# So what can we learn from this account of Paul?

- ➤ No one will trust in the message of the gospel without God graciously working in their hearts.
- The second lesson we learn is that our source of truth must be the word of God alone.
- The third lesson is that the greatest way to silence critics is with consistent living.

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22 And still the churches in Christ that are in Judea didn't know me personally. 23 All they knew was that people were saying, "The one who used to persecute us is now preaching the very faith he tried to destroy!" 24 And they praised God because of me.

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The single best argument for or against Christianity has always been the same: Christians. A superficial, hypocritical life is a strong case against the claim that the gospel saves. But a transformed life, lived to the glory of God, is powerful proof of the truth of the gospel. We are our best argument. May we, therefore, so experience the grace of God in the gospel that others might see our transformed lives and glorify God because of us!



