

In this lesson Paul reminds the Galatians that the gospel he preached to them did not come through human authority but was revealed to him by Jesus. The apostle has just told the new converts of his astonishment at hearing how they have been willing to follow versions of the gospel said to be more official than his but which depend on obedience to aspects of the law in order to bring about a right relationship with God. Paul rehearses his conversion from dependence on his Jewish heritage and recalls his special commission to bring the good news to non-Jews. While he did later make contact with Cephas and James in Jerusalem, his understanding of the fundamentals of the gospel does not derive from human leaders. Hear now these words from Galatians.

I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel I preached is not of human origin. I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ. For you have heard of my previous way of life in Judaism, how intensely I persecuted the church of God and tried to destroy it. I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people and was extremely zealous for the traditions of my fathers. But when God, who set me apart from my mother's womb and called me by his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles, my immediate response was not to consult any human being. I did not go up to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before I was, but I went into Arabia. Later I returned to Damascus.

Then after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to get acquainted with Cephas and stayed with him fifteen days. I saw none of the other apostles - only James, the Lord's brother. I assure you before God that what I am writing you is no lie.

Then I went to Syria and Cilicia. I was personally unknown to the churches of Judea that are in Christ. They only heard the report: "The man who formerly persecuted us is now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy." And they praised God because of me.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

In our gospel we hear how Jesus on his way to Jerusalem encounters opposition and misunderstanding, and then speaks with several would-be disciples. The Samaritans reject Jesus because they were opposed to worship in Jerusalem. James and John wish to punish them, but that is not Jesus' way. Potential followers are bid to count the cost, and Jesus points out that true discipleship means leaving other things behind. This can cause the painful rupture of past ties and relationships. Hear now these words from the gospel of Luke.

As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem. And he sent messengers on ahead, who went into a Samaritan village to get things ready for him; but the people there did not welcome him, because he was heading for Jerusalem. When the disciples James and John saw this, they asked, "Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to destroy them?" But Jesus turned and rebuked them. Then he and his disciples went to another village.

As they were walking along the road, a man said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go."

Jesus replied, "Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head."

He said to another man, "Follow me."

But he replied, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father."

Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God."

Still another said, "I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say goodbye to my family."

Jesus replied, "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."

This is the word of the Lord. **May the reading and the hearing of your word inform our minds, comfort our souls and guide our feet.**