

FACEBOOK STALKING JESUS OR COFFEE WITH STEVE GARVEY

INTRO

Galatians will take us back to the basics of what the Gospel is, how we receive it, how we apply it and it warns against mixing legalism and human works into the very simple good news of Jesus.

Today's title is **Facebook Stalking Jesus or Coffee With Steve Garvey**

We'll get to the title in just a bit. First, a bit about the intro:

Paul's greeting is packed with meaning, as he establishes his authority as an apostle who was not appointed by people or institutions but directly by Jesus Christ, emphasizing the resurrection as the foundation of Christian hope.

Paul makes clear that his message is not personal opinion but carries God's authority, like a representative with power of attorney. He stresses that his calling came through direct revelation rather than human endorsement, aligning him with the original apostles, and reinforces his credibility by noting the support of the broader Christian community with him.

Finally, by addressing multiple churches in Galatia (Modern Day Turkey) rather than a single congregation, Paul signals that his message has wide relevance for the region, underscoring the seriousness and collective importance of what he is about to say.

PRAY

Galatians 1:3-4

³ Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, ⁴ who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age,

If we are going to understand the Gospel clearly here's some things you have to know:

You're a sinner, I'm a sinner. This is fundamental to our understanding of what God has done for us. You might be better than a buddy of yours or you might not be as bad as someone else, but God

doesn't grade on a curve. Everyone of us falls short of God's standard of perfection. Matt Chandler once said, "You are not a sinner because you sin, you sin because you are a sinner."

Your actions are only a result of the condition of your heart. You have to understand this, because you can fix your actions and still have a busted up broken down heart. You can have a pristine lifestyle and still have a wretched heart.

But the assurance we have as followers of Jesus is that He has taken care of all our sins no matter how dark they are, no matter how light they are. He has taken care of our sins, because we cannot do it on our own. By giving Himself he has done something we can't do.

We need a righteousness that supersedes our own righteousness. So Christ comes and lives in perfection and imputes that perfection to us so that when we stand before God, He doesn't see our shortcoming, but He sees Christ's perfection.

Perfect Baseball Cards

This is the perfection that Christ imputes to us, that we cannot create or restore for ourselves.

I think we can get side tracked by the term "evil age." We start thinking about the movie Paranormal Activity or some other scary movie like that or some post apocalyptic world like 28 Years Later. I don't think that's accurate. He's talking about the world we live in right now.

There is a battle between good and evil going on around us all the time. One of the most effective tools of the enemy is to lull us to sleep in thinking there isn't even a battle being fought. So how do we get lulled to sleep? By loving the creation rather than the creator. Making this world our home. Rather than understanding, as Pastor Noel said this Christmas Eve, we are all temps, we are all interims in this life.

We allow this world to try and fulfill us in a way that only Christ can fulfill and when we hit that ceiling, we medicate. For some it's drugs or alcohol or sex, for most of us its gadgets, trinkets, toys. A new iPhone, a new jet ski, a bigger TV, new clothes, etc. There is an emotive response when we get new stuff. But it doesn't last. I love video games and I look forward to new video games. But I have also recognized that the minute I get that new game I'm already thinking about the NEXT game.

We strive for comfort but comfort can become very dangerous to our spiritual life.

Andy Mineo: Nobody told me you could die like this, nobody told me you could die from bliss... corrupted by the comfort we love...I had more when I had less.

What Jesus does is He rips that ceiling off and allows you to experience ever increasing true joy. Joy that goes deeper than happiness. Joy that is everlasting.

This is the present evil age in which we live, where we can be lulled to sleep by our striving for comfort and ignore the battle that is going on around us.

Galatians 1:6-7

⁶ I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the One who called you to live in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel —⁷ which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the Gospel of Christ.

Paul pivots and expresses his shock and disappointment. He makes it very personal here, they weren't deserting a message but a person. They have deserted Him, Jesus and moved onto another gospel.

Set the Stage

Churches had been established in Galatia and were doing well. Then the Judaizers moved in and started perverting the simple Gospel message with their rules and extra stuff they are piling up in addition to Jesus. They were teaching that in order to be saved you had to become a Jew first. So you had to be circumcised and abide by all of the food customs, and purity laws.

There are two perversions that are commonly attributed to the gospel but are not really the gospel at all. I'm gonna call them group A and group B.

The most common: Gospel seems too easy to be true. That idea that Christ would love us save us and rescue us from our sin. That we don't have to earn it, that God gives us His grace freely. We cannot grasp that so we move to helping a brother out. I'll add these things to life death and resurrection of Jesus and help him save me.

As Christians we should pray with Jesus, study the Scriptures, get involved in small groups because we want to grow in our intimacy with our savior. We don't do them to be saved. We're saved, so we do them.

The dangerous part about this is when you stop trusting in your relationship with Jesus and start trusting more in your religious activity.

This is crazy, but is similar to our culture's obsession with celebrities. The most followed people on social media are celebrities. We love to get information about people we don't know, but we talk about them like we know them. For a while when she was going through all the conservatorship stuff, I followed Britney Spears on Instagram. I used to always call her "My friend Britney."

Coffee with Garvey

- Warren Beatty & Annette Benning
- Jon Lovitz
- Chuck Liddel
- Wayne Gretsky
- David Beckham

- Larry King
- Steve Garvey

I don't know Steve Garvey, I know about him. I have looked at his stats, I've heard people who watched him play, I know a lot of Dodger fans who want his number retired by the team, but I don't know him. If you asked him about having meeting me at Starbucks in 2013, he's not going to remember that.

This is my great fear about people who are stuck in group A, you know Jesus like I know Garvey. You can give me some stats, some facts, some info about him but you don't have a relationship with him, you just know about him.

So, test yourself: In your spiritual disciplines, Bible study, prayer, worship, small groups...are they leading you closer to Jesus or are they an ends in themselves?

John 5:39

³⁹ You study the Scriptures in vain because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me, ⁴⁰ yet you refuse to come to me to have life.

You can be doing the religious stuff and still miss Jesus in the process

In your prayer life, are you getting to Jesus?

In your scripture reading, are you getting to Jesus?

In your worship, are you getting to Jesus?

In your small group time, are you getting to Jesus?

Because if you are not getting to Jesus, then it is in vain.

Don't misunderstand me, I'm not saying don't read your Bibles. But if you are only gaining truth for truth's sake and it's not leading you to The TRUTH, you've missed the mark.

You may memorize scripture and learn to defend doctrine without loving the One who created that doctrine, it's an insane trade, an astonishing trade.

So, that was group A perversion of the Gospel.

The other perversion is group B You hear the gospel and learn about forgiveness and say to yourself, I'm saved, so now I can do whatever I want, because God promises that He'll have to forgive me no matter what.

How this plays out is that you compartmentalize Christ and limit his role to Sunday mornings. You come here, sing some songs, hear Matt Shool give a sermon with some lame 80's references, and leave here with the power and weight of the Gospel having absolutely no bearing or impact on your daily life. You have tricked yourself into believing you have fire insurance.

"I was baptized as a kid, I go to church on the weekend, sometimes I drop a couple bucks in the box. I don't feel any remorse for my sin and my constant selfishness, but it's cool, Christ has my back, we're cool."

That's a perversion.

That's not the gospel, do whatever you want there are no repercussions, that's cruelty. How would I be as a parent if I told my kids, do whatever you want. No shaping, no discipline, no desire to mature you, just do whatever you want, we're cool.

I do love them, but I desire so much more for them. I want them to thrive in this life and I want them to be a benefit for others, I want them to live lives that bring joy to God's heart!

Paul's warning is accept the simplicity of the Gospel message and stop perverting it by adding to it or trying to take advantage of it. Stop!

Galatians 1:8-9

8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let them be under God's curse! 9 As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let them be under God's curse!

Paul uses the term "anathama" which refers to something being cursed or damned. This can sound like an angry vindictive outburst, but Paul is emphasizing the fact that anyone who perverts or denies God's truth will be rejected by God.

If you pervert the gospel you rob yourself from the ceiling being taken off, from the life, from the joy, from the fulfillment that God has in store for you.

You have been invited into a relationship with the creator of the universe and all you want to do is study his facebook page, but not know him?

You just want to give Him lip service, but not follow Him?

You don't want joy in obedience, but would rather have some truths you can regurgitate?

Why would you make this trade?

Galatians 1:10

10 Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ.

Paul is being accused of not telling others about circumcision, dietary laws, and the other customs is because he's trying to win friends and gain converts with this watered down message and Paul responds with "Anyone who preaches an gospel other than this let him be damned, who trying to win friends now?" If I was trying to make friends, I would not be a follower of Christ.

Accept the Gospel message for what it is, simple and beyond your capability to help it. This is what has been made available to you in 2026, life to the fullest through Jesus Christ. Will you receive that gift?

SMALL GROUP QUESTION

In verses 1–2, Paul strongly emphasizes who sent him. Why do you think establishing his authority is so important at the very beginning of this letter?

According to verses 3–5, how does Paul summarize the core of the gospel message? What stands out to you about God’s role versus humanity’s role in salvation?

In verses 6–7, Paul expresses shock that the Galatians are turning to a “different gospel.” What are some modern examples of ways the gospel might be distorted today?

Verses 8–9 contain very strong warnings. What do these verses teach us about the seriousness of altering or adding to the gospel message?

In verse 10, Paul contrasts seeking human approval with serving Christ. What are some ways believers today may be tempted to please people rather than God?

After reading Galatians 1:1–10, what does this passage challenge or encourage you to examine about your own faith, beliefs, or influences?