

Friday, June 29, 2018

What Gospel Did Paul Preach to the Galatians?

"But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed."

—The Apostle Paul,
writing to the Galatians (Gal. 1:8-9)

The other day while doing some research, I came across what one groundless gospel advocate has written concerning "Paul's preaching of the gospel to the Galatians as recorded in Acts 13." [1] In the book *The Gospel of the Christ*, the author Tom Stegall writes:

"There, after preaching about Christ being cursed for us on the 'tree,' [Acts 13:29, NKJV] he emphasizes how God raised up His Son from the dead at the resurrection. Immediately after making this point, Paul preaches as a consequence of Christ's resurrection the forgiveness of sins and justification 'through Him' (*en toutō*) to everyone who believes (Acts 13:38-39)." [2]

But after I looked up this passage of Scripture in my Bible, I noticed that what the apostle Paul actually says about Christ in Acts 13 is that *"they took Him down from the tree and laid Him in a tomb. But God raised Him from the dead, and for many days He was seen by those who had traveled with Him . . ."* (Acts 13:29-31, NIV). This is the biblical gospel; Christ's burial is not skipped over, nor omitted.

Stegall concludes with Paul's statement about justification "through Him" (Gr. *en toutōi*, i.e. justification "in this man" or "in this one" [3]) in Acts 13:39. But Stegall's skipping over Christ's burial is *unjustified* (i.e. groundless), because the apostle Paul specifically includes in his gospel to the Galatians the fact that Christ's body was "laid in a tomb" (*ethēkan eis mnēmeion*, Acts 13:29).

The fact that Jesus was laid "in a tomb" (Acts 13:29) is part of Paul's gospel which he preached to the Galatians and by which they were "justified" (Acts 13:38-39).

The burial of Jesus is part of the saving gospel which the apostle Paul preached to the Galatians and to everyone else (cf. 1 Cor. 15:4). So be careful not to skip over Christ's burial in the gospel!

ENDNOTES:

[1] Stegall, *The Gospel of the Christ* (Milwaukee: Grace Gospel Press, 2009), p. 315.

[2] Ibid. Later in his book, Stegall goes on to write: "the burial and post-resurrection appearances of Christ are not technically part of the gospel" (Ibid., p. 578); "the cross and resurrection are elements of the gospel in distinction to the burial and appearances". (Ibid., p. 579.)

[3] The Greek pronoun *toutōi* is a dative singular masculine demonstrative pronoun. (The Greek letter iota in the word *toutōi* is subscripted under the long omega in the Greek, forming what is called an improper diphthong.)

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