Exegetical Notes for Galatians 1:10

KEY


Calvin = John Calvin. *Calvin’s Commentaries: Galatians*.


Gill = John Gill. *Gill’s Commentary on the Bible*.


Luther = Martin Luther. *Commentary on Galatians*.


Metzger = Bruce M. Metzger. *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*.


Parsing Verbs and Declining Nouns

Verbs:
ποιμάνατε (ποιμανω = to tend, shepherd || Verb: Aorist Active Imperative, Second Person Plural).
ἀποκαλύπτεσθαι (ἀποκαλύπτω = to reveal, disclose || Verb: Present Passive Infinitive).

Nouns (gender before case):

Participles (gender before case):
μελλούσης (μελλω = to be about to || Participle: Feminine Genitive Singular Present Active).

Adjectives (gender before case):
(ἐπεικής = gentle, kind || Adjective: Masculine Dative Plural).

Independent Personal Pronouns:
ἡμίν (ἡμιν = I || First Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Dative Plural).
ὑμίν (ὑμιν = you || Second Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Dative Plural).
αὐτόν (αὐτόν = He, Him || Third Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Masculine Dative Singular).

Demonstrative Pronouns (gender before case):
(τοῦτο = this || Near Demonstrative Pronoun: Neuter Nominative Singular).

Reflexive Pronouns (only masculine and feminine - the genitive is the lexical form as there is no nominative case):
(ἐμαυτόν = myself || First Person Reflexive Pronoun: Masculine Genitive).
(σεαυτόν = yourself || Second Person Reflexive Pronoun: Masculine Genitive).
(ἐαυτόν = himself, herself, oneself || Third Person Reflexive Pronoun: Masculine Genitive).
now for people making an appeal to or

ον θεον;

ο θεος

DASM NASM

92.24 12.1

God

Sentence ] 

ζητω

ζητεω

CLD VPAI1S

89.139 25.9

or am I seeking

Infinitival Clause άνθρωπος άρεσκειν;

άνθρωπος άρέσκω

NDPM VPAN

9.1 25.90

people to please

Subordinate Clause ει έτι άνθρωπος ήρεσκον

ει έτι άνθρωπος άρέσκω

CAC B NDPM VIAI1S

89.65 67.128 9.1 25.90

if still people trying to please

Sentence / Χριστου δουλος ουκ άν ήμην.

Χριστος δουλος ου άν ειμι

NGSM NNSM BN TC VIMI1S

93.387 87.76 69.3 71.14 13.1

of Christ a slave not - be

For

   am I now striving
      to please men
   or
      God?

Or

   am I seeking
      to please men?

If

   I were still trying to please men
      I would not be a slave of Christ.
TRANSLATION, OUTLINE AND CENTRAL PROPOSITION

GREEK TEXT:

Ἅρτι γὰρ ἀνθρώπους πείθω ἢ τὸν θεόν; ἢ ζητῶ ἀνθρώποις ἀρέσκειν; εἰ ἔτι ἀνθρώποις ἠρέσκον, Χριστοῦ δοῦλος οὐκ ἂν ἦμην.  NA27

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

For am I now striving to please men or God? Or am I seeking to please men? If I were still trying to please men I would not be a slave of Christ.
PASSAGE SUBJECT/THEME (what's the passage talking about): You cannot please God and men.

PASSAGE COMPLEMENT/THRUST (what's the passage saying about what it's talking about): Because you can only be a slave to one.

PASSAGE MAIN IDEA (central proposition of the text): A true servant of Christ can only have one Master.

CENTRAL PROPOSITION OF THE SERMON: You Can Recognize a True Servant of the Gospel by Who He Serves

SERMONIC IDEA/TITLE: "Who Do You Please?"

SERMON OUTLINE:

I. A True Servant of the Gospel Pursues Truth Over Popularity

II. A True Servant of the Gospel Knows and Defends the Gospel

III. A True Servant of the Gospel Serves Only One Master

Danger of Being a People Pleaser
Verse 10 is a hinge (debate as to whether it fits better with vv. 6-9 or 11-17 ff.). Really correlates to both passages.
For am I now striving to please men or God? Or am I seeking to please men? If I were still trying to please men I would not be a slave of Christ.

CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

This verse is a hinge, connecting vv. 6-9 to vv. 11-24. This is where Paul establishes his authority as a genuine apostle.

One of the primary objectives of the Judaizers who were stirring up so much controversy and confusion in the Galatian churches was to discredit Paul’s apostolic authority. They knew they could not successfully undermine his teaching of God’s gracious gospel until they undermined his divine authority in the eyes of the church members. In order to accomplish that end, they spread the idea that Paul was not a legitimate apostle but was self-appointed and that his motivation was to elevate himself and build up a personal following. They accused him of putting aside the Mosaic ceremonies, standards, and practices in order to make the gospel more appealing to Gentiles by removing its Jewish associations. He also made the gospel easier for Jews to accept, they argued, because he removed the demanding requirements of traditional Judaism to which all loyal Jews subscribed.

The strategy worked as the accusations of the Judaizers had caused many members of the
Galatian churches to begin doubting Paul’s apostolic legitimacy. Since he was not among the original apostles, whom Jesus personally called, taught, and commissioned, just where did he get his message and authority? Did he get them second hand from the other apostles, or did he simply make up his own brand of the gospel and arrogate apostolic authority to himself? What right, they asked, did Paul have to speak for God, as he persistently claimed to do?

There is no evidence that the early church ever doubted the apostleship of the Twelve (the original eleven and Matthias, who replaced Judas). The eleven were hand-picked and trained by Jesus; and under the Lord’s direction they chose Matthias, who had been among the disciples who accompanied them “all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us—beginning with the baptism of John, until the day that He was taken up from us … a witness with us of His resurrection” (Acts 1:21–26). The credentials of the Twelve were well known and well attested.¹

One of the reasons why the Judaizers may have despised Paul was because of his intent to serve as an apostle to the Gentiles. Judaizers were nationalists and saw the Gentiles as second-rate.

Modern analogy – If the Judaizers were white supremacists how would they feel if Paul was an Apostle to the blacks?

For am I now striving to please men or God? (Ἄρτι γὰρ ἀνθρώπους πείθω ἢ τὸν θεόν;)  

2 options (men would include yourself).


Observe the consummate cleverness with which the false apostles went about to bring Paul into disrepute. They combed Paul’s writings for contradictions (our opponents do the same) to accuse him of teaching contradictory things. . . . The false apostles slyly suggested that Paul had been constrained by the other apostles to observe these ceremonial laws. We know that Paul observed these decora out of charitable regard for the weak brethren. He did not want to offend them. But the false apostles turned Paul’s charitable regard to his disadvantage. If Paul had preached the Law and circumcision, if he had commended the strength and free will of man, he would not have been so obnoxious to the Jews. On the contrary they would have praised his every action. [Luther]

Or am I seeking to please men? (ἦ ζητῶ ἀνθρώποις ἀρέσκειν;)  

So common in ecclesiastical religion of pomp and circumstance. In our depravity we default to being people pleasers. We desire the applause and approbation of others. We want to be significant in the eyes of others. Pride.

No man can say that we are seeking the favor and praise of men with our doctrine. We teach that all men are naturally depraved. We condemn man’s free will, his strength, wisdom, and righteousness. We say that we obtain grace by the free mercy of God alone for Christ’s sake. This is no preaching to please men. . . . This sort of preaching procures for us the hatred and disfavor of the world, persecutions, excommunications, murders, and curses. To this day you

will find many who seek to please men in order that they may live in peace and security. They
teach whatever is agreeable to men, no matter whether it is contrary to God’s Word or t
heir own conscience. But we who endeavor to please God and not men, stir up hell itself. We
must suffer reproach, slanders, death. [Luther]

If I were still trying to please men I would not be a slave of Christ. (εἰ ἐτι ἀνθρώποις ἔρεσκον,
Χριστοῦ δοῦλος οὐκ ἂν ἴμην.)

A slave has 1 central purpose – to please his master.

Cannot serve 2 masters.

There was a time when in fact Paul did indeed seek to please other human beings. Before his
conversion to Christ, he was on a fast track toward the highest echelons of the Jewish rabbinic
establishment. His entire career, including his persecution of the Christians, was designed not
only to justify himself before God but also to curry the favor of those in power so as better to
advance his own ambitions. But this kind of self-serving, time-serving endeavor was forever
shattered when Saul of Tarsus and Jesus of Nazareth collided outside Damascus. Serving Christ
and pleasing humanity are mutually exclusive alternatives, “If I were … I would not be.”
Holman Publishers, 1994), 100]

What about Paul being “all things to all men?” 1 Cor. 9. Refers to method, not mastery. Methods may
differ, the Master remains the same.

This is a question every person has to answer. Whose pleasure do I seek? If we try to please
ourselves, or other people, then we are living by a different gospel. Pleasing God and pleasing
others are mutually exclusive. We cannot follow our own ambitions and follow Jesus Christ at
the same time. . . . [O]nce we understand the one true gospel, then we stop living for ourselves,
or for others, and start living for God.” [Ryken, 25]

What do you live for? Who do you live for?

We might put the question this way: What is the constituency for our ministry? In a market-
driven age we are accustomed to think of every church having a special niche, of every visitor
as a prospective customer, and every aspect of worship designed to satisfy the consumers. Paul
was reminding the Galatians that the gospel was not a product to be peddled on the marketplace
of life. It has no need of shrewd salesmen to make it more palatable to modern tastes. The
gospel has its own self-generating, dynamic authority and need not be propped up by artificial
means, however sophisticated or alluring. One day every person called to the ministry of the
word of God must give an account for the stewardship of that office. On that day we will either
be “disqualified for the prize” or hear those coveted words, “Well done, faithful servant.” God,
not any human audience, is our true constituency. [Timothy George, Galatians, vol. 30, The