

Men in Christ - May 2024 - Gay Allen Henecke DD

Judaizers (a name given to people who believed that Jesus was an addition to the religion of Israel, rather than a fulfillment of that religion) were *Jesus-believers* who among other things, proclaimed that the ceremonial and kosher requirements of the Torah were still binding on those who were “in Jesus”. Following Paul's successful campaign in (Asia-minor) Galatia, they appeared in his new congregations insisting that Gentile converts to Christ keep kosher – beginning with circumcision. Many may have been motivated by a desire to avoid the divisive persecution of Zealot Jews (claiming to be from “headquarters”) who objected to their mixing with Gentiles who were “not clean” by Hebrew holiness lifestyles. The Judaizers argued that Paul was not an authentic apostle (unchosen by Christ’s personally selected twelve) and that out of a desire to make the message more appealing to Gentiles he had removed from the gospel certain legal requirements.

Paul responded by clearly arguing that his apostolic authority was from God in Jesus and thereby substantiated the good news he preached. By introducing additional requirements for belonging in Christ his adversaries had perverted the gospel of grace and, unless prevented, would bring Paul's converts into the bondage of Hebrew legalism, whose new name was - Judaism. Paul will proclaim that the crucifixion of Jesus was an event of God where the old requirements died with Christ – and “new creation” came into being in the resurrected God in Jesus. Paul says all understanding of Jesus begins in the God accomplishment on the cross. God affirmed this in the resurrection. God did not reform Israel – he created an all-new Israel. We get to be this new creation in Christ by the faith of Jesus which we enter and live by faith through grace.

Colossians 3:11 Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all. Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, and patience, forbearing one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

Galatians 2:19 For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.

Galatians 3:1 O senseless Galatians, who cast a spell on you, that you should not obey the truth, before whom Jesus Christ hath been so clearly set forth, on his cross?

Galatians 5:24 Now those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

Galatians 6:14 But may I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

1 Corinthians 1:22 For Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks ask for wisdom, but we preach about a crucified Christ, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles. But to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God.