

Galatians 1:11–17 — Leader / Learner Guide

Paul's Independent Revelation · TheGospelVault.com, @iJohn.316 (Instagram)

Big Idea and Context

Big idea: Paul's gospel of grace through faith alone did not come from any man or any school. It came by direct revelation from Jesus Christ, and Paul's changed life is the proof.

Having declared one true gospel (1:6–10), Paul now begins proving where that gospel came from. The proof runs through 2:21.

- **1:11–17:** the gospel came by revelation, not from men.
- **1:18–2:10:** it did not depend on the Jerusalem apostles.
- **2:11–21:** it was strong enough to correct Peter himself.

Revelation, Not Tradition — Three Anchor Verses

Verse	What it says	Teaching point
1:11–12	Not according to man ... through the revelation of Jesus Christ	Not fabricated, not passed on, not learned in a school — revealed.
1:13–14	I persecuted the church ... zealous for the traditions of my fathers	Paul was the least likely man to invent a law-free gospel.
1:15–16	Called me through His grace, to reveal His Son in me	Paul did not deserve the call, and the Son was revealed in him, not only through his words.

Audience: "brethren" (v.11) means the believers in the pews. The Judaizers are the ones Paul has just placed under the curse (vv.8–9).

Man-made religion: every human system adds something to believing. A gospel with nothing added is not one a man would invent.

Teaching Flow

1. **Paul's Claim: A Divine Revelation (11–12).** Not according to man (not fabricated), not received from man (not imitated), not taught (not assimilated).
2. **Paul's Conduct before Conversion (13–14).** He tried to destroy the church (Acts 8:1–3; 9:1–2; 26:9–11; Phil 3:6), yet the church prevailed (Matt 16:18) — the anvil outlasts the hammers.
3. **Paul's Call to Preach (15–16a).** Set apart from birth (Jer 1:5), called by grace, to reveal God's Son in him (John 20:31) and to preach Him to the Gentiles.
4. **Paul's Course after Conversion (16b–17).** He consulted no one and did not go to Jerusalem. He went to Arabia, then back to Damascus.

Clarify While Teaching

- **"Knocked off his horse":** Acts 9 says Saul fell to the ground. No horse is mentioned.
- **The 613 commandments:** rabbinic tradition counts 613 commands within the Law itself. The Pharisees' "hedge" was the oral tradition built around them.
- **Three years in Arabia:** Galatians 1:18 says "after three years" Paul went to Jerusalem. That period covers both Arabia and Damascus, so the time in Arabia alone is not stated.
- **Revelation in Arabia:** that Paul received his gospel there one-on-one, and that much of it shows up in Romans, is Sellers' reasonable inference, not stated in the text.
- **"16 is the best scripture":** he means John 3:16.

Discussion and Close

1. Why is it significant that the man who hated this gospel most became its strongest preacher?
2. Paul says God revealed His Son "in me." Where would people see Christ in you, not just hear about Him?
3. Paul didn't have to like the Gentiles to obey God's call to them. Who is God asking you to reach that you would rather avoid?

Close: Point ahead to 1:18–2:10: Paul does meet Peter and James, but only years later, and they add nothing to his gospel. Salvation is a free gift — believe it, receive it.

Full study: [Paul's Independent Revelation — Galatians 1:11–17](#) · Source: Dr. C. Norman Sellers, [SellersBibleInstitute.com](#)