

WHAT WE NEED IS THE “REAL THING”

Galatians 1:6-9 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: 7 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. 9 As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

I. The NFL Referee strike

A. This past week has been a momentous week

1. We found an issue that brings all members of all political parties together.

a) In the midst of heated politics, gaffes, missteps, campaign trails, and stump speeches, there has emerged one single issue that all political parties can agree on

(1) I have heard President Obama say this

(2) I have heard Governor Romney say this as well

(3) I have heard radio commentators on both sides of the political spectrum speak on this issue

2. It is an issue that the American people by and large care about

a) Caller after caller phoned into talk shows.

(1) They were pretty upset when they called

b) Commentator and pundits have all spoken about this great problem that was facing our nation

(1) These were not nice and calm discussions

(2) It was not a new economic plan

- (3) It was not a healthcare overhaul
- (4) It was not a defense of morality
- (5) It was not a national security issue
 - (a) It was to bring back the regular NFL referees.

B. Just four weeks into the season, the referees decided that they were not going to “take it anymore”

- 1. The main issues of the lock out were of course financial
 - a) NFL refs were being paid less than MLB, NHL, or NBA officials despite the NFL being the most financially successful of the four*
 - (1) Little known fact is that all of the NFL refs are part time
- 2. So the refs decided to go on strike, and the league hired replacement refs for the remaining NFL games
 - a) Unfortunately, for the replacements they were not up to the standard required by the league and it's fans*
 - (1) Commentators would point out bad calls
 - (2) Coaches would fume over rule interpretations
 - (3) Players would complain that games were getting out of control and unsafe
 - b) Then on Monday night it all came to a head*
 - (1) In a Packers & Seahawks game on the very last play of the game it all came down to a Seahawk desperation pass into the end zone.
 - (2) There was a jump ball situation in the end zone.
 - (a) One ref signaled touchdown, the other signaled no catch...

(b) I'm not even a Packers fan, but after watching the YouTube clip I agree that they should have won the game.

3. Driving to work on Wednesday morning, the airwaves were FULL of talk about the bad call.

a) *It didn't take long for the league to come around and agree to the real referees demands to end the lockout.*

(1) In fact by Thursday night, the real refs were back in uniform and on the field.

(2) Because people realized that they need the REAL thing!

II. Taking things for granted

A. Nobody talked about the refs

1. Up until this point I do not remember the commentators telling us what a good job the refs did

2. I do not remember politicians speaking out on behalf of referees

a) *I certainly don't remember a presidential candidate and the current President of the United States both speaking the same things on one issue.*

B. Often times when something is going good, we take it for granted

1. When the bills are all paid

2. When the family is all fine

3. When our health is good

a) *We tend to think that we can get by without God*

C. But when Crisis comes along that's when people find that they need the real thing

1. When your bills aren't paid – you want the real thing
2. When your family is spiraling out of control – you want the real thing
3. When your health is failing – you want the real thing
 - a) *People can tell you that this replacement is just as good, but inside your soul is saying, I NEED THE REAL THING*

III. Replacements

A. The problem was that the league thought that their replacements could be just as effective as the originals

1. They were similar, they had some experience, they looked the part, they acted the part, but they were not the same
2. They were sloppy, they were unlearned, they were unobservant, they were overwhelmed

a) *They made a bad situation worse*

B. A lot of people look for a replacement

1. My life is falling apart – maybe alcohol can fix it
2. My family is messed up – maybe drugs can take away the pain
3. My soul is empty – maybe that preacher can help fill it

a) *It looks the same – an alcoholic stupor can cause you to forget about your troubles for a while*

b) *A drug high can cause you to lose your worries and cares for a short time*

c) *An empty soul can feel uplifted in a church or watching a TV program.*

(1) But in the end it is not enough and makes a bad situation worse

(2) Sure alcohol can cause you to forget your troubles

as it destroys your liver

(3) That high can cause you to feel good- as it destroys your mind

(4) Your soul might feel uplifted in the church, or during the show, but what about when you're at your job?

(a) These are all just replacements for the "Real Thing"

IV. What we need is the Real Thing

A. What the NFL needed was the real refs

B. What this world needs is the real Jesus Christ & the real church

1. Not a replacement

2. Not a fake but the real thing

a) They don't need a prosperity doctrine

b) They need a repentance one

c) They don't need a feel good religion

d) They need a "get right" message

e) They don't need a cheap imitation

f) They need the REAL THING

C. What this world needs

1. Is not a preacher afraid to preach

2. Is not a powerless church

3. Is not another fake Christianity

a) What this world needs is a demonstration of the outpouring of God's Spirit through a church that is full of faith

and love.

- b) No more fakers – give me Faithers*
- c) No more deceivers – give me believers*
- d) No more lies – give me the TRUTH*
- e) No more imposters – give me the ALMIGHTY*

D. The real doesn't come by accident

1. The disciples were given a command to go out and to preach and cast out devils.

2. They went out and accomplished the command

Matthew 17:14-16 And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying, 15 Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatic, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. 16 And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him.

3. But there was one man that had a son

- a) The disciples could not cast out the demon*
- b) The man brought his son to Jesus*

(1) I won't settle for anything less than the REAL THING

Matthew 17:17-21 Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me. 18 And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour. 19 Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? 20 And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. 21 Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.

- c) Jesus told his disciples that this kind comes not out but by prayer and fasting*

(1) It takes a deeper level of commitment to God

4. How do we get the Real Thing?

(1) The Real thing comes with a deeper level of commitment

(2) The Real thing comes with a stronger dedication to the things of God

b) Church is not a place you go, Church is something that you are

(1) Pastor doesn't have to call you and ask, were you a good example today?

(2) Did you pray today?

(3) Read your Bible?

(4) Witness to someone?

(5) Pay your tithes?

(6) You do those things on your own.

c) That's a real church that can show the real Jesus to this real world

(1) They have real hurts, they have real pains, what they need is the REAL THING!

5. If you are here today, and are tired of the replacements

a) Tired of the fakers

b) Tired of the false

c) I offer to you the REAL JESUS today

(1) You can find Him at this altar in repentance

(2) You can find Him in a watery grave of Baptism

(3) You can find Him by receiving His Spirit today

6. Church if you're tired of going through the motions

a) If you want the REAL THING in your heart and life

b) It comes with a new commitment to prayer

c) It comes with a new dedication to soul winning

d) It comes with a deeper desire to serve Jesus Christ

(1) Here at the altar today