The artwork above greeted me immediately before teaching the first lesson on April 7, 2013. One of my class members drew it—a great way to encourage her teacher!

This document contains the teacher notes for 20 Sunday school lessons on the epistle to the Galatians. There is a complementary document containing student handouts to be distributed to listeners to aid in retention while teaching this material.

Many thanks to David Barber, Amy Valovcin, Sean McGarvey, and Terry Bolden for teaching lessons in this series. They are my Philippians 1:3, my Aarons and Hurs (Exodus 17:12), and our Sunday school class is exceedingly blessed to share in their wisdom.
We claim no infallibility relative to the material presented here. It is, as many have said before, beggars showing other beggars where to find bread.

These teachings are provided free in the spirit of Matthew 10:8b.

As errors are found, please let me know so I can correct. The theology expressed here should not be construed as representing the theology of Stuart Heights Baptist Church (especially when I am wrong or when I am being an idiot).

The formatting is as follows:

- **bold green text are quotes from commentators** (several dozen different commentaries are used throughout)
- **bold red text is the Scripture** (NKJV is used unless otherwise noted. Scripture taken from the New King James Version®. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.)
- **bold blue text are Bible references**
- **bold purple text are questions to consider asking while teaching this material**
- **highlighted, bold, and underlined text in the teacher notes are answers to blanks in the student handouts**
- **plain black text are the teachers' comments**

The file formats available online are only the PDFs, but if the native Microsoft Word files are needed, I am more than happy to email them. I can be reached at jim314@yahoo.com.

The audio recordings of 18 of the 20 teachings themselves are available via our class podcast. Many thanks to David Barber for his faithfulness in this area.

I hope these resources assist in a better understanding of Galatians and what New Testament believers are to do with this wonderfully dense letter. Again, feel free to contact me with questions or feedback.

Grace and peace,

Jim Fleming
Hixson, Tennessee
August 2013
Who Wrote Galatians?
Paul wrote the Epistle to the Galatians. Near universal acceptance of this has been observed throughout the history of Christianity.

What is Galatians About?
Galatians is a letter where Paul refutes a false gospel (Law + grace) and teaches about the gospel, grace, and freedom.

Where Does Galatians Take Place?
Paul writes to the churches in Galatia (i.e., Antioch in Pisidia, Lystra, Iconium, and Derbe, etc.). Galatia was a province of Rome that Paul had traveled through many times.
**WHEN WAS GALATIANS WRITTEN?**

There is much debate about when Paul wrote *Galatians*. It could have been Paul’s first canonical (i.e., inspired by the Holy Spirit and part of the Bible) work or it could have been as late as his middle canonical work. Regardless, he wrote it well after he was well known as an apostle of Jesus Christ—these believers knew him, respected him, and would listen to him.

**WHY WAS GALATIANS WRITTEN?**

To set the Galatian churches straight on the gospel, grace, freedom, and how the Law fits with those three. A corruption of the gospel had crept in and Paul had to cut out the infected doctrine and clarify exactly what the gospel was and was not. Keeping the Law satisfies my desire to maintain a standard. The gospel takes that standard and says that it was fulfilled in Jesus. The Law is about what I am doing. The gospel is about what Jesus has already done. This error is rooted in selfishness.

**OUTLINE**

1. Grace and the **Lawyer**: The Personal Appeal (*Galatians 1-2*) (April/May)
2. Grace and the **Law**: The Theological Appeal (*Galatians 3-4*) (May/June)
3. Grace and the **Life**: The Application Appeal (*Galatians 5-6*) (July/August)

**SCHEDULE**

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August 4  Bear and Share the Burdens  Galatians 6:1-6:5  Fleming
August 11  Be Generous and Do Good & Glory Only in the Cross  Galatians 6:6-6:15  Fleming
August 18  Blessing and a Plea  Galatians 6:16-6:18  Fleming

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES

Knowledge objectives help me as the teacher to go in to a study with clearly defined set of objectives.

1. To recognize the dangers and downstream impacts of altering the gospel
2. To understand more fully the terms “justification by faith” and “Christian liberty”
3. To recognize the evidences of a Spirit-filled life in myself and in others
4. To understand more fully why the Law was given, the Law’s purpose, and how I, as a New Testament believer, relate to the Law
5. To grow in the knowledge of the relationships between the Old Testament and the New Testament

RESOURCES

I have ten Galatians-related resources to give away today. Anyone who agrees to the following is eligible to receive a resource:

1. Read the text of Scripture that corresponds to the weekly lesson every week
2. Read the portion of your resource that corresponds to the weekly lesson every week
3. Email me at jim314@yahoo.com any impactful and/or insightful quotes or concepts every week by Wednesday

HOMEWORK: READ GALATIANS 1:1-5 (NKJV)

GREETING
1 Paul, an apostle (not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead), 2 and all the brethren who are with me, To the churches of Galatia:

3 Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, 4 who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, 5 to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.
**Galatians: Freedom for Life**

**Greeting (Galatians 1:1-5)**

**Introduction**

In today’s text, Paul comes out swinging. He quickly establishes his authority, gives us a great example of how to handle difficult communications, and ends with the awesomeness of Jesus.

**Outline**

1. Grace and the Lawyer: The Personal Appeal (Galatians 1-2) (April/May)
2. Grace and the Law: The Theological Appeal (Galatians 3-4) (May/June)
3. Grace and the Life: The Application Appeal (Galatians 5-6) (July/August)

**Galatians 1:1-5 (Greeting)**

1. **Paul, an apostle** [Paul immediately throws down his credentials. He reminds the Galatian believers that he has some authority in this space. Martin Luther called Paul’s statement here, ‘**holy pride.**’ An apostle was a delegate, a **messenger**, one sent forth with orders. The Bible talks about the 12 that followed Jesus as being apostles. Judas is described as losing his apostleship and that space being filled by Matthias. In Acts 4:33, the apostles are described as having given testimony to the risen Lord (i.e., they would have had to have **personally** seen the resurrected Christ). In Acts 14:14, Barnabas and Paul are called apostles, so Paul is speaking the truth here when he calls himself an apostle. John MacArthur: One way to deny the truthfulness of a message is to deny the authority of the one who gives it. . . . Apparently the Judaizers had convinced some of the Galatian church members that Paul was a self-appointed apostle with no divine commission. So at the outset of the letter Paul dispensed with the usual personal greetings and immediately began to establish the genuineness of his apostolic authority. Ironside: Go over the other letters, and you will find that he never refers to himself as "apostle" unless writing to some people where his apostleship has been called in question, or where he has some great doctrine to unfold that people are not likely to accept unless they realize that he had a definite commission to make it.] (**not from men nor through man** [other Scriptures describe the fact that there were many false apostles during this time—and obviously, if God had not declared them apostles, men would have had to have done that and Paul is distancing himself from those men], **but through Jesus Christ** [immediately after invoking his apostleship, he talks about Jesus—Paul never got over the importance of Jesus] and **God the Father who raised Him from the dead** [the first theological concept that Paul addresses is the **resurrection** (a component of the gospel)—because it changed everything]),

2. **and all the brethren**
who are with me [Paul is representing not only the Holy Spirit’s view and his own personal view, but other believers’ views as well—he is not acting alone in this messaging. It is good for us to be reminded that we are all under authority and that it never goes away.],

So, this introduction begs the question: How can Paul get away with this? (aside: we will read of far more abrupt and seemingly rude statements that Paul makes later in Galatians, so if you do not think this is bad—hang tight because it will get worse). So, how can Paul start his communication this way? Paul had a previously established relationship with the Galatians. He had already spent time teaching them truth and not he is about to remind them of it. You can be open and honest in sharing truth and delivering correction when you have an already established relationship. This is Christian Communication 101—truth wrapped in the hearer’s knowledge that the messenger loves them. One of the reasons I pray for each of you every day is so that when I stand in front of you I can recall the love that I have for you so you will hear it, feel it, and know it in my words.

To the churches of Galatia [Implicit in this phrase is the idea that there is a single standard of truth for all churches. There are not varieties of sources of truth or varieties of gospels that reflect truth; there is one truth. There is one gospel. There is one God in three Persons. There is one resurrection, one faith, one hope. There is one and only one redeemer and savior and His name is Jesus. Paul will be crystal clear about these things, but we cannot miss the fact that there is intended to be consistent messaging to multiple churches. We are all on the hook for teaching the same message. We briefly discussed last week that this epistle (a letter to a person or a group of people) was to be passed around to the various churches in Galatia. Contrary to what fills up most of my inbox today, this message was to be forwarded. As I mentioned last week, Galatia was a very large place. It essentially had a northern region and a southern region. David Guzik: Paul was in southern Galatia on his first missionary journey (Acts 13:13-14:23), he went through northern Galatia on his second (Acts 16:6) and third (Acts 18:23) missionary journeys. It appears to be largely irrelevant whether he was writing to the northern region, to the southern region, or to both regions.]:

3 Grace to you and peace [Wikipedia: “Grace” was a common Hellenistic (Greek) greeting, while “peace” (shalom) was the common Jewish greeting; this reflected Paul’s dual identity in Jewish faith and Hellenistic culture. Lenski: Grace is always first, peace always second. This is due to the fact that grace is the source of peace. Without grace there is and can be no peace; but when grace is ours, peace must of necessity follow.] from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ [grace starts with God and is delivered through Christ; peace (the root of the Greek word means to join) also starts with God and was made possible by the finished work of Christ which enables us to join with God both now and forevermore], 4 who gave Himself for our sins [The Greek word is
hamartia: to be without a share in, to miss the mark, to err, be mistaken, to miss or wander from the path of uprightness and honor, to do or go wrong, to wander from the law of God, violate God’s law, sin. The fact that Jesus gave Himself up for my sin shows the seriousness of my sin. John Calvin: These words, ‘who gave himself for our sins’, are very important. He wanted to tell the Galatians straight out that atonement for sins and perfect righteousness are not to be sought anywhere but in Christ . . . So glorious is this redemption that it should ravish us with wonder., that He might deliver [rescue, deliver, pluck out; Tim Keller: Jesus is not so much a teacher as he is a rescuer. Because that is what we most need. Nothing in who we are or what we do saves us. Lightfoot: Strikes the keynote of the epistle. The gospel is a rescue, an emancipation from a state of bondage.] us from this present evil age [Yes, my salvation will be finished in a future sense one day in heaven, but it is being executed right now in this present age. The gospel is for now. The gospel is forever. The gospel is for all.], according to the will of our God and Father [Tim Keller: We didn’t ask to be rescued, but God in His grace planned what we didn’t realize we needed. Oftentimes, we think we bring something significant to this relationship. Not quite. Neil Wilson: Our most active participation in God’s work of saving us is simply allowing ourselves to be saved. Sean McGarvey (summarizing Martin Luther): He says not to sweat it, because God through Christ already handled it.], 5 to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

APPLY (SO WHAT IS THE POINT?)
1. Everyone is under authority
2. Relationships are critical to correcting error in the church
3. There exists a single gospel for all churches to proclaim
4. Martin Luther: These two terms, grace and peace, constitute Christianity
5. The gospel is for now

PERSONALIZE (NOW WHAT DO I DO?)
1. Submit to the authorities in my life
2. Establish relationships prior to engaging error
3. Know the singularly true gospel
4. Look for ways to live out grace and peace in real ways (i.e., give others what they do not deserve and work to join people together)
5. Glorify God through the ‘right now’ applicability of the gospel

HOMEWORK: READ GALATIANS 1:6-10 (NKJV)

ONLY ONE GOSPEL
6 I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, 7 which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 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. 9 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.

10 For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bond servant of Christ.
Review (Galatians 1:1-5: Greeting)
1 Paul, an apostle (not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead), 2 and all the brethren who are with me,

To the churches of Galatia:

3 Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, 4 who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, 5 to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Introduction
In today’s text, Paul clarifies his issue with the Galatians’ theology (they allowed others to modify the gospel) and provides correct theology (never modify the gospel).

Outline
1. Grace and the Lawyer: The Personal Appeal (Galatians 1-2) (April/May)
2. Grace and the Law: The Theological Appeal (Galatians 3-4) (May/June)
3. Grace and the Life: The Application Appeal (Galatians 5-6) (July/August)

Galatians 1:6-10 (Only One Gospel)
Lightfoot: This is the sole instance where St. Paul omits to express his thanksgiving in addressing any church. Paul gets right to the hard work of confronting and clarifying. 6 I marvel [wonder at, marvel] that you are turning away [transposed, transferred, changed, passed over, fallen, carried away—the root words mean to put behind; Martin Luther: Jerome thinks that Paul was punning on the word Galatians, alluding to the Hebrew word galath, meaning “fallen” or, “carried away,” as though he were saying, “You are Galatians in name and in fact; that is, you are fallen or carried away”] so soon [only a few years would have passed since Paul preached to them] from Him who called you in the grace of Christ [Ironside: What is grace? It is God’s free, unmerited favor to those who have merited the very opposite.], to a different [Greek, heteros—a different kind] gospel [literally, good news—specifically, the good news that Jesus came to save us], 7 which is not another [a different Greek word than in Galatians 1:6—allos—literally, this is not an acceptable alternative gospel; David Guzik: Different has the idea of “another of different kind” and another has the idea of “another of the same kind.” It is as if Paul writes, “They brought you a completely different gospel. They claim it is just an alternative gospel of the same kind, but it isn’t at all. It is all together
different. Barclay: Paul is holding up the cross and saying: ‘God loved you like that.’ Ironside: Go through the Book from Genesis to Revelation and there is only one gospel—that first preached in the Garden of Eden when the message went forth that the Seed of the woman should bruise Satan’s head. That was the gospel, salvation through the coming Christ, the Son of (God born of a woman.); but there are some who trouble [agitate, trouble by moving around the parts of a thing, cause inward commotion, take away calmness of mind, disturb equanimity, disquiet, make restless, stir up, render anxious or distressed, perplex the mind by suggesting doubts] you and want [will, have in mind, intend, resolve, determine, purpose, desire, wish, are fond of, delight in, have pleasure in] to pervert [Greek, metastrepho—to turn around] the gospel of Christ [modifying the gospel means a change has been made so that either the gospel is no longer good news (either it did not matter, the facts are not true, or someone does not believe it) or the gospel is no longer about Jesus having fully completed it (i.e., Jesus’ death was not enough—this is the option Paul debunks here)]. [David Barber (commenting on J. Vernon McGee’s commentary): I think it is important here where he says that they did NOT challenge the facts of the gospel. . . . Today, denominations add baptism, giving, speaking in tongues, sacraments, financial success, and many other things to the gospel. Jesus + nothing = salvation. Ironside: Divine judgment must fall upon any one who seeks to pervert the gospel of Christ or to turn people away from that gospel.] 8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven [Paul did not say a demon from hell—this angel reference could easily represent anything we would normally accept to be from a safe source (Gary, Darrell, Brian, Jim, etc.)], preach any other gospel to you than [Greek, para—besides, near] what we have preached to you, let him be accursed [Greek, anathema—an offering resulting from a vow, which after being consecrated to a god was hung upon the walls or columns of the temple; a thing devoted to God without hope of being redeemed, and if an animal, to be slain; therefore a person or thing doomed to destruction (a curse, a man accursed, devoted to the direst of woes)]. 9 As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other [Greek, para] gospel to you than what you have received [received, taken, joined, professed], let him be accursed [David Guzik: So, where is Paul’s love? Paul’s love is for souls that are in danger of hell. If a gospel is false, and not “another good news” at all, then it can’t save someone. Life Application Bible Commentary: He [Paul] wanted it understood that once the truth of the gospel was declared, all amendments were false. Elyse Fitzpatrick: Everything that isn’t gospel is law. Every way we try to make our kids good that isn’t rooted in the good news of the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ is damnable, crushing, despair-breeding, Pharisee-producing law. Jesus + nothing = salvation. We do not get to call a different kind, another of a different kind, another of the same kind, a modification of the parts, a turned around, or a close or near gospel the real gospel of Jesus Christ. The gospel is the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus—plus nothing and minus nothing. Martin Luther: He does not at first set upon them with vehement and rigorous words but uses a fatherly manner. . . . He is
very hot and full of indignation against those false apostles, their seducers, upon whom he lays all the blame. . . . Parents, when their child is bitten by a dog, will chase the dog but sympathize with and comfort the child].

10 For do I now [at this moment] persuade [persuade, to make friends of, to win one’s favor, to strive to please, to have confidence in, to trust in] men, or God? Or do I seek [seek, strive, require, demand, crave] to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant [slave] of Christ [Barclay: Slaves had their master’s name and sign stamped on them with a red-hot branding iron. Seth Godin: Embracing the convenient at the expense of the effective is where the failure happens].

**APPLY (SO WHAT IS THE POINT?)**

1. There are times when dispensing with niceties are in order
2. Any deviation/modification of the gospel is a turning away from Jesus
3. Alternative gospels are not gospels at all
4. Pleasing God is more important than pleasing man

**PERSONALIZE (NOW WHAT DO I DO?)**

1. Love people enough to get to the point: Darla Skinner: Don’t mess with the gospel
2. Never modify the gospel (it has worked and will continue to work forever)
3. Know the gospel well enough to spot any modification
4. Recognize that I am a slave to Jesus

**HOMEWORK: READ GALATIANS 1:11-24 (NKJV)**

**CALL TO APOSTLESHIP**

11 But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. 12 For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ.

13 For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it. 14 And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers.

15 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb and called me through His grace, 16 to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, 17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus.

**CONTACTS AT JERUSALEM**
18 Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days. 19 But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord’s brother. 20 (Now concerning the things which I write to you, indeed, before God, I do not lie.)

21 Afterward I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. 22 And I was unknown by face to the churches of Judea which were in Christ. 23 But they were hearing only, “He who formerly persecuted us now preaches the faith which he once tried to destroy.” 24 And they glorified God in me.
**Galatians: Freedom for Life**

Call to Apostleship & Contacts at Jerusalem (Galatians 1:11-24)

**Review (Galatians 1:6-10: Only One Gospel)**

6 I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, 7 which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 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. 9 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.

10 For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.

**Introduction**

In today’s text, Paul continues his defense of himself and the source of his message as he recalls his salvation story (his testimony of grace) and early Christian development.

**Outline**

1. Grace and the Lawyer: The Personal Appeal (Galatians 1-2) (April/May)
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**Galatians 1:11-24 (Call to Apostleship & Contacts at Jerusalem)**

Martin Luther: This whole passage is a refutation of the argument that the false apostles used against Paul, saying that he was only a scholar of the apostles who lived according to the law, and that Paul himself had also lived according to the law, and therefore it was necessary for the Gentiles themselves to keep the law and be circumcised.

**Call to Apostleship**

11 But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel [the noun form of the word] which was preached [the verb form of the word] by me is not according to [down from, according to, from] man. 12 For I neither received it from man [it was not handed to Paul], nor was I taught it [it was not taught to Paul], but it came through the revelation [apokalupsis, laying bear, making naked, disclosure of truth, instruction, manifestation, appearance; our word apocalypse comes from this Greek word] of Jesus Christ [David Guzik: Paul’s message was not a man’s attempt to reach up and understand God; it was God’s effort to bow down and communicate with man—the essence of the gospel].

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13 For you have heard of my former conduct [manner of life, conduct, behavior, deportment] in Judaism, how I persecuted [pursued to persecute] the church of God beyond measure [hyperbole, beyond what is measurable] and tried to destroy [ravage, destroy, waste] it. 14 And I advanced [prokopto, when a blacksmith would hammer metal, the part of the metal that would be pushed forward in front of the other parts of the metal was called the prokopto] in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries [others that had the same job that Paul did that were Paul's age] in my own nation, being more exceedingly [more abundantly, more earnestly, more exceedingly, above others] zealous [burning with zeal to acquire—also used of God as jealous of any rival for us] for the traditions of my fathers [Barclay: It is a notable thing about Paul that he is not afraid to recount the record of his own shame in order to show God's power. Paul is saying that he was out in front of all of the other persecutors and advanced in comparison to them and made more progress in his career goals than his contemporaries because he was pursuing the church harder than anyone else in order to fulfill tradition. Tradition can be good when it helps to create an environment/culture where grace is valued, but it can be deadly when it restricts grace and encourages adherence to the Law. Life Application Bible Commentary: Following traditions did not give anyone salvation.].

15 But when it pleased God, who separated [Paul is nodding to his former Pharisaical lifestyle since this word is similar to the word for Pharisee; Robertson's New Testament Word Pictures: To mark off from a boundary or line. The Pharisees were the separatists who held themselves off from others. Paul conceives himself as a spiritual Pharisee.] me from my mother's womb [God had a plan for Paul before Paul was even born—if grace > works, it must be this. No possibility for a works salvation can tolerate a pre-birth separation. Calvin: He had been set apart by the secret purpose of God.] and called me through His grace, 16 to reveal [apokalupsis, lay bare, make naked, disclose truth, instruct, manifest, appear—the same word used in Galatians 1:12] His Son in me [A prayer to pray every day: “Lord, reveal Yourself to me and reveal Yourself in me”], that I might preach Him among the Gentiles [Paul’s calling was to make Jesus known to the Gentiles—show the picture], I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, 17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia [the desert—but not the Saudi Arabian desert], and returned again to Damascus.

Contacts at Jerusalem

18 Then after three years [After three years where? In the desert. J. Vernon McGee: It is interesting how God has trained His men. He trained Moses in the desert. He put Abraham in a rather unique place to train him, and Elijah had that same type of experience. It has been God’s method to put His man out on the desert to train him. David was trained outdoors. . . . The Lord used the same method for Paul.] I went up to Jerusalem to see [this word is used extra-biblically for tourism—David Guzik: The idea is that Paul was not commanded to come to Jerusalem to give an account to Peter or the
other disciples, but he came of his own accord, and visited as a “tourist.” Barclay: Paul had the courage to face his past. Peter, and remained with him fifteen days. 19 But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord’s brother. 20 (Now concerning the things which I write to you, indeed, before God, I do not lie.) [This sounds like Paul is refuting a lie that was told about him. Ironside: When one gets under the power of false teaching, as a rule he is ready to make all kinds of charges as to the integrity, the honesty of other people.]

21 Afterward I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. 22 And I was unknown by face to the churches of Judea which were in Christ. 23 But they were hearing only, “He who formerly persecuted [made to run, put to flight, drove away, pursued in a hostile way] us now preaches the faith which he once tried to destroy.” [Martin Luther: So his reason for repeating these things was to keep the churches in true and sound doctrine, to show that he had not received his Gospel from any man, and to show that for three or four years in Damascus and Arabia, by revelation from God, he had preached the very same Gospel that the apostles had preached, before he had seen any of the apostles.]

24 And they glorified [Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: Imperfect, kept on doing it] God in me [me = the persecutor, murderer, slanderer, and destroyer of the gospel—Jesus can use anyone and the gospel is for everyone. Justin Harness: Paul’s whole life and story is the abundance of grace God showed toward him. He used Paul’s life of learning the Old Testament and "religion" and his diligent efforts to enforce a religion where rules meant everything to enhance his ability to deliver the Gospel message with authority and confidence. Tim Keller: God does not love us because we are serviceable. He loves us simply because he loves us. This is the kind of love we can ever be secure in since it is the only kind of love we cannot possibly lose. This is grace.]

David Guzik: Paul’s whole point in the second part of this chapter is important. His gospel was true, and his experience was valid, because it really came from God. Does your gospel come from God, or have you made it up yourself? Does your Christian experience come from God, or have you made it up yourself? Only what comes from God can really save us and make a lasting difference in our lives.

APPLY (SO WHAT IS THE POINT?)
1. The gospel is a noun and a verb
2. God can use a pagan’s passion for God’s good
3. Almost everybody spends some time in the desert
4. Jesus can save anyone
5. God will have His glory (God put Paul in the desert for God’s glory)

PERSONALIZE (NOW WHAT DO I DO?)
1. Know the gospel and share the gospel (use the gospel as both a noun and a verb)
2. Remember my pagan state and view everyone as savable (i.e., do not just ‘go after’ the Christian nice guy/gal—go after the hardcore pagan that hates Jesus)

3. Learn in the desert and recognize that God has plans for redeeming that time

4. Never give up on Jesus (we sometimes view people as not savable and at its core that is giving up on Jesus’ ability to save—it is not giving up on that person)

5. Know that the end of my story will result in God being glorified

**HOMEWORK: READ GALATIANS 2:1-2:10 (NKJV)**

**DEFENDING THE GOSPEL**

1 Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and also took Titus with me. 2 And I went up by revelation, and communicated to them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to those who were of reputation, lest by any means I might run, or had run, in vain. 3 Yet not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. 4 And this occurred because of false brethren secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage), 5 to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

6 But from those who seemed to be something—whatever they were, it makes no difference to me; God shows personal favoritism to no man—for those who seemed to be something added nothing to me. 7 But on the contrary, when they saw that the gospel for the uncircumcised had been committed to me, as the gospel for the circumcised was to Peter 8 (for He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles), 9 and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. 10 They desired only that we should remember the poor, the very thing which I also was eager to do.
GALATIANS: FREEDOM FOR LIFE
Defending the Gospel (Galatians 2:1-10)

REVIEW (Galatians 1:11-24: Call to Apostleship & Contacts at Jerusalem)
11 But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. 12 For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ.

13 For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it. 14 And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers.

15 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb and called me through His grace, 16 to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood. 17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus.

18 Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days. 19 But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord’s brother. 20 (Now concerning the things which I write to you, indeed, before God, I do not lie.)

21 Afterward I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. 22 And I was unknown by face to the churches of Judea which were in Christ. 23 But they were hearing only, “He who formerly persecuted us now preaches the faith which he once tried to destroy.” 24 And they glorified God in me.

INTRODUCTION
Immediately after defending the source of his gospel, Paul gives specific examples of how he refuted Law-like behavior and kept his faith grounded in justification by faith.

OUTLINE
1. Grace and the Lawyer: The Personal Appeal (Galatians 1-2) (April/May)
2. Grace and the Law: The Theological Appeal (Galatians 3-4) (May/June)
3. Grace and the Life: The Application Appeal (Galatians 5-6) (July/August)

Galatians 2:1-10 (Defending the Gospel)
1 Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem [see Acts 15 (?) for further record of this trip] with Barnabas [We meet Barnabas in Acts 4 where he is found selling land to pay for new believers’ food and shelter. The disciples changed his name from Joseph to Barnabas because Barnabas was such an encourager (his new name means son of encouragement). Barnabas introduced Saul/Paul to the early believers and was a constant encourager to many in the early church. Many times in Acts, Barnabas is listed first and Paul is listed second. Barnabas had a profound impact on Paul and the early church and is the only good man named in the Bible (Acts 11:24),] and also took Titus [David Guzik: In 2 Corinthians 2:13, Paul refers to Titus my brother, and says how he had no peace when Titus was absent. 2 Corinthians 7:6 says how Paul was comforted . . . by the coming of Titus. 2 Corinthians 8:6 shows how Paul trusted Titus to receive a collection from the Corinthians. 2 Corinthians 8:16 says that Titus had the same earnest care that filled the heart of Paul. In 2 Corinthians 8:23, Paul says If anyone inquires about Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker concerning you. In 2 Corinthians 12:18, Paul speaks again of Titus, and how he shares Paul’s heart: Did Titus take advantage of you? Did we not walk in the same spirit? Did we not walk in the same steps? In Titus 1:4, Paul calls Titus a true son in our common faith. Paul loved and trusted Titus, and regarded him as a valuable associate.] with me. 2 And I went up by revelation [i.e., by specific/special command of God—not at the request of a man], and communicated to them that gospel which I preach [heralded, proclaimed, published] among the Gentiles, but privately to those who were of reputation [Paul did not stand on the Jerusalem street corner and publicly deride the leaders who were in error—he told them privately. When possible, praise in public and correct in private. A beautiful example of this is how Aquila and Priscilla treated Apollos in Acts 18:24-28], lest by any means I might run, or had run, in vain [for nothing, for emptiness; Imagine running a marathon and receiving no prize (imagine running your entire life and realizing that the prize you were working for is emptiness and vanity). Paul seems concerned that this false gospel will undo the work he has done and cause his life’s work to be in vain.]. 3 Yet not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised [The church leadership in Jerusalem accepted Titus without Titus needing to comply with the Law. Martin Luther: Paul did not condemn circumcision as if it were a sin to receive it. But he insisted, and the conference upheld him, that circumcision had no bearing upon salvation and was therefore not to be forced upon the Gentiles.]. 4 And this occurred [this = Paul having to confront these leaders] because of false [lying, deceitful, false] brethren secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out [inspect and plot against] our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage [enslave us]) [Paul equates living under the Law with slavery. Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: Spiritual liberty or spiritual bondage, which?], 5 to whom we did not yield submission [subjection, subordination, obedience] even for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue [stay permanently, remain, continue, stay constantly; in the aorist tense, meaning this is true in the past, in the present, and in the
future—the gospel is always **truth** with you. [Morris: The passage is grammatically difficult. . . . Clearly Paul was deeply moved when he wrote this and was not greatly concerned with the niceties of grammar. Life Application Bible Commentary: We normally think of taking a stand against those who might lead us into immoral behavior, but Paul had to take a hard line against the most "moral" of people. Like Paul, we must not give in to those who make the keeping of man-made standards a condition for salvation, even when such people are morally upright or in respected positions.]

6 **But from those who seemed** [were of the opinion that they were] **to be something** [great debate here as to whether or not Paul is referring to the ‘big three’ or other leaders]—whatever they were, it makes no difference to me; God shows personal favoritism to no man [literally, God takes no man’s face]—for those who seemed to be something added [communicated, imparted] **nothing to me** [Those who were high on themselves taught Paul nothing]. 7 **But on the contrary, when they saw that the gospel** for the uncircumcised [another way of saying gentiles] had been committed [faithed, committed, entrusted] **to me, as the gospel for the circumcised** [another way of saying the Jews] **was to Peter** [the added words in italics can be misinterpreted to read that there is a gospel for the gentiles and a gospel for the Jews, but the second ‘the gospel’ is not present in the original and should not be read as if it is] 8 **(for He who worked effectively in** [put the power in, was at work in, was active in] Peter for the apostleship [commissioning/entrusting of the gospel message] to the circumcised [Jews] also worked effectively in [the same Greek word in Galatians 2:7; put the power in, was at work in, was active in] me toward the Gentiles, 9 and when James, Cephas [Simon Peter], and John, who seemed [were supposed, were reputed] to be pillars [metaphorically speaking, they had a great stabilizing impact on the early church because of their direct relationship with Jesus], **perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand** [symbolic of a sign of honor and acceptance toward another] of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised [Jews. Life Application Bible Commentary: Paul was a walking, talking advertisement for the gospel. Aside: Martin Luther wrote that the Roman Catholics believed that the papacy began with the successor to Peter, so the Roman Catholic Church should have been populated with Jews. Barclay: It should be carefully noted that it is not a question of two different gospels being preached; it is a question of the same gospel being brought to two different spheres by different people specially qualified to do so. Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: The compromisers and the Judaizers were brushed to one side when these five men shook hands as equals in the work of Christ’s Kingdom. Ironside: The two messages are one; but Paul’s is a little fuller than that of Peter. One had the message peculiarly adapted to the Jews and the other to the Gentiles, and so they decided on distinct spheres of labor. Lightfoot: A distinction of sphere, not a distinction of type.]. 10 **They desired only that we should remember** [present active subjunctive—that we should keep on remembering] the poor [those that were reduced to begging], **the very thing which I also was eager** [hastening,
hurrying, laboring, quickly trying] to do. [David Guzik: Two visits to Jerusalem over 14 years shows that Paul did not sit at the feet of the disciples of Jesus to learn the gospel. Warren Wiersbe: Had Paul been unwilling to wage this spiritual warfare, the church in the first century might have become only a Jewish sect, preaching a mixture of law and grace. But because of Paul's courage, the gospel was kept free from legalism, and it was carried to the Gentiles with great blessing. Barclay: Those who know they have a God-given task will always find that they have a God-given strength to carry it out.]

J. Vernon McGee: We must never forget that the Christian life is a living relationship with God through Jesus Christ. A man does not become a Christian merely by agreeing to a set of doctrines; he becomes a Christian by submitting to Christ and trusting him. You cannot mix grace and works, because one excludes the other. Salvation is the gift of God's grace, purchased for us by Jesus Christ on the cross. To turn from grace to law is to desert the God who saved us.

Justin Harness: Paul's whole life and story is the abundance of grace God showed toward him. He used Paul's life of learning the Old Testament and "religion" and his diligent efforts to enforce a religion where rules meant everything to enhance his ability to deliver the Gospel message with authority and confidence.

APPLY (SO WHAT IS THE POINT?)
1. Defending the gospel involves keeping the right stuff in and the wrong stuff out
2. Impostors will always preach a different gospel
3. Living under the law is slavery
4. The truth is worth the effort
5. Leaders are sometimes wrong

PERSONALIZE (NOW WHAT DO I DO?)
1. Know the right stuff (the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus) and the wrong stuff (everything else)
2. Know the right stuff and the wrong stuff
3. Live under grace
4. Know the truth and be willing to challenge anyone with it
5. Be private, gracious, patient, direct, and loving in correcting (see 1 Timothy 5)

HOMEWORK: READ GALATIANS 2:11-2:21 (NKJV)

Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed; for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who
were of the circumcision. 13 And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with
him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy.

14 But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said
to Peter before them all, “If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as
the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews? 15 We who are Jews by nature,
and not sinners of the Gentiles, 16 knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the
law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be
justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no
flesh shall be justified.

17 “But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is
Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not! 18 For if I build again those things which I
destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. 19 For I through the law died to the law that I
might live to God. 20 I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but
Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of
God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. 21 I do not set aside the grace of God; for
if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain.”
**Galatians: Freedom for Life**

No Return to the Law *(Galatians 2:11-21)*

**Review (Galatians 2:1-10: Defending the Gospel)**

1 Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and also took Titus with me. 2 And I went up by revelation, and communicated to them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to those who were of reputation, lest by any means I might run, or had run, in vain. 3 Yet not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. 4 And this occurred because of false brethren secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage), 5 to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

6 But from those who seemed to be something—whatever they were, it makes no difference to me; God shows personal favoritism to no man—for those who seemed to be something added nothing to me. 7 But on the contrary, when they saw that the gospel for the uncircumcised had been committed to me, as the gospel for the circumcised was to Peter 8 (for He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles), 9 and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. 10 They desired only that we should remember the poor, the very thing which I also was eager to do.

**Introduction**

Between Galatians 2:10 and Galatians 2:11, the scene and location change. We move from Jerusalem to Antioch, where Paul yet again shows his authority as an apostle.

**Outline**

1. Grace and the Lawyer: The Personal Appeal *(Galatians 1-2)* (April/May)
2. Grace and the Law: The Theological Appeal *(Galatians 3-4)* (May/June)
3. Grace and the Life: The Application Appeal *(Galatians 5-6)* (July/August)

**Galatians 2:11-21 (No Return to the Law)**

11 Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed; 12 for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles [Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: It was his habit (imperfect tense)]; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the
circumcision. 13 And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy. [Barclay: A famous name can never justify an infamous action.]

Remember back in Galatians 2:9 when Peter and Paul had come to agreement? Galatians 2:9: and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. They talked, shook hands, hugged it out, and all went on their ways to continue to preach the gospel. Paul and Barnabas to the Gentiles and Peter (Cephas) and James to the Jews. Now Paul confronts Peter.

Peter eating and fellowshipping with them was not unusual. In fact, it was common.

“Withstood him to his face.” Meaning that Paul went to Peter, not behind his back. He spoke to his face.

This is a, “scene straight from the high school lunch room.”

And that is when Paul calls Peter out. (I am paraphrasing here) “Dude, what are you doing? Just because the Judaizers are here you are gonna act like you don’t know me? You used to eat and hang out with the Gentiles. But, now . . . NOOO! Dude, you’re a hypocrite.” (Again, this is how the scene unfolded in my mind.)

Peter seems to go to one extreme or the other.

Galatians 3:28: There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Aren’t you? Story

Peter was allowing himself to be caught up in the situation. Aren’t we all a little guilty of this at times? Perhaps playing down our faith and our beliefs in front of the ones that we need to display it the most. What is our fear? Rejection? Having others withdraw from us? Now on the other side we have Paul . . . his only concern was the truth of the gospel. He only wants to be recognized as a child of God, a defender of truth, a godly example of love, and someone who stands solid and strong in defense of God’s word.

Ironside: It would suggest certainly that the apostle Peter, who is the one at fault, is not the rock upon which the church is built. What a wobbly kind of a rock it would be if he were, for here is the very man to whom the Father gave that wonderful revelation that Christ was the Son of the living God, actually behaving in such a way at Antioch as to bring discredit upon the gospel of the grace of God. If Peter was the first Pope he was a very fallible one, not an infallible.
Life Application Bible Commentary: Paul was a walking, talking, advertisement for the gospel

I read that the withdrawal of Peter from the Gentiles was more than likely gradual. However, as soon as Paul noticed, he was quick to call Peter out. Not all disagreements are the same as Peter and Paul’s. Paul’s confrontation of Peter in not meant to be the blueprint for all disagreements in the church. If there is something that we disagree with when it comes to our pastors’ sermons or a Sunday school lesson, it is best not to “oppose them to their face.” No matter if the disagreement is minor or major it must be done it love and truth.

Martin Luther: No one has ever fallen so badly that he cannot rise again. And on the other hand, no one is so surefooted that he cannot fall. If Peter fell, I may fall too.

14 But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before them all [Ironside: It was too serious a matter to settle quietly with Peter in a corner, for it had been a public scandal, and it called in question the liberty of Gentiles in Christ and so must be settled in a public way.], “If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews? 15 We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, 16 knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.

The word straightforward comes from the Greek word orthopodeo. Orthos means straight and pous means foot. Combine them and you get to walk straight or uprightly.

Romans 3:10: There is none righteous, no not one. Warren Wiersbe: Peter in the book of Acts is certainly more consistent than in the four gospels, but he was not perfect — nor are we! Ironside: The fact that one has received great spiritual blessing at any particular time gives no guarantee that he will never fear again. Tim Keller: Christian living is therefore a continual realignment process of bringing everything in line with the truth of the gospel.

Ephesians 2: 8-9: For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.

John MacArthur: Three times in this verse [Galatians 2:16] Paul declares that salvation is only through faith in Christ and not by law. The first is general, “a man is not justified;” the second is personal, “we might be justified;” and the third is universal, “no flesh shall be justified.”

It is by Christ and Christ alone.
17 “But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not! 18 For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor [Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: Peter, by his shifts had contradicted himself helplessly as Paul shows by this condition. When he lived as a Gentile, he tore down the ceremonial law. When he lived like a Jew, he tore down salvation by grace.]. 19 For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. 20 I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me [Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: So complete has become Paul’s identification with Christ that his separate personality is merged into that of Christ. . . . It is the union of the vine and the branch.]; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. 21 I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain.” [Barclay: When Paul took God at his word, the midnight of law’s frustration became the sunshine of grace. Ironside: Paul saw . . . that our liberty in Christ actually hung upon the question of whether one would sit down at the dinner table or not with those who had come out from the Gentiles unto the name of our Lord Jesus.]

He gave His life so we could be free. Salvation through faith alone and not works.

Being crucified with Christ refers to the conversion experience, a once for all transaction that has ongoing results. We do not have to be crucified with Christ daily, but daily we pick up our crosses and follow him. We have to daily pick up the responsibilities of discipleship and display the mercy and grace of Christ in our actions. Christ made the ultimate sacrifice for us. He gave His life so that we could be free. Again, salvation through faith alone, not works!

Horse show story

APPLY (SO WHAT IS THE POINT?)

1. It is not about works
2. You have to have faith
3. It’s ALL about Jesus (Jesus died so that we can live in His love and truth)

PERSONALIZE (NOW WHAT DO I DO?)

1. Do not be afraid to speak up
2. Have faith
3. Trust in the Savior

HOMWORK: READ GALATIANS 3:1-9 (NKJV)

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

1 O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified? 2 This only I
want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? 3 Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh? 4 Have you suffered so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain?

5 Therefore He who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, does He do it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?— 6 just as Abraham “believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” 7 Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham. 8 And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, “In you all the nations shall be blessed.” 9 So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.
Galatians: Freedom for Life

Justification by Faith (part 1) (Galatians 3:1-9)

Review (Galatians 2:11-2:21: No Return to the Law)

11 Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed; 12 for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision. 13 And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy.

14 But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before them all, “If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews? 15 We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, 16 knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.

17 “But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not! 18 For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. 19 For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. 20 I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. 21 I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain.”

Introduction

In Galatians 1-2, Paul finishes his defense of himself and now gets to the defense of his message: the justification of the sinner is by faith and not by works.

However, before we get to Paul, a few words about his message and his approach.

Marshall Goldsmith is an executive coach and he wrote the book, What Got You Here Won’t Get You There. Goldsmith’s book sells the idea that the skills that get someone promoted the first few rungs of the corporate ladder may not get them promoted the last few rungs. Changes have to take place between middle and upper management. This principle holds true in many facets of life, but it falls short when describing theology.

In today’s text, Paul in essence says, “What Got You Here Will Get You There.”
Paul’s approach today reminds me of Bloom’s Taxonomy (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). Taxonomy is a fancy word that simply means classification. Bloom’s Taxonomy is a standardized categorization of learning objectives in an educational context. Put simply, it is the classification of the goals of education from simplest to most complex.

Bloom’s Taxonomy starts with remembering and ends with creativity. It says you have to remember before you can apply and evaluate information.

Bloom’s taxonomy is the reason that my approach to Sunday school lessons rarely changes. We read the text (remember), then break it down (understand), then talk about application, then personalize (where I ask you to analyze how you could make real the theology outside these walls).

In the context of Galatians 3:1-9, Paul asks the Galatians if they remember how they started out in the faith, he then challenges their understanding, and finishes by asking them to evaluate whether works or faith will take them to the spiritual finish line. It is a brilliant use of Bloom’s Taxonomy to explain theology. Maybe Bloom and his committee members borrowed Paul’s approach when they developed this taxonomy!

**Outline**

1. Grace and the Lawyer: The Personal Appeal (Galatians 1-2) (April/May)
2. Grace and the Law: The Theological Appeal (Galatians 3-4) (May/June)
3. Grace and the Life: The Application Appeal (Galatians 5-6) (July/August)

**Galatians 3:1-9 (Justification by Faith)**

1. **O foolish Galatians!** [Paul does not waste any time, does he? He continues to be consistently direct if he has something against someone.] **Who has bewitched** [fascinated, slandered, charmed—my personal visual for this word is someone who has hypnotized the Galatians into believing error] **you that you should not obey** [be persuaded by, be convinced by] **the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed** [written about before now] **among you as crucified?**
2. **This only I want to learn from you** [Paul is keeping it very simple for them]: **Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?**
3. **Are you so foolish** [the second time in three verses Paul has called the Galatians foolish]? **Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect** [fulfilled, completed, accomplished] **by the flesh?**
4. **Have you suffered so many things in vain** [for nothing]—if indeed it was in vain [for nothing]?
5 Therefore He who supplies [furnishes, presents, ministers, contributes] the Spirit to you and works [God does the work in our relationship and we have the faith—we tend to mix this up and think that we have to do the real work] miracles [the Greek is dynamis—explosive power] among you, does He do it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? [In essence, Paul is asking: Does God save you because of your works or because of your faith? Faith]—6 just as Abraham “believed God, and it was accounted [the Greek is logizomai and it means to take an inventory or to count] to him for righteousness [this is from Genesis 15:6—Paul is saying Abraham was saved by faith and you all want to be like Abraham, so you have to be saved by faith to be like Abraham].” [God sees the faith and performs an inventory. When He sees works for salvation, God counts that as insufficient and the result is hell. When He sees faith for salvation, God counts that as sufficient and the result is heaven.] 7 Therefore know [an imperative] that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham [What Paul is saying without explicitly saying it is that those that keep the Law for their salvation are not sons of Abraham]. 8 And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify [Justification is a legal declaration of righteousness—it is instantaneous and it is received immediately at salvation and can only be declared by a judge worthy of delivering this type of verdict. I can wear a black robe, bang a gavel, and deliver judgments, but without the positional authority, my judgments carry no weight.] the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, “In you all the nations shall be blessed [this declaration of good news to Abraham in Genesis 12:3 was a summary of the gospel].” 9 So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing [trusty, faithful, believing] Abraham.

Now, back to Bloom’s Taxonomy.

If you start with works, how does Bloom’s Taxonomy work? If you teach works, remember works, and apply works, the creativity that results comes from trying to get around the rules. Salvation by works ends with legalism.

If you start with faith and grace, how does Bloom’s Taxonomy work? If you teach faith and grace, remember faith and grace, and apply faith and grace, the creativity that results tries to use faith and grace. It is a completely different outcome based on the inputs. Salvation by faith and grace ends with liberty and love.

Hans Kung: The finer the net is woven, the more numerous are the holes.

**Apply (So what is the point?)**

1. We can be fascinated with another gospel
2. What saved you then will save you now
3. Salvation has never changed (in the Old Testament it was faith—in the New Testament it was faith—and now it is faith)
4. Justification can only be declared by God, so He sets the terms
PERSONALIZE (NOW WHAT DO I DO?)

1. Regularly review and affirm the **gospel**
2. Stop working for and worrying about your salvation (we cannot do enough to save ourselves—neither the instantaneously part or the ongoing part)
3. Don’t get confused about how Old Testament saints were saved (it was by faith)
4. Know that the conditions to salvation (justification) are faith-based, not works-based

HOMEWORK: READ GALATIANS 3:1-9 (NKJV)

**JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH**

1 O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified? 2 This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? 3 Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh? 4 Have you suffered so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain?

5 Therefore He who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, does He do it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?— 6 just as Abraham “believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” 7 Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham. 8 And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, “In you all the nations shall be blessed.” 9 So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.
**Galatians: Freedom for Life**

Justification by Faith (part 2) *(Galatians 3:1-9)*

**Review (Galatians 3:1-9: Justification by Faith)**

1 O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified? 2 This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? 3 Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh? 4 Have you suffered so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain?

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**Introduction**

Last week, we looked at *Galatians 3:1-9* and we saw it matters what you start with. If you start with the Law, you lean towards legalism. If you start with faith and grace, you lean towards liberty and love. Jared Wilson: The Law points its finger. The gospel gives us His hand. This week, we look at what several theologians have said about this text.

**Outline**

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**Galatians 3:1-9 (Justification by Faith)**

MacArthur: Defection and desertion are contemptible because they involve disloyalty and betrayal. Few things are more tragic or disappointing than a Christian who deserts the purity of the gospel for a false form of Christianity that presumes to improve on the finished work of Christ. Yet that is what may believers in the Galatian churches had done or were in danger of doing because of the Judaizers.

One of the things we must remember as we walk through Galatians is that Paul is refuting the teaching that New Testament believers must keep the Old Testament Law.
There is a comfort level in having firm rules in place with clear boundaries for every aspect of life. However, it is a deceitful comfort because the Law quickly wears us out. Warren Wiersbe: Freedom in Christ was a threat to those who found safety in conformity.

1 O foolish Galatians! [J. B. Phillips New Testament: O you dear idiots of Galatia. Guzik: Paul uses the Greek word anoetos, which has the idea of someone who can think but fails to use their power of perception.] Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth [Guzik: It is wonderful to have a soft, tender heart before God. But some people have softer heads than hearts. Their minds are too accommodating to wrong, unbiblical ideas, and they don’t think things through to see if they really are true or not according to the Bible. This is a sign of spiritual immaturity, even as a baby will stick anything into its mouth. Ironside: Error affects people in that way. . . . They seem to be under a spell.], before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed [literally, placarded or written; Barclay: It is the Greek word prographein that would be used for putting up a poster.] among you as crucified? 2 This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? [J. Vernon McGee: Now we need to be very careful here. The gospel is true irrespective of experience. What experience does is corroborate the gospel. . . . Experience is not to be discounted, but it must be tested by truth. Guzik: The Holy Spirit is not a “prize” earned through the works of the law. MacArthur: God’s way of salvation . . . is by His grace working through man’s faith, Satan’s is the opposite, the way of man’s own effort and work. From the time of Cain’s first works-righteousness offering of a grain instead of an animal sacrifice, unbelieving man has sought to make himself right with God through his own goodness and merit. My flesh has a passionate desire to be recognized for its work. Luther sums up my views on this verse succinctly: There is no middle way between the two. Everything that is not the Holy Spirit, or believing what is preached, is the law. There is no evidence anywhere in Acts that anyone received the Holy Spirit through the teaching of the Law.] 3 Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh? [Tim Keller: Saving faith is faith in God’s provision, not our performance. MacArthur: The Holy Spirit is not the goal of the Christian life but is its source. We must never be deceived into thinking that we are producing holiness—that is the Spirit’s job. Luther: The conscience is always complaining that this is too easy a way. Spurgeon: The reason of this contention lies in the fact that man is not only poor, but proud; not only guilty, but conceited; so that he will not humble himself to he saved upon terms of divine charity. He will not consent to believe God; he prefers to believe in the proud falsehoods of his own heart, which delude him into the flattering hope that he may merit eternal life. Ironside: Scripture distinguishes between new birth by the Spirit and the reception of the Holy Spirit, but there need not necessarily be any interval between our new birth and the reception of the Holy Spirit. . . . In past dispensations men were born of God and yet not indwelt by His Spirit, but with the coming in of the dispensation of the grace of God, when people are born again, the Holy Spirit Himself comes to dwell in them.] 4 Have you suffered so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain? [MacArthur: Having
received new life in Christ by faith, they had been persuaded to live out their new lives by the old way of works. God help us to love the gospel that saved us and to live in the light of the gospel that saves us. Ironside: Some people find it difficult to distinguish between a hatred of false doctrine and a love for the people themselves who have come under the influence of it. When we stand up for the truth of God and warn people against false teaching, that does not imply for one moment that we have any unkind feeling toward those taken up with that false teaching. We love such a person as one for whom Christ died, and pray that he may be delivered from his error and brought into the light of the truth.]

Paul now changes from arguing with their own personal experiences to arguing from experiences from the Scripture.

5 Therefore He who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, does He do it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? [Wiersbe: When a child of God is born into God's family, he has all that he needs spiritually, nothing need be added! . . . It would be strange if [natural] parents had to take a child to the doctor at one month to receive ears, at two months to receive toes, and so on. We do not work to have additional gifts added—everything we need for life and godliness is given to us at the moment of salvation. Ironside: It is the glory of the gospel that when men truly believe they actually become new creatures in Christ Jesus. There were no such signs and wonders accompanying this law-preaching.]—6 just as Abraham “believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” [A common argument at this time for the case for keeping the Law was to be circumcised. The Law clearly taught circumcision. The Judaizers at this time taught it. Those that were teaching Jesus + something = salvation probably taught it. There is only one problem with that. God counted Abraham’s faith as righteousness years before he was circumcised. In response to those that disagreed with Paul about how righteousness is accounted, this from Barclay: Every time a deed of the law was performed, so they said, that was a credit entry in a person’s account with God. J. Vernon McGee: It cannot be said that Abraham was justified by the Law because the Mosaic Law was not given until four hundred years after Abraham. The downstream impacts of salvation by keeping the Law are that everyone before the Law perished and went to hell. MacArthur: Circumcision was only a mark, not the means, of salvation. Likewise, baptism is an outward sign of an inward change. Baptism does not save any more than circumcision saves. J. Vernon McGee: Circumcision was the badge and evidence of Abraham’s faith, just as baptism is the badge and evidence of a believer’s faith today. Guzik: We should be careful to say that Abraham’s faith did not make him righteous. Abraham’s God made him righteous, by accounting his faith to him for righteousness. Poole: His faith was not his righteousness, but God so rewarded his exercise of faith, as that upon it he reckoned (or imputed) . . . the righteousness of him in whom he believed. Luther: Faith says to God, “I believe what you say.”] 7 Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham. [Ironside: Those born of
Abraham’s lineage after the flesh are not really Abraham’s sons unless born again: they must have the faith of Abraham to be his sons. Guzik: At that time, some Jewish Rabbis taught that Abraham stood at the gates of Hell, just to make sure that none of his descendants accidentally slipped by. . . . It’s the same today when people believe God accepts them because they come from a Christian family. God is a Father, not a grandfather; everyone must have their own faith in God.] 8 And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith [Guzik: Paul observes that even back in Abraham’s day it was clear that this blessing of righteousness by faith was intended for every nation, for Gentiles as well as Jews, because God pronounced that in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed (Genesis 12:3).], preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, “In you all the nations shall be blessed.” 9 So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham. [Jared Wilson: I know what Portuguese is. I don’t know Portuguese. Similarly, you can know what grace is—even say some grace words—but not be fluent.]

Ironside: Someone says, "But do you not remember the old story about the two preachers who were in the rowboat, who were debating as to whether salvation were by grace or by works, by faith or by works? The boatman listened to them, and when they were unable to come to a solution of the problem, one said to the boatman, 'You have heard our conversation; what do you think of this?' "'Well,' he said, 'I have been thinking it is like this—I have two oars. I will call this one Faith and this one Works. If I pull only on this oar the boat goes round and round and does not get anywhere. If I pull on that one it goes round and round and gets nowhere. But if I pull on both I get across the river."

And people say that is a beautiful illustration of the fact that salvation is by faith and works. It would be if we were going to heaven in a rowboat, but we are not. We are going through in the infinite grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and like that lost sheep that went astray and was found by the shepherd, we are being carried by the Savior home to glory, and it is not a question of working our way there.

Salvation by works ends with legalism.

Salvation by faith and grace ends with liberty and love.

We will end today with this quote from Luther: To put righteousness in the law, then, is nothing but fighting against the Gospel. Moses with his law requires us to work and give. The Gospel, on the other hand, gives freely and requires of us nothing but to hold out our hands and take what is offered.

**Apply (So what is the point?)**

1. Some will believe false doctrine
2. False doctrine will make us sick
3. Discernment is critical
4. Father Abraham has many sons

**PERSONALIZE (NOW WHAT DO I DO?)**

1. Don’t give up on believers with false doctrine
2. Regularly review and affirm the gospel
3. Know why I believe what I believe
4. Believe in Jesus to be one of them

**HOMEWORK: READ GALATIANS 3:10-18 (NKJV)**

**THE LAW BRINGS A CURSE**

10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.” 11 But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for “the just shall live by faith.” 12 Yet the law is not of faith, but “the man who does them shall live by them.”

13 Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”), 14 that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

**THE CHANGELESS PROMISE**

15 Brethren, I speak in the manner of men: Though it is only a man's covenant, yet if it is confirmed, no one annuls or adds to it. 16 Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, “And to seeds,” as of many, but as of one, “And to your Seed,” who is Christ. 17 And this I say, that the law, which was four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by God in Christ, that it should make the promise of no effect. 18 For if the inheritance is of the law, it is no longer of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise.


**Galatians: Freedom for Life**

The Law Brings a Curse & The Changeless Promise (Galatians 3:10-18)

**Review (Galatians 3:1-9: Justification by Faith)**

1. O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified? 2. This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? 3. Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh? 4. Have you suffered so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain?

5. Therefore He who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, does He do it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?— 6. just as Abraham “believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” 7. Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham. 8. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, “In you all the nations shall be blessed.” 9. So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.

**Introduction**

Where Galatians fits in the Bible

Where Galatians 3:10-18 fits in Galatians

Audience: the Judaizers (Gospel + the Law)

**Outline**

1. Grace and the Lawyer: The Personal Appeal (Galatians 1-2) (April/May)
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**Galatians 3:10-18 (The Law Brings a Curse & The Changeless Promise)**

**The Law Brings a Curse**

10. For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse [Is the Law bad? Ironside: It was a great blessing to Israel to have such instruction, showing them how to live and how to behave themselves, and it kept them from a great many of the sins to which the Gentile nations round about them were given.] of it is written, “Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.” 11. But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for “the
just shall live by faith.” [So why the Law? Ironside: God did not give the law to save man, He gave the law to test him, to make manifest man’s true condition. . . . Suppose a man falling over a precipice reached out his hand as he went over, and caught hold of a chain fastened to some stump in the cliff, and there hung on to the chain. The chain had ten links. How many would have to break to drop the man into the abyss below? Only one. The law is like that chain; when you sinned the first time you broke the link and down you went.] 12 Yet the law is not of faith, but “the man who does them shall live by them.” [Barclay: First of all, those who do that have to stand or fall by their decision; if they choose the law, they have to live by it. . . . Therefore, the inevitable result of trying to get right with God by making the law the principle of life is a curse.]

13 Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”), 14 that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

**The Changeless Promise**

Barclay: When we read passages like this, we have to remember that Paul was a trained Rabbi, an expert in the scholastic methods of the Rabbinic academies. He could, and did, use their methods of argument, which would be completely convincing to a Jew, however difficult it may be for us to understand them.

15 Brethren, I speak in the manner of men: Though it is only a man’s covenant, yet if it is confirmed, no one annuls or adds to it. 16 Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, “And to seeds,” as of many, but as of one, “And to your Seed,” who is Christ. 17 And this I say, that the law, which was four hundred and thirty years later [meaning faith was present far before the Law], cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by God in Christ, that it should make the promise of no effect. [Barclay: Once a covenant has been duly ratified, you cannot alter it or add additional clauses to it. Therefore, the later law cannot alter the earlier way of faith. Ironside: And though the law came four hundred and thirty years after this promise of grace for all nations through Abraham’s seed, it did not alter God’s purpose; it was given only in order to increase man’s sense of his need, to make him realize his sinfulness and helplessness, and lead him to cast himself on the infinite grace of God.]

18 For if the inheritance is of the law, it is no longer of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise.

Law vs. Grace

Justification/salvation is not by the Law but rather by faith.

Faith in what?

- Old Testament: Faith looking forward to the fulfillment of the Law by the messiah
• New Testament: Faith looking back to the work of Christ

What place does the Law have?

• Condemnation of all mankind
• Demonstrates the sinfulness of man
• Law = curse

That the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus

• What is he talking about? The Abrahamic Covenant
• Why mention this? Every Jew knew what this was (example: Dr. Who)
• Covenants (look at what I have done before)
  o Lots of covenants in the Old Testament
    ▪ Noahic Covenant: Genesis 9:8-17
    ▪ Abrahamic Covenant: Genesis 12-17
    ▪ Mosaic Covenant: Exodus 19-24
    ▪ Davidic Covenant: 2 Samuel 7
  o Conditional, unconditional

Covenants

• A covenant is an agreement between two parties
• There are two types of covenants: conditional and unconditional
  o Conditional (or bilateral covenant): an agreement that is binding on both parties. Both parties agree to fulfill certain conditions. If either party fails to meet their responsibilities, the covenant is broken and neither party has to fulfill the expectations of the covenant.
  o Unconditional (or unilateral covenant): an agreement between two parties, but only one of the two parties has to do something. Nothing is required of the other party.
• The Abrahamic Covenant is an unconditional covenant
  o God made promises to Abraham that required nothing of Abraham. Genesis 15:18-21 describes a part of the Abrahamic Covenant.
  o The actual Abrahamic Covenant is found in Genesis 12:1-3.
  o Read more here

Apply (So what is the point?)

1. The Law demonstrates we are unable to qualify on our own for righteousness
2. God's act of redemption is offered without conditions (we have no part other than faith)
3. Everything points to Jesus alone (all of it)
PERSONALIZE (Now what do I do?)
1. Recognize I cannot be right with God on my own
2. Understand I cannot add anything to His gospel
3. Ask: What have I added to the gospel?

HOMEWORK: Read Galatians 3:19-25 (NKJV)
PURPOSE OF THE LAW
19 What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator. 20 Now a mediator does not mediate for one only, but God is one.

21 Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law. 22 But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. 23 But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. 24 Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.
Purpose of the Law (Galatians 3:19-25)

REVIEW (Galatians 3:10-18: The Law Brings a Curse & The Changeless Promise)

10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.” 11 But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for “the just shall live by faith.” 12 Yet the law is not of faith, but “the man who does them shall live by them.”

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INTRODUCTION

In today’s text, Paul talks about the purpose of the Law. The Law was given around 1450 BC—making it ‘in effect’ for about 1/3 of the Old Testament.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Creation</th>
<th>Law</th>
<th>Present day</th>
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<tr>
<td>~4000 BC</td>
<td>~1450 BC</td>
<td>2013 AD</td>
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Flood ~2350 BC  Jesus ~30 AD

Which came first, faith or the Law? Faith. Faith was around before, faith was around during, and faith has been around after.
One of our original knowledge objectives in this series will be answered today: to understand more fully why the Law was given, the Law’s purpose, and how I, as a New Testament believer, relate to the Law. This is a critical lesson in our study of Galatians.

**Outline**

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**Galatians 3:19-25 (The Purpose of the Law)**

19 *What purpose then does the law serve? It was added* [The Law was added. We incorrectly equate the entire Old Testament with the Law.] because of transgressions [The Law was added because of our sin to show us our sin. We needed a visible standard of truth to show us our sinfulness, so God gave the Law. The Law is the term we use to describe the collection of 613 individual laws listed in the Old Testament. *Barclay:* The function of the law is to define sin. But, while the law can and does define sin, it can do nothing whatever to cure it. It is like a doctor who is an expert in diagnosing illnesses but who is helpless to clear up the trouble which has been diagnosed. Luther: There is a double use of the law. One is civil. God has ordained civil laws, indeed all laws, to punish transgressions. Ever law, then, is given to restrain sin. . . . Another use of the law is divine and spiritual—that is (as Paul says), to increase transgressions—that is, to reveal to us our sin, blindness, misery, impiety, ignorance, hatred, and contempt of God. . . . This is the proper use of the law—to terrify the self-righteous. . . . to bridle civil transgressions, and then to reveal spiritual transgressions, . . . it drives us to Christ.], till [until—clearly indicating that the law has a point at which it is no longer in effect—but until when?] the Seed [Jesus] should come [the law was in effect until Jesus came—see Romans 10:4] to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator [a go-between, a reconciler—the Old Testament word is champion—one who steps into the space between two warring camps and fights on behalf of another. Moses is the mediator mentioned here.]. [Barclay: *In the days of Paul, the Rabbis were so impressed by the holiness and remoteness of God that they believed it was quite impossible for him to deal direct with men and women; therefore they introduced the idea that the law was given first to angels and then by the angels to Moses (cf. Acts 7:53; Hebrews 2:2).* Here, Paul is using the Rabbinic ideas of his time. The law is distanced from God by two stages. . . . Compared with the promise, which was given directly by God, the law comes as second-hand.] 20 *Now a mediator does not mediate for one only, but God is one* [Luther: God does not offend anyone and therefore needs no mediator]. [Barclay: To Paul, it was the weakness of the law that it depended on two persons—the law-giver and the law-keeper—and human beings had wrecked it. Grace is entirely from God; we cannot undo it; and surely it is better to

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stuartheights.org/sundayschool  
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depend on the grace of the unchanging God than on the hopeless efforts of helpless human beings.]

21 Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! [Luther: Although the law reveals and increases sin, it is not against God’s promises. Rather, it confirms them, for its true purpose is to humble and (so that we use the law rightly) to prepare us to sign and seek mercy.] For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law [this is as plain as Paul can make it—the Law does not give life—and if it cannot give life, it is not the source of our salvation. The Law serves as a mirror for us to come face to face with the reality of the truth of our sinfulness and our insufficiency. We all look into a mirror every day purposefully be confronted with the truth of our appearance. The Law does that for us relative to our spiritual state. Have mom tell the story of me looking in a mirror. Luther: It [the law] is a mirror that shows us ourselves as sinners, guilty of death and worthy of God’s everlasting wrath and indignation. Ironside: “Suppose that you and I were walking down the street together, and we passed some place of interest, perhaps a museum, that we were eager to see. We went to the window and inquired about the admission fee, and it was $1.00. I looked into my purse and said, ‘Oh, I have left my money at home; I have only 25 cents.’ You looked at your money and found you had only 70 cents. Which one of us would go in first?” “Well,” he said, “under such circumstances neither of us would get in.” “There would be no difference, and yet you have a great deal more money than I; but as far as having what was necessary to pay our way in, there is no difference.” The Law shows us all our shortcomings and our insufficiency to pay our way.]. 22 But the Scripture has confined [shut together, enclosed, included] all under sin [everyone is under the curse of sin—see Genesis 3], that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ [the promise given to Abraham that his Seed would bless the entire earth] might be given to those who believe. 23 But before faith came [literally, before faith made a public appearance or arrived (the arrival of our faith happened when Jesus came)], we were kept under guard [the same word for confined in Galatians 3:22] by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed [apokalypto—the revealing described in Revelation]. 24 Therefore the law was our tutor [Barclay: In the Greek world, there was a household servant called the paidagogos. He was not the schoolmaster. He was usually an old and trusted slave who had been in the family for a long time and who was well respected. He was in charge of the children’s moral welfare, and it was his duty to see that they acquired the qualities essential to mature adulthood. He had one particular duty: every day, he had to take the children to and from school. He had nothing to do with the actual teaching of the children, but it was his duty to take them in safety to the school and deliver them to the teacher. That—said Paul—was like the function of the law. It was there to lead people to Christ. It could not take them into Christ’s presence, but it could take them into a position where they might enter for themselves.] to bring us to Christ [Christ is the true and better mediator that mediates a perfect mediation for all time. Ironside: God did not leave His people without a code of morals until Jesus came.
to set before us the most wonderful moral code the world has ever known, and the law served in a very real way to protect and keep them from much of the immorality, iniquity, vileness, and corruption found in the heathen life round about them. As long as the people lived in obedience, in any measure, to that law, they were saved from a great deal of wickedness and evil.], that we might be justified [declared righteous] by faith [Barclay: What then is the consequence of the law? It is to drive everyone to seek grace, because it has proved human helplessness.]. 25 But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. [Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: The pedagogue is dismissed. We are in the school of the Master.]

Warren Wiersbe: The law has performed its purpose: The Savior has come and the “guardian” is no longer needed. It is tragic that the nation of Israel did not recognize their Messiah when He appeared. God finally had to destroy the temple and scatter the nation, so that today it is impossible for a devoted Jew to practice the faith of his fathers. He has no altar, no priesthood, no sacrifice, no temple, no king (Hosea 3:4). All of these have been fulfilled in Christ, so that any man—Jew or Gentile—who trusts Christ becomes a child of God.

Luther: The law is not perpetual; its end is Jesus Christ. He is eternal (Romans 6:9), and therefore the time of grace is also eternal.

APPLY (SO WHAT IS THE POINT?)

1. The Law has a purpose (present tense)
2. New Testament believers are not under the Law (it does not apply to us)
3. Jesus fulfilled the Law
4. Jesus is better than me

PERSONALIZE (NOW WHAT DO I DO?)

1. Know that the purpose of the Law is to bring me face to face with the reality of my sin (and the purpose of the Gospel is to bring me face to face with Jesus—the only one capable of dealing with the reality of my sin)
2. Stop working for and worrying about my salvation
3. Trust in Jesus’ fulfillment of the Law
4. Praise His name

HOMEWORK: READ GALATIANS 3:26-4:7 (NKJV)

SONS AND HEIRS

26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ
Jesus. 29 And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.

1 Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all, 2 but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father. 3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world. 4 But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

6 And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, “Abba, Father!” 7 Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.
GALATIANS: FREEDOM FOR LIFE

Sons and Heirs (Galatians 3:26-4:7)

REVIEW (Galatians 3:19-25: Purpose of the Law)

19 What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator. 20 Now a mediator does not mediate for one only, but God is one.

21 Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law. 22 But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. 23 But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. 24 Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.

INTRODUCTION

Through faith in Jesus Christ, we can become sons and heirs of God—the ultimate Father

OUTLINE

1. Grace and the Lawyer: The Personal Appeal (Galatians 1-2) (April/May)
2. Grace and the Law: The Theological Appeal (Galatians 3-4) (May/June)
3. Grace and the Life: The Application Appeal (Galatians 5-6) (July/August)

Galatians 3:26-4:7 (Sons and Heirs)

26 For you are all [all] sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ [Guzik: Here, using the picture of baptism, Paul illustrates what it means to have faith in Christ Jesus. He doesn't say we were baptized into water, but baptized into Christ. Just as in water baptism a person is immersed in water, so when we place our faith in Christ Jesus, we are immersed in Jesus.] have put on Christ [We are clothed with Christ. Life Application Bible Commentary: The more we grow, the more we fit into what Christ has given us.]. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus [Barclay: At that time, the Rabbis quoted a morning prayer that was popular among many Jews of that day. In that prayer, the Jewish man would thank God that he was not born a Gentile, a slave, or a woman. Paul takes each of these categories and shows them to
be equal in Jesus. Stott: When we say that Christ has abolished these distinctions, we
mean not that they do not exist, but that they no longer create any barriers to
fellowship. Barclay: In the Jewish morning prayer, which Paul must have used all his pre-
Christian life, a Jewish man thanks God that ‘You have not made me a Gentile, a slave
or a woman.’ Paul takes that prayer and reverses it. The old distinctions have gone; all
are now one in Christ.\] 29 And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and
heirs \[and\] is better] according to the promise.

1 Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child \[not yet legally recognized as an
adult\], does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all, 2 but is under
guardians and stewards \[the heir is subject\] until the time appointed by the father. 3
Even so we, when we were children \[Barclay: For Paul, those who governed their lives
by slavery to the law were children; those who had learned the way of grace had
become mature in the Christian faith.\], were in bondage under the elements \[basic
principles\] of the world. 4 But \[Life Application Study Bible: That little word offered hope
to humanity\] when the fullness of the time had come \[It was the right time, as appointed
by the Father\], God sent forth His Son \[Fleming: It is a common heresy to deny the
Sonship of Jesus Christ prior to His arrival on earth. . . . He was the Son when He was
sent and He was the Son prior to His arrival.\], born of a woman \[clothed\ in humanity\], born
under the law \[the heir is subject\], 5 to redeem those who were under the law, that we
might receive the adoption as sons.

6 And because you \[all y’all\] are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your
hearts, crying out, “Abba, Father!” 7 Therefore you \[Amy Valovcin: There is a change
from the plural in Galatians 4:6 to the singular in Galatians 4:7—making it personal\] are
no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. \[Yancy:
When I attended a Bible college, I observed people who followed the rules and missed
God, and people who broke the rules and missed God. What burdens me, though, is
that group of people who still believe that they missed God because they broke the
rules. They never heard the melody of the gospel of grace.\]

**APPLY (SO WHAT IS THE POINT?)**

Through faith in Jesus Christ:

1. **God** is your Daddy
2. The Spirit intercedes for you
3. Your Father delights in and **sings** over you
4. Our Heavenly Father is limitless

**PERSONALIZE (NOW WHAT DO I DO?)**

1. Answer the question: Who is **my** (D/d)addy?
2. **Cry** out to the Father
3. Know that the Father desires a relationship with me.
4. Share Him.

**Homework: Read Galatians 4:8-4:20 (NKJV)**

**Fears for the Church**

8 But then, indeed, when you did not know God, you served those which by nature are not gods. 9 But now after you have known God, or rather are known by God, how is it that you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage? 10 You observe days and months and seasons and years. 11 I am afraid for you, lest I have labored for you in vain.

12 Brethren, I urge you to become like me, for I became like you. You have not injured me at all. 13 You know that because of physical infirmity I preached the gospel to you at the first. 14 And my trial which was in my flesh you did not despise or reject, but you received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus. 15 What then was the blessing you enjoyed? For I bear you witness that, if possible, you would have plucked out your own eyes and given them to me. 16 Have I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?

17 They zealously court you, but for no good; yes, they want to exclude you, that you may be zealous for them. 18 But it is good to be zealous in a good thing always, and not only when I am present with you. 19 My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you, 20 I would like to be present with you now and to change my tone; for I have doubts about you.
**Galatians: Freedom for Life**

Fears for the Church *(Galatians 4:8-20)*

**Review (Galatians 3:26-4:7: Sons and Heirs)*

26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.

1 Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all, 2 but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father. 3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world. 4 But when the fullness of the time had come [the right time], God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons [the right plan].

6 And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, “Abba, Father!” [the right relationship]” 7 Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ [the right standing before God].

**Outline**

1. Grace and the Lawyer: The Personal Appeal *(Galatians 1-2)* (April/May)
2. Grace and the Law: The Theological Appeal *(Galatians 3-4)* (May/June)
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**Galatians 4:8-20 (Fears for the Church)*

8 But then, indeed, when you did not know God, you served those which by nature are not gods [Without Christ, without His work, without grace that only God can provide, without the full knowledge of Him, we are all but idolaters. Webster: idolater: a person that admires intensely and often blindly a person or thing that is not usually a subject of worship. Martin Luther: Anyone who falls from grace to the law is in just as much danger as someone who falls from grace to idolatry, for without Christ there is nothing but idolatry, an idle and false imagination of God. Webster: idolatry: immoderate (excessive, inordinate, devilish) attachment or devotion to something or someone. Of course, we do not have this problem, do we? We, as Christians do not worship Aphrodite (the goddess of love), or Demeter (the god of work/harvest), or Apollo (the god of music), or Poseidon (the god of seas/rivers, i.e., recreation), or Hera (the
godess of the family), or Hestia (the goddess of the home). Of course not! We are too wise for that now (Athena—the goddess of wisdom.). 9 But now [Why? You were resting in the arms of grace. You were trusting solely in the work of Christ. You had it all right deep in your soul, then] after you have known God [you did what was right, you got in a right relationship with God], or rather are known by God [This is more important and has a better emphasis. How many active and busy church members will stand before the throne of God and hear words like those of Matthew 7:23b: I never knew you?], how is it that you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage? [Sean McGarvey: Paul wants to wake them up . . . with a slap in the face with their own hand] 10 You observe days and months and seasons and years. [There is nothing wrong with this in and of itself, unless you believe (as these Judaizers were teaching) that you must observe these to be saved, kept saved, or maintain a right relationship with God. Judaizers/legalists were leading them into observing the law. Too many are willing to lead others to say, “It is Jesus plus something. You must also do these things to get right with God, or continue to be right with God.” Wiersbe: One of the tragedies of legalism is that it gives the appearance of spiritual maturity when, in reality, it leads the believer back into a “second childhood” of Christian experience. Yancy: At first glance legalism seems hard, but actually freedom in Christ is the harder way. It is relatively easy not to murder, hard to reach out in love; easy to avoid a neighbor’s bed, hard to keep a marriage alive; easy to pay taxes, hard to serve the poor. When living in freedom, I must remain open to the Spirit for guidance. Living in freedom is difficult because we must keep our hearts open and receptive, where they are vulnerable to the attacks of the enemy, available to being hurt by others, and penetrable by God for leading the lost, directing the confused, healing the hurt, correcting the wrong, lifting the fallen, etc. We want to protect ourselves from the things that we deem too painful and turn to rules/laws or insulate our lives with idols. Instead of our focus on Christ, it is on activities, work, family, etc. Then. He does not have His rightful place in our hearts.] 11 I am afraid for you, lest I have labored for you in vain [I worked hard to help you open your hearts to the truth; to freedom. Why go back to this bondage? I know personally where this road leads, and you do not want to be on it.].

12 Brethren, I urge you to become like me [faithful to the truth, clinging to freedom, trusting solely in the work of Christ, and accepting fully the grace God], for I became like you [Guzik: Paul can say to the Galatian Christians, “When it comes to legalism, I know where you are at. I used to live my whole life trying to be accepted by God because of what I did. In that regard, I became like you and saw that it was a dead end. Take it from someone who knows where you are coming from.”]. You have not injured me at all [This is not about personal hurt, this is about freedom, getting it right. This is for your benefit, that I share this.]. 13 You know that because of physical infirmity [lacking strength/weakness] I preached the gospel to you at the first [Was the sickness self-imposed from John Mark abandoning the group? Was it from his apparent problems with his eyes? Some speculate that since the first part of this trip before he
came to them was spent traveling through swampy areas, he had contracted some form of malaria. Could it be the effects from being stoned to death and dragged outside of a previous city he had stopped at? What infirmity/illness he experienced, we can only speculate on.]

14 And my trial which was in my flesh you did not despise or reject, but you received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus [We love and follow our leaders, not because of how they look, how much charisma they have, how great a story they tell, nor how well they preach; but, we trust their leadership and follow them based on their commitment to the truth and their desire to share that with others. We must always ask, “Do those I follow desire for me freedom and the grace of God or yearn more for me to follow them?”].

15 What then was the blessing you enjoyed? [What happened to your joy? You rejoiced in the grace you received in your newfound freedom.] For I bear you witness that, if possible, you would have plucked out your own eyes and given them to me [Plucked out eyes would do no one any good. This is like us saying today, “I would give my right arm for this person. What they have shown me, what they have given to me is priceless.”].

16 Have I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth? [Proverbs 27:6: Faithful are the wounds of a friend, But the kisses of an enemy are deceitful. Sometimes we need the truth more than we need to feel good about any certain situation. Thanks go out to all those who were willing to share the truth in love, rather than to stroke an ego or allow any of us to continue down a wrong and potentially harmful course!]

17 They zealously court you, but for no good [using love, many cults and some Christian legalistic sects can woo those who are not grounded in or firmly clinging to truth]; yes, they want to exclude [literally: lock you up] you, that you may be zealous for them. 18 But it is good to be zealous in a good thing always, and not only when I am present with you [Zealousness for truth is always a good thing. Beware of being zealous for that which is not founded on truth. Those we often label as terrorists are most often zealots for a cause that originates from the Deceiver].

19 My little children [You can sense the concern and love for this congregation—just like the love Christ expressed over Jerusalem during passion week (Matthew 23:37).], for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you, 20 I would like to be present with you now and to change my tone; for I have doubts about you [Not about their salvation per se, but their adherence to truth—to what he had originally taught them].

**Apply (So what is the point?)**

1. Our fallen nature often makes it easy for us to “fall away” from the truth that we have known
2. It can be easy to follow wrong teaching or doctrine from those who look or sound good
3. Grace, though not easy, is still free

**Personalize (Now what do I do?)**
2. Learn to recognize truth-tellers. Do not follow because of looks or actions. Many will be lead into a Christ-less eternity by those who “mean well.”
3. Know Truth! John 14:6: Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.” Invest your life and time in the One who gave you life—In the One who gave you freedom. Get to know Him well.

**HOMEWORK: READ GALATIANS 4:21-31 (NKJV)**

**TWO COVENANTS**

21 Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law? 22 For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman. 23 But he who was of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman through promise, 24 which things are symbolic. For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar—25 for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children—26 but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all. 27 For it is written:

“Rejoice, O barren,
You who do not bear!
Break forth and shout,
You who are not in labor!
For the desolate has many more children
Than she who has a husband.”

28 Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise. 29 But, as he who was born according to the flesh then persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, even so it is now. 30 Nevertheless what does the Scripture say? “Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.” 31 So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman but of the free.
**Galatians: Freedom for Life**

Two Covenants (Galatians 4:21-31)

**Review (Galatians 4:8-20: Fears for the Church)**

8 But then, indeed, when you did not know God, you served those which by nature are not gods. 9 But now after you have known God, or rather are known by God, how is it that you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage? 10 You observe days and months and seasons and years. 11 I am afraid for you, lest I have labored for you in vain.

12 Brethren, I urge you to become like me, for I became like you. You have not injured me at all. 13 You know that because of physical infirmity I preached the gospel to you at the first. 14 And my trial which was in my flesh you did not despise or reject, but you received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus. 15 What then was the blessing you enjoyed? For I bear you witness that, if possible, you would have plucked out your own eyes and given them to me. 16 Have I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?

17 They zealously court you, but for no good; yes, they want to exclude you, that you may be zealous for them. 18 But it is good to be zealous in a good thing always, and not only when I am present with you. 19 My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you, 20 I would like to be present with you now and to change my tone; for I have doubts about you.

**Introduction**

Immediately after challenging his listeners to know the truth, Paul finishes this two-chapter section by teeing up the final section. As a review, we have looked at Paul’s personal appeal to the Galatians to listen to him because of his apostolic authority. We watched him walk through how the theology of law cannot exist concurrently with the theology of grace. In today’s text, Paul gets tactical, gives the Galatians an Old Testament history lesson, and shows how God is telling a bigger story.

**Outline**

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**Galatians 4:21-31 (Two Covenants)**
21 Tell me, you who desire to be under the law [Is Paul writing to those that are the Judaizers or those under the influence of the Judaizers? I think probably to both. So, why would someone want to be under the Law? Because checking a list makes me feel good about my performance. Living according to grace and love makes Jesus look good because only through the filling of the Holy Spirit can that be done.], do you not hear the law? [Paul acts as if the Law is alive telling a story. And it was. It was pointing to Jesus the entire time. Jesus is the fulfillment of the Law. Living under the Law was oppressive. Living under grace and love is freeing (the point that Paul is teeing up in this passage).] 22 For it is written that Abraham had two sons [Pop quiz: what are their names? Ishmael and Isaac. This story is found in Genesis 16-18. If you want to understand today’s text, you have to be familiar with Genesis 16-18. Paul does not tell the entire story, but rather assumes his readers know it—and good Jews would have known it for sure—certainly the Judaizers would know it well.]: the one [Ishmael] by a bondwoman [Hagar], the other [Isaac] by a freewoman [Sarah]. 23 But he who was of the bondwoman [Ishmael] was born according to the flesh [Abraham had fleshly faith in Abraham to provide for Abraham. Abraham did not trust God to provide via God’s plan for marriage—one man and one woman for the duration of their natural lives], and he [Isaac] of the freewoman [Sarah] through promise [The promise that God gave to Abraham that God would give him a son. Here is the reality—when God promises to do something, He never violates his previously written word to accomplish it. God is supremely consistent with Himself. And we are not—and if you need an example of that, think of how hard it is to be consistent in front of your own children relative to discipline.], 24 which things are symbolic [You should highlight, underline, circle, and star this phrase in your Bible. The Old Testament really happened. It also is symbolic for other things. It all points to Jesus. Most people would agree that the New Testament is about Jesus. The Old Testament is as well.]. For these are the two covenants [contracts]: the one from Mount Sinai [the location that the Law was given on earth] which gives birth to bondage [if we live according to the Law, we are under bondage to it—it ties our hands to a set of rules], which is Hagar—25 for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children [meaning, the Jews that are alive then were still under bondage to the Law—because rules will never set you free]—26 but the Jerusalem above [heaven] is free, which is the mother of us all. 27 For it is written:

“Rejoice, O barren,
You who do not bear!
Break forth and shout,
You who are not in labor!
For the desolate has many more children
Than she who has a husband.”
28 Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise [i.e., not under the Law]. 29 But, as he who was born according to the flesh then persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, even so it is now [i.e., the Judaizers are persecuting those not under the Law—and legalism and legalists are still pointing fingers]. 30 Nevertheless what does the Scripture say? “Cast out the bondwoman and her son [symbolically the Law], for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.” 31 So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman but of the free [we are not under the Law].

Warren Wiersbe: As far as God’s dealings with men are concerned, God began with grace. In Eden, God provided for Adam and Eve by grace. Even after they sinned, in His grace He provided them with coats of skins for a covering (Genesis 3:21). He did not give them laws to obey as a way of redemption; instead, He gave them a gracious promise to believe: the promise of a victorious Redeemer (Genesis 3:15).

Luther: We ought, therefore, to be careful to learn the doctrine of justification, for that is our only support against these infinite slanders and offenses, and our comfort in all our temptations and persecutions.

**Apply (So What Is the Point?)**
1. We are **not** under the Law
2. God is telling a **bigger** story
3. The Law is bondage and grace is **freedom**

**Personalize (Now What Do I Do?)**
1. Constantly reevaluate my life to see if there is any **Law** in me
2. Look for the bigger story and share it
3. Cling to **grace**

**Homework: Read Galatians 5:1-6 (NKJV)**

**Christian Liberty**
1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage. 2 Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing. 3 And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law. 4 You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace. 5 For we through the Spirit eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. 6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love.
**Galatians: Freedom for Life**

Christian Liberty *(Galatians 5:1-6)*

**Review (Galatians 4:21-31: Two Covenants)**

21 Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law? 22 For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman. 23 But he who was of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman through promise. 24 which things are symbolic. For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar— 25 for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children— but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all. 27 For it is written:

“All who desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman through promise, which things are symbolic. For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar— for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children— but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all.”

28 Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise. 29 But, as he who was born according to the flesh then persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, even so it is now. 30 Nevertheless what does the Scripture say? “Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.” So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman but of the free.

**Introduction**

One of our original knowledge objectives in our study of Galatians was, “to understand more fully the terms “justification by faith” and “Christian liberty.” We have already looked deeply at “justification by faith.” Today, we look at, “Christian liberty.” This is, perhaps, one of the most misunderstood terms in all of Christendom. I pray that great clarity is brought today.

**Outline**

1. Grace and the Lawyer: The Personal Appeal *(Galatians 1-2)* (April/May)
2. Grace and the Law: The Theological Appeal *(Galatians 3-4)* (May/June)
3. Grace and the Life: The Application Appeal *(Galatians 5-6)* (July/August)
Galatians 5:1-6 (Christian Liberty)

1 Stand fast [an imperative; be stationary, stand still, persevere—in the face of the Judaizers] therefore in the liberty [freedom, liberty] by which Christ has made us free [make free, liberate, deliver, exempt from the bondage of sin—in the aorist tense—meaning past, present, and future; Christ fulfilled the Law so we do not have to and he placed us in a place of freedom; Guzik: Our freedom from the tyranny of having to earn our own way to God, the freedom from sin and guilt and condemnation, freedom from the penalty and the power and eventually freedom from the presence of sin. This is not liberty to do what we please. Christian liberty is about freedom from the Law, and do not be entangled [an imperative; in a hold (MMA)] again with a yoke of bondage [slavery; William Tyndale’s English translation: And wrap not yourselves again. It is as if Paul is saying, “Stop going back to the Law. You will only get tangled up in something you have been delivered from.”] Luther: Like oxen that toil in the yoke all day, and in the evening are turned out to graze along the dusty road, and at last are marked for slaughter when they can no longer draw the burden, so those who seek to be justified by the Law are ‘entangled with the yoke of bondage,’ and when they have grown old and broken-down in the service of the Law they have earned for their perpetual reward God’s wrath and everlasting torment.].

2 Indeed [See here] I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit [benefit, profit] you nothing [we cannot live in both worlds—be firmly planted in freedom or in the Law; Lightfoot: Circumcision is the seal of the law. He who willingly and deliberately undergoes circumcision, enters upon a compact to fulfill the law. To fulfill it therefore he is bound, and he cannot plead the grace of Christ; for he has entered on another mode of justification. Geneva Study Bible: Baptism is a sign of the new covenant, just as circumcision was the sign of the old covenant. Calvin: Whoever wants to have a half—Christ loses the whole. Barnes: A man who can be justified by his own obedience, does not need the aid or the merit of another. For those Christians that are circumcised, do not panic. Paul is not saying if we are circumcised that we cannot have Jesus. He is saying if we start down this path for our salvation that Christ will profit us nothing because we are trusting in ourselves. Paul will make himself clear in Galatians 5:6 relative to his views on circumcision.].

3 And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor [obligated] to keep [in the aorist tense—meaning past, present, and future] the whole law [we are either all in or all out—we cannot pick and choose what part of the Law we want to keep—it is all or nothing (it is nothing like a buffet salad bar). Guzik: Why must we keep the whole law? Because if we come to God on the basis of our own law keeping, then our law-keeping must be perfect.].

4 You have become estranged [inactive, inoperative, idle, without force or influence, abolished, separated (perhaps a graphic play on words here?], loosed, terminated, rendered useless, of no effect, null and void; not just unplugged from the wall, but the battery removed as well from a laptop] from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from [a better translation is, ‘fallen out of,’ fallen down from, fallen off of] grace [Jim’s perspective: Life]
Application Study Bible: To decide on legalism as the way of salvation is to “fall away” from grace. It's like throwing away the life preserver when lost at sea.]. 5 For we through the Spirit eagerly wait [literally, we are separated to look patiently for] for the hope [expectation, confidence] of righteousness by faith. 6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails [has strength or power over] anything [Coffman: neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is relevant to Christianity. Guzik: The only harm is trusting is something that is completely irrelevant!], but faith working [operating, working] through love [agape].

Guzik: You have faith? Wonderful; but it must be faith working through love. If your faith doesn’t work, it isn’t real faith. If it doesn’t work through love, it isn’t real faith. But your love alone isn’t enough; your love must also have faith; an abiding trust in who Jesus is and what He did for us.

Barnes: A mere intellectual assent to the truth may leave the heart cold and unaffected; mere orthodoxy, however bold, and self-confident, and “sound,” may not be inconsistent with contentions, and strifes, and logomachies, and divisions. The true faith is that which is seen in benevolence, in love to God, in love to all who bear the Christian name; in a readiness to do good to all mankind. This shows that the heart is affected by the faith that is held; and this is the nature and design of all true religion.

APPLY (SO WHAT IS THE POINT?)
1. Christian liberty has nothing to do with doing what I want to do
2. Christian liberty has everything to do with Jesus setting me free (from bondage to the Law)
3. Faith working through love is evidence of Christian liberty

PERSONALIZE (NOW WHAT DO I DO?)
1. Praise God for freedom from the Law
2. Praise God for Jesus’ deliverance
3. Lovingly work out my faith

HOMEWORK: READ GALATIANS 5:7-15 (NKJV)

Love Fulfills the Law
7 You ran well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? 8 This persuasion does not come from Him who calls you. 9 A little leaven leavens the whole lump. 10 I have confidence in you, in the Lord, that you will have no other mind; but he who troubles you shall bear his judgment, whoever he is.

11 And I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why do I still suffer persecution? Then the offense of the cross has ceased. 12 I could wish that those who trouble you would even cut themselves off!
13 For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. 14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” 15 But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!
**Galatians: Freedom for Life**

Love Fulfills the Law *(Galatians 5:7-15)*

**Review (Galatians 5:1-6: Christian Liberty)**

1. Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage. 2. Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing. 3. And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law. 4. You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace. 5. For we through the Spirit eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. 6. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love.

**Introduction**

In today’s text, Paul balances several hard truths with encouragement—the message itself is an example of communicating truth in love.

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**Galatians 5:7-15 (Love Fulfills the Law)**

7. You ran well [beautifully, honorably (we start with encouragement)]. Who hindered you from obeying [being convinced/persuaded by] the truth? 8. This persuasion [ability to be treacherously persuaded] does not come from Him who calls you [i.e., this did not come from Jesus]. 9. A little [mikros] leaven [fermentation—the root word means to boil up: Wikipedia: Used in doughs and batters that causes a foaming action which lightens and softens the finished product. The leavening agent incorporates gas bubbles into the dough. Compare this with the biblical definition of vanity—emptiness and a lack of weight. Contrast this with the biblical concept of truth—heaviness and substance. Leaven lightens things up and creates pockets of emptiness.] leavens the whole lump [dough; leaven persuades the dough to move; Jesus Himself warned His disciples about the leaven in the doctrine of the Pharisees in Matthew, Mark, and Luke; Life Application...]

Jim Fleming

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Study Bible: Jesus used yeast as an example of how a small among of evil can affect a large group of people. Warren Wiersbe: Every Christian has the responsibility to watch for the beginnings of legalism, that first bit of yeast that infects the fellowship and eventually grows into a serious problem. I could tell many stories of families that have passed through Stuart Heights and left to chase after some bits of leaven.]. 10 I have confidence in you [again with the encouragement], in the Lord [Psalm 20:7: Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; But we will remember the name of the Lord our God.], that you will have no other mind [i.e., I believe you will not believe their teachings]; but he who troubles [stirs, agitates] you shall bear [carry] his judgment, whoever he is [whether he has status, power, or some positional authority; Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: It seems unlikely that Paul knew precisely who the leader was].

11 And I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision [synonymous for the Law and Judaism—the very thing that Paul was writing this letter to the Galatians about—warning them about this doctrine], why do I still suffer persecution? Then the offense [stumbling block, trap stick] of the cross has ceased [is inoperable; Guzik: When we trust in legalism, we believe that we can, at least in part, save ourselves. This takes away the offense of the cross, which should always offend the nature of fallen man. Stott: ‘Circumcision’ stands for a religion of human achievement, of what man can do by his own good works; ‘Christ’ stands for a religion of divine achievement, of what God has done through the finished work of Christ. ‘Circumcision’ means law, works, and bondage; ‘Christ’ means grace, faith and freedom. Every man must choose . . . And behind our choice lurks our motive. It is when we are bent on flattering ourselves and others that we choose circumcision. Before the cross we have to humble ourselves.]. 12 I could wish that those who trouble [disturb, make an uproar, to stir up, excite, unsettle, in the sense of a commotion that would drive you from your home] you would even cut themselves off [amputated their private areas entirely—not just circumcise. Guzik: Paul’s idea here is something like this: “If cutting will make you righteous, why don’t you do like the pagan priests, go all the way and castrate yourself?” Morris rightly observes, “This was a dreadful thing to wish, but then the teaching was a dreadful thing to inflict on young Christians.”]!

13 For you, brethren [again—positive], have been called to liberty [remember from last week’s lesson that Christian liberty is all about freedom from the Law—not freedom to do whatever we want]; only do not use liberty as an opportunity [base of operations, starting point, opportunity (Shooter)] for the flesh, but through love [agape—in fact, there is a definite article in front of this word in the Greek that is not translated in the NKJV—it should be, ‘the’ love’] serve [be in bondage, do service to, obey, submit to] one another [mutually]. 14 For all the law is fulfilled [filled up to the brim, completed, perfected, realized, crammed, leveled up, furnished, satisfied, executed, verified, accomplished, finished] in one word, even in this: “You shall love [agape—the verb your neighbor] [the root of the English word comes from two words—nigh (meaning...
near), and boor (meaning rude and/or insensitive persons—especially peasants)] as yourself." [Luther: If you want to know how you ought to love your neighbor, ask yourself how much you love yourself. If you were to get into trouble or danger, you would be glad to have the love and help of all men. You do not need any book of instructions to teach you how to love your neighbor. All you have to do is to look into your own heart, and it will tell you how you ought to love your neighbor as yourself.] 15 But if you bite and devour one another, beware [an imperative meaning to look] lest you be consumed [a compound word in Greek—the first means in the midst of and the second means to take for oneself, to prefer, to choose by vote in an election—the sense seems to be if we bit and devour each other we quickly devolve into political type behavior] by one another [Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: There is a famous story of two snakes that grabbed each other by the tail and each swallowed the other]!

Warren Wiersbe: Christian liberty is not a license to sin but an opportunity to serve. . . . The formula looks something like this:
liberty + love = service to others
liberty – love = license (slavery to sin)

**Apply (So What Is The Point?)**
1. The truth is the focus
2. Liberty is an opportunity to love and serve
3. A little error in soteriology is a big error

**Personalize (Now What Do I Do?)**
1. Keep my eyes on the truth
2. Love and serve
3. Get it right and constantly go back to the gospel

**Homework: Read Galatians 5:16-26 (NKJV)**

**Walking in the Spirit (Part 1)**
16 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

19 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.
22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. 24 And those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. 26 Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.


**Galatians: Freedom for Life**

Walking in the Spirit (part 1) *(Galatians 5:16-26)*

**Review (Galatians 5:7-15: Love Fulfills the Law)**

7 You ran well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? 8 This persuasion does not come from Him who calls you. 9 A little leaven leavens the whole lump. 10 I have confidence in you, in the Lord, that you will have no other mind; but he who troubles you shall bear his judgment, whoever he is.

11 And I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why do I still suffer persecution? Then the offense of the cross has ceased. 12 I could wish that those who trouble you would even cut themselves off!

13 For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. 14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” 15 But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!

**Introduction**

After illustrating how love fulfills the Law, Paul now transitions to a focus on the Spirit.

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**Galatians 5:16-26 (Walking in the Spirit)**

This week: Make a conscious effort to be known for a relationship with God

16 I say then: Walk [1. What you are known for—your modus operandi; **What would God write on your tombstone Facebook profile?** in the Spirit] [2. Continual habit: keep walking in the Spirit. Paul is answering his previous context, “I say then.” *Pneumati peripateite*: literally, keep on walking in the spirit.], and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusts [pulls like a game of tug-of-war] against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish [3. You cannot control your flesh. The Greek word for lust did not have the negative connotation that it does today. Only through repeated activity do we learn anything. Malcolm Gladwell illustrates this in *Outliers* by the 10,000-hour rule. **Are you putting in the time?** Discipline can become a crutch of its own.]. 18 But if you
are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law [In this game of spiritual tug-of-war, drop the rope, and walk in the Spirit. 4. Paul brings it home to the Galatians. 5. Paul’s singular focus: If you focus on the one, you will not do the other.].

Next week: The war between the Spirit and the flesh

19 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. 24 And those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. 26 Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

Apply (So what is the point?)
1. A singular focus of: walk in the Spirit
2. We must keep walking in the Spirit (this is not a checklist, but rather a relationship with God and an understanding of self)
3. The lust of the flesh is equal to being under the Law

Personalize (Now what do I do?)
1. Do not try to keep myself from being bad, rather be good
2. Do what it takes for me (know myself)
3. _________________________________ [What would Paul put here for me? Am I putting in the time? What is my distraction?]

Homework: Read Galatians 5:16-26 (NKJV)

Walking in the Spirit (Part 2)
16 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

19 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.
But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.
**Galatians: Freedom for Life**

Walking in the Spirit (part 2) *(Galatians 5:16-26)*

**Review (Galatians 5:7-15: Love Fulfills the Law)**

7 You ran well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? 8 This persuasion does not come from Him who calls you. 9 A little leaven leavens the whole lump. 10 I have confidence in you, in the Lord, that you will have no other mind; but he who troubles you shall bear his judgment, whoever he is.

11 And I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why do I still suffer persecution? Then the offense of the cross has ceased. 12 I could wish that those who trouble you would even cut themselves off!

13 For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. 14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” 15 But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!

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**Galatians 5:16-26 (Walking in the Spirit)**

Last week: Make a conscious effort to be known for a relationship with God

16 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

This week: The war between the Spirit and the flesh

19 Now the works of the flesh are evident [1. Statements outside the “bad” list], which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just
as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God [God gives the believer the opportunity and choice not to sin].

22 But the fruit of the Spirit [2. Statements outside the “good” list] is [a life known for; Warren Wiersbe: We must remember that this fruit is produced to be eaten, not to be admired and put on display] love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law [this is a reference back to the Galatians; similar to the self-evident comment—this is Sunday school, not Saturday school]. 24 And those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires [historically, there have been many interpretations of this passage, but crucified with the flesh = able not to sin (this is an opportunity because pre-Jesus, we did not have an opportunity not to sin)—and this does not mean that life is now perfect]. 25 If we live [walk] in the Spirit, let us also walk [no flesh] in the Spirit. 26 Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another [overstepping the Spirit back into the flesh—this is the overexpression (we spend more time here than we think we do)].

3. Again, there is a single focus: If we focus on the Spirit, we will not be in the flesh.

What does overexpression of each of these fruits look like? (too much fruit rots)

- Love: helicopter mom
- Joy: giddy, not serious, insincere
- Peace: passive, no boundaries or balance
- Longsuffering: being walked on, low self-worth
- Kindness: taken advantage of
- Goodness: too sweet
- Faithfulness: 20% doing 80% of the work, overworked, being taken advantage of
- Gentleness: ineffective, not working at all
- Self-control: inactivity, stoic, Vulcan-like, extreme discipline

Apply (So what is the point?)
1. These things were known but not acted on
2. Think through, “What are you known for?"
3. Conceited = over expression

Personalize (Now what do I do?)
1. Apply it (just because I know something does not mean I apply it)
2. Know that if I have a lifestyle of sin, I am most likely not a believer (I may not have the key ingredient—the Holy Spirit)—so I should examine myself to see if I am in the faith and if I am a believer, I should examine myself to see if I am doing too much/too little of any of the fruits
3. Focus on the Spirit
HOMEWORK: READ GALATIANS 6:1-6:5 (NKJV)

BEAR AND SHARE THE BURDENS

1 Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. 2 Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. 3 For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. 4 But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. 5 For each one shall bear his own load.
REVIEW (Galatians 5:16-26: Walking in the Spirit)

16 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

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INTRODUCTION

As soon as Paul finishes his classic section on walking in the Spirit, he follows it up with a paragraph reminding us what to do when we do not walk in the Spirit. Paul reminds us that relationships are critical. Ironside calls Galatians 6, “Grace in action.” Obviously, grace is not about working—grace is a gift, but when the gift is working properly under the power of the Holy Spirit, Galatians 6 is what grace looks like in action.

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Galatians 6:1-5 (Bear and Share the Burdens)

1 Brethren, if a man is overtaken [a compound word: before + token/seized/grabbed; usually used of eating before all parties in the meal have arrived] in any trespass [fall, falling aside, lapse, deviation from truth, or sin; Barclay: The best of men slip up. The word Paul uses (paraptoma) does not mean a deliberate sin; but a slip as might come to a man on an icy road or a dangerous path.], you who are spiritual [literally, Spirit-filled
or walking in the Spirit (those described in the passage before)] **restore** [an imperative; present active—keep on restoring, keep on mending, keep on completing; used of setting bones and specifically mending **nets** in Matthew 4:21. How long would we mend a net? We would restore/mend until it is functional/capable of fulfilling its function. Do not stop early. Do not get tired; hold on to the rope! Barclay: Paul says that, if a man does make a slip, the real Christian duty is to get him on his feet again. . . . The whole atmosphere of the word [restore] lays the stress not on punishment but on cure. Sean McGarvey: I’ve tended to view this passage . . . as a kind of “swimming buddy” plan for life for times that each of us will fail and fall. A logical question to ask here is, “When do we engage? How big or small of a sin do we engage with?” Paul has already given us the answer to this: “If a man is overtaken in any trespass.” Life Application Study Bible: persistent sin that destroys the person and hurts the fellowship must be resolved. Luther: Your brother does not cease to be your brother because he slips or offends you; that is when he has most need of your love.] **such a one in a spirit of gentleness** [meekness, gentleness, humility; Ironside: A hard, critical spirit will drive the failing one deeper into sin and make it more difficult to recover him at last. If our instinct is to hit with a hammer instead of giving a hand, we are not walking in the Spirit.], **considering** [looking at, observing, contemplating, spying on] **yourself** [self-examination should occur prior to restoration; when I think about the fruits of the Spirit, hurrying and rushing are not listed—patience is listed and longsuffering are listed and they do not rush—slow down and examine] **lest you also be tempted** [the word is not sin, ensnared, or overtaken, but tempted (implying we should be aware of what is capable of tempting us)]. **2 Bear** [an imperative; present active—keep on bearing, keep on carrying, keep on lifting, keep on sustaining] **one another’s burdens** [heaviness, weight, burden, trouble—the root word is walk (implying we have an obligation to each other to help our collective and mutual walks); this is not a shift in topic—the thing to be carried here is the weight of restoration (this could not be used to guilt people in to helping someone move physical objects)], **and so fulfill** [an imperative; present active—keep on fulfilling, keep on supplying] **the law of Christ** [the law of Christ is love; There is a very popular business book right now entitled Lean In. It is by Sheryl Sandberg (COO of Facebook). She noticed over her career that for a variety of reasons, women were not as well represented in leadership positions as men. Sandberg encourages women to ‘lean in’ to engage in leadership roles by inserting themselves into the conversation/issue/problem. The book is a challenge to women in business to lean in in order to keep moving up the corporate ladder to make the world more equitable. I am going to borrow Sandberg’s phrase and paraphrase Paul here. Paul says that bearing burdens completes Christ’s command to love. Paul is telling us to ‘lean in’ to each other’s lives and be engaged. Love **leans in**.]. **3 For if anyone thinks himself to be something** [somebody], **when he is nothing** [nobody; Ironside: The law of Christ is the law of love, and love seeks to help others in their distress and share the load with them. If anyone thinks himself superior to such service and stands upon his dignity, he is but manifesting his own littleness.], **he**
deceives himself [I can be self-deceived (Jim’s note: this is one of the most terrifyingly humbling concepts in all of Scripture and one of the reasons I attempt to regularly remind myself of my own proclivity for error)]. Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: Leads his own mind astray. . . . He deceives no one else. Luther: Brother, you are infected with this vice, and I am infected with another. God has forgiven me ten thousand talents, and I will forgive you a hundred denarii.]. 4 But let each one examine [an imperative; test, examine, prove, scrutinize, approve] his own work [business, work, effort, job], and then he will have rejoicing [glorying, boasting, rejoicing] in himself alone, and not in another. 5 For each one shall bear [not an imperative; carry, lift, sustain] his own load [invoice (as part of freight), task, service. Jesus uses this word in Matthew 23:4 when He calls his load light].

Many look at this passage and see an apparent contradiction between Galatians 6:2 and Galatians 6:5. One verse says to bear one another’s burdens and one says to bear his own load. Which is true? Both. We have an obligation (when walking in the Spirit) to assist others, but this attitude should never be interpreted by someone walking to walk non-introspectively.

**Apply (So what is the point?)**
1. Walking in the Spirit is the prerequisite for restoration
2. Introspection is critically important
3. Grace is **active**

**Personalize (Now what do I do?)**
1. Walk in the Spirit
2. Self-examine, self-examine, self-examine
3. Lean in

The last thought for today’s passage is this: this is hard. Many times, I am so consumed with myself, my life, and my issues that I am not leaning in to other’s burdens. However, this can be one of the defining characteristics of Christianity—that we do not shoot our wounded. Wiersbe: Nothing reveals the wickedness of legalism better than the way the legalists treat those who have sinned. We can be different. We can be filled with the Spirit, walk in the Spirit, and then lean in. Jared Wilson: The Law points its finger. The gospel gives us His hand. Give someone a hand today and lean in.

**Homework: Read Galatians 6:6-15 (NKJV)**

**Be Generous and Do Good**

6 Let him who is taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches.

7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. 8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to
the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. 9 And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. 10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

GLORY ONLY IN THE CROSS

11 See with what large letters I have written to you with my own hand! 12 As many as desire to make a good showing in the flesh, these would compel you to be circumcised, only that they may not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. 13 For not even those who are circumcised keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh. 14 But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. 15 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation.
**Galatians: Freedom for Life**

Be Generous and Do Good & Glory Only in the Cross *(Galatians 6:6-15)*

**Review (Galatians 6:1-5: Bear and Share the Burdens)**

1 Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. 2 Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. 3 For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. 4 But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. 5 For each one shall bear his own load.

**Introduction**

Last week we looked at leaning in for the purposes of engagement, restoration, and community. This week, we see specific ways in which Paul directs the Galatians to apply the reality of freedom and grace in their lives.

**Outline**

1. Grace and the Lawyer: The Personal Appeal *(Galatians 1-2)* (April/May)
2. Grace and the Law: The Theological Appeal *(Galatians 3-4)* (May/June)
3. Grace and the Life: The Application Appeal *(Galatians 5-6)* (July/August)

**Galatians 6:6-15 (Be Generous and Do Good & Glory Only in the Cross)**

**Be Generous and Do Good**

6 Let him who is taught [Greek is katecheo (to sound down in the ears)—where we get our English word catechism (doctrine Q&A)] the word share [an imperative; communicate, share, distribute] in all good things with him who teaches [Martin Luther: These passages are all meant to benefit us ministers. I must say I do not find much pleasure in explaining these verses. I am made to appear as if I am speaking for my own benefit. I admit that I feel somewhat awkward right now talking about it. Guzik: It isn’t payment; it is sharing. Ironside: He who seeks only to be benefited by others and is not concerned about sharing with them, will have a Dead Sea kind of life.].

7 Do not be deceived [an imperative; Greek is planao (the root word for planets—wandering stars); led astray, wander roam, be deceived, be seduced]. God is not mocked [derided, sneered, mocked—the root word means snout (to raise your nose up at)]; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap [My father probably quoted this verse to me more than any other growing up. At some point, he stopped giving the specific reference and just said, “Galatians.” To him, this is the message of Galatians—
you reap what you sow. In some respects, I think he may be right. The overarching error that Paul is trying to correct with the Galatian believers is the reality that the gospel cannot be modified. If you sow modification of the gospel, there are consequences to be reaped. Life Application Study Bible: From farming to finances, this saying holds true (Proverbs 22:8). A farmer plants corn and grows corn; he should not expect or desire anything else. Believers must decide what crop they want and grow accordingly. Barclay: There is a moral law in the universe. If a man breaks it he may be forgiven, but, nonetheless, he breaks it at his peril. 8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption [decay, ruin, destruction, corruption; sowing Law-keeping is the same result as sowing sin—neither can save; Robertson's New Testament Word Pictures: Nature writes in one's body the penalty of sin as every doctor knows], but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life [sowing faith-keeping is the same result as sowing walking in the Spirit—both save]. 9 And let us not grow weary [weary, utterly spiritless, exhausted, weak, faint] while doing good, for in due [literally, your own] season we shall reap if we do not lose heart [do not relax, do not loosen, do not dissolve, do not set free, do not weaken; Guzik: In the ancient world, this phrase translated lose heart was used for the kind of fear and weariness a woman experiences during labor but before delivery. It describes a time when the work is hard and painful, but also unfinished and unrewarded.]. 10 Therefore, as we have opportunity [season—whack-a-mole service opportunities], let us do good to all, especially [chiefly, primarily, mostly] to those who are of the household of faith [we start at home].

GLORY ONLY IN THE CROSS

11 See [an imperative] with what large letters I have written to you with my own hand! [Guzik: Paul's custom, typical in the ancient world, was to dictate his letters to a secretary [amanausis (uh-man-you-went-sis)]. But he would often personally write a short portion at the end, both to authenticate the letter and to add a personal touch. Other examples of this kind of postscript are 1 Corinthians 16:21-24 . . . and Colossians 4:18 . . . . One reason Paul may have done this was prove that he really wrote the letter, as is reflected in 2 Thessalonians 3:17.] 12 As many as desire [have in mind] to make a good showing [good show, display—literally, for these people Christianity was all a show] in the flesh, these would compel [compel, necessitate, drive, constrain, force; Guzik: There was everything wrong in compelling a Gentile to be circumcised, saying they could not be right with God without coming under the law of Moses] you to be circumcised [This attempt at impressing the wrong people reminds me of a popular quote from Dave Ramsey: We buy things we don't need with money we don't have to impress people we don't like (i.e., those people that do not necessarily have our best interests at heart can have powerful influences on our behavior)], only that they may not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ [they do what they do to avoid persecution; avoiding persecution should never be a factor in our decision-making; Barclay: The Romans allowed the Jewish religion and officially allowed the Jews to practice it. Circumcision was the unanswerable mark of a Jew; and so these people saw in it a
passport to safety should persecution arise. Circumcision would keep them safe from the hatred of the Jews and the law of Rome alike. Today, many feel safe in the arms of the Law, but they forget Jared Wilson: The Law points its finger. The gospel gives us His hand.[]. 13 For not even those who are circumcised keep the law [even when we think we have kept the Law we have not], but they desire [have in mind] to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh [bragging in the works of the flesh will always disappoint as there is no real value there; Ironside: The believer does not obey in order to be saved, but because he is saved]. 14 But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ [Bruce: The word crux was unmentionable in polite Roman society . . . even when one was condemned to death by crucifixion the sentence used was an archaic formula which served as sort of an unlucky euphemism: arbori infelici suspendito, ‘hang him on the unlucky tree.’ Paul identified himself with the cross of Christ, not with the world.], by whom the world [Greek is kosmos] has been crucified to me, and I to the world [The cross reaches out to the world, but illustrates the world’s view of God. Ironside: The cross of Christ is the measure of man’s hatred to God. If you want to know what the world thinks of Jesus, look at the cross. And if you want to know what Jesus thinks of the world, look at the cross. Ironside: When Paul says, “I glory in the cross of Christ,” he means this then: I accept the cross of Christ as my cross; I accept His death as my death; I take my place with Him as one who has died to the world, to sin, and to self, and henceforth I am not under law but under grace. Law crucified my Savior. He met its claims upon that cross, and now, having satisfied all its demands, I am delivered from its authority and am free to walk before God in grace, seeking to glorify Him in a life of happy obedience because I love the One who died there to put away my sin. Wiersbe: the world does not care if we are "religious" just so long as the cross is left out.]. 15 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails [is strong, has power, has ability] anything, but a new creation [formation, building, creation, creature, ordinance].

Mark Driscoll: In the New Testament, regeneration is spoken of in terms of a new birth, or being born again. . . . Aspects of God’s regenerating work in the new heart of those who are born again as Christians to a thoroughly new life:

1. New Master (1 John 4:4) 6. New emotions (1 John 4:7)
2. New creation (2 Corinthians 5:17) 7. New community (1 John 1:3)
3. New identity (Colossians 3:9-10) 8. New power (Romans 8:12-13)
4. New mind (1 Peter 2:2) 9. New freedom (Romans 6:6)

Apply (So what is the point?)

1. Reaping will occur
2. The cross of Christ is our source of freedom
3. Freedom for life is found in Christ (freedom looks like . . . )
PERSONALIZE (NOW WHAT DO I DO?)

1. **Sow** intentionally
2. Identify with the cross of Christ
3. Be **free**

**HOMEWORK: READ GALATIANS 6:16-18 (NKJV)**

**Blessing and a Plea**

16 And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

17 From now on let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.

18 Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.
GALATIANS: FREEDOM FOR LIFE

Blessing and a Plea (Galatians 6:16-18)

REVIEW (Galatians 6:6-15: Be Generous and Do Good & Glory Only in the Cross)

BE GENEROUS AND DO GOOD
6 Let him who is taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches.
7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. 8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. 9 And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. 10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

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INTRODUCTION

As we move into the final words of Paul to the Galatians, let us reflect on our original knowledge objectives for this study:

1. To recognize the dangers and downstream impacts of altering the gospel
2. To understand more fully the terms “justification by faith” and “Christian liberty”
3. To recognize the evidences of a Spirit-filled life in myself and in others
4. To understand more fully why the Law was given, the Law’s purpose, and how I, as a New Testament believer, relate to the Law
5. To grow in the knowledge of the relationships between the Old Testament and the New Testament

Thanks to David Barber, Amy Valovcin, Sean McGarvey, and Terry Bolden for teaching lessons in this series (and to Darla Skinner, Amy Valovcin, and Sean McGarvey for their faithfulness in helping every week). They are my Philippians 1:3, my Aarons and Hurs (Exodus 17:12), and our class is exceedingly blessed to be able to share in their wisdom.
REVIEW

What were some of the things we learned in our twenty-week series on Galatians?

Apply (So what is the point?)

1. Everyone is under authority
2. Relationships are critical to correcting error in the church
3. There exists a single gospel for all churches to proclaim
4. The gospel is for now

1. There are times when dispensing with niceties are in order
2. Any deviation/modification of the gospel is a turning away from Jesus
3. Alternative gospels are not gospels at all
4. Pleasing God is more important than pleasing man

1. The gospel is a noun and a verb
2. God can use a pagan’s passion for God’s good
3. Almost everybody spends some time in the desert
4. Jesus can save anyone
5. God will have His glory

1. Defending the gospel involves keeping the right stuff in and the wrong stuff out
2. Impostors will always preach a different gospel
3. Living under the law is slavery
4. The truth is worth the effort
5. Leaders are sometimes wrong

1. It is not about works
2. You have to have faith
3. It’s ALL about Jesus

1. We can be fascinated with another gospel
2. What saved you then will save you now
3. Salvation has never changed (in the Old Testament it was faith—in the New Testament it was faith—and now it is faith)
4. Justification can only be declared by God, so He sets the terms

1. Some will believe false doctrine
2. False doctrine will make us sick
3. Discernment is critical
4. Father Abraham has many sons
1. The Law demonstrates we are unable to qualify on our own for righteousness
2. God’s act of redemption is offered without conditions
3. Everything points to Jesus alone

1. The Law has a purpose (present tense)
2. New Testament believers are not under the Law
3. Jesus fulfilled the Law
4. Jesus is better than me

1. God is your Daddy
2. The Spirit intercedes for you
3. Your Father delights in and sings over you
4. Our Heavenly Father is limitless

1. Our fallen nature often makes it easy for us to “fall away” from the truth that we have known
2. It can be easy to follow wrong teaching or doctrine from those who look or sound good
3. Grace, though not easy, is still free

1. We are not under the Law
2. God is telling a bigger story
3. The Law is bondage and grace is freedom

1. Christian liberty has nothing to do with doing what I want to do
2. Christian liberty has everything to do with Jesus setting me free
3. Faith working through love is evidence of Christian liberty

1. The truth is the focus
2. Liberty is an opportunity to love and serve
3. A little error in soteriology is a big error

1. A singular focus of: walk in the Spirit
2. We must keep walking in the Spirit (this is not a checklist, but rather a relationship with God)
3. The lust of the flesh is equal to being under the Law

1. These things were known but not acted on
2. Think through, “What are you known for?”
3. Conceited = over expression
1. Walking in the Spirit is the prerequisite for restoration
2. Introspection is critically important
3. Grace is active

1. Reaping will occur
2. The cross of Christ is our source of freedom
3. Freedom for life is found in Christ

Remember **Galatians 1:3**: Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Paul began with grace and Paul ends with grace.

**Outline**

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**Galatians 6:16-18 (Blessing and a Plea)**

16 And as many as walk according to this rule [Ironside: What rule? He has not laid down any rule. Yes, he has said we are a new creation. That is the way to test everything that may be put before me. Is it of the new creation or is it of the old? In essence, are we going to walk under the Law or under grace?], peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God [could mean anything from the church, to Jewish believers, to Old Testament saints].

17 From now on let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks [Greek is stigmata; Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: Slaves had the names or stamp of their owners on their bodies. It was sometimes done for soldiers also. There were devotees also who stamped upon their bodies the names of the gods whom they worshipped. Today in a round-up cattle are given the owner’s mark. Paul glorified in being the slave of Jesus Christ. . . . since he bore in his body the brandmarks of suffering for Christ received in many places. Wiersbe: Beware of that religious leader who lives in his ivory tower and knows nothing of battling against the world, the flesh and the devil, who has no “marks” to show for his obedience to Christ. Paul was no armchair general; he was out in the front lines, waging war against sin, and taking his share of suffering. Life Application Study Bible: For many of us. our skin is baby smooth. We have no scars of conflict or persecution because we keep ourselves so well insulated from pain and suffering.] of the Lord Jesus. [The Judaizers had their mark—circumcision. Paul had his marks—scars from stonings and whippings.]

18 Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.
Barclay: After the storm and stress and intensity of the letter comes the peace of the benediction. Paul has argued and rebuked and cajoled but his last word is GRACE, for him the only word that really mattered.

MacArthur: Essentially the message of Paul’s epistle to the Galatian believers and to believers of every age—the message that, because we have trusted in Him, Christ has set us free.

J. Vernon McGee: Galatians is the strongest declaration and defense of the doctrine of justification by faith in or out of Scripture. . . . Not only is a sinner saved by grace through faith plus nothing, but the saved sinner lives by grace. Grace is a way to life and a way of life.

Ian McConnell: Saturday is for bacon [this is Christian liberty at its finest!]

Life Application Study Bible: Grace was exactly what Paul hoped would be the result of his entire urgent letter to them—that they would return to the gospel of salvation by God’s grace alone.

Tullian Tchividjian: Because Jesus was strong for me, I am free to be weak; Because Jesus won for me, I am free to lose; Because Jesus was Someone, I am free to be no one; Because Jesus was extraordinary, I am free to be ordinary; Because Jesus succeeded for me, I am free to fail.

Luther: In effect, he is saying, “I have taught you Christ purely. I have entreated you. I have criticized you, and I have not let anything pass that I thought profitable for you. I can say no more but that I heartily pray that our Lord Jesus Christ will bless my labor and bring fruit from it and will govern you with his Holy Spirit forever.

**APPLY (SO WHAT IS THE POINT?)**
1. Epistles are dense
2. Grace >
3. Believers are free

**PERSONALIZE (NOW WHAT DO I DO?)**
1. Study hard
2. Live in grace
3. Be free

Amen.

**HOMEWORK: LIVE GALATIANS**