**Galatians**

**“Living Free”**

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**Galatians**

**“Living Free”**

**Introduction: 1:1-5**

**“Grace declared and defined”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-2a Paul’s ministry**

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**I. Intro.**

In span of 30 years which made up Paul’s conversion outside of Damascus and his imprisonment in Rome, he traveled thought the Roman empire as an ambassador of Jesus Christ. This included three famous missionary journeys where he preached the gospel and planted churches but he didn’t just leave them he returned to check on them and wrote them letters. Many believe that the earliest letter that he wrote was this one somewhere around 48 AD. This letter is address to a people originally from Gaul (present day France) that migrated south, settling in present-day Turkey. The name Galatians is a compound word made up of their ancestry being Gaul’s and their geographical location in the area inhabited by Grecians, hence Gal--atians. Galatia was not a city but a region 100-175 miles wide east to west by 250 miles long north to south. Although they had been dwelling in this area since before 230 BC when they were conquered by Rome in 189 BC they remained loyal to Rome and were eventually awarded this area. Paul first encountered these people on his first missionary journey when he visited the southern cites of Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Derbe and Lystra, (Acts 13-14). Julius Caesar reportedly said of the Galatians that they “*Were, fickle, fond of change, and not to be trusted.*” Something if you have read the account of Luke in Acts 14 Paul could no doubt personally attest too. In that chapter after Paul healed a lame man in the morning the people worship he and Barnabas as a god’s in the afternoon only to pick up rocks and leave him for dead outside the city in the evening. That is followed up by Paul going back into the same area preaching the gospel where many come to faith in Christ. Not only were they fickle before they were believers they become fickle afterward as Paul is now addressing those who “*having begun in the Spirit were now believing they could be perfected by the works of the flesh*” (3:3).

**II. Vs. 1-2a Paul’s ministry**

Vs. 1-2a Paul starts with three things about him in the first 5 verses:

1. Vs. 1-2 ***His ministry***: He identifies his ministry as an apostle “*not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ.*”
2. Vs. 2-4 ***His message***: His message was and would always by about a person---Jesus Christ.
3. Vs. 5 ***His motive***: “*To whom be glory forever and ever*”. The false teachers were after the praise of man Paul was seeking people to praise God.

When Paul introduces himself in his letters he always does so one of two ways:

1. To the Romans, Philippians, Titus and Philemon: He calls himself either a ***servant or a prisoner of Christ***.
2. To The Corinthians, Ephesians, Colossians, Galatians, Timothy: He calls himself and ***apostle***.

For the most part the reason for this can be picked up in the overall tone of the letter as those who embraced and welcomed his ministry, he was a servant but to those who challenged his authority he was a person sent out by Jesus Christ. There will always be those opposed to the simplicity of the Gospel according to grace. You can always recognize them despite their many forms because they major in the “***Three R’s of religion***”: **Rules, Regulations and Rituals**! The attacks of the religious upon those who desire to “live free” generally follow a three prong attack which can be easily seen in the outline of Paul’s defense in this letter.

1. **1:10-2:21 First line of attack is aimed at the messenger**: Thus Paul is forced to defend his right to speak the message.
2. **3:1-4:31 Second line of attack is aimed at the message**: Thus defends the truth of the message, practically, logically, historically then compares what the false teachers taught next to what he taught.
3. **5:1-6:10 Third line of attack is aimed at what they believe disproves the message**: Thus Paul responds by demonstrating what grace looks like in everyday life.

So Paul states he was “*an apostle (not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead)*. Paul’s enemies were those who said he had no credentials; he wasn’t an eye witness of the resurrection etc. There is nothing in scripture that says that a person’s calling and service can be instilled, educated and passed on by man. The only thing a human institution or organization can do is recognize what God is doing, help equip and encourage those called. Our authority like Paul’s cannot come from the state or school but only from Jesus Christ. Paul will take the opportunity to share how that was witnessed both in the other apostles as well as in the Church in Jerusalem and was seen on equal footing when Paul corrected Peter when he had been cowered into siding with the legalists. I can’t help but think that the statement “*and all the brethren who are with me*” also substantiates the truth that others recognized the calling and authority of Jesus upon his life.

**III. Vs. 2b-3 Paul’s message**

Vs. 2b-3 There was a wide difference between North and South Galatia in respect to language, occupation, nationality, and social organization. The northern region of Galatia was made up of small cities and mostly agricultural development. The southern region of Galatia was full of cities and commerce. 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.

Paul often linked peace with grace because no one will ever truly know peace until they first experience grace. In his writings he uses the word grace 100 times and among all the other writers of the New Testament, it is only used 55 times. Grace is unmerited favor or “***God’s riches at Christ’s expense.***” As such we are gifted God’s riches by simply trusting in Christ’s work on our behalf alone. **Rules, Regulations and Rituals** we don’t need **Rules, Regulations and Rituals** they offer us nothing, they won’t make us more right with God, they won’t contribute anything of a more productive joyous life. In fact that will rob us from the peace that only grace can provide!

**IV. Vs. 4-5 Paul’s motive**

Vs. 4-5 Think of verse 4 as a simple definition of grace, a summation of grace if you will. Jesus giving Himself for our sins, that in so doing He might deliver us from the power and penalty of this present evil age. The verb “*deliver*” strikes the keynote in this letter as the Gospel is a gospel of rescue an; “**emancipation** *from a state of bondage*.” The idea behind the word “*deliver*” is **not** deliverance from the presence of something, but deliverance **from** the power of something. And what are we rescued out of? “*this present evil age*.” We will not be delivered from the ***presence*** of this present evil age until we go to be with Jesus. But we can be experience deliverance from ***the power*** of this present evil age right now. **He doesn’t take us out of the world He takes us out of the evil that is in this world!** Jesus’ death ***isn’t just*** that we would be forgiven from our evil but that having been forgiven we would live a new life amongst those still dwelling in this evil age that we may be living what we are proclaiming that those still held in this evil age may be free!

But why does Paul say “***might deliver***”? Why the uncertainty of the deliverance?

* Is it because of some lack in Jesus who gave Himself for my sins?
* Is it because my sins may be so great or of such a kind that even His giving of Himself may not be enough to deliver?

Listen carefully: The uncertainty lies not with Christ’s ability or willingness but with our willingness to simply receive His gift. And in receiving His gift we must do so without strings attached, without declaring that we will do better next time, without saying that we will work hard to earn His approval from here on out! The fact remains that many will not receive the gift because they would rather be deserving of it. We humans love to be able to stand on anything no matter how microscopic it may be that says that we have something of value and worth that makes us worthy. In the movie “*Saving Private Ryan*” in which eight men lose their lives to return the only surviving brother out of four back to his mother. At the end of the movie Captain Miller on his last breath says to private Ryan, “*Earn this. Earn it*.” The last scene of the movie is Private Ryan visiting the grave of Captain Miller as an old man and asking his wife, “*Tell me I’ve led a good life. Tell me I’m a good man.*” Though we may look at that as some motivation to “***earn it, to live a good life***” no matter how good a life we may live we would never be able to earn Jesus gift because it wouldn’t be a gift it would be works. In Romans 5:7-8 Paul wrote, “*For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us*.”

Don’t be tempted to move to fast when you read the little doxology of Paul’s “*to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen*” Your see the context of that burst of praise has to do with the gift of Jesus and if we could claim even a smidgen either before or after His sacrifice then we couldn’t say that doxology because we would be able to say some of it had to with us. So we can say this because He alone has delivered us this present evil age, only He could of done that and He could use any of my goodness or work as credit afterward. Wiersbe says, “*Galatians is a dangerous book. It exposes the most popular substitute for spiritual living that we have in our churches today-------legalism.*” He went on to say, “*Millions of believers think they are “spiritual” because of what they don’t do---or because of the leader they follow----or because of the group they belong to*.” “*When the Holy Spirit takes over, there will be liberty, not bondage---cooperation, not competition—glory to God, not praise to man*.”

**Galatians**

**“Living Free”**

**Statement of Purpose: 1:6-9**

**“Why live in a prison without walls?”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 6-7 No turning away**

**III. Vs. 8-9 Double curse**

**I. Intro.**

Here Paul shares the reason for the letter and what was keeping him up at night! Some had come to these precious people and perverted the truth about the person and work of Jesus causing them to move away from freedom and back into bondage in ***a prison without walls***. After Paul’s departure folks (Judaizers) came into the region and persuaded the believers to leave a life of freedom and return again back to a life of bondage only this time in a prison without walls and bars. What they taught appealed to them like it appeals to our fallen nature; to be like Private Ryan who tries to earn the sacrifice. It sounds good: “*I’ll do good: Go door to door, ride bicycles, wear special underwear, sell magazines, light candles and play with beads. I’ll EARN what God has given me!*” But think of this, if someone gives you a gift and you open your wallet and pay for it is it still a gift? If Someone gives you a gift and you now feel obligated to do something in return to earn what they gave you is it still a gift? Ah but if you being so blessed by their gift now want to do the same for other because they have demonstrated a sacrificial love then you are not giving to get, you are giving because you have gotten! You are not giving to earn what you have gotten; you are giving because He first gave to you! (1 John 4:19)

**II. Vs. 6-7 No turning away**

Vs. 6 This is the only one of Paul’s letters were he omits any praise, prayer, thanksgiving or commendation for the church. Instead it is replaced by amazement which was ***not*** that they were merely turning away but that they were doing so this soon. To make matters worse their turning was not from an ideology or point of view it was from a Person who gave up His life that they may have life. The phrase is “*You are turning away so soon*” literally means that they were **transferring their allegiance. These Galatians who had only a short time ago willing and joyfully embraced Jesus now were not just leaving the team they were joining the opposition**! As gentiles they had come to faith in the freedom that only Jesus could offer them but now they believed that it was best that they first became Jews, keep the law, become circumcised and follow *regulations, rituals and rules*. These false teachers didn’t deny that you need to follow Jesus (*they seldom do*); no they said that ***He wasn’t enough you must let Moses do the rest***. To these Judaizers and the Galatian believers, when Jesus said “*It is finished*” He was wrong it wasn’t really finished you must go the rest of the way on your own. ***The problem is that you cannot embrace the person of Jesus while rejecting the work and word of Christ***. People think that they can do that all the time: Oh they like Jesus, He is a prophet, a teacher, a miracle worker but His sacrifice isn’t enough.

Notice verse 6 carefully as Paul says, “*I marvel that you are* ***turning away*** *so soon* ***from Him***” Then Paul continues in the same sentence by saying, “*who called you in the grace of Christ, to* ***a different gospel***”. The implications are clear as to what Paul was meaning, “***To forsake the gospel is to forsake Jesus in whose gospel it is***!” The message and the messenger are inseparable and these Galatians weren’t just turning to a message to “*fill in* or *add too*” what they were being told Jesus’ sacrifice lacked. Paul wanted them to know they were rejecting Jesus. And as is always the case when we let go of Jesus or add to Jesus we are not replacing him or adding to Him that which is better we are **giving up the best**.

Vs. 7 Next notice that Paul tells us three things about this “*other gospel*” that these Galatians had accepted from the hand of the Judaizers.

1. **Which is not *another***: The word Gospel means “*good news*” and this other gospel that was being received wasn’t good news. The word “*another*” **doesn’t** mean of the “*same kind but a different emphasis*” it means a completely “*different*” Jesus and gospel. This new message was not of equally or greater value of the gospel of grace. There are folks all the time trying to add to or take away from Jesus. Like the witches brew they add a little Jesus to the “eye of newt” you see these false teachers aren’t opposed to religion. But when you take Jesus’ claims and words at face value they exclude that possibility of any human works or effort and this is what offends people. “*What you mean, that my good works are of no value? Do you know how long I’ve been gathering and doing good works*?” These false teachers had brought the Galatians a completely different gospel and wrapped in the same paper calling it the same thing but it wasn’t the same in any way. It would be still false if they didn’t bring a “*different Jesus*” and a “*different gospel*” but what these Judaizers had done was similar to what Joseph Smith brought in Mormonism. That is always satan’s methods to mix the true Jesus with some false hoods.
2. **Some who *trouble* you**: The word “*trouble*” in verse 7 is a word that refers to being “*sea sick*” ***these folks were bent upon rocking the Galatians believers boat so much so that they would toss out grace***. Martin Luther said, “*Heretics don’t advertise their errors*”! These false teachers didn’t come out and say that their message was trouble but that is exactly what it was. Notice as well that this false gospel didn’t just come to the Galatians out of thin air it was brought to them by the Judaizers. But **why would anyone let go of grace to embrace trouble**? The answer is that ***the Galatians were caught up more in how trouble was delivered than on the fact that it was trouble***! That is why churches founded upon a person’s charisma or personality can be dangerous because people are more apt to hear how something is said then what is actually being said. Folks, when you change the gospel you automatically trouble the church, these two go hand in hand!
3. **To *pervert* the gospel of Christ**: This troubling gospel was really a perversion in that it didn’t start from scratch making a new god and a new savior. Instead it perverted the One they had already embraced as true. It used names, terminology and ideas that were familiar just twisted with a different definition. So these false teachers added too and took away from the good news about Jesus. ***The gospel of Christ offers us everything but at the cost of our pride as we can’t claim any work of our own and in fact we have to admit that we are helplessly and hopelessly lost***.

* It offends our wisdom as God has become a man dying a humiliating death on our behalf.
* It offends our personal experience saying that a dead man, (Jesus Christ) rose from the dead in a glorious body and will never die again.

But with though it may offend us it is nonetheless the truth!

**III. Vs. 8-9 Double curse**

Vs. 8-9 Finally notice that Paul doesn’t care who brought the false gospel. Even if it is himself, or an angel from heaven, it is to be rejected. Let all of Jesus’ Church be on notice that “*The test of a person’s ministry is not popularity, miraculous signs and wonders, but their faithfulness to the Word of God*.” **The warning couldn’t be plainer**: “*Do not be persuaded by the messenger ill respective of how spiritual they may seem*!” If they alter the message or the person of Jesus in any way they are to be rejected. No amount of special glasses and golden tablets can change the fact that what old Joe taught was a different gospel. I’m not saying that those who have been coerced by the slickness of Joe’s message are to be attacked or avoided, on the contrary they out to be reached as Paul was doing to these Galatians.

Twice in these two verses Paul says that the person or persons who are distorting the person and work of Jesus Christ should not only not be believed ill regardless of who they are they ought to be cut off. Paul is asking for a double curse for any and all who would distort the truth concerning the person and work of Jesus. His love for the lost was such that those who keep themselves and others from being saved he wished them removed. And that double curse included himself if he ever changed the person or work of Christ. Notice that this curse includes angels as well! I’ve noticed that people are very susceptible to outside revelation as the basis of determining if something is true or not. But Paul put up the standard as the Word of God not our human experiences. Peter wrote in 2 Peter 1:16-19 “*we were not making up clever stories when we told you about the power of our Lord Jesus Christ and his coming again. We have seen his majestic splendor with our own eyes. And he received honor and glory from God the Father when God's glorious, majestic voice called down from heaven, "This is my beloved Son; I am fully pleased with him." We ourselves heard the voice when we were there with him on the holy mountain. Because of that,* ***we have even greater confidence in the message proclaimed by the prophets****. Pay close attention to what they wrote, for their words are like a light shining in a dark place—until the day Christ appears and his brilliant light shines in your hearts*.” Peter had personal experience but he says that of greater value than that is the fulfilled Word of God. So instead of the “*burning in the bosom*” test take the angelic revelation next to the Word of God and it clearly won’t pass the test.

Saint’s remember that ***the devil disrupts the Church as much by error as he does by evil***. The ban upon all who preach an opposite gospel than Jesus is universal upon all angelic as well as Paul himself. His zealousness for the good news was even if he were to slip and begin to espouse such lies that he should also be banned. By repeating it twice within two verses Paul does so to show that this wasn’t merely an emotional moment that he lost control of but a calm well thought out statement. These are not the actions of a man-pleaser but a Christ-pleaser. By ending this section this way Paul is saying that what was at stake were not just his views or opinions but the glory of God and the only way of salvation! “*I venture to say that if the church cared more for the glory of God and the souls of the lost we too would not tolerate the corruption of the gospel of grace.*”

**Galatians**

**“Living Free”**

**Main Teaching: 1:10-6:10**

**1:10-12**

**“Divinely certified”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 10 Nonconformity**

**III. Vs. 11-12 Testing origin**

**I. Intro.**

We live in a world of conformity, every human attempt at being nonconformists turns into others conforming to their nonconformity. A philosopher once said, “*We forfeit ¾ of ourselves in order to be like others*.” At the ordination of men for the ministry a bishop was heard praying, “*O lord, grant that these brethren never want to be like other people*.” Paul’s nonconformity threatened the religious Jews who had converted to Christ. They were quick to point out his nonconformity as a reason why the gospel of grace was not to believed. Paul declares that his nonconformity was divinely inspired and deliberately followed. The question of authority is always the first attempt at settling a conflict. Imagine watching an Olympic competition where there are no judges or referees, how would is a winner declared? But when we get into religious beliefs most people make their adherence based upon subjective feelings. Paul makes a claim to the Judaizers that the gospel he proclaimed had divine origins but how can we know? What about other religions that claim divine origins? Is the way we determine divine origins of sacred texts based upon the number of followers or the beneficial results of those who follow the truth?

**II. Vs. 10 Nonconformity**

Vs. 10 Paul says that their question of authority based upon his nonconformity reveals that he is God’s servant and not a man pleaser. There was no attempt by Paul to alter the message in order to ingratiate himself to the audience and their attack of him was proof. He could either by a servant of Christ or a popularity seeker but with the message of the gospel he couldn’t be both. There are few things more tempting to the servant of Christ as the lure of popularity and many a servant of Christ has been ruined by chasing after it! Paul’s opening statement is that ***what*** he preached had nothing to do with trying to get people to believe what he taught instead he only taught to an audience of One, the Lord. There are **two parts to what goes into a message**:

1. **Preparation**: This has to do with the **study of the text**, the work of reading and rereading the passage in the Bible. And Paul says that he did so only to hear from the Lord. One of the best things pieces of advice I ever received was, “*Never study to teach, always study to learn*!” We need to approach our Bible bathed in a **threefold prayer**:

* Lord, reveal Who you are to me, I’ve come to see you.
* Lord, reveal who I am, how you see me, not the way I see me, or the way I want others to see me but who I really am to You.
* Lord, make me the person you want me to be.

I have spent countless hours in the Word with only that aim, to hear personally form the Holy Spirit through the Word of God so that there may be more of Him and less of me.

1. **Impartation**: The 2nd part of teaching is **communication** and Paul says, “*Or do I seek to please men*?” The insinuation was that Paul was pandering to the audience saying things that would tickle their ears. There have always been those that sought to be “***famous***” instead of “***faithful***”. Paul says, “*For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bound servant of Christ.*” There are two things that startle me in this statement:
2. “*If I* ***still*** *pleased men*”: His confession that at one time he did seek to please men instead of Christ. And I believe that is a reference to his activities prior to coming to faith in Jesus.
3. “***I would not be*** *a bound servant of Christ*”: Paul saw these two (*pleasing men or being a bound servant of Christ*) as **mutually exclusive**! The word “*servant*” here means a slave whose life is not their own but belongs entirely to his master. The most important person that needs to be reached today and everyday is me.

**III. Vs. 11-12 Testing origin**

Vs. 11 Having defended the way he studied as well as the way he communicated Paul moves to a natural question of origin. You can be 100% faithful in your ***preparation*** and ***impartation*** but that would be only as good as the material you began with. The phrase “*I make known to you*” is literally I “*certify*”. Paul was “***certifying***” that **the saving good news was not to be measured or accounted for by human standards in its origin or development**! “***What is the origin of Paul’s gospel that it should be considered the standard by which all other messages and opinions should be assessed and judged***?” Paul said that though he proclaimed the gospel he was not its author or originator! There are only ***three possibilities with regards to religious material*** it is either:

1. ***Invention***: Fabricated by the mind
2. ***Tradition***: Handed down from person to person
3. ***Revelation***: Made known by God

Paul declares that it was neither his ***invention*** nor a ***tradition*** but that Jesus took him into His class room. It was not his message it was God’s message and God’s words! Paul denies three possible origins with regards to the gospel he proclaimed:

1. Vs. 11b “*Not according to man*”: The phrase “*according to man*” can mean not according to human authority or it can mean not “***made up by man***” which is probably what Paul is referring to. The cross and resurrection of Jesus do not figure in any man made religion as they always prefer that which flatters their good work and personal goodness.
2. Vs. 12a “*Neither did I receive it from man*”: Not only was in not “made up by man”, Paul says that he did not gather the information being passed down from generation to generation with oral traditions. He is not saying that such teaching is wrong or can’t be trusted he is simply saying that he didn’t receive the gospel by this method. In fact Paul was passing on the gospel to those that he spoke by this method so clearly he wasn’t speaking against this method.
3. Vs. 12b “*Nor was I taught it*”: The phrase denies instruction as the channel in which he came to posses this truth. This is the normal method which we come to truth and the very one we are using now but nonetheless it was not the way in which Paul himself received the truth of the gospel.

Paul’s declaration with regards to the gospel is that it came to him by way of personal revelation from none other than Jesus Christ himself. This experience can never be our experience with the gospel and is unique. ***There are many who claim that their message has divine origins but how can we tell? What test can we apply to determine if the message we hear is nothing more than man’s quest for his creator or something worse, his human invention***? There is a **fourfold test you can apply to determine divine origin**:

1. ***Reliability of the text***: By studying and comparing the proposed divinely inspired text to other known ancient documents with regards to people, places and events we can see if they are in agreement. Archaeology has consistently confirmed and supported the Biblical record in fact there has never been a single contradiction.
2. ***Continuity of the text***: The Bible is unique among every book that has ever been written: Although written over a period of 1600 years by over 60 generations, by more than 40 different human authors, on three different continents, in varying circumstances and situations, in different places and times, in three different languages and communicating on countless subjects it has done so **with one voice**!

* It is unique in its **circulation**, being the most published and popular book in human history.
* It is unique in its **translation** being the most translated book into other human languages in human history.
* It is unique in its **survival**, having survived time, transcription, persecution and criticism.
* It is unique in its **honesty**, as it deals with sin and failures of its hero’s in a manner unknown among ancient literature.
* Finally it is unique in its **influence**; it has had the single most influence of any literature in human history upon every culture and society it has been involved in.

1. ***Predictability of the text***: Predictive material can be found in passages from Genesis to Revelation. 28% of the Old Testament is predictive and 21% of the New Testament is predictive. Of the 31,123 verses of the Bible 8,352 of them or 27% contain predictive material. As divinely in origin it would have to be 100% accurate in its predictions. The only way that could be possible is if the One who authored it existed outside of time, space and matter. For instance there are over 108 specific prophecies in the Old Testament about the first coming of Jesus and in all 108 we can verify their fulfillment in the New Testament. The odds of all 108 of these being fulfilled by one person are beyond the realm of probability! Another example of this is the prediction of the rise and fall of four world empires (Babylonian, Persian, Grecian and Roman) and all the critics can do is claim that the prophecies were written after the events which can be proven is a false assumption.
2. ***Functionality of the text***: The final test is to look at what the divinely originated text does in those who have read it? Applying the multiple variables in the millions of readers, with the different times in which people read the text, their different cultures, social standing, age, ethnicity, geographical locations etc. All those who have trusted the words of this document singularly proclaim to have had the same transforming encounter! Where the text has been applied by each and every individual in the above variables every aspect of their lives has been made better!

Any belief system that proclaims divine origin must be able to stand up to **all four** of these criteria. If they can’t then they would be only believable by their followers based upon “***feelings***” alone and not upon facts! Though the critic may still be able to claim that this fourfold test doesn’t prove divine origin it does tell us that such a belief need not be “blind faith”. Instead is a step that is intelligent, informed and can stand continual scrutiny! Friends Christianity is only valid if what Paul says about its divine origins is true. Because what is known about the person and work of Christ is made known in the Bible without the assurance of divine origin we have good morals to live by and lively stories to read but we don’t have absolute truth to follow!

**Galatians**

**“Living Free”**

**Main Teaching: 1:10-6:10**

**1:13-24**

**“Divine demonstration”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 13-14 The Persecutor**

**III. Vs. 15-16b The Believer**

**IV. Vs. 16c-24 The Preacher**

**I. Intro.**

Paul set forth that this gospel that he proclaimed didn’t have its source in men but in God but how’s he going to prove it to the Church? The answer was for Paul to share his personal history (*the three stages of his life to illustrate the continual power of the gospel for transformation*) his condition before his conversion, immediately after his conversion and since his conversion.

**II. Vs. 13-14 The Persecutor**

Vs. 13-14 **The Persecutor**: Paul begins this section of the power of the gospel by retelling his life prior to his encounter with the gospel of Christ. Acts chapters 9, 22 and 26 give this story in greater detail. The story of Paul’s transformation from Christian persecutor to Christ follower was well known especially among the churches he had served and founded as he no doubt shared his testimony. One of (if not THE) most effective evidences of the truth of the resurrection of Jesus is our own personal transformation from as Col. 1:13 says “*the power of darkness … us into the kingdom of the Son of His love*”. Paul was not seeking a new spiritual truth when he was first confronted by Jesus. He describes his Judaism as “*former conduct*” and the Greek phrase means “*way of life*”. Paul says that his Judaism was not just something that he donned of the Sabbath or on holy days, it involved his life 24-7 365 days a year. This was seen in two things:

1. The Church: Persecuted and tried to destroy it as he saw it opposed to his way of life.
2. Judaism: Advanced beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers.

Paul mentions this to say that ***he wasn’t looking for a way out he was concentrating on a way up*** and these words sets the stage to marvel at the fact that God would save such a sinner as he.

**III. Vs. 15-16b The Believer**

Vs. 15-16b **The believer**: Something happen to Saul of Tarsus, “*the persecutor*” and as we read in Acts chapter 9 the change was not gradual, it was sudden and without warning. He was on his way to Damascus because he had run out of Christians to persecute in Israel and a few days later he was in Damascus proclaim to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ. How could these Judaizers explain such a transformation? Saul’s conversion was an embarrassment to them so how could these same folks claim that he was an imposter now, they knew the story? What had caused this about face, Paul’s answer is God! He was only preaching the same message that had caused his transformation. ***Paul reveals five things about his conversion and indirectly every conversion***:

1. Vs. 15a, 16a God did it: “*It pleased God…*.” Whenever Paul wrote or spoke of his conversion he always emphasized the fact that God did the work. Paul says that his transformation was ***not*** at the pressure of men, nor was it because God lacked something that He believed would be fulfilled in choosing Paul. No, it was because God saw a lost soul that He could lavish his love upon even though his hatred towards His only Son caused him to persecute those who had received the very love that was being offered to him. Paul says that he first received that call from his “*mother’s womb*.” What an amazing statement as it not only says that such a call had nothing to do with us it also reveals how God see’s all of humanity, in need of salvation.
2. Vs. 15b By grace: *“and called me through His grace*”. His salvation like every other salvation was not based upon his effort or character but solely upon God’s. After our birth into this world we are all too quickly ushered into a life of self worth based upon performance. Paul says for him it was: “*I persecuted….tried to destroy…and I advanced in Judaism beyond my contemporaries.*” But notice the difference after Paul became a follower of Christ as he writes: “*when it pleased God who separated me…and called me through His grace…revealed His Son in me*” here the emphasis isn’t upon what Paul had done but upon what God had done! Here then is the amazing truth that all of fallen humanity needs to understand with regards to God’s call: It is certain that God didn’t call us on account of our holy life and goodness and it is equally true that He didn’t **NOT** call us because of our sinful life. So then what prompted God to call us has nothing to do with what we are or aren’t and everything to do with **WHO HE IS**! Thus we are called only in His amazing grace.
3. Vs. 16a Through Christ: “*to reveal His Son in me*”. Read this verse very carefully it **DOESN’T SAY**: That God revealed His son **TO** me; it says that He revealed His Son **IN** me. “**TO**”, would suggest that this revelation was from the outside on the surface. But “**IN**” tells us this revelation is from the inside out as the Son dwells in us and become the habitation of the Holy. In Philip. 3 Paul said that as an unsaved person he had plenty to boast about, religion self-righteousness, reputation, recognition but none of those mattered because the one thing he didn’t have was the only thing that mattered, he didn’t have Jesus. All of things that he used to brag about before Christ he now saw as a pile of manure when he compared it to the one thing that he had now, Jesus. As we look at Paul’s life we see the difference that Jesus makes as he was revealed three ways IN, TO and THROUGH Paul.

**IV. Vs. 16c-24 The Preacher**

Vs. 16c-24 **The preacher**: Here we get a glimpse into **Paul’s preparation in ministry**. First he says he made no personal contacts with the leaders of the movement until 3 years. Secondly we note that his education where he received his D.D. (*doctorate in the desert*). Then he went back to Damascus where instead of just being able to proclaim Jesus as the Christ he could now prove Jesus as the Christ. Next, he did go up to Jerusalem as a tourist not to be questioned and not to question for 15 days. Finally he went back home to Tarsus for as much as 10 years no doubt sharing Jesus with everyone he could. Dear ones the next time you are going through a “***dry spell***” consider this that perhaps you are getting your degree as God wants to refresh you in your desert with “***Living Water***”. That is what happened to the apostle John when he was on his deserted Island of Patmos and had a fresh unveiling of Jesus Christ, you can read all about it in the 22 chapters of his book called “Revelation”. It wasn’t until three years later that Paul met Peter, and James the half brother of Jesus. What is remarkable about this statement is that one would have expected that a new convert, especially one who had been the foremost persecutor of believers, would have touched base with those he was not aligned with if for no other reason than to make sure he understood the Christian movement, but Paul didn’t do this for three years. This reveals two things:

1. That as far as Paul was concerned he knew all he needed to know with regards to the gospel and that no one else could have added anything further.
2. That the early church founders didn’t feel the need to examine Paul and didn’t summon him to Jerusalem he came as a tourist on his own accord.
3. Vs. 16b For others: “*among the Gentiles*”. **God’s calling didn’t just include his salvation it was to save him in order to use him to reach others**. To give us a practical understanding of the difference between “TO” and “IN” Paul goes on to say what this IN was able to do: “*That I might preach Him among the Gentiles*”. Having Jesus revealed in him was able to produce a transformation so amazing that it was able to change a man who had for his whole life hated Gentiles, preached against Jesus to a man who loved the Gentiles enough that now he preached the One he hated formerly preached against in order to save them. ***God has a great sense of humor as he chose to use the very man who hated Gentiles to now reach Gentiles. Seeing Paul spend time with Christians’ would have been comparable to seeing Hitler attending a synagogue!***
4. Vs. 24 For His glory: “*And they glorified God in me*”. Prior to his conversion Paul was up and coming, famous and though he told himself it was for the glory of God in reality it was for his own glory. But afterward his service was with one aim to glorify God and here were these Judaizers now doing just as he had prior to knowing Christ they were doing so as knowing Christ. It seems as though what got Paul’s foot into the door of the churches of Judea was his testimony as all they knew was that “*He who formerly persecuted us now preaches the faith he once tried to destroy*.”

Though they glorified God for his radical transformation he was to them just a normal follower of Christ and the work to which Paul had been called to wouldn’t develop for another 13 years. And during those years he was not famous he served in human obscurity as God continued to work his calling in his life.

**Galatians**

**“Living Free”**

**Main Teaching: 1:10-6:10**

**2:1-10**

**“Desired Destination”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-2 Founding fathers**

**III. Vs. 3-5 False brethren**

**IV. Vs. 6-10 Added nothing to me**

**I. Intro.**

There are several differences between the tone of this chapter and the tone of chapter 1:

1. The subject is not the source of the Gospel but the nature of the Gospel (it is apart from Judaism and circumcision).
2. Paul’s relationship with the authority of the early church (harmony and unity)

Through it all Paul maintained **the balance of tenacity and humility**, like ***a tame tiger*** Paul wouldn’t budge on his position but neither would he devour his opponents. **It wasn’t just about being right, sense the gospel was true he must also behave right while defending its validity**. In Elmer Davis’ book “*But We Were Born Free*” he makes this observation with regards to the United States and its sovereignty, “***This will remain the land of the free only so long as it is the home of the brave.***” Paul could have uttered the same sentiments with regards to the gospel that was under attack from the Judaizers. Paul’s first fight for Christian freedom from the law was in Acts 15 mentioned here. His 2nd altercation came later and is the subject of Galatians 2:11-21. Had Paul been unwilling to be of the mindset of the “***home of the brave***” the Church as we know it would have never have made it outside of the first century. His courage has kept the gospel free from legalism and has carried it to us Gentiles.

**II. Vs. 1-2 Founding fathers**

Vs. 1-2 According to Acts 14:27 Paul and Barnabas came back excited about what the Holy Spirit had done to open up a door to spread the gospel amongst the gentiles. But they soon found that the open door to the gentiles was meant with a closed door by the Judaizers who said that they gentiles first needed to become Jews before they could become Christians. Circumcision was an important Jewish rite that had been passed down by their patriarch Abraham and symbolized the acceptance and obedience to the whole Jewish Law. Least we think that this is a Jewish problem there are a lot of Christians that have done the same with: Church attendance, bible reading, communion, tithing, Church membership, baptism etc. The first thing Paul mentions is that of timing of this 2nd trip as it was 14 years later after his first which was 3 years after his conversion (around 3 years after Pentecost). What this suggests is that apparently the early church had no problem with the gospel Paul was preaching as they were in no hurry to correct it. He also notes that this 2nd trip was accompanied by two very important witnesses:

1. **Barnabas**: A close friend of Paul and the one responsible of introducing Paul to the Church in Jerusalem (Acts 9:26-28). Like the meaning of his name you always see him encouraging someone. When the gospel began to come primarily to the Hellenistic Jews of Antioch he thought that they would relate better to Paul than others, so he went and fetched him from Tarsus. (Acts 11:25-26) It was Barnabas who accompanied Paul on the first missionary journey (Acts 13-14). And it was Barnabas who encouraged John Mark after he dropped out of the team.
2. **Titus**: A Gentile convert who worked with Paul after he was won to Christ by Paul (Titus 1:4). He became “***exhibit A***” at the council in Jerusalem of the effect of the gospel among the gentile church’s and why they didn’t need to become Jews first. In his later years he assisted Paul by going to some of the most difficult fellowships to help solve problems.

This is the trip Luke mentions in Acts 11:27-32 when he brought an offering from the Gentile Churches to help with famine relief in Jerusalem. It was at this time he voluntarily spoke to them about the gospel that he was proclaiming to the Gentiles but he did so privately in case he needed to correct some of them that were in leadership positions if there gospel didn’t coincided with the gospel he had received from Jesus. In Acts chapter 10 (a full 10 years after Pentecost) God had used Peter to move the church to welcoming in Gentiles into the folds but through the next 14 years there were some of Jewish background that thought that the only way this should be allowed was if the Gentile first became Jewish converts as they believed that Jesus was only for the Jews. Paul’s greater concern was that his view of the gospel (albeit true) may cause a split in the early church if not handled in humility.

**III. Vs. 3-5 False brethren**

Vs. 3-5 The mention of Titus being a Greek is to point out that the leadership in the early Church didn’t have a problem with Titus being a believer yet not being circumcised in accordance to Mosaic law. Circumcision (the cutting away of the male foreskin) was the sign of initiation into the Jewish faith and the Mosaic covenant. If a Gentile man wanted to become a Jew, he would have to be circumcised as an adult. All Jewish men were circumcised, and most all Gentile men were not, it was an easy way to refer to “*those part of the covenant*” and to “*those outside of the covenant of Moses*.” Paul had no problem with circumcision but he insisted that it had no bearing upon a person’s salvation and therefore must not be forced upon Gentiles. Paul calls these people “*false brethren*” who came in secretly. The idea behind the phrase “*false brethren*” is either that they didn’t belong in the church or that they didn’t belong in the meeting to decide gentile conversion. Those that would steal away our freedom and grace in Christ don’t announce their attentions, neither do they lack sincerity for their cause as Paul calls then “false” not “frauds”. ***The religionists crept in to observe the liberty of Paul, Barnabas and Titus; they didn’t come to celebrate it, but to regulate it***! Their issue was not with Paul as he was a Jew who was circumcised on the 8th day of his life. Their issue was with the gospel he preached. This is why Paul would not compromise even for one hour and remained steadfast in the truth. Martin Luther later expressed the same heart: “*Wherefore, God assisting me, my forehead shall be harder than all men’s foreheads. Here I take upon me this title . . . “I give place to none.*” The historical account of the Council of Jerusalem is in Acts 15:6-21 as several folks presented their case:

1. **Peter** began as he said it was he whom the Lord chooses to take the gospel to the gentiles in Cornelius (Acts 10) and the Holy Spirit filled them the moment they believed before he had even finished the message. That one act broke down the wall of separation between Jew and Gentile and clearly God through Jesus was now making the two one in Christ.
2. **Paul and Barnabas** told the assembly what God had done among the Gentiles in a missionary report and although the false brethren Judaizers argued the truth was irrefutable, God had done the same thing over and over as He had with Cornelius.
3. **Titus** was finally brought in as the Judaizers had said that unless a Gentile had submitted to circumcision they couldn’t be saved then what did they make of Titus? Here was a saved Gentile who had not been circumcised.
4. **James**, the leader of the Church in Jerusalem summed up the arguments and the matter was concluded on the side of Paul. It was God’s choice to take the gentiles as they were and who were they to try to lay upon them what God had clearly not.

You would think that this would have forever settled the matter but Martin Luther battled the same issues with “*Roman Catholics*”, as do those who have to deal with the “*Sabbath keepers*” or the “*membership maintainers*”.

**IV. Vs. 6-10 Added nothing to me**

Vs. 6-10 Four times in this chapter Paul refers to the three major leaders in the early church in Jerusalem, James, Peter and John. But they are alluded to by the use of phrases that describe them as: “*those that were of reputation*” (verse 2), “*those who seemed to be something*” (twice in verse 6), and those “*who seemed to be pillars*” (verse 9). ***Why the differential way of speaking of them?*** It seems as though Paul wanted to deflate the puffed up attitudes that people were prone to have (and still do) of the instruments that God chooses in His wisdom to use. In doing this he is elevating the divine gospel far above the instrument that proclaims it. The instrument is fallible but the Word of God is not! A case in point will be seen next week in Peter and Barnabas’ defection at the supper table when the Judaizers came to eat! Though he recognized their calling and authority and was glad to be working alongside them, they and he were nonetheless human and never to be made “*Pope*” or “*Christ of earth*” with their authority equal to the “*Word of God*”! Calvin writes of verse 8 “*The distinction is interesting, especially because Roman Catholics claim that the Pope is the successor of Peter – but where is his ministry to the Jews? “****If Peter’s apostleship pertained peculiarly to the Jews, and as the Pope claims the primacy because he is Peter’s successor, he ought to exercise it over the Jews****. Paul is here declared to be the chief apostle of the Gentiles; yet they deny that he was the bishop of Rome*.”

**As far as Paul was concerned when it came to the divine origination of the Word of God these three, “*added nothing to me*”!** Not only did the Jerusalem Council agree with Paul’s gospel, they also encouraged his ministry, recognized it publically and sent a letter stating as much. The same gospel was being preached by the Jewish church to Jews as well as by Paul to the gentile church. The church moved from the theological to the practical and wanted the gentile church to continue to help the poor and needy. The Judaizers didn’t not give up and instead at every opportunity after Paul left they would come in to the church and attempt to get folks to add to the gospel. I say if James, Peter and John could add nothing to the gospel or the Word of God then certainly Joseph Smith, the Pope or anyone else stands no chance!

**Galatians**

**“Living Free”**

**Main Teaching: 1:10-6:10**

**2:11-16**

**“Defended declaration”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 11-13 Not good enough for Peter**

**III. Vs. 14 No second class citizens**

**IV. Vs. 15-16 Life-giver not Law-giver**

**I. Intro.**

The agape meal was part of early church life and at the supper the whole congregation came together to enjoy a common meal by pooling everybody’s resources. For those who were slaves it may by the one decent meal that had for the week and marked the togetherness that the Church had when compared with the world. But the Jews believed that God was only gracious and merciful to Jews and they were forbidden to do business with gentiles let alone eat with them. That set up the collision in the church in Antioch where prior to the Judaizers from James arrival Peter shared the common meal together but when they arrived he stopped for fear. And this led to all the other Jewish believers separating themselves from the gentile believers even influencing Barnabas. **A church ceases to be Christian if it contains class distinctions.** In the presence of God there is neither noble nor base, rich or poor, Jew or gentile all are sinners for whom Christ died and we share a common relationship to our Heavenly Father which makes us all brothers and sisters. A famous name (Peter) can never be used to justify a infamous action.

**II. Vs. 11-13 Not good enough for Peter**

Vs. 11-13 At the council in Jerusalem Peter, James and John approved of Paul’s gospel and Peter gave a passionate speech on being the instrument by which God granted gentile conversion. But apparently he fell under the spell of ungodly peer pressure because although he was in favor of welcoming Gentiles into the kingdom of God without first becoming Jews; when the Judaizers came to Antioch, (*Paul’s home church*) he refused to eat with them. Verse ll clearly states that “***Peter... was to be blamed***” but how can this be? Peter according to Roman Catholicism was the first Pope and as Pope he was infallible in matters of doctrine and Church practice. Clearly neither Peter nor any Pope is infallible as there is only one that is, Jesus Christ.

The phrase “*he would eat with the gentiles*” is in the imperfect tense in the Greek showing that Peter’s eating with the gentiles was a regular practice. So his with drawl was from a habit of having always done so. When a Jew refused to eat with a Gentile, he did this in obedience to Jewish rituals. Peter no longer kept a strict observance of the Law of Moses for himself, but by his actions, he implies that Gentiles believers must keep the law – when he himself does not! ***They were good enough to enter the church but not good enough for Peter!*** Peter knew that these men would be offended by his fellowshipping with the gentiles so he treated them as the Judaizers did as second class Christians. And he did this with full knowledge of:

* Of what he had learned in 3 ½ years of observing Jesus who ate and drank with sinners
* Of what he had been told by the Lord not to call unclean that which God has made clean
* Of having witnessed firsthand the baptism of the Holy Spirit upon Cornelius before he had even finished the message

“***The sins of teachers become the teachers of sin***!” and Paul wouldn’t stand for this so he publically confronted him in his hypocrisy. Peter’s actions were based upon “***fear***” but what did he have to fear from those Judaizers from Jerusalem? The only thing they could do was jeopardize his position in the Church in Jerusalem. It seems that Peter’s fear led him to compromise so as to not lose his position of power! But that being the case: “***Who was in power and leading the Church in Jerusalem, Peter or the Judaizers***?” Clearly Paul had to address this hypocrisy or the outcome would have led to two classes of Christians. It seems to me that some of the Jewish believers viewed the outcome of the Jerusalem council as the creation of two groups:

1. **Jews**: Who could go on living like Jews keeping the law and maintaining their traditions.
2. **Gentiles**: Who were free circumcision and the law but were no the less 2nd class citizens.

These observations reveal to us that the old Peter was still present in Peter and even the baptism of the Holy Spirit hadn’t washed away its stench. Oh dear ones we cannot tame the flesh, bath it even in Holy Water, no it must die daily, moment by moment! That is why Paul said in Romans 6:11that we must “*also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord*.” Martin Luther said, “*No man’s standing is so secure that he may not fall. If Peter fell, I may fall.*” Why even Barnabas fell under their influences and the “*man of encouragement*” became the man of “*discouragement*” and his name at the moment was “*Bummer*” instead of “*Barnabas*”! Here again was a man who according Acts 11:24 was characterized as a “*good man* ***FULL*** *of the Holy Spirit*.” Dear ones that is why “*one death*” won’t suffice and neither will “*one filling*”. **I need to die daily and be continually under the spout where the Holy Spirit comes out!** Let these two (Peter and Barnabas) serve as a reminder that we must repeat the above process moment by moment! Their fall led to all of the believing Jews following suit. What responsibility and accountability those who are leaders have, be that in the home, on the job or in the church.

**III. Vs. 14 No second class citizens**

Vs. 14a It was not that Peter denied the gospel Paul proclaimed, Peter’s offence was against the gospel in conduct, “*his behavior was a contradiction of the truth of the gospel*”. It was predicated not upon conviction (*in fact he contradicted his convictions*) it was peer pressure from a small group of the circumcision party that caused him to compromise the gospel he believed and to practice what he didn’t. The same Peter who had denied the Lord for a maidservant’s inquiry had repeated the act. By use of the phrase “*But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel*...”, it is clear that Paul didn’t view this as a simple matter of seating arrangements at a church potluck. It was instead a matter of how they perceived the gospel to the gentiles as not eating with them said publically that they were not saved. There they are, at the Antioch Church potluck and he Gentile Christians have just been asked to leave, or are told to sit in their own section away from the “***real***” Christians. And Peter (*the honored guest*) and Barnabas (*the man who led many of them to Jesus*) goes along with all this and so does every other Jewish believer. All except for Paul who publically confronts Peter for doing so. Peter was the face of the early Church the most famous believer on the planet at the moment. Not only this next to the most famous Christian in the world was the man (Barnabas) who had encouraged Paul and was his sponsor and he was siding with Peter. It was Jesus and Paul against the world.

Vs. 14b Here we have what Paul said before Peter and the crowd.

1. First Paul reminded Peter publically that was no longer practicing strict obedience to the Law of Moses, “*Hey Pete, I saw you eating bacon wrap shrimp; you’re not keeping a kosher diet*!” Can you imagine how Paul’s words spoiled the party as those Judaizers choke on their bagel, “*What, Peter eats shrimp and bacon with gentiles*?” “*Say it aint so, Pete!*” I can imagine that even though Peter was eating kosher food at the time he probably felt a little sick.
2. Second, Paul was very emphatic saying, “*If you, born and bred a Jew, discard Jewish customs, how unreasonable of you to impose them on Gentiles*.” The kind of Christianity that still thinks and behaves as though by its self efforts it can please God and by its achievements it can show its self superior to other men is not Christianity at all!

**IV. Vs. 15-16 Life-giver not Law-giver**

Vs. 15-16 Paul reminds them that we are all declared right before God by the work of Jesus alone and not by the keeping of any or all of the law. If the law was capable of declaring a person right before God than why the animal sacrifices, why the sacrifice of the only Son of God? The word “*justified*” in verse 16 is a legal term that means to receive a favorable verdict and in this case that verdict is before God. Next Paul tells his listeners how a person “*receives a favorable verdict*” by saying “*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.*” There will not be one person in heaven declared innocent by any effort on their part. Every person from Adam to the last person to breath air on this earth will be declared not guilty by Jesus sacrifice alone. The phrase “*we have believed in Christ Jesus*” is literally “*we have believed* ***INTO*** *Christ Jesus*” and speaks of “***committal***” not just “***conviction***”! The difference is if you are a diabetic and know intellectually that you need to take insulin yet do not take it verse a diabetic that makes sure that you do take your insulin. Jesus is no “***Law-giver***” He is a “***Life-giver***”! Paul said, “*by the works of the law* ***no flesh*** *shall be justified*” not Gentile nor Jew, not anyone will ever be considered right by their works! That’s what hypocrisy always does it tries to make others do what we ourselves cannot do!

**Galatians**

**“Living Free”**

**Main Teaching: 1:10-6:10**

**2:17-21**

**“The Great Exchange”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 17-18 Christ: 100% righteous**

**III. Vs. 19-21 Mankind: 100% not righteous**

**I. Intro.**

In Job 25:4 Bildad the Shuhite posed a question to Job saying, “*How then can man be righteous before God? Or how can he be pure who is born of a woman*?” I came upon this news paper article that would have answered in part Bildad’s question as it read on September 16th 2010 in a New York Paper: “*A 21-year-old man was apparently slapped with a parking ticket as he lay slumped over dead in his car. According to family and cops, Nicholas Rappold, of Flushing, was dead in the front seat of his Jeep Cherokee on 165th St. near 35th Ave. Tuesday morning when a traffic agent gave him a ticket for being parked illegally while city officials were in the process of street sweeping. Rappold's friend found him about an hour after the ticket was issued.* ***Police voided the ticket after releasing the car to the family****.*” The question is: ***Why did they void the ticket? Well obviously by the issuance of the ticket it wasn’t that the law was dead to Nicholas Rappold. No it’s because Nicholas Rappold was dead to the law and the law was no longer valid***. That is what this section is all about. Martin Luther was so amazed by these verses that he wrote of his time as a monk and his feeble attempts of trying to make absolution saying: “*The merit of Christ is mentioned….but if you look closer you will notice that Christ’s merit is belittled, while the monk’s merits are aggrandized. They confess Christ with their lips, and at the same time deny His power to save. I myself was at one time entangled in this error. I thought Christ was a judge and had to be pacified by a strict adherence to the rules of my order. But now I give thanks unto God… who has called me out of darkness into the light of His glorious gospel.*”

**II. Vs. 17-18 Christ: 100% righteous**

Vs. 17-18 Remember that as Paul said these words the concerned parties were right in front of him, he was only saying what they were thinking. Their objection to the doctrine of grace is, “*If God declares right bad people, what is the point of being good? Can’t we do as we like and live as we please*?” Wouldn’t this make Jesus a servant of sin? Paul’s answer is an emphatic “***certainly not***!”

1. First, yes, we seek to be justified by Christ, and not by Jesus plus our own works.
2. Second, yes, we ourselves also are found sinners, that is, we acknowledge that we still sin even though we stand justified by Christ.
3. But no, this certainly does not make Jesus the author or approver of sin in our life. He is not a minister of sin.

There are two great temptations in the Christian life:

1. The temptation to try to earn God’s favor
2. The temptation to use some little achievement to compare oneself to our fellow man to our advantage and their disadvantage

In verse 16-17 a word appears for the first in Paul’s letter it’s the word “***Justified***” and it is central to the gospel Paul preached. The verb form of the word appears three times in verse 16 and once in verse 17 and the noun form (New King James “righteousness”) once in verse 21. It is always important to define terms and we come to the powerful truth of justification our understanding or lack thereof has eternal consequences. **Justification is the act of God whereby He declares the believing sinner right in Jesus Christ.**

* No Christian can therefore be more “justified” than another, you either are or you are not.
* If it was justified by works then it would be a gradual process in which one could be more justified than another.
* God declares the believer in Jesus right he ***doesn’t*** make him right by declaring him not guilty. In the court of law once a person has been declared not guilty they cannot be retried for the same crime and as such can never be guilty again.
* We are no merely pardoned as that would mean that we still have a record and we are not just forgiven as that would mean that we could again become guilty.
* In justification God no longer puts our sins on record!
* The number one reason most sinners never become believers is because they refuse to admit they are sinners and sinners are the only kind of people Jesus can save.

Martin Luther said, “*A Christian is not somebody who has no sin, but somebody against whom God no longer chalks sin, because of his faith in Christ.*” Paul says “***There is no more sin then in trying to find acceptance before God by our law-keeping than there is sin in everyday life as a Christian.***” Good works looks at Jesus, on the cross, taking the punishment we deserved, bearing the wrath of God for us, and says to Him, “***That’s all very nice, but it isn’t enough. Your work on the cross won’t be good enough before God until I’m circumcised and eat kosher*.**” What an insult to the Son of God!

**III. Vs. 19-21 Mankind: 100% not righteous**

Vs. 19-20 Here Paul describes what permanently changed his relationship to the law. The law hadn’t die it was still Holy and Good. The problem is what the law has to work with (*you and me*) is not Holy and Good. It was the law its self that killed Paul as it showed him that he could never live up to its demands to be perfect. In Matthew 5:27-28 Jesus said “*You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart*.” The purpose of the law is to show us that we can’t keep it so we will turn to Jesus who is the only One that has ever kept it. Paul confessed in Romans 7:7 that he “*would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, "You shall not covet.*” The problem with these Judaizers from James was that they were not living as dead to the law instead they were thinking that they still could live under the law and be declared by God as being right before Him by their efforts in keeping it. It was only when Paul died to the law as a basis of being right with God that he could truly live for God.

Paul anticipates them saying, “*Paul when did you die to the law*?” to which Paul says, “*I’ve been crucified with Christ! I died to the law as a basis of right standing before God when Jesus died on the cross forever demonstrating that that the law could never declare me right*!” Furthermore the author of Hebrews in 10:4 says that “*it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.*” Not only does Paul declared that he is dead to the law he also declares that he has a new life as the life he now lives he does thru complete trust in Jesus. On the cross my friend there was a “GREAT EXCHANGE” as we gave Jesus our old failed “***tried-to-be-right-before-God***” life for Jesus’ “***live-in-him-life***”. The outcome is Paul’s life is no longer his life it is Jesus’ life and Paul is only managing the life Jesus gave him by simple trust in Jesus. His faith wasn’t in himself, it wasn’t in “faith” it was in a Person who rose from the dead. This simple trust in someone and not in ourselves is made much easier when we realize as Paul writes of Jesus: “***Who loved me and gave Himself for me***!” *If you could ask Nicholas Rappold he would tell you that the law never loved him, it never sacrificed anything for him. No it tried to give him a ticket when he was dead*. Paul views Jesus’ sacrifice as personally for him and not just generally for the world. Dear one until you come to understand that Jesus sacrifice was specifically for you, He personally gave His life for you; you will never understand the full weight of grace!

Vs. 21 Paul finished off his confrontation with Peter by saying; “*For anyone to live under the Law of Moses to be right with God is to set aside the Grace of God*” and Paul would have none of that! You can either choose the always failed course of human works and effort in an attempt to be declared right before God or you can choose the always successful course of trusting in Jesus finished work; but you cannot do both! ***It is not heroic or noble to try to earn your way to heaven it is instead the greatest offence anyone can make as it is saying to God the Father that His only Son Jesus’ death and sacrifice is either not enough or not necessary***. Matthew 26:39,42 as Jesus prayed in the garden he asked “*O My Father,* ***if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me****; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will*.” “*Again, a second time, He went away and prayed, saying, "O My Father,* ***if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done****.*” Let that forever settle this in our lives it is “***NOT POSSIBLE FOR THIS CUP TO PASS AWAY***”. There is no other way! Martin Luther put it this way, “*If my salvation was so difficult to accomplish that it necessitated the death of Christ, then all my works, all the righteousness of the Law, are good for nothing. How can I buy for a penny what cost a million dollars*?” To say that my work, my sacrifice is good enough to go to heaven is saying in so many words “*I’m Jesus, I’m God*” as it proclaims ourself as our own savior!

**Galatians**

**“Living Free”**

**Main Teaching: 1:10-6:10**

**B. 3:1-4:31 Reasoned Grace**

**1. 3:1-14 Lessons learned**

**3:1-9**

**“Bewitched”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-5 So foolish**

**III. Vs. 6-9 Abraham**

**I. Intro.**

***The gospel is not good advice to men, but good news about Christ; not an invitation to us to do anything, but a declaration of what God has done; not a demand but an offer***! So why were the gentile believers so ready to cash in grace for works? Back when I was kid there was a sitcom called “***Bewitched***” and it was about a mortal who inadvertently married a witch. Samantha was trying desperately to live as a mortal and not cast her spells on her husband Darrin. Yet in each episode she found that to make it she had to wiggle her nose and use her witchcraft to make it through. That is what Paul say’s the Judaizers had reverted to get these gentile believers to let go of grace and embrace legalism to be right with God. These Judaizers weren’t wiggling their noses they were point their fingers to employ there witch craft. Paul will use 6 different arguments in Galatians to prove that Jesus saves us by faith alone and not by works and her in this section we see two more.

**II. Vs. 1-5 So foolish**

Vs. 1 In this chapter Paul attempts to correct their vision of Jesus who Paul says was “*clearly portrayed*”. He question the Galatians’ on their own experience; they had experienced Christ, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the baptism of the Holy Spirit all before they were indoctrinated into the idea that they need first to become Jews. ***What in their experience suggested that something was missing? What else could they add by works that they hadn’t already received by faith?*** Their blurred vision had come about because the Judaizers had come in and told them falsely that they were “*Made right before God based on what Jesus did for us, plus what we do for Him under the Law of Moses*.” In calling the Galatians “*foolish*” Paul is not saying that they are morally or mentally deficient instead he uses a word that suggests a person who has the right answer but fails to use that answer. The word “*bewitched*” reflects that they were behaving as if they were under some spell that has caused them to not respond to what they knew was true. The word was used of an ancient superstition where someone would place and “*evil eye*” upon another. Martin Luther wrote, “*Through the centuries, error after error arises, and we are well able to see some of the errors of the past, but many are blind to the errors of today*.” One author put it this way: “*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.* They had become “*spiritually dull*” to the gospel that they had accepted from Paul which proclaimed Jesus as the Messiah who had been crucified.

Vs. 2-3 Paul makes the correlation that receiving the Holy Spirit is when the Christian life begins. The question Paul asks is “*How did they receive the Holy Spirit, by human works or by faith*.” Note the contrasts between the law and faith:

* The law says, “*do this*” and the gospel says, “*Jesus has done it all*”!
* The law requires human works and achievement; the gospel requires faith in Christ’s achievement.
* The law makes demands and bids us to obey; the gospel brings promises and bids us to believe.

These two are diametrically opposed to each other; to establish one you must destroy the other as they cannot coexist. It is hard for us to imagine that these Judaizers were telling already saved gentile believers that God would not bless them unless they first became circumcised and kept the law. ***One wonders how many of these men undertook the operation only to find out that all that they received was a little less skin, a lot more pain but no blessing***. The blessing of the Holy Spirit is not earned He is received! God gave them the greatest gift of the Holy Spirit indwelling and empowering them then why would God cause growth by efforts of the flesh?

* Under law, we are blessed and grow spiritually by earning and deserving.
* Under grace, we are blessed and grow spiritually by believing and receiving.

If Satan cannot stop us from being saved by faith, then he will attempt to hinder our blessing and growth and maturity by faith. Spurgeon said, “*When the works of the flesh are substituted for faith, self-confidence and pride are the inevitable result. 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*.”

Vs. 4-5 Apparently while Paul was among them these Galatian believers had suffered persecution from Jews who thought their liberty in Christ was wrong and now that they had switched sides Paul asks them about this by saying, “*He who supplies the Spirit to you*…” That would be a gift from God in response to our simple trust. Yet now at the words of the Judaizers these Galatians believers believed that the spiritual riches came from God based upon human effort. There is a choice to make:

1. ***Do you believe you will be blessed by the works of the law?***: Will you earn and deserve your blessing from God.
2. ***Or by the hearing of faith?***: Or will you believe and receive it?

The Holy Spirit is mentioned 18 times in this letter and is the evidence of a life that has been transformed by God. There are two persons necessary for the birth of a baby and there are two persons necessary for the New Birth in Christ: ***The Word of God*** and ***the Spirit of God***. And just like a baby nothing more needs to be added, you don’t need to take the child to the hospital to add an arm, or grow a tow, as if they are Mr. Potato Head. “*You have begun in the Spirit*”, Paul says, “*Nothing more needs to be added*”.

**III. Vs. 6-9 Abraham**

Vs. 6 Here in these four verses Paul calls Abraham to the stand and quotes Genesis 15:6, quoted four times in the New Testament. There was not a Jew who wouldn’t claim their ancestry to one man, Abraham. He was the reason why they got circumcised so Paul will reveal to the Galatians that Abraham is not a symbol of works he is a symbol of faith alone. No one could say that Abraham was made right by his obedience or fulfillment of the law as he was before the law. Abraham put his trust in God’s promise to give him children that would eventually bring forth the Messiah and God credited this belief to Abraham’s account as righteousness. God spoke to Moses in Deut. 7:6-8 saying, “*For you are a holy people to the Lord your God; the Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth. The Lord did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples; but because the Lord loves you, and because He would keep the oath which He swore to your fathers, the Lord has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt*.” Abraham didn’t “**believe IN God**” he “***BELIEVED GOD***”.

Vs. 7 Since Abraham was declared right by God solely upon his trust in God and not by his trust plus his works Abraham is the father of all who trust in God and are declared right. The Judaizers believed they were superior to Gentile Christians because they descended from Abraham but Paul says that ***the link to Abraham is not in the genes it’s in the faith!*** Some Jewish Rabbis taught that Abraham stood at the gates of Hell, just to make sure that none of his descendants accidentally slipped by. In Matthew 3:9 John the Baptist dealt with this same thinking when he said do not think to say to yourselves, “*We have Abraham as our father.* *For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones.*”

It is a sad fact that some have taken Galatians 3:7 and misapplied it to support the false teaching of “*replacement theology*”: ***The idea is that God is finished with the people of Israel as a nation or a distinct ethnic group, and that the Church spiritually inherits all the promises made to Israel***. But you don’t interpret the Bible on one verse you interpret the one verse by what the entire Bible. Romans 11:25 says that the “*hardening in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.*” This means that God is not finished with Israel as a nation or a distinct ethnic group. God is not “finished” with Israel, and Israel is not “spiritualized” as the church. All who put their faith in Jesus Christ are sons of Abraham; but Abraham has his spiritual sons and his genetic sons, and God has a plan and a place for both.

Vs. 8-9 Paul has already said that his experience as well as the Galatians experience supports grace and not works but here ***Paul says more importantly the Bible supports this position.*** Paul believed that when the scriptures speak God speaks as he personifies the scriptures. Even back in Abraham’s day according to Genesis 12:3 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 nations shall be blessed. ***If it was essential that a Gentile must first become a Jew before they can become a Christian, God would never have said this blessing would extend to every nation, because Gentiles would have had to become part of the Israelite nation to be saved***. The most important question we can ask is, “*Am I of faith*?” “*Do I believe God even as Abraham did*?” “*When God says it, do I believe it*”? “*Do I live as if I really believe God is true*”? “*Can others see that I am trusting God*”?

**Galatians**

**“Living Free”**

**Main Teaching: 1:10-6:10**

**B. 3:1-4:31 Reasoned Grace**

**1. 3:1-14 Lessons learned**

**3:10-14**

**“From got to, too get to”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 10-12 All of it, all of the time**

**III. Vs. 13-14 Paid in full**

**I. Intro.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Paul addresses why our attempt’s to live by the law doesn’t work; something that old Earl Henry of Lexington Kentucky would attest too. You see old Earl holds the record for most arrests (1030 and counting). He has become somewhat of an Internet star when his county jail's [web site](http://jail.lfucg.com/services/offenders/offenderdetails/default.asp?inmateid=337&inmateimage=E137236.JPG) began showing the incarceration status of past and present offenders, including their [mug shots](http://www.vimeo.com/clip:95085). Earl's notoriety led to a spot on the "Jimmy Kimmel Show," and later spawned a rock song, a [Firefox browser extension](http://www.thepangburns.com/jesse/firefoxExtensions/index.htm), and an [oil painting](http://henryearl.messedup.net/images/henry_oil.jpg), among other tributes. He even has his own website where you can contribute money, (I’m not sure if that is to pay for his legal fees or a bottle of Jack Daniels)? Currently the Stats for Henry Earl's Alcohol-Related Offenses are: | |
| Total | |
|  |  |
| Number of days spent in jail: | 4618 (over 12 ½ years) |
|  | |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| Overall | |
| Average # of days per year spent in jail: | 243.05 |
| Average duration of incarceration period: | 4.49 days |
| Average duration of time not spent in jail: | 2.01 days |

Dear friend the law can’t make you right or do right just ask Henry Earl, though in his case it has made him famous. The Christian experience isn’t “DO, DO, DO” ----- it’s “DONE”, as in Jesus did it all! “*Are you telling me pastor that I don’t have to go to Church? I don’t have to read my Bible? I didn’t have to pray? I don’t have to tithe*?” That’s right ***you don’t HAVE to do any of those things, you GET to do those things*** as our Christian life isn’t about GOT to, it’s about GET to!

**II. Vs. 10-12 All of it, all of the time**

Vs.10 Paul needed to explain the fine print of attempting to live by the law as a basis of being right before God. The Judaizers had left out a few details as they didn’t merely see keeping the law as important they saw it as essential in their relationship to God. Luther equated this with ***building a house starting with the roof first***. The law is not a religious cafeteria where you can pick and choose what to be obey. God requires doing the law not believing the law as the laws says “*do and live*” where as grace says, “*believe and live*”.

No doubt these legalistic folks would quote Psalm 119:1 “*Blessed are they whose ways are blameless, who walk according to the law of the Lord*.” The problem was that they weren’t blameless because no matter how hard they tried they could not walk according to the law of the Lord. Paul is not saying that the Word of God is bad, what he means is that **God never intended the law to be the way we gain approval or acceptance before God**. If God had intended this then why did He institute the system of atoning sacrifices to go along with the law? The entire sacrificial system looked forward to Jesus who would be the Lamb of God that would take away the sin of the world.

Paul is quoting Deut 27:15-26 in which Moses outlined 12 curses (one for each tribe) that followed the 10 commandments. The 12th curse (Deut. 27:26) was against the person who does not set up ***ALL*** the words of the law and ***DO THEM***. What is interesting to note is that only here in Paul’s quotation do you see a Jew use the word ALL as the Jews refused to translate the Hebrew text of Deut. 27:26 with the word ALL. Apparently they realized that they could not approach God on those grounds and left the word ALL out so as to pick and choose how they were to approach God on the basis of their own works and effort. To prove his point Paul quotes Deut. 27:6 properly and the important point is summed up in two words in this quote “***ALL***” and “***DO***”. Based upon this passage: **If God would approve you on the basis of the law, you first would have to do two things**:

1. ***DO IT***: Not simply know it, not simply love it, not simply teach it, not simply want it, you must ***do it***.
2. ***ALL OF IT***: Not some of it, some of the time. Not just when you are over 18 or 40. Not just more good than bad.

The Law’s requirement was to keep **ALL OF IT, ALL OF THE TIME**! If the basis of God’s acceptance of us is upon our effort then we have no right to choose what, how much or when and where we obey the law. Paul’s point couldn’t be more clear: “***If you are using the law as the basis of approval and blessing before God and are not doing all of it all of the time then you are CURSED by the very law you are trying to use to gain acceptance and blessing.***” This curse is not the curse of reaping what we have sown by our own bad choices, not a curse of the world or even satan but a curse by God!

Vs. 11 To back up his point Paul tells us that this is exactly what God said in the old testament in Habakkuk 2:4 which he quotes here saying, “*But the just shall live by his faith.*” This old testament passage is so important that God has it quoted three times in the new testament.

1. Gal. 3:11: The emphasis is on **just**
2. Heb. 10:38: The emphasis is on **live**
3. Rom. 1:17: The emphasis is on **faith**

Deep down every Jew knew that they couldn’t keep all of the law all of the time and that is why they placed so much upon being descendants of Abraham as they were trusting in what they perceived to be his good works and effort. But already revealed that it wasn’t Abrahams works but his faith that God looked at and declared him right by. The question isn’t whether a believer ought to keep the law morally but rather whether they can obtain right standing before God based upon their works in attempting to keep it, which Paul demonstrates is impossible.

Vs. 12 Here is yet another quote of Paul’s to further illustrate his point this time out of Leviticus 18:5 “*You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if* ***a man does, he shall live by them****: I am the Lord*.” In quoting this verse Paul is saying that using the law as the basis of acceptance and blessings before God is not like playing “*horse shoes*” as you are not rewarded for your effort and getting close. You can’t say “*Well I’ll do my best and let faith cover the rest*!” You can choose works or faith but not both! The roads of faith and works don not go in the same direction as it relates to approval and acceptance before God they are heading in opposite directions. So if you want to live by works, by the law, you will not to do it all of the time not just try to do it. There are so many who use their works as the basis of their acceptance and blessings before God that count their “*good intentions*” but such good intentions are never going to be counted only perfect performance counts.

**III. Vs. 13-14 Paid in full**

Vs. 13-14 Having given his readers the bad news Paul can now give us the good news. Because we can’t do all of it all of the time Jesus has bought us out of the curse of the law. “*Redeemed*” points to the payment of a price that sets us sinners free. Redemption came from the practices of ancient warfare. After a battle the victors would often capture some of the defeated. Among the defeated, the poorer ones would usually be sold as slaves, but the wealthy and important men, the men who mattered in their own country, would be held to ransom. When the people in their homeland had raised the required price, they would pay it to the victors and the captives would be set free. The process was called redemption, and the price was called the ransom. What was the price that Jesus paid? He stood in our place and took the curse we deserved. **It didn’t just cost Jesus something – it cost Jesus Himself**. He made Himself the target of the curse, and set those who believe outside the target. Christ is personally innocent; He did not deserve to be hanged for any crime of His own doing. But because Christ took the place of others who were sinners, He was hanged like any other transgressor. Jesus fulfilled the prophecy of Deut. 21:23 which says, “*Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree.*” Jesus received this curse, which we deserved and He did not, so that we could receive the blessing of Abraham, which He deserved and we did not! It would be enough if Jesus simply took away the curse we deserved. But He did far more than that; He also gave a blessing that we didn’t deserve! The central issue with all religion is: How does an adherent come into a relationship with their god. In all other religions the answer to that question is works and effort on the part of the follower. Only in Christianity is the answer different. According to the Genesis account when Adam sinned God said, “*From now on you will have to work for your bread, live by the sweat of your brow, and work through thorns and thistles.*” But when Jesus (the second Adam) came in the upper room, His broken body became our bread. In the garden of Gethsemane, His sweat mingled with blood and on Calvary, the thorns of the earth were embedded in His brow. He became the curse for us!

**Galatians**

**“Living Free”**

**Main Teaching: 1:10-6:10**

**B. 3:1-4:31 Reasoned Grace**

**1. 3:1-14 Lessons learned**

**3:15-21**

**“Law and order”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 15-18 No “If’s” in a promise**

**III. Vs. 19-21 The purpose of the law**

**I. Intro.**

This article recently appeared in a Salt Lake City news paper: [Max Melitzer](http://weirdnews.aol.com/2011/06/18/homeless-man-max-melitzer_n_879860.html), a 60 year-old homeless man, was tracked down by a private investigator and was told that his recently deceased brother had left him an undisclosed sum of money in his will. Before the life-changing news, Melitzer had been pushing around a shopping cart filled with his personal belongings. Melitzer’s family reports they had a written with him in September in which they gave him a phone number to reach them, but he never called. When they discovered his brother had left him money in his will they had to hire the private investigator, David Lundberg, to find him. It took two months, a few interviews and 60 or 70 phone call tips to finally find “the mellow guy in his 60s.” There are a lot of Christians like Max pushing around a cart of their belongings living on the street of self effort and works who don’t realize that they are heirs to a promise.

The word “*promise*” appears 8 times in verses 15-29 and each time Paul uses the word he does so in the context of God’s promises to Abraham. It was the Judaizers contention that the Law changed the original contract with Abraham but Paul argues that it didn’t. To begin with once two parties concluded an agreement, a third party cannot come along years later and change the agreement. The only persons who could change the agreement are the two original parties. To add something to it or take something away from it would be illegal. Since that is true with man how much more so with God? Furthermore when the original contract was made according to Genesis 15 Abraham was asleep and as such it wasn’t Abraham making a contract with God it was God who made one with him and God choose no conditions for Abraham to meet. Thus this was a contract of grace whereby God made promises to Abraham and Abraham made no promises to God! Moses could add nothing to the contract and could take nothing away from the contract.

**II. Vs. 15-18 No “If’s” in a promise**

Vs. 15-18 In the last section Paul showed that the law didn’t work in as much as it couldn’t institute change in us. In fact the “***fine print***” was that ***we are required to do all of the law all of the time*** and if we failed then we are under the curse of the law. The good news is that Jesus took that curse upon Himself while giving us His blessings and that was all given us as we simply trust in Him. Here Paul moves to the unchanging nature of the covenant made with Abraham. Notice that Paul hasn’t lost perspective even though some had embraced legalism as he starts off in verse 15 calling them “*Brethren*” a term exclusively used for fellow believers.

**The first point Paul makes is a legal one**: Prior to the issuance of the law there was already a binding contract in place, it was the covenant with Abraham. And with that contract it couldn’t be annulled or add to, since that is true with men how much more so with God. In Genesis 22:18, God promised Abraham that “*in your* ***seed*** *all the nations of the earth shall be blessed*.” Paul makes sure that the reader understands that the contract blessings was for Abraham and a ***specific descendant*** as the word in the contract was “**SEED**” singular and not “**SEEDS**” plural which would make the contract for all of Abrahams descendants in general. The contract blessings are clearly written that in this “SEED” (SINGULAR) all the nations of the earth shall be blessed. The point Paul is making is that nothing written 430 years later (the law) could over rule the contract God established with Abraham especially when God was the one writing both contracts. There was nothing in the 2nd contract (the law) that voided out the first contract, (the covenant with Abraham). Reading that contract with Abraham you find three tenants listed:

1. Genesis 12:1-3; Genesis 15: “***UNCHANGING*” and “*ONE SIDED*” in nature**
2. Genesis 17:7-8: **It’s “*PROMISES ARE FOREVER*”**
3. Genesis 12:1-3; Genesis 15: **There are no “IF’s” thus it is “*UNCONDITIONAL*”**

Now when you compare that to Deut. 28 and the Mosaic Covenant you see there are five times we read the word “IF” (1, 9, 13, 15, and 58) which tells us that the law is clearly ***conditional***, a ***2 sided contract where two parties were necessary to uphold it, thus its promises are not forever***. What this means is that all the promises of blessings comes through to Abraham and his descendant’s, spiritually through Jesus by faith. The final point Paul wants to make is that if the inheritance of these blessings offered to Abraham was on the basis of the law, they wouldn’t be permanent and they would have depended upon Abraham keeping the law (*something he couldn’t have done especially since it was written until 430 years latter*). But the blessings were offered on the basis of God’s promise, thus it stands sure. The Greek word for promise is GRACE and it is in the perfect tense which means that it is a permanent FREE GIFT!

All of this demonstrates two very important points:

1. The approach to God on the basis of Faith alone is 100% biblical
2. The law (*though it came after the contract with Abraham*) does not overrule it

The Judaizers quoted the law, Paul quoted the promise, they quoted tradition Paul quoted older tradition! The 430 years mentioned by Paul in verse 17 have puzzled bible students for years. As we know that from Abraham’s call in Genesis 12 to Jacob’s arrival in Egypt in Genesis 46 is 215 years. But Moses tells us in Exodus 12:40 that Israel sojourned in Egypt for 430 years which would make the total number of years from Abraham’s call to the giving of the law 645 years, not 430 years. Yet the 430 year number is repeated elsewhere where the number is rounded off to 400 years. The best answer to this math problem is in what Paul is counting: It seems that Paul is counting from when God appeared to Jacob in Egypt (Genesis 46:1-4) and reaffirmed the contract with Abraham until the giving of the law at Sinai.

**III. Vs. 19-21 The purpose of the law**

Vs. 19-21 Having established that the law didn’t set aside the original contract Paul anticipates a logical question: “***What then is the purpose of the law***”? Paul says **the purpose of the law was fourfold**:

* 1. First, it clearly establish God’s standards as holy and perfect
  2. Second, it keeps man from destroying each other (moral law)
  3. Third, it reveals man’s real problem of rebellion
  4. Finally, it shows us are need for a savior in Jesus

The law remains in effect till Jesus came and still is in effect for those who have yet to receive Jesus by faith as Jesus came to fulfill the law, not destroy the law. But for those who have by faith received Jesus the law no longer is the basis of approaching God. Based upon Paul, the law was given to Moses at Mount Sinai by the hands of angels who were the mediator for Moses when he received the Law from God. Moses needed that “***go-between***” between Moses and God but we don’t need a go-between between Jesus and us because Jesus is our Mediator. The difference is ***A promise depends on one person; a mediated agreement depends on two***. The weakness of the law compared to the covenant of Abraham is shown because it depends on two parties (*and one of them is us and we aren’t* ***promise keepers*** *we are* ***contract breakers***). Whereas a promise depends upon God alone, who is always a promise keeper. The nation received the law 3rd hand from God to angels to Moses. But when God made a covenant with Abraham He did it personally, without a mediator. Paul is not saying that the law contradicts the promise, he is saying that the law cooperates with the promises as they complement each other.

Vs. 21Paul asks yet another hypothetical question that he thought the readers would ask: “*Is the law then against the promises of God?*”And he answers “*Certainly not*!” The problem with the law is not to be found in the law but rather what it has to work with, us! We can’t keep the law and the law offers nothing to enable us to do so or even the desire to do so. If the law could have given us the desire and the power to enable us to keep its requirements then it could have brought about righteousness. Think of it as speed limit signs: **In order for speed limit signs to truly work all of the time they would need to affect two things**:

1. **The driver**: First the sign must change the desire of the driver to always drive the speed limit because without changing the desire of the driver and only changing the car, the car will obey but the driver will always try to alter the car so he can speed.
2. **The car**: Second it must automatically change the car in case the driver whose desire has been changed isn’t paying attention and unintentionally goes over the speed limit. Getting a sign to change every car is relatively easy to accomplish but getting a sign to change the desire of every car driver all the time is impossible!

**Galatians**

**“Living Free”**

**Main Teaching: 1:10-6:10**

**B. 3:1-4:31 Reasoned Grace**

**2. 3:15-29 Logic liked**

**3:22-29**

**“No more red pencils”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 22-25 Lessons from the law**

**III. Vs. 26-29 Graduation**

**I. Intro.**

Czar Nicholas of Russia would walk about his military camps dressed as an ordinary officer, in order that he might know what was going on without being known by others. One night, the Czar noticed a light under the paymaster's door. He opened the door and stepped inside and noticed a young officer—son of an old friend who was seated at a table, sound asleep. He thought of awaken him, but noticed a gun on the table along with some money and a sheet of paper. The paper contained a long list of gambling debts amounting to thousands of rubles. He had realized how much he owed and how impossible it was for him to pay it. The only way out, he thought, was to end it all with the gun as he could not face the disgrace which awaited him. He had written below the terrible total:***"WHO CAN PAY SO GREAT A DEBT?"*** The Czar's first thought was to have him arrested. But he thought of his long friendship with the officer's father. A feeling of compassion took possession of him and he took up the pen which the officer had dropped and wrote just one word: ***"NICHOLAS"*** The young officer awoke after the Czar had gone and noticed the name "Nicholas" below his own question. Joy and shame filled his heart as he thought of the fact that the Czar knew all about his dishonesty and recklessness and yet was willing to pay his debt. The following morning the money arrived from the Czar enough to pay **"So Great a Debt"** down to the last ruble. The joy of the officer for this kindness could not be described and it changed the rest of his life.

**II. Vs. 22-25 Lessons from the law**

Vs. 22 The law does not make a person a sinner; it is like a mirror as it reveals that we are one. It enables us to see our dirty faces but once you see your dirty face you don’t take the mirror off the wall and try to scrape the dirt off. No, you simply wash the dirt off and that is what grace and the blood of Christ does. The law can’t help us because it holds us in the prison of sin. If you can’t stop sin in your life then you have proven that you are imprisoned by the law of God. Martin Luther wrote: “*When the Law drives you to the point of despair, let it drive you a little farther, let it drive you straight into the arms of Jesus who says: ‘Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*”

There is a mistake often made in the presentation of the gospel. In telling folks about the “good news” most folks don’t understanding why Jesus is good news. If the church only speaks about salvation people will not understand what they are in need of being saved from.

Suppose you took a flight to Hawaii and somewhere over the Pacific ocean unknown to all the passengers, the pilots realize that they a fuel leak and they don’t have enough fuel to land the plane. So the Pilots call the two stewardesses into the cockpit and tell them of the situation: They need to get the passengers ready for the fact that the plane isn’t going to be able to land. The good news is that in that the cargo hold is enough parachutes for every passenger on board. Furthermore they have radioed ahead and there are ships in the immediate area where the plane will be going down to pull out the folks from the water. There needs to be no loss of life if the passengers will only put on the parachutes and exit the plane as instructed. The Pilots are busy keeping the plane in the air so the task of preparing the passengers falls on the two stewardesses. The first stewardess says, “*Gotcha, I’ll take care of it*!” So she pull’s our some parachutes gets on the PA and says, “*Ladies and gentleman aboard flight 777 I have some wonderful news for you all today*!” “*We have a special free backpack that will make your flight more comfortable. And after you land it will come in handy every day.” “How many of you would like to have one*?” To her surprise only a few folks raise their hand and the rest of the folks aren’t interested. Of the folks that have raised their hands all but two just put the parachute under the seat and go back to watching the movie, playing with their I-pads or reading books. Of the two that try them on only one leaves it on the other one try’s it on then just tosses it aside. The fellow that puts in on keeps it on for 15 minutes and until it becomes hot and uncomfortable then he also takes it off. The first stewardess comes back and tells the 2nd stewardess what has happened and that no one has the parachute on. So the 2nd stewardess says, “*I’ll take care of this*!” She gets of the PA and calmly says, “*Ladies and gentlemen we have an announcement that you need to pay attention to so turn off all your electric devices and put down your books*.” “*The Pilots of flight 777 have discovered a fuel leak that will cause us to have to abort our landing. In their wisdom they have provided parachutes for every passenger onboard the fight today. Furthermore they have made sure that there will be ships in the area where the plane will be going down to pick up every passenger so that no person’s life will be lost*.” “*We will be instructing each and every passenger on how to put on the parachute and how to leave the plane safely.*” “*We ask that you remain calm and follow the instructions that we give you exactly.*” “*Now how many of you dear folks want a* *parachute today, please raise your hand?*”

Vs. 23-25 Before we came to faith in Christ, Paul says, the law kept guard over us in a protective custody. It revealed God’s heart; showing is the right way to live, a way to govern humanity. It also provided an avenue by which we would come to Jesus as we stopped trying to justify ourselves and instead allowed Jesus to declare us right with God as we simply trusted in His finished work. The law gives a reward and a punishment to works; it remits nothing, pardons nothing, and instead calls all to reckoning. ***Satan would have us prove ourselves holy by the very thing God gave to prove us sinners***!

Notice that the words “*to bring us*” in verse 24 are italicized which means that the translators inserted them to clarify the sentence. The original Greek reads, “*Therefore the law was out tutor until Christ*”. Once we have come to a relationship by faith in Jesus, we no longer need to live under our tutor. The tutor did not simply teach a child he was the child’s guardian, watching over the child and his behavior. The idea is more of a nanny, since the tutor could discipline the child. The word tutor literally means “child conductor” and by use of this word Paul is saying **two important things**:

* 1. The Jews are not born through the law, but rather that they are brought up by the law. The tutor was a slave given the responsibility to be the child’s guardian and if needed the disciplinarian. But even with those responsibilities **the tutor was not the child’s father** and only the father could give life the tutor just regulated life.
  2. The work of the tutor was **preparation for the child’s maturity** and once the child became and adult, they no longer needed the tutor. The law was just preparation for Israel of the Messiah as the ultimate goal of God was the coming of the Son. In verse 26 Paul uses a word translated sons that literally means “adult sons” as God’s plan for His children is maturity.

**III. Vs. 26-29 Graduation**

Vs. 26-27 The Judaizers had taught the gentile believers that they weren’t fully followers of Jesus until they became followers of the Law but Paul says that they were full sons of God through faith. What did those adult men who had under gone circumcision at the insistence of the Judaizers think of that true statement? Paul doesn’t say that we are baptized into water but that we are “BATIZED INTO CHRIST”. Water baptism is where a person is immersed into water, so we place our faith in Christ we are immersed in Jesus. Paul uses a decidedly Roman analogy as he writes “*For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have* ***put on Christ***”. When the Roman son became of age where he was seen as an adult he would be given a “*toga virilis*” which signified that he was now a grownup son enjoying full citizenship with all the rights and responsibilities of an adult and was to no longer be treated like a child in his father’s house.

Vs. 28-29 Since the Judaizers pushed class distinctions based upon obedience to the law Paul emphasizes equality through faith. At that time, the Rabbis quoted a morning prayer of the Jews where the Jewish man would thank God that he was not born a Gentile, a slave, or a woman. Here Paul makes good use of that by showing what faith has done.

1. **Neither Jew nor Greek**: As far as spiritual position before the throne of God there is no difference between Jew and Gentile. Thus ***no prior religious benefit***!
2. **Neither slave nor free**: In Christ before the throne of God there is no difference between those that were free in society and those who were slaves. ***No prior economic benefit***!
3. **Neither male nor female**: The equality in Christ even reached through the division of the sexes and established no difference before the throne of God between male and female. ***No prior gender benefit***!

I still remember the dreaded “*red pencil*” the teacher would use on my English papers as she would take my paper and mark it all with the misspelled words, poor punctuation, and bad grammar. That’s what teachers do, they point out mistakes that need correcting. Ah but now that I’m in Christ I still have as many mistakes as I once did. Recently a gracious lady came and asked if she take all my notes and correct all my mistakes on my behalf. She isn’t circling them in red pencil she is fixing them so that those that go on line to read the notes won’t get distracted with my mistakes and instead will get blessed at the perfection of the word. That’s what Christ has done and why we no longer need the law!

**Galatians**

**“Living Free”**

**Main Teaching: 1:10-6:10**

**B. 3:1-4:31 Reasoned Grace**

**3. 4:1-31 Liberty verses legalism**

**4:1-7**

**“From slave to son”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-3 The way we were**

**III. Vs. 4-7 The way we are**

**I. Intro.**

In Galatians 1-3 we have been listening to Paul the apostle, Paul the theologian, Paul the defender of the faith; but now we are hearing Paul the man, Paul the pastor, Paul the passionate lover of souls. Paul’s focus in the forth chapter in man’s personal history instead of world history:

1. Vs. 1-3 Man’s condition under the law
2. Vs. 4-7 Man’s condition under grace
3. Vs. 8-11 Passionate not to go back to the law
4. Vs. 12-18 Not forgetting the past

John Newton, who wrote Amazing Grace, was an only seven years old when his mother died. He became a sailor, and went out to sea at eleven years old. He became the captain of a slave ship, and had an active hand in the horrible inhumanity of the slave trade. But when he was twenty-three, on March 10, 1748, when his ship was in imminent danger of sinking off the coast of Newfoundland, he cried to God for mercy, and he found it. He never forgot how amazing it was that God had received him, as bad as he was. To keep God’s grace ever on his mind, he placed a plaque over the fireplace mantel with the words of Deuteronomy 15:15 “*You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God redeemed you*.” We must keep fresh in our mind what we once were, and what we are now in Jesus Christ, if we do we will do well.

**II. Vs. 1-3 The way we were**

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. The motives may be right but the methods are wrong! The Judaizers had sold them a bill of goods in thinking that their following the law and circumcision would make them superior Christians.

Wiersbe commented saying that legalism practiced in Christianity is like, “*Hearing your pilot announce that the navigator has lost their position and has been flying in circles for the last hour and half but the good news is that they are making very good time*!” To counter this Paul takes three appeals the first we will look at this week the other two when I get back:

1. Vs.1-7 **He explains their adoption**: First we have entered into our adoption by being born again but once we did we entered into the family of God as full adults able to enjoy our complete inheritance.
2. Vs. 8-11 **His concern over their regression**: They had cashed freedom in for bondage and this having escaped the bondage of false gods.
3. Vs. 12-18 **His heart that they would come back to the simplicity of a relationship**: Paul reminds them of how their heart towards him had changed because they had embraced legalism instead of obedience for love’s sake.

Vs.1-3 In 3:26 Paul said we are sons of God through faith in Jesus, now he compares a child and a slave. In the Jewish tradition, on the 1st Sabbath after a boy had turned 12, his father took him to the Synagogue, where he became “*A Son of the Law*”. The father spoke these words over the son “*Blessed be thou, O God, who has taken from me the responsibility for this boy.*” The son then prayed, “*O my God and the God of my Fathers! On this solemn and sacred day, which marks my passage from boyhood to manhood, I humbly raise my eyes unto thee, and declare with sincerity and truth, that henceforth I will keep thy commandments, and undertake and bear the responsibility of mine actions towards thee.*” In the Greek culture the boy under the fathers care from 7-18 then he became a cadet for two years and was under the direction of the state. Before he became a cadet they had a ceremony where the boyhood long hair was cut off and offered to the gods.

In the Roman culture the age was not specific as it was up to the father to determine when the boy was ready and apparently based upon verse 2 Paul has in mind the Roman custom and not the Jewish or Greek custom. What we do know is that the Roman’s held a sacred family festival every year on the 17th of March and if the father believed the son was ready he would be formally adopted and recognized as a son and heir and given the toga virilis. In turn the boy or girl would give the father a toy showing that they had put away childish things!

While the child is still recognized as a child they have less day-to-day freedoms and authority then slaves of the household even though one day they will inherit it all. Paul uses that truth to compare it to the spiritual condition of a person born under the guardian of the law set to watch us as children bringing its truth to bear upon our conscience until we could be presented as adult children and heirs of the King. Paul says, “*So too, we, when we were ‘young children,’ were kept in slavery to the ABC of the universe*.” One of those chief elements is the idea of “*you get what you deserve*” some call it karma. This is one of those things that held us in bondage and that grace completely destroys. Legalism is not a step towards maturity it is a step back into childhood. Maturity is doing the right thing for the right reason. Immaturity is having to be told to do the right thing and without being told it won’t get done and if it gets done it will be for the wrong reason.

**III. Vs. 4-7 The way we are**

Vs. 4-5 Paul says, “*When the time was right*” Jesus came into our lives as the law had worked perfectly in the world to prepare us for God’s redemptive work. Paul’s aim is not to destroy the work of the law in our lives only to limit its influence. Some that remain under the law in the world are still being prepared but once you have received Jesus by the grace He offers you no longer need to law working in the world. Paul tells us four things:

1. “**WHO**” came, ***Jesus*:**
2. “**WHEN**” He came, ***the fullness of time***:
3. “**HOW**” He came “***born of a woman, born under the law***:” Jesus came not only as God’s Son, but also as one born of a woman, born under law. The eternal Son of God in heaven added humanity to His deity and became a man, born of a woman, born under law.
4. “**WHY**” He came, “***to redeem those born under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons***”: Because Jesus is God, He has the power and the resources to redeem us. Because Jesus is man, He has the right and the ability to redeem us. He came to purchase us out of the slave market, from our bondage to sin and the elements of the world.

We were not just purchased out of a slave market to be owned by another! We were purchased from a slave market to be made heirs, placed into the family as adult sons and daughters. God is not just their creator, their “*man upstairs*” He is their Dad as they have been adopted into His family. In the Roman culture adopted children were given equal privileges in the family as biological children.

When we consider our status as Christians we need to go much further than thinking of God as one who has merely saved us from certain destruction to realizing that He has saved us not only out of harm’s way he has saved us all the way home into His lavish mansion. Solomon wrote in Song 2:4 “*He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love.*” We gain something in Jesus that is greater than what Adam ever possessed. He was never adopted as a son of God. Redemption is far more than restoring what Adam lost as we are granted more in Jesus than Adam ever had.

Vs. 6-7 We have access to the same intimacy with God the Father that God the Son, Jesus Christ had. Jesus addressed God the Father as “Daddy” when He prayed, Abba, Father, as recorded in Mark 14:36. Listen to Paul’s words carefully as he doesn’t say we “*whisper*” Abba, Father as if we are lacking confidence to speak affectionately. No we are bold and confident to shout out our love for we have experienced His love for us. ***Our cry’s, as weak as they may seem in a world that belittles our faith, mocks our life and attempts to drown out our voices will never be able to keep our Dad from hearing us***! God’s purpose was not only to secure our sonship by His Son, but to assure us of it by His Spirit. There are five differences Paul makes here with regards to Sons’ verses slaves:

* A son has the nature of the father, a slave has a master: The law can make us a slave but it can never make us a son! It could reveal our need for the nature of the father but it could never produce it.
* A son’s father is the master; a slave’s master is the father: No slave could ever call the master, father and no son would ever call his father, master! As son’s we have the holy spirit that has entered our hearts that naturally cries out to our Dad.
* A son obeys out of love; a slave obeys out of fear: The fruit of the Holy Spirit indwelling us is love! The law demanded and fear would obey but never out of love.
* A son is wealthy; a slave is poor: We are both sons and heirs and since we have been adopted as adults into the family of God we get to enjoy our inheritance the moment we have been adopted into God’s family.
* A son has a future and a hope; a slave doesn’t: The worst day of a son’s life always held the promise of something better the next day. The best day of a salves life always help the certainty of something worse.

To be an heir you must inherit something but we don’t inherit something we inherit Someone, God the Father! And as such we have received according to Ephes. 1:3 we have also received “*every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ*”.

**Galatians**

**“Living Free”**

**Main Teaching: 1:10-6:10**

**B. 3:1-4:31 Reasoned Grace**

**3. 4:1-31 Liberty verses legalism**

**4:8-18**

**“Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 8-11 No reverse gear**

**III. Vs. 12-18 Where’s the love?**

**I. Intro.**

Religious rituals have a fascination that to some lasts a life time. Festivals, ceremony and church liturgy has captured hearts where emotions are stirred by the music, church décor and even the look of the facility. Many of those traditions that aroused religious feelings still do so but the truth that the tradition pointed too has long ago been lost and what the focus of worship and truth is now is just the façade of symbols and ceremonies. The sad truth is that it is quite possible to observe and practice a ritual and completely miss the truth. People that do so will be satisfied with the performance thinking that this is God and miss the opportunity to have an ongoing relational encounter with the living God. The Galatians were being persuaded to follow the sign at the cost of what it pointed too. Jesus didn’t come and say, “*I have come that they may have religion*!” He came and said, “*I have come that that they may have life, and have it more abundantly*!” Last time we looked at this passage we looked at Paul’s three appeals the first of which we looked at two weeks ago, they were:

1. Vs.1-7 **He explains their adoption**: We have entered into our adoption by being born again but once we did we entered into the family of God as full adults able to enjoy our complete inheritance.
2. Vs. 8-11 **His concern over their regression**: They had cashed freedom in for bondage and this having escaped the bondage of false gods.
3. Vs. 12-18 **His heart that they would come back to the simplicity of a relationship**: Paul reminds them of how their heart towards him had changed because they had embraced legalism instead of obedience for love’s sake.

**II. Vs. 8-11 No reverse gear**

2. Vs. 8-11 **His concern over their regression**: They had dropped out of the school of grace for the nursery of the law. From the wealth of the gospel to the poverty of the law! They were doing this by adopting special observances of days, weeks, months etc. It wasn’t wrong to celebrate those times it was wrong to think that having done so they obtained a special standing before God.

Vs. 8-11 Paul says based upon this truth that we have become heirs we have a choice to make: Live as heirs or live under the law. Why would a person who has become an heir to the King want to go back and live as like the beggars we once were? It’s one thing to live like a beggar because you don’t know that you are an heir and it’s a whole other matter to choose to do so when you know you are an heir. Wiersbe wrote, “*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.*” These elements of the world are:

* Weak because they offer no strength
* Beggarly because they bestow no riches

All they can do is bring us again into bondage. The false teachers demanded the observance of days, months, seasons and years as if this would lead them into a higher plane of spirituality. But all these weak and beggarly elements of legalism did was bring them into bondage. Paul didn’t object to these observances for he kept them himself. He objected to the Gentiles taking them as a means of salvation. We can have a living, free, relationship with God as a loving Father based on what Jesus did for us and who we are in Him. Or we can try to please God by our best efforts of keeping the rules, living in bondage as slaves, not sons.

**III. Vs. 12-18 Where’s the love?**

2. Vs.12-18 **His heart that they would come back to the simplicity of a relationship**: Paul reminds them of how their heart towards him had changed because they had embraced legalism instead of obedience for love’s sake. Saint’s works and effort always has as one of its casualties love for others. When our standard is our obedience then we must continually compare ourselves to the very ones we are called to come alongside of to love. One of the telling characteristics of false teaching is that its focus is towards the churched to win them to their way of thinking. Their outreach is to those who already attend not to those who don’t. They want the sheep to follow them not the lost to follow Christ! That is what Paul says about the Judaizers as well. The true servant of Christ reaches the lost and desires to bring them into a relationship to Jesus not get followers to join them. Because the Galatians had lost the truth about their salvation they had lost the joy of it as well and were now engaged in the work that couldn’t satisfy.

Vs. 12 Paul wasn’t standing before the Galatian Christians, saying “*Look at how perfect I am. Don’t worry about following Jesus, just follow me*.” He simply wanted them to follow him as he followed Jesus. On a side note: Can we say to others be like me? If the Christian life is as we proclaim it to be than we ought to be able to say this. Paul had lived his life in legalism as they were now attempting to do he knew its appeal and failure. He wasn’t speaking to them ought of being personally hurt by them; he was motivated only by love.

Vs. 13-16 It seems based upon this passage that Paul travelled to this reason because of some physical infirmity. Yet even though Paul was weak physically the Galatians still received him and would have given their own eyes if they could have. Physical infirmity and illness were regarded by Jews and Gentiles alike as a symbol of divine displeasure or punishment, there would have been a natural temptation for the Galatians to despise Paul and reject his message. Paul marveled at those who had displayed such love towards him before they knew him would now show such hatred for him simply because he spoke the truth against the lie they had believed.

Those that have the privilege of teaching God’s word must only be judged upon the truthfulness of their words not upon their performance.

Vs. 17-18 The legalists were talented at glad handing and demonstrating love but their motive was to seduce them into false teaching. There have been many false teaching groups who practice overwhelming love and support initially to prospective members to gain control over them then they indoctrinate them into the same kind of self righteousness and class distinctions that they practice. The zeal of these kinds of churches is a zeal for the group above a zeal for Jesus even though they do so with a pretense in the name of Christ. Any church that becomes exclusive and proclaims to be the “*one true church*” or of higher standing than other churches will soon make demands upon its own members to keep them in bondage and control. These groups start out with excessive love, then trout out special insightful teaching that they only have and once the person is in begin to lay on them heavy demands. And if the member doesn’t go along then they are ostracized form all including family. Had these so called churches started with the latter they would have no followers.

**Galatians**

**“Living Free”**

**Main Teaching: 1:10-6:10**

**B. 3:1-4:31 Reasoned Grace**

**3. 4:1-31 Liberty verses legalism**

**4:19-31**

**“Stair Way To Heaven?”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 19-23 Mother or a monitor**

**III. Vs. 24-26 A tale of two hills**

**IV. Vs. 27-31 Children of promise or children of work**

**I. Intro.**

Parents have you noticed that we never seem to outgrow our children? When they are little they are a “***handful***”, when they’re grown they are a “***heart-full***”! The events of this section actually happened, but Paul used them as an allegory, (*a narrative that has a deeper meaning*). The Jewish Rabbis held that a passage of scripture had four meanings:

1. Literal meaning
2. Suggested meaning
3. Deduced meaning
4. Allegorical meaning

Paul’s purpose in using this story as an allegory is to again reiterate that the works and grace can’t coexist. In 1971 Robert Plant of Led Zeppelin sat down and wrote the lyrics that would be the most popular rock songs ever called, “Stair Way to Heaven”. In it he wrote about “*a lady who's sure that all that glitters is gold and she's buying a stairway to heaven*”. Though Plant says that “*Depending on what day it is I still interpret the song a different way---and I wrote the lyrics*” He does go on to say, “*The woman is getting everything she wanted, without giving anything back*.” That is in line with the subject matter of Paul’s in this section as the Judaizers were false saying that the gentile believers in Galatia could get everything they wanted without giving something back. Dear ones ***there is no stair way to heaven there is only a resurrection to heaven***!

**II. Vs. 19-23 Mother or a monitor**

Vs. 19-20 Every parent has had to speak to their adult children as if they were little and Paul experienced just that as he felt the need to speak to those he truly loved in Christ but had chosen the law over grace as if they were children in need of being won to Jesus again. Paul didn’t doubt their salvation as he said that Christ was formed in them he was concerned that they had decided to leave what was clearly formed. Saint’s it is the job of every parent to raise adults and it is the responsibility of every pastor to raise mature believers. Paul wanted two things with regards to this communication with them:

1. That he could speak to them in person
2. That he could speak to them with gentler words

Vs. 21-23 Right in the middle of his letter Paul has a bible study out of Genesis 16 and the story of Abraham, Sarah and Hagar. Paul will use this story as yet another metaphor between religion and relationship as he contrasts Sarah’s free son Isaac with Hagar the bound woman’s son, Ishmael. Right here would be a good time to give a little time line of the events that Paul is using as a metaphor:

At 75 Abraham was called by God to go to Canaan and is promised many descendants. At 85 the promised son has not arrived and Sarah becomes impatient and suggests that Abraham marry Hagar her maid and slave girl. At 86 Hagar becomes pregnant and Sarah become jealous and throws her out of the house. But the Lord intervenes, and sends Hagar home and she delivers a son Ishmael. At 99 God speaks to Abraham and again promises that he will have a son by Sarah 24 years after the first promise and 14 years after Sarah suggested Hagar. At 100 years of age (16 years after the birth of Ishmael) Isaac (laughter) is born. At 103 when Isaac was three a party celebrating his weaning Ishmael (19) mocks Isaac and Abraham is told he needs to kick Hagar and Ishmael out of the house.

The sad truth concerning Ishmael’s birth was that it was concocted by Sarah to “*help God out*” in fulfilling His promise to give them a child. **That is what religion is always about trying to inherit the promise of God through the works of the flesh.** One of these two sons will represent your life at any given time:

1. Faith in God to fulfill His promises to you.
2. Trusting yourself effort to earn God’s promises to you.

Wiersbe said, “*Legalism does not mean the setting of spiritual standards; it means worshipping these standards and thinking we are spiritual because we obey them. It also means judging other believers on the basis of these standards*.” Religion offers two things but neither of them have any benefits:

1. It offers a list of outward rules to keep: But those rules gain you no real benefit
2. It allows you to take credit for your salvation: But it isn’t a true salvation because it’s not by grace.

Spurgeon said, “*The law is the road which guides us, not the rod which drives us*.”

**III. Vs. 24-26 A tale of two hills**

Vs. 24-26 Here Paul uses yet another metaphor this one deal with geography. Paul says these two contracts had two separate mountains that they came from: The law came from Mount Sinai according to Exodus chapter 19-20. The rules passed down from that hill is all about what we must do to be right with God, and if we start climbing that mountain we will never reach the peak! Paul tells us that this metaphor equals Hagar as it makes us a slave as we try to inherit the promises of God by the works of the flesh. Note the irony here as Paul says in verse 25 that “*this corresponds with Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children.*” Works took control and made that which was born of the free women, born by simply trusting God, and put him into bondage as it became Ishmael instead of Isaac!

***Oh dear ones Paul’s words ought to speak to us who have inherited every spiritual blessing in heavenly places by simple trust in God’s finished work through His Son. Because if Israel can look to their works as the basis of acceptance before God and the Galatians who began in the Spirit are now trying to be made perfect by the works of the flesh; then so can we!***

“*But the Jerusalem above is FREE*!” The geography of grace is not to be visited from an earthly hill top but from a heavenly one! Look not to another hill to find grace. The Catholic church sought to find grace on the hill of Calvary but only see the sacrifice and as such their Jesus must be crucified each week to atone for their sins. (*Even that isn’t enough as they will need to spend a few 1,000 years in purgatory to atone for their sins.*) No Paul says look up to heavens Zion where Jesus was taken up into heaven and the disciples didn’t look down at the earth but up into heaven into the clouds. ***Our relationship to God is matter of heaven coming to earth not earth reaching up to heaven***. The New Covenant is all about freedom, but there are far too many in the churches today that say they are free while they still are enslaved to their works. Paul says the New Covenant is the “*Mother of us all*” every birth from her is a “*new birth*”, a miracle, and as such we are a new creations in Christ Jesus. To further illustrate this Paul says that it is a fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah 54:1. This prophecy says that there will be many more of those born by faith then that will ever be borne by works.

**IV. Vs. 27-31 Children of promise or children of work**

Vs. 27-31 Paul says as followers of Christ we don’t identify with Ishmael, we identify with Isaac as children of promise. There is another reality as it relates to these two covenants represented by these two boys Ishmael and Isaac and that is that Ishmael the child of works and self effort will always resent the child of faith, represented by Isaac.

The answer to this problem is clear, but not easy says Paul in verse 30, “*cast out the bound woman and her son*”. Law and grace cannot coexist together in our Christian life. Every believer must “***kick out***” the idea of a relationship with God maintained by our works and effort. In saying this Paul says that you can’t continue to practice Judaism the way the Jews did during Paul’s day and practice Christianity. Today there are those that attempt to do so but one of those two boys will have to go. Only one is the true heir! It was the child of promise, Isaac that was given the inheritance not Ishmael. The Isaac’s will be persecuted by the Ishmael’s but it is the Isaac’s that inherit the promises of God not the Ishmael’s.

Dear ones there were 24 years after the first promise and 14 years after Sarah suggested Hagar. Sarah thought, “*Honey, I know God spoke to you but I think what God meant was that we were suppose to help Him out. So I’ve got this idea why don’t you take my slave girl from Egypt and father a child through her*?” The result was the birth of Ishmael and they probably thought, “*Yep that is what God meant*”; for 16 years until God said, “*Abraham, I’m still going to give you that boy I promised you and Sarah*!” But Abraham said, “*It’s ok Lord Ishmael will do, I love him he’s my boy*!” But God Insisted and said, “*No, he isn’t what I had in mind with my promise, Abraham; I don’t need your help to fulfill My promise.*” There was years between the time that God first spoke to Abraham about giving he and Sarah a son and they took matters into their own hands. That’s a long time to wait for God to do what He said He was going to do isn’t it? Listen up saints; there is always a gap of time between God giving a promise and the fulfillment of the promise. It’s easy for us to get impatient and start thinking that God needs our help to do what He promised us He would do. As I look over my life, I can see a lot of Ishmael’s because I got impatient and tried to help God. And whenever I’ve birthed and Ishmael, strife, bitterness and anxiety have come with him. The answer is not religion, not doing things to help God out. No the answer is rest in what God has done!

**Galatians**

**“Living Free”**

**Main Teaching: 1:10-6:10**

**C. 5:1-6:10 Responded Grace**

**1. 5:1-12 Practical position**

**5:1-12**

**“Practical Position”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1 Lost their freedom**

**III. Vs. 2-6 Lost their wealth**

**IV. Vs. 7-12 Lost their way**

**I. Intro.**

Freedom is noble ideal, but its practice is a much more difficult reality. With emancipation come personal responsibility and many a person, once freed, has wished to return to their former status where the master provides for all their needs. ***The Jews in the wilderness frequently stated their preference to return to the slavery of Egypt to flee the personal responsibility of trusting a benevolent God.*** Freedom demands that the freed person make their way, making their own decisions, suffering their own consequences for wrong choices. They themselves are responsible for their choices not someone else! This prospect can be overwhelming and frightening to the immature, regardless of how attractive the absence of restraints may be. What many want in our society is called the “*Peter Pan Syndrome*” of the benefits of freedom without the responsibilities it carries, whereby they never grow up. Thus legalism appeals to folks as a way of claiming superiority over that Peter Pan’s of this present day. The Church battles legalism today for much the same reasons the early church did. Leaders in the Church fear that if you do away with rules and high standards, then the Church will fall into “Never Neverland” becoming a congregation of Peter Pan’s. **The error is not so much in legalism as it is in not understanding grace.** Paul clarified this in his letter to Titus (2:11-12) saying that “*the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age.*” His argument in these 12 verses is to show his readers what they lose when they follow legalism instead of grace:

1. Vs. 1 They lose their freedom
2. Vs. 2-6 They lose their wealth
3. Vs. 7-12 They lose their way

**II. Vs. 1 Lost their freedom**

Vs. 1 Notice that Paul doesn’t merely tell these believers to intellectually agree with grace, he admonishes them to live by this truth. It boils down to a choice of how each believer chooses to live out their relationship with God, in bondage or freedom, in fear or love! Jesus bore the yoke of bondage for us as He carried His cross up the hill to Calvary. Paul uses words like liberty but we need to define what he meant by that word in his time not ours.

* Liberty today has the meaning of the pursuit of doing whatever a person wants to do. Not denying any desire! But this isn’t what Paul was speaking by the use of this word. The liberty Paul speaks of is the freedom from the tyranny of having to earn our own way to God. It also includes the freedom ***from*** sin, not the freedom to sin.

Paul wants them to “*stand fast*” which suggests that they were already in the right place when they received Jesus and that they need to make sure that they stayed there. Jesus Christ has given us an “*Emancipation Proclamation*,” but our “old master” tells us that we are still slaves to a legal relationship with God. These Galatians lived in bondage because their “*old master*” has deceived them. Jewish teachers of that day spoke of the Law of Moses as a yoke, but they used the term in a favorable light, but Paul sees it as a yoke of bondage. It was related to slavery, not liberty, as it entangled them.

In the mitzvot **t**he Rabbis count 613 commandments to keep in the Law of Moses. One sight on Judaism commented that “*Judaism is more of an action-based than faith-based religion, performing mitzvot, or God's commandments, is central to leading a Jewish life*.” Even remembering all 613 would be a chore but to keep all 613 each and every day is an impossibility. The moment you try to do so you become a law breaker and enter back into slavery.

**III. Vs. 2-6 Lost their wealth**

Vs. 2-4 Paul uses three phrases to describe the loses if they turn from grace to the law as the basis of their acceptance before God:

1. Vs. 2 “*Christ will* ***profit you nothing***”
2. Vs. 3 “*He is* ***a debtor*** *to keep the whole law*”
3. Vs. 5 “*You* ***fallen from grace***”

Those three phrases tells us the consequences of choosing the law over grace as, “*It will not profit you anything and make you a debtor to the law having fallen from grace*!” Paul is not suggesting that the Galatians had “*lost their salvation*” as 9 times he calls them brethren. What he is saying is that they had fallen out of the influence of grace and were no longer enjoying the benefits of grace. To receive circumcision as a gentile, (*which was the sign to the Jews that that they were under the law*) was a sign that the gentile no longer trusted in Jesus as the sole basis of their right standing before God; they now trusted in themselves instead. Notice the words “*Indeed I, Paul…*” as he is making a personal appeal so that these beloved believers would know what is at stake: ***If you try to make yourself worthy you make Christ worthless***! Furthermore, you are debtor to keep all 613 commandments each and every day for the rest of your life without fail or excuse. The Judaizers from Jerusalem were trying to convince these Galatian believers that they were only bound to keep some of the law not all of it. James wrote in his letter in 2:10 that “*whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all*.” If we come to God on the basis of our own law keeping, then our law-keeping must be perfect. **Think of it this way**: *If you are pulled over for speeding, it will do you no good to protest that you are a faithful husband, a good taxpayer, and have obeyed the speed limit many times in the past. That’s irrelevant; you have still broken the speeding law and are guilty under it.* Literally, this phrase reads “*you have fallen out of grace.*” Most people think of “*falling from grace*” in terms of immoral conduct, but we are not saved by our conduct. We are saved by our continuing reliance by faith on the grace of God. Boice remarked on this phrase saying, “*The phrase does not mean that if a Christian sins, he falls from grace and thereby loses his salvation. Or to put it another way, to choose legalism is to relinquish grace as the principle by which one desires to be related to God*.”

Vs. 5-6 The answer is not more laws and effort in our strength but greater dependence upon the Holy Spirit as we wait for the hope of practical righteousness by faith which is the fulfillment of positional righteousness. No one can be into self effort if they are dependent upon the Holy Spirit! You aren’t better if you are circumcised or uncircumcised. You aren’t worse if you circumcised or uncircumcised. It doesn’t matter if you worship on Saturday or Sunday, whether you eat meat or feast on birdseed, drive a V8 S.U.V. or cruise on your Schwinn as far as a relationship with God everything is irrelevant except faith in Jesus alone.

**IV. Vs. 7-12 Lost their way**

Vs. 7-12 The word “*hindered*” in verse 7 is a military term that means to “*break up a road to make it impassable*.”As the saying goes it’s not how you start a race It’s how you finish it that matters. These believers were in danger of leaving the race because the false teachers had torn up the path throwing the debris of legalism on the road making in impassable. It hadn’t taken much to get them of track, as a “*little leaven leavens the whole lump.*”

But as corrupting an influence as legalism is Paul was far more confident in the resurrection power of Christ to restore what had been destroyed. It also sent a warning to those who were get them off course that they will be judged no matter who they are. James warned in 3:1 “…*let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment*.” Just because someone is a popular teacher doesn’t exclude such judgment if they are taking people away from Jesus onto other things.

It seems as though some falsely accused Paul of still preaching the necessity of circumcision but Paul says if this is true then why is he still enduring persecution from the very ones that were saying this? The whole point of Jesus dying on the cross was to say, “*You can’t save yourself. I must die in your place or you have absolutely no hope at all.*” Paul’s idea here is: “*If cutting will make you righteous, why don’t you do like the pagan priests, go all the way and castrate yourself*?” 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. The Christian faith is not founded upon a book but upon a person; its dynamic is not obedience to a law but love of Jesus!

**Galatians**

**“Living Free”**

**Main Teaching: 1:10-6:10**

**C. 5:1-6:10 Responded Grace**

**2. 5:13-26 Power of performance**

**5:13-18**

**“The Fifth Freedom”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 13-15 Purple elephants and Ice cream Sundays**

**III. Vs. 16-18 New hard drive**

**I. Intro.**

On January 6th 1941 Franklin D. Roosevelt sought to persuade Americans that it was in their interests to align themselves against Nazism and dictatorship. He spoke of what America stood for in Four Freedoms including two values that went beyond the United States’ constitution – freedom from want and freedom from fear.

* The first is freedom of speech and expression – everywhere in the world.
* The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way – everywhere in the world.
* The third is freedom from want – which, translated into world terms, means economic understandings which will secure to every nation a healthy peacetime life for its inhabitants – everywhere in the world.
* The fourth is freedom from fear – which, translated into world terms, means a world-wide reduction of armaments to such a point and in such a thorough fashion that no nation will be in a position to commit an act of physical aggression against any neighbor – anywhere in the world.

It is too bad that that Franklin D. Roosevelt didn’t include one other freedom, **a fifth freedom:** ***The freedom from our self and the oppression of our own sinful nature.*** The legalist believed that they had the answer to the “*fifth freedom*” in laws; but no amount of outside regulations can change an inward nature. It is not law on the outside but love on the inside that can change a nature. And the love on the inside is the power from the Holy Spirit. In this book there are over 14 references to the Holy Spirit it is His ministry within us that enables a believer to enjoy their freedom.

**II. Vs. 13-15 Purple elephants and Ice cream Sundays**

Vs. 13 Jesus came to set the captives free not to put people into bondage. It’s unfortunate that as far as the world is concerned they often see Christians as people that are more bound up then they are free. The one word that sums up the law is not legalism but LOVE! The antidote to struggling with the flesh is to serve people in love. Are you board? Are you battling the flesh in some area? Can’t get along with a co-worker or someone else? I know how to fix your problem, get busy loving people and you will find more joy and peace then you knew was possible. Friend, freedom is the essence of all that encompasses being a Christian it is how we are to live our lives, “freed up”.

The word “*opportunity*” in verse 13b is a military word that means *a base of operations, or the starting-point for an attack*. This leads to the fear from some that such freedom will be used as an opportunity to live according to the old fleshly nature. ***Paul isn’t questioning the possibility of this; he is challenging the antidote, legalism***! Having started this chapter with the exhortation to “*stand fast*” in “*the liberty by which Christ has made us free*” there is a question that needs to be properly defined: ***This liberty that Paul says the believer is to stand fast in must be understood in the context as one in which Christ as made us free***. It is a liberty that Jesus has given us not one in which the world or the flesh has given us. It is a freedom FROM sin not a freedom TO sin! ***Why does God give us freedom with the possibility that we can miss appropriate this freedom as an opportunity to pursue our flesh?*** It wouldn’t be freedom if we had no choice! The flesh expects others to conform to us, and doesn’t care about others. But when we, through love, serve one another we conquer the flesh. Think about Jesus; He had more liberty than anyone who ever walked this earth; yet He used His liberty to love and serve others. Notice that Paul is very specific; he says through “LOVE” serve one another. That love is the love of Jesus as it is our motivation.

Vs. 14 It’s as if Paul says: “*You want to keep the law? Love your neighbor as yourself and you have fulfilled the law in one word*.” The question folks have is: ***What does it mean to love your neighbor as yourself***? Some have twisted this into the idea of self-love as the foundation for a healthy self-esteem. But the **idea is that we are to love others as we naturally take care of ourselves**. “*The meaning is not that we must properly love ourselves before we can love others . . . but that we are to love our neighbor with the same spontaneity and speed with which we already love ourselves.*” The truest measure of our spiritual sate is **not**: How much we pray, how much of the Bible we know, how many time we attend Church. No the measure of our spiritual state **is**: “*How we treat others*!” Friend, you will not be able to accurately gage your spiritual state on those that treat you well, or upon those you already love. No, you will need the nastiest, meanest, person who takes pleasure in hating you to see if you love this “*neighbor*” as you do yourself.

Vs. 15 Paul warns that the loveless life is a life lived on a level of animals who are only concerned for themselves. They bite a devour one another! What would happen if every time we said an unkind word about another person, rolled our eyes uncaringly, acted in a way that showed indifference we would feel the pain that our words and actions caused others? Would we be doubled over in excruciating pain? Ah but what it feel like if every time we treated folks the way Jesus treats us we would experience what they felt by our words and action? The key to walking in the Spirit friend is not “*suppressing the flesh*” it’s “*surrendering to the Spirit*”! Far too many are battling the “***Sin-drome***”. The law says to the flesh, “*Don’t think about purple elephants*!” But as soon as it says that all we can do is think of purple elephants. Grace places before us a chocolate Sunday with all the fixings and says dig in and you know what happens? As you pick up the spoon for your forth bite you have totally forgotten about the purple elephants. Think about Moses who we are told twice that he didn’t eat or drink 40 days and nights. Was the reason for his fast to impress God? Nope, he was in the presence of the Lord during this time and was so enjoying the Lord that forgot to eat or drink! No amount of writing down and pledging to never think of purple elephants is going to keep you from dwelling on purple elephants. So whatever your purple elephant is the way to not be overrun by your heavy pachyderm of a problem is going to be found in replacing your purple elephant with pure blessing and joy of our glorious Sunday!

**III. Vs. 16-18 New hard drive**

Vs. 16 If we walk in the Spirit (*instead of trying to live by the law*), we naturally will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. The fear of the legalist is that walking in the Spirit gives license to sin, and that only legalism can keep us holy but that is wrong. Our walk is to be in the “Spirit” which speaks of three things:

* 1. First, it means that the Holy Spirit lives in you
  2. Second, it means that we are open and sensitive to the influence of the Holy Spirit in our lives
  3. Third, it means we pattern our life after the influence of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit doesn’t move in us to gratify our fallen desires and passions, He guides us in the path of Jesus.

Vs. 17 The Greek word translated flesh: “*Means all that man is and is capable of as a sinful human being apart from the unmerited intervention of God’s Spirit in his life . . .*” *Paul tells us that walking in the Spirit is not a scenic leisurely walk picking daisies; it’s a battle field where trying to avoid landmines of the flesh*. The “***new you***” doesn’t get along with the “*old you*” and when the old you is winning the battle you don’t do the things that the new you wishes to do. Even though the old man was crucified with Christ, and is dead and gone (Romans 6:6), his influence lives on through the flesh - and he will battle against us until we experience God’s final antidote to the flesh: a resurrection body. I believe ignorance of the fact that we are in a battle with our old nature is satan’s biggest advantage because if we don’t realize this truth we will always lose the battle.

Martin Luther said, “*When the flesh begins to cut up the only remedy is to take the sword of the Spirit, and fight against the flesh. If you set the Word out of sight, you are helpless against the flesh.*” It’s like we are a computer, and we have two hard drives in us. One is programmed according to the Spirit, and the other is programmed according to the flesh. In any given situation, we have to decide which “drive” we will access. You ***can’t*** take the “drive” of the flesh and make it as efficient as possible. God wants you to run off the “drive” of the Spirit of God. ***The law is like an error message that keeps popping up on your flesh “drive.” It doesn’t fix the drive, and it sometimes makes the system crash – but it does tell you something is wrong, and it points you in the right direction***. Instead, the Spirit “drive” has programming on it that will make your software run better – and one day, when we get to heaven, God will replace that “flesh” drive with a resurrection upgrade. Until then we are told in Jeremiah 31:33 the Holy Spirit will “*put His law on our minds, and write it on our hearts; so that we will operate as He is our God*.” This is the great work of the New Covenant, promised in the Old Testament. The inner influence is far more effective than the outer influence. The mistake that is made is that the Mosaic law is substituted for the restraint of the Holy Spirit, and with disastrous results. Only in Christianity could you ever have a true democracy, because in a true Christian state everyone would only think as much of their neighbor as they do for themselves. Christian freedom is not a license to sin, for the simple reason that the Christian is not a person who has become free to sin; they are a person by the grace of God who has become free NOT to sin.

**Galatians**

**“Living Free”**

**Main Teaching: 1:10-6:10**

**C. 5:1-6:10 Responded Grace**

**2. 5:13-26 Power of performance**

**5:13-18**

**“Seventeen bad works”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 19-20a Sensual and religious sins**

**III. Vs. 20b-21 Impersonal and social sins**

**I. Intro.**

Author Phillip Yancy made this observation with regards to this passage and the Sea Gull. “*The seagull is a different bird. Watching one bird fly in majesty is breathtaking but watch that same gull as he dive-bombs into a group of gulls, provoking a flurry of scattered feathers and angry squawks to steal a tiny morsel of meat. The concepts of sharing and manners do not exist among gulls. They are so fiercely competitive and jealous that if you tie a red ribbon around the leg of one gull, making him stand out, you sentence him to execution. The others in the flock will furiously attack him with claws and beaks, hammering through feathers and flesh to draw blood. They'll continue until he lies flattened in a bloody heap.*” Such is the difference between “*the works of the flesh*” and the “*Fruit of the Spirit*”. ***Paul reveals three works of the Holy Spirit that he exhorts these Galatians to walk in:***

1. The Holy Spirit enables the believer to fulfill the law through love
2. The Holy Spirit enables the believer to overcome the flesh as we are preoccupied with the goodness of God
3. The Holy Spirit enables the believer to produce Spiritual Fruit that is both a blessing to others as well as beneficial to the believer

**II. Vs. 19-20a Sensual and religious sins**

Vs. 19-21a Paul lists 17 specific works of the flesh that walking in the Spirit enables us to overcome. In verse 17 Paul had written about the battle between our two hard drives in every believer. This battle is inward but the results of this invisible battle are outwardly evident. **We can’t see our inward old nature but we can see what it does.** A general observation of these **17 things will reveal four categories that though not exhaustive** do supply an adequate list. While having 17 “***bad words***” there is also a list 9 “***good words***” which points out that the human language is always more loaded towards evil than it is good.

1. **Sensual sins*: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness and lewdness***: We are appalled at the sexual immorality of our day, but Paul wrote in a day where things were far worse. “*The sexual life of the Greco-Roman world at the time of the New Testament was sheer chaos and the evidence of this fact has come not from Christian writers but from the non-Christian who was disgusted with the unspeakable sexual immorality*.”
2. ***Adultery***: This word isn’t included in the list of many ancient manuscripts, so translations like the NIV don’t include it. Adultery is violating the marriage covenant by sexual immorality and the bottom line is The Holy Spirit never led anyone into adultery.
3. ***Fornication***: In the Greek the word is porneia, and it speaks of sexual immorality in a broad sense. Webster’s dictionary defines fornication as “*Voluntary sexual intercourse between two unmarried persons or two persons not married to each other*.” Paul calls sex before and outside of marriage –fornication and at this time it was so widespread that it was apparently accepted as ***a normal part of life***. The Word of God doesn’t accept this view as the Holy Spirit never led anyone into fornication. Adultery and fornication are ***understood in relation to marriage***. Webster’s Unabridged Dictionary uses this definition: “*The social institution under which a man and woman establish their decision to live as husband and wife by legal commitments, religious ceremonies, etc.*” Many want the benefits of marriage without the commitment of marriage. The Bible has a word for that: fornication.
4. ***Uncleanness***: Uncleanness refers to the opposite of purity. The word for uncleanness is general enough to let us know that all of these things are works of the flesh. It covers impure speech, or suggestive speaking filled with double meanings.
5. ***Lewdness***: Lewdness has the idea of “*ready to sin at any time*.” It speaks of someone who flaunts their immorality, throwing off all restraint and having no sense of shame, propriety, or embarrassment. The chief characteristic of lewdness is a bad person usually tries to hide their sin; but the lewd person no longer cares how much they shock public opinion so long as they can gratify their desires.
6. **Religious sins**: ***Idolatry and sorcery***: These are sins of worship, and remind us that it isn’t only tragic to worship the wrong God, or seek the wrong spiritual power – it is sinful as well.
7. ***Idolatry***: Idolatry is the worship of any god except the Lord God revealed to us by the Bible and in the person of Jesus Christ. Idolatry is simply putting things ahead of God. The Christian who devotes more of himself to his car, house, or boat than he does to serving Christ may be in danger of idolatry.
8. ***Sorcery***: Sorcery is also translated witchcraft and is the service and worship of occult and spiritual powers apart from the true God. Paul uses the word “*pharmakeia*”, which we get our word for “*pharmacy*.” In the ancient world, the taking of drugs (especially hallucinogens) was always associated with the occult, and the Bible’s association with drug taking and sorcery points out that drugs open up doors to the occult that are better left closed.

**III. Vs. 20b-21 Impersonal and social sins**

1. **Interpersonal sins**: ***Hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions and heresies***. These sins primarily express themselves in how we treat others. God cares about moral purity, but He is also passionate about how we treat one another. The fact that Paul uses more words to describe these interpersonal sins shows how important our treatment of each other is to God.
2. ***Hatred***: Hatred is the inner motivation for the ill treatment of others. The word expresses an attitude of heart that expresses itself in actions such as contentions, outbursts of wrath.
3. ***Contentions***: Originally, this word had to do with the rivalry which has found its outcome in quarrelling’s and wrangling. Most commonly it is translated as strife and speaks of a combative and argumentative spirit.
4. ***Jealousies***: Sometimes this word is used in a positive sense - as for being zealous for something good. But here, in this context it means “*the desire to have what someone else has*.”
5. ***Outbursts of wrath***: This word speaks of a sudden flash of anger, not a settled state of anger. It means to lose your temper, being unable to control your anger.
6. ***Selfish ambitions***: This word has an interesting history. It started out meaning “*to work for pay*” in time it meant work that is done for no other reason than money. Finally it was used to describe politicians who campaign for election, for what they can get for their own glory and benefit. It is the heart of a person whose first question is always, “*What’s in it for me*?”
7. ***Dissensions***: This word literally means “*standing apart*.” And describes a society . . . where the members fly apart instead of coming together.
8. ***Heresies***: The word originally meant “*to choose*” but came to mean someone who divisively expressed their “choices” or opinions. We think today of heresies in terms of wrong ideas and teachings; but the emphasis is actually the wrongful dividing over opinions. Barclay said, “*There is all the difference in the world between believing that we are right and believing that everyone is wrong. Unshakable conviction is a Christian virtue; unyielding intolerance is a sin*.”
9. **Social sins**: ***Envy, murder, drunkenness, revelries and the like***:
10. ***Envy***: The word means being bitter just because someone else has something and we don’t. The Stoics called this “*grief because of someone else’s good*”!
11. ***Murder***: This word is not in every ancient text, but murder is a work of the flesh, and that the Holy Spirit never led anyone into murders!
12. ***Drunkenness***: Christians may differ on if a Christian can drink alcohol but what is not debatable is that the Scriptures forbid drunkenness. Being impaired in any way by drink or drinking with the intention of becoming impaired, is sin.
13. ***Revelries***: The word doesn’t mean having a party or a good time. It means unrestrained partying. Barclay says, “*The kind of party which lowers a man’s self and is a nuisance to others.*” The fact that Paul includes these two sins in his list shows that they were works of the flesh that the Galatian Christians had to be on guard against.

“***And the like***”, these words demonstrate that Paul understands that his list is not exhaustive. It isn’t as if you can find a work of the flesh not covered here you are free to do it! “*The early church was not made up of people whose pre-Christian lives were of the highest standard but Paul reminds his readers that whatever kind of sin they had favored in their pre-Christian days they must be abandoned*.”

Vs. 21b The danger of the works of the flesh isn’t just a path of destruction; if continued without repentance it could reveal where you will spend eternity. Paul preached salvation by God’s grace but he also taught that those who are saved by God’s grace have an obligation to live it in consistent living. The verb tense for “*practice*” is in the present which indicates a habitual continual sin and not an isolated lapse. Paul is not talking about an *act* of sin, but a *habit* of sin. Boice said, “*Those who continually practice such sins give evidence of having never received God’s Spirit*.” What is the outcome of such habitual continually practice sin? “*They will not inherit the kingdom of God*!” Charles Spurgeon said, “*The grace that does not change my life will not save my soul.*” The idea isn’t that a Christian could never commit these sins, but that they could never stay in these sins. Martin Luther said, “*Those who sin through weakness are not denied pardon as long as they rise again and cease to sin.*”

**Galatians**

**“Living Free”**

**Main Teaching: 1:10-6:10**

**C. 5:1-6:10 Responded Grace**

**2. 5:13-26 Power of performance**

**5:22-26**

**“The Secret of Life”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 22-23 Total make over**

**III. Vs. 24-26 Dead men don’t walk**

**I. Intro.**

For 11 years Merhan Nasseri (*who had been expelled from his native country of Iran*) was a man without a country. He was allowed to live in Terminal 1 of the Paris airport in 1988. There he stayed for 11 years, writing in a diary, living off of handouts from airport employees, cleaning up in the airport bathroom. Finally, on September 1999 the situation changed as French authorities gave Nasseri an international travel card and a French residency permit. Suddenly he was free to go anywhere he wanted. But to their surprise when airport officials handed him his walking papers, he simply smiled, tucked the documents in his folder, and resumed writing in his diary. You see he was afraid to leave the place that had been his home for 11 years. Can you imagine a more unnatural home than an airport? Friends when we come to Christ, we have a move to make that can be as frightening as the move Nasseri had to make from the airport. We are beckoned to leave our home of the ways of this fallen world to our new home: the ways of the kingdom of God.

**II. Vs. 22-23 Total make over**

Vs.22 Looking at the list of 17 works of the flesh realizing that it is not an exhaustive list causes a person to feel overwhelmed at the reality of battling our old nature. The Holy Spirit is big enough and good enough to change you from the 17 works of the flesh with the fruit of the Spirit. Love always triumphs over the flesh. We cannot defeat the work of the flesh with work empowered by the flesh; it can only be defeated by the Fruit of the Spirit! Paul is careful to call this fruit because fruit has 5 chief characteristics:

* It is produced by abiding not by working
* It is fragile
* It reproduces itself
* It is attractive
* It nourishes

It is one thing to overcome the flesh and *not do* evil things, but quite something else *to do* good things. The legalist may try to boast that they are not guilty of adultery or murder but can they boast in the Spirit that they are guilty of the fruit of the Spirit? A machine in a factory *works,* and turns out a product, but it could never manufacture fruit. Paul begins with *love* because all of the other fruit is really an outgrowth of love.

1. These first three qualities express the ***Godward*** aspect of the Christian life: *Love*, *Joy* and *peace*
2. The next three express the ***manward*** aspect of the Christian life: *long-suffering*, *gentleness*, and *goodness*.
3. The final three qualities are ***selfward****: faithfulness*, *gentleness* and *self-control*.

When Paul described the life lived after the flesh he used the plural form calling it the work***s*** of the flesh; but here he uses the singular fruit. The Holy Spirit has only one work to do in all of us, LOVE! No Christian can claim, “*Well the Holy Spirit didn’t give me this gift.*” The empowering, indwelling Holy Spirit can change each and every believer no matter what 17 works of the flesh afflict them. If you want to know what the Holy Spirit’s fruit of love looks like in action you can best see it at work in these 8 characteristics. There are ***four distinct words in the Greek for love***:

* + 1. **Eros**: Describes a romantic, passionate love.
    2. **Philia**: Describes the love we have for those near and dear to us as in family and friends.
    3. **Storge**: Describes a love that shows its self in affection and care.
    4. **Agape**: Describes a different kind of love that is more of a decision than a spontaneous action.

Agape chooses to love the undeserving, thus its action has to do with the mind and not just the emotions. It is an “*unconquerable benevolence*” no matter what a person may do to us by way of insult, injury or humiliation we will never seek anything else but their highest good. Barclay described it as, “*the deliberate effort which– (*only with the help of God*) – we never to seek anything but the best even for those who seek the worst for us.*” When you have been badly treated, and you think of returning evil for evil, remember, “*The fruit of the Spirit is love.*” Do not imitate it evil for evil, imitate Christ.

***Godward*** aspect of the Christian life

1. ***Joy***: The Greek word is not the joy that comes from earthly things, or from triumphing over someone else in competition. It is a joy whose foundation is God. Spurgeon wrote: “*This joy does not come from what a person has, but from what they are; not from where they are, but from whose they are; not from what they enjoy, but from what was suffered for them by their Lord*.” One of the greatest marketing strategies ever employed is to position hell as the place where the fun is and the kingdom of God as the place of gloom and misery. This is a joy that can abide and remain, even when circumstances seem terrible. It is this joy that Paul knew in Acts 16:25 that caused him to sing when he was beaten and chained in a dark dungeon!
2. ***Peace***: The Greek word for peace does not just mean freedom from trouble it reaches into the positive and claims everything for our highest good. It means tranquility of heart which comes from the consciousness that we are in the hands of God. The early Christians loved these two characteristics of love so much that the two most popular Christian names were Cara “Joy” and Irene and “Peace”. This peace is peace with God and with people, filled with blessing and goodness – not just the absence of fighting.

***Manward*** aspect of the Christian life

1. ***Longsuffering***: Longsuffering is that quality which enables a person to bear adversity, injury, reproach, and makes them patient to wait for the improvement of those who have done him wrong. Luther said, “*When the devil finds that he cannot overcome certain persons by force he tries to overcome them in the long run.*” To be longsuffering means that you can have love, joy, and peace even over a period of time when people and events annoy you.
2. ***Kindness***: This is the same kind of kindness by which God acts towards humanity. The Christian is to treat people in the same manner in which God has treated them. Kindness is a question of disposition whereas goodness is a question of action in words and deeds.
3. ***Goodness***: These two words are closely connected. About the only difference is that goodness also has with it the idea of generosity.

***Selfward*** aspect of the Christian life

1. ***Faithfulness***: The idea behind this word is that the Spirit of God works in us faithfulness both to God and to people. “*It is the characteristic of the man who is reliable.*” The ability to serve God faithfully through the years and through the temptations of life is something that can only be achieved by the Spirit.
2. ***Gentleness***: The word has the idea of being teachable, not having a superior attitude, not demanding one’s rights. It is the quality of a person who is angry at the right time and over the right things and never at the wrong time and over the wrong things. In our society what is prized is self-assertiveness but what God values in the heart is gentleness.
3. ***Self-control***: The world knows of self-control and self-sacrifice, but almost always for a selfish reason. The self-discipline and denial of the flesh is only for themselves, but the self-control of the Spirit will also work on behalf of others.

Paul concludes this list with a double truth, “*Against such there is no law*”. Love with these characteristics is what lawmakers would desire to legislate if they could. It is possible for the old nature to *counterfeit* some of the fruit of the Spirit, but the flesh can never *produce* the fruit of the Spirit. ***The difference is***: When the Spirit produces fruit, God gets the glory. When the flesh is at work, the person is inwardly proud of himself and is pleased when others compliment him. The fruit is produced *to be eaten,* not to be admired and put on display. People around us are starving for love, joy, peace, and all the other graces of the Spirit. We do not bear fruit for our own consumption; we bear fruit that others might be fed and helped, and that Christ might be glorified.

**III. Vs. 24-26 Dead men don’t walk**

Vs. 24 Notice that Paul says here that those who are in Christ “HAVE” crucified the flesh. He didn’t say “SHOULD”, or “BETTER HAVE” but rather he describes it as having already taken place and something therefore we need only be reminded of that truth. Friends, the flesh no longer has dominion over us, it’s been crucified, so next time it wants to act like a “*zombie*” walking around getting you in trouble you only need to remember that in Christ “*dead men don’t walk.*” Paul choose to use the word “cross” instead of just saying kill it because the cross reminds us that this is what Jesus did with our sin and it is what we are to do if we wish to follow Him. It reminds us that doing so is painful but we have to take direct action against the flesh. The verb is in the active voice and points rather to what the believer has himself done and must continue to regard as being done. “*When Christ came in the flesh, we crucified him; when he comes into our hearts, he crucifies us*.”

Vs. 25 The Greek words for walk here is different than the word for walk in verse 16. Here the word means “*to walk in line with*”. The idea is, “*let the Holy Spirit continually direct your steps*.”

Vs. 26 Pail ends this chapter with the need for each believer to examine their own hearts. The problems are in us, and need to be dealt with by the Spirit of God. Augustine used to often pray, “*Lord, deliver me from that evil man, myself.*” All we must do is yield to the Spirit of God, and begin to truly walk in the Spirit.

**Galatians**

**“Living Free”**

**Main Teaching: 1:10-6:10**

**6:1-10 Practice perfected**

**Closing: 6:11-18 Dying to Live**

**6:1-5**

**“Practice perfected”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-5 Sharing burdens and blessings**

**I. Intro.**

1929 Cal Berkley’s Roy Regals was involved in a play that will go down in college football history. His team was playing Georgia Tech in the Rose Bowl and the game was scoreless when he picked up a fumble and headed for the end zone only to have a teammate chase him down and tackle him one yard away from the end zone. The problem for Roy Regals was that he was running the wrong way. On the next play, Regals' quarterback got sacked in the end zone and when the game was over, his team lost by one point. For the rest of his life, Roy Regals was known as “*Wrong Way Regals.*” He later confessed that he had heard his teammate behind him yelling, “*You're going the wrong way,*” but thought, “*What's wrong with him?*” ***Regals had instincts without direction.*** In the popular comic strip “*Peanuts*,” Lucy asks Charlie Brown, “*Why are we here on earth*?” He replies, “*To make others happy.*” Lucy ponders this for a moment and then asks, “*Then why are the others here?*” Paul answers Lucy’s question by say thing that there are **two things that we ought to be sharing with each other in Church**:

* Vs. 1-5 Burdens
* Vs. 6-10 Blessings

Both of which Roy Regals could of used!

**II. Vs. 1-10 Sharing burdens and blessings**

Vs. 1-5 In the 5th chapter Paul dealt with every Christians battle (*The works of the flesh verses the fruit of the Spirit*). Here he gives the Church instructions on what to do if one of us temporarily loses the battle. In word Paul gives us our call to arms “***restore***”! Not shot and bury, not shun and ignore. Neither are they to be excused; they are to be restored! The person who has religion is not interested in lifting burdens they are interested in adding burdens. The legalist is always harder on other people than he is on himself, but the Spirit-led Christian demands more of himself than he does of others *that he might be able to help others.* Restoration is not taking a blind eye to the persons fall from grace; it takes sin seriously but never leaves the wounded on the battlefield of the world overtaken.

The verb for “*overtaken*” is instructive and is a medical term that means to “*put in order*” or to “*restore to its former condition*”. It was often used in the Greek in setting a fractured or dislocated bone. In Mark 1:19 the word was used of the disciples who were “*mending their nets*”. Paul uses this word not as a way of minimizing the offence but rather giving understanding as to the weakness we all have in the flesh where we are dragged away and seduced by our flesh in conjunction with satan and the world system. The church often neglects this responsibility with two equally damaging errors:

* 1. ***It ignores the sin and acts as if it never happened***
  2. ***It over reacts to the sin it treats the person too harshly***

The carnal person wants to reveal a person who has sinned; the spiritual person wants to restore a person who has sinned. The carnal person has a false since of superiority over the person who has fallen while the spiritual person realizes how close they are of falling themselves. It’s for this reason that Paul suggests that this restoration should be accomplished by the “***Spiritual***”. **Far too often the sanctuary is more akin to the office water cooler then it is the house of prayer, as gossip, judgment or undiscerning approval and defense is what transpires**. If a man takes a fall it’s the duty of the Church to get him on his feet again. Paul gives **4 aspects of what “*Spiritual Restoration*” looks like**:

1. Vs. 1 ***In a spirit of gentleness***: The meaning of the word “*gentleness*” is in the context described by Paul as “*considering yourself lest you also be tempted*”. Those who are spiritual must consider **two dangers** they face like the person they are restoring:
2. *The danger of their own weakness and corruption.*
3. *The danger of pride thinking that they are stronger then the fallen saint*.

This warning was towards the arrogance of the legalists who treated the fallen with hatred and pride.

1. Vs. 2 ***Bearing one another’s burdens***: This word speaks of an animal that has been loaded down and is sagging under the weight of the load. The focus of this word is upon others not upon self. We aren’t to be expecting others to bear our burdens but we are to be looking to bear others burdens. The assumption that lies behind this command is that we all have heavy burdens but God does not mean for any of us to carry them alone. ***Could it be that one of the reasons that we have been given “burdens” by the Lord is so that we will be better equipped in the heart and in the body to carry others burdens when our load is light*?** The “**law of Christ**” is in John 13:34-35“*A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.*” The Mosaic law was a burden the law of Christ bears others burdens!
2. Vs. 3 ***If anyone thinks himself to be something***..: The greatest obstacle we face in bearing another’s burdens is PRIDE! Pride doesn’t always say “*I’m better than you*”. But it often says, “*I’m more important than you, and deserve not to be inconvenienced*.” Humility says the opposite, “*I’m nothing you are something, let me carry your burden.*” Paul writes to every Christian saying, “*We Christian’s nothings must never think we are Christian something’s*” **If I esteem you above me, and you esteem me above you, a marvelous thing happens**: ***we have a community where everyone is looked up to, and no one is looked down on***! ***There is nothing more blinding to a person then when their eyes are fixed upon their own image! The misery of many a person is that they can’t see beyond themselves unless it is to find fault in another***! The greatest example of this is satan who is so self-deceived that he works against God actually believing that he will one day triumph.
3. Vs. 4-5 ***But let each one examine his own work***: Here is **a safe guard against self-deception - self-examination!** We shouldn’t do things to try to impress folks that we are important instead we ought to just do the things God has called us to do regardless of who is watching or listening. It is easy to get our work approved before man but another thing to have it approved before God. To rejoice in “*one’s self*” is to have joy as we walk with the Lord instead arrogance that we are better than our brothers and sisters. *There is a great danger in listening to the praise heaped upon you by others and that is you will begin to believe it*! The gospel is great news delivered by those who needed it the most and as such will forever be unworthy to receive praise from men to whom they have shared it. Luther said, “*If we had to feel that the success of our ministry depended upon our popularity with men we would die, because we are not popular.*”

There is no contradiction between bear one another’s burdens and each one shall bear his own load. In verse 5 Paul speaks of our final accountability before God and in verse 2, he speaks of our need to care for others. There is also a difference in the words Paul uses for burdens which means “*heavy burdens*” and “*load*” which is term for a man’s backpack. We are all responsible to carry our own backpack while also carrying others heavy loads.

**Galatians**

**“Living Free”**

**Main Teaching: 1:10-6:10**

**6:1-10 Practice perfected**

**Closing: 6:11-18 Dying to Live**

**6:6-18**

**“Dying to live”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 6-10 Sharing blessings**

**III. Vs. 11-18 Don’t miss this**

**I. Intro.**

On May 9th 2000 something remarkable happened at a public High School in Mississippi. What started as a special presentation by the Pearl River Central High School's Fellowship of Christian Athletes turned into a revival that has transformed the, Mississippi, school and left school administrators astounded. “*It was the most incredible thing I've seen in all my years as an educator*,” said Pearl River principal Lolita Lee. The revival started during a special program attended by nearly 90 percent of the school's 670 students. The program was originally scheduled for one hour, but when the bell rang, Lee said there were more than 100 students standing in line to pray and make spiritual decisions. Principal Lee did something that doesn't happen in normal public school settings—she let the service continue, for more than four hours. Through three class periods and lunch, students wept, prayed, sang, and made amends with one another. And nearly one month later, Lee said the results of the revival are manifested in the hallways of Pearl River Central High as Teachers and staff share how much better the students are.

Dear ones what our nation needs is what Paul was admonishing the believers in Galatia be filled with the Holy Spirit so that we will:

1. Share others burdens: Paul was very careful to outline for us how that was to be done by giving us four things of self-examination before we go and help out a fallen brother.
2. Share with others our blessings.

**II. Vs. 6-10 Sharing blessings**

Vs. 6 In the context of caring for one another, Paul instructs those who are taught the word to support the teacher and in so doing they will be sharing in all the good things with those who teach. The idea is focused upon financial support, but not limited to it. The biblical relationship between pastor and congregation is one of partnership, thus support doesn’t mean payment it means sharing and investing! Though awkward for the pastor to share this Paul repeats this principal in several places in his letters. Martin Luther made this comment on this verse saying, “*When Satan cannot suppress the preaching of the Gospel by force, he tries to accomplish his purpose by striking the ministers of the Gospel with poverty*.”

Vs. 7 Paul reminds them of God’s principle of sowing and reaping. Their giving isn’t throwing away money; it is like planting seeds, and whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. What mocks God is selfishness not generosity and in sharing in all good things with those that teach you are enabling the teaching to be a blessing to others.

Vs. 8 If we want to reap what we have sown; where neither rust, moth nor thief cannot destroy then, sow in the Spirit the resources God has blessed you with. When we sow to the Spirit material things we don’t reap necessarily material things, but something better: of the Spirit we reap everlasting life.

Vs. 9 Even as we wisely manage our resources under the principle of sowing and reaping, we need patience. This is because the harvest does not come immediately after you sow the seeds. This phrase translated lose heart was used for the kind of fear and weariness a woman experiences during labor before delivery; A time when the work is hard and painful, but also unfinished and unrewarded.

Vs. 10 To “*Not lose heart*”, is given context of being wise stewards of our resources, but to hoard for our own consumption but to distribute for the blessings of others especially those in God’s family.

**III. Vs. 11-18 Don’t miss this**

Vs. 11 Typically Paul dictated his letters to a secretary but here he adds a personal touch hand writing a short portion at the end to authenticate and personalize the letter. The writing in “*large letters*” has caused many to speculate that he suffered from poor eyesight but it could be that the larger letters was to emphasize his writing.

Vs. 12-13 Paul finishes with a final word about the motives of the Judaizes whose only interest in the Galatian believers was to get them into legalism. They wanted the Galatians to become circumcised so they could wear the submission of these Gentiles as a badge of achievement. Even as David had boasted in the two hundred foreskins of the Philistines he had killed, so these legalists wanted the allegiance of these Gentiles primarily as a trophy. There was nothing wrong with a Gentile being circumcised but there was everything wrong with saying they could not be right with God without coming under the law of Moses. Furthermore to advocate circumcision was to align the new movement with Judaism, a religion that had official Roman sanction, and therefore one that avoided persecution. Paul describes the legalists four ways:

1. Vs. 12a ***They were arrogant***: They weren’t into winning people, or causing Christians to grow in grace. Their interest was gaining converts to their way of thinking. They wanted the glory and praise of men not of God.
2. Vs. 12b ***They were compromised***: They preached circumcision to avoid persecution. They were more concerned in appeasing men both Jews and Romans then they were obeying the Lord. To the Roman Citizen the word “cross” was literally a four letter word and would never be spoken in public settings. Theses Judaizes preferred the word circumcision to crucifixion as theirs was the popular religion.
3. Vs. 12c ***They were salesmen***: They had a slick campaign to compel folks to follow their false teaching. They were good speakers and used funny stories and slick entertainment to persuade the Galatians to abandon grace.
4. Vs. 13 ***They were phonies***: They wanted the gentiles to submit to the law that they did not obey. Their zeal for the law ended at getting others to follow it and the more they got to follow their false teaching the more they would boast of their numbers.

Vs. 14-15 Paul cared nothing for the glory that came from riches. He cared nothing for the glory that came from status and power among men. He only cared about the glory of the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Having placed the flesh on the cross, Paul also puts the world on the cross, and considers himself dead to the world. Friend:

* ***The world can’t have any influence over us if it is dead***
* ***And we can’t respond to any influence from the world if we are dead to the world.***

Paul and the world could agree together on one thing: *they didn’t like each other*. Though circumcision was a big deal to the legalists Paul knew that it couldn’t make you a new creation only faith in Christ could do that. Christianity is something God does in us, not something we do for God.

Vs. 16 The phrase “*walk according to this rule*” speaks of a surveyor’s line by which direction is determined. As Christians we don’t make up our direction as we go we follow the direction the Word of God is pointing us in. When we do we will experience the blessings of peace and mercy like those who had left Egypt and were guided by the cloud by day and the fire by night.

Vs. 17-18 The words Paul spoke in this letter were not coming from a man who spoke them in theory but from a man who had experienced the truths. Paul was saying, “*The Judaizers want to cut your flesh and brag about you, but I bear in my body the brands of the Lord Jesus Christ—for His glory*.” Paul marks branded him with the name of Jesus and identified him as a follower. Barclay remarks, “*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*.”