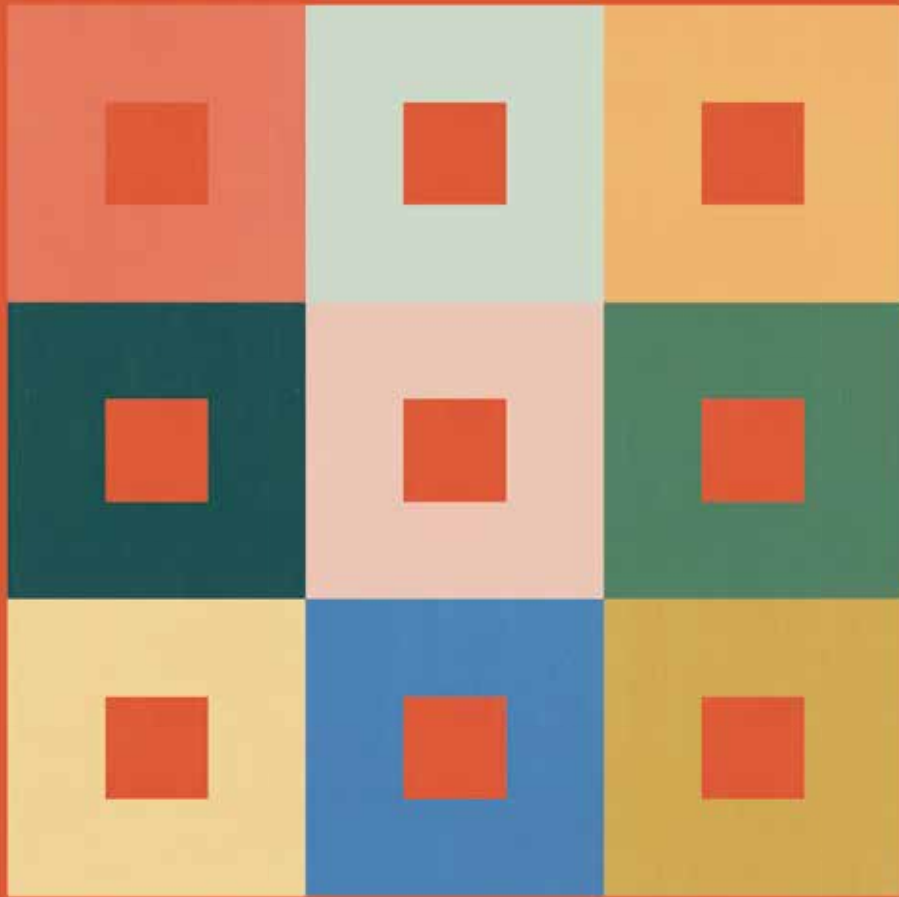


GALATIANS



NO OTHER GOSPEL

A STUDY THROUGH GALATIANS

GOSPEL CITY CHURCH

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OVERVIEW

THE GOAL OF GOSPEL CITY BIBLE STUDIES

The goal of everything we do at Gospel City is to make disciples of Christ in the context of the local church for the glory of God. But how can we (sinners saved by grace) become like Jesus (the perfect, sinless God-man)? No amount of effort, good works, or lawkeeping could possibly enable a fallen sinner to become like Jesus. However, through the gospel, God has promised to recreate sinners into the image of Christ—not through our works, but through faith in Christ’s work. This faith is fed and nurtured by hearing/studying the Word of God, as Paul says in Romans 10:17, “faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.”

That is where these Bible studies come in. If disciples of Christ are made by hearing and believing the Word of Christ, then we at Gospel City must be lifelong learners, lovers, and obeyers of the Word of God! The goal of these Bible Studies is to equip you to do just that. As you are better equipped to study, love, and obey the Word, you will grow in your personal discipleship, and you will also be better equipped to make disciples of all nations by teaching others to obey all that Christ has commanded, so that they too can be transformed into the image of Christ by receiving the gospel promises through faith.

PARTICIPANT USER GUIDE

UNDERSTANDING HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK

With this goal in mind, we have divided each week’s personal study time into three steps: (Step 01) *Observe*, (Step 02) *Interpret*, and (Step 03) *Reflect & Apply*. Each of the three steps will include guidance on how to pray over what you will study and how to respond to what you did study. Here are some tips for how to approach each step:

STEP 01 / OBSERVE

The goal of the observation questions is not to get you to answer the questions; the goal is to act as a diving board that helps to get you thinking about the text. Use the questions to help you ask more questions. Circle, underline and highlight in your Bible. Look for repeating words and phrases. Consider how what the author is saying is connected to what he just said. Most importantly, pray, pray, pray and pray some more. Ask the Lord to open your eyes that you may see wondrous things out of his law (Psalm 119:18).

STEP 02 / INTERPRET

After thinking deeply about the text, we will begin to try to interpret it. To guide you in this, we will provide *zoom out* and *zoom in* questions. Zoom out to see how the author is drawing upon themes and doctrines in the broader, unified story of Scripture. Just as climbing mountains provides one with epic views, each *zoom out* section will provide “observation decks” that overlook the grand narrative of the epic story of the Bible. Then, zoom back in to see how what the author is saying fits in the immediate context and develops the overall argument.

Each question in *Step 02* has corresponding cross references and/or commentary in the back of the workbook. The goal is to properly interpret the passage. Lean on the resource in the back as much as you need to, but don’t lean on it so much that it keeps you from doing the work. The goal is not simply to “know” the right answer, but to understand it and believe it.

STEP 03 / REFLECT & APPLY

After reading and interpreting the Word, we need to consider how the living and active Word is “reading” us! Don’t rush past this step. The goal of Bible study is not merely to know some facts about the Bible. The goal is to know God, and as we come to know and behold Him through the Word, we will be conformed into the image of His Son. Take time each week to hold your heart and life up to the mirror that is the Word and respond in repentant faith.

RESPOND IN PRAYER

The *Respond in Prayer* section each week follows the same pattern: praise, admit, ask, thank. You’ll be given specific prompts to do each step from the section of Scripture you have been studying. Find what works best for you. You may want to keep a prayer journal or write out a few specific things you want to remember to pray over. You might want to review what you are praying over and take a walk as you respond.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE IN THE WEEKLY GATHERING

Every week, following your dedicated personal study of the Word, we will gather together with a shared purpose—to “stir up one another to love and good works” (Hebrews 10:24-25). Our collective aim during these gatherings will be to minister the Word to each other so that we can collectively grow in maturity toward Christ, who is our Head. We will do this through large group teaching and table discussions in smaller groups. Therefore, come each week come ready to minister the Word to one another and to be ministered to so that we can build each other up in love.



INTRO
TO THE

STUDY OF
GALATIANS

INTRODUCTION TO GALATIANS

The small book of Galatians answers life's biggest questions. Who is Jesus and why did He die? How can a sinner be counted righteous on Judgement Day by a Holy God? Is a person saved by faith alone in Christ alone, or is it a combination of faith plus works? How does a person receive the Spirit and become an heir of the promises to Abraham? Who are the true people of God? If a person is saved by faith alone, then what is the purpose of the law? How can a person walk according to the Spirit and not gratify the desires of the flesh? Etc. All of these are sub-questions to the ultimate question: *What is the one true gospel?*

With these questions in mind, here is a brief overview of our study. In weeks 01-02 we will see how the message of the gospel and Paul's authority as a gospel messenger were both under attack by false teachers who had infiltrated the Galatian church (1:1-2:14). Then in weeks 03-07, we will get into the meat of the letter where Paul thoroughly defends the gospel message (2:15-4:31). In weeks 08-10, we will consider the implications the gospel has for Christian living. All of this will come together to help us see that a person is not justified by works of the law, but through faith in Jesus Christ.

TIPS FOR STUDYING THE BOOK OF GALATIANS

WHAT SHOULD I DO WHEN I FEEL STUCK OR DON'T UNDERSTAND THE PASSAGE?

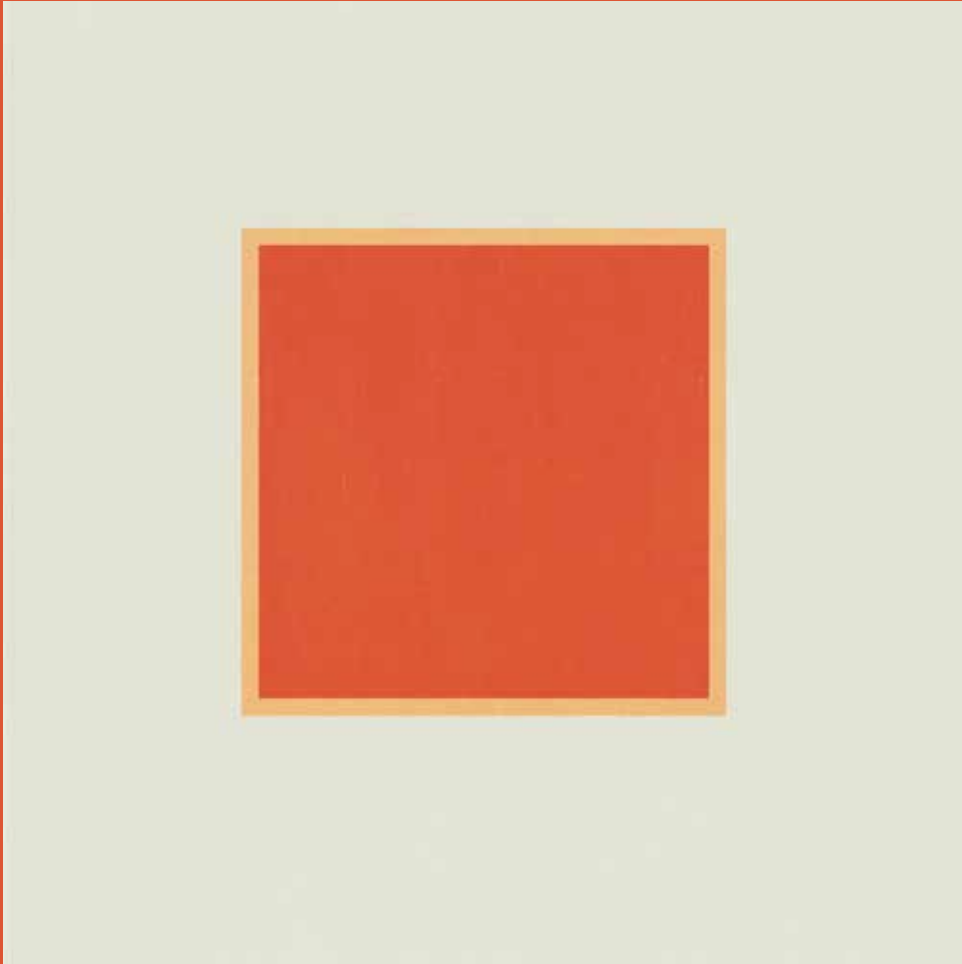
Keep praying Psalm 119:18. Read the passage over and over again. Read and reread the commentary sections throughout the workbook. Consider reading a different translation (like CSB). Move on and come back to it the next day. Always remember we have the teaching and discussion time to help each other.

WHY STUDY A BOOK ABOUT THE GOSPEL IF I ALREADY BELIEVE THE GOSPEL?

Remember that the gospel is not merely a formula to memorize, it is good news to believe and rehearse every day! Even those who have saving faith lack functional belief in the gospel on a daily basis. For example, anytime we feel shame, guilt, pride, fear, or despair it is an indicator that we are forgetting we are saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. Also, remember the gospel is something to *behold*. Marveling at it should never get old.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I FEEL LIKE SOMETHING IS REPETITIVE?

Imagine hiking around the Grand Canyon. In one sense, the views will get "repetitive." Every view is of the same Grand Canyon. But this is not a bad thing. Every view provides a different angle of the "grandness" of the Grand Canyon! The same is true when it comes to Paul's defense of the gospel in Galatians. The whole book is about the gospel. Each passage in the letter adds to the layers and layers of the glories of the gospel. Some things are worth meditating on from every angle. The gospel is certainly one of them.



WEEK 01

THE GOSPEL IS
BEING DISTORTED

WEEK 01

GALATIANS 1:1-10

In most of Paul's letters, he follows up his initial greeting with some personal words to those whom he is writing. Usually he tells the Church why he loves them and what he has been praying for them. Even to the messed up Corinthian church, Paul said, "I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus" (1 Corinthians 1:4). But in Galatians, the seriousness of the situation does not afford any time for pleasantries. Let's dive in and consider how Paul sets the tone for the rest of the letter.

PRAY

Psalm 119:18

READ

Galatians 1:1-10

STEP 01

OBSERVE

GALATIANS 1:1-10

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 1:1-10

Upon your first reading through the text, write down anything that stands out as interesting, awesome, surprising, or confusing.

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 1:1-5

01 | What does this passage say about Paul? Who is he, and why does it matter?

02 | What does this passage say about God the Father? What does it say about Christ?

03 | What does it say to/about the reader (*consider the implications of the pronouns you, our, and us*)?

- 04 | Focus specifically on the phrase “Grace to you and peace.” What type of grace and peace is Paul referring to? Where does this grace and peace come from? How can one become a recipient of this grace and peace?

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 1:6-10

- 05 | What does this passage say about the gospel?

- 06 | Why is Paul astonished/shocked?

- 07 | Consider v8-9 specifically. Why is the gravity of the situation so severe?

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 1:1-10 AGAIN

- 08 | According to v1-5, what is the gospel?

- 09 | With this one true gospel in mind, consider 1:6-10 again. Why would it be such a catastrophe for someone to preach/believe a “different” gospel?

MEDITATE ON

Galatians 1:3-5

STEP 02

INTERPRET

GALATIANS 1:1-10

In Galatians 1:1-10, the apostle Paul wastes no time getting to the point. He makes it clear there is one true gospel that saves, and that anyone who distorts the one pure gospel preaches a “gospel” that is no gospel at all. In fact, any distorted gospel does not lead to salvation (1:4-5); instead, it leads to the eternal punishment of those who teach it and believe it (1:8-9). It is clear that the

Galatians, whom Paul labored over, are in danger of being deceived into believing a false gospel (1:6). Therefore, the stakes of the occasion of this letter could not be higher.

WE WILL SEEK TO DISCOVER

ZOOM OUT 01 / Which “gospel” are the false teachers teaching?

ZOOM OUT 02 / Which gospel is Paul teaching?

ZOOM OUT 03 / Why should we listen to Paul?

READ GALATIANS 1:6-7 AND CONSIDER THE CROSS REFERENCES ON PAGE 118

- 01 |** In Galatians 1:7, Paul mentions “some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ.” According to the rest of the letter, who are these people? What can we learn about their character and motives?

READ GALATIANS 1:6-9 AND CONSIDER THE CROSS REFERENCES ON PAGE 118

- 02 |** In 1:6-9, Paul talks about this “different” gospel or “distorted” gospel or “gospel contrary to the one you received.” According to the rest of the letter, how are these people distorting the gospel? Which “gospel” are they teaching?

- 03 |** According to Paul, is this “different” gospel something we can simply agree to disagree on? Are the differences and implications minor or major? Explain.

- 04 |** Why might this “different” gospel be tempting to believe?

ZOOM OUT 02 / WHICH GOSPEL IS PAUL TEACHING?

In *Zoom Out 01*, we considered the clues throughout the letter that help us get an idea of the character and motives of the false teachers in Galatia, as well as the content of their false gospel. In summary, these false teachers were insisting the Gentile believers in Galatia must be circumcised and keep the Mosaic Law in order to be saved.

In the coming weeks, we will learn more about what the “circumcision party” (as Paul refers to them in 2:12) taught, and why their

false gospel was so tempting to believe. But for now, it is important to know that this was a big controversy in the early church (consider Acts 15 for more background).

With this background in mind, let’s consider what Paul emphasizes about the true and pure gospel.

READ GALATIANS 1:3-4 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 118-119

- 05 | According to Paul, what is the only way someone can receive grace and peace from God? What role does the law play? What role does faith play?

READ GALATIANS 1:3-4 AND CONSIDER THE CROSS REFERENCES ON PAGE 119

- 06 | According to Paul, what has Christ done for us? Why is this good news? How should we respond to this good news?

READ GALATIANS 1:3-4 AND CONSIDER THE CROSS REFERENCES ON PAGE 119

- 07 | According to Paul, how does one *become justified* (or be declared righteous/attain peace with God)? Is it through our works of the law or faith in Christ’s work? How does this differ from the distorted gospel of the false teachers?

ZOOM OUT 03 / WHY SHOULD WE LISTEN TO PAUL?

In the previous *zoom out* sections, we have seen that it is clear Paul teaches a different gospel from the circumcision party. This begs the question: Who is right, and how do

we know? We will consider this question in more depth next week, but it is worth considering now as we come to the conclusion of the first week of our study.

READ GALATIANS 1:1-2 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 119

- 08 | It is clear that Paul is preaching a different gospel from the circumcision party in Galatia. Why should the Galatians (and we) listen to Paul? How do we know whose gospel is right?**

PAUSE & CONSIDER

Both *grace* and *peace* are words we hear often in our Christian walk, but what is Paul truly praying here? As we study God's Word and walk with Jesus, we find that all of our life in Christ is an ongoing outpouring of grace from God. The grace of the gospel is grace for salvation, grace for obedience, and grace to endure as we await His return.

In the same breath, Paul prays for peace, "shalom." He prays that they experience the peace of their restored relationship with God. Paul's prayer is for you, too. Take a few moments to meditate on the grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins to deliver us.

STEP 03

REFLECT & APPLY

GALATIANS 1:1-10

- 01 | Reflect on the deliverance you have in Christ from this present evil age. How does distorting the gospel taint this rescue mission?

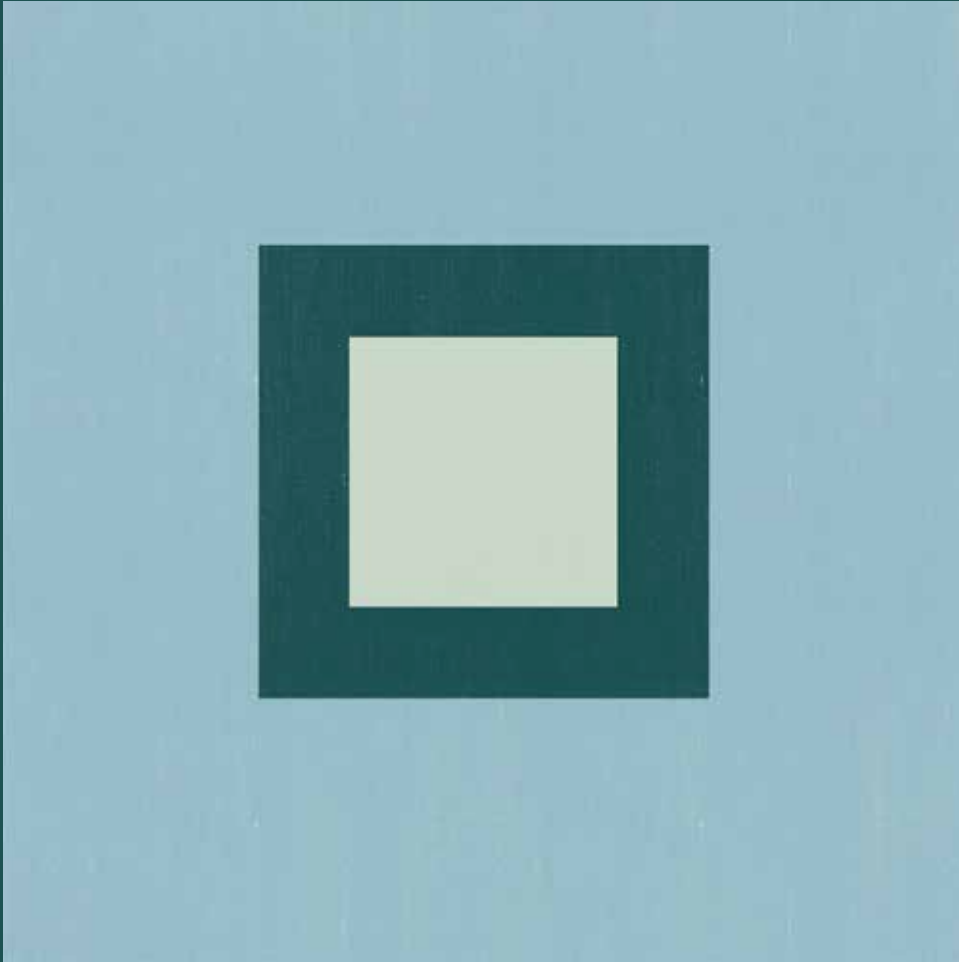
- 02 | How do you find yourself falling into patterns of striving to earn your standing with God over simply receiving His grace by faith? How are you inclined to live out a distorted gospel?

- 03 | How are you embracing the grace and peace God has extended to you? If it is by God's grace that you are empowered to live in peace, what is your role in this glorious gift?

- 04 | Which "gospels" try to lead us astray in today's culture? How can you keep from being led astray by those who might distort the gospel?

RESPOND IN PRAYER

- PRAISE** Praise God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ that He gave His life for yours so that you might be delivered from the present evil age! Give Him the glory and honor for the true gospel that saves you.
- ADMIT** As you invite God to examine your heart, admit any ways He reveals that you have been tempted to live out of a different or distorted gospel. Tell Him how those distorted gospels have led you astray, and confess to Him how you have added to or diluted the gospel.
- ASK** Ask for His help to know when counterfeit gospel ideas creep into your life. Ask for the resolve of Paul to stand firm on the true gospel and be cautious of distortion.
- THANK** Thank God for His grace that empowers you in all of life and for the peace of a restored relationship with Him.



WEEK 02

PAUL'S CREDIBILITY
IS BEING DISTORTED

WEEK 02

GALATIANS 1:11-2:14

Last week, we learned from Galatians 1:1-10 that some false teachers had infiltrated the church of Galatia and were teaching a distorted gospel (1:7). We looked ahead in Galatians to see that the specific false gospel being taught was the notion that one must be circumcised and keep the law of Moses to be saved. We also learned the Galatians were being lured into believing this distorted gospel and that this distorted “gospel” is no gospel at all, for believing it leads to eternal punishment rather than salvation.

This sets the stage for the rest of the letter as Paul sets out to win back the Galatians with the one true gospel. But before Paul defends his gospel, he must first defend his credibility as a trustworthy messenger. This is where the text picks up in our study for Week 02.

PRAY

Psalm 119:18

READ

Galatians 1:11-2:14

STEP 01

OBSERVE

GALATIANS 1:11-2:14

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 1:11-2:14

Upon your first reading through the text, write down anything that stands out as interesting, awesome, surprising, or confusing.

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 1:11-12

- 01 | What does this passage say about the gospel Paul preaches? Where did he receive it? (*Recall 1:1*)
- 02 | Consider what you studied last week (in 1:1-10). Why do you think Paul is emphasizing the divine origin of his gospel?

NOTE: The rest of this week's passage records four episodes from Paul's life that help support his claim that he received his gospel from God and not from man. Let's consider each event one at a time.

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 1:13-17

03 | Which events take place in this episode Paul describes? Explain in your own words.

04 | How does this episode help prove that Paul received his gospel from God and not from man? *(Ponder: Why might it be relevant that Paul was rapidly advancing in Judaism? How do the details in v17 help support his case?)*

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 1:18-24

05 | Which events take place in this episode Paul describes? Explain in your own words.

06 | How does this episode help prove that Paul received his gospel from God and not from man? *(Ponder: Why would it be relevant that Paul visited with Cepheas—also known as the apostle Peter—for only 15 days? Why would it help support his case to mention that he was unknown by the churches in Judea?)*

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 2:1-10

07 | Which events take place in this episode Paul describes? Explain in your own words.

08 | How does this episode help prove that Paul received his gospel from God and not from man? *(Focus specifically on v9.)*

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 2:11-14

09 | Which events take place in this episode Paul describes? Explain in your own words.

10 | How does this episode help prove that Paul received his gospel from God and not from man? *(Ponder: Why would it help Paul's case for him to demonstrate that he was willing to stand up even to the apostle Peter for the sake of preserving the purity of the gospel?)*

MEDITATE ON

Galatians 2:5

**TO THEM WE DID
NOT YIELD IN
SUBMISSION EVEN
FOR A MOMENT,
SO THAT THE
TRUTH OF THE
GOSPEL MIGHT
BE PRESERVED
FOR YOU.**

GALATIANS 2:5

STEP 02

INTERPRET

GALATIANS 1:11-2:14

In this week's text, we get some clues regarding how the false teachers were persuading the Galatians to side with them rather than with Paul. It would seem the false teachers were arguing that Paul's gospel is not trustworthy because he is not a legitimate apostle. Instead, the gospel he preaches is just a distorted version of the one the legitimate apostles teach. 1:10 suggests the false teachers might have even accused Paul of watering down the gospel for Gentiles, telling them they did not need

to be circumcised and keep the law to be saved, just because he was a people pleaser who wanted to be liked.

As we will see in this week's text, all of this leads Paul to make a twofold argument: (1) He received his gospel straight from God, not from man. (2) Even though his gospel is from God, it is still in alignment with the one true gospel the apostles preach as well.

WE WILL SEEK TO DISCOVER

ZOOM OUT 01 / Where did Paul receive his gospel?

ZOOM IN 01 / How do these historical events prove Paul's claim?

ZOOM IN 02 / How does Paul's gospel differ from the false teachers?

READ GALATIANS 1:11-17 AND CONSIDER THE CROSS REFERENCES ON PAGE 119-120

- 01 |** Consider the testimony of Paul's conversion in Acts 9. How does it help prove what Paul is claiming in Galatians 1:11-17? *(How did Paul receive the gospel he preaches? What caused Paul to go from persecuting the church of Jesus Christ to preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ? Did Paul learn his gospel from anyone before he started preaching it?)*

READ GALATIANS 1:15-16 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 120

- 02 |** In Galatians 1:15-16, Paul claims God set him apart before he was even born and chose him to serve as a preacher of salvation to the nations. This is quite the audacious claim. Could it possibly be true? Why or why not?

ZOOM IN 01 / HOW DO THESE HISTORICAL EVENTS PROVE PAUL'S CLAIM?

In *Zoom Out 01*, we considered the evidence to support Paul's claim that he did indeed receive his gospel from God, not from man, and that he was chosen by God to be a preacher of the gospel before he was even born.

Now in *Zoom In 01*, we will consider four different "episodes" that Paul recounts in

order to support his claim. As we do, we will see that these historical events prove (1) He received his gospel straight from God, not from man. (2) Even though he was not taught the gospel by any man, it is still in alignment with the one true gospel the apostles preach.

READ GALATIANS 1:18-24 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 120

- 03 | Go verse by verse through 1:18-24. How does each detail help prove the fact that Paul received his gospel from God and not from men?**

READ GALATIANS 2:1-10 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 120-121

- 04 | Go verse by verse through 2:1-10. How does each detail help prove the fact that Paul received his gospel from God and not from men?**

READ GALATIANS 2:11-14 AND CROSS REFERENCE/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 121

- 05 | Go verse by verse through 2:11-14. How does each detail help prove the fact that Paul received his gospel from God and not from men?**

ZOOM IN 02 / HOW DOES PAUL'S GOSPEL DIFFER FROM THE FALSE TEACHERS?

In *Zoom Out 01*, we considered the evidence of the divine origin of Paul's apostolic calling and gospel. In *Zoom In 01*, we considered episode after episode that prove (1) Paul's gospel is from God, not taught to him by men, (2) it is the same gospel that the other Apostles preach.

In this *zoom in*, we will consider clues from the text that help readers discern the

specifics of the distorted gospel the false teachers were propagating. This will help set us up for the rest of the letter, where Paul transitions from defending his authority as a legitimate apostle to defending the true gospel he preaches.

CONSIDER GALATIANS 2:3-5

- 06 | Why would forcing Titus to be circumcised compromise the purity of the gospel?
How might requiring circumcision bring one into slavery?

CONSIDER GALATIANS 2:11-14

- 07 | How was Peter's conduct "not in step with the truth of the gospel"? According to Paul, why is it a first-tier gospel issue for Peter to separate himself from the Gentiles out of fear of the circumcision party?

PAUSE & CONSIDER

Paul was called by God's grace and by God's design. If by God's grace He has revealed Himself to you, what might His calling be in your life? For Paul, it was to preach Christ among the Gentiles.

Those who have been called by God have good works which He has prepared for us beforehand, so that we might walk in them (Ephesians 2:10). How is His grace evident so that you might live out your calling?

STEP 03

REFLECT & APPLY

GALATIANS 1:11-2:14

- 01 | **How does Paul's story cause you to reflect on your own? Reflect on when Jesus revealed Himself to you and brought you to life. How has your life changed in Christ?**

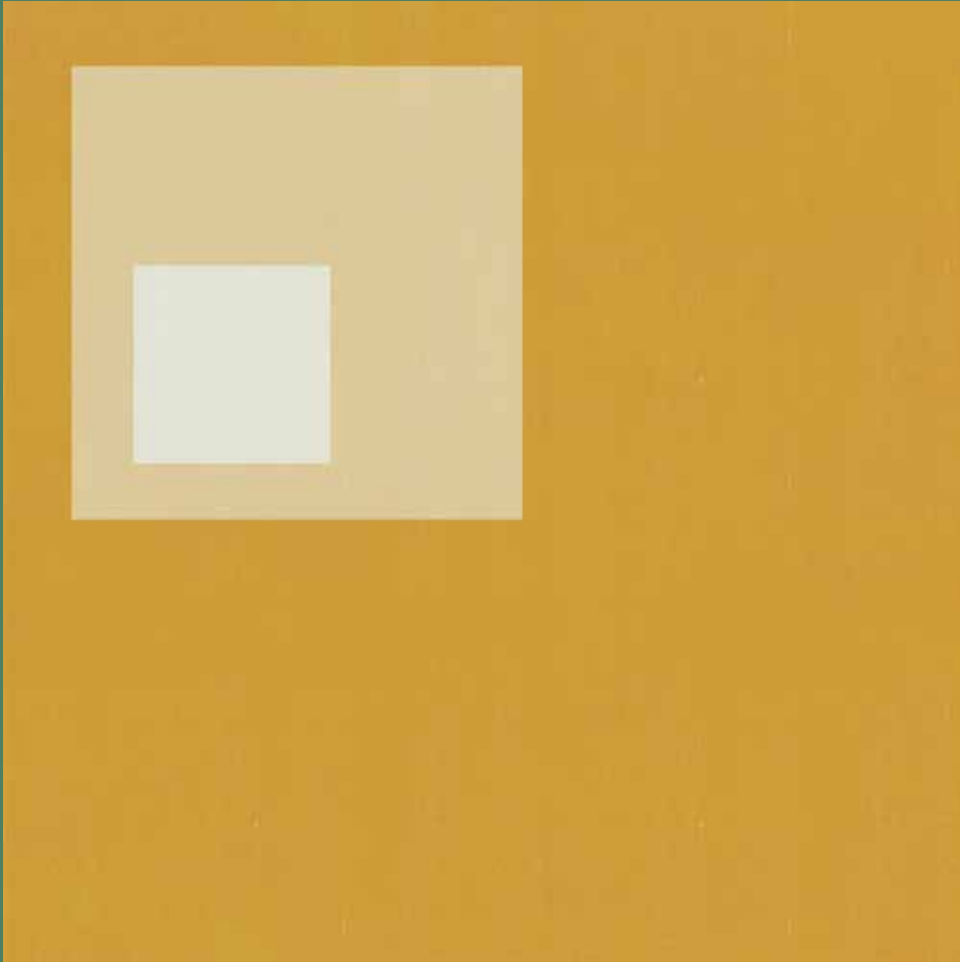
- 02 | **Recall Paul's conversion and growth into ministry. Do you find his story encouraging or discouraging? How can his story influence your own growth into what God has called you to?**

- 03 | **Why do you think Paul and the "pillars" (2:9) were so concerned with being aligned in their calling and ministry? What is so valuable about these men who wrote the New Testament and the way they carefully guard and test the authenticity of the gospel message?**

- 04 | **Are you tempted to live differently when you are with different people? How could living according to the true and pure gospel free you from this temptation? Consider Paul's thoughts from Galatians 1:10.**

RESPOND IN PRAYER

- PRAISE** Praise God for how He has saved you! Praise Him that He alone is able to bring life, and that no matter what is in your past, He can redeem you and use you for His glory. How good is He that He finds pleasure in revealing Himself to you!
- ADMIT** Admit any hypocrisy in your heart or actions. Tell God where you are tempted not to seek unity with the Church or where you are tempted to live differently based on who you are with.
- ASK** Ask God to grant you the patience you need as He works in your life to grow and mature you. Ask if there are any areas in which He is asking you to take steps forward. Seek His help in being authentic in your words and actions, desiring to live for Him alone.
- THANK** Thank God for the unity of the Church and for those who worked to keep and preserve the true gospel. By God's Spirit and those He called to spread the gospel, we have heard and believe!



WEEK 03

SAVED BY FAITH ALONE
IN CHRIST ALONE

WEEK 03

GALATIANS 2:15-21

Paul is writing to the churches in Galatia because they have been infiltrated by some false teachers. These false teachers are subtle. They are not blatantly denying the deity of Christ or His bodily resurrection. They are not promoting outward heinous sins like sexual immorality or sorcery. They are simply appealing from the Jewish Scriptures (the Old Testament) that to be saved by the Jewish Messiah (Jesus), you Gentiles (the Galatians) must live like Jews (be circumcised, keep the Sabbath, eat kosher, etc.). It is not difficult to see how this message might seem reasonable to these new believers in Galatia.

And to build their case, the false teachers are essentially saying, “Look, even the apostle Peter and Paul’s ministry partner, Barnabas still live like Jews (2:11-14). It is clear that Paul

is the one who is in the wrong. His gospel is a watered-down gospel because he is a people pleaser (1:10). He is not even a legitimate apostle, and his gospel is different from the gospel of the real apostles. Let us tell you what you really have to do to be saved.”

This is what Paul is up against, but at the end of our text from last week, Paul sets the record straight. Peter did not withdraw from eating with Gentiles because of theological conviction; he did so hypocritically out of fear of the Jews. Therefore, Paul confronted him and called him out for it.

In this week’s text, we will get a summary of what Paul said in his rebuke to Peter, which will further drive home the point that Paul’s gospel is the one true apostolic gospel.

PRAY

Psalm 119:18

READ

Galatians 2:15-21

STEP 01

OBSERVE

GALATIANS 2:15-21

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 2:15-21

Upon your first reading through the text, write down anything that stands out as interesting, awesome, surprising, or confusing.

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 2:15-16

01 | According to this passage, how is a person justified? How is a person *not* justified?

02 | Ponder: What are “works of the law”? What does it mean to be *justified*? Why can’t works of law justify a person?

03 | Is v16 redundant? We know every word of Scripture is inspired and profitable (2 Timothy 3:16). So, what is Paul communicating by saying the same thing in multiple different ways?

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 2:17-19

- 04 | Which words or themes from 2:15-16 are repeated here in 2:17-19?
- 05 | Consider the connecting word *for* in vv18-19. What is the connection between what Paul says in v18 with what he says right before it? What is the connection between what Paul says in v19 with what he says right before it?
- 06 | Paul is defending his case that justification is by faith alone in Christ alone. How might vv17-19 help build this case? (*Keep in mind what we have studied in weeks 1 and 2, specifically Paul's confrontation of Peter.*)

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 2:20

- 07 | What does this beautiful verse say about *I* and *me*? What does it say about Christ?
- 08 | Both vv19-20 talk about Paul (and all Christians by implication) dying and then living. What did Paul “die” to? How did he die? How does he now live, even though he died?
- 09 | Galatians 2:20 is a verse we often quote in isolation, but consider it in context. How does it help support Paul’s case that “a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ”?

MEDITATE ON

Galatians 2:20

STEP 02

INTERPRET

GALATIANS 2:15-21

The Galatian Gentiles have been deceived into believing they must live like Jews (be circumcised and keep the law of Moses) to be saved by the Jewish Messiah. Based on the text we studied last week, it would seem that the false teachers are saying, “Look, even Peter and Barnabas still keep the law of Moses. Paul gave you a watered-down gospel. Here is what you really need to do to be saved.”

In 2:11-14, Paul tells the Galatians he confronted Peter and called him out for his hypocrisy. Here in 2:15-21, readers get a summary of what Paul said to Peter in his rebuke. All of this is meant to prove Peter’s actions were wrong, the false teachers’ teaching is wrong, and it is Paul who preaches the one true gospel.

WE WILL SEEK TO DISCOVER

ZOOM OUT 01 / How is a person justified?

ZOOM OUT 02 / How can faith alone in Christ alone justify?

ZOOM IN 01 / How does 2:15-21 all fit together?

READ GALATIANS 2:16 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 121

- 01 | Consider the cross references for more context. What does it mean to be *justified*? What are the blessings and benefits of being justified?

READ GALATIANS 2:16 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 121

- 02 | The good news handed down from a judge that a person is innocent and declared righteous does not mean much if the person did not even know they were on trial. Why does every person who has ever lived—whether they realize it or not—need to be justified?

READ GALATIANS 2:16 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 122

- 03 | Why can't a person be justified by works of the law?

READ GALATIANS 2:16 AND CROSS REFERENCE/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 122

- 04 | How does faith alone in Christ alone enable God to declare a sinner righteous without making Himself an unrighteous judge?

In *Zoom Out 01*, we dove deep into the doctrine of justification by faith alone in Christ alone. We learned that to be justified means to be declared righteous by the Judge of all the earth. We learned that everyone's greatest need is justification before God, because every single person who has ever lived will appear before the judgment seat of God to give an account for the life they lived. We then considered the fact that God's standard is holy perfection. In order to be declared righteous in His sight, one must keep the law perfectly. This is why the law cannot bring justification—because all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. But then we considered the glorious good news of the gospel that whoever believes in Jesus will be declared righteous in God's sight. Christ paid the wages of sin so that

the righteous Judge could declare sinners who put their faith in Christ righteous for all of eternity.

This is the scandalous gospel of grace. Our works cannot justify, but faith in Christ's work can. The objection that always arises when one truly understands this gospel is this: What about my works? Does it not matter how I live? Should I sin more that grace may abound?

In this *zoom out*, we will see that justification by faith in Christ does not provide an excuse to live a lawless life. Rather, when one puts his or her faith in Christ, Christ lives in them and empowers them to live a righteous life by faith.

READ GALATIANS 2:19-20 AND CONSIDER THE CROSS REFERENCE ON PAGE 122

- 05 | Consider how Romans 6 helps expand what Paul means in Galatians 2:19-20. What does Paul mean when he says, "I have been crucified with Christ"? When did he die? How did he die? What did he die to?

READ GALATIANS 2:16 AND CONSIDER THE CROSS REFERENCE ON PAGE 122

- 06 | Just as Paul died with Christ, he is also risen with Christ. How does Paul describe this new life? What is different about it? What causes/empowers the differences?

- 07 | Romans 6:5 says, “If we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.” Based on what we have studied in Galatians 2:15-21, how can someone be *united* to Christ? What are the results and benefits of being united to Christ?

ZOOM IN 01 / HOW DOES 2:15-21 ALL FIT TOGETHER?

Galatians 2:15-21 helps us marvel at the heart of the good news of the gospel. Justification before God is possible through faith in Jesus Christ. When one puts their faith in Christ, they are united to Him. His death is their death so that His life can be their life. Faith in Christ does not merely pay the wages of our sin; it unites us to Christ, causes us to be raised from the spiritual dead so that we can walk in newness of life, and then the risen

Christ empowers us to live a righteous life by faith.

Now we need to zoom back in and consider how justification by faith and union with Christ fit in the logic of the argument of Galatians. The logic of Paul’s argument in 2:15-21 is profound. It is dense and a bit difficult to follow, but it will be worth the effort!

READ GALATIANS 2:15-16 AND CROSS REFERENCE/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 122-123

- 08 | Verse 15 is a continuation of the same discussion from 2:11-14. It is as if Paul is relaying to the Galatians what he said to Peter. With this in mind, who is the *we* in vv15-16? Why does Paul refer to Gentiles as “Gentile sinners”? Is he claiming that Jews are not sinners?

READ GALATIANS 2:17 AND CROSS REFERENCE/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 123

- 09 | How does this statement in v17 help prove Peter’s conduct “was not in step with the gospel”?

READ GALATIANS 2:18 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 123

- 10 | How does this statement in v18 help prove Peter's conduct "was not in step with the gospel"?

READ GALATIANS 2:19 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 123-124

- 11 | What does Paul mean in v19 when he says, "I died to the law so that I might live to God"? How is this connected to the previous statement that the Old Covenant has been torn down and the New Covenant is now in place?

READ GALATIANS 2:20-21 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 124

- 12 | Now consider the amazing logic that helps illuminate the amazing truths of v20! How does Paul describe this "new life"? How is it different and so much better than his old life when he was under the law?

PAUSE & CONSIDER

Reflect on the fact that the faith you have is in the One who loves you and gave Himself for you. What does it mean for you to live your life *in Christ*, secure in the truth that He paid it all because He

loves you? Meditate on this love. Before moving into the busyness of your day, spend some time thanking Him.

**I HAVE BEEN
CRUCIFIED WITH
CHRIST. IT IS NO
LONGER I WHO LIVE,
BUT CHRIST WHO
LIVES IN ME.
AND THE LIFE
I NOW LIVE IN THE
FLESH I LIVE BY
FAITH IN THE SON
OF GOD, WHO LOVED
ME AND GAVE
HIMSELF FOR ME.**

GALATIANS 2:20

STEP 03

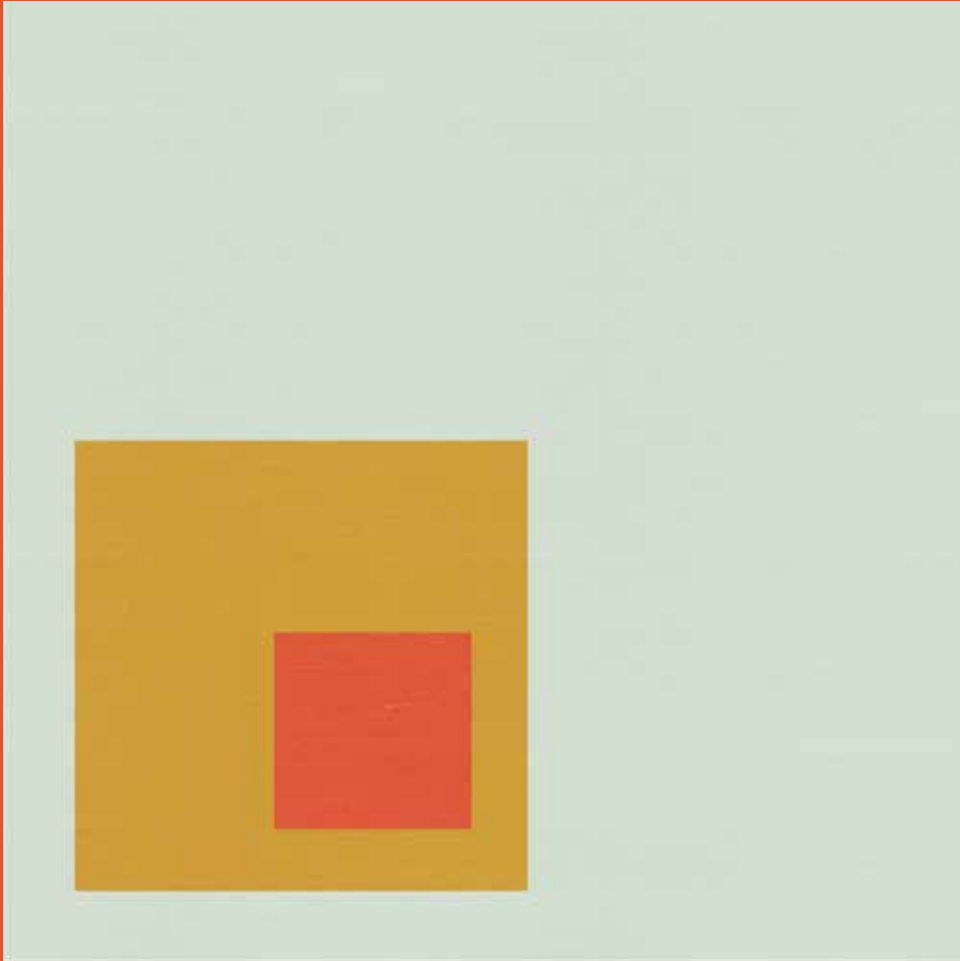
REFLECT & APPLY

GALATIANS 2:15-21

- 01 | It can be tempting to view oneself either better or worse than another for a lot of different reasons. Do you find yourself comparing others' sins or righteousness with your own? If justification is through faith in Christ alone, how should we view one another?
- 02 | Do you find yourself either trying to earn righteousness or living as if your relationship with God is based on your performance? If this does nothing to change your status with Him, why is it so tempting to strive after?
- 03 | Christ died for our sin and to save us from it. Do you find yourself justifying your sin *because of* Christ's grace and forgiveness? What does this thought process say about Jesus' death?
- 04 | Being crucified *with* Christ brings *ultimate life*! Christ in you means you are empowered by the Holy Spirit to live an entirely new life. What evidence of "Christ in you" do you see in your life? What more do you hope to see?

RESPOND IN PRAYER

- PRAISE** Praise Jesus that His blood was enough to cover our sin. His work is sufficient for all. His sacrifice is the ultimate display of love.
- ADMIT** Confess how you may be living in a way that either overemphasizes grace by justifying your sin, or underemphasizes it by striving to earn your justification before God.
- ASK** Ask God to help you live fully in your life in Christ. Tell Him any areas of your life that your old self needs to die to, and ask to see more of Christ's life in you.
- THANK** Thank God for His love, for Christ's death, and for the new life you have in Him!



WEEK 04

FATHER ABRAHAM IS
SAVED BY FAITH

WEEK 04

GALATIANS 3:1-9

In *Week 01*, we learned that the Galatians had been deceived by false teachers who were preaching a false gospel (1:1-10). In *Week 02*, we learned that the false teachers were not merely contradicting the true gospel; they had deceived the Galatians into thinking Paul was not a trustworthy messenger (1:11-2:10). It is true that Peter, Barnabas, and other believing Jews separated themselves from eating with Gentiles in accordance with the Mosaic Law. But contrary to what the false teachers were telling the Galatians, this did not mean that one needed to keep the law of Moses in order to be saved. Peter was acting hypocritically and not in step with the truth of the gospel. It was Peter who was wrong (and the false teachers by implication), not Paul.

In *Week 03*, we learned what Paul said in his rebuke to Peter (2:15-21). As Paul makes clear, justification before God can only come by

faith alone in Christ alone. The law cannot save. And if this is true, as Peter would have acknowledged, one must choose between faith in Christ or works of the law. You cannot have both. To put your faith in one implies that your faith is not in the other. Either Christ saves, or the law saves. As for Paul (and all true Christians alike), he has died to the law and is therefore no longer bound by the law. He has been raised with Christ, and now it is Christ who empowers him to live the Christian life by faith. This is the good news of the gospel—that through faith, Christ's death can be counted as our death so that His life can be our life.

Now that Paul has reestablished his apostolic authority and set the record straight regarding what happened with Peter, Paul addresses the Galatians directly to win them back to the one true gospel.

PRAY

Psalm 119:18

READ

Galatians 3:1-9

STEP 01

OBSERVE

GALATIANS 3:1-9

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 3:1-9

Upon your first reading through the text, write down anything that stands out as interesting, awesome, surprising, or confusing.

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 3:1-5

- 01 | According to 3:1-2, how does a person receive the Holy Spirit? What is the connection between hearing the gospel of Christ crucified (*which is what Paul is referring to in v1*) and receiving the Spirit?
- 02 | Consider v3-5. How does this section add to Paul's argument from 3:1-2? (*Questions to consider: What does Paul mean by "having begun by the Spirit"? Which aspect of the Christian life does Paul seem to be describing in 3:3-5?*)

- 03 | How does what Paul says in 3:1-5 contribute to his argument from 2:15-21?**
(Questions to consider: How does the fact that a person receives the Spirit by faith prove a person is justified by faith? How does the fact that a person is justified/receives the Spirit by faith prove the Galatians are foolish to go back to relying on works of the law?)

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 3:6-9

- 04 | What does this passage say about Abraham?**
- 05 | What does this passage say about faith?**
- 06 | According to this passage, how can Gentiles (i.e., non-Jews) be considered sons of Abraham (i.e., the father of the Jews)? And why is this significant?**
- 07 | Remember, Paul is defending his true gospel against the false teachers' distorted/false gospel (1:1-10). Paul states the thesis of his gospel in 2:15-16. With this context in mind, how does 3:6-9 help contribute to Paul's argument?**

MEDITATE ON

Galatians 3:5-6

STEP 02

INTERPRET

GALATIANS 3:1-9

In this week's passage, Paul continues to build his argument that justification is by faith alone in Christ alone. To do this, he helps the Galatians consider their own

experience of salvation, and then he turns to the Old Testament to prove that salvation has always been by faith.

WE WILL SEEK TO DISCOVER

ZOOM OUT 01 / How were the Galatians saved?

ZOOM OUT 02 / How was Abraham saved?

ZOOM OUT 03 / How does Abraham's testimony prove Paul's gospel?

READ GALATIANS 3:2 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 124

- 01 | According to the testimony of Scripture, how and when does one *receive* the Holy Spirit?

READ GALATIANS 3:3-5 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 124

- 02 | Once someone is saved and receives the Holy Spirit, how are they to grow in godliness/be perfected? Is it the Spirit who sanctifies or works of the law done in the flesh? (Also consider: *What is the difference between living according to the flesh and living according to the Spirit?*)

- 03 | In 2:15-21, Paul argues that one is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ. Then in 3:1-5, he brings up the Holy Spirit. How does the role of the Spirit in the Christian life help prove Paul's point that one is justified by faith and not by works?

Paul is continuing to build his case that one is declared righteous before God through faith in Jesus Christ, not by works of law. In *Zoom Out 01*, we considered how Paul uses the Galatians' own testimony to prove his point. The gospel of Christ and Him crucified was preached to the Galatians (3:1), and upon hearing the gospel, they believed it, were born again, and received the Holy Spirit. Paul then goes on to show that just as the Christian life begins by the Spirit, it continues by the Spirit. It is the Spirit who is sanctifying them (3:3), and it is the Spirit who empowers the Christian life as a gift that comes through faith. It is not earned by works of the law (3:5). Therefore, if the Christian life begins as a gift that is received by faith, and if the Christian life is empowered as a gift by faith, then

why would the Galatians ever go back to relying on works of the law? And what was true for the Galatians is true for all Christians. A Christian never graduates from life in the Spirit to life in the flesh. That would be nonsense!

Now that Paul has established his case using the Galatians' own testimony, he transitions to making his case from the Old Testament. In Galatians 3:6-9, Paul proves that salvation has always been by faith alone and never through works of the law. To understand Paul's argument, we must first consider the context of the story of Abraham (*Zoom Out 02*), and then we will be ready to see the power of Paul's logic in *Zoom Out 03*.

READ GALATIANS 3:8 AND CROSS REFERENCE/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 124-125

04 | What did God promise to do *for* and *through* Abram/Abraham?

READ GALATIANS 3:6 AND CROSS REFERENCE/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 125

05 | Why did it take faith (a lot of faith) to believe these promises?

READ GALATIANS 3:6 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 125

06 | Consider what you know about Abraham's life. Did he do anything to earn these promises? Did he do anything to prove he was not worthy of them?

In *Zoom Out 02*, we considered the background of the story of Abraham, which Paul assumed his readers knew, as he developed his argument. We learned that in Genesis 12, God called Abraham and promised to make a great nation out of him and bless all the nations of the earth through him. These were quite the promises because Abraham was very old, his wife was barren, and they had no children. In Genesis 15, a few decades after God made His initial promise in Genesis 12, God appeared to Abraham in a vision, and Abraham reminded him that he still had no children. But God reaffirms His promises, guaranteeing that

the old barren couple who currently have zero offspring will eventually have offspring as numerous as the stars. Then the Scripture records that Abraham believed God, and his faith was “counted to him as righteousness.”

As the apostle Paul will help us see, this story of Abraham has massive implications for our understanding of the gospel. In this *zoom out*, we will consider how these key passages from Genesis help confirm Paul’s argument that justification is by faith alone and not through works of the law.

READ GALATIANS 3:6 AND CROSS REFERENCE/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 125

- 07 |** According to Scripture, was Abraham justified by works or by faith? What does it mean when Scripture says that faith was “counted to him as righteousness”? Does it mean that Abraham was *made righteous*, or that he was considered righteous in God’s sight even though he was unrighteous? Explain.

READ GALATIANS 3:7 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 125-126

- 08 |** According to the testimony of Scripture, who are the true sons/daughters of Abraham? (Consider: Are true sons of Abraham those who are physical descendants (i.e., Jews), those who keep the law, or those who have faith like Abraham?)

- 09 |** What does it mean to be a child of Abraham, and why is it so important?

READ GALATIANS 3:6-9 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 126

- 10 | Consider Paul's argument in 3:6-9 together. According to Paul, what is the blessing God promises to give to the Gentiles through Abraham? How is this blessing a foreshadowing of the gospel?

PAUSE & CONSIDER

Consider the power of faith in God! Abraham *believed* God! He believed Him at His word; he believed His promises, and it was counted to him as righteousness. The exchange feels unfathomable, yet it's an incredible gift from an exceptionally

gracious God. It is a gift that God has extended even before the law was in place. Take some time to meditate on God's gracious plan to save us by faith alone—how does this truth deepen your belief?

**AND THE SCRIPTURE,
FORESEEING THAT GOD
WOULD JUSTIFY THE
GENTILES BY FAITH,
PREACHED THE GOSPEL
BEFOREHAND TO
ABRAHAM, SAYING,
"IN YOU SHALL ALL
THE NATIONS
BE BLESSED."**

GALATIANS 3:8

STEP 03

REFLECT & APPLY

GALATIANS 3:1-9

- 01 | Why does Paul not want us to lose sight of Christ's crucifixion? How does remembering the details and reason for Jesus' death and resurrection bolster your faith?

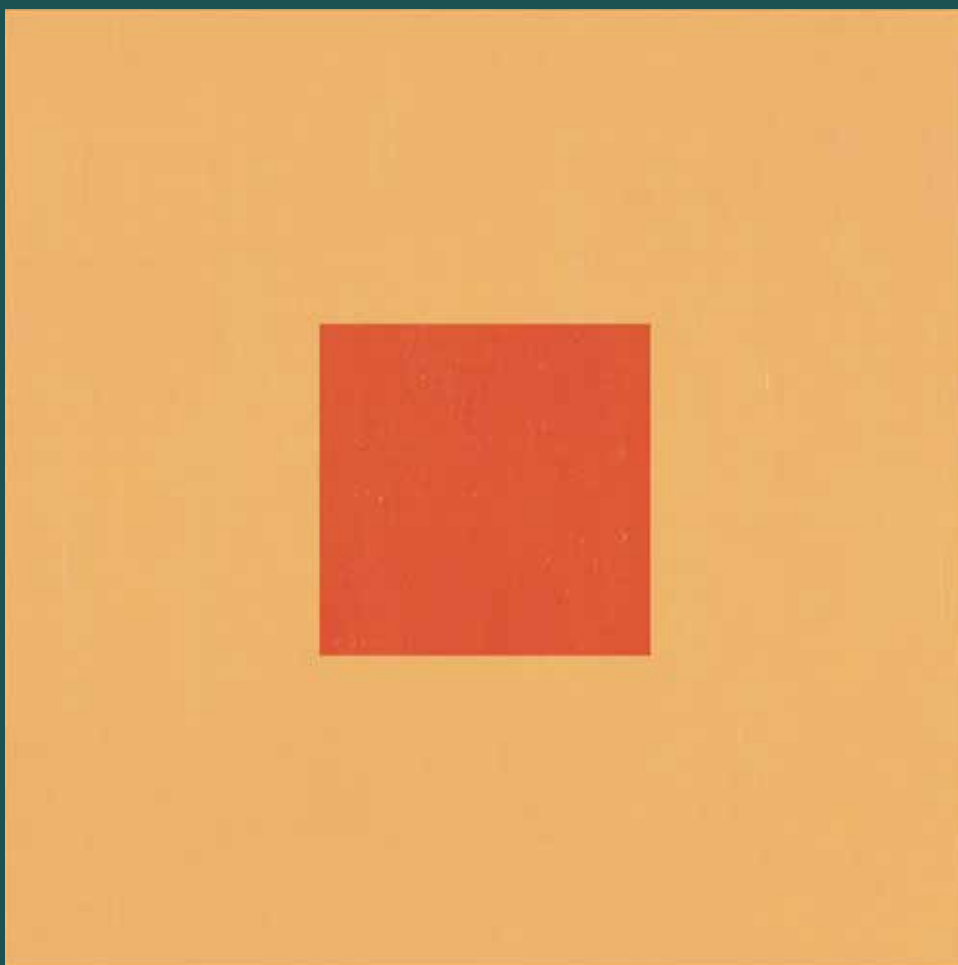
- 02 | Reflect on the continuous work of the Spirit in the believer's life. Why is the Holy Spirit such a gift?

- 03 | Review the contrast we looked at between the works of the flesh and the works of the Spirit. Which does your life look more like? Does your life reflect a life enabled by the Spirit, or are you relying on the performance of your flesh for your godliness?

- 04 | Consider God's one big plan to make it possible for people from all nations to be justified *through faith*. Do you trust in Jesus Christ the same way that Abraham believed God? This faith makes you a true son of Abraham.

RESPOND IN PRAYER

- PRAISE** Give praise to God for granting us so much! He imparts righteousness to us through our faith in Him. This is a glorious gift! Only He can pardon our sin and permit us such grace.
- ADMIT** Share with God when you have not believed Him. Confess your faith feels weak and ask Him to help you have faith like Abraham.
- ASK** Ask God to give you a renewed appreciation and experience with His Spirit. He is working in you today! Pray for a heart willing to be shaped by the work of the Spirit to sanctify you.
- THANK** Thank God for His one big plan to bless all nations through faith in Him. Tell Him how grateful you are to be a son of Abraham—a son of His, our Heavenly Father.



WEEK 05

DEATH THROUGH THE LAW,
LIFE BY FAITH

WEEK 05

GALATIANS 3:10-14

In the first two chapters of Galatians, Paul reestablishes his credibility as an apostle. He was commissioned “not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father” (1:1) to preach the one true gospel, which he “did not receive it from any man, nor was [he] taught it, but [he] received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ” (1:12). After dismantling the slanderous arguments that had been made against him by the false teachers, Paul turns back to address the Galatians directly (3:1). He is seeking to explain why the false teachers are so wrong and so dangerous to assert that one has to be circumcised and keep the law in order to be saved.

What comes next is an avalanche of divine logic that proves over and over again why a person is not and cannot be justified by works of the law, but only through faith in Jesus Christ. Paul first uses the Galatians’ own testimony against them to prove his point (3:1-5), and then, like a skilled lawyer, he calls his star witness, Abraham, to the stand to further drive home the point (3:6-9).

In this week’s text, Paul strings together a flurry of statements and Old Testament quotations to demonstrate why the law cannot save.

PRAY

Psalm 119:18

READ

Galatians 3:10-14

STEP 01

OBSERVE

GALATIANS 3:10-14

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 3:10-14

Upon your first reading through the text, write down anything that stands out as interesting, awesome, surprising, or confusing.

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 3:10-12

- 01 | In 3:10-12, Paul makes three statements and then proves each claim with a corresponding quotation from the Old Testament. First, consider v10: How does the Old Testament quote prove that “all who rely on works of the law are under a curse”?
- 02 | How does the Old Testament quotation in v11 prove that “no one is justified before God by the law”? (*Hint: Remember, to be justified is synonymous with being counted righteous.*)
- 03 | How does the Old Testament quotation in v12 prove “the law is not of faith”?

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 3:13-14

- 04 | According to v13, how did Christ redeem? Who did He redeem? And what did He provide redemption from?
- 05 | How does the Old Testament quotation in v13 prove that “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us”?
- 06 | According to v14, what are the (epic!) implications of Christ becoming a curse for us?

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 3:10-14 AGAIN

- 07 | In these five verses, Paul quotes four Old Testament passages, and each is connected with words like *for* and *now*. In other words, Paul is building an argument. How do these statements and quotes all string together? Summarize the argument in your own words.
- 08 | How does v14 tie this paragraph (3:10-14) together with what Paul said in 3:1-9?

MEDITATE ON

Galatians 3:13-14

STEP 02

INTERPRET

GALATIANS 3:10-14

Paul is continuing to build his case that justification is by faith and not by works. In this section, he focuses on why the law cannot save. But before we attempt to discern the divine logic of 3:10-14, we must overcome the sinful, naive objection that is surely to arise in every heart that studies Galatians. That objection goes something like this: “This is so repetitive. I already believe that a person is justified by faith and not by works. Why does Paul keep repeating himself? Can’t he move on to make a new point?”

This response is sinful for at least two reasons: (1) It is an arrogant response to assume that divinely inspired Scripture is unnecessarily redundant or repetitive. The infinitely wise God of the universe has gifted us a finite amount of revelation, and if He considers a point worth hovering over,

then we ought to humbly believe what God is saying is something we need to think deeply about. (2) It is also sinful because it treats the glorious gospel as a mere fact to memorize rather than a spectacle to behold, a spectacle so grand that even angels long to look (1 Peter 1:12). In addition to being a sinful response, it is also naive for at least two reasons: (1) The belief that one can earn favor and right standing with God through works is hardwired into every human heart because of sin. Therefore, what Paul is proving is no small feat. And (2), even believers are tempted every day to think we can earn more (or lose) favor with God through our works (see 3:3). Therefore, every single one of us needs to preach this gospel to ourselves every single day. Lord, we believe; help our unbelief!

WE WILL SEEK TO DISCOVER

ZOOM OUT 01 / Why can’t the law save?

ZOOM OUT 02 / If the law can’t save, then who can be saved?

ZOOM OUT 03 / If faith saves, who or what do we put our faith in?

READ GALATIANS 3:10 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 126

- 01 | Consider the testimony of Paul's conversion in Acts 9. How does it help prove what is God's standard when it comes to obedience to the law? Does He merely require *most* people to obey *most* of the laws *most* of the time? According to these verses, what happens if someone scores 99.9% obedience to the law over their lifetime?

READ GALATIANS 3:10 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 126-127

- 02 | As we saw above, God's standard for law keeping is perfection. Consider the testimony of Scripture: Does anyone meet this standard? Does anyone come close?
- 03 | Now consider your answers to the previous two questions and put them together. How does this prove Paul's statement that "all who rely on works of the law are under a curse"?

In *Zoom Out 01*, we considered why everyone who relies on works of the law is bound to be cursed rather than saved. In v11, Paul overcomes the next logical objection to his argument. Dissenters to Paul's gospel are bound to say, "Okay, Paul, if being a physical offspring of Abraham/a Jew is not what brings salvation (3:6-9), and doing our best to keep the law, albeit imperfectly, does not bring salvation (3:10), who then can be saved? Good for you, Paul, you found a verse in the Old Testament that proves perfect law keeping is what God requires—but God is gracious. Certainly, our efforts to keep His law the best we can will be good enough for Him."

It is important to acknowledge that this is the natural objection bound to arise in

every human heart. Very few people, if any, assume they are perfect. Everyone knows they are a sinner, whether they admit it or not. But just about everyone assumes that they are not that bad. If they have never murdered anyone or done something that is really, really bad, then certainly God will grade on a curve and let them into heaven. This is how everyone thinks. This is the assumption every world religion is built upon. And this is what the false teachers in Galatia were teaching: being considered righteous (or good enough) before God is possible through works of the law. How else could anyone be saved? Paul continues with this question in mind.

READ GALATIANS 3:11 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 127

- 04 |** In 3:11, Paul quotes Habakkuk 2:4 to prove no one is justified by the law. What is meant by *shall live*? Does it refer to surviving rather than dying? Does it mean that "living by" is a way of life here on this earth? Or does *shall live* refer to eternal life/salvation? Explain.
- 05 |** With this understanding of *shall live* in mind, how does Habakkuk 2:4 help support the claim that no one is justified before God by the law?

READ GALATIANS 3:12 AND CROSS REFERENCE/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 127-128

06 | Now consider the Old Testament quote in v12. According to Leviticus 18:5, how does a person attain eternal life through the law? Why is this not compatible with faith?

07 | Reread 3:10-12 and summarize Paul's argument in your own words.

ZOOM OUT 03 / IF FAITH SAVES, WHO OR WHAT DO WE PUT OUR FAITH IN?

Galatians 3:13 brings us to the end of Paul's flurry of statements proven by Old Testament quotes. Thus far, we have seen that the law cannot lead to eternal life because God requires perfection, and no one keeps the law. We have seen that even though the law cannot save, there is another way, for Scripture declares, "the righteous shall live by faith." But we have yet to see how this can be the case. If God requires perfection, then how can He possibly declare unrighteous people to be "righteous"? Wouldn't this make God

Himself "unrighteous"? It is clear that a person cannot be justified by the law, but how can a person be justified by faith? Faith in what or whom? And how can this so-called faith be credited to unrighteous people as righteousness?

It is with these questions in mind that we turn to 3:13-14, where we will encounter the glorious good news that Christ died a substitutionary atoning death. This is the heart of the good news of the gospel.

READ GALATIANS 3:13 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 128

08 | Galatians 3:13 states that "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law." Who does *us* refer to? Only believing Jews who lived under the Mosaic Law, or all believing Jews and Gentiles from all time? Explain.

READ GALATIANS 3:10-13 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 128

- 09 | According to 3:10, what is the punishment for breaking the law? According to 3:13, how did Christ pay the punishment for law breaking in our place?

READ GALATIANS 3:14 AND CROSS REFERENCE/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 128

- 10 | Now consider 3:14. If everyone who breaks God's law deserves to be cursed, and if everyone breaks God's law, then how can we lawbreakers receive God's blessing instead of cursing?

READ GALATIANS 3:14 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 128-129

- 11 | According to 3:14, what is the blessing of Abraham? How does this tie together Paul's argument in 3:1-14?

PAUSE & CONSIDER

Paul's point is that *all* are under the curse of the law (Jew and Gentile), but his greater point is that *all* can be called sons through the Son, Jesus Christ! Redemption and rescue are extended to all who believe, and by simply believing, He grants life and

the fullness of His presence through His Spirit dwelling in us. How can you rest in the fullness of His presence today?

**CHRIST REDEEMED
US FROM THE CURSE
OF THE LAW BY
BECOMING A CURSE
FOR US—FOR IT IS
WRITTEN, “CURSED
IS EVERYONE WHO
IS HANGED ON
A TREE”**

GALATIANS 3:13

STEP 03

REFLECT & APPLY

GALATIANS 3:10-14

- 01 | Have you felt like Paul's point of justification through faith has grown redundant and stale? What fresh perspective have you gained as you have studied Galatians 3:10-14?

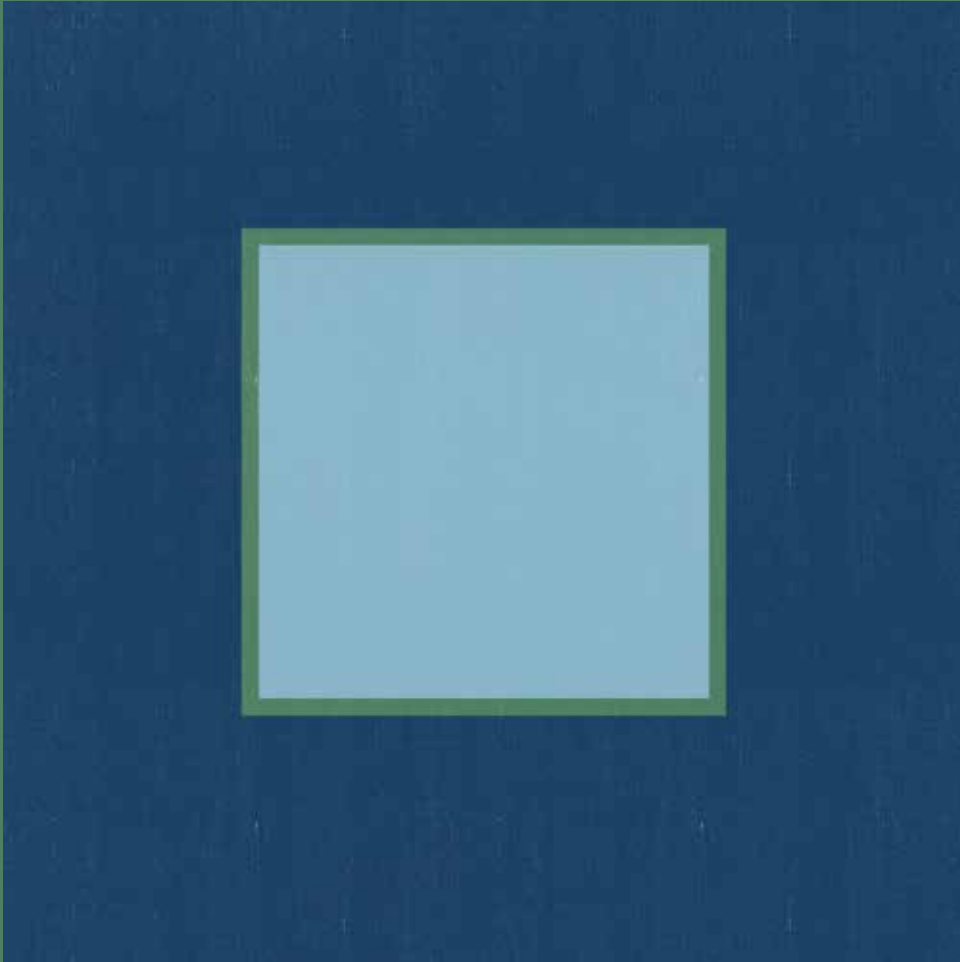
- 02 | If we have life by faith, how can we live by faith? What does living by faith in your daily life look like? Write some things you are walking through right now and how faith in Christ can impact them.

- 03 | Consider what Christ took on as He "became a curse for us." What has Christ redeemed/rescued/saved you from?

- 04 | Reflect on this incredible gift of the indwelling of the Spirit. Once relying on self and performance, we are now free to rely on the Holy Spirit! Consider the implications of this on your daily life and make note of your thoughts.

RESPOND IN PRAYER

- PRAISE** Give Christ the adoration He deserves! He became a curse for us and, in exchange, gives us life, sonship, and eternal presence through His Spirit. Praise Him, because only He was able, and He chose to!
- ADMIT** Admit where you have relied on yourself or your performance rather than on Christ's finished work and His Spirit within you.
- ASK** Ask God to help you walk by faith in the power of the Spirit.
- THANK** Thank God that He loved you in your cursedness and weakness, and that He made a way for you to have life.



WEEK 06

HEIRS OF THE PROMISE
THROUGH FAITH IN CHRIST

WEEK 06

GALATIANS 3:15-29

Paul is continuing to unpack the glorious gospel of justification by faith alone in Christ alone. He has shown that the Galatians received the Spirit by faith and not by works (3:1-5). He has demonstrated from the Scriptures that Abraham, the father of the Jews, did not achieve righteousness through obeying the Jewish law, but rather he was counted righteous by faith alone (3:6-9). And he has proven that the law cannot save because to be considered righteous before God, one has to *be righteous*—that is, perfectly holy! Yet no one comes even close to keeping the law; therefore, all who rely on works of the law are under a curse. But thanks be to God, Christ Jesus bore our curse in our place on the tree so that whoever puts their faith in Him will be counted righteous as He is righteous (3:10-14).

In this week's text, Paul seeks to answer a question a lot of us have probably been wondering for a few weeks now: "Why then the law?" If the law cannot save, then why did God give the law through Moses? It would be easy to assume (as the Jews did) that God gave the law in order to show how to inherit the promises given to Abraham. But, as Paul points out in this week's text, if keeping the law is the means by which one inherits the promises, then the inheritance is based on performance, not a promise! This cannot be the case because the God who never lies has *promised* to bless all the nations of the earth through Abraham. And what God promises to do, He will do! So why then the law? Let's dive into this week's text to find out.

PRAY

Psalm 119:18

READ

Galatians 3:15-29

STEP 01

OBSERVE

GALATIANS 3:15-29

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 3:15-29

Upon your first reading through the text, write down anything that stands out as interesting, awesome, surprising, or confusing.

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 3:15-18

- 01 | What does this passage say about God's promises? (Note also: To whom did God promise? What did He promise? When did He promise?)
- 02 | What does this passage say about the law? (As a reminder, the law was given to Israel through Moses on Mt. Sinai after the exodus from slavery in Egypt.)
- 03 | Consider v16 and 18 together. Why does it matter that God made the promises to Abraham before the law was given? (Or to ask it another way, was the law given in order to show how one could earn what was promised to Abraham? Why or why not?)

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 3:19-25

04 | If obedience to the law cannot save, then why did God give the law? According to this passage, what was the purpose of the law?

05 | According to this passage, what can the law *not* do?

06 | Why does the coming of Christ make the law (the Mosaic Covenant) no longer necessary?

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 3:26-29

07 | According to this passage, how can a person receive the blessing promised to Abraham? (*also see 3:22*)

08 | According to 3:16, Christ is the true offspring of Abraham. According to 3:26-29, how can others also be considered Abraham's offspring? Is it through ethnicity, gender, social class, or something else?

09 | This passage talks a lot about union with Christ. How does someone become united to Christ? What are the implications of being "in Christ" or "putting on Christ"?

MEDITATE ON

Galatians 3:26-29

STEP 02

INTERPRET

GALATIANS 3:15-29

Paul is seeking to demonstrate answers to very important questions. How can a person be counted righteous before God? Who are the true people of God? Who will inherit the promises of salvation given to Abraham? And ultimately, do these blessings come by faith or works of the law?

Abraham can't come through the law, for the law requires perfect obedience. Therefore, everyone who relies on works of the law will be under God's curse, which is the opposite of the blessing of salvation (3:10-14).

To prove that justification is by faith, Paul has demonstrated that the blessings of

WE WILL SEEK TO DISCOVER

ZOOM OUT 01 / If the law cannot save, then why was the law given?

ZOOM OUT 02 / Who is/are the true offspring of Abraham?

ZOOM OUT 03 / Who will inherit the blessings promised to Abraham?

READ GALATIANS 3:15-18 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 129-130

01 | Was the Abrahamic Covenant dependent on God's faithfulness or human obedience? What about the Mosaic Covenant?

02 | According to Galatians 3:17-18, why is it so important to realize that the Mosaic Covenant (which is based on performance) came after the promises made to Abraham?

READ GALATIANS 3:19-25 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 130

03 | According to Galatians 3:19-25, why was the law given? Why is the law no longer necessary?

So far in chapter 3, we have seen that the law is not the means by which God will usher in His gospel promises to Abraham and his offspring. Paul gives two reasons for this: (1) The law cannot save. Whoever relies on the law for salvation will be cursed by God, not blessed (3:10-14). And (2) the law was never supposed to be the means by which God fulfilled His gospel promises. The law was given as a temporary babysitter in order to expose how sinful people are, and to prepare them to receive by faith the one way of salvation God provides.

Now we need to take a step back and remind ourselves why Galatians was written. The Galatians are in danger of believing that to be saved by the Jewish Messiah (Jesus), they must obey the Jewish law as laid out in the

Jewish Scriptures (such as be circumcised, eat kosher, etc.), and thus live like Jews. If the Galatian Gentiles want to be treated like God's people, then they need to live like God's people.

This false teaching is what prompts Paul to write Galatians. If we were to summarize the big question Paul is seeking to answer, it would be this: Who are the true people of God? Or, to say it differently, who are the true offspring of Abraham? Who are the people that will receive the salvation promises given to Abraham and his heirs? If it is not law-abiding Jews, then who is it? It is this very important question we seek to answer next.

READ GALATIANS 3:16 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 130-131

04 | As a way of reminder, which promises were made to Abraham and his offspring?

READ GALATIANS 3:16 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 131

05 | According to the testimony of Scripture, how will these promises be ushered in through Abraham's offspring?

06 | With this background in mind, reread 3:16. Who are/is the true offspring of Abraham? Why is this significant?

ZOOM OUT 03 / WHO WILL INHERIT THE BLESSINGS PROMISED TO ABRAHAM?

So far, we have seen that God promised to bless all the families of the earth through Abraham's offspring. We have seen that this universal blessing will not be earned through Abraham's collective offspring obeying the Mosaic Law, for that was never God's plan. Instead, this universal blessing will come through Abraham's singular offspring, who is Christ. Christ is the means by which the

Abrahamic blessing is poured out onto the world.

In this *zoom out*, we will seek to answer two questions: How can we receive the blessing promised to Abraham and his offspring? What does this promised blessing entail?

READ GALATIANS 3:26-29 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 131

07 | If Christ is the true offspring of Abraham, then how can we receive the blessings promised to Abraham and his offspring?

READ GALATIANS 3:8-9 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 131-132

08 | According to 3:1-4:7, what all does the blessing of Abraham include?

PAUSE & CONSIDER

This is one weighty promise! To the offspring of Abraham is promised an inheritance, an eternal legacy, and incredible blessings! The Father has given all of this to the Son. All who put their faith in the Son are the sons of Abraham, and putting our faith in the Son unifies us with Him—we are in Christ—and His blessings become ours! Consider this

inheritance that has been extended to those who believe. Does any of this sound *too good to be true*? As you enjoy this intimate relationship with the Son of God, express your gratitude and ask for grace to understand this promise deeper.

STEP 03

REFLECT & APPLY

GALATIANS 3:15-29

- 01 | What benefit is the law to you now that the promise is fulfilled? How does it help you come to the knowledge of your sin? How does it make you long for Christ?

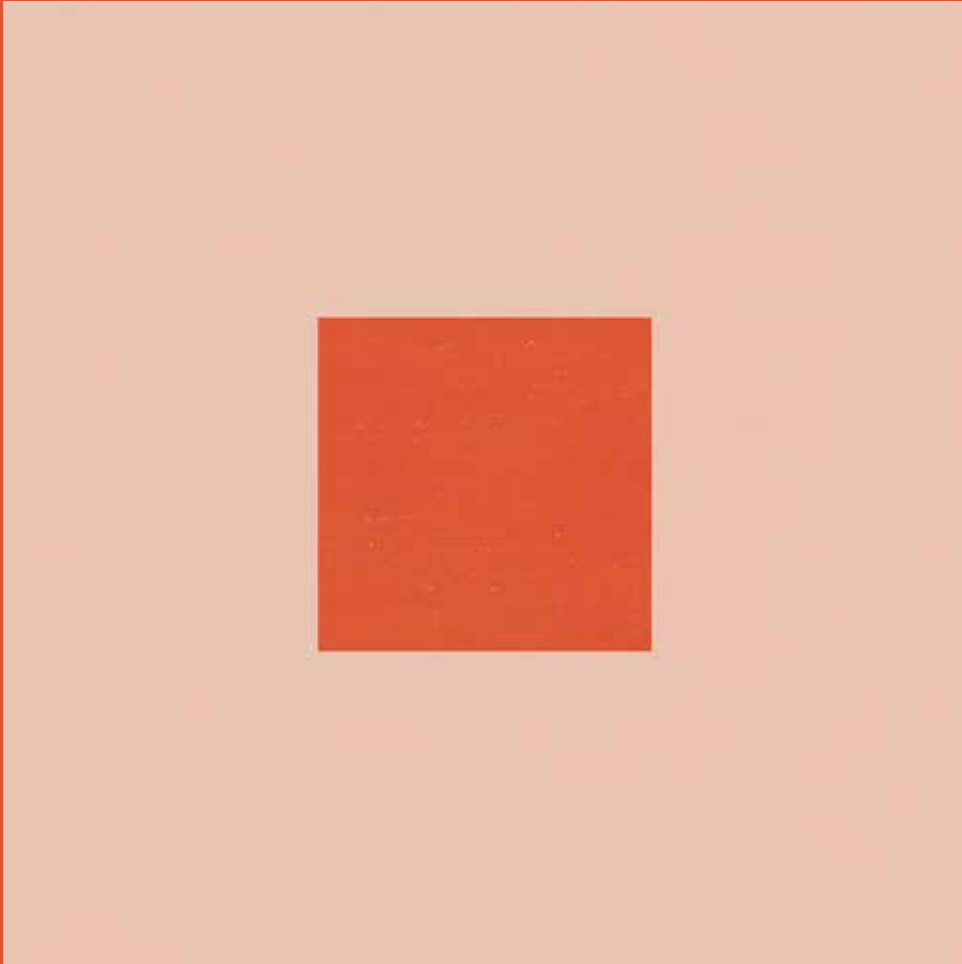
- 02 | Consider what the law can and cannot do for you. Do you consider the captivity under the law a blessing or a curse?

- 03 | How has Christ—as the one offspring and true heir of the promise—brought you to worship Him as you consider what it cost Him to extend this promise to you?

- 04 | Reread 3:25-26. Given that we are no longer under a guardian, but are united with Christ, how should our relationship to God’s standard of living be characterized? As joint heirs, what is the significance of being “clothed with Christ”?

RESPOND IN PRAYER

- PRAISE** Worship the One who has shared with you the blessing of the promise! It is only in Christ that we can become recipients of the promise.
- ADMIT** Confess how you may be taking for granted your status in Christ before God. The incredible gift of this inheritance is yours! Are there ways you have lacked gratitude or worship of what He has given you?
- ASK** Ask God to help you walk worthy of this inheritance.
- THANK** Give thanks for your sonship and your freedom through faith in Christ.



WEEK 07

FROM SLAVERY
TO SONSHIP

WEEK 07

GALATIANS 4:1-31

Paul is writing to defend the one true gospel against the false gospel being propagated by false teachers. He states his thesis clearly in 2:16, saying, “a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ.”

In chapter 3, Paul compares and contrasts the promises made to Abraham and the law that was given through Moses. The law cannot save, and it was never meant to save. It was given as a temporary babysitter in order to expose the depths of human sinfulness to demonstrate that the only possible way for sinful man to be counted righteous by a holy God is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. But the good news of the gospel is that God promised to Abraham all the way back in Genesis 12 that He would bless all

the nations of the earth through Abraham’s offspring. The promised offspring is Christ, the promised blessing is justification, and the blessing is received by faith, not performance. When one believes these gospel promises, they are united to Christ, and through their union with the true offspring of Abraham, they are counted as Abraham’s offspring and heirs of the promises, whether they are his physical offspring or not.

In chapter 4, Paul continues to demonstrate why living under the law is no longer necessary. To do this, he argues that living under the law is akin to slavery, while believing in the gospel leads to freedom and sonship. Slavery or sonship? These are the two options Paul presents to his readers.

PRAY

Psalm 119:18

READ

Galatians 4:1-31

STEP 01

OBSERVE

GALATIANS 4:1-31

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 4:1-31

Upon your first reading through the text, write down anything that stands out as interesting, awesome, surprising, or confusing.

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 4:1-7

- 01 | What does 4:1-2 say about children and slaves? How are they similar and how are they different?
- 02 | Consider 4:3-5. How does the illustration from 4:1-2 compare to what happens in salvation? *(Questions to consider: At what point were Paul's readers slaves? What were they enslaved to? How were they freed? What are they freed for?)*
- 03 | According to 4:1-5, the work of Christ enables people to go from slaves to sons (of God!). Now consider 4:6-7. What are the blessings that come with sonship to God?

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 4:8-20

- 04 | According to 4:8-10, what were Paul's readers formerly enslaved to? What are the blessings of freedom? *(This is similar to what he has just said in 4:1-7, but emphasizes different aspects.)*
- 05 | Consider 4:9-10. Why is wanting to live under the law akin to wanting to go back into slavery?
- 06 | According to 4:12-20, why should the Galatians become as Paul is (i.e., no longer live under the slavery of the Mosaic Law)? How does Paul use their relationship and past experiences to help make his case?

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 4:21-31

- 07 | In 4:22, who is the slave woman, and which son did she bear for Abraham? Who is the free woman, and which son belongs to her? *(See 4:24 and 4:28 for clues.)*
- 08 | How do these two birth stories in 4:24-31 help illustrate the difference between the gospel promises made to Abraham and the law covenant made through Moses (on Mount Sinai)?
- 09 | Consider 4:28 and 4:31. What is the relationship between how Isaac was born to Sarah and how believers are born again/saved?

MEDITATE ON

Galatians 4:6-7

STEP 02

INTERPRET

GALATIANS 4:1-31

In chapter 3, Paul demonstrates how to be counted as an offspring of Abraham. It is not through ethnicity or law keeping, but rather through faith in Jesus Christ, the true offspring of Abraham. Union with Christ through faith is how one becomes part of Abraham's family, not by the law.

Here in chapter 4, Paul shifts from talking about being part of Abraham's family to being part of God's family. As Paul hinted at

in chapter 3 (see 3:26), this is really just two different ways of talking about the same thing. Christ is both the Son of God and the true offspring of Abraham. Therefore, to be united to Christ by faith is to be adopted into God's family and considered an heir of the promises to Abraham and his offspring. But it does emphasize a different aspect of our salvation that is very much worth appreciating.

WE WILL SEEK TO DISCOVER

ZOOM OUT 01 / Who are slaves and who are sons (of God)?

ZOOM IN 01 / What are the blessings of sonship to God?

ZOOM OUT 02 / What can Abraham's two sons teach us about slavery and sonship?

ZOOM OUT 01 / WHO ARE SLAVES AND WHO ARE SONS (OF GOD)?

READ GALATIANS 4:1-4 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 132

01 | In 4:1-4, who are slaves, and what are they enslaved to? Why does Paul describe these things as slavery?

02 | How can a spiritual slave become spiritually free?

READ GALATIANS 3:19-25 AND CROSS REFERENCE/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 132

03 | It is clear that the gospel sets us free from slavery to sin. But what does it set us free *for*? And what is the role of the Holy Spirit?

ZOOM IN 01 / WHAT ARE THE BLESSINGS OF SONSHIP TO GOD?

In *Zoom Out 01*, we saw that everyone who has ever lived is born a slave of sin. This is why Paul can describe the Galatians' former paganism and idol worship as slavery, and their desire to live under the Jewish law as merely a different type of slavery. Neither the law nor any other religion has the power to set someone free from sin, but the good news of the gospel is that the Son of God

came to redeem us from slavery to sin. The good news does not stop there. He did not just redeem us from spiritual slavery to spiritual freedom; He saved us *from* slavery *for* sonship!

In this *zoom in*, we will consider some of the many benefits of being a son/daughter of God.

04 | According to 4:6-9, can adopted sons of God expect an intimate relationship with the God of the universe? Or is He a busy, absent father with more important things to do? Explain.

05 | Consider the word heir in the context of sonship. What does it mean to be an *heir*? What are the implications of being an heir of God?

06 | With these massive blessings that come with sonship in mind, consider Galatians 4:9 specifically. Why is it so astonishing that the Galatians would want to go back to slavery under the Mosaic law?

ZOOM OUT 02 / WHAT CAN ABRAHAM'S TWO SONS TEACH US ABOUT SLAVERY AND SONSHIP?

Paul is helping his readers see that the law keeps people enslaved to the power of sin because the law is powerless to set us free. The good news of the gospel is that Jesus came to redeem us from slavery to sin so that we could be adopted children of God. As children of God, we are indwelt by His Holy Spirit. The God of the universe is our Abba Father, who intimately knows us and loves us, and we are heirs to the owner of everything. When it is put this way, why would anyone choose slavery over gospel freedom?

In order to further drive home the point, Paul uses an illustration from the Old Testament. There are some dense details in 4:21–31 that are difficult to understand. But our goal in this *zoom out* is to get the big idea of what Paul is saying so that we can see how it connects to what he has been saying all along—that justification is by faith alone in Christ alone. So, how does the example of Sarah and Hagar help make the point? Let's dive in to find out.

READ GALATIANS 4:23-27 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 132-133

07 | What does Paul mean when he says that “the son of the slave was born according to the flesh, while the son of the free woman was born through promise”? What is the difference between how the two sons were born?

- 08 | With these differences in mind, how is Hagar an allegory for the law/covenant given at Mount Sinai?

READ GALATIANS 4:28, 31 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 133

- 09 | Consider everything we learned from chapter 3 and compare it with 4:28, 31. How does the way Isaac was born to Sarah provide an allegory for how people are saved through the gospel?

PAUSE & CONSIDER

Our freedom is only ours through one avenue. Whether we find ourselves enslaved to too many rules or too many liberties, we are held in bondage by a sinful nature that is only redeemable through the one true Son of God—a redemption promised long ago that all could be welcomed in Christ. In the promise itself, the proof of the

power to make even the impossible *possible*. Consider God's plan to bring a nation from an old, barren woman (an impossible promise?). Can you trust God's promises? Meditate on the power He has to call you *child*, and set aside your striving.

STEP 03

REFLECT & APPLY

GALATIANS 4:1-31

- 01 | **Consider the weakness and worthlessness of the elementary principles of this world that Paul talks about. What makes them weak and worthless?**

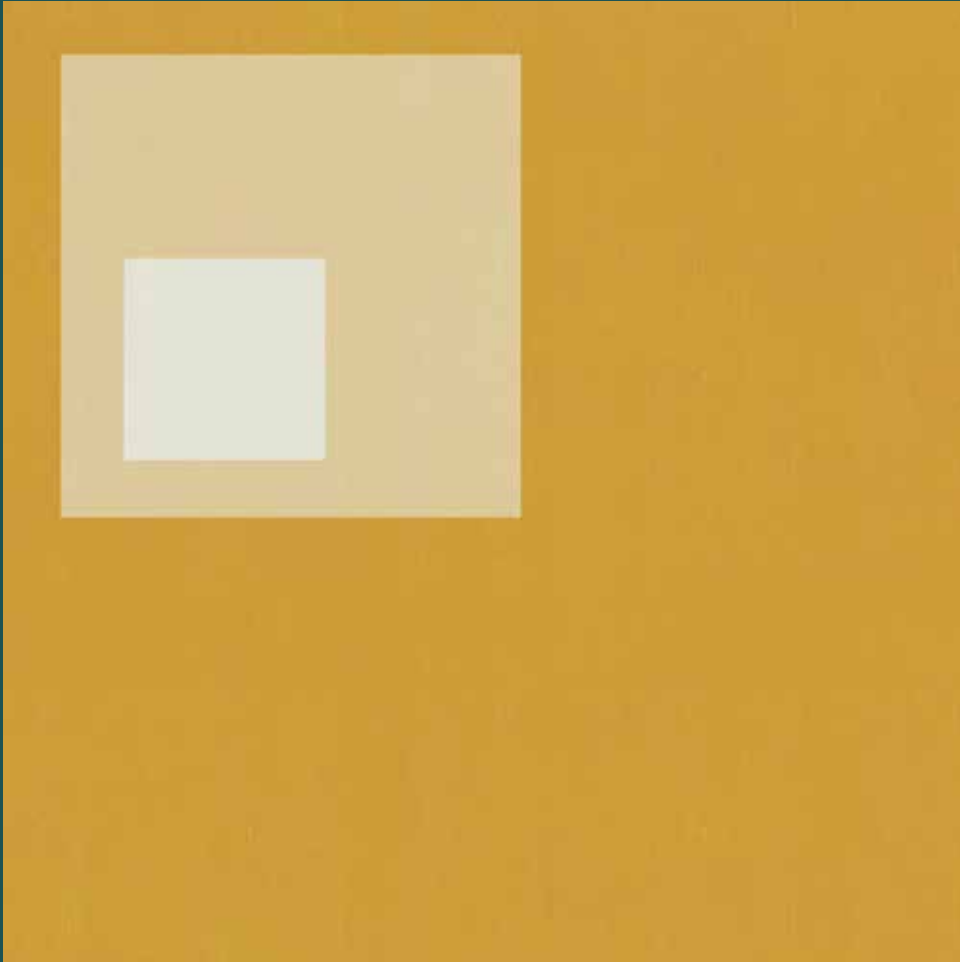
- 02 | **How often do you find yourself turning back to these worldly principles? What specific ways of law or liberties do you fall back into? What makes them more enticing to you than the freedoms of Christ?**

- 03 | **Do you experience an intimate relationship with God? You are welcomed as His child and known by Him. Let that sink in! Write down some ways you are grateful for this intimacy.**

- 04 | **Just as Abraham tried to take the promises of God into his own hands, we too can choose our own ways over God's. Which lessons can we learn from Abraham's impatience, and what do we see as true about God's character in the story of Hagar and Sarah?**

RESPOND IN PRAYER

- PRAISE** You are known by God! Enjoy the welcoming intimacy of your Heavenly Father.
- ADMIT** Continue to examine your heart for ways you turn back to the enslavement of things that cannot save you. Confess these to the Father who loves you.
- ASK** Ask your Heavenly Father to empower you by His Spirit to walk in the freedoms you have through your union in Christ!
- THANK** Thank your Heavenly Father that He is a promise keeper, and that all His promises are yes and amen through Christ Jesus.



WEEK 08

FREED TO SERVE
ONE ANOTHER

WEEK 08

GALATIANS 5:1-15

We are now entering into the final section of Galatians. Paul wastes no time getting straight to the point as he warns the Galatians that they are in danger of forsaking the one true gospel that saves for a false gospel that does not (1:1-10). After proving his gospel is the one true gospel that he received as a revelation from God (1:11-2:14), Paul states the thesis of his gospel in plain terms: A person is justified not by works of the law, but through faith in Jesus Christ.

From 2:15-4:31, Paul unpacks layer after layer of the one true gospel. The heirs of the gospel promises to Abraham are those who have faith like Abraham. For those who put their faith in Christ—the one true offspring of Abraham—their faith is counted to them as righteousness. They are united to Christ by faith, and therefore adopted into the family of Abraham (whether they are Jew or

Gentile). They are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and made sons of God and heirs of the New Creation, while those who rely on works of the law are cursed and remain enslaved to their sin because the law cannot save, nor was it ever meant to do so. But now that Christ has come, the babysitter that is the law is no longer necessary, and a life of loving God and loving others is empowered by the Spirit, through faith in Christ (2:15-4:31).

All of this brings us to the final section of the letter (5:1-6:18). Now that Paul has thoroughly established that a person is declared righteous by faith in Christ and therefore free from the slavery of the law, does this mean we can indulge the flesh and pursue a life of debauchery free of consequences? Of course not. Let's dive in to see how Christians ought to live in the freedom Christ has purchased for us.

PRAY

Psalm 119:18

READ

Galatians 5:1-15

STEP 01

OBSERVE

GALATIANS 5:1-15

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 5:1-15

Upon your first reading through the text, write down anything that stands out as interesting, awesome, surprising, or confusing.

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 5:1-6

- 01 | Considering 5:1-3, why can't a person put their faith in Christ and accept circumcision? Why do they have to choose?
- 02 | According to 5:4-5, what are the two paths one can take to seek justification/being declared righteous? Describe the difference between these two paths.
- 03 | According to 5:6, at the end of the day, what actually matters, what does *not* matter, and why?

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 5:7-12

- 04 | Consider 5:7-10. Why is Paul concerned about the Galatians? What gives him confidence in the midst of his concern?
- 05 | How is false teaching like leaven? What warning is implied in this analogy?
- 06 | In 5:10-12, what does Paul have to say about the false teachers? Are these words overly harsh? Why or why not?

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 5:13-15

- 07 | What is gospel freedom for? What is it *not* for?
- 08 | What does gospel freedom produce? What is it *not* meant to produce?
- 09 | Ponder: Paul has spent multiple chapters arguing that believers are no longer under the law, but now he encourages believers to love one another, which fulfills the whole law. Is he contradicting himself? Why or why not?

MEDITATE ON

Galatians 5:5-6

STEP 02

INTERPRET

GALATIANS 5:1-15

Paul has concluded his theological argument proving a person is justified not by works of the law, but through faith in Jesus Christ (2:15-4:31). Now, in the last two chapters of the letter, he unpacks the implications of the one true gospel for Christian living. If the law can't save, then does this mean we should live a life of lawlessness? Or, to state it the way he does in Romans, "are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?" (Romans 6:1). By no means! Freedom from

the law does not mean a believer is free to live a lawless life. Rather, as we will see, freedom in Christ empowers us to love God and love others, and thus fulfill the law of Christ through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. This is a summary of where Paul is headed. Before he gets there (starting in 5:13), he first summarizes his exhortation to the Galatians based on where he has been (5:1-12).

WE WILL SEEK TO DISCOVER

ZOOM OUT 01 / Why does Paul have such strong words about circumcision?

ZOOM OUT 02 / Why does Paul have such strong words for the false teachers?

ZOOM OUT 03 / If we are free from the law, how then shall we live?

ZOOM OUT 01 / WHY DOES PAUL HAVE SUCH STRONG WORDS ABOUT CIRCUMCISION?

READ GALATIANS 5:1-4 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 133-134

- 01 | Consider all we have studied so far in Galatians. Why is it such a big deal for the Galatians to accept circumcision? Can't they put their trust in Christ *and* try to keep the law? Explain.
- 02 | According to Galatians 5:1-4, what are the consequences of believing a person can add to their righteousness through their works?

READ GALATIANS 5:5-6 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 134

- 03 | If the law cannot save, then what hope do we have? Focus specifically on what 5:5 emphasizes that has not been emphasized up to this point.

ZOOM OUT 02 / WHY DOES PAUL HAVE SUCH STRONG WORDS FOR THE FALSE TEACHERS?

In *Zoom Out 01*, we saw that Paul has such strong words for the Galatians because if they accept circumcision out of the belief that keeping the Mosaic law will add to their right standing before holy God, then they are obligated to keep the whole law, and Christ is of no advantage to them. A person can either trust in Christ's work on the cross and therefore be counted righteous as a gift of grace, or they can trust in their own works by attempting to keep the law perfectly. There is no middle ground. This is why Paul has such strong words for the Galatians, because what they are trifling with is a first-tier gospel issue.

In this *zoom out*, we will consider why Paul has such strong words for the false teachers in Galatia. As 21st century Americans who live in a culture where truth is relative, tolerance is championed, and coexisting among pluralistic religious worldviews is expected, it can be startling to read what Paul writes in this passage. But the same man who wrote 1 Corinthians 13 writes these words under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, we should study this passage as a warning to all of us about the seriousness of bad theology and false teachers.

READ GALATIANS 5:7-11 AND COMMENTARY ON PAGE 134

- 04 | According to 5:7-11, how were the false teachers affecting and influencing the Galatians?

READ GALATIANS 5:10, 12 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 134-135

- 05 | Based on this negative impact, what does Paul have to say about the false teachers? Consider 5:10 and 5:12 specifically.

READ GALATIANS 5:7-12 AND CROSS REFERENCE/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 135

- 06 | Are these strong words that Paul has for the false teachers over the top or appropriate? Explain.

As a transition from his theological defense of the one true gospel (2:15–4:31), Paul urges the Galatians, “For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.” Before diving into the implications of this freedom, he first reiterates one last time that the false teachers are teaching a false gospel that cannot save, for salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. Those who have been troubling the Galatians have divine judgment coming for them, but those who are united to Christ by faith will ultimately be declared righteous on Judgment Day (5:2–12).

After pausing to make one final appeal to the Galatians, Paul goes back to the thought he started in 5:1 where he seeks to demonstrate the implications of the Christian life that is free in Christ and free from the law (5:13 through the end of the letter). If Christians are saved by grace and free from the law, then does this imply a Christian is free to live a lawless life without any consequences? Paul writes next with this misunderstanding of the gospel in mind.

READ GALATIANS 5:13 AND COMMENTARY ON PAGE 135

- 07 | Paul says in 5:13 that as Christians, we are free. He then says that we should use our freedom to serve one another in love. Isn't serving others the opposite of freedom? What is it about gospel freedom that frees us to serve one another? Explain the connection.

READ GALATIANS 5:14 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 135–136

- 08 | Consider 5:14. How is the whole law fulfilled in the single command “You shall love your neighbor as yourself”? Why would Paul—who has spent the last few chapters telling the Galatians they are no longer under the law—tell the Galatians to serve one another in love, and thus “fulfill the whole law”?

READ GALATIANS 5:13, 15 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 136

09 | Consider 5:13a and 5:15. Why is it necessary for Paul to warn his readers not to use their freedom as an opportunity for the flesh?

PAUSE & CONSIDER

Freedom is often something we take for granted. In the freedoms we enjoy, it is tempting to turn inward and exercise self-indulgence or to grow greedy and strive to protect our liberty. In God's family, as He has given us everything for life and godliness, we have the joy of extending the love and grace He has extended to us. Our freedom doesn't need to be protected

or hoarded, and it can become a self-inflicted prison if used to serve ourselves. There is truly nothing more liberating than to love one's neighbor from a place of freedom and security in your identity as part of the family of God. Consider how the love of God spurs you toward loving others.

**FOR FREEDOM CHRIST
HAS SET US FREE;
STAND FIRM THEREFORE,
AND DO NOT SUBMIT
AGAIN TO A YOKE
OF SLAVERY.**

GALATIANS 5:1

STEP 03

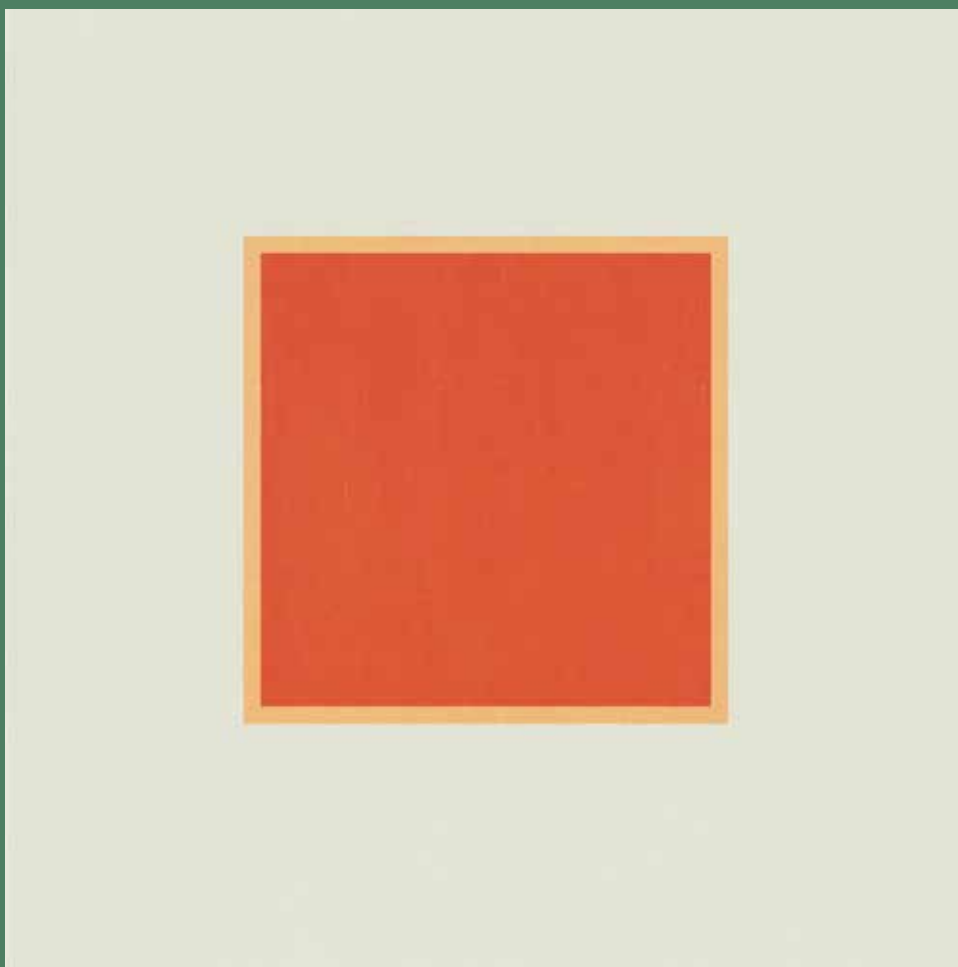
REFLECT & APPLY

GALATIANS 5:1-15

- 01 | In his commentary on Galatians, Harmon says, "Our entire experience of the Christian life is based on faith and the work of the Spirit." What do you think relying on your works—big or small, or even supplementing works—says about your faith in Christ?
- 02 | Do you guard and stand on the truth with vigilance? Has there been any "leaven" that has hindered you from obeying the truth?
- 03 | Consider the progression of freedom in Christ to becoming a servant to one another. Do you think this is a fair expectation? Why or how does it come naturally to one who is truly free? Write your thoughts.
- 04 | Is there a neighbor whom you are struggling to love? Who do you need to exercise your freedoms in love toward? Which steps of love can you take today?

RESPOND IN PRAYER

- PRAISE** You can have confidence in the Lord for the work He has begun and continues to do in you. Praise God that He completes what He starts, and that by His Spirit, He is still working to complete you.
- ADMIT** Confess where you have used your freedoms as an opportunity for the flesh. Be specific with Him in the ways you have indulged in either the desires or the works of the flesh.
- ASK** Ask God to help you see opportunities to serve those around you, and ask Him to give you joy as you seek to love from the security of your identity in Him.
- THANK** Thank God for His Spirit that grants us faith! Through Him, we have the hope of righteousness, and today we can enjoy His love daily.



WEEK 09

FREED TO WALK
BY THE SPIRIT

WEEK 09

GALATIANS 5:16-26

We have made it to the final section of Galatians (5:1-6:18). Having thoroughly unpacked the theological implications of the good news that a person is justified not by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ (2:15-4:31), Paul concludes his letter by unpacking the implications the gospel of grace has for Christian living. If believers are free from having to earn favor with God through the law, and are counted righteous before God by faith alone, does this open the floodgates for people to indulge the flesh? This is the question Paul is seeking to answer. If the law no longer provides the guidelines for how we ought to relate to God and our neighbor, how then shall we live?

Last week, we studied the beginning of Paul's answer to this question. Being counted righteous

in Christ and free from the law does not free a Christian to indulge the flesh and live a lawless life (5:13). On the contrary, the gospel actually empowers us to do what the law could never do, which is to love God and love our neighbor as ourselves. This love that the gospel produces is free from any obligation to earn favor with God or man, for we are already counted righteous through faith in Christ.

Paul's exhortation to love God and one's neighbor rather than indulging the flesh is easier said than done. The question is, how? Paul continues with this question in mind. What we will study this week is one of the most beloved passages in all of Paul's writings.

PRAY

Psalm 119:18

READ

Galatians 5:16-26

STEP 01

OBSERVE

GALATIANS 5:16-26

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 5:16-26

Upon your first reading through the text, write down anything that stands out as interesting, awesome, surprising, or confusing.

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 5:16-18

- 01 | Why does Paul tell his readers to “walk by the Spirit”? Focus on the word *for* and write down the reasons you see from 5:16-18.
- 02 | Consider 5:18. What is the connection between walking by the Spirit (see 5:16) and being led by the Spirit? With the context of telling the Galatians not to gratify the desires of the flesh in mind, why does he remind them they are no longer under the law?

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 5:19-21

- 03 | What are the works of the flesh? Write down any patterns or themes you see. Why would Paul refer to these as *works of the flesh*?

- 04 | According to 5:21b, what do the works of the flesh earn a person? The word *do* could also be translated as “make a practice of doing.” Why is this significant?

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 5:22-23

- 05 | Consider the examples of the fruit of the Spirit (who is the Holy Spirit of God). Why would these be the things the Spirit produces in the life of a believer who walks by the Spirit?
- 06 | Why does Paul contrast the *works* of the flesh with the *fruit* (singular) of the Spirit? What does this contrast imply?
- 07 | Consider the fruit of the Spirit in light of Paul’s statement “against such things there is no law.” Can the law produce what the Spirit can produce? Why or why not?

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 5:24-26

- 08 | How are the truths seen in 5:24 relevant to the conversation about walking by the Spirit/bearing the fruit of the Spirit and not gratifying the desires of the flesh?
- 09 | What is the connection between being made alive by the Spirit and being able to keep in step with the Spirit? How should the reality that we have been made alive by the Spirit keep us from conceit or envy?

MEDITATE ON

Galatians 5:22-25

STEP 02

INTERPRET

GALATIANS 5:16-26

In Galatians 2:15-4:29, Paul seeks to explain how a person is *justified*. Here, in 5:1-6:18, Paul focuses on how a person is *sanctified*. The same foundational gospel truths apply to both sections. The good news about how a person can be *counted* righteous before God is the same way a person becomes (progressively) more righteous before God. In other words, works done in the power of the flesh cannot save, and they cannot sanctify either. It is faith alone in Christ alone that enables us to be counted righteous, and it is faith alone in the power of God's Spirit alone that grows us in godliness.

Back in 3:2-3, Paul highlights this reality. "Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?" These two verses include three key words from this week's passage (works, flesh, and Spirit). As we will see, the works of the flesh produce the opposite of righteousness, but the Spirit has the power to take unrighteous people and produce in them the fruits of righteousness.

WE WILL SEEK TO DISCOVER

ZOOM OUT 01 / What are the works of the flesh?

ZOOM OUT 02 / What is the fruit of the Spirit?

ZOOM OUT 03 / How can we walk by the Spirit?

ZOOM OUT 01 / WHAT ARE THE WORKS OF THE FLESH?

READ GALATIANS 5:19-21 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 137

- 01 | Consider each “work” of the flesh listed in Galatians 5:19-21. How is each one the opposite of loving God and/or our neighbor?

READ GALATIANS 5:21 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 137-138

- 02 | In 5:18, Paul says “the works of the flesh are evident.” But back in 5:16-17 he refers to the *desires* of the flesh. What is the connection between the desires of the flesh and the works of the flesh? (Are these terms synonymous or does one lead to the other?)

READ GALATIANS 5:16-21 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 138

- 03 | Consider 5:21. What do works of the flesh “earn” a person? Is this just? Why or why not?

ZOOM OUT 02 / WHAT IS THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT?

In *Zoom Out 01*, we saw that fleshly desires produce lives that are littered with fleshly actions. We saw that the works of the flesh are the opposite of loving God and our neighbor. We saw that those whose lives are marked by the gratification of the flesh will not inherit the kingdom of God.

What we will see in this *zoom out* is that a person who walks by the Spirit lives a life that is drastically different.

READ GALATIANS 5:21-22 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 138-139

- 04 | Consider the fruit of the Spirit in light of Galatians 5:13-14. How does each aspect of the fruit of the Spirit help produce a life that shows love to both God and our neighbor?

READ GALATIANS 5:21-22 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 139

- 05 | Why is the list of characteristics in Galatians 5:22-23 called the fruit of the Spirit? What is the relationship between the character of God and the fruit that the Spirit of God produces in a believer's life?

ZOOM OUT 03 / HOW CAN WE WALK BY THE SPIRIT?

In *Zoom Out 02*, we saw that God is love; He is the fountain of joy, the Prince of Peace, the infinitely patient, good and kind, the producer of faithfulness, the giver of gentleness, and the embodiment of self-control. Therefore, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control, because God is these things, and the Spirit is God. We also saw that the fruit of the Spirit enables the believer to love God and love his neighbor, which is the fulfillment of the law and the exact opposite of the person who lives a life gratifying the desires of the flesh.

In this *zoom out*, we will consider more deeply how the fruit of the Spirit comes to fruition in a believer's life. It is true that God is each of these things, and the Spirit of God dwells inside every believer, but there is still the God's sovereignty/human responsibility dynamic at play. Paul does command believers to walk by the Spirit. The Christian life is not all passive. So how does one walk by the Spirit?

READ GALATIANS 5:16 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 139

- 06 | What does it mean to walk by the Spirit?

READ GALATIANS 5:16 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 139-140

07 | How does a person walk by the Spirit?

READ GALATIANS 5:16, 22-23 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 140

08 | How does walking by the Spirit produce the fruit of the Spirit?

READ GALATIANS 5:24 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 140-141

09 | How does walking by the Spirit keep someone from gratifying the desires of the flesh?

10 | If someone walks by the Spirit, does that mean they will never sin?

PAUSE & CONSIDER

Life in the Spirit realigns our desires and produces life-giving fruit! When we are made new in Christ, our desires are made new, and it is a delight to walk in step with Him. As you consider the fruit produced by the Spirit, reflect on the characteristics that Christ has toward you—He is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

When our flesh is crucified with Christ, and our image bearing is renewed, we too can see these fruits of the Spirit in our lives as we walk with Him.

STEP 03

REFLECT & APPLY

GALATIANS 5:16-26

- 01 | Can you identify any desires within yourself that align with the Spirit? Are there desires of the flesh that need to be put to death?

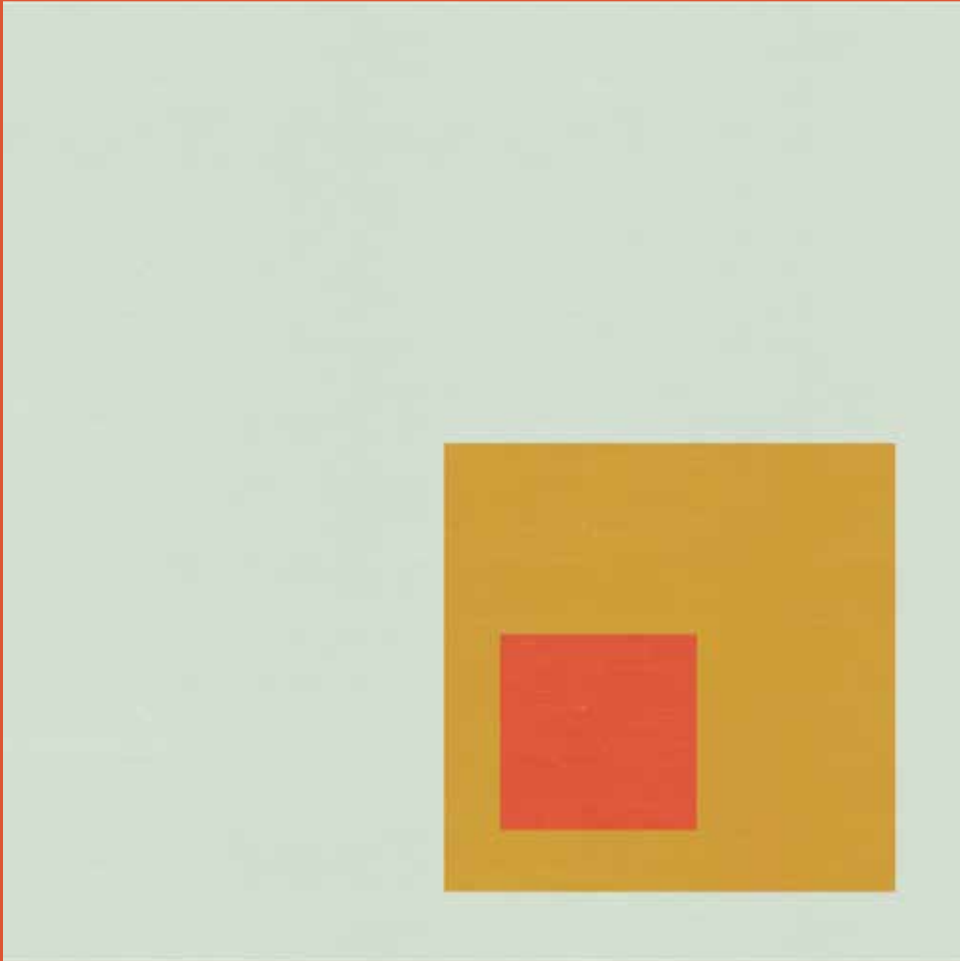
- 02 | What insight do you gain from looking at the fruit of your life? In what ways can you enjoy the kingdom inheritance in the here and now?

- 03 | You cannot produce the fruit of the Spirit in yourself, but you can seek Him and walk in His ways. What are some practical steps to implement in your life that can help you cultivate surrendered soil and keep in step with the Spirit?

- 04 | How has being in regular Bible study helped you walk in the Spirit? Describe one way being in Scripture has helped you to be led by the Spirit.

RESPOND IN PRAYER

- PRAISE** Meditate on the power of Christ that has brought your heart of stone to life so that you can walk in step with His Spirit! It is only by His grace!
- ADMIT** Repent of any desires of the flesh that entice you.
- ASK** Ask God to help you desire more of Him and His ways. Tell Him which of His characteristics you would like to grow in, and ask Him to teach you His ways.
- THANK** Thank God for bringing from you what you cannot produce yourself. It is His kindness that creates a new heart, new desires, and beautiful fruit. Thank Him for the ways you see Him working!



WEEK 10

FREED TO BEAR ONE
ANOTHER'S BURDENS

WEEK 10

GALATIANS 6:1-18

We have made it to the final chapter in Galatians! We can be certain that Satan, who is the deceiver of the whole world and the Father of lies, is the one who is behind all false teaching. And yet, what Satan meant for evil in the church of Galatia, God has meant for lots and lots of good. The false teaching that infiltrated the Galatian church prompted the Apostle Paul to pen this great letter, and the result is a clear—concise, glorious unpacking of the one true gospel that a person is saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone for the glory of God. This letter played a major role in launching the Protestant Reformation a few centuries ago, and we trust and pray that God has used it for much good here at Gospel City Church, as well.

Last week, we studied the most famous section of this important letter. We learned how to walk by the Spirit and not gratify the desires of the flesh. We considered the reality that our

works and lifestyle flow from the fountain of our desires, and our desires are shaped by what we set our minds on. Therefore, in order to walk by the Spirit we must have godly desires, and in order to have godly desires we must set our minds on the things of God. As we saw, this is only possible for those who have the Spirit of God dwelling in them. Before Christ, every desire of every heart is only evil continually (Genesis 6:5 / Romans 1:18-3:18). But in Christ we are a new creation! We received new hearts with new desires and new abilities to walk by the Spirit and not gratify the desires of the flesh.

In this final chapter of Galatians, Paul will give some practical examples of what it looks like to walk by the Spirit in the context of the Church community. He then will conclude with some final remarks that summarize the main themes of this great letter.

PRAY

Psalm 119:18

READ

Galatians 6:1-18

STEP 01

OBSERVE

GALATIANS 6:1-18

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 6:1-18

Upon your first reading through the text, write down anything that stands out as interesting, awesome, surprising, or confusing.

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 6:1-5

- 01 | According to 6:1-5, what are some responsibilities believers have to their fellow church members?
- 02 | What personal responsibility does each individual have?
- 03 | What is the relationship between these personal responsibilities and communal responsibilities? *(For example, what temptation might come upon an individual who is attempting to restore another person caught in sin? Etc.)*

- 04 | How does 6:1-5 help unpack what it looks like practically to walk by the Spirit and not gratify the desires of the flesh?

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 6:6-10

- 05 | According to 6:6-10, which corporate responsibilities do all church members have to one another?
- 06 | Which individual responsibilities does this section highlight? Why is it important to keep the distinction between personal and corporate responsibility clear?
- 07 | How does 6:6-10 help unpack what it looks like practically to walk by the Spirit and not gratify the desires of the flesh?

PRAYERFULLY READ GALATIANS 6:11-18

- 08 | According to 6:11-13, what are the defining characteristics that mark the false teachers in Galatia? What are they motivated by, and what do they put their hope in?
- 09 | According to 6:14-18, what are the defining characteristics that mark Paul and all genuine believers? What are they motivated by, and what do they put their hope in?

MEDITATE ON

Galatians 6:8

STEP 02

INTERPRET

GALATIANS 6:1-18

In 2:15-4:31, Paul proves that the gospel is the good news that we can be free from the law and free in Christ through faith alone. Whoever is united to Christ by faith is freed from slavery to sin, freed from having to earn a righteousness they could never earn, and freed as adopted children of God. In 5:1, Paul proclaims “For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.”

In 5:13-14, Paul clarifies that gospel freedom is not a license to indulge the flesh, rather

it provides the power by the Spirit to love God and love others. In 5:16-26, Paul explains how a person can walk by the Spirit and not gratify the desires of the flesh. Now, in the final chapter of the letter, Paul concludes with a few practical examples of what it looks like to walk by the Spirit. He focuses on the implications that life in the Spirit has for the Church community, as well as for each member individually.

WE WILL SEEK TO DISCOVER

ZOOM OUT 01 / What are some examples of what it looks like to walk by the Spirit?

ZOOM OUT 02 / If we are saved by faith, why will we still reap what we sow?

ZOOM OUT 03 / Why is Galatians 6:11-18 such a fitting conclusion?

ZOOM OUT 01 / WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE TO WALK BY THE SPIRIT?

READ GALATIANS 6:1-10 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 141

- 01 | Consider 6:1-10 and go through each verse that describes how believers should treat other people. Explain how walking by the Spirit empowers a person to do what Paul is instructing (How does the Spirit help a person restore a person caught in sin “with gentleness”? etc.)

READ GALATIANS 6:2 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 141

- 02 | According to 6:2 specifically, what is the law of Christ, and how does bearing one another's burdens fulfill it?

READ GALATIANS 6:1-10 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 142

- 03 | Consider Paul's instructions in 6:1-10 from the reverse perspective. How would seeking to gratify the desires of the flesh prevent a person from living the way Paul is instructing?

ZOOM OUT 02 / IF WE ARE SAVED BY FAITH, WHY WILL WE STILL REAP WHAT WE SOW?

In *Zoom Out 01*, we considered how walking by the Spirit empowers the Church to love each other and the world. We considered how Christ is the ultimate example of bearing our burdens, and we considered how this type of community is only possible when people walk by the Spirit. Therefore, in summary, those who walk by the Spirit bear one another's burdens and thus fulfill the law of Christ (6:2), while those who seek

to gratify the desires of the flesh “bite and devour one another” (5:15).

Now we will focus on the personal responsibility each individual has as a member of the corporate body of Christ. We will specifically focus on why people who are saved by grace alone through faith alone still need to be mindful of the reality that they will reap what they sow.

READ GALATIANS 6:1-10 AND COMMENTARY ON PAGE 142

- 04 | As people who live amongst other sinful, needy people, what does 6:1-10 emphasize about each person's individual personal responsibility?

READ GALATIANS 6:1-10 AND COMMENTARY ON PAGE 142

- 05 | Which principles, rewards, and warnings does Paul reference in this passage in order to motivate each individual to obey his instructions?

READ GALATIANS 6:7-9 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 142-143

- 06 | If we are saved by faith alone and not by works, then how will we be rewarded/judged for our works? How can both of these things be true?

ZOOM OUT 03 / WHY IS GALATIANS 6:11-18 SUCH A FITTING CONCLUSION?

In *Zoom Out 01 + 02*, we have considered the practical implications of what it looks like to walk by the Spirit, both at a corporate level and an individual level.

Now, in the last paragraph of Galatians, Paul summarizes the main themes in what amounts to a fitting conclusion to this monumental letter.

READ GALATIANS 6:12-16 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 143

- 07 | Paul begins his letter contrasting his gospel with the false teachers, and he ends the letter by contrasting himself with them again. What are the major differences between them?

READ GALATIANS 6:14-16 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 143

- 08 | Focus specifically on 6:14-16. How is this a fitting summary of the type of faith that saves? Look for themes that Paul has unpacked throughout the letter.

READ GALATIANS 6:18 AND CROSS REFERENCES/COMMENTARY ON PAGE 143-144

- 09 | Paul begins and ends the letter by celebrating God's grace as a way of communicating that everything in between is meant to help people marvel at God's grace. How has this study helped you come to a deeper appreciation of the grace we have received through Christ?

PAUSE & CONSIDER

Reflect on the incredible grace God has extended toward you through Christ! Take some additional time to read the entire book of Galatians as a whole, and take note of what God has taught you and revealed to you through His Word. As you remember the Father's grace to call you *child* and *heir*, the Son's love toward you in

laying down His life, and the Spirit that empowers you to walk in His ways, what is it He is calling you to do?

STEP 03

REFLECT & APPLY

GALATIANS 6:1-18

- 01 | How does understanding “the law of Christ” and His love for you help you to seek restoration and unity with others? Why is humility key to avoiding being tempted yourself? Is there anyone you are needing to show gentleness toward?

- 02 | Our freedom in Christ continues to stretch outward, calling us to be responsible for one another. What practical ways can you bear the burdens of your brothers and sisters in Christ?

- 03 | Take inventory of where you invest your time, energy, and resources. What you see in your schedules, priorities, and finances often give insight to what you are sowing. Are you sowing things of the Spirit or things of the flesh?

- 04 | Paul boasts in Christ crucified—no works or desires sway him from the one true gospel of Jesus’ completed work to make us a new creation. How can you continue to sow in the Spirit, not growing weary in doing good?

RESPOND IN PRAYER

- PRAISE** Which attributes of God have stood out to you during this study of Galatians? Praise Him for the ways He has revealed His goodness to you. Give Him the worship He deserves—tell Him specifically how you have grown to learn more about His character.
- ADMIT** Has God convicted you of anything specific this week or over the last few weeks? Confess the sin He has graciously revealed to you. Allow conviction to draw you near to Him and take refuge in His forgiveness.
- ASK** What is God calling you to from your study of Galatians? Ask Him to help you—remembering that you are empowered by His Spirit! Ask Him to show you how to walk in step with Him.
- THANK** How are you thankful for what God has done for you? Think of some areas that you are grateful for His Word and His grace toward you and thank Him!

APPENDIX A

WEEK 01

Q / 01

GALATIANS 2:4-5 / Yet because of false brothers secretly brought in—who slipped in to spy out our freedom that we have in Christ Jesus, so that they might bring us into slavery—⁵to them we did not yield in submission even for a moment, so that the truth of the gospel might be preserved for you.

GALATIANS 2:11-14 / But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. ¹²For before certain men came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles; but when they came he drew back and separated himself, fearing the circumcision party. ¹³And the rest of the Jews acted hypocritically along with him, so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy. ¹⁴But when I saw that their conduct was not in step with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, “If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews?”

GALATIANS 4:16-17 / Have I then become your enemy by telling you the truth? ¹⁷They make much of you, but for no good purpose. They want to shut you out, that you may make much of them.

GALATIANS 5:7-10 / You were running well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? ⁸This persuasion is not from him who calls you. ⁹A little leaven leavens the whole lump. ¹⁰I have confidence in the Lord that you will take no other view, and the one who is troubling you will bear the penalty, whoever he is.

GALATIANS 6:11-13 / See with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand. ¹²It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh who would force you to be circumcised, and only in order that they may not be persecuted for the cross of

Christ. ¹³For even those who are circumcised do not themselves keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh.

Q /
02-04

GALATIANS 3:1-2 / O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified. ²Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith?

GALATIANS 3:10-11 / For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, “Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them.” ¹¹Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for “The righteous shall live by faith.”

GALATIANS 5:2-6 / Look: I, Paul, say to you that if you accept circumcision, Christ will be of no advantage to you.

³I testify again to every man who accepts circumcision that he is obligated to keep the whole law. ⁴You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace. ⁵For through the Spirit, by faith, we ourselves eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness. ⁶For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love.

GALATIANS 6:12 / It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh who would force you to be circumcised, and only in order that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ.

GALATIANS 6:15 / For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.

Q / 05

GALATIANS 2:15-16 / We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners; ¹⁶yet

we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified.

- Note the connection between being justified and having peace with God. As Romans 5:1 says, "Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Q / 06

GALATIANS 2:19-21 / For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. ²⁰I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. ²¹I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.

Q / 07

GALATIANS 2:16 / Yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ.

GALATIANS 3:6-9 / Just as Abraham "believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness"? ⁷Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham. ⁸And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "In you shall all the nations be blessed." ⁹So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.

GALATIANS 3:13-14 / Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree"—¹⁴so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.

GALATIANS 3:25-26 / But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, ²⁶for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith.

GALATIANS 5:5 / For through the Spirit, by faith, we ourselves eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness.

Q / 08

GALATIANS 1:14-16 / And I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers. ¹⁵But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and who called me by his grace, ¹⁶was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles.

GALATIANS 3:8 / And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "In you shall all the nations be blessed."

- In the wider context, Paul is making the point that the gospel he is preaching is the one true biblical gospel that Scripture proclaimed since the beginning. Justification before God has always been by faith alone.

WEEK 02

Q / 01

ACTS 9:1-6 / But Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest ²and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. ³Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven shone around him. ⁴And falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" ⁵And he said, "Who are you, Lord?" And he said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting." ⁶But rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do."

ACTS 9:15-20 / But the Lord said to him (Ananias), "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel." ¹⁶For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name." ¹⁷So Ananias departed and entered the house. And laying his hands on him he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you came has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." ¹⁸And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he →

rose and was baptized; ¹⁹and taking food, he was strengthened. For some days he was with the disciples at Damascus. ²⁰And immediately he proclaimed Jesus in the synagogues, saying, “He is the Son of God.”

Q / 02

ISAIAH 49:1, 3, 5-7 / Listen to me, O coastlands, and give attention, you peoples from afar. The Lord called me from the womb, from the body of my mother he named my name... ³And he said to me, “You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified.”... ⁵And now the Lord says, he who formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him; and that Israel might be gathered to him—for I am honored in the eyes of the Lord, and my God has become my strength—⁶he says: “It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel; I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.” ⁷Thus says the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One, to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nation, the servant of rulers: “Kings shall see and arise; princes, and they shall prostrate themselves; because of the Lord, who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you.”

- Isaiah 49 is not a prophecy specifically about the Apostle Paul, but it does show that it is not an outlandish claim for Paul to say that God chose him for a specific role in His redemptive plan before he was even born. Just like the Lord’s servant in Isaiah 49, Paul was called by God before he was born to make God’s salvation known among the Gentiles/nations/peoples from afar.

JEREMIAH 1:5 / “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.”

- It might sound crazy for Paul to claim God set him apart before he was born to bring his gospel to the nations, but God did it for Jeremiah, why not Paul?

ROMANS 9:10-12 / And not only so, but also when Rebekah had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac, ¹¹though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God’s purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who

calls— ¹²she was told, “The older will serve the younger.”

- This further reiterates the fact that God is absolutely a God who chooses servants for Himself before they are even born.

Q / 03

GALATIANS 1:18-20 / Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas and remained with him fifteen days. ¹⁹But I saw none of the other apostles except James the Lord’s brother. ²⁰(In what I am writing to you, before God, I do not lie!)

- Paul was a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ for three years before he even interacted with any apostles. Even when he did, he only visited with Peter a couple weeks, and he didn’t even see most of the other apostles.

GALATIANS 1:21-23 / Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. ²²And I was still unknown in person to the churches of Judea that are in Christ. ²³They only were hearing it said, “He who used to persecute us is now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy.”

- Not only did Paul not receive his gospel from the apostles, he did not receive it from the churches who were taught the gospel by the apostles either. There is no game of “gospel telephone” going on here that could suggest Paul’s gospel is a confused version of the apostles’.

Q / 04

GALATIANS 2:1-2 / Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along with me. ²I went up because of a revelation and set before them (though privately before those who seemed influential) the gospel that I proclaim among the Gentiles, in order to make sure I was not running or had not run in vain.

- After 14 years of being a minister of the gospel, Paul finally went up to Jerusalem to spend some extended time with the other apostles. But even at that point, it was not to learn their gospel; rather, it was to make sure that the gospel Paul preached was not being contradicted by others.

GALATIANS 2:3-5 / But even Titus, who was with me, was not forced to be circumcised, though he was a Greek. ⁴Yet because of false brothers secretly brought in—who slipped in to spy out our freedom that we have in Christ Jesus, so that they might bring us into slavery— ⁵to them we did not yield in submission even for a moment,

so that the truth of the gospel might be preserved for you.

- If it were actually true that Paul misunderstood or watered down the apostolic gospel, then this would have been the opportunity for the apostles to set the record straight. They would have told Titus that he needed to be circumcised, but they didn't because requiring circumcision is a message that leads to slavery, not salvation.

GALATIANS 2:9 / And when James and Cephas and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given to me, they gave the right hand of fellowship to Barnabas and me, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised.

- Paul is making the point over and over again. He did not receive the gospel from the apostles or any other man, but the gospel he preaches is the apostolic gospel, and Paul proves it right here. The pillars of the faith—Peter, James, and John—all affirmed that Paul was indeed an apostle of Jesus Christ who preached the same gospel they did.

Q / 05

GALATIANS 2:14 / But when I saw that their conduct was not in step with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, “If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews?”

- It is true that Peter, Barnabus, and others acted in a way that would imply that keeping the Mosaic Law is necessary for salvation. Paul could see how the false teachers could use this against him to convince the Galatians that Paul was the one who was confused, but Paul said Peter was acting hypocritically, which is to say his outward actions were not in line with his inward convictions. This is not proof that one must keep the Mosaic Law to be saved. This is just an example that fear and peer pressure can make someone cave on their convictions in the moment. Paul confronted Peter and set the record straight so that the purity of the gospel would be preserved. Contrary to what Peter's actions implied, Gentiles did not need to live like Jews in order to be saved. That is a false gospel!

WEEK 03

Q / 01

ROMANS 4:5-8 / And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness, “just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works:⁷ “Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven,

and whose sins are covered; ⁸blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin.”

- This verse gives a lot of clues about the meaning of *justification*. To be justified means to be declared righteous by the Judge of all the earth. Justification by faith is the good news that an ungodly person can be considered righteous apart from works. It is the good news that our lawless deeds can be forgiven, our sins can be covered, and the Lord Almighty will not count our sins against us!

ROMANS 5:1 / Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

- What we deserve is wrath, enmity, death, and hell for all of eternity. This is the wages of sin against a holy God, but justification means peace and reconciliation and the hope of glory!

ROMANS 8:29-30 / For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.³⁰ And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

- And it means that we have the hope of being conformed into the image of the Son, who is the radiance of the glory of God.

Q / 02

ROMANS 2:5-9 / But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed.⁶ He will render to each one according to his works:⁷ to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; ⁸but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury.⁹ There will be tribulation and distress for every human being who does evil.

2 CORINTHIANS 5:10 / For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

- When we appear before the judgment seat in the throne room of the universe, the Judge will either declare us guilty, and we will pay for eternity for our sins, or He will declare us righteous, and we will be rewarded with eternal glory. The stakes could not be higher.

Q / 03

DEUTERONOMY 27:26 / “‘Cursed be anyone who does not confirm the words of this law by doing them.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’”

DEUTERONOMY 28:58-59 / If you are not careful to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that you may fear this glorious and awesome name, the Lord your God, ⁵⁹then the Lord will bring on you and your offspring extraordinary afflictions.

- These two passages from Deuteronomy show us that anyone who seeks to be justified by the law must keep all of the law perfectly! God’s standard is holy perfection.

ROMANS 2:13 / For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified.

- In order to be justified by the law, you have to keep the law—perfectly—without exception.

ROMANS 2:10-11 / As it is written: “None is righteous, no, not one; ¹¹no one understands; no one seeks for God.

ROMANS 3:23 / For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

- And yet all have sinned. No one is righteous. No one keeps the law perfectly. Therefore, no one can be justified by the law.

Q / 04

ROMANS 3:23-26 / For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God’s righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. ²⁶It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

- This is the greatest news in all the world! The Righteous Judge can remain just in his justification of sinners because the perfectly righteous Jesus was put forward as a wrath-appeasing sacrifice. The wages of sin is death, and Christ died to pay the wages of all who would believe in Him so that whoever receives this gift by faith receives the righteousness of Christ, and is therefore declared righteous in God’s sight.

Q / 05-07

ROMANS 6:1-13 / What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? ²By no means! How can we

who died to sin still live in it? ³Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. ⁵For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷For one who has died has been set free from sin. ⁸Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. ¹⁰For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. ¹¹So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. ¹²Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. ¹³Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness.

Q / 08

GALATIANS 2:12-15 / For before certain men came from James, he (Peter) was eating with the Gentiles; but when they came he drew back and separated himself, fearing the circumcision party. ¹³And the rest of the Jews acted hypocritically along with him, so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy. ¹⁴But when I saw that their conduct was not in step with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, “If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews?” ¹⁵We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners.

- Based on the context, the we in v15-16 refers to Paul, Peter/Cephas, Barnabas, and the other Jews caught up in the confrontation.
- Therefore, Paul is saying, “Peter, you know that a person is justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law. You know this. I know this. We all know this. So why are you living in such a way that makes these Gentiles feel like they have to

live like Jews to be saved? That is not the gospel! Because even we Jews cannot live according to the law in a way that leads to salvation. How could Gentiles ever hope to do so?"

- And of course, Paul knew he was a sinner, and that every Jew was a sinner, but the word *sinner* can sometimes be used in the Bible to refer to people who were morally or ritually unclean. This use of the word is common in the gospels when the Pharisees are upset with Jesus for eating with tax collectors and "sinners." By this definition, the term *sinner* refers to people who do not keep the law, and therefore should not be associated with because of their uncleanness. By this definition, all Gentiles are "sinners" because none of them keep the law.
- With this definition of *sinner* in mind, it is easy to see in the context of 2:11-14 why Paul compares "we Jews" to "Gentile sinners." According to the Mosaic Law, Gentiles are unclean and therefore sinners.

Q / 09

GALATIANS 2:15-17 / We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners; ¹⁶yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified. ¹⁷But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we too were found to be sinners, is Christ then a servant of sin? Certainly not!

- Paul's logic is not easy to follow, but the logic is profound and irrefutable. He is saying "Not following the Mosaic Law makes you a sinner by definition (2:15). And we know that one is declared righteous/not guilty of sin by faith in Christ, *not* by keeping the Mosaic Law. (2:16). Therefore, in our endeavor to be justified by Christ, we no longer keep the law because it is faith in Christ that saves, not the law. *But if you are saying it is still necessary to abide by the Mosaic Law (as your conduct would imply, Peter)*, then you are saying the gospel of Jesus Christ (the good news that justification is by faith and not law keeping) promotes sin among those who believe it. And this makes no sense because Christ died for sin, not to promote more sin."

Q / 10

GALATIANS 2:18 / For if I rebuild what I tore down, I prove myself to be a transgressor.

- What has been torn down? And what might be rebuilt? What this verse implies is massively important to the whole argument, and Paul will expound upon it later on in the letter. In summary, Paul is alluding to the fact that the Old Covenant (AKA the Mosaic Law) has been replaced by the New Covenant. This is important because the Old Covenant has very clear laws for Israel about circumcision, food regulations, the Sabbath, and other laws that kept Jews separate from Gentiles.

So, is Paul saying the Jews should now disobey and disregard holy, inspired Scripture? Well, that would be the case if the Old Covenant were "rebuilt." And if the Mosaic Law were still binding, then Paul and all others who put their faith in Christ rather than works of the law would be proven to be "transgressors."

- By posing the question this way, Paul is proving how illogical it is to continue to abide by the Mosaic Law. Because the Mosaic Law has in fact been "torn down." Jesus has inaugurated a New Covenant (Luke 22:20). And because the New Covenant has come, the Old Covenant is now obsolete (Hebrews 8:13).
- Therefore, Paul is essentially implying that requiring Gentiles to abide by Jewish food regulations as outlined in the Old Covenant would be a step backwards in redemptive history. It makes no sense. It is "not in step with the truth of the gospel" (2:14).
- This might lead some to ask, "Well then, what is the purpose of the law?" This is a great question, and Paul will unpack his answer later in the letter, starting in 3:19.

HEBREWS 8:13 / In speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

Q / 11

GALATIANS 2:19 / For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God.

ROMANS 7:1-4 / Or do you not know, brothers—for I am speaking to those who know the law—that the law is binding on a person only as long as he lives? ²For a married woman is bound by law to her husband while he lives, but if her husband dies she is released from the law of marriage.

³Accordingly, she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive. But if her husband dies, she is free from that law, and if she marries another man she is not an adulteress.

⁴Likewise, my brothers, you also have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead, in order that we may bear fruit for God.

- What Paul says briefly in Galatians 2:19, he explains in detail in Romans 7:1-4. A covenant is a binding, serious relationship established between two parties, supported by laws and expectations. You cannot flippantly enter in or out of covenant relationships. So if the Jews were in a covenant relationship with God, and this covenant required that they obey the Mosaic Law, how can Paul now say that the Jews do not need to keep the law?
- Here is the answer, and it is incredibly profound. If a spouse in a covenant relationship dies, the other spouse is no longer required to abide by



the laws and regulations of the covenant (such as faithfulness). But, if a member of the covenant relationship dies, then the covenant is no more, and he or she is free to enter into a covenant with another.

- So, how can the Jews no longer be required to abide by the Old Covenant regulations? Because they have died to the law, have been born again, and are now under the New Covenant that Jesus inaugurated through His death and resurrection!

Q / 12

GALATIANS 2:20 / I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

- And this is how Paul died! He didn't literally die, but through his faith union with Christ, his old self has been crucified with Christ. And yet the same power that raised Christ from the dead dwells in him, so that he too has been raised with Christ to walk in newness of life. It is no longer the Mosaic Law that determines how Paul lives, it is Christ who lives in him by faith.

GALATIANS 2:21 / I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.

- This is the punctuation mark of the whole argument. If we can be justified by keeping the Mosaic Law, then Christ's death is meaningless. Why would the precious Son of God spill his blood for sinners if justification could be attained any other way?
- But of course that is ridiculous. Salvation is only by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. Therefore, we must not live as if we can earn God's favor any other way (such as keeping the Mosaic Law) lest we nullify the grace of God, and imply that Christ died for no purpose. May it never be!

WEEK 04

Q / 01

ACTS 10:43-45 / To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.” ⁴⁴While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word. ⁴⁵And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles.

- The verses right before this (Acts 10:34-42) make it clear that Peter was preaching the gospel as the Holy Spirit fell on those who believed.

ACTS 15:7-9 / And after there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, “Brothers, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. ⁸And God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them, by giving them the Holy Spirit just as he did to us, ⁹and he made no distinction between us and them, having cleansed their hearts by faith.

EPHESIANS 1:13 / In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit.

Q / 02

ROMANS 8:5-9 / For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. ⁶For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. ⁸Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. ⁹You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.

- In Galatians 3:3, Paul asks, “Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?” To put the question another way, Paul is essentially saying, “It was the Spirit who caused you to be born again. Now that you are saved, how are you growing in godliness? Are you being sanctified by works or by the Spirit?”
- Romans 8:5-8 makes it abundantly clear that nothing good can come from the flesh! See Romans 8:1-14 for more context.

GALATIANS 5:16-18 / But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. ¹⁸But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

Q / 04

GENESIS 12:1-3 / Now the Lord said to Abram, “Go from your country and your

kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. ²And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

- In this passage, God promises to make a great nation out of Abraham, and He promises that through Abraham's offspring all the peoples of the earth will be blessed.

Q / 05

GENESIS 15:1-6 / After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision: "Fear not, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." ²But Abram said, "O Lord God, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" ³And Abram said, "Behold, you have given me no offspring, and a member of my household will be my heir." ⁴And behold, the word of the Lord came to him: "This man shall not be your heir; your very own son shall be your heir." ⁵And he brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be." ⁶And he believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness.

- In this passage, Abraham is really old, but he still does not have one single offspring. How can a great nation descend from Abraham if he doesn't have any kids? How can God bless all the nations of the earth through Abraham's offspring if he doesn't have any offspring and is too old to have children? Yet, Abraham believed God was powerful enough to do the impossible, and faithful enough to keep His promises, and it was by this faith God declared Abraham righteous.

Q / 06

GENESIS 16:1-2 / Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. She had a female Egyptian servant whose name was Hagar. ²And Sarai said to Abram, "Behold now, the Lord has prevented me from bearing children. Go in to my servant; it may be that I shall obtain children by her." And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai.

- Note that Genesis 16 comes right after Genesis 15, when Abraham was declared righteous!

JOSHUA 24:2-3 / And Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the Lord, the God of

Israel, 'Long ago, your fathers lived beyond the Euphrates, Terah, the father of Abraham and of Nahor; and they served other gods.

³Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the River and led him through all the land of Canaan, and made his offspring many.

- According to this passage, Abraham—the man declared righteous by God—was formerly an idol worshiper!

Q / 07

ROMANS 4:1-8 / What then shall we say was gained by Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh? ²For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. ³For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness." ⁴Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. ⁵And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness, 'just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works: ⁷"Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; ⁸blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin."

- Here in Romans 4:1-7, Paul elaborates on the same argument from Galatians 3.
- Abraham is the patriarch—the recipient of the promises—the one through whom God is going to save the world! In Romans 4:1, Paul asks, "Did Abraham earn any of these incredible blessings according to the flesh? Did he work his way into these blessings or did he receive them as a gift?"
- Paul answers his own question. Scripture says it explicitly: Abraham did not earn his salvation. He did not earn any of the blessings he received through works of the law. He received them by faith!
- To prove that Abraham was not an anomaly, Paul cites another hero of the faith. King David praised God for the blessing that it is possible for a sinner not to be treated according to his sin.
- The doctrine Paul is preaching is not new. Justification has always been *by faith*.

Q / 08-09

MATTHEW 3:7-9 / But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸Bear fruit in keeping with repentance. ⁹And do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father,' →

for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham.

- The Pharisees and Sadducees arrogantly assumed salvation was guaranteed to them because they were sons of Abraham (Jews). But John the Baptist tells them to repent because their ethnicity won't save them.

JOHN 8:37-39, 44 / I know that you are offspring of Abraham; yet you seek to kill me because my word finds no place in you. ³⁸I speak of what I have seen with my Father, and you do what you have heard from your father." ³⁹They answered him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would be doing the works Abraham did,..." ⁴⁴You are of your father the devil.

- In this passage, Jesus takes a sledgehammer to the Jews' assurance of salvation. They assumed they were saved because they were physical descendants of Abraham. And yet, Jesus says that who your physical father is is irrelevant; what matters is who your spiritual Father is. Based on the works of these Jews, it was clear that their *spiritual* father was the devil, not God.

ROMANS 4:9-12 / Is this blessing then only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? For we say that faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness. ¹⁰How then was it counted to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised. ¹¹He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted to them as well, ¹²and to make him the father of the circumcised who are not merely circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.

- The blessing Paul refers to in v9 is the blessing of an unrighteous person being declared righteous by God through faith and not through works. Paul then goes on to show that Abraham received this blessing before he was circumcised to show that justification before God is a gift that comes through faith, not through keeping the law. This is important because if Abraham can be justified before he was circumcised, then Gentiles can be justified without being circumcised/keeping the law as well.

Q / 10

GENESIS 12:3 / In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

GENESIS 15:6 / And he believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness.

- In order to understand Paul's argument, it is important to note that Genesis 12 comes *before* Genesis 15. In other words, when God promised to bless all the nations of the earth through Abraham (as the Scripture records in Genesis 12), the Scripture "foresaw" that God would declare Abraham righteous by faith a few decades later (as recorded in Genesis 15).
- Therefore, if we interpret Genesis 12 through the lens of Genesis 15:6, as Galatians 3, Romans 4, and James 2 teach us to do, we see the blessing that God promises to give to all nations through Abraham is like an acorn that eventually grows into the majestic oak tree that is the gospel of justification by faith.
- Therefore, as Paul argues, in order to receive the promises given to Abraham, one must share the faith of Abraham. For it is by faith that one is considered part of Abraham's spiritual family, not through law keeping or ethnicity.
- So, the fact that Abraham was justified by God before he even received the covenant of circumcision in Genesis 17 proves Paul's argument that justification has always been and always will be by faith.

WEEK 05

Q / 01

DEUTERONOMY 27:26 / "Cursed be anyone who does not confirm the words of this law by doing them." And all the people shall say, 'Amen.'"

DEUTERONOMY 28:58-59 / "If you are not careful to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that you may fear this glorious and awesome name, the Lord your God, ⁵⁹then the Lord will bring on you and your offspring extraordinary afflictions, afflictions severe and lasting, and sicknesses grievous and lasting.

- Notice the comprehensive statements in these verses, like all and everyone.

Q / 02

1 KINGS 8:46 / "If they sin against you—for there is no one who does not sin."

PSALMS 14:1-3 / "The fool says in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds; there is none who does good. ²The Lord looks down from heaven on the children of man, to see if there are any who understand, who seek after

God. ³They have all turned aside; together they have become corrupt; there is none who does good, not even one."

PROVERBS 20:9 / Who can say, "I have made my heart pure; I am clean from my sin"?

ECCLESIASTES 7:20 / Surely there is not a righteous man on earth who does good and never sins.

ISAIAH 1:5-6 / The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. ⁶From the sole of the foot even to the head, there is no soundness in it.

JEREMIAH 17:9 / The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?

ROMANS 3:23 / For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

- Paul does not insert a statement that no one keeps the law perfectly because it is so obvious that it goes without saying. But if we miss what is obviously implied, we will miss the thrust of Paul's argument.
- Therefore, the logic of v10 goes something like this: (1) If you rely on works of the law, you will be cursed (not saved). Why? Because (2) everyone who does not keep every law perfectly for their entire life is a lawbreaker. Lawbreakers are under a curse. And (3) No one comes even close to keeping the law perfectly. Therefore, "all who rely on works of the law are under a curse."

Q /
04-05

HABAKKUK 2:4 / The righteous shall live by faith.

- What is meant by "the righteous shall live by faith"?
- The first key to interpretation is to recognize that to be righteous is synonymous with being justified before God. For to be "justified before God" means that the Judge of all the earth has declared you "righteous."
- The next key is to remember Paul is contrasting the law with faith. They are opposites. So why can't anyone be justified by the law? Because Habakkuk 2:4 is clear: justification is by faith.
- What remains is determining the meaning of "shall live." What does this mean? The biggest clue is the phrase "justified before God." The fact that justification is "before God" evokes the picture of Judgment Day, when we will appear in the heavenly throne room before the Judge of all the earth to give an account of everything we have ever done. Those who are declared righteous will be ushered into everlasting life, and those who are guilty will go to everlasting punishment. Therefore, "to be justified before God" is a present declaration of a future reality.
- Understanding what justification is helps us interpret what is meant by "shall live." Notice the

future tense again. This helps us see that what is meant by "shall live" is eternal life. The righteous shall be saved by faith.

ROMANS 1:16-17 / For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. ¹⁷For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."

- Galatians 3:11 is not the only time Paul quotes Habakkuk 2:4. In fact, he quotes the verse in his thesis statement for the book of Romans. As Paul develops his thesis throughout Romans, it is clear what is meant by "shall live."

ROMANS 3:23-26 / For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. ²⁶It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

- By faith we receive the gift of justification, redemption, and propitiation. By faith in Jesus, God righteously declares unrighteous sinners to be righteous! That is, by faith we receive the gift of eternal life!

Q /
06-07

LEVITICUS 18:4-5 / You shall follow my rules and keep my statutes and walk in them. I am the Lord your God. ⁵You shall therefore keep my statutes and my rules; if a person does them, he shall live by them: I am the Lord.

- Notice the same phrase "shall live." Paul quotes Leviticus 18:5 right after Habakkuk 2:4 in order to highlight the contrast. One promises eternal life through faith, the other through observing the law. The law is about doing, not believing. The path to life is through performance, not faith.
- The thrust of this quote might fall flat unless one remembers what Paul proved in 3:10! Therefore, we must take each piece of Paul's argument and see how it all fits together.
- In summary: Everyone who does not obey every iota of every law for every second of their life is under God's curse. And no one keeps God's law perfectly. Therefore, the law cannot justify. But, good news! The Old Testament itself declares eternal life can be gifted to those who have faith. Righteousness is attainable through faith. Observing the law is about doing, not believing. →

Q / 08

- And to behold the way God has made, we turn to the next verse.
- It could be easy to think that only Jews were under the curse of the law, but it is important to remember that Galatians was written to Galatian Gentiles. So 3:13 would not make much sense in an argument meant for Gentiles if the us did not include them. And as we can see from the verses below, Paul certainly believed that Christ died for both Jews and Gentiles.

GALATIANS 1:3-5 / Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, “who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, ⁵to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

- Paul says in his introduction to the Galatian Gentiles that Christ “gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age.” The language is very similar to 3:13.

GALATIANS 2:20 / And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

- In this verse, Paul is speaking in the first person, but he speaks about himself as a representative of all Christians. Christ loves you, and he loves me, which is why he gave himself up for you and for me!
- But the question remains: if Christ died to redeem Jews and Gentiles from the curse of the law, how are Gentiles under the curse of the law? Romans 2 gives us a clue.

ROMANS 2:14-16 / For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. ¹⁵They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them ¹⁶on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.

- In other words, even though Gentiles do not have the Law of Moses, they still have God’s law written on their hearts. The fact that everyone has a conscience is proof of this. And when Gentiles break the law written on their hearts, they are guilty and deserving of wrath, just like Jews. Therefore, both Jews and Gentiles are guilty of law-breaking, and both Jews and Gentiles are in need of salvation from the wrath that they deserve.

Q / 09

GALATIANS 3:13 / Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree.”

GALATIANS 3:10 / For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, “Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them.”

- This is beautiful. Paul has already established that the punishment for breaking God’s law is being cursed by God. In the context of Deuteronomy 27, from which Paul quotes in Galatians 3:10, the threat of God’s curse is the threat of being exiled from the promised land, the land of blessing where God dwells. And as we know from many places in the New Testament (see Romans 4:13 or Hebrews 11, for instance), the promised land in the Old Testament is a shadow or a type that points to the New Heavens and the New Earth (the ultimate promised land). Therefore, being cursed by God and exiled from the promised land for breaking his law was just a precursor of eternal judgment, where the cursed disobedient will spend eternity in hell.
- As Paul also established, the bad news gets worse because all have sinned and therefore all are under God’s curse.
- This brings us to the glorious good news of the gospel! Christ became a curse for us! How? By being crucified on a cross as a substitute for our sins. As it is written, “cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree.” And by taking the wrath of God upon Himself in our place, He has redeemed/ rescued/saved us from the curse that we deserve for our sin.

Q / 10

GALATIANS 3:8-9 / And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, “In you shall all the nations be blessed.” ⁹So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.

- The opposite of being cursed by God is being blessed by God. We all deserve to be cursed, and yet God promised to bless all the nations of the earth through Abraham? How? By faith in Jesus Christ! This is how the gospel was preached beforehand to Abraham. In a fallen sin-cursed world full of lawbreakers who deserve eternal wrath, God promised to bless people from every tribe, tongue, and nation.
- The acorn of this gospel that was revealed to Abraham is now a massive oak tree in full bloom. The oak tree is the good that Jews and Gentiles can be justified before God through faith in the atoning death of Jesus Christ.

Q / 11

GALATIANS 3:2-5 / Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of

the law or by hearing with faith? ³Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? ⁴Did you suffer so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain? ⁵Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith.

- Ever since Galatians 2:15, it has been clear that Paul is talking about justification by faith. And through a series of Old Testament quotations, he has proven that justification has always been by faith—in fact, even Abraham was justified by faith. And this makes sense in the context of a letter written to Galatians who have been deceived into thinking they must be circumcised and keep the law of Moses to be considered a child of Abraham (i.e., part of the people of God).
- What has seemed out of place up to this point is Paul's mention of the Holy Spirit in 3:1-5. Why does Paul bring up the Spirit in the middle of a conversation about justification? And why does he bring it up again in v14?
- The answer is subtle, yet profound. It is important to remember that justification is a present declaration of a future reality. To be justified (now) before God means that in the future (on Judgment Day), God will declare us righteous. The reason this is important is that the Holy Spirit is the firstfruits of our salvation. In other words, the presence of the Spirit in the life of a believer in the present age proves that they will be justified before God on the last day!
- There are lots of verses that associate the Holy Spirit with the firstfruits of our future salvation.

EPHESIANS 1:13-14 / In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

- The present gift of the Spirit is the down payment guarantee of our future salvation!

ROMANS 8:22-23 / For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. ²³And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

- The Spirit is the firstfruits of the plentiful harvest of salvation that is coming for all who are being saved.

JOEL 2:28, 29, 31 / And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh... ²⁹Even on the male and

female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit... ³¹The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes.

- Notice the Spirit is poured out (which was fulfilled at Pentecost in Acts 2) and then the Day of the Lord/judgement day will come.
- All of these verses prove the Spirit is the guarantee of future things to come. Therefore, for Paul to insert the Spirit into a conversation about justification makes perfect sense. The Scripture promises the righteous shall live by faith. Those who have the Spirit are those who will inherit eternal life. Therefore, if you receive the Spirit by faith and not by works, it proves that justification is by faith and not by works!
- This Holy Spirit is the firstfruits of the promise of the blessing of Abraham, which will eventually blossom into eternal life in the New Heavens and the New Earth. And this blessing is available, not to Jews only, and not to perfect law-keepers only, but rather, this blessing is available to all who put their faith in Jesus, who redeemed us from the curse by becoming a curse for us so that we could receive the blessing of Abraham by faith.

WEEK 06

Q /
01-02

GENESIS 15:12-13, 18 / As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell on Abram. And behold, dreadful and great darkness fell upon him. ¹³Then the Lord said to Abram, “Know for certain that your offspring will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs and will be servants there, and they will be afflicted for four hundred years....¹⁸On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, “To your offspring I give this land.

- In Genesis 12, God promises to give Abraham lots of land, lots of offspring, and lots of blessings. In Genesis 15, God confirms these promises with a covenant.
- Genesis 15 makes it clear that the fulfillment of these promises will be dependent on God and His faithfulness, not Abraham's.
- It also reveals that Abraham's offspring will sojourn in a land not their own for 400 years. Therefore, there will be times when it looks like the promises are not being fulfilled.

EXODUS 19:4-6 / “You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. ⁵Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; “and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” →

- Note that in Exodus 20, God gives the Ten Commandments, which is the summary of the law. It is very clear that the blessings of the Mosaic Covenant were conditional upon Israel's obedience to the law.
- Deuteronomy 27-28 makes this very clear, as well, as Moses unpacks the blessings that come from obeying the Mosaic Covenant/Law and the curses that come from disobedience.
- Seeing this distinction between the Law and the promises to Abraham is very important to Paul's argument. If God already promised to bless all the nations of the earth through Abraham, and those promises are based on God's faithfulness, not Abraham's, then it does not make any sense for God to add a bunch of laws 430 years later to all of a sudden make the fulfillment of His gospel promises conditional upon human obedience.
- Clearly, obedience to the law is not the means by which the promises to Abraham were to be fulfilled.
- So this begs the question: Why then the law?

Q / 03

ROMANS 3:20 / For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

ROMANS 7:7 / What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin.

- These two verses make it clear the law is like a mirror that helps people see how sinful they are.
- Compare this idea with Galatians 3:19 and 21-23. Paul says the law cannot produce righteousness; instead, it exposes our unrighteousness!
- So why was the law given? Verses 22 and 24 are key. If the law helps people see how sinful they are, then the purpose of the law is *not* to convince people to try to earn their salvation through the law. Instead, the purpose was to convince people that faith in Christ is their only possible hope for justification. The law helps us understand the bad news of the gospel so that we are prepared to understand how gracious the good news of the gospel really is.
- But now that Christ has come, we no longer need the law because it has served its temporary purpose. Paul compares the law to a "guardian" or babysitter. Some babysitters help kids realize how great they have it with their parents. And when the parents come home, the babysitter is no longer needed. This is why the law was given—not as the path to inherit the promises, but as a mirror to show that the only way is by grace through faith, not by works.

ROMANS 4:14-16 / For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void.¹⁵ For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression.¹⁶ That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise

Q / 04

may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring.

GENESIS 12:1-3 / Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you.² And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.³ I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

- In this passage, God makes some very clear promises to Abram/Abraham. He promises to make a great nation out of him, which implies giving him lots of offspring who inhabit lots of land. And he promises to bless all the families of the earth through Abraham. A concise way to summarize the promises to Abraham is land, offspring, and blessing.

GALATIANS 3:8-9 / And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "In you shall all the nations be blessed."⁹ So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.

GALATIANS 3:14 / So that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.

ROMANS 4:13 / For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith.

HEBREWS 11:8-10, 16 / By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.⁹ By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise.¹⁰ For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God...¹⁶ But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.

- God makes promises to Abraham at the beginning of the Bible, and if we fast forward to

Q /
05-06

the end, we see that what God originally promised to Abraham is like an acorn that grows and grows into what we know as the oak tree of gospel promises.

- As we see from the passages above, the way God planned to bless all the nations of the earth through Abraham is by making a way through Abraham's offspring to be justified by faith.
- As we see from Romans 4 and Hebrews 11, the land God promised to Abraham and his offspring is not limited to the promised land in Canaan, it is actually the New Heavens and New Earth.
- Therefore, ultimately, the promises made to Abraham turn out to be the blessing of eternal life in heaven.

GENESIS 3:15 / “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”

- The first gospel promise in the Bible sets the expectation that all God's gospel promises will be fulfilled through a singular offspring.

GENESIS 22:17-18 / I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, ¹⁸and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.

- Here in Genesis 22, it was revealed to Abraham that the blessing to the nations would come through his singular offspring.
- For more evidence, see Genesis 49:8-10 and Numbers 24:17, which show that the singular offspring promised Savior will come through from the tribe of Judah.
- Therefore, by the end of Genesis, readers know that the promised Messiah is a singular offspring who will come from the line of the woman, Abraham, and Judah.
- Eventually it is revealed that the Savior of the world will be a son of David. See 2 Samuel 7:12-13 or Isaiah 9:6-7 for a couple more examples.

PSALM 72:17 / May his name endure forever, his fame continue as long as the sun! May people be blessed in him, all nations call him blessed!

- As all of Psalm 72 makes abundantly clear, the blessing promised to Abraham will be ushered in through a singular son of David.

MATTHEW 1:1 / The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

- All of this is why the New Testament begins with this verse—to show that Jesus is the singular promised offspring from the line of Abraham and David.

Q / 07

GALATIANS 3:7 / Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham.

- As we have said, who the true sons and daughters of Abraham are is of massive importance. It is another way of saying who is saved, and who are the people of God that will receive His gospel promises? These are different ways of saying the same things.
- With Galatians 3:7 in mind, remember what Paul says in 3:16: Christ is the true offspring of Abraham. This is a key thought we need to keep in mind as we read the end of chapter 3.

GALATIANS 3:26-29 / For in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith.

²⁷For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. ²⁸There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

- This passage wraps up the whole argument, and it is amazing! What we need to notice is the language of union with Christ. Paul says we are “in Christ,” and “put on Christ,” and “are Christ's.” This is “union with Christ” language.
- How is someone united to Christ? By faith. Faith is what unites us to Christ. Why is that important? Because Christ is the true offspring of Abraham.
- How do we receive the gospel promises given to Abraham and his offspring? It is not through being a Jew (a physical offspring of Abraham), and it is not by keeping the law—it is by being united to Abraham's true offspring by faith.
- If we are united to Christ, then we are one with Christ, and if we are one with Christ, we are part of Abraham's family and heirs of the gospel promises.

Q / 08

GALATIANS 3:8-9 / And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, “In you shall all the nations be blessed.” ⁹So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.

- As we have already seen, the blessing of Abraham includes the blessing that justification/being declared righteous before God for all of eternity can be gifted through faith.

GALATIANS 3:14 / So that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.

- According to this passage, the blessing of Abraham also includes the promised Holy Spirit who indwells every believer who has been declared righteous by faith. →

- Also see 3:18. In the Old Testament, the inheritance associated with the Abrahamic promise referred to the promised land. But as we have seen in the New Testament, this is expanded to include the New Heavens and the New Earth (Romans 4:13). In other words, heaven is the believer's inheritance.
- 3:21 implies that the blessing of Abraham includes the blessing of eternal life.
- 3:26 helps us see that being united to Christ by faith does not just make us sons of Abraham, it also makes us sons of God! For according to the flesh, Christ is an offspring of Abraham, but he is also the eternal Son of God!
- And Galatians 4:4-7 expands on this amazing reality. Christ came to free us from slavery so that we could be adopted as sons!
- And 3:26-29 helps us see that one of the gospel blessings includes union with Christ, which implies an intimate relationship with the Son of God.

WEEK 07

Q /
01-02

GALATIANS 3:23 / Now before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed.

- According to this verse, being under the law is like being held captive or imprisoned.

GALATIANS 4:3 / In the same way we also, when we were children, were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world.

- Scholars debate what this means. It could refer to demonic forces, or elements of creation, or aspects of the old creation, which would include the Mosaic Law. The point is that slavery is what characterizes people before Christ sets them free.
- Also consider 4:8-10. It would seem that Paul is comparing the pagan past of the Galatians with their desire to go under the Mosaic Law (by observing days and months and seasons and years according to the Mosaic Law), and he compares both of them to slavery! Both paganism and the law are just two different types of slavery.

JOHN 8:31-36 / So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, ³²and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." ³³They answered him, "We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, 'You will become free?'" ³⁴Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin." ³⁵The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. ³⁶So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

- This passage sheds a lot of light on what Paul is saying. As Jesus makes clear, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin. This is why both paganism and the law are merely different types of slavery. Because neither one can free you from sin! The law does not have the power to free you from sin, and worshiping idols definitely does not have the power to free you from sin. Therefore, every person who has ever lived is born in slavery to sin, because all practice sin, and whether you are Jew or Gentile, your religion is powerless to set you free from sin. There is only one way to be set free from sin.
- Specifically notice the word *redeem* in Galatians 4:5. *Redemption* is a word used to describe being purchased from slavery for freedom. And as John 8 and Galatians 4 both make clear, it is the Son who sets us free from slavery to sin.

ROMANS 8:2-3 / For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. ³For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do.

- The law cannot set you free from slavery to sin, and neither can idols. Only the Son of God can set you free! And if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

Q / 03

ROMANS 8:14-17 / For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. ¹⁵For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" ¹⁶The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

- It is one thing to go from slavery to freedom, but it is an even greater thing to go from a slave to an adopted son. The good news of the gospel is so good that through faith in Christ, we can go from being a slave to sin and an enemy of God to being adopted into God's family and made an heir of God and a co-heir with Christ. This is amazing grace indeed!
- The Holy Spirit dwells in the heart of every believer confirming that this news that sounds too good to be true is actually true. The Spirit testifies with our spirit that we are indeed sons of God who will one day inherit all the gospel promises and reign with Christ as an adopted child of God for all of eternity.

Q /
07-08

GENESIS 16:1-4 / And Sarai said to Abram, "Behold now, the Lord has prevented me from bearing children. Go in to my servant; it may be that I shall obtain

children by her.” And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai. ³So, after Abram had lived ten years in the land of Canaan, Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar the Egyptian, her servant, and gave her to Abram her husband as a wife. ⁴And he went in to Hagar, and she conceived.

GENESIS 17:15-17 / And God said to Abraham, “As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. ¹⁶I will bless her, and moreover, I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall become nations; kings of peoples shall come from her.” ¹⁷Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed and said to himself, “Shall a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?”

GENESIS 21:1-2 / The Lord visited Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did to Sarah as he had promised. ²And Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age at the time of which God had spoken to him.

- Of course every time a new image bearer is conceived, it is a miraculous work of God. But there was nothing extra miraculous about Abraham and Hagar having a child. Hagar was of childbearing age; it was not a result of faith. They conceived a child in the strength of their own flesh according to their own works.
- But there is something extraordinarily miraculous about 100 year old Abraham and 90 year Sarah having a son. This had nothing to do with their works or effort or performance and it had everything to do with God being faithful to His promises.
- Just as Abraham could not usher in the promises of God through his works according to the flesh (by sleeping with Hagar), the works of the law cannot usher in God's gospel promises either.
- Instead, those who rely on works of the law (present day Jerusalem representing those who still live under the Mosaic Covenant) are still in slavery to the law, just like Hagar and her children. Their works can't free them and usher in the promises anymore than Hagar did.

Q / 09

GALATIANS 3:2-3 / Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? ³Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?

- Remember, Abraham had a son with Hagar through works of the flesh.

GALATIANS 3:18 / For if the inheritance comes by the law, it no longer comes by

promise; but God gave it to Abraham by a promise.

GALATIANS 3:21-22 / For if a law had been given that could give life, then righteousness would indeed be by the law. ²²But the Scripture imprisoned everything under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

- These are just a few of the many examples from Galatians 3 that remind us that the way we inherit the gospel promise is not through our works, but rather through faith in Christ's work.
- Abraham and Hagar are a classic example of taking matters into your own hands and trying to make God's promises come true through works of the flesh, while the son that was born to Abraham through Sarah is a classic example of God fulfilling His promises despite man's inability to earn them through works.
- These two examples are perfect allegories for the difference between the law of Moses and the promises made to Abraham. Just as Abraham had two options to choose between in order to receive the promised son—he could work for it in his flesh, or he could trust in God's promise—likewise, we have two ways we can earn God's promises of salvation—we can rely on our works of the law according to the flesh, or we can rely on God's promises.
- As we have seen time and time again throughout Galatians, Abraham's true offspring are those who believe in God's promises, not those who try to earn them through the law.
- Although Jerusalem ought to be the capital city of God's people, it currently is the capital city of those who are still under slavery. But thanks be to God, the heavenly city that awaits all of God's people, whether Jew or Gentile, is the New Jerusalem in the New Creation.
- For more on the New Jerusalem being the capital city of God's people in heaven, compare Galatians 4:25-26 with Hebrews 11:10 and 16, Hebrews 12:22-23, and Revelation 21:1-2.

WEEK 08

Q /
01-02

GALATIANS 2:16 / Yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified.

GALATIANS 2:21 / I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose. →

GALATIANS 3:10 / For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, “Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them.”

JAMES 2:10 / For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it.

- Let's work backwards through these cross references. You are either a lawbreaker or a law-keeper. There is no such thing as partially guilty, only guilty or non guilty. Everyone sins—therefore, everyone is guilty of being a lawbreaker. And everyone who breaks the law is under God's curse, because that is the penalty for breaking the law. Thus, everyone who relies on works of the law is under a curse.
- Here is the most important part: if you rely on works of the law, you are not relying on Christ's work through His death and resurrection. To accept circumcision is to say, “No thank you,” to the way of salvation that God has provided through Christ, and to try to pave your own way through your own works.
- We cannot reject the grace of God through Christ and at the same time believe in it! We either put our faith in Christ and Christ alone, or we put our faith in our works. To choose one is to not choose the other.
- Therefore, to think we can add anything to our righteousness through our works is to cut ourselves off from the grace of God through Christ.

Q / 03

GALATIANS 2:16 / Yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ.

GALATIANS 3:8 / And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, “In you shall all the nations be blessed.”

GALATIANS 3:11 / Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for “The righteous shall live by faith.”

GALATIANS 3:24 / So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith.

- As Paul has made clear over and over again, being declared righteous before God can only come through faith. But Galatians 5:5 emphasizes three things about this gospel reality that are worth focusing on! (1) The Christian life is not merely begun by faith, it is sustained by faith all the way through. (2) Our faith is sustained and empowered by the Spirit. (3) Our faith that is sustained by the Spirit helps us look forward to the day when those who have been declared righteous by God will be officially made righteous by God.

GALATIANS 3:2-5 / Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? ³Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? ⁴Did you suffer so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain? ⁵Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith.

- This passage alludes to the fact that the Christian life is by faith through the power of the Spirit from beginning to end. At no point does a believer graduate beyond the need for faith.
- What is specifically unique about 5:5 is the fact that the Spirit sustains our faith until the firstfruits of our salvation blossom into the full reality of comprehensive righteousness. “For He who began a good work in us will bring it to completion on the day of Christ Jesus” (Philippians 1:6). This is the hope we have, and faith in this hope is sustained by the Spirit who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it (Ephesians 1:14).

Q / 04

- According to 5:7, the Galatians were faithfully growing in their Christian walk until the false teachers came along and discouraged them from obeying the truth of the Word of God.
- 5:8 adds that the false teaching the Galatians were considering is not of the Lord, the one who created them, called them, and loves them.
- According to 5:9, the false teaching that seems small and inconsequential is actually having a dramatic (negative) effect on the entire congregation of the Galatians church.
- 5:10 then adds that the false teachers are “troubling” the Galatians, and 5:11 implies they were slandering Paul's reputation and turning the Galatians against him.

Q / 05

- What the ESV translates to say “bear the penalty” could literally be translated “bear the judgment.” Therefore, when Paul references what the false teachers have coming to them, he has Divine Judgment Day in mind.
- Here are a few passages that help fill in the picture.

ROMANS 2:5-9 / But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed. “He will render to each one according to his works:” ⁷to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; ⁸but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury. ⁹There will be

tribulation and distress for every human being who does evil, the Jew first and also the Greek.

2 CORINTHIANS 5:10 / For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

JAMES 3:1 / Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness.

- This is more than a slap on the wrist. Paul is saying the false teachers will face the wrath of God/bear the penalty of divine judgment. Not just because their false gospel cannot atone for their sin, but also because of how their false teaching was causing the Galatians to stumble.
- Paul's strong words for them do not stop there, as his frustration about the situation is clearly expressed in 5:12.

Q / 06

- Paul's strong words for the false teachers appropriately match the intensity of the situation for multiple reasons.
- Starting with 5:12, this is not an immature jab or random outburst of anger. As Matthew Harmon makes clear in his commentary on Galatians, the comment is connected to the issue at hand. If the false teachers think that circumcision is so great and helpful, then why stop with the foreskin? By egging on the false teachers to cut more off, Paul is exposing the ridiculousness of their teaching that they would trust in circumcision over the atoning blood of Christ.
- As hard as it is to fathom, what Paul says in 5:12 is not nearly as painful and devastating as what 5:10b implies. So are his words over the top? Can't they all just agree to disagree?
- This passage has a lot of the same elements as 1:6-9. Comparing the two passages will help emphasize the seriousness of the situation.

GALATIANS 1:6-9 / I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—⁷not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. ⁸But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed. ⁹As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed.

- As we have seen throughout the letter, there is only one gospel that saves. The distorted gospel being taught by the false teachers was no gospel at all. Therefore, everyone who teaches it and

believes it will face eternal condemnation. The stakes could not be higher; therefore, the situation deserves the strongest language possible.

- What cannot be missed in all of this is Galatians 5:10a. Paul does not view the Galatians as a lost cause. In fact, he has confidence that the Lord will preserve them! This is amazing, and it is another reason for the strong language. The Galatians need to know the danger they are in. Paul is doing everything he can to make it clear so that they repent and stay tethered to Christ.

Q / 07

- Galatians 5:13 is one of many examples that led the great reformer Martin Luther to write his epic short classic, *The Freedom of the Christian*. In this very important (and very short, readable) work, Luther argues that (1) A Christian is a free lord of everything and subject to no one (because Christians are children of the King of the universe!). And (2) A Christian is a willing servant of everything, and subject to everyone (because we are saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone, who, though He is the eternal Son of God, came not to be served but to serve. And this love for Christ and gratitude for our free salvation spurs us on to love and good works as a response to the free grace we have received).
- In an explanation of the apparent contradiction of being “freed to serve” as we see in Galatians 5:13, Luther explains, “Thus, it is clear that only faith, on the basis of pure grace through Christ and his word, makes a person completely upright and saves him. No work, no command is necessary for a Christian for salvation, but the Christian is free from all commands. On the basis of pure freedom, without any thought of gain, he does everything that he does, seeking neither benefit nor salvation. For he already has everything that he needs and is saved through his faith and God's grace. No, indeed, he wants only to do what is pleasing to God” (pp.67).
- Wow. That is the key. If we serve one another out of an obligation or desire to earn favor with God and man, then we are not free. We are bound by the favor we are seeking to earn. On the other hand, if we demand others serve us rather than living a life in service to others, we are not free either. We are merely slaves to our passions.
- But if we rest in the reality that we are counted completely righteous before God by faith through pure grace, not as a result of our works (such as serving), then we are truly free to serve others. Not in an effort to earn or impress or pay back a debt, but in joy and love for God and neighbor. That is true gospel freedom!

Q / 08

- This is a two-part question, and in order to consider the second part, we must first understand the answer to the first part. So, how does loving your neighbor fulfill the whole law?
- First we need to realize Paul is teaching what Jesus taught.

MATTHEW 22:35-40 / And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him.

³⁶“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” ³⁷And he said to him, “You →

shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ³⁸This is the great and first commandment. ³⁹And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. ⁴⁰On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”

- Jesus cites two commands—not one—but in a more concise way, Paul is still saying what Jesus is saying. Because in Galatians 5:14, Paul quotes Leviticus 19:18.

LEVITICUS 19:18 / “You shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord.”

- In other words, love for your neighbor is rooted in who God is. To love your neighbor is to love the Lord. And to love the Lord is to love your neighbor. You cannot love one without loving the other.

1 JOHN 4:20-21 / If anyone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. ²¹And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.

- It is important to point out that Jesus, Paul, and John are not just picking and choosing their favorite commands. What they are doing is rightly interpreting the law. For the law itself is simply an extended exposition of how to love God and neighbor.
- We can see this clearly in the Ten Commandments (which is in itself a summary of the law). The first four commands focus on loving God, and the last six focus on loving your neighbor. If you love God and neighbor, you will fulfill the whole law.
- As Paul makes clear in a similar passage to Galatians 5

ROMANS 13:8-10 / Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. ⁹For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,” and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

¹⁰Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

- With this in mind, let’s consider the second half of the question. It is important to realize Paul is not against the content of the law. He says in Romans 7:12 that the law is holy and righteous and good.
- What he is against is trusting in the law as a means of earning righteousness before God. For the law cannot produce righteousness in anyone, it only exposes the unrighteousness that is already there.

- But the good news of the gospel is that through our faith union in Christ, we have been raised to walk in the newness of life! We have been given new hearts that are able to obey, and we are indwelt by the Holy Spirit who empowers us to love God and neighbor (as we will consider more of in the next section of Galatians).
- Even Moses talked about the day when this would be possible for God’s people to love Him and their neighbor, and the day Moses spoke of was not under the Mosaic Covenant, but through the coming of the New Covenant.

DEUTERONOMY 30:6 / And the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.

- This is what leads Paul to say later on in Galatians.

GALATIANS 6:15 / For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.

- The circumcised heart that Moses prophesied about is the same thing as the new creation Paul speaks about here. What matters is not the removal of the foreskin, but the removal of the heart of stone that cannot obey God, that is replaced with a new heart/circumcised heart, which happens when a person is born again/made a new creation.
- Therefore, by the power of the Spirit, in the freedom that Christ has purchased through the gospel, we can love God and love our neighbor, not in an effort to earn our righteousness, but as a response to the free grace we have received through Christ! The gospel both frees us and empowers us to love one another.

Q / 09

- Trying to earn your salvation through works is often called legalism. At the opposite end of the spectrum is an equally false and dangerous ditch one can fall into—that is, to assume that the good news that we are saved by grace alone is a license to sin. This is a classic twisting of the gospel that Satan loves to propagate, and the flesh loves to believe.
- Paul addresses it in Romans 3 and Romans 6.

ROMANS 3:8 / And why not do evil that good may come?—as some people slanderously charge us with saying.

ROMANS 6:1 / What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?

ROMANS 6:15-16 / What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! ¹⁶Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads

to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?

- See the rest of Romans 6 for more context.
- Therefore, the good news that we are saved by grace through faith is not a license to sin. It is the good news that we are empowered to love and obey by the Spirit who indwells us, not in an effort to earn, but as a free response that is fueled by love.

WEEK 09

Q / 01

- Each of these cross references uses at least one of the same words from Paul's list of the works of the flesh. Allow each reference to help round out your understanding of each as you think about how each work is the opposite of loving God and neighbor.

EPHESIANS 5:3 / But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints.

COLOSSIANS 3:5 / Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

ROMANS 1:24 / Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves.

EPHESIANS 4:19 / They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity.

1 PETER 4:3 / For the time that is past suffices for doing what the Gentiles want to do, living in sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry.

- Consider for something related to the fleshly work of sorcery

ACTS 19:19 / And a number of those who had practiced magic arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted the value of them and found it came to fifty thousand pieces of silver.

JAMES 4:4 / You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

ROMANS 1:29 / They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness.

ROMANS 13:13 / Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy.

EPHESIANS 4:31 / Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.

PHILIPPIANS 2:3 / Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.

- Selfish ambition translates as *rivalries* in Galatians 5:20
- If we recall our study from last week, loving God and our neighbor is the fulfillment of the law. Paul has also made it abundantly clear that a person cannot achieve righteousness/obey the law through works of the flesh. But what Galatians 5 makes clear is that works in the flesh produce the exact opposite of loving God and our neighbor!
- People who are sexually immoral, impure, and sensual do not love their neighbor. They are merely using their neighbor for their own fleshly gratification. By definition, it is impossible for any sexual act to be loving that is outside of God's design of one man and one woman in the covenant of marriage.
- In addition to not loving one's neighbor, it is not loving God, for it is choosing to gratify one's flesh above obedience to God. Which by definition makes every sexual act outside of marriage idolatrous.
- These are just a few examples of many regarding how the works of the flesh are the opposite of loving God and our neighbor.

Q / 02

- Paul refers to the "desires" of the flesh three times in 5:16-17 and another time in 5:24. Yet, he refers to the works of the flesh that are "evident" in 5:19. Why the change in words?
- Desires are not evident, desires are internal. What makes desires evident is outward actions. What we do reveals what we desire.
- Jesus taught on this reality.

MATTHEW 7:17-20 / So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. ¹⁹Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰Thus you will recognize them by their fruits. →

MATTHEW 12:33-34 / “Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad, for the tree is known by its fruit. ³⁴You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.

- These passages are incredibly important for helping people understand why they do what they do. The outward/evident fruits of people's actions flow from the internal (not evident) desires of the heart.
- Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. What is in you will come out of you.
- Therefore, what Paul is saying is the outward works of the flesh that are evident are the result of inward fleshly desires. The desires produce the actions.

Q / 03

- The concept of being an heir or receiving an inheritance has already been mentioned a few times in Galatians.

GALATIANS 3:18 / For if the inheritance comes by the law, it no longer comes by promise; but God gave it to Abraham by a promise.

GALATIANS 3:29 / And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

GALATIANS 4:7 / So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

- And as we have seen, being an heir of the gospel promises is related to the idea of being an adopted child of God who is saved for eternal life in heaven.
- Therefore, receiving an inheritance in the Kingdom of God is another way of talking about being saved.
- As we have seen, the heirs of the gospel promises are those who put their faith in Christ! Not those who trust in works of the flesh. Therefore, it is to be expected that those who trust in the flesh and live fleshly lives will not inherit what only those who are indwelt by the Spirit will inherit.
- Paul says something similar in 1 Corinthians 6:9-11

1 CORINTHIANS 6:9-11 / Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, ¹⁰nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were

justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

Q / 04

GALATIANS 5:13-14 / For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.

¹⁴For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

- As we saw last week, the whole law is fulfilled in the one command to love your neighbor as yourself. For loving your neighbor flows from loving God, and loving God and neighbor is the fulfillment of the law.
- As we saw in the previous *Zoom Out*, the works of the flesh produce a life that is the opposite of loving God and loving neighbor.
- Therefore, we should expect the fruit of the Spirit to produce a life that is loving to God and neighbor.
- Consider these few passages that expound on what the fruit of the Spirit looks like in the life of a believer.

1 CORINTHIANS 13:4-7 / Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant ⁵or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; ⁶it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. ⁷Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

EPHESIANS 4:1-3 / I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, ²with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, ³eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

COLOSSIANS 3:12-15 / Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, ¹³bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. ¹⁵And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body.

- These are just a few examples of many from the New Testament that demonstrate how the fruit of the Spirit empowers a person to love his or her neighbor (and God by implication).

Q / 05

- Notice how these verses describe people who live in a drastically different way from the works of the flesh we considered previously.

1 JOHN 4:7-8 / Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God.

⁸Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.

- This passage gives a very clear example of what the question is getting at. God is love! Therefore, whoever has been born of God (and therefore has the Spirit of God living inside of them) will be loving!
- The same can be said for every other characteristic.

ROMANS 14:17 / For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

JOHN 15:11 / These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

PHILIPPIANS 4:7 / And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

ROMANS 2:4 / Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?

TITUS 3:4-5 / But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, ⁵he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit.

EPHESIANS 5:7-9 / Therefore do not become partners with them; ⁸for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light ⁹(for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true).

EPHESIANS 1:1 / Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, To the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful in Christ Jesus:

MATTHEW 11:28-29 / Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take my yoke upon you, and

learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

2 PETER 1:3-6 / His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, ⁴by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature... ⁵For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, ⁶and knowledge with self-control.

- This is a longer cross reference. But Peter helps his readers understand that through God's power, He has granted us everything we need pertaining to life and godliness so that we can become partakers of the divine nature. Then he goes on to explain the implications of this amazing reality. And one of the implications of being given the power from God to become godly is the attribute of self-control.

Q / 06

EPHESIANS 4:1 / I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called.

EPHESIANS 5:1-2 / Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. ²And walk in love.

COLOSSIANS 1:10 / So as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.

- These are just a few examples that show that the Bible often uses walking as a metaphor for the walk that is the Christian life.
- As Galatians has shown us time and time again, the Christian life is characterized by faith. Therefore, we walk by the Spirit by faith.
- With this in mind, how does a person walk by the Spirit?

Q / 07

- In the previous *zoom out*, we saw how fleshly desires produce fleshly conduct. Our behavior flows from our desires. So the question is, how can a person change their desires?
- Well, at the deepest level, the answer is that it is impossible. The reason the law cannot save is because we are sinners to the core, and the law does not have the power to change our hearts/desires.

JEREMIAH 13:23 / Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots? Then also you can do good who are accustomed to do evil. →

- As this passage says, a person cannot change the desires of their heart any more than they can change the color of their skin.
- But this is why the good news of the gospel is so good. God does not just declare us righteous. He gives us a new heart that has the power to desire to be righteous.
- This is what Moses means when he talks about a circumcised heart in Deuteronomy 30, and what Jeremiah means when he talks about the New Covenant in 31:31-34, and what Ezekiel means when he prophesies that God will remove our hearts of stone and give us a heart of flesh.
- All of this what the Bible means when it talks about receiving a new heart, being made a new creation, or being born again. A person goes from having “every intention of the thoughts of his **heart** was only evil continually” (Genesis 6:5), to receiving a new heart with desires to please and obey the Lord.
- So the first aspect of the answer to this question is that a person must receive a new heart and be indwelt by the Spirit in order to even make it possible to walk by the Spirit, which happens upon conversion.
- But as every believer knows by experience, being saved does not instantly transform all of a person's desires from being only evil to always holy.
- As we saw in the last question, a person's conduct flows from their desires, so how can a person change their desires and therefore walk by the Spirit? The question remains.

ROMANS 8:4-5, 9 / Who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. ⁵For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit... ⁹You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.

- What Romans 8:9 makes clear is that in order to walk by the Spirit, you must first be indwelt by the Spirit. What the rest of the passage reveals is the way to walk by the Spirit is by setting the mind in the things of the Spirit.
- What does this mean practically? The Spirit of God inspired the Word of God, so at the very least, it means that those who walk by the Spirit are those who think about and meditate on the Word. Psalm 1 provides a clear picture of the walk of the man who delights in the Word.

PSALM 1:1 / Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked,

- How does the blessed man not walk in the counsel of the wicked?

PSALM 1:2 / His delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night.

Q / 08

- We have seen that to walk by the Spirit, we must set our minds on the things of the Spirit. And we set our minds on the things of the Spirit by meditating on Scripture, which is the Holy Spirit-inspired Word of God.
- We have also seen that the fruit of the Spirit is of the Spirit because the Spirit is God, and God is love, joy, peace, patience, etc.
- But what is the connection? How does walking by the Spirit, by setting our minds on the things of the Spirit, produce the fruit of the Spirit in our lives?
- The Word has creative power. The same Word that has the power to create the universe is the power that recreates us into the image of Christ/ produces the fruit of Christ in our lives.

COLOSSIANS 3:10 / And have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.

2 TIMOTHY 3:16-17 / All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

JOHN 15:7-8 / If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.

- Also consider passages like Romans 12:1-2, Ephesians 4:22-24, and 2 Peter 1:3. All of these passages talk about the power the Word has to recreate our hearts to have godly desires.
- When we have godly desires, godly conduct will be evident in our lives, which is another way of saying we will bear the fruit of the Spirit.

Q / 09

GALATIANS 2:20 / I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

- If the Spirit of Christ lives inside of us, and we walk by the Spirit by setting our minds on the things of the Spirit, we will bear the fruit of the Spirit, which implies that we will not gratify the desires of the flesh. The two are against each other.
- This violent language of crucifying the flesh with its passions and desires speaks to the reality that, as believers, we cannot be content or comfortable with our sin; rather, we must make war on our sin.

ROMANS 8:13 / For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

- These are the only two options. There is no middle ground.
- Yet at the same time, this is a process. To walk according to the Spirit does not mean that a genuine believer will never sin again. What it means is that he or she will not make a practice of sinning in habitual and unrepentant ways.
- As one commentator pointed out, crucifixion is a slow death! And so it is with the crucifixion of our sinful passions.
- But for those who are in Christ, day by day and year by year, the Spirit will renovate more and more of a believer's heart, and he or she will put off more and more of the old self and be renewed more and more into the image of the Creator. All by the power of the Spirit for the glory of God!
- It is clear Paul views this as a process, because in the very next section, he gives instructions about how to deal with genuine believers (as he calls them brothers in Christ) who are caught in sin!
- The battle between the flesh and the Spirit will be a battle that rages until we are glorified. But thanks be to God, that those whom He calls He also justifies, and those whom He justifies have the eternal security knowing that one day the God of glory will glorify them and conform them into the image of His Son (Romans 8:28-30).

Q / 02

- With these connections in mind, consider v6 and 10. How are these examples of what it looks like to walk by the Spirit in the context of community?
- The phrase "law of Christ" adds to our understanding of what Paul meant in Galatians 5:14.

GALATIANS 5:14 / For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

- It is true that believers are not under the Mosaic law, but this does not mean they are free to live a lawless life. Rather, the Spirit of Christ empowers them and leads them to live like Christ. A concise way to describe how Christ lived is that He loved God, and He loved others. This is what is meant by the law of Christ.
- Bearing one another's burdens is a great example of what it looks like to live like Christ and love like Christ.

GALATIANS 3:13 / Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree."

- For Christ bore the ultimate burden by taking upon Himself the burden of our sin.

ISAIAH 53:4-5 / Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. ⁵But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.

- People who are indwelt by the Spirit of Christ live like Christ. To live like Christ is to live a life of bearing each other's burdens because of the joy and gratitude and freedom that is provided by knowing the burden of eternal wrath from a holy God has been borne by Christ.

GALATIANS 1:3-4 / Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, "who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age.

GALATIANS 2:20 / And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

- These two verses show us what enabled Christ to bear our ultimate burden. He loves us. If Christ were seeking to gratify the desires of His flesh, He would never have stepped down from heaven, and He definitely would not have ever gotten anywhere near a cross. But because He is the God who is love, He bore our burden by dying in our place. →

WEEK 10

Q / 01

GALATIANS 5:22-24 / But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. ²⁴And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

- Every single person who has ever lived (other than Jesus) sins and is sinned against every single day. This is true even for Christians who are indwelt by the Spirit.
- What is different about the people of God compared to the people of the world is how they deal with sin and how they confront other people's sin.
- Notice from v1, the first prerequisite for restoring a person caught in sin is to be a spiritual person. As we learn from 1 Corinthians 2:10-16, a spiritual person is a person who is indwelt by the Holy Spirit.
- Notice the result: this person's aim is to restore the person caught in sin, which is evidence of the fruit of love, and the way he or she does it is with gentleness, which evidences the fruit of patience, kindness and gentleness.
- In v2, Paul instructs the Galatians to bear each other's burdens. According to Matthew Harmon's commentary on Galatians, a burden refers to "anything that makes following Christ difficult, whether it is sin, suffering, hardship, or something else" (339). When Christians help each other bear one another's burdens, rather than merely look out for themselves, they are evidencing the fruit of love and kindness and goodness.

- And His Spirit dwells in believers, which empowers us to die to ourselves, love one another, bear each other's burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ.

Q / 03

GALATIANS 5:19-21 / Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, ²⁰idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, ²¹envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these.

- Whenever a person is caught in sin, the sin of the individual is usually painful to the one doing the restoring. If that person is seeking to gratify the desires of the flesh, it would be easy to respond in anger.
- It might be tempting to use the situation to cause dissension or division, or to make one look better in comparison, which would be fueled by rivalry or envy.
- People who are seeking to gratify their flesh are too busy thinking about themselves to bear other people's burdens. They are too selfish with their time, treasure, and talents to serve others rather than indulge themselves.

Q / 04

- 6:1 starts with a plural command, then focuses on the individual. 6:2 goes back to the corporate, then in 6:3-5, back to the individual. This back and forth goes all the way through 6:10.
- This back and forth is because we all need each other to help each other love God and love others. But there are things that only the individual can be ultimately responsible for. We have both a communal faith and a personal faith, and we cannot have one without the other.
- For example, in v1, we all need each other to help each other deal with sin. But each person individually needs to keep a personal watch on themselves lest they too be tempted. When a person is caught in sin, it can be tempting to each join them in sin, or become prideful and think that you would never do such a thing.
- We are all called to help each other bear each other's burdens, but ultimately each one of us will have to individually answer to the Lord and give a personal account on Judgment Day for how we have lived (which is what v5 refers to).
- We are all called corporately to support our pastors, but each person will individually have to give an account for how they invest their resources, etc.

Q / 05

- One aspect of the personal responsibility Paul highlights in the section is that each person will individually reap what he or she sows.
- In v1, he commands each individual to watch themselves, and he adds the warning "lest you too be tempted."
- V3-5 warns and reminds that each person will have to give an individual account to the Lord.
- V7-8a warns that if a person invests their time, treasure, and talents in fleshly pursuits they will reap destruction.

Q / 06

- Then he follows that up with the promise of reward for those who invest in what matters for eternity and is made possible by the Spirit (such as bearing each other's burdens). In other words, bearing each other's burdens is not merely a nice thing to do, it is the equivalent of sowing seeds that will one day blossom into fruit that is heavenly rewards in eternal life.
- Notice how the summary command in v10 to do good to everyone is grounded in the reality of the reward promised in 6:8b-9. Paul is saying, "Doing good will produce the fruit of rewards in heaven. Therefore, do as much good as possible!"

- Paul has spent multiple chapters pounding the nail that a person is saved not by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ. So it should be initially surprising to us that he is concluding the letter with promises of reward and judgment for how a person lives.
- How can both of these things be true?
- To answer this question, we first need to establish they are both, in fact, true.
- The Bible is clear that we are saved by faith alone. Our works cannot add anything to our salvation. We see this over and over again in Galatians 2:15-4:29, but we see it in other places as well.

ROMANS 3:28 / For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law.

- It is also a prevalent biblical teaching that each person will be rewarded or judged at Judgment Day based on how they lived.

2 CORINTHIANS 5:10 / For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

- This sobering verse is talking about believers *and* unbelievers. We will *all* appear before the judgment seat of Christ.
- And Jesus spoke often of laying up for ourselves treasures in heaven.

MATTHEW 6:19-20 / "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, ²⁰but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.

- So it is clear that both of these things are true. But how can they both be true at the same time?
- As we think about this question, we need to remember that it is wrong to think we are saved by faith, then live the rest of our Christian lives trusting in works of the flesh. Paul already rebuked that thinking in 3:1-5. The Christian life is by grace through faith from beginning to end.
- As we have been studying throughout chapters 5-6, being saved by faith alone does not mean

that it does not matter at all how one lives. In fact, it matters so much that eternal rewards are on the line. The reality is, everyone in heaven will be saved by faith alone. No one will get there by their works. But at the same time, some believers will have more rewards in heaven than others. In God's infinite wisdom, both are true.

Q / 07

GALATIANS 1:9 / As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed.

- The differences between Paul and the false teachers could not be more stark.
- The false teachers care about their personal reputation among men, which leads them to mislead the Galatians for a perceived personal gain.
- They love themselves more than they love Jesus, which leads them to run from persecution at all costs.
- They don't even keep the teachings they teach, which makes them hypocrites.
- Yet, ultimately, their boast is in physical things. They teach a works-based religion that trusts in self rather than Christ, and this leads them to put their hope in self-promotion rather than living for Christ.
- They care about the outward and physical rather than the spiritual and genuine heart change, which is why their gospel is a "gospel" that cannot save.
- Paul, on the other hand, does not boast in anything other than the Lord Jesus Christ. He believes a person is saved by faith alone in Christ alone, and he actually practices what he preaches.
- Through his faith in Christ, Paul has died to the world and all that belongs to this present evil age (such as fleshly desires, trusting in works of the law, living for the approval of man, etc.), and has been raised with Christ through his union to the resurrected Lord.
- Ultimately, he realizes that what matters is not outward appearance or tangible works of religion, but rather inward transformation, which comes by being made a new creation in Christ.
- For all who, like Paul, trust in the mercy of God rather than their own works, they are the true people of God, no matter their race or social class.

Q / 08

- In this last paragraph Paul is not merely highlighting the stark difference between him and the false teachers. He is also reminding the Galatians of the most important themes that he has been teaching throughout the letter.
- First consider v14. For Paul to say he boasts in nothing except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ is another way of saying, rather than putting your faith in works of the law, he has put his faith in Christ alone. This is reminiscent of what he has said over and over in Galatians.

GALATIANS 2:16 / Yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ.

- We have also seen throughout Galatians that when a person puts their faith in Christ they are united to Christ. His life is their life, and His death is their death, so that His life can be their life.
- We see the doctrine of union with Christ clearly at the end of chapter 3.

GALATIANS 3:27-28 / For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. ²⁸There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

- Understanding that faith unites us to Christ is important for understanding the rest of what Paul says in Galatians 6:14b-16.
- Paul says in v14 that because of his faith in the crucified Christ he too has been crucified to the world. This is especially important because the crucified Christ was also raised from the dead. Therefore, if we are united to the crucified Christ, we too will be risen from the dead. This is what Paul means in 6:15 when he refers to being a new creation.
- What matters is not the religious works you do, like being circumcised or not. What matters is putting your faith in what Christ has done. Because when you do, you will be born again, made spiritually alive, made a new creation. Galatians 2:20 says it similarly.

GALATIANS 2:20 / I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

- How can a crucified man live? By being raised from the dead/made a new creation.
- And lastly, being united to Christ by faith helps us understand Paul's comment about being part of the Israel of God.
- As we saw in chapters 3-4, a big question Paul sought to answer was: Who are the true people of God? Who will receive the promised blessings to Abraham? We learned that Christ is the true offspring of Abraham and the only Son of God. Therefore, through faith union with Him, we are adopted into God's family and made heirs of the promises to Abraham. Another way to say it, we are members of the Israel of God, whether Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male or female. What matters is being united to Christ by faith.

Q / 09

GALATIANS 1:3-4 / Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, ⁴who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father.

GALATIANS 6:18 / The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen. →

- Matthew Harmon concludes his commentary on Galatians by commenting on this grace sandwich mentioned above, and it is difficult to say it any better than him:
- “By beginning (1:3) and ending (6:18) the letter with grace, Paul encompasses everything in between as an expression of God’s undeserved favor to us. The opponents emphasize works of the law; Paul trumpets the grace of God. It is by grace that God sent Christ to rescue us from this present evil age (1:4). It is by grace that God called Paul to take the good news to the gentiles (1:15-16). It is by grace that we are justified through faith and not works of the law (2:15-16). It is by grace that we are crucified with Christ and raised to new life with him, a new life that we live by faith in him (2:19-20). It is by grace that we are sons and seed of Abraham through Jesus Christ the singular seed of Abraham (3:6-18). It is by grace that Christ redeems us from the curse of the law and gives us the Spirit (3:10-14). It is by grace that we have been freed from the elements of this world and adopted into God’s family as sons with an inheritance (4:1-7). It is by grace that we are children of the heavenly Jerusalem, sons and daughters who have been redeemed from our exile in the great new exodus that Christ has accomplished (4:21-5:1). It is by grace that we are free to serve one another in the power of the Spirit, bearing his fruit in our lives (5:13-26). It is by grace that we are able to bear each other’s burdens and thus fulfill the law of Christ (6:1-5). It is by grace that we are empowered to persevere in doing good so that one day we will reap an eternal harvest (6:6-10). It is by grace that we have experienced the new creation that will one day transform all things into a perfect and glorious reflection of Jesus (6:14-15). And it is by grace that we experience peace and mercy through the Abrahamic covenant fulfilled in Christ, marking us off as the Israel of God (6:16). Such grace comes from the Lord Jesus Christ, who loved us and gave himself for us” (370-371).
- May this amazing summary of the message of Galatians help you marvel at the good news that we are saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone for the glory of God alone! Amen.

APPENDIX B

THEOLOGICAL TERMS

BLESSING OF ABRAHAM: The blessing is being counted righteous by faith and being an heir of the promise of salvation through the Messiah, who is the promised offspring of Abraham. The firstfruits of this gospel inheritance is the Holy Spirit, which will eventually blossom into being sons and daughters of God in the New Creation.

BOOK OF THE LAW: The first five books of the Bible, written by Moses. The Law contains laws, but the Law is not to be equated with laws. The Law/Torah is ultimately about having faith like Abraham rather than laws like Moses.

FAITH: (1) The system of salvation through the Messiah for all who believe. (2) The instrument of trust that is oriented toward and grounded in a promise.

FLESH: (1) The sinful boasting in status and reputation as a law-abiding Jew, (2) the sinful desires that rule the heart of the unbeliever and are still present within the believer, or (3) living in the physical world.

FREEDOM: (1) From the curse of sin and slavery to the law and (2) for loving God and your neighbor by the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

GOSPEL: The promise of God concerning the Messiah and His forgiveness of our sins. It is the good news of Jesus' life, death, burial, and resurrection, and the new life found in receiving His message by faith.

JUSTIFIED/JUSTIFICATION: A legal term that refers to a person's status before the law. It means to be declared righteous and is the opposite of condemnation. When God declares a sinner righteous it means that person will be treated as if he or she has kept the whole law.

LAW: (1) The system of commands from God given through Moses including the civil, ceremonial, and moral laws. The law was given primarily to reveal heart-level rebellion and to be a guardian until Christ. Or (2) the first five books of the Bible, the Book of Moses.

RIGHTEOUSNESS: Righteousness refers to the moral condition of a person. A person who is righteous is in "right" relationship with God and just before the law. The term is synonymous with "justified" and can only come through faith in Christ, the Righteous One.

SPIRIT: (1) The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity. He guides, leads, convicts, comforts, intercedes for, and indwells every believer as the firstfruits of salvation. Everything He does aims at glorifying Christ by conforming believers into the image of Christ. (2) The system of believing and receiving salvation by faith, not works. In this sense of the word, the Spirit is the opposite of the flesh.

TRANSGRESSION: Refers to breaking the law. To transgress means to go beyond the bounds. Therefore, a transgression is going outside the moral boundary determined by the law.

WORKS OF THE LAW: Human efforts of abiding by the Mosaic Law to earn and/or maintain a justified status before God.

APPENDIX C

NAMES & TITLES

ABRAHAM: The example of faith, justified before God by believing His promises rather than by works of the law.

APOSTLE: The word literally means “sent one.” The New Testament apostles were eyewitnesses of the resurrection of Christ and directly commissioned and sent by Him to build His church through the preaching of the gospel.

CIRCUMCISION: The physical sign of membership into the covenant community to remind the community of the descendent who would come from the line of Abraham to bring salvation to the nations. Therefore, even circumcision was by faith because it required Jewish men to cut the organ from which the promised offspring would come. But now that the promised offspring has come, this specific sign of faith is no longer necessary.

CIRCUMCISION PARTY: A group of false teachers who taught Gentiles that they must be circumcised and keep the law of Moses in order to be saved by Christ.

GENTILES: People who are not ethnically Jewish. (2) The Bible sometimes uses the word as a spiritual term to refer to the people of the world as opposed to the people of God (See Ephesians 4:17 for example).

GREEK: At the time the New Testament was being written, the Mediterranean world was saturated with Greek culture because of the conquests of Alexander the Great. This is why the entire New Testament was written in Greek; because it was the common language of the day. Therefore, sometimes the Bible uses the term “Greek” synonymously with Gentile.

HAGAR: Hagar was a servant girl who worked for Sarah, Abraham’s wife. After years of infertility Sarah encouraged Abraham to try to produce an heir for them through Hagar. Hagar gave birth to Ishmael. This son came through Abraham’s works, not faith. See Genesis 16 for more details.

ISAAC: Isaac was the long awaited son that was born to Abraham and Sarah as a result of God’s promises. Through Isaac came Jacob, and from Jacob came the 12 tribes of Israel.

JEW: Widely known as the Old Testament people of God known as “Israelites,” who are descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (also known as “Israel”). “Jew” comes from the name “Judah” after the split of the northern and southern kingdoms of Israel and the assimilation of the Israelites into the Greco-Roman society.

JUDAISM: Originally known as the religion of the people of Israel, but during the intertestamental period, it transformed into a new religion overseen primarily by the Pharisees and Sadducees who emphasized the laws of Moses, rather than faith, and they added new laws that went beyond the Mosaic Law.

MOUNT SINAI: The mountain where the Lord met with Moses and the people of Israel to give them His laws after delivering them from slavery.

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SAVED BY
GRACE ALONE,
THROUGH
FAITH ALONE,
IN CHRIST ALONE,
FOR THE GLORY
OF GOD ALONE!

GOSPEL CITY CHURCH