


GRACE IN THE WORD

A JOURNEY THROUGH GALATIANS: FALL 2021



“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 2:16

“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. I DO NOT NULLIFY THE GRACE OF GOD, FOR IF RIGHTEOUSNESS WERE THROUGH THE LAW, THEN CHRIST DIED FOR NO PURPOSE.” GALATIANS 2:20-21

“FOR AS MANY OF YOU AS WERE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST HAVE PUT ON CHRIST. THERE 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.” GALATIANS 3:27-28

“FOR FREEDOM CHRIST HAS SET US FREE; STAND FIRM THEREFORE, AND DO NOT SUBMIT AGAIN TO A YOKE OF SLAVERY.” GALATIANS 5:1

A JOURNEY THROUGH GALATIANS

ABOUT THIS READING PLAN:

This reading plan will walk us through one chapter of Galatians each week. Each day's reading will include a passage from Galatians paired with passages from other letters written by Paul as well as other scriptures that speak to the same concepts. At many points, you will read the same Galatians passage two days in a row with other passages to fully study the meaning of Paul's words to the church at Galatia. By structuring the reading plan this way our hope is that you will gain a greater understanding of this book and a greater understanding of the freedom we have through Jesus.

ADDITIONAL STUDY RESOURCES:

We highly recommend that you watch **The Bible Project Galatians Overview Video** at bibleproject.com/explore/video/galatians

Check out the website at graceclarksville.com/graceintheword and join our online community on Facebook at facebook.com/groups/graceintheword

Study material in this guide was adapted from the *She/He Reads Truth* Galatians Study, *The Bible Recap*, *The Bible Project*, *ESV Study Bible*, and *Galatians For You* by Tim Keller.

Name & Contact Information:

What is your hope for this 6 weeks in God's Word?

CONTEXT & THEME OF GALATIANS

Paul had been establishing churches in the region where many Gentiles were converted and believed in Jesus. The Jews didn't appreciate this. They were accustomed to being God's chosen people and didn't easily accept that Jesus came to offer salvation to ALL people. Throughout this time, Paul suffered tremendous persecution by many Jews for converting the Gentiles. One of these churches he established was in Galatia and shortly after leaving Paul heard that a group of teachers known as the Judaizers (a radical Jewish group) had been teaching a false gospel to the church at Galatia.

These appear to be the same as the "Judaizers" mentioned in Acts who were telling Gentile Christians, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom prescribed by Moses, you cannot be saved" (Acts 15:1). They told the Galatians that they were required to keep the law and be circumcised in order to truly receive salvation from God. But salvation is a free gift from God through the grace of Christ, it is undeserved, it can't be earned and it's something we can never repay. This amazing grace is unmerited favor. Grace is always free and separate from our works (Rom 11:6). The good news of justification (being granted a righteous legal standing before God through faith in Jesus Christ) was being undermined by these Judaizers with the result that the Galatian believers would either question the authenticity of their salvation or return to law as a means for salvation.

Paul wrote this letter to help the confused believers in Galatia see they were being taught a false gospel: being acceptable to God depends on their human effort, which is the opposite of the gospel of Jesus. The pure, true gospel explains that you are saved by grace through faith in Jesus alone and our growth hinges on the power of the Holy Spirit. In this letter, Paul writes about the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit in the Christian life, including thoughts such as, "walk by the Spirit," "be led by the Spirit," and to "keep in step with the Spirit." This submission to the Holy Spirit in our every day is what equips us to live a life that honors God and points others toward Him. Paul's heart is to help the Galatians see the freedom Christ offers them - freedom from the law and the power of sin and freedom to love and serve others by carrying each other's burdens and being kind (Galatians 6).

At its core, Galatians is a book about freedom from sin and freedom from a performance based view of salvation. Because Jesus is the culmination of all the promises of the Old Testament, as followers of Jesus we can be freely counted righteous before God. Paul's message in Galatians is needed as much now as it was back then: salvation is not a matter of what we can accomplish, but about what Jesus accomplished on the cross on our behalf. The death and resurrection of Jesus initiated a new covenant, in which followers of Jesus no longer have to become Jews or follow the ceremonial laws set out in the Old Testament to be Christians. To require the following of these Old Testament ceremonial laws denies the true gospel, which proclaims that salvation comes by faith alone, not by keeping the "works of the law" (Gal. 2:16).

HOW TO READ A NEW TESTAMENT LETTER

Galatians is an epistle (letter) that was written by Paul to the church of Galatia.



A VISUAL THEOLOGY GUIDE TO THE BIBLE WORKBOOK

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Most of the books that make up the New Testament are letters. Some were addressed to churches, while others were written to individuals. Here are some principles to keep in mind when reading these letters.

1. **Reading a letter can be like listening to one side of a conversation.**
 - We must look for context clues to figure out what was going on.
2. **Letters were meant to be read all at once.**
 - This allows the reader to see the author's progression of thought and make connections that might otherwise be missed.
3. **These letters were written to believers learning to live in Christian community.**
 - The authors intended for these to be read aloud to the entire church and often be shared with other churches as well.
4. **These letters were written to a specific group of believers in history.**
 - Some bits of guidance were written to a specific problem while others articulate principles that are universally true.
5. **New Testament letters draw heavily on the Old Testament.**
 - The Old Testament was the Bible of the early church. The better we know the Old Testament, the better equipped we are to understand the NT letters.
6. **The New Testament Letters are part of our family history.**
 - Much has changed in the last two thousand years, but the faith that brought hope to Christians in these early churches is the same faith we hold on to today.
7. **Jesus is the point of these letters.**
 - These letters were written in the years right after Jesus' life, death and resurrection. They were written so the readers would grow in their understanding of who He is, what He has done, and what He has promised to do, so His followers can become more like Him.

PRAYERS / REFLECTIONS

BEFORE YOU READ GOD'S WORD TODAY, SEEK HIS HELP WITH THESE 5 PRAYERS:

- 1 God, give me wisdom, knowledge, and understanding.
- 2 God, let any knowledge I gain serve to help me love You and others more, and not puff me up.
- 3 God, help me see something new about You I've never seen before.
- 4 God, correct any lies I believe about You or anything I misunderstand.
- 5 God, direct my steps according to Your Word.

*** Prayers from The Bible Recap Reading Plan by Tara-Leigh Cobble ***

TIPS FOR APPROACHING SCRIPTURE:

- Pray before you read (use the prayers above)
- Read the words in proper context, taking into consideration when it was written, who it was written to, what was happening when it was written (a good study bible is helpful, we recommend the ESV Study Bible)
- Look for God's character and faithfulness to His people
- Look for themes that point to Jesus
- Look for anything repetitive, unusual, confusing, hopeful, comforting, challenging
- Once you are finished reading, take a few minutes to meditate on what you have read:
 - » Narrow what you've read down to just one or two main thoughts.
 - » What did I learn about God in these passages?
 - » How can I praise God for what this says about him?
 - » What did I learn about the human heart in these passages?
 - » What behavior/emotions come when I forget these things about God?
 - » What is God revealing to me today that I need to listen to?
 - » What sins do I need to confess in light of what God revealed today?
 - » What is one next step I can take in light of what I have read today?

WEEKLY CHECKLIST

WEEK ONE - GALATIANS 1

- Day 1 - Galatians 1:1-5, Psalm 16:1-11
- Day 2 - Galatians 1:1-5, I Corinthians 15:1-11, Colossians 1:9-14
- Day 3 - Galatians 1:6-10, II Corinthians 11:1-4, 12-15
- Day 4 - Galatians 1:11-24, Acts 9:1-22
- Day 5 - Galatians 1:11-24, Joel 2:12-14
- Day 6 - Grace Day
- Day 7 - Reflection Day - Colossians 1:13-14, Galatians 1:9-10

WEEK TWO - GALATIANS 2

- Day 8 - Galatians 2:1-10, Isaiah 19:21-25
- Day 9 - Acts 15:1-29, Galatians 2:1-10
- Day 10 - Galatians 2:11-21, Acts 10:9-48
- Day 11 - Galatians 2:11-21
- Day 12 - Galatians 2:16-21
- Day 13 - Grace Day
- Day 14 - Reflection Day - Galatians 2:20

WEEK THREE - GALATIANS 3

- Day 15 - Galatians 3:1-9, Genesis 15:1-6, Matthew 3:1-12
- Day 16 - Galatians 3:1-9, Romans 4:13-25
- Day 17 - Galatians 3:10-18, Genesis 12:1-7, 1 Peter 2:24-25
- Day 18 - Galatians 3:10-18, Isaiah 53:1-12
- Day 19 - Galatians 3:19-29, Jeremiah 31:31-34, Romans 3:21-26
- Day 20 - Grace Day
- Day 21 - Reflection Day - Galatians 3:28, 1 Peter 2:24, Jeremiah 31:33, Romans 3:23-24

WEEK FOUR - GALATIANS 4

- Day 22 - Galatians 4:1-7, John 14:1-21
- Day 23 - Galatians 4:1-7, Romans 8:1-17
- Day 24 - Galatians 4:8-20, Romans 1:18-25
- Day 25 - Galatians 4:21-31, Genesis 16:1-16, Romans 9:6-8
- Day 26 - Galatians 4:6,31, John 8:31-36
- Day 27 - Grace Day
- Day 28 - Reflection Day - Galatians 4:4-7, John 14:15-18, Romans 8:1-4

WEEK FIVE - GALATIANS 5

- Day 29 - Galatians 5:1-15, Matthew 22:37-40
- Day 30 - Galatians 5:1-15, 1 John 3:19-24
- Day 31 - Galatians 5:16-26, Ezekiel 37:11-14
- Day 32 - Galatians 5:16-26, Ephesians 2:1-10
- Day 33 - Galatians 5:22-25
- Day 34 - Grace Day
- Day 35 - Reflection Day - Galatians 5:13-18, 25-26, Ephesians 2:4-10

WEEK SIX - GALATIANS 6

- Day 36 - Galatians 6:1-10, John 15:9-17
- Day 37 - Galatians 6:1-10, Luke 15:11-32
- Day 38 - Galatians 6:11-18
- Day 39 - Galatians 6:11-18, Jeremiah 9:23-24, 2 Corinthians 5:17-21
- Day 40 - Galatians 2:16, 20-21, Galatians 3:27-28, Galatians 5:1,13, Galatians 6:2, 9-10
- Day 41 - Grace Day
- Day 42 - Reflection Day - Galatians 2:19-20, Galatians 5:1,6,13,16,22-23, Galatians 6:10



WEEK 1

GALATIANS CHAPTER 1

WEEK 1

DAY 1 - MONDAY

Galatians 1:1-5, Psalm 16:1-11

WHO AM I?

When Paul introduces himself, it is as though he is writing on one of those "Hello! My Name Is" stickers, one that says: "Hello! My name is Paul, and I belong to Christ. Everything I am is because of everything He did."

Galatians opens with a precious reminder and a challenge to remember: If we are in Christ, then we belong to God, and our identity is now bound up in Christ's death and resurrection. We are sealed by His Spirit, waiting for the day Jesus returns. And we can trust Him, as the psalmist says, because He is our portion and our cup of blessing (Psalm 16:5). He holds my future in his hands, and the boundaries He has drawn around my life are good for me (v.6). From that one identity, everything else should flow, all for His glory.

Written by Melanie Rainer - *She Reads Truth*

**DO YOU BELIEVE THAT YOUR
IDENTITY IS FIRMLY ROOTED IN
CHRIST? WHY OR WHY NOT?**

**IF YOU BELIEVED THAT YOUR
IDENTITY IS IN CHRIST ALONE,
HOW WOULD THAT CHANGE
YOU?**

Go to graceclarksville.com/intheword for additional study resources.

WEEK 1

DAY 2 - TUESDAY

Galatians 1:1-5, I Corinthians 15:1-11, Colossians 1:9-14

Jesus gave himself for our sins to rescue us from “this present evil age” for the glory of God (Gal. 1:4-5). The sacrifice of Christ on the cross is at the heart of the gospel. A holy God cannot overlook humanity’s sin and rebellion, but in His great love for us, he sent his Son to suffer and die in our place, taking God’s wrath against sin. This rescue not only secures our eternity, but also gives us the power to be delivered from sin here on earth by the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

DON'T ADD TO THE GOSPEL

Paul wrote this spicy letter to the Galatians because they were toying with the gospel. Because of false teachers in their community, the Galatians were about to tamper with the gospel of grace, diluting it by adding their own works. This is why Paul wrote to the Church, and this is what we still need to hear today on the regular. Only Jesus can deliver us from our sins—past, present, and future—and we cannot deliver ourselves and make our relationship with God right.

Written by J.A. Medders - *He Reads Truth*

**WHAT STOOD OUT TO YOU
IN I CORINTHIANS 15:1-11
TODAY?**

**WHAT STOOD OUT IN
COLOSSIANS 1:9-14 TODAY?**

WEEK 1

DAY 3 - WEDNESDAY

Galatians 1:6-10, II Corinthians 11:1-4, II Corinthians 11:12-15

NO OTHER GOSPEL

When the line between truth and embellishment blurs, it is easy to believe first and question later. This is exactly Paul's point in today's part of the letter to Galatians. "I am amazed," he writes, "that you are so quickly turning away from him who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—not that there is another gospel" (Gal. 1:6-7). Paul pulls no punches, telling them, "If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, a curse be on him!" (v.9). Furthermore, in 2 Corinthians, Paul admonishes, "For if a person comes and preaches another Jesus... you put up with it splendidly!" (2 Cor. 11:4). The warning is two-fold: Stay true to the one true gospel and to Christ, and do not follow or teach a false gospel. I actively fight against the temptation of false gospels every day by engaging in Scripture, the north star that always points us exclusively to Christ. Filtering out falsehoods and embellishments is the work of the Holy Spirit in my heart through the means of grace that is the Word of God.

Written by Melanie Rainer - *She Reads Truth*

How often are you tempted to subscribe to a "gospel" that says you only matter to God if you prayed today? Or read your Bible? Do you follow the crushing logic of a "gospel" that ties your joy to your works, or do you tie it to Jesus's cross and resurrection? If we aren't careful, we can take good things, and we can make them into cursed things if we attach them to the gospel.

Written by J.A. Medders - *He Reads Truth*

**CAN YOU SEE HOW
UNDERSTANDING THE TRUE
GOSPEL OF SALVATION BY
GRACE THROUGH FAITH IN
JESUS ALONE CAN HELP YOU
IDENTIFY FALSE GOSPELS?**

**WHAT ARE SOME GOOD THINGS
THAT YOU TEND TO ATTACH TO
THE GOSPEL?**

WEEK 1

DAY 4 - THURSDAY

Galatians 1:11-24, Acts 9:1-22

God revealed his Son Jesus to Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus. Saul was an ultra-orthodox Jew, who had been persecuting Christians for not following the law. He was doing what he thought was moral and right by persecuting these Christians, but this revelation from God... this encounter with Jesus... changed Saul (who we now know as Paul) forever. Paul began preaching the very faith & message that he had once tried to destroy. It's a reminder to us that no one is beyond the grace of God. The heart that is against Christ can be still changed. Paul's story became, "I once was blind, but now I see."

GOD REVEALED HIMSELF TO PAUL

Here, as in Acts, Paul is not sharing his testimony for general inspiration, or to point us to himself. He's using it to refute the claims of people who want to undermine his message, and he wants it all to point to the God of amazing grace. As Paul tells us how he became a follower of Jesus—or, perhaps more accurately, how Jesus made him His follower—he's defending himself from three attacks "some people" were making on him and his gospel message. First, Paul refutes the idea that he came to his gospel message through his own reflection, reasoning and thinking. Second, Paul undermines the claim that his gospel message was derived from other leaders. Third, Paul shows that his God-given gospel "checked out" with the message the other apostles had received from God.

Later we will see that they were encouraging the Gentile Christians to become full converts to Judaism, and to keep all the Mosaic laws of diet and dress, including circumcision (2:12; 3:5; 6:12). But Paul is saying: I've already been there and done that! I know all about this subject! You cannot make yourself acceptable to God by the most zealous and detailed following of moral, ethical, or cultural codes. Grace is the free, unmerited favor of God, working powerfully on the mind and heart to change lives. There is no clearer example than Paul that salvation is by grace alone, not through our moral and religious performance.

Written by Tim Keller - *Galatians For You*

WHAT IS YOUR "I ONCE WAS BLIND, BUT NOW I SEE" MOMENT? BE BRAVE ENOUGH TO SHARE IT WITH SOMEONE THIS WEEK.

WEEK 1

DAY 5 - FRIDAY

Galatians 1:11-24, Joel 2:12-14

PAUL'S TRANSFORMATION

As we've read through Galatians 1 this week, Paul has been building a case for the rest of his letter using his own story of transformation. Paul uses his story to set the stage for the rest of the letter. Paul had been a pharisee, self-described as "extremely zealous for the traditions of my ancestors" (Gal 1:14). He knew the law. He lived by it and for it. Then Paul explains his own total transformation as "when God, who from my mother's womb set me apart and called me by his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son in me" (vv.15-16). Paul became an apostle of Jesus; he knew his Savior, and lived by Him and for Him. Paul was totally transformed. The same transformation is offered to us by God's grace. I love how God calls them to Himself in Joel 2:12-13..."return to the LORD your God. For he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, abounding in faithful love, and he relents from sending disaster." Because I can trust God and His character, I can trust His process of transformation—His grace, compassion, patience, and steadfast love. Every day I pray for a deeper and greater transformation of my heart. Prayer, Scripture, Spirit—these are my lifelines to a new heart and a closer communion with God. Without them, I'm weak and tired. With them, I am transformed.

Written by Melanie Rainer - *She Reads Truth*

Paul, a former Pharisee before Jesus flipped his world upside down in the very best way, Paul knows the power of Christ and is not ashamed of the gospel. How has Jesus flipped your world around? Don't ever be ashamed of your story. Jesus isn't. He wrote it. He's using it. Praise God for it! Your origin story doesn't even begin with you. Your story begins with the God of all grace, and a book filled with the names of those redeemed by the blood of the Lamb.

Written by J.A. Medders - *He Reads Truth*

**HAVE YOU EVER FELT ASHAMED
BY PARTS OF YOUR STORY?**

**SPEND SOME TIME IN
PRAYER SURRENDERING
THOSE FEELINGS OF SHAME
TO GOD AND PRAISING HIM
FOR ALL THE PARTS OF YOUR
TRANSFORMATION STORY.**

WEEK 1

DAY 6 - SATURDAY - GRACE DAY

Use today to rest, pray and catch up on any of this week's reading that you missed.

In this week's reading:

1. *What themes did you see emerge?*
2. *What was the biggest thing that God revealed to you this week?*
3. *What next step do you need to take based on what He revealed to you this week?*

WEEK 1

DAY 7 - SUNDAY - REFLECTION DAY

Reflect on these passages:

"He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins."

Colossians 1:13-14

"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. For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ."

Galatians 1:9-10

REFLECTION QUESTIONS FOR WEEK 1

How could you live your life in a way this coming week that helps people see less of you and more of God working in you?

How can you commit this coming week to spending more time with God?

Who can you share your transformation story with this coming week?



WEEK 2

GALATIANS CHAPTER 2

TIMELINE OF GALATIANS

DATE (ALL ARE APPROX)	DESCRIPTION	GALATIANS	ACTS
AD 34	Saul, also known as Paul, persecuted the followers of Jesus. (shortly after Jesus' death & resurrection)	1:13-14	9:1-2
AD 34	Saul/Paul has an encounter with Jesus & is converted on the way to Damascus.	1:15-16a	9:3-19a
AD 34-37	Paul spends time in Arabia; returns to Damascus to preach that Jesus is the Messiah	1:17	9:19-22; cf. 9:27
AD 37	Paul visited Jerusalem three years after his conversion.	1:18-20	9:26-29
AD 37-47	Paul preached in Syria and Cilicia.	1:21-24	9:30-31
AD 47	Paul visited Jerusalem fourteen years after his conversion. It is possible this is what is known as the Jerusalem Council	2:1-10	11:27-30 15:6-29
AD 47-48	Paul with Barnabas planted churches in Gentile territory, Galatia included, during Paul's first missionary journey.		13:1-14:28
AD 49	At the Council of Jerusalem, Paul argues successfully that Gentile Christians need not follow Jewish law; returns to Antioch; confronts Peter over question of Jewish law		15
AD 52-55	Paul wrote Galatians.	1:1-6:18	

WHY WAS PAUL SO PASSIONATE ABOUT CONFRONTING THIS FALSE GOSPEL?

In short, because the stakes were high... this false gospel was threatening true church unity. On the one side of this dispute we have Paul, who is saying: The gospel of faith in Christ is for people of all cultures. On the other we have his opponents, claiming: Not all Jewish people are Christians, but all Christians must become Jewish. Neither side would have accepted the other fully, and would have questioned if the others were saved! Paul's Gentile churches would doubt that the Jewish churches really had faith in Christ, and the Jewish churches would also doubt the salvation of the Gentiles. The other apostles had stayed in Jerusalem, and they had not worked out the implications of the gospel for Gentiles who were converting from paganism. They simply had not confronted most of these issues practically. It would have been extremely easy for them to miss the implications of the gospel when it came to living as a Gentile Christian. It would have felt natural for them to say: Of course all Christians should eat kosher! or something similar. But the ramifications of such a "small" mistake would have been enormous. That's why Paul said that "the freedom we have in Christ" (v 2:4) was under threat, and therefore that the very "truth of the gospel" was at stake (v 2:5). This meeting could have ended up splitting the church; and at such an early stage in its life, two virtually different religions would have emerged. No wonder Paul felt fear. The stakes could not have been higher. Paul says "they added nothing to my message" (v 2:6). The Jerusalem apostles agreed that it is faith in Christ alone, and not any other performance or ritual, that is necessary for salvation. The implications of this are fundamental to our understanding of what the Christian faith is. The countless regulations for "cleanliness" in the laws of Moses were designed (among other things) to show us how impossible it was to make ourselves perfectly acceptable before a holy God. But these "false brothers" had used the regulations in order to teach the exact opposite: that we could make ourselves pure and more acceptable to God through strict compliance with them.

Written by Tim Keller - *Galatians For You*

THE TRUE GOSPEL

God's acceptance through Christ = Enough

THE FALSE GOSPEL

God's acceptance through Christ + select Mosaic laws = Enough



ENTER JESUS OFFERING SALVATION TO ALL PEOPLE

INSTEAD OF GIVING THE PEOPLE THE
LAW ON TABLETS OF STONE

GOD WILL NOW WRITE
THE LAW ON THEIR HEARTS

GOD NOW PROMISES TO PUT HIS
SPIRIT _____
IN HIS PEOPLE AND TO CAUSE THEM
TO WALK IN HIS STATUTES AND OBEY HIS RULES.

WEEK 2

DAY 8 - MONDAY

Galatians 2:1-10, Isaiah 19:21-25

Please refer to pages 16-17 for background and context on today's reading.

In today's reading in Isaiah, we see this prophecy of the Egyptians worshipping with the Assyrians together alongside Israel. A foreshadowing of a time in the future when the Jewish and Gentile nations would unite under the banner of Jesus Christ. The whole world—represented by Egypt and Assyria, at either end of Isaiah's historical landscape—united in worship. God's plan is to win worshipers from all nations, not just from Israel.

UNITY IN THE BODY OF CHRIST

Paul talks often of the body of Christ and the rubber of ethnic differences meets the road of his ministry in Galatians. And in chapter 2, he specifically explains that the apostles to the Jews (James, Peter, and John) agreed with him that there was no need for Titus or other Gentile Christians to submit to Jewish ritual law. I feel Galatians reading me as much as I am reading it. What expectations do I have for other believers, and for myself? What do I think Christians should look like, act like? How should they think and feel? What do I add to the truth, or what do I believe that others have added? Paul shows us how true discipleship and evangelism should be shaped by Christ, not the world. It is as simple, and as profoundly complicated, as "God does not show favoritism" (Gal 2:6). We can substitute categories from centuries of Church history into the slots of "Jew" and "Gentile," but the truth does not change. The gospel is just as true for you as it is for me or anyone else. Our salvation is based only on the finished work of Christ—nothing we do or don't do can change it. We are secure in our Savior.

Written by Melanie Rainer - *She Reads Truth*

**WHAT STOOD OUT IN TODAY'S
READING?**

Go to graceclarksville.com/intheword for additional study resources.

WEEK 2

DAY 9 - TUESDAY

Acts 15:1-29, Galatians 2:1-10

We read in Acts today about the Jerusalem Council. The passages from Acts help us understand the background and context of what Paul is talking about in Galatians 2. See pages 16-17 for more details of the timeline.

REMEMBER THE POOR

In Galatians 2:10, Paul reminds them to remember the poor. Paul is afraid that the believers have lost their focus by pointing fingers at one another about who is following the law rather than focusing on what it looks like to serve one another. The heart of his reminder is to keep their eyes on the mission of Christ who came with gentleness and humility to serve the "least of these."

DO YOU EVER FIND YOURSELF
DISTRACTED FROM THE MISSION
OF CHRIST TO SERVE OTHERS?

PRAY TODAY FOR GOD TO OPEN
YOUR EYES TO THE PLACES
WHERE YOU CAN "REMEMBER
THE POOR".

WEEK 2

DAY 10 - WEDNESDAY

Galatians 2:11-21, Acts 10:9-48

GOD DOESN'T SHOW FAVORITISM

Today, we see Paul confront Peter (also known as Cephas). To understand why Paul is upset with Peter, we have to go back to the Acts 10 passage where we see God showing Peter through a vision that ALL (Gentiles and Jews) are equal in his eyes. God gave Peter this vision and then later directed Peter to the home of a Roman centurion, named Cornelius. Cornelius accepted Jesus and received the Holy Spirit. God was willing to give his Holy Spirit even to Gentiles who would repent and believe in Jesus. After the vision & this conversion, Peter says "Now I truly understand that God doesn't show favoritism" (Acts 10:34). Peter shifted his way of thinking after this encounter and began to regularly eat with Gentiles. But then later as we see in our Galatians passage, Peter reverted back to his old ways of separating himself from the Gentiles. This upset Paul and pushed him to confront Peter's behavior in the Galatians passage.

Tim Keller says this in his book *Galatians For You*, "Peter was allowing cultural differences to become more important than gospel unity. Paul does not primarily see his fellow apostle's behavior as rude, or unmannered, or unwelcoming, as we might. Fundamentally, he sees that something deeper is going on. Peter is 'not acting in line with the truth of the gospel' (Galatians 2:14)."

N.T. Wright says in his study of Galatians, "The question Paul and Peter have run into, which was focused on whether Jewish and Gentile Christians were allowed to eat at the same table, is the question 'Who are the true people of God?' Paul's answer is simple: all who are 'in the Messiah' are the true people of God. That means believing Gentiles as well as believing Jews. The heart of Paul's argument is that one must lose everything, including the memory of who one was before, and one must accept and learn to live by a new identity with a new foundation."

WHAT OLD IDENTITIES HAVE YOU DISCARDED OR SHOULD YOU DISCARD BECAUSE OF YOUR NEW IDENTITY IN CHRIST?

DOES SEEING OTHERS THROUGH THEIR IDENTITY IN CHRIST CHANGE THE WAY YOU BEHAVE TOWARDS THEM?

WEEK 2

DAY 11 - THURSDAY

Galatians 2:11-21

JUSTIFIED BY THE BLOOD OF JESUS

This latter half of Galatians 2 is one of the strongest rebukes of an apostle in the Bible. Paul calls Peter (also known as Cephas), a hypocrite who deviated from the true gospel. Peter had been eating non-Jewish-law-approved meals with Gentile Christians. But when a group of radical Jewish leaders called the circumcision party disapproved, Peter stopped eating with Gentiles. The Judaizers believed that to be a true Christian, a Gentile had to become Jewish first and follow Jewish law.

In his book, *Galatians for You*, Tim Keller writes, "Paul did not simply say: You're breaking the rules (even though Peter was), but: You've forgotten the gospel: your own gracious welcome in Christ. Paul did not focus so much on the sinful behavior as on the sinful attitude of self-righteousness that lay beneath it."

More often than I wish I, like Peter, wonder, how can I live out my faith but in a way that doesn't make other people angry or uncomfortable? I live in the irreconcilable tension of seeking the approval of both God and man (directly antithetical to what we read a few days ago in Galatians 1:10).

After rebuking Peter, Paul goes on to make one of the most impassioned, beautiful expositions of the true gospel. He says, "a person is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ... I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died for nothing" (vv.16,21).

Paul spends the rest of Galatians building on this truth: the traditional Jewish law does not save or purify people, only faith in Christ who died and rose again. The approval of other people doesn't save you either, and you only need acceptance by God the Father, gained by the righteousness of Christ given to us when we believe. All we need is in Christ. All we have is Christ. Christ did not die for nothing; He died for you and me.

Written by Melanie Rainer - *She Reads Truth*

PAUL IS ASKING THE QUESTION, WHY DO WE SEEK APPROVAL FROM MAN WHEN WE ARE ALREADY JUSTIFIED BY THE BLOOD OF CHRIST? DO YOU LIVE IN THE TENSION BETWEEN PLEASING GOD AND MAN?

WHAT DID GOD REVEAL TO YOU TODAY ABOUT LIVING IN THAT TENSION?

WEEK 2

DAY 12 - FRIDAY

Galatians 2:16-21

So what is Paul trying to say here? He is saying that the law shows us how we should live, but also shows us that we will never be able to keep the works of the law perfectly, so we need a Savior. Paul, knowing this fact says he "was crucified with Christ" and he "died to the law " because it was not the law that made him acceptable and clean before the Lord, it was the fact that he was "crucified with Christ"...he was covered by the blood of Jesus and made clean.

As Tim Keller says, "If we could save ourselves, Christ's death is pointless, and means nothing. If we realize we cannot save ourselves, Christ's death will mean everything to us. And we will spend the life that He has given us in joyful service of Him, bringing our whole lives into line with the gospel. Now that he is justified and accepted, Paul has a new motive for obedience that is far more wholesome and powerful. He wants simply to live for the one "who loved me and gave himself for me" (v 20)."

CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST

Our lives are no longer our own. Christ lives in us and works through us. He brings with Him life after death. That's the way of the gospel. Paul reminds us of the time Peter struggled to walk in the freedom of the gospel. Christ's cross and empty tomb finished the demands of the law. "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes" (Romans 10:4). If the law were a subway, Christ is the final stop. Everyone off. If the law were a movie, Christ is the hero-scene. Roll the credits. With Christ, we've died to the law, and we now live with Christ.

If you are a Christian, your commitment to Him is more than merely believing that a man from Nazareth was crucified under Roman occupation. You were crucified, too, right along with Him. And when Christ walked out of that borrowed burial site, you walked out, too—into new life. Christ lives in you, and you live by faith. Why did Christ do all of this for you? Because He knew you were going to be a great Christian? Ha! No, not at all. He knew you and I would be bumbling followers of The Way. Did He do all of this because our good works caught His attention? Nope. Paul is clear: Jesus loved us and gave Himself for us out of His great love for us (Ephesians 2:4-5). Live freely in Christ, with Christ, and for Christ.

Written by J.A. Medders - *He Reads Truth*

**WHAT DOES BEING
"CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST"
MEAN TO YOU?**

WEEK 2

DAY 13 - SATURDAY - GRACE DAY

Use today to rest, pray and catch up on any of this week's reading that you missed.

In this week's reading:

1. *What themes did you see emerge?*
2. *What was the biggest thing that God revealed to you this week?*
3. *What next step do you need to take based on what He revealed to you this week?*

WEEK 2

DAY 14 - SUNDAY - REFLECTION DAY

Reflect on 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."

Of course, Paul was not literally crucified with Christ on the cross, but what Paul means is that when we accept Jesus as our Savior, we die to our old self and our old ways and take up a new way of life with Christ living within us. Because of our acceptance of Jesus and his blood shed for us on the cross, we now stand justified (clean) in the eyes of God, this is not a status we earned, but a gift given to us through our faith in Christ. We now get to live in the light of His unexplainable love for us and share His love with all those around us.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS FOR WEEK 2

How are you most tempted to seek the approval of men? What would change if instead of seeking the approval of men, you sought to please the God who already approves of you?

Do you find yourself returning to the works of the law to feel acceptable to God even though Jesus came to free us from the law?

When God looks at you, you stand justified (clean) before Him because of the blood of Jesus. Is that hard for you to accept?

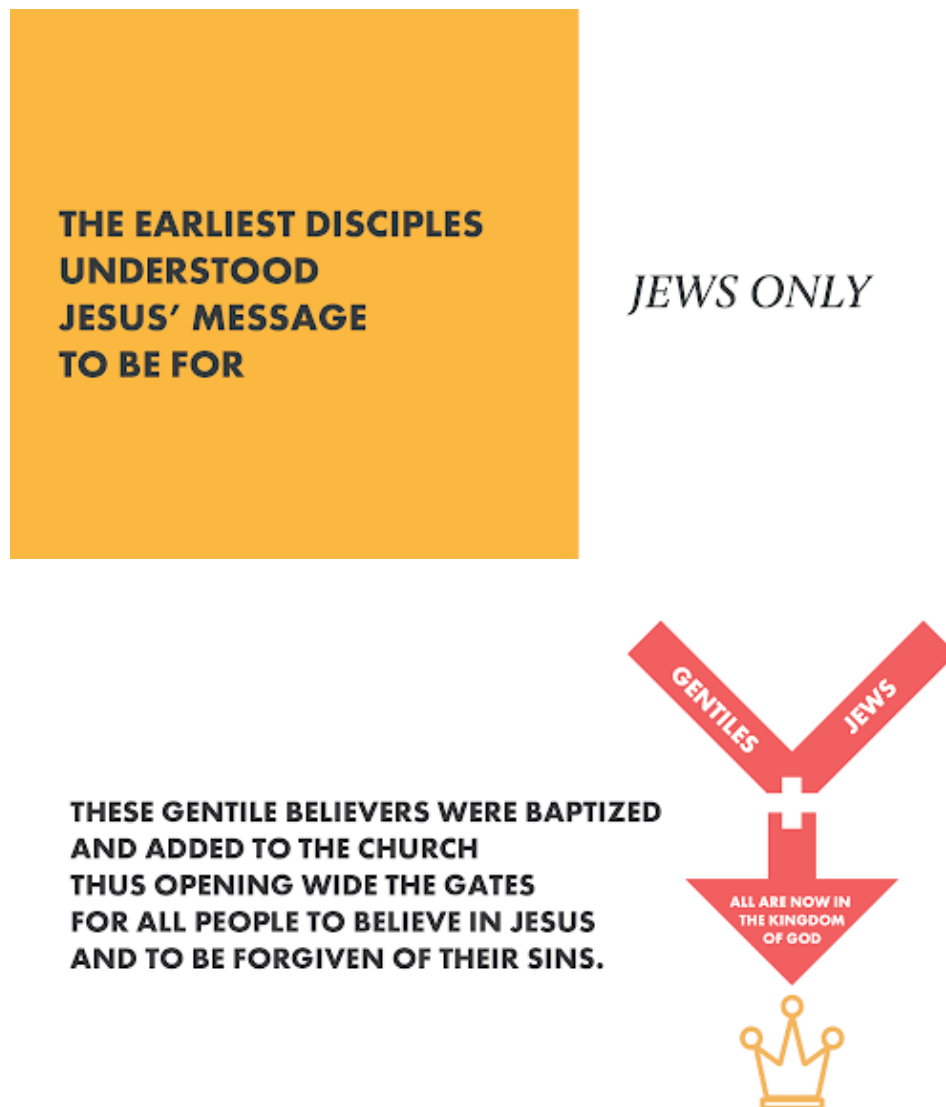


WEEK 3

GALATIANS CHAPTER 3

In Galatians chapter 3, Paul says, *"You have the Spirit. How did that happen? Did you do some action that summoned Him? Or did He come to you through the faith God granted you? Now that you've got the Spirit, why are you trying to do something to gain God's approval? The Spirit is God's seal of approval!"* Then he summarizes an important idea in a succinct way, twice. *"It is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham"* (3:7). And, *"If you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise"* (3:29). He's writing this letter to Gentiles. Even though God has a unique, irreplaceable relationship with ethnic Israel, Gentiles are still counted among the descendants of Abraham. That relationship isn't contingent on ethnicity or circumcision; it's contingent on faith in Christ and available to anyone of any ethnicity, Jew or Gentile. Four hundred thirty years before God gave the law to Moses, He promised Abraham that all the nations of the earth would be blessed through Him. Salvation has always been about faith in YHWH and has always been available for anyone who has that. *"There 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"* (3:28). What an incredible relief! Because of Christ, the door is open to everyone. And because of the Spirit, we're united across our differences.

Written by Tara-Leigh Cobble - *The Bible Recap*





**“THERE 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.”**

GALATIANS 3:28

WEEK 3

DAY 15 - MONDAY

Galatians 3:1-9, Genesis 15:1-6, Matthew 3:1-12

JUSTIFICATION THROUGH FAITH

The Galatians had done what so many of us do: turned to good works (in their case this was living by the Jewish ceremonial law) as their means of justification. They were living as if their standing in the eyes of God was based on their actions. This is why Paul reacted so strongly. He hammers them with rhetorical questions each of which smashes the foundation for their false sense of justification.

- "Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by believing what you heard?"
- "Does God give you the Spirit and work miracles among you by your doing or by works of the law?"
- "Or is it by believing what you heard—just like Abraham who believed God and it was credited to him for righteousness?"

This last question is incredibly significant for people seeking to be good Jews, to follow the law. It harkens back to their patriarch and his standing before God. In Genesis 15, God promises Abraham, an old man, an heir who will lead to offspring as numerous as the stars. Abraham believed this promise and it was "credited to him as righteousness"—that is, his faith was his righteousness in the eyes of God. Abraham, the father of God's people, was justified by faith. The Galatians could not rest on their law-based laurels. A few years prior John the Baptist had warned about this very thing when he preached the coming of Jesus: "Do not presume to say to yourselves 'We have Abraham as our father.'" (Matthew 3:1-12) He then preaches repentance and the coming of Christ, the true messiah.

Paul ends this section with the clarifying, defining words: "those who have faith, these are Abraham's sons." He does not dismiss the significance of Abraham or God's promise to him. No, he clarifies it. Abraham was promised to be the father of a great nation through whom all the nations of the world would be blessed (gentiles, like me and most of you). How does this happen? Through Jesus, the offspring of Abraham. We are made right in the eyes of God by faith in Jesus and no other way, no other action, no other law. So it is that faith that folds us into the family of Abraham, the people of God.

Written by Barnabas Piper - *He Reads Truth*

**HOW DOES IT FEEL TO KNOW
YOU ARE PART OF GOD'S BIG
DIVERSE FAMILY?**

**WHAT DID GOD REVEAL
TO YOU THROUGH THESE
SCRIPTURES TODAY?**

WEEK 3

DAY 16- TUESDAY

Galatians 3:1-9, Romans 4:13-25

FAITH COUNTED AS RIGHTEOUSNESS

In these verses, we see Abraham displaying such unwavering faith. He was sure that God would do what He had promised. Abraham trusted God to work despite his wife's barrenness to fulfill what seemed to be an impossible promise. The scriptures say that Abraham's faith was credited to him as righteousness. When God promised Abraham that he would be the father of many nations, Abraham didn't try to earn that promise from God; he didn't even try to fully understand it, he simply believed what God said, that's faith. Romans 4:20 says, "No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God..." So if Abraham was declared righteous simply because of his faith, why do we (and The Galatians) feel like we need to add extra rules for people to be included in the family of God?

As Tony Evans puts it in his Bible commentary, "Abraham's family both Jews and Gentiles—are those who have faith in God, not those who seek to keep the law. The gospel was announced ahead of time to Abraham when God promised that all the nations would be blessed through him. They would be blessed through "the seed" of Abraham, Jesus Christ (Gal 3:16, 19). God's blessings come to those who have faith like Abraham (3:9), who exercised faith before the giving of the law."

Tim Keller says it this way in his book *Galatians for You*, "When God credits righteousness, He is conferring a legal status on someone. He treats them as actually righteous and free from condemnation, even though they are still actually unrighteous in their heart and behavior. They are 'justified'. This flies in the face of all traditional religion, which tells us that either we are living righteously and are therefore pleasing and acceptable to God, or we are living unrighteously and are therefore alienated from God. But Paul (and Abraham) are showing that it is possible to be loved and accepted by God while we are ourselves sinful and imperfect."

HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE FAITH?

WHY IS IT HOPEFUL THAT IT IS BY FAITH YOU ARE CREDITED AS RIGHTEOUS?

WEEK 3

DAY 17 - WEDNESDAY

Galatians 3:10-18, Genesis 12:1-7, 1 Peter 2:24-25

LAW AND PROMISE

One of the most foundational truths of the gospel, of being a Christian, is that we are unable to save ourselves because we are sinners. In our nature we are rebellious against God and cannot make ourselves righteous and good enough to enter his perfect Holy presence and be right in his eyes. Somehow, some way, though, we convince ourselves that good works will save us and that following a moral code will gain us justification in God's eyes. It is an easy thing to believe: do good and earn rewards. In this way we are like the Galatians. What Paul says is something much stronger than "this is incorrect" or "make some adjustments to your thinking." He says "all who rely on the works of the law are under a curse . . . it is clear that no one is justified before God by the law." Not only was the Galatians' focus on law-keeping failing to save, it was keeping them under a curse of judgement by God. By depending on the law they were condemning themselves to hell.

Thank God the passage does not stop there, nor does the gospel. Paul does not leave us with bad news but rather wipes away the curse of the law by looking to Jesus in faith: "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming the curse for us." 1 Peter 2:24 says he "bore our sins in his body on the tree" The curse of the law was broken by the sacrifice of Jesus. The promise of salvation is not just an individual thing. This is a promise for the nations, a fulfilling of God's covenant to Abraham. In Genesis 12:1-7 God calls Abraham to follow him and promises to make Abraham into a great nation. This blessing is not Abraham's ego or world domination; it is a promise to bring hope to the world through Abraham's offspring. "I will make your name great and you will be a blessing . . . and all the peoples on earth will be blessed through you." The law, which came centuries later than this promise, doesn't change it. The law served a different purpose altogether. Salvation is through Jesus alone, and all who have faith in Jesus are members of the promise God made to Abraham, both blessed and commissioned to spread the blessing of Christ to our world.

Written by Barnabas Piper - *He Reads Truth*

**READ GALATIANS 3:18 AGAIN.
WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU
THAT OUR INHERITANCE COMES
BY A PROMISE INSTEAD OF BY
THE LAW?**

**WHAT DID GOD REVEAL TO YOU
TODAY?**

WEEK 3

DAY 18 -THURSDAY

Galatians 3:10-18, Isaiah 53:1-12

THE SERVANT'S PRIESTLY WORK

Isaiah 53 reveals a prophecy written hundreds of years before it would actually happen, the prophet tells of Jesus' death and resurrection in an unbelievably accurate way. The ESV Study Bible says, "This is the servant's priestly work on behalf of those he represents, securing their acceptance before God." These passages are filled with hope because Jesus took what was supposed to be our curse...our punishment and credited us with righteousness instead.

Written by Barnabas Piper - *He Reads Truth*

WHAT STOOD OUT TO YOU IN
THE ISAIAH VERSES TODAY?

WEEK 3

DAY 19 - FRIDAY

Galatians 3:19-29, Jeremiah 31:31-34, Romans 3:21-31

THE PURPOSE OF THE LAW

Paul recognizes that the previous 18 verses have seemingly diminished and undermined the law of God, the very commands God gave his people as a means of being set apart for holiness as his own. Rather than doing what we are often so prompt to do and taking an extreme position Paul answers it in a sequence of clarifying statements adding depth and nuance to our understanding of God's plan and purpose.

First, the law was "added for the sake of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise was made would come." (v.19) Paul clarifies this a few verses later in 3:24 when it says "the law, then, was our guardian until Christ." The Old Testament law was a protective measure, a gift from God to show his people what sin was, what honoring him required, and to guide them to an understanding of righteousness.

Second, makes abundantly clear that the law is not contrary or in opposition to the promise of God to save through Jesus. In 3:21 he explains that the law was not given with the ability to give life. It was never designed to be the means of justification. Following the law without faith was never salvific. God gave the law to protect his people, guide his people, and teach his people their need for a true and perfect savior.

Jeremiah 31 helps us understand the connection between the law (old covenant) and the promise of Jesus (new covenant). In verses 31-34 the Lord declares that he will make a new covenant, not like the old one which Israel broke (and like we break the law). This covenant will be written on their hearts, that is, it will be believed by faith and given by the Spirit. The old covenant law paves the way for the new covenant. Hebrews 10:1 clarifies even further by describing the law as "shadow of good things to come." The sacrifices and rituals of the old covenant law could never purify and never justify, but they echoed forward to the promised saving sacrifice of Jesus.

So what was the purpose of the law? It protected. It foreshadowed. It echoed. This was God's intention, not to save through the law but to create a family for himself: "Through faith you are all sons of God in Christ Jesus." Before Jesus their faith was in the one true God and a coming savior, and it was credited to them as righteousness. Since Jesus' ascension our faith is in him as the perfect sacrifice, the mediator and great high priest, and the coming King.

Written by Barnabas Piper - *He Reads Truth*

DESCRIBE WHAT YOU THINK THE PURPOSE OF THE LAW WAS.

WHAT DO YOU THINK THE JEREMIAH PASSAGE MEANS WHEN IT SAYS "I WILL PUT MY LAW WITHIN YOU"? WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO HAVE THE LAW WRITTEN ON YOUR HEART?

WEEK 3

DAY 20 - SATURDAY - GRACE DAY

Use today to rest, pray and catch up on any of this week's reading that you missed.

In this week's reading:

1. *What themes did you see emerge?*
2. *What was the biggest thing that God revealed to you this week?*
3. *What next step do you need to take based on what He revealed to you this week?*

WEEK 3

DAY 21 - SUNDAY - REFLECTION DAY

Reflect on these passages:

There 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.

Galatians 3:28

He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

I Peter 2:24

For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

Jeremiah 31:33

For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

Romans 3:23-24

Sin flattens us, all unworthy. But Christ redeems us, and presents us beautifully clean, whole, and unified before God. Christianity is open and welcoming to all, and in it "there is no Jew or Greek, slave or free, male and female; since you are all one in Christ Jesus."

Written by Melanie Ranier - *She Reads Truth*

REFLECTION QUESTIONS FOR WEEK 3

What expectations do I have for other believers, and for myself?

What do I think Christians should look like, act like? How should they think and feel?

What do I add to the truth, or what do I believe that others have added?



WEEK 4

GALATIANS CHAPTER 4

WEEK 4

DAY 22 - MONDAY

Galatians 4:1-7, John 14:1-21

The passages in John focus on the fact that we keep His commandments (the law) because we love Him, not out of a posture of earning anything from Him, but in response to His love for us, this is what living in freedom in Christ looks like.

FREEDOM IN CHRIST

When I started reading the Bible in my 20s, I found something completely different than I was expecting. It wasn't the drudgery that my childhood friends described. It wasn't lists of rules and commands that left us hopeless and helpless. It was something wondrous. Life-giving, I dare say. Words that told me that God takes people who were orphaned by sin, and makes them part of His family. He adopts them as His sons and daughters (John 14:18). Heirs, the Bible called them (Gal. 4:7). And after I believed, after I recognized the only way to the Father was through the One who called Himself the "way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6), I kept noticing many people who struggled with the same sort of begrudging attitude toward Christianity that my childhood friends had with their catechism classes. They were exhausted, trying to work for what God had already given them. It was like they had forgotten that "there is no Jew or Greek, slave or free male or female; since you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28). They lived as slaves instead of sons (and daughters) and heirs of the promise. I swore that this wouldn't happen to me. Until it happened to me. Not too long ago, I was tired, running on empty. Something was off. I was working so hard that I took my eyes off the gospel's greatness for myself. So, I turned to the Scriptures once again. And in Galatians, I was once again reminded of this good news: in Christ, I am a child of God. I am adopted into God's family. I am an heir according to God's promises (Gal. 3:29). And because of this, I know I am going to enjoy eternity with Him forever—not because of anything that I do, but all because of Christ, the way, the truth, and the life.

Written by Aaron Armstrong - *He Reads Truth*

DID YOU NOTICE THAT IN GALATIANS 4:7, PAUL SUDDENLY SHIFTS FROM THE PLURAL YOU TO THE SINGULAR YOU, POINTING A FINGER AT THE READER?

DO YOU BELIEVE THIS MESSAGE OF DELIVERANCE IS NOT ONLY FOR PEOPLE IN GENERAL BUT FOR YOU PERSONALLY?

HOW DOES THIS TRUTH CHANGE YOUR HEART TODAY?

WEEK 4

DAY 23 - TUESDAY

Galatians 4:1-7, Romans 8:1-17

Reading these Galatians passages again alongside these passages from Romans helps us to further understand what Paul is trying to tell these Christians at Galatia. Romans 8:15-17 says, *"For 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!' The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and 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."*

LIVING AS A AN HEIR WITH CHRIST

So for a child of God, there is confidence and boldness every day. We don't walk in fear of anyone or anything; our Father owns the place! God will honor us as He honors His one and only Son. We live with heads held high. Our sonship removes the fear of missing fulfillment or losing approval that is at the root of much of our disobedience. So there are two specific steps we can take in order to have a deeper experience of our sonship. First, we must put aside significant time to study the work of the Son, asking the Spirit to illuminate us and make it real to us. We must learn to meditate on the Bible; to connect our prayer to our study and our study to our prayer. Second, we must "cry out" to our Father spontaneously, throughout the day. We must, in other words, analyze and address the issues of everyday life by remembering His fatherly love. We need to learn to ask, moment by moment: Am I acting like a slave who is afraid of God, or like a child who is assured of my Father's love? And as we cry "Abba, Father" in our lives, the Spirit does His work, assuring us "that we are God's children ... co-heirs with Christ" (Romans 8:16-17), and so flooding our hearts with life-changing assurance.

Written by Tim Keller - *Galatians For You*

**HOW DO TODAY'S
SCRIPTURES IMPACT YOU?**

**WHAT DO THEY SHOW YOU
ABOUT WHO GOD IS?**

**WHAT DO THEY SHOW YOU
ABOUT YOURSELF?**

WEEK 4

DAY 24 - WEDNESDAY

Galatians 4:8-20, Romans 1:18-25

PAUL'S CONCERN FOR THE GALATIANS

In these Galatians passages, we see Paul pleading with the Galatians to "become as I am, for I also have become as you are." This is not because Paul wants to elevate himself, but because he hopes that they can see Christ working in His life. He desires deeply for them to find the freedom in Christ that he has found. Paul describes this as "I am again in the anguish of childbirth until Christ is formed in you!" Paul has been where they are and wants to show them a better way. He warns in the Romans passages that they might have exchanged the truth of God for a lie and are serving the created rather than the creator. Paul wants them to look at his life and see the gospel changing him. Tim Keller says it this way, *"Paul has been so personally open about his own heart and so consistent in his own life that he can invite the Galatians to imitate him. Our words are not sufficient for (and maybe not even most important in) persuading others about the truth of Christ. People have to be able to look into our hearts and lives, to assess how we handle trouble, how we deal with disappointment and interruptions, how we conduct our relationships, how we feel and act, so that they can see whether Christ is real and how the gospel affects a day-to-day human life. Generally, we find faith mainly through relationships with joyful, flawed-but-honest, loving Christians, not through arguments, information and books."*

DOES PAUL'S ZEAL FOR THE GALATIANS COMPEL YOU TO SHARE WITH OTHERS HOW JESUS IS CHANGING YOU?

WHO IN YOUR LIFE NEEDS TO SEE YOU AS A "JOYFUL, FLAWED-BUT-HONEST, LOVING CHRISTIAN"?

PRAY ABOUT HOW GOD CAN USE YOUR LIFE AS A TESTIMONY TO OTHERS THAT THE GOSPEL IS REAL.

WEEK 4

DAY 25 - THURSDAY

Galatians 4:21-31, Genesis 16:1-16, Romans 9:6-8

See pages 40-41 for more detail about these passages.

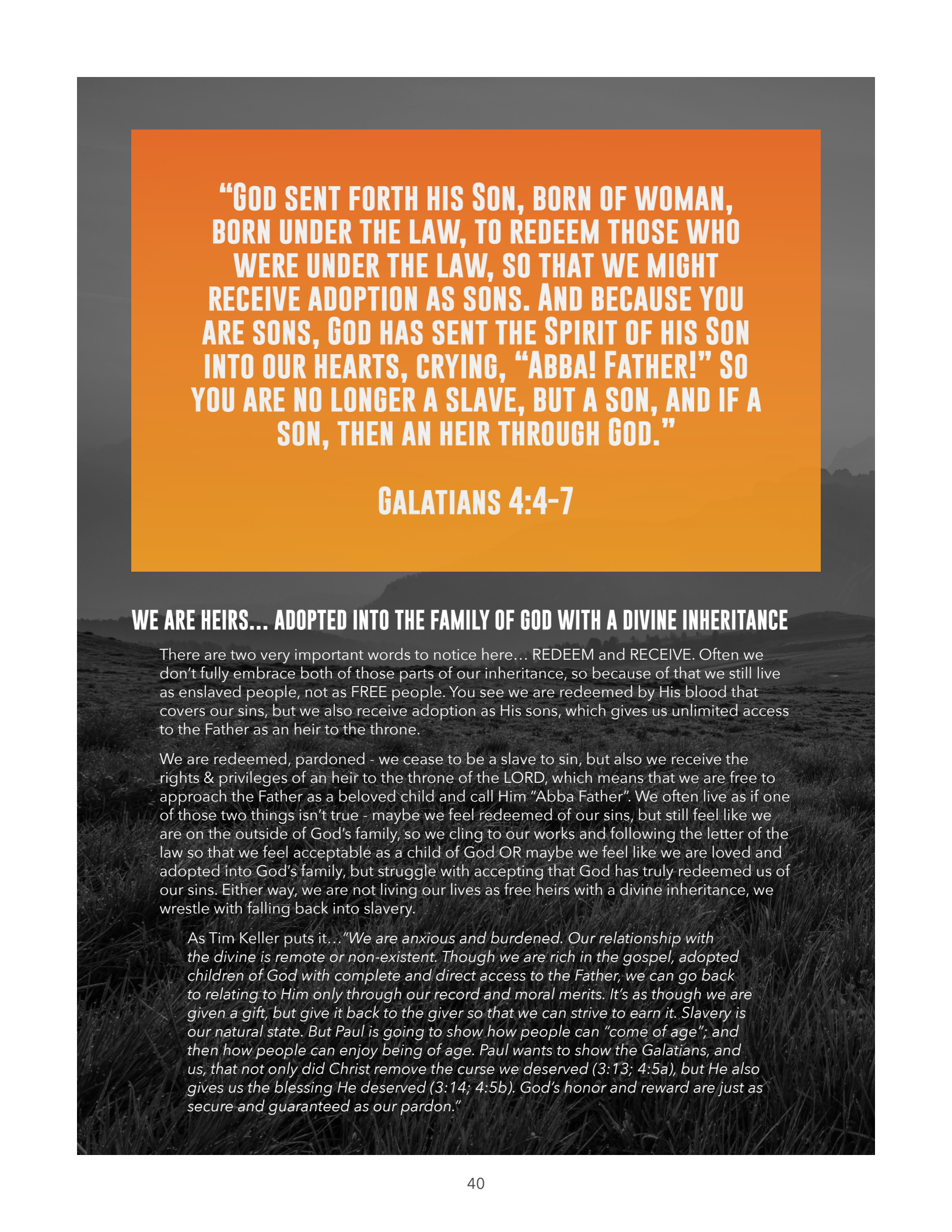
CHILDREN OF PROMISE

In these passages, Paul showed (the Galatians) another way to read the Old Testament, to see themselves in the story, not as outsiders, but as real and true descendants of Abraham and heirs of God's promises. Long before the law was given to Moses, there was Abraham, and he was an outsider until God invited him in, not because of anything he had done, but simply on the basis of faith. Abraham had two sons—Ishmael and Isaac. Ishmael was the son of the slave woman, Hagar, and the result of Abraham taking God's promises into his own hands. Isaac, on the other hand, was the child given to Abraham and Sarah. His birth was *unnatural*. It was miraculous. And it was through this miracle child, Isaac, that God's promises came down through history. Like Isaac, the Galatians were "unnatural" children of God. They, too, were part of God's family by way of a miracle. "Now you too, brothers and sisters, like Isaac, are children of promise" (Galatians 4:28). God's family is made up of men, women, and children who enter in by faith, in fulfillment of the promises God spoke to Abraham. Being a Jew or a Gentile means nothing. What matters is Christ. We can belong to the family of God, not because of who our parents are or because of how well we obey, but simply because Jesus paid the price and invites us to enter in by faith. Thanks be to God!

Written by John Greco - *He Reads Truth*

**WHAT DID YOU LEARN ABOUT
GOD IN TODAY'S READING?**

**WHAT DOES BEING A "CHILD
OF PROMISE" MEAN TO YOU?**



**“GOD SENT FORTH HIS SON, BORN OF WOMAN,
BORN UNDER THE LAW, TO REDEEM THOSE WHO
WERE UNDER THE LAW, SO THAT WE MIGHT
RECEIVE ADOPTION AS SONS. AND BECAUSE YOU
ARE SONS, GOD HAS SENT THE SPIRIT OF HIS SON
INTO OUR HEARTS, CRYING, “ABBA! FATHER!” SO
YOU ARE NO LONGER A SLAVE, BUT A SON, AND IF A
SON, THEN AN HEIR THROUGH GOD.”**

GALATIANS 4:4-7

WE ARE HEIRS... ADOPTED INTO THE FAMILY OF GOD WITH A DIVINE INHERITANCE

There are two very important words to notice here... REDEEM and RECEIVE. Often we don't fully embrace both of those parts of our inheritance, so because of that we still live as enslaved people, not as FREE people. You see we are redeemed by His blood that covers our sins, but we also receive adoption as His sons, which gives us unlimited access to the Father as an heir to the throne.

We are redeemed, pardoned - we cease to be a slave to sin, but also we receive the rights & privileges of an heir to the throne of the LORD, which means that we are free to approach the Father as a beloved child and call Him "Abba Father". We often live as if one of those two things isn't true - maybe we feel redeemed of our sins, but still feel like we are on the outside of God's family, so we cling to our works and following the letter of the law so that we feel acceptable as a child of God OR maybe we feel like we are loved and adopted into God's family, but struggle with accepting that God has truly redeemed us of our sins. Either way, we are not living our lives as free heirs with a divine inheritance, we wrestle with falling back into slavery.

As Tim Keller puts it... "We are anxious and burdened. Our relationship with the divine is remote or non-existent. Though we are rich in the gospel, adopted children of God with complete and direct access to the Father, we can go back to relating to Him only through our record and moral merits. It's as though we are given a gift, but give it back to the giver so that we can strive to earn it. Slavery is our natural state. But Paul is going to show how people can "come of age"; and then how people can enjoy being of age. Paul wants to show the Galatians, and us, that not only did Christ remove the curse we deserved (3:13; 4:5a), but He also gives us the blessing He deserved (3:14; 4:5b). God's honor and reward are just as secure and guaranteed as our pardon."

AN ALLEGORY OF THE GOSPEL

(Paul's Allegory in Galatians 4:21-31)

In Galatians 4:21-31, Paul uses an allegory to further explore this idea of living enslaved by the law vs living free in Christ. This allegory uses the story from Genesis of Sarah and Hagar. This church in Galatia would likely have been familiar with this story and the false teachers were likely using this story to spread a false gospel. Abraham and Sarah tried to take things into their own hands. Tim Keller explains, "Abraham had two sons, Ishmael and Isaac, by two different women. And they were born in very different circumstances, which are crucial to understanding the point Paul is making. God had promised that He would provide Abraham with an heir. But he was old, his wife Sarah was barren, and he had lived in this land for a decade without children. So Sarah suggested that Abraham sleep with her maidservant, Hagar, so they could "build a family through her" (Gen. 16:1-2). "Abraham agreed", Hagar conceived, and Ishmael was born.

Fourteen years later, when Abraham was one hundred, he had another child, this time by his barren wife. "The Lord did for Sarah what he had promised. Sarah became pregnant and bore a son to Abraham in his old age ... Abraham gave the name Isaac to the son Sarah bore him" Paul sums up the differences in births when he says: "[The] son by the slave woman was born in the ordinary way; but his son by the free woman was born as the result of a promise" (Gal 4:23). Taken in this narrow, figurative sense, Hagar's son (Ishmael) represents seeking salvation by works, and Sarah relying on salvation by God's grace. This is a really interesting analogy. The gospel is that we do not try to attain a righteousness that our abilities can develop. Rather, we are to receive a righteousness provided through supernatural acts of God in history. We need to rely on God—just as Abraham eventually learned that he needed the miraculous work of God to provide him with a son and heir. As Abraham needed to switch his faith from his own efforts to God's supernatural work, so these Galatian Christians need to look back to Christ's work, rather than at their own law-keeping efforts. Therefore there are two ways of being related to Abraham: one right way and one wrong way. It is a brilliant argument."

LIVING ENSLAVED BY THE LAW

RELYING ON OUR OWN WORKS FOR SALVATION

OLD COVENANT - PRE-JESUS

REPRESENTED BY HAGAR - SLAVE

CHILD BY FLESH/WORKS - ISHMAEL

DECENDANTS OF ISHMAEL - PERSECUTORS

NO INHERITANCE

LIVING FREE IN CHRIST BY GRACE

RELYING ON THE POWER OF GOD WORKING IN & THROUGH US

NEW COVENANT - FULFILLED IN JESUS

REPRESENTED BY SARAH - FREE

CHILD BY PROMISE/SPIRIT - ISAAC

DECENDANTS OF ISAAC - PERSECUTED

HEIRS WITH FULL INHERITANCE

WEEK 4

DAY 26 - FRIDAY

Galatians 4:6,31, John 8:31-36

FREE INDEED

Paul's message throughout Galatians 4 is that we have been set free because when we accepted Jesus, we were given the gift of the Spirit to live within us. Yet our human nature wants to run back to slavery being bound by our efforts to earn His love and being bound by the lies of the enemy that say we are not redeemed or loved by God. In these John passages, we see Jesus say, "If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." Do you believe you are free?

**SPEND SOME TIME TODAY
PROCESSING GALATIANS 4
AND ALL THE ADDITIONAL
PASSAGES THAT WE READ
THIS WEEK.**

**WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE
"FREE INDEED"?**

WEEK 4

DAY 27 - SATURDAY - GRACE DAY

Use today to rest, pray and catch up on any of this week's reading that you missed.

In this week's reading:

1. *What themes did you see emerge?*
2. *What was the biggest thing that God revealed to you this week?*
3. *What next step do you need to take based on what He revealed to you this week?*

WEEK 4

DAY 28 - SUNDAY - REFLECTION DAY

Reflect on these passages:

"But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!'" So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God."

Galatians 4:4-7

"If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. 'I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.'"

John 14:15-18

"There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit."

Romans 8:1-4

REFLECTION QUESTIONS FOR WEEK FOUR:

What verses impacted you the most this week?

What does living free mean to you now after what we have read this week? Has your perspective changed?



WEEK 5

GALATIANS CHAPTER 5

THE HEART OF PAUL'S MESSAGE TO THE GALATIANS

We have seen up until now in Galatians that Paul is stressing that the Galatians not give in to this issue of circumcision. His passion is not specifically about circumcision, but that if they give into this false teaching it will impact everything. He believes the Galatians have been "running well" and that this teaching will hinder them from "obeying the truth". He even says in 5:9 that "A little leaven leavens the whole lump" insinuating that this seemingly small thing can ruin their freedom.

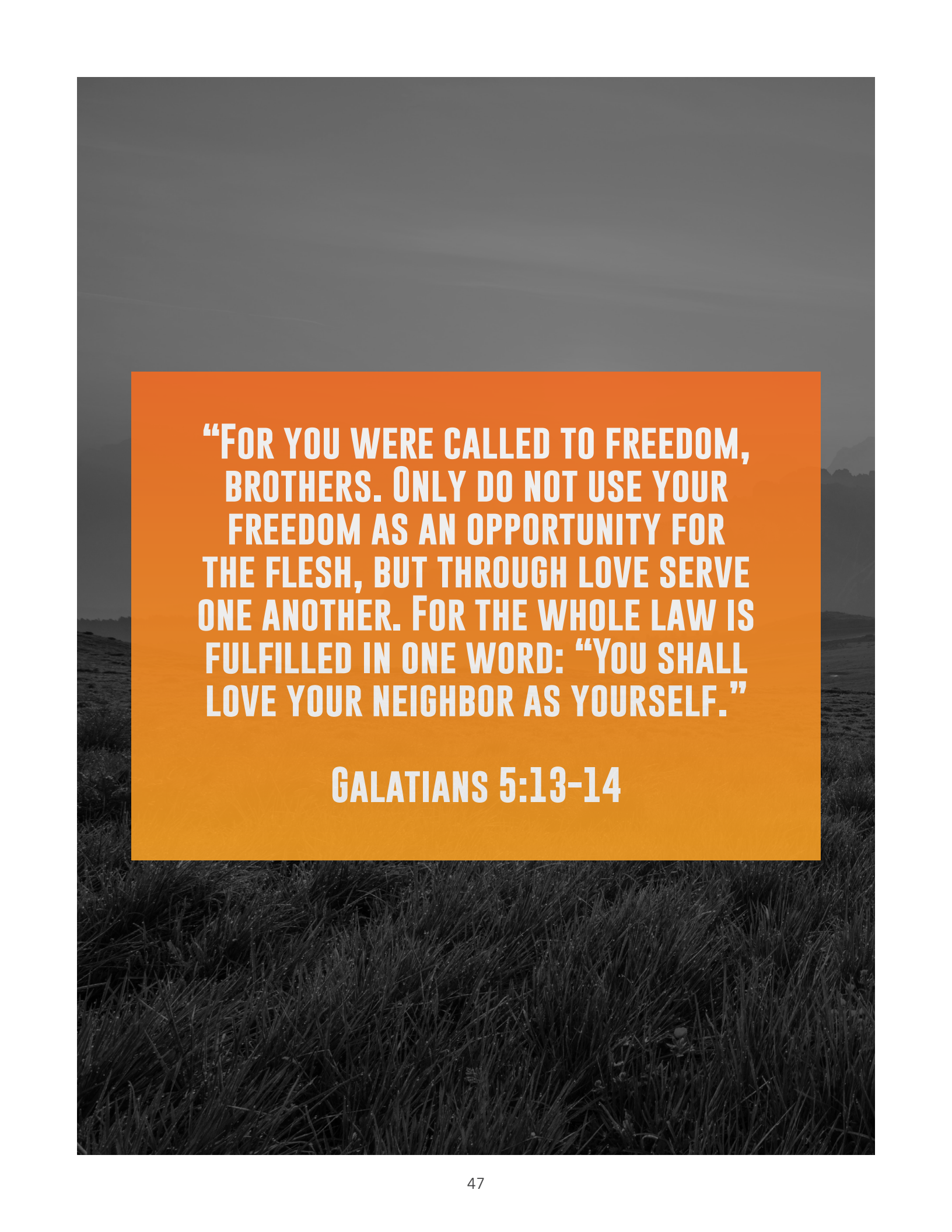
You see Paul in this chapter is worried about two things...

1. *the Galatians losing their freedom by seeking their salvation through law keeping*
2. *the Galatians abusing their freedom by rejecting the rules all together*

Tim Keller says, *"While the message of Galatians 5:1-12 is: Don't lose gospel freedom, the message of Galatians 5:13-15 warn us: Don't abuse gospel freedom. The obligation that is gone for the Christian is the obligation to obey the law to be saved, which is impossible to achieve. But now that we are saved wholly and freely by grace we are, if anything, more obligated to obey the law! Why? Because we have more reason to love God than we ever did before. Love arises from gospel faith and hope (v 5-6), and overflows into loving and serving our neighbors, rather than using them to serve ourselves. And loving our neighbor is 'the entire law ... summed up in a single command' (v 14)."*

In Galatians 5, Paul hits the heart of his message to the Galatians. He truly desires for them to get this so they can **live free and help others live free as well**. Tara-Leigh Cobble in The Bible Recap says it this way, *"(Paul) uses intense language to say that if they rely on works at all, they've missed the gospel and they've missed Christ: 'You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law' (5:4). He isn't saying they'll lose their salvation—he's saying they clearly don't grasp the gospel. At the end of that verse, he says, 'You have fallen away from grace.' Grace means 'unmerited favor'—it's when we get what we don't deserve. The phrase 'fall from grace' is often misused as a way of saying someone has fallen into sin. But Paul shows us that falling from grace is more like falling into self-righteousness (which, to be fair, is also sin), making an effort to earn what has been freely given. He says our freedom doesn't terminate on us. It's not a pass to live for ourselves and sin all we want. Freedom is an opportunity to magnify God's character and model His love to the world around us. We only get this freedom to begin with because the Spirit lives in us, and there's only one thing He wants to do: Magnify God—which is what the Spirit does in us, producing His fruit in us. And Paul shows us what this Spirit fruit looks like on display: If another Christian is ensnared in sin patterns and can't get free, lean in with gentleness to help. Don't become arrogant that you're helping, because that could be you next week. Share with those who teach, and don't tire of doing good—especially to other believers. He reminds them what it looks like to be a family."*

Jesus came to give us freedom... a freedom that allows us to live lives that say "I WANT to OBEY" rather than an "I HAVE to OBEY" A life where we seek to honor God with our lives because of our acceptance, not to gain acceptance. God's immeasurable love for us is our motivation to obey and follow the law!



**“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. FOR THE WHOLE LAW IS
FULFILLED IN ONE WORD: “YOU SHALL
LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.”**

GALATIANS 5:13-14

WEEK 5

DAY 29 - MONDAY

Galatians 5:1-15, Matthew 22:37-40

There is a fine line between LEGALISM (following the law will save you) and LICENSE (grace gives you freedom to do as you please), this is a very important contrast that Paul is trying to make here in Galatians 5 as he lands on what we as Christ followers are to do with our freedom. This freedom is neither intended to enslave us to the law through legalism or to give us free license to be our own authority with no regard for the law.

WE ARE FREE, NOW WHAT?

Give us an inch, and we'll take a mile. Christians can fall prey to the same temptations as everyone else. It can be hard to know where to draw the line in our Christian freedom. We're "called to be free," but how free? (Galatians 5:13). What movies should we really allow ourselves to watch? How much time can we spend on our phones every day? How often do we actually need to be in church on Sunday morning? We are not bound by the ten thousand commandments, and we instead enjoy the freedom and grace of two:

"'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and most important command. The second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets depend on these two commands" (Matthew 22:37-40).

Really, in just these two commands, all are fulfilled. In this we see what Paul means when he calls the Galatians to "faith working through love". With this in mind, suddenly, it seems we actually have a lot of freedom. The Ten Commandments allow for freedom in Christ, but that freedom is not for us to see how much we can get away with; rather, it is freedom to bear the fruit of love for one another, as brothers and sisters. It is not to be used as an opportunity to return to the flesh. So how do we use our freedom rightly? The Holy Spirit must quicken us inwardly. Outward acts of faith are not a measure of our identity in Christ. It is the inward washing of the Spirit alone that sets us free. In fact, a faith that looks amazing from the outside can be deceptive. Man judges by the outside, but God judges the heart (1 Samuel 16:7). Our hunger for outward approval and reputation often ensnares us, and distracts us from our need for the inward work of the Spirit. The end result is a shallow and fruitless faith, which actually makes us "alienated from Christ" (Gal 5:4). Furthermore, the pride of self-reliance also produced discord in the church at Galatia, prompting Paul's warning: "If you bite and devour one another, watch out, or you will be consumed by one another". True freedom is found in the love and Lordship of Christ, which "compels us" to love others as He has loved us (2 Corinthians 5:14-15). In Christ Jesus, we are free from bondage to the law, and free to serve Christ instead. He has called us to walk in the liberty of love. May we use our freedom to show our gratitude to Christ.

Written by Rebecca Faires - *She Reads Truth*

REFLECT ON WHETHER YOU LEAN MORE ON THE SIDE OF LEGALISM OR ON THE SIDE OF LICENSE. DO YOU STRUGGLE WITH WHAT TO DO WITH THIS FREEDOM THAT CHRIST OFFERS?

WEEK 5

DAY 30 - TUESDAY

Galatians 5:1-15, 1 John 3:19-24

WE ARE LOVED

Paul wrote to remind the Galatians of their freedom in Christ. Jesus paid the price for their sins, so there was now nothing standing between them and the love of God. "For you were called to be free, brothers and sisters" (Gal 5:13). But the false teachers in their midst were preaching a twisted gospel that would render Christ's sacrifice meaningless. If salvation must be earned, the cross accomplished nothing. To turn and follow the instructions of the false teachers would be to turn away from Christ, to reject the grace He offers. It's no wonder Paul used such harsh language in this passage: "I wish those who are disturbing you might also let themselves be mutilated!" (Gal 5:12). This is deadly serious business.

Paul's letter to the Galatians served to remind them of the moment in their own history that was truer than every lie those false teachers could think up. But his letter wasn't just for them. The Holy Spirit inspired Paul's words and preserved them so that you and I, nearly two thousand years later, could receive the same reminder: In Christ, we have God's love. There's nothing we can do to show ourselves approved. We already are, and it's all thanks to grace, bought and paid for on our behalf at Calvary.

Written by John Greco - *He Reads Truth*

DO YOU LIVE FIRMLY IN THE TRUTH THAT NOTHING CAN SEPARATE YOU FROM THE LOVE OF GOD?

HOW DOES LIVING IN THE LIGHT OF THAT TRUTH COMPEL YOU TO LOVE OTHERS?

WEEK 5

DAY 31 - WEDNESDAY

Galatians 5:16-26, Ezekiel 37:11-14

FLESH VS SPIRIT

In this passage, Paul gives us two lists: a list of death and a list of life—the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:19-23). Our flesh wars with the Spirit, but Paul encourages us in this manner: “If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit” (Gal 5:25). This is a powerful image! We’re not expected to walk out our faith journey alone; instead, we must learn to yield to the Holy Spirit. In daily life, our heart’s proclivities lead us away from the Word and drown out the voice of the Spirit; it’s easier to listen to our senses, our circumstances, and our vain desires. Our inattention to the Spirit causes us to fall out of step with Him. Theologian John Owen put it this way: “Be killing sin, or it will be killing you.” Daily, hourly, we are to fix our attention on the Word, hide it in our hearts, and yield our desires to Christ— not by our own strength, but by yielding to the Spirit within us. We must bring our bone-dry souls to the Fountain of Life. As God promised to Ezekiel: “You will know that I am the LORD, my people, when I open your graves and bring you up from them. I will put my Spirit in you, and you will live” (Ezek 37:13-14). Here’s the good news: this is all God’s work; a life in step with the Spirit grows out of the Spirit of adoption that we have already received by grace. God calls us to live in the Spirit that He has already given, “for [we] are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from [ourselves]; it is God’s gift” (Eph. 2:8). Walk in step with His Spirit.

Written by Rebecca Faires - *She Reads Truth*

THIS PHRASE “WALKING IN STEP WITH THE SPIRIT” MEANS THAT YOUR STEPS ARE BEING LED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT, NOT BY YOUR FLESH. IT MEANS THAT IT WILL NOT BE IN YOUR OWN STRENGTH AND POWER, BUT IN HIS.

WHERE ARE YOU TRYING TO WALK IN YOUR OWN STRENGTH? WHERE DO YOU NEED TO BEGIN “WALKING IN STEP WITH THE SPIRIT”, IN ORDER TO FIGHT AGAINST YOUR FLESH?

WEEK 5

DAY 32 - THURSDAY

Galatians 5:16-26, Ephesians 2:1-10

SO HOW THEN SHALL WE LIVE?

This gift of grace that we have received is what compels us to live a holy life pleasing to the Father vs. living for our own fleshly desires. We cannot lose our salvation, it was taken care of when we accepted Jesus. No matter how successful we are in achieving a holy life, nothing changes our standing before Him. His love & grace is a gift that is NOT based on our performance. Accepting this truth should lead us to lives filled with peace and compel us to show that love to others. It impacts how we live our lives, it compels us to flee from sin and to pursue good works. The power of the Holy Spirit working within us is what helps us fight our fleshly desires and move away from selfishness. Living and looking more like Jesus every day. This is the message that Paul is giving the Galatians (and us), a life of freedom is one that is walking humbly in step with the Spirit, allowing the Spirit to lead and guide our hearts, minds, words and actions. Paul also shares this same message in Ephesians 2:8-10, *"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."*

As we grow in faith, we begin to tap into His power within us to fight off the power of sin. The grace of the gospel might seem like a free pass to sin. It's true you are free to sin, but the hope is that sin begins to lose its power over you.

THINK OF A SIN YOU ARE STRUGGLING WITH. HOW DOES THE GOSPEL FREE YOU UP TO GO TO BATTLE WITH THAT SIN?

READ GALATIANS 5:16 AGAIN. HAVE YOU SEEN THE TRUTH OF THIS VERSE PERSONALLY IN YOUR OWN LIFE?

WEEK 5

DAY 33 - FRIDAY

Galatians 5:22-25

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit."

"When God planted us like trees in His garden, the Spirit started working in us, producing Spirit fruit in us. This word fruit in 5:22 is singular—it's one fruit with nine characteristics. When these things begin to show up in us, that's His signature." Tara-Leigh Cobble - The Bible Recap

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT REFLECTION DAY

One of the jobs of the Holy Spirit is to help us in this battle against the flesh, it's why so often in scripture, the Spirit is referred to as "our Helper." This list in Galatians 5 of the fruit of the Spirit can feel unattainable at times, until we realize that as we are "walking in step with the Spirit", the Spirit will produce these things in us over time as we spend time in God's Word, keep His commands and respond to the Spirit's prompting. It's a divine partnership that as we walk with the Lord faithfully and consistently, the spirit will produce things in us to make us look more like Christ. This is a daily practice of dying to ourselves or as Paul puts it "being crucified with Christ", so that the fruit of the Spirit can grow in our character. We often have to "put to death" some thoughts and actions in our lives to make room for the fruit to grow. We can't do this without the help of the Spirit and it doesn't happen overnight. This is a lifelong pursuit of spiritual growth. Growth is gradual, it's often happening under the surface, slowly changing our hearts which impacts our thoughts, desires and actions. We can have assurance that if we continue to be faithful in walking "in step with the Spirit", growth will come. We will be able to see evidence of the fruit in our lives. It's also important to note that "fruit" here is singular, not plural... the life of a spirit filled person will display all these characteristics and it will impact our relationships.

Take some time today to reflect on the "Fruit of the Spirit" chart on the following page.

TAKE SOME TIME TODAY TO REFLECT ON THE "FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT" CHART ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE.

DO YOU SEE LOVE, JOY, PEACE, PATIENCE, KINDNESS, GOODNESS, FAITHFULNESS, GENTLENESS, AND SELF-CONTROL ON THE INCREASE IN YOUR LIFE?

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

LOVE

AGAPE

SELF GIVING FOR THE GOOD OF OTHERS, UNCONDITIONAL COMMITMENT

TO SERVE A PERSON FOR THEIR GOOD, NOT FOR WHAT THE PERSON BRINGS YOU. A SETTLED STATE OF MIND THAT ARISES FROM GOD'S LOVE FOR US. THE OPPOSITE IS FEAR OR SELF-PROTECTION. & ITS COUNTERFEIT IS SELFISH, WHEN YOU TREAT SOMEONE WELL BECAUSE OF HOW THEY TREAT YOU. (JOHN 15:12-14, I COR. 13, ROMANS 13:10, EPH. 5:25)

JOY

CHARA

CALM DELIGHT, GLADNESS, EXPRESSION OF THE SPIRIT'S PRESENCE

A DELIGHT IN GOD FOR THE SHEER BEAUTY AND WORTH OF WHO HE IS. THE OPPOSITE IS HOPELESSNESS OR DESPAIR, AND ITS COUNTERFEIT IS AN ELATION THAT IS BASED ON EXPERIENCING BLESSINGS, NOT THE BLESSER, CAUSING MOOD SWINGS BASED ON CIRCUMSTANCES. (ROMANS 14:17, I PETER 1:8-9)

PEACE

EIRENE

HARMONY BETWEEN INDIVIDUALS & GROUPS, LIFE SUSTAINING UNITY

A CONFIDENCE AND REST IN THE WISDOM AND CONTROL OF GOD, RATHER THAN IN YOUR OWN. IT REPLACES ANXIETY AND WORRY. THE COUNTERFEIT OF PEACE IS INDIFFERENCE, APATHY, NOT CARING ABOUT SOMETHING. (ROMANS 5:1, PHILIPPIANS 4:7, COLOSSIANS 3:15)

PATIENCE

MAKROTHYMIA

STEADFAST, LONG SUFFERING, PERSEVERANCE WITHOUT COMPLAINT

AN ABILITY TO FACE TROUBLE WITHOUT BLOWING UP, TO BEAR BURDENS AND TRIALS WITH PERSEVERANCE. THE OPPOSITE IS RESENTMENT TOWARD GOD AND OTHERS, AND ITS COUNTERFEITS ARE CYNICISM OR LACK OF CARE. (I CORINTHIANS 13:4, COLOSSIANS 1:11, 3:12, I THESSALONIANS 5:14-15)

KINDNESS

CHRESTOTES

GRACIOUS ACTIONS & ATTITUDE TOWARD IMPERFECT PEOPLE, MERCY

AN ABILITY TO SERVE OTHERS PRACTICALLY. THE OPPOSITE IS ENVY, UNABLE TO REJOICE IN ANOTHER'S JOY. ITS COUNTERFEIT IS MANIPULATIVE GOOD DEEDS, DOING GOOD FOR OTHERS SO TO GET RECOGNITION OR FEEL "GOOD ENOUGH" FOR OTHERS OR FOR GOD. (ROMANS 2:4, EPHESIANS 2:7, TITUS 3:4)

GOODNESS

AGATHOSYNE

GENEROSITY, USEFULNESS, EXCELLENT CHARACTER, INTEGRITY

BEING THE SAME PERSON IN EVERY SITUATION. EXEMPLIFIES UPRIGHT CHARACTER AND DISPLAYS VIRTUE & HOLINESS IN ACTION. THE OPPOSITE IS A PHONY OR A HYPOCRITE. ITS COUNTERFEIT IS GOODNESS SIMPLY FOR THE SAKE OF BEING VIRTUOUS. (ROMANS 15:14, EPHESIANS 5:8-9)

FAITHFULNESS

PISTIS

TRUSTWORTHY, RELIABLE, ACTS ON CONVICTION, CONSISTENT, LOYAL

RELIABLE & TRUE TO THEIR WORD. BELIEVING GOD IS WHO HE SAYS DESPITE THE CIRCUMSTANCES. THE OPPOSITE IS AN OPPORTUNIST, A FRIEND ONLY IN GOOD TIMES. ITS COUNTERFEIT IS TO BE LOVING BUT NOT TRUTHFUL, OR RELIABLE ONLY WHEN IT IS SEEN. (ROMANS 3:3, TITUS 3:8, REVELATION 2:10)

GENTLENESS

PRAOTES

MEEK, HUMBLE DISPOSITION, NOT AGGRESSIVE OR DRIVEN BY ANGER

NOT EASILY OFFENDED & SELF-FORGETFUL. MEEK BUT NOT WEAK. HUMBLE BUT NOT INFERIOR. THE OPPOSITE IS TO BE SELF-ABSORBED, ANGRY OR SEEK REVENGE. ITS COUNTERFEIT IS A FALSE HUMILITY THAT DOUBLES AS PRIDE AND IS NOT THEIR TRUE CHARACTER. TITUS 3:1-2, I PETER 3:15-16)

SELF-CONTROL

EGKRATEIA

RESTRAINT OF EMOTIONS, ACTIONS & DESIRES TO BE IN LINE W/GOD'S WILL

PURSUES THE IMPORTANT OVER THE URGENT, RATHER THAN TO BE ALWAYS IMPULSIVE OR UNCONTROLLED. ABLE TO HAVE MODERATION OR SAY NO TO FLESHLY DESIRES. THE OPPOSITE IS INSTANT GRATIFICATION. ITS COUNTERFEIT IS A WILLPOWER WHICH IS BASED ON PRIDE, & A NEED OF CONTROL. (TITUS 2:11-12, II PET. 1:5-6)

Adapted from She Reads Truth & "Galatians for You" by Tim Keller

WEEK 5

DAY 34 - SATURDAY - GRACE DAY

Use today to rest, pray and catch up on any of this week's reading that you missed.

In this week's reading:

1. *What themes did you see emerge?*
2. *What was the biggest thing that God revealed to you this week?*
3. *What next step do you need to take based on what He revealed to you this week?*

WEEK 5

DAY 35 - SUNDAY- REFLECTION DAY

Reflect on these passages.

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. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another. But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For 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. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

Galatians 5:13-18, 25-26

But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Ephesians 2:4-10

REFLECTION QUESTIONS FOR WEEK FIVE:

What did God reveal to you this week about the freedom Christ came to offer?

What did this week's passages show you about God's love for us?

In what ways do you see the fruit of the Spirit growing in your life?

Reflect on how the truths we read this week will impact your faith journey.

We have come to the last chapter of Galatians. Paul's letter to the Galatians is more serious in tone than many of his other epistles. He is warning the church that adding anything to the gospel of Jesus is dangerous. Just a little refresher on the context of the church at Galatia. The Galatians had been saved by grace through their faith in Jesus, yet were now being taught by false teachers that the work of Jesus in their lives was NOT enough. So now the believers in Galatia are pointing fingers and trying to size each other up based on how well they keep the law. The church was divided, confused and not caring for one another well. This angered Paul and he is urging the Galatians to get back in line with the Holy Spirit and be unified under the true gospel of Jesus. A gospel that says that the work of Jesus on the cross IS enough to save us (justification) and the work of Jesus continues through the power of the Spirit within us, as it produces fruit in our lives to help us look more like Jesus (sanctification).

So at the beginning of chapter six, we see Paul's focus shift to loving and serving each other well. Galatians 6 can be summed up with these words from Paul, *"Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. Let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen."*

We have seen throughout Galatians how easily we can lose our freedom by slipping back into legalism/works-based salvation and how easily we can take advantage of our freedom by fully giving into our sinful desires. The whole point of Paul's letter is to show the Galatians that the Spirit is their guide in how to live in between those two places. When we look to Jesus' saving work in our lives alone, we can live in freedom from the bondage of the law and joyfully follow the Lord's commands in a way that allows us to share the good news of the gospel with others.

J. Vernon McGee says it this way, *"Through Galatians may you find the comfort, wisdom, healing, and wholeness that comes from discovering your acceptance and authority in Christ alone. Acceptance through Christ gives us security in our standing relationship with God and liberating freedom to live lives that bear spiritual fruit."*

**"AND LET US NOT GROW WEARY OF
DOING GOOD, FOR IN DUE SEASON WE
WILL REAP, IF WE DO NOT GIVE UP."**

GALATIANS 6:9



WEEK 6

GALATIANS CHAPTER 6

WEEK 6

DAY 36 - MONDAY

Galatians 6:1-10, John 15:9-17

BEAR ONE ANOTHER'S BURDENS

Chapter five of Galatians closed with Paul instructing his friends to walk by the Spirit. Now he says, "Carry one another's burdens; in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ" (Gal 6:2). In other words, as we walk by the Spirit, we are to walk alongside our brothers and sisters in Christ. When someone trips headlong into sin, we are to "restore such a person with a gentle spirit" (v.1), helping them get back on their feet so they can continue to walk in "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control" (Gal 5:22-23). Paul says the only law that matters is "the law of Christ"—and that law is fulfilled when we "carry one another's burdens." After all, remember that when Jesus carried His cross through the streets of Jerusalem, falling under its weight, He was carrying our burdens. That cross was our rightful punishment, the curse we deserved for our rebellion against God. We fulfill the law of Christ when we follow Jesus's lead, bearing the burdens of those whom we love. Each one of us must battle against his own flesh, the snares of the devil, and the traps of this world, but we don't fight alone. God has given us the local church, brothers and sisters who also love the Lord, to help us. But all too often we reject this help out of pride, shame, or fear. We don't share our struggles. We don't ask for prayer. We don't confess our sins. And so, we don't have someone by our side to pick us up when we fall. Jesus said, "Love one another as I have loved you" (John 15:12). If we are going to take this command seriously, we can't live the Christian life as a solo adventure. We must go together, and we must carry one another.

Written by John Greco - *He Reads Truth*

**WHO DO YOU SHARE YOUR
BURDENS WITH? WHO ARE
YOU CARRYING BURDENS
FOR? TAKE SOME TIME TO
EVALUATE WHO MIGHT BE IN
YOUR LIFE THAT NEEDS YOU
TO WALK WITH THEM AND
WHO YOU CAN ASK TO WALK
WITH YOU.**

WEEK 6

DAY 37 - TUESDAY

Galatians 6:1-10, Luke 15:11-32

LOST AND FOUND

We are called to bear one another's burdens, to walk alongside each other on this faith journey. We are called to focus on the Lord and care for others. Even when we're busy. Even when the burdens of others seem inconvenient. Even when we really, really just want to push them away. Fortunately, Paul delivers some practical direction for us. He shows what walking by the Spirit looks like in some very common and practical circumstances. His first instruction: deal tenderly with those overtaken in wrongdoing (v.1). To be overtaken in wrongdoing is to be caught by temptation and then falter. This is very different from someone who has chosen to deliberately walk in sin, willfully pursuing it. In order to love others well, we need to remember our own sinfulness and God's grace to us. Yes, sin must be treated as sin, but always in the spirit of love, and in light of God's forgiveness and constant love for us. And then we must make the way home easy, restoring them with a gentle spirit, responding in love rather than in wrath and fury. Remember the parable of the Prodigal Son? (Luke 15:11-32). We ought to make the way home easy, welcoming them, celebrating and rejoicing because what once "was lost [has been] found" (v.32). It's far too easy to deal with other people's sins, well... sinfully. *Ironic, huh?* But knowing full well the battle between flesh and Spirit that actively wars within each one of us (Galatians 5:17), we ought to show mercy and tenderness toward those who stumble, because we, too, live only by the tender mercy of God. Apart from His grace, none of us could stand before Him. Paul's second instruction is to carry one another's burdens, both the circumstantial burdens of this life, like finances, food, and shelter, and also the burdens of sin and temptation. We are to be a strengthening influence for our fellow sojourners in the faith— in time of need, in time of weakness, in times of faltering. "In this way," Paul declares, "[we] will fulfill the law of Christ" (v.2). Wow. What a statement. We like to make sure our neighbors are dotting their I's and crossing their T's, instead of seeking ways to love and serve them as Christ has loved and served us—as a humble servant, laying down His life in love for us. May we learn to follow the pattern of Christ, not in duty, but in love. In this way, we will not tire of doing good, but will reap the fruit of faithful love in the communion of the saints.

Written by Rebecca Faires - *She Reads Truth*

**WHAT DID GOD REVEAL TO
YOU TODAY AS YOU READ
GALATIANS ALONGSIDE THE
STORY OF THE PRODIGAL SON?**

WEEK 6

DAY 38 - WEDNESDAY

Galatians 6:11-18

GOSPEL OF GRACE

At the end of Galatians, Paul does something to make sure the Galatians can “recognize” him. He stops dictating the letter to his scribe and picks up the stylus himself: “Look at what large letters I use as I write to you in my own handwriting” (Gal 6:11). In other words, “It’s really me here on the other end of this conversation. It’s Paul!

Your friend!” Paul’s personal relationship with the Christians in Galatia went deeper than any logical or biblical argument he could make to steer them away from the false teaching that threatened to rob them of the true gospel and steal their joy. So, his final appeal is to tell his friends about his scars. “I bear on my body the marks of Jesus” (Gal 6:17). Paul had been persecuted just about everywhere he went—imprisoned, beaten, and left for dead more than once. He could have saved himself a world of hurt, at least from the Jews who opposed him, if he would have just advocated for circumcision in his calls to repentance. But that would be changing the gospel of grace into a gospel of works. He believed so strongly that Jesus, and Jesus alone, was enough that he could not compromise, not for all the comforts in the world. Do you believe Jesus is enough? Or have you believed the lie that there’s something you must do to earn eternal life with God? The gospel is the most precious and priceless message that’s ever been shared. Paul stands in good company with all those, down through the centuries, who have suffered for a gospel that can seem just too good to be true. Thank Jesus today for the gospel of grace. And may we pray for one another with these final words of Paul here in Galatians: “Brothers and sisters, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen” (Gal 6:18).

Written by John Greco - *He Reads Truth*

**HAVE YOU BELIEVED THE LIE
THAT YOU MUST HAVE JESUS
+ SOMETHING ELSE?**

**ARE YOU WILLING TO
CONFRONT THIS LIE AS PAUL
DID TO SEEK THE TRUTH OF
THE GOSPEL?**

**LET THE TRUTH OF THE
GOSPEL OF GRACE SETTLE IN
YOUR HEART TODAY. JESUS
IS ENOUGH.**

WEEK 6

DAY 39 - THURSDAY

Galatians 6:11-18, Jeremiah 9:23-24, 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

BOAST IN THE LORD FOR HE IS WORTHY

Instead of boasting in what amounts to little more than circumstances from our birth, we are called to boast in the Lord (Gal 6:14). And “the one who boasts should boast in this: that he understands and knows me—that I am the LORD, showing faithful love, justice, and righteousness on the earth, for I delight in these things. This is the LORD’s declaration” (Jeremiah 9:24).

The Hebrew word for God’s “enduring, covenantal love” is *hesed*. In his book *Inexpressible*, Michael Card defines *hesed* beautifully as, “When the person from whom I have a right to expect nothing gives me everything.” Our boasting then, is to be in the undeserved and overwhelming love of Christ, who—while we were His enemies, helpless in our sin—gave His life for us, so that we could be children of God (Rom 5:6-11). Paul’s benediction appeals to this same *hesed*, as he speaks to the Galatian church that had foolishly followed after the false teachings of the Judaizers, and wandered from the life of the Spirit. As he had earlier called on them to deal gently with those who are overtaken by sin, so also Paul deals gently with the Galatians. Why? Because Christ has dealt gently with Paul. And so Paul can boast in one thing only: the *hesed* of God, seen most clearly in the cross of Christ. He exhorts the Galatians to do the same. The apostle then blesses the Galatians with a benediction that can only result from the steadfast love of God. Because of God’s undeserved and faithful love, we have fellowship with one another. We have restoration when we are overtaken in sin, and reconciliation with those we have offended, including Christ our Lord. Because of His love for us, we are part of the family of God, brothers and sisters, and co-heirs with Christ to the inheritance of God’s eternal kingdom. Paul goes on to bless the Galatians with the grace of Christ, for it is His grace alone which saves, restores, sustains, secures, and transforms us into His own likeness. This He does by the work of His Spirit in our spirits, in our hearts, and in our minds. In Him, we are a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17).

The final note of Paul’s epistle to the Galatians is a resounding praise of Christ, in whom alone we boast.

Written by Rebecca Faires - *She Reads Truth*

**WHAT DOES GOD’S LOVE
MEAN TO YOU?**

**HOW CAN YOU BOAST IN THE
LORD TODAY?**

WEEK 6

DAY 40 – FRIDAY – GALATIANS OVERVIEW

Galatians 2:16, 20-21, Galatians 3:27-28, Galatians 5:1, 13, Galatians 6:2, 9-10

KEY THEMES FROM GALATIANS (FROM ESV STUDY BIBLE)	GALATIANS
In his sin-bearing death, Christ is a substitute for all Christians, whom he brings into a new realm of freedom and life.	1:4; 2:20; 3:13
This gospel of Christ is for humanity, but there is no sense in which it has its origin in humanity: it comes only from God. Paul is himself an illustration of this: his conversion to Christ and his apostleship were not through human consultation but through the direct revelation of Christ.	1:1, 11-12, 15-20
The gospel is appropriated not by works of law but by faith, which is the route to justification.	2:16
To require circumcision and other Mosaic ceremonies such as dietary laws and Jewish holidays as a supplement to faith is to fall back from the realm of grace, faith, and freedom, and to come under the whole law and its curse, since comprehensive observance of the law is impossible.	2:12-14, 16; 3:10; 4:10; 5:3
OT Scripture itself testifies to the truth of justification by faith, both in the life of Abraham and in the prophecy of Habakkuk.	Gen. 15:6; Hab. 2:4
The Christian life has its source in the believer having died with Christ to sin, and thereby having renounced the flesh.	5:24; 6:14
The Spirit is the source of power and guidance in the Christian life, and the work of the Spirit produces love and faith.	5:6, 16, 18, 25
The Christian life consists not in pleasing people but in pleasing Christ our master and being willing to suffer persecution for the sake of his cross.	1:10; 6:12, 14

WHICH OF THESE THEMES IMPACTED YOU THE MOST AS YOU STUDIED GALATIANS? EXPLAIN.

WEEK 6

DAY 41 - SATURDAY - GRACE DAY

Use today to rest, pray and catch up on any of this week's reading that you missed.

In this week's reading:

1. *What themes did you see emerge?*
2. *What was the biggest thing that God revealed to you this week?*
3. *What next step do you need to take based on what He revealed to you this week?*

WEEK 6

DAY 42 – SUNDAY– REFLECTION DAY

Reflect on these passages.

I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is 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 2:19b-20

For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.

Galatians 5:1

For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything; the only thing that counts is faith working through love.

Galatians 5:6

For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another.

Galatians 5:13

Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh.

Galatians 5:16

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Galatians 5:22-23a

So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all, and especially for those of the family of faith.

Galatians 6:10

CLOSING REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

What does Galatians say about living by faith?

How does Galatians shape your understanding of the story of redemption?

How would you summarize the message of Galatians?

**WHAT WAS THE BIGGEST THING THAT GOD REVEALED TO YOU DURING THESE 6 WEEKS IN HIS WORD?
WHAT DID YOU LEARN ABOUT GOD OR YOURSELF THAT YOU DIDN'T KNOW 6 WEEKS AGO?**

NOW WHAT?

There's transformative power in reading God's Word. Why? Because it is God speaking directly to our hearts through His works of the past, His instruction and encouragement, and the expressing of His heart for us. Scripture is our opportunity to have our hearts connected to His heart. That's powerful. When we intentionally approach God's Word this is what we can expect.

Hopefully over these last six weeks you had that experience. Hopefully you felt God at times like you never had before. Hopefully you found yourself more aware of His presence and more attuned to His will than you have before. This is the hope of our staff and the purpose for writing, encouraging, and leading you through this intentional study through the Word of God.

Whenever we experience a spiritual breakthrough, or come to the end of a rhythmic practice of deeper connection with God we inevitably come to this question: now what? After we are moved through worship and a powerful message on a weekend, or we have had an intentional time of prayer, or we have finished a verse, chapter, or book of the Bible we find ourselves filled up, eager, and willing, but often unsure what to do to continue this union with Christ. We have all been there. There are a few things though that might help us to continue to lean, grow, and go forward in God's presence.

One, don't lose sight of the message you have just read over the last six weeks that Paul gave to the Galatians. Remember, your faith is not built on works, but on grace. That means one of the best things you can do for your soul and relationship with Jesus is to rest in His salvation. Practically, when you find yourself seeking what other "work" you need to do to earn favor, or feel like you're drawing near to God, stop. Sit back. Close your eyes. Take a deep breath. Remember He is there with you right now, not because of anything you have done, but because of everything He has done. Rest in that. Thank Him for that. Be transformed because of that.

Second, in that posture of grateful freedom and rest seek to draw nearer to Him through the continued practice of hearing from Him through the study of His Word. Go at the study of God's Word in the same diligence you found in this study. The length of what you read and study may be different, it may be a book, a chapter, it may only be a verse, but whatever you study do it daily. Look to the passage and ask yourself: what does this passage mean? What is God saying to me with this? How can I apply this to my walk with Jesus? Take time to read different bible translations and commentaries to better understand the context or meaning of the passage, and seek to be transformed by it like you have been through your study of Galatians.

Finally, seek to live it out. We live for Jesus, not to earn favor with Jesus, but because His grace is so great we want to look just like Him. The rhythms of grace you hopefully experienced during this study can be lived out daily as you seek to live like Him more and more. If during these six weeks you found yourself studying the Word daily- continue that. If you found yourself plugging into community weekly to discuss His Word and the impact it has on your life- find that again. If you grew closer to Jesus during this time- don't stray away. The work God's Word began in you over these past six weeks are just the beginning if you don't lose sight of Him after it. In all things of your life rest in His grace, find community that will help you continue to do that, and grow in your love for Him and His people. This is the message of Galatians and this is the mission for our lives.

-Van Riggins Spiritual Formations Pastor



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