

Galatians is a very important book for Christians, because in it, Paul deals with two major, foundational concepts to faith:

1. The foundation of salvation being faith alone in Christ alone (it has been put, Christ + Nothing = Everything; Christ + Something = Nothing)
2. The impact that this foundational truth has on how we live out Christian life.

Take your Bible and read any introductory material to the book of Galatians. Jot down three facts about the book:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

If your Bible includes maps, try to find Galatia, to give you a perspective of where these Christians lived.

Read Acts 13:2-14:28. What were Paul and Barnabas doing at the time of the writing of this letter to the Galatian Christians?

Read Galatians 1:1-2. In his introduction, what does Paul establish?

Read 1:3-4: What is Paul focusing on now?

Read 1:6-7: What challenge were the Galatians facing?

Please finish reading through verse 10.

In verses 6-10, Paul used very strong language. Put yourself in the position of being a Christian receiving this letter from Paul. How would you feel?

Why do you think Paul used such strong language?

Many Jews were upset that Paul was preaching a gospel of such complete freedom. They felt that these new believers should first convert to Judaism before becoming Christians. This would add a list of rules and expectations to these believers.

What problems can result when even well-meaning religious groups add expectations to believers, rather than focus on Christ alone for salvation?

Do you think some religious organizations burden people with rules (even if they claim to believe that salvation comes from Christ alone)? How?

In your opinion, what is a Christian? What makes a “good” Christian?

What do you think Paul meant by the reminder that he was not trying to please men?

*Personal application:* Make a list of the disciplines/practices/expectations you have on yourself (or others) in order to be a good Christian.

Now, prayerfully consider whether you are giving too much weight to these practices rather than rejoicing in the relationship you have with Christ by trusting HIM alone (not your good practices) for salvation.

Feel free to contact [bbeutler@firstpresgreenville.org](mailto:bbeutler@firstpresgreenville.org) or [Beth@hopeunlimitedforyou.com](mailto:Beth@hopeunlimitedforyou.com) with comments or questions.

Please note: suggested responses are provided as a guide since it can be helpful to confirm if your thoughts and study interpretations are “on the right track.” However, I recommend you do NOT refer to this page until after you have completed the study on your own. Then, feel free to compare your thoughts and answers with what I provide here. Be aware that in many cases, there may not be just one right answer or exact, perfect response. I desire the Holy Spirit to guide me as I provide suggested responses. Please let the Holy Spirit be your main Teacher as well. Particularly when studying Galatians, it would be a shame to become legalistic about our answers! Questions that would be completely personal are left off of this sheet.

Galatians is a very important book for Christians, because in it, Paul deals with two major, foundational concepts to faith:

1. The foundation of salvation being faith alone in Christ alone (it has been put, Christ + Nothing = Everything; Christ + Something = Nothing)
2. The impact that this foundational truth has on how we live out Christian life.

Take your Bible and read any introductory material to the book of Galatians. Jot down three facts about the book: *Answers will vary.*

If your Bible includes maps, try to find Galatia, to give you a perspective of where these Christians lived.

Read Acts 13:2-14:28. What were Paul and Barnabas doing at the time of the writing of this letter to the Galatian Christians? *On a missionary journey*

Read Galatians 1:1-2. In his introduction, what does Paul establish? *His authority through Jesus Christ*

Read 1:3-4: What is Paul focusing on now? *Stressing Jesus as the source of forgiveness.*

Read 1:6-7: What challenge were the Galatians facing?

*Getting caught up in confusion about the gospel of simple grace.*

Please finish reading through verse 10.

In verses 6-10, Paul used very strong language. Put yourself in the position of being a Christian receiving this letter from Paul. How would you feel? *Answers may vary.*

Why do you think Paul used such strong language? *He felt very strongly that the Galatians should not revert back to thinking they had to earn salvation in some way.*

Many Jews were upset that Paul was preaching a gospel of such complete freedom. They felt that these new believers should first convert to Judaism before becoming Christians. This would add a list of rules and expectations to these believers.

What problems can result when even well-meaning religious groups add expectations to believers, rather than focus on Christ alone for salvation? *Salvation loses its power...it is a gift of grace. In this scenario, it becomes just another list of rules that we cannot consistently keep.*

Do you think some religious organizations burden people with rules (even if they claim to believe that salvation comes from Christ alone)? How? *Yes, but having stated or unstated expectations of what makes a good Christian.*

In your opinion, what is a Christian? What makes a “good” Christian? *Personal answer.*

What do you think Paul meant by the reminder that he was not trying to please men? *He was reminding that he was bringing God’s message and not trying to impress men.*

*Personal application:* Make a list of the disciplines/practices/expectations you have on yourself (or others) in order to be a good Christian.

Now, prayerfully consider whether you are giving too much weight to these practices rather than rejoicing in the relationship you have with Christ by trusting HIM alone (not your good practices) for salvation.

*Review question from last week:*

What are the two major concepts the book of Galatians deals with?

*Please read Galatians 1:11-24.*

Paul spends quite a bit of time here “establishing credentials.” Why might that be? (Hint: a group called the Judaizers—who according to the Life Application Bible Commentary were an “extreme faction of Jewish Christians”—wanted these Galatian Christians to also practice Jewish traditions as part of their salvation.)

What do you think it means to be “set apart from birth?” (v.15) (Take a look at Isaiah 49:1 and 5 for further insight.)

To whom does Paul give credit in verses 15-16?

Verse 18 tells us how many years Paul waited between his calling from God and his trip to Jerusalem to visit Peter. Circle the period of time he waited:           1 year                   3 years                   5 years

What do you think Paul may have been doing during that period?

Paul stresses that he had little interaction with the apostles or other Christians in this initial stage of his journey with God. Why is this important?

What do verses 23 and 24 indicate about Paul’s life?

As this chapter wraps up, you could say that Paul has been sharing his “testimony” with the Galatian believers, partly to establish that he does indeed have the authority to instruct them and refute what the Judaizers had been teaching.

From time to time, *you* may be asked to share your personal testimony or hear the testimony of someone else’s journey of faith. Why can it be valuable to share or hear such journeys?

Look up 1 Peter 3:15 and write it here:

*Personal application:* On the back of this page, write a brief account about how you came to know God personally and what He means to you now. Use this as an opportunity to practice being “ready to share” if someone asks about the hope within you.

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Review question from last week:

What are the two major concepts the book of Galatians deals with?

1. The foundation of salvation being faith alone in Christ alone (it has been put, Christ + Nothing = Everything; Christ + Something = Nothing)
2. The impact that this foundational truth has on how we live out Christian life.

Please read Galatians 1:11-24.

Paul spends quite a bit of time here “establishing credentials.” Why might that be? (Hint: a group called the Judaizers—who according to the Life Application Bible Commentary were an “extreme faction of Jewish Christians”—wanted these Galatian Christians to also practice Jewish traditions as part of their salvation.) *He was assuring the Galatians of his authority in Christ and the reasonableness of his addressing this issue.*

What do you think it means to be “set apart from birth?” (v.15) (Take a look at Isaiah 49:1 and 5 for further insight.) *God had a plan and calling for Paul as He does for all of us.*

To whom does Paul give credit in verses 15-16? *God*

Verse 18 tells us how many years Paul waited between his calling from God and his trip to Jerusalem to visit Peter. Circle the period of time he waited:      1 year              3 years              5 years

What do you think Paul may have been doing during that period? *Answers will vary.*

Paul stresses that he had little interaction with the apostles or other Christians in this initial stage of his journey with God. Why is this important? *There are times it is best to deal only and directly with the Lord about a matter, to be rooted and grounded in Him before consulting other people.*

What do verses 23 and 24 indicate about Paul’s life? *People knew his past actions as a persecutor and were amazed at the change God had made in Paul’s life.*

As this chapter wraps up, you could say that Paul has been sharing his “testimony” with the Galatian believers, partly to establish that he does indeed have the authority to instruct them and refute what the Judaizers had been teaching.

From time to time, *you* may be asked to share your personal testimony or hear the testimony of someone else’s journey of faith. Why can it be valuable to share or hear such journeys? *It can encourage others.*

Look up 1 Peter 3:15 and write it here: *Use your Bible. ☺*

Review question from last week: Why did Paul “establish his credentials?”

**Read Galatians 2:1-10.**

What is Paul continuing to do in this passage?

How many years had passed since Paul was first in Jerusalem?

Sometimes, when reading Bible passages, we skim through the story and feel as if the events happened rapidly. But in this case, how many years *in total* have we now seen from the time Paul first felt called by God to ministry to the point where he had been fully accepted by the Apostles as a messenger to the Gentiles? (See v. 1:18 and 2:1)

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*What decision or process is happening in your life that seems to be taking “its good ole’ sweet time?” Take a moment to prayerfully reflect and confess any efforts on your part to rush God or manipulate the situation.*

In verse 4, Paul mentions a couple of "false brothers." What were their intentions?

Why would anyone WANT to restrict the freedom of a believer?

*Think about times you may observe the actions of other believers and felt a variety of emotions. Being brutally honest, check off one or more of the following attitudes that you may have experienced and think about whether they reflect the love of Christ to our brothers and sisters. (Bear in mind that I am not talking about observing actions that directly go against biblical principles. We are encouraged to exhort one another to live in godly ways and there may indeed be a time for loving confrontation. However, there are many grey areas that are open to interpretation, personal style and conviction, and not specifically condoned or condemned in Scripture.)*

\_\_\_\_\_pride - "I would never do that."

\_\_\_\_\_exclusivity - "We don't do that at our church."

\_\_\_\_\_confusion - "I wonder if it is okay to do that."

\_\_\_\_\_disdain - "Christians should not do that"

\_\_\_\_\_acceptance – “I can accept their style even though it doesn’t work for me.”

\_\_\_\_\_indifference – “It doesn’t matter to me what they do.”

In verses 7-8, Paul contrasts his own calling and that of Peter’s. What is the difference?

What did the Apostles and Paul decide?

What common goal did both groups want to have?

*Personal application: Think about a fellow believer, or group of believers, that up until now, you have kept your distance from because of differences in practice. Write a prayer for them here, and ask the Lord how you can specifically encourage them or reach out to them for the common goal of advancing God’s kingdom.*

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Review question from last week: Why did Paul “establish his credentials?” To assure the Galatians that they could trust what he was teaching them.

**Read Galatians 2:1-10.**

What is Paul continuing to do in this passage? *Establish himself as worthy to be listened to.*

How many years had passed since Paul was first in Jerusalem? *14 years*

Sometimes, when reading Bible passages, we skim through the story and feel as if the events happened rapidly. But in this case, how many years *in total* have we now seen from the time Paul first felt called by God to ministry to the point where he had been fully accepted by the Apostles as a messenger to the Gentiles? (See v. 1:18 and 2:1)

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What decision or process is happening in your life that seems to be taking “its good ole’ sweet time?” Take a moment to prayerfully reflect and confess any efforts on your part to rush God or manipulate the situation.

In verse 4, Paul mentions a couple of “false brothers.” What were their intentions? *Spy on our freedom and make us slaves.*

Why would anyone WANT to restrict the freedom of a believer? *Answers may vary.*

Think about times you may observe the actions of other believers and felt a variety of emotions. Being brutally honest, check off one or more of the following attitudes that you may have experienced and think about whether they reflect the love of Christ to our brothers and sisters. (Bear in mind that I am not talking about observing actions that directly go against biblical principles. We are encouraged to exhort one another to live in godly ways and there may indeed be a time for loving confrontation. However, there are many grey areas that are open to interpretation, personal style and conviction, and not specifically condoned or condemned in Scripture.) *Personal response.*

\_\_\_\_\_pride - “I would never do that.”

\_\_\_\_\_exclusivity - “We don’t do that at our church.”

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\_\_\_\_\_disdain - “Christians should not do that”

\_\_\_\_\_acceptance – “I can accept their style even though it doesn’t work for me.”

\_\_\_\_\_indifference – “It doesn’t matter to me what they do.”

In verses 7-8, Paul contrasts his own calling and that of Peter’s. What is the difference? *Paul is primarily ministering to the Gentiles, while Peter is to the Jews.*

What did the Apostles and Paul decide? *That Paul should go to the Gentiles.*

What common goal did both groups want to have? *Sharing the gospel of freedom through Christ alone.*

*Personal application: Think about a fellow believer, or group of believers, that up until now, you have kept your distance from because of differences in practice. Write a prayer for them here, and ask the Lord how you can specifically encourage them or reach out to them for the common goal of advancing God’s kingdom.*

*Personal response.*

Review question from last week: What were the intentions of the “false brothers” Paul referred to in Galatians 2:4?

**Read Galatians 2:11-31**

*During this time, Peter, Paul, the Judaizers (those who felt Jewish practices should be added to the gospel) and some Gentile Christians had gathered in Antioch, a major trade center and base for the Gentile church. Believers were first called Christians in Antioch. You can consider it Paul's headquarters. Up until now, Peter, an obviously important figure in Christianity, had enjoyed fellowship with the Gentile Christians, but once representatives from Jerusalem were coming (James held a position of prominence in Jerusalem) Peter began to hold back—possibly to avoid the Jewish contingent from seeing him with the Gentile believers.*

What is happening in verse 11?

Why did Paul speak so strongly to Peter?

- True or false. Paul wrote to other churches to warn them about Peter's hypocrisy.
- True or false. Paul confronted Peter face to face.
- True or false. Paul made his stand clear in front of the entire group.
- True or false. Paul's goal was to prove himself right.

What can you learn from this in regard to confronting another believer?

*Observe that Paul chose a very important matter as the subject of his confrontation...the very foundation of the gospel. This was not simply a disagreement over a cultural practice or style. He "chose" his battle since it was so important. Note also that he went face to face with Peter and the others who were assembled, but did not stir up other believers who were not directly involved. The ultimate goal was the unity of the Gentiles and Jewish believers in understanding that Christ alone, not rule-keeping, provides salvation.*

Fill in the blank from verse 16: By the works of the \_\_\_\_\_ no one will be \_\_\_\_\_.

If we are not justified by rule-keeping, why should we bother doing any type of religious practice?

When someone gives you a tremendous gift, how do you feel? Do you want to love and serve them out of gratefulness?

*There are two attitudes we can have when trying to keep biblical principles. Either we try to please God and earn His favor and approval, or we behave in godly ways out of a grateful heart because of what He has done for us.*

Think of an important relationship in your life. Do you "do good" for that person so that you will stay in their good graces? Or are you thankful for the relationship and you simply want to do them well because of your love for them?

Write out Galatians 2:20.

*This powerful verse reminds us of how we can consistently live as godly disciples.*

Who is living in a believer?

Is He capable of living a godly life?

Are you capable of living a godly life on your own?

Personal application: Think about a particular challenge that you have in regard to living a godly life. (Examples: anxiety, materialism, lustful thoughts, anger, bitterness) Do you tend to feel you need to "try harder" to "do better" with that sin? Now, think about Christ living in you. If your flesh is crucified in Christ, and He is the one living out through you, is HE able to live without giving in to that temptation? How can saying, "Christ in me is not worrying," or "Christ in me is not angry" help you the next time you are tempted?

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*The Life Application Bible Commentary was used to prepare this lesson.*

Review question from last week: What were the intentions of the “false brothers” Paul referred to in Galatians 2:4? *They wanted to make people slaves to their requirements.*

### Read Galatians 2:11-31

*During this time, Peter, Paul, the Judaizers (those who felt Jewish practices should be added to the gospel) and some Gentile Christians had gathered in Antioch, a major trade center and base for the Gentile church. Believers were first called Christians in Antioch. You can consider it Paul's headquarters. Up until now, Peter, an obviously important figure in Christianity, had enjoyed fellowship with the Gentile Christians, but once representatives from Jerusalem were coming (James held a position of prominence in Jerusalem) Peter began to hold back—possibly to avoid the Jewish contingent from seeing him with the Gentile believers.*

What is happening in verse 11? *Paul confronted Peter for acting differently when the Jews came to town.*

Why did Paul speak so strongly to Peter? *He wanted Peter to not fall into the trap of holding back from ministry to the Gentiles or not acting “in line with the truth of the gospel,” being hypocritical.*

True or false. Paul wrote to other churches to warn them about Peter's hypocrisy.

True or false. Paul confronted Peter face to face.

True or false. Paul made his stand clear in front of the entire group.

True or false. Paul's goal was to prove himself right.

What can you learn from this in regard to confronting another believer? *Personal response.*

*Observe that Paul chose a very important matter as the subject of his confrontation...the very foundation of the gospel. This was not simply a disagreement over a cultural practice or style. He "chose" his battle since it was so important. Note also that he went face to face with Peter and the others who were assembled, but did not stir up other believers who were not directly involved. The ultimate goal was the unity of the Gentiles and Jewish believers in understanding that Christ alone, not rule-keeping, provides salvation.*

Fill in the blank from verse 16: By the works of the \_\_\_\_\_ no one will be \_\_\_\_\_. *Law / justified*

If we are not justified by rule-keeping, why should we bother doing any type of religious practice? *Good works show our love and appreciation for God and grace, not to earn it.*

When someone gives you a tremendous gift, how do you feel? Do you want to love and serve them out of gratefulness?

*There are two attitudes we can have when trying to keep biblical principles. Either we try to please God and earn His favor and approval, or we behave in godly ways out of a grateful heart because of what He has done for us.*

Think of an important relationship in your life. Do you "do good" for that person so that you will stay in their good graces? Or are you thankful for the relationship and you simply want to do them well because of your love for them?

Write out Galatians 2:20. *Use your Bible.* ☺

*This powerful verse reminds us of how we can consistently live as godly disciples.*

Who is living in a believer? *The Holy Spirit.*

Is He capable of living a godly life? *Yes.* Are you capable of living a godly life on your own? *No, not without his help.*

Personal application: Think about a particular challenge that you have in regard to living a godly life. (Examples: anxiety, materialism, lustful thoughts, anger, bitterness) Do you tend to feel you need to "try harder" to "do better" with that sin? Now, think about Christ living in you. If your flesh is crucified in Christ, and He is the one living out through you, is HE able to live without giving in to that temptation? How can saying, "Christ in me is not worrying," or "Christ in me is not angry" help you the next time you are tempted?

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*Review question from last week: Who is living in a believer and empowers her to live a godly life?*

**Read Galatians 3:1-14**

Why do you think Paul referred to the Galatians as “foolish?”

Paul asks a pointed question in verse 2. Write a paraphrase of it.

What point is he trying to make in verse 5?

Paul spends verses 6-9 talking about a well-known Bible character. Who is it and what is the essence of what Paul is sharing?

Due to God choosing to redeem both Jews and Gentiles, what is our connection to Abraham?

In verse 10, Paul says those who rely on observing the law live under a \_\_\_\_\_. Why would it be a \_\_\_\_\_ to feel bound by obeying laws in order to achieve God’s favor?

If we cannot earn salvation through obeying laws, what purpose do you think the law now has?

How did Christ “redeem us from the curse of the law?”

Look up Deuteronomy 21:23. How does it make you feel that God had His Son die in such a terrible way?

What benefit do we receive because of what Christ did?

In light of the fact that salvation was made available to Gentiles, why might the Jews (specifically the Judaizers) been trying so hard to add law to concept of salvation by faith?

Before you judge the Jews too harshly, remember that they were taught that interaction with Gentiles would cause them to be unclean. By desiring the Gentiles to adhere to Jewish traditions too, they were probably fighting to hang onto long-standing tradition, but God providing a way to break free from the requirements of following the law and in true love and grace, offered it as a free gift.

*Personal application: Think of a long-held tradition that you embrace as part of your faith journey. It may be a particular discipline (like attending the same service regularly) or a preference (such traditional/contemporary music) or use of a certain translation. Is there anything in that practice that, while beneficial, could be considered legalistic in terms of how you feel when other people don’t do the same thing you do? Pray this week to be freed from depending on that practice for God’s favor and for the ability to release others from your expectations. Again, note that I am not talking about key doctrines such as salvation by grace, but rather religious practices, habits and attitudes.*

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Review question from last week: Who is living in a believer and empowers her to live a godly life? *The Holy Spirit.*

**Read Galatians 3:1-14**

Why do you think Paul referred to the Galatians as “foolish?” *They were allowing others to rob them of their freedom in Christ.*

Paul asks a pointed question in verse 2. Write a paraphrase of it.

*Did I receive salvation because of my following of the law? No!*

What point is he trying to make in verse 5? *God chooses to do miracles and indwell us because of His love for us, not our performance.*

Paul spends verses 6-9 talking about a well-known Bible character. Who is it and what is the essence of what Paul is sharing?

*Abraham – Abraham’s faith in God was credited as righteousness, not his performance.*

Due to God choosing to redeem both Jews and Gentiles, what is our connection to Abraham? *We are his spiritual children.*

In verse 10, Paul says those who rely on observing the law live under a \_\_\_\_\_. Why would it be a \_\_\_\_\_ to feel bound by obeying laws in order to achieve God’s favor? *Curse.*

If we cannot earn salvation through obeying laws, what purpose do you think the law now has? *To show us our need.*

How did Christ “redeem us from the curse of the law?” *He took on the punishment we deserve.*

Look up Deuteronomy 21:23. How does it make you feel that God had His Son die in such a terrible way? *Personal response.*

What benefit do we receive because of what Christ did? *Full access to God.*

In light of the fact that salvation was made available to Gentiles, why might the Jews (specifically the Judaizers) been trying so hard to add law to concept of salvation by faith? *They may have been afraid of losing their influence, power and status over people.*

Before you judge the Jews too harshly, remember that they were taught that interaction with Gentiles would cause them to be unclean. By desiring the Gentiles to adhere to Jewish traditions too, they were probably fighting to hang onto long-standing tradition, but God providing a way to break free from the requirements of following the law and in true love and grace, offered it as a free gift.

*Personal application: Think of a long-held tradition that you embrace as part of your faith journey. It may be a particular discipline (like attending the same service regularly) or a preference (such traditional/contemporary music) or use of a certain translation. Is there anything in that practice that, while beneficial, could be considered legalistic in terms of how you feel when other people don’t do the same thing you do? Pray this week to be freed from depending on that practice for God’s favor and for the ability to release others from your expectations. Again, note that I am not talking about key doctrines such as salvation by grace, but rather religious practices, habits and attitudes.*

*Personal response.*

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*Review question from last week:* If we cannot earn salvation through obeying laws, what purpose do you think the law now has?

**Read Galatians 3:15-26**

In verse 18, we see that our inheritance of salvation depends on a \_\_\_\_\_

- A. Promise
- B. Law
- C. Angel
- D. None of the above

Why do you think angels are mentioned in verse 19?

*FYI: Jews believed that angels gave the law to Moses, the mediator. (From Quest Study Bible.)*

Does Paul feel that the law and the promises of God cannot co-exist? How do you know?

What is the world a prisoner of?

What is the gift given to those who believe, rather than trust in the law?

Paul clearly states in verse 23 what role the law plays. Circle one or more of the following items that could serve as good word pictures for the role the law now plays.

gavel                  mirror                  coat                  shovel                  judge                  jailer                  tour guide

According to verse 26, how do we become sons of God?

How does verse 28 make you feel in terms of how you view others in the body of Christ?

*Personal application: If the law serves as a guide to show us our need for Christ, how can you react toward yourself the next time you feel you mess up? Women especially seem to have a tendency to “beat themselves up.” If you have that tendency, do you think you are bringing glory to God? How does focus on this passage this week help you rejoice in the freedom from self-condemnation that Christ provides? Write a prayer about this.*

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Review question from last week: If we cannot earn salvation through obeying laws, what purpose do you think the law now has?

To show us our need.

**Read Galatians 3:15-26**

In verse 18, we see that our inheritance of salvation depends on a \_\_\_\_\_A: PROMISE

- A. Promise
- B. Law
- C. Angel
- D. None of the above

Why do you think angels are mentioned in verse 19? *Messengers, couriers*

*FYI: Jews believed that angels gave the law to Moses, the mediator. (From Quest Study Bible.)*

Does Paul feel that the law and the promises of God cannot co-exist? How do you know? *He tells us the law was in charge to lead us to Christ so each has its place.*

What is the world a prisoner of? *law*

What is the gift given to those who believe, rather than trust in the law? *Salvation; an inheritance in heaven*

Paul clearly states in verse 23 what role the law plays. Circle one or more of the following items that could serve as good word pictures for the role the law now plays.

gavel            mirror            coat            shovel            judge            jailer            tour guide

According to verse 26, how do we become sons of God? *Through faith in Jesus Christ.*

How does verse 28 make you feel in terms of how you view others in the body of Christ? *No one has reason to brag...we are all of equal status in God's eyes.*

Personal application: *If the law serves as a guide to show us our need for Christ, how can you react toward yourself the next time you feel you mess up? Women especially seem to have a tendency to "beat themselves up." If you have that tendency, do you think you are bringing glory to God? How does focus on this passage this week help you rejoice in the freedom from self-condemnation that Christ provides? Write a prayer about this.*

Personal response.

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*Review question from last week: What role does the law now play?*

**Read Galatians 4:1-20**

What do verses 1-7 seem to indicate about our relationship with God?

Verse 6 assures us that as “sons” of God, we have what?

How does it make you feel that you can call God “Abba, Father,” an endearing term like “Daddy?” (verse 6)

What question does Paul ask in verse 9?

Why did Paul feel his labor might have been in vain?

Paul was extremely concerned that that Galatians would fall back into a legalistic, rule-following religion rather than enjoy their freedom in Christ. In our day, how/where do you see the temptation for faith to become legalistic in your life?

In verses 12-17, Paul reminds the Galatians of their dear relationship with him. To what is he comparing it? (see verse 12)

Paul seems to be almost jealous for the Galatians, fearful of them turning to false teachers instead of resting in the gospel Paul taught them.

Do you think Paul was concerned that he would lose followers?

Look up I Corinthians 1:11-20. How does Paul feel about people following other Christian leaders?

If Paul was not focusing on the possible loss of respect and friendship, why did he get so emotional about the Galatians following someone else?

*Personal application: A continuing theme of embracing freedom and cautions about legalism pervade the early part of Galatians. Again, think about areas of life that you may put a legalistic pressure on other people. Think particularly about your immediate family. In what way do you expect parents, sisters, brothers, spouse or children to practice their faith in the same way you do? Write a prayer releasing them from this expectation. In what way may they thrive when they no longer need to live under your expectations?*

*Feel free to contact [bbeutler@firstpresgreenville.org](mailto:bbeutler@firstpresgreenville.org) or [Beth@hopeunlimitedforyou.com](mailto:Beth@hopeunlimitedforyou.com) with comments or questions.*

Review question from last week: What role does the law now play? *To show us our need of Christ.*

**Read Galatians 4:1-20**

What do verses 1-7 seem to indicate about our relationship with God? *We receive the full rights of sons and daughters of the King!*

Verse 6 assures us that as “sons” of God, we have what? *We have His Spirit indwelling us.*

How does it make you feel that you can call God “Abba, Father,” an endearing term like “Daddy?” (verse 6) *personal response.*

What question does Paul ask in verse 9? *Do you want to be enslaved again to rules?*

Why did Paul feel his labor might have been in vain? *If the Galatians fell back into rule-keeping as necessary for salvation, the message of grace would have been wasted. He did not want them to miss the message of grace and freedom in Christ.*

Paul was extremely concerned that that Galatians would fall back into a legalistic, rule-following religion rather than enjoy their freedom in Christ. In our day, how/where do you see the temptation for faith to become legalistic in your life?

*Personal response.*

In verses 12-17, Paul reminds the Galatians of their dear relationship with him. To what is he comparing it? (see verse 12) *familial, brother*

Paul seems to be almost jealous for the Galatians, fearful of them turning to false teachers instead of resting in the gospel Paul taught them.

Do you think Paul was concerned that he would lose followers? *No, he was concerned they would lose their joy.*

Look up I Corinthians 1:11-20. How does Paul feel about people following other Christian leaders? *He warns against it causing division.*

If Paul was not focusing on the possible loss of respect and friendship, why did he get so emotional about the Galatians following someone else?

Personal application: *A continuing theme of embracing freedom and cautions about legalism pervade the early part of Galatians. Again, think about areas of life that you may put a legalistic pressure on other people. Think particularly about your immediate family. In what way do you expect parents, sisters, brothers, spouse or children to practice their faith in the same way you do? Write a prayer releasing them from this expectation. In what way may they thrive when they no longer need to live under your expectations?*

*Review question from last week:* How does it make you feel that you can call God “Abba, Father,” an endearing term like “Daddy?” (4: 6)

**Read Galatians 4:21-31**

This week, you will be visiting a somewhat complicated passage. Please do not let this discourage you. Given the style of these studies, we will unpack the basics of it, but of course, it is not an exhaustive look. In this section of Galatians, Paul is using a communication method called an “allegory.” This was a common approach to debating in those days and it was wise of Paul to use something with which the Galatians were familiar. An allegory takes infuses a story with deeper and parallel meanings beyond the surface facts of the story. (A modern-day example might be the *Lord of the Rings* or *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*.) In this case, Paul uses the story of Sarah and Hagar, and to some degree, their sons Isaac and Ishmael, to help the Galatians see their standing with Christ. Therefore, to help us better understand the context of this message, please read Genesis 16 and 21:1-21. As you read, please make some notes of the contrasts between Hagar and Sarah and their sons, Ishmael and Isaac.

HAGAR/ISHMAEL

SARAH/ISAAC

Now, please re-read Galatians 4:21-31 and add to your chart above anything more that Paul points out.

In verse 21, Paul makes a challenge. What is it?

Why would anyone want to “remain under the law?”

In our day, do you think there are people who are more comfortable following a religious system of law rather a relationship based in grace? Why might people (and perhaps even yourself) rather have rules provided when it comes to practicing their faith?

In verse 22, what do you think Paul means when he distinguishes that one of Abraham’s sons was “born by the flesh and one by the promise?” What parallel might he be drawing with the Galatians?

In verse 28, who are the Galatians like?

If the Galatians do not have blood roots in Judaism, why would Paul say they are like Isaac, rather than saying they are like Ishmael? (You might take a look at verse 26.)

In verse 30-31, Paul takes part of the Genesis story and tells the Galatians (and us!) what we are to spiritually and emotionally do in regard to religious bondage. What is it?

*Personal application:*

Over and over Paul is hammering on the idea of a free, grace-based relationship with God. Yet so many churches, denominations and faiths can easily fall into the trap of legalism. Where do you see this in your life? Based on today’s allegorical passage, what application do you need to make for yourself?

**Read Galatians 4:21-31**

This week, you will be visiting a somewhat complicated passage. Please do not let this discourage you. Given the style of these studies, we will unpack the basics of it, but of course, it is not an exhaustive look. In this section of Galatians, Paul is using a communication method called an “allegory.” This was a common approach to debating in those days and it was wise of Paul to use something with which the Galatians were familiar. An allegory takes infuses a story with deeper and parallel meanings beyond the surface facts of the story. (A modern-day example might be the *Lord of the Rings* or *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*.) In this case, Paul uses the story of Sarah and Hagar, and to some degree, their sons Isaac and Ishmael, to help the Galatians see their standing with Christ. Therefore, to help us better understand the context of this message, please read Genesis 16 and 21:1-21. As you read, please make some notes of the contrasts between Hagar and Sarah and their sons, Ishmael and Isaac.

**HAGAR/ISHMAEL****SARAH/ISAAC**

*Able to have children*  
*Had a son by Abraham as arranged by Sarah*  
*Despised Sarah after conception*  
*Fled from Sarah; God saw and took care of her*  
*Son would be a wild man*  
*Told to return to Sarah and submit*  
*Ishmael teased Isaac*  
*Hagar and Ishmael sent away*  
*Ishmael would become a nation*  
*Original covenant corresponds with spiritual bondage*

*Not able to have children until God stepped in*  
*Sent maidservant to husband; tried to complete promise herself*  
*Sent Hagar away*  
*Abraham allowed her to do with Hagar as she wished*  
*Dealt harshly with Hagar*  
*Had son at God's set time according to promise*  
*Sarah very happy at birth of Isaac*  
*Isaac is child of promise, representing freedom*  
*Spiritual freedom available to all*

Now, please re-read Galatians 4:21-31 and add to your chart above anything more that Paul points out.

In verse 21, Paul makes a challenge. What is it? *He challenged those who “loved the law” to actually hear and listen to it and what it taught. (He goes on to tell the story of Hagar and Sarah and the picture of freedom God intended to come.)*

Why would anyone want to “remain under the law?” *It is sometimes “easier” to measure whether we are doing well if we have a tangible benchmark with which to compare our behavior. However, this is not true freedom in Christ.*

In our day, do you think there are people who are more comfortable following a religious system of law rather a relationship based in grace? Why might people (and perhaps even yourself) rather have rules provided when it comes to practicing their faith? *Rules provide structure that many people want. They may not trust themselves to do right out of a right relationship with God. However, this type of faith practice can become shallow and not be as vital as God intends a relationship to be.*

In verse 22, what do you think Paul means when he distinguishes that one of Abraham's sons was “born by the flesh and one by the promise?” What parallel might he be drawing with the Galatians? *He is using this to remind them that the promise of salvation is available to all of us rather than some being “sons of the slave” and in bondage.*

In verse 28, who are the Galatians like? *Isaac*

If the Galatians do not have blood roots in Judaism, why would Paul say they are like Isaac, rather than saying they are like Ishmael? (You might take a look at verse 26.) *You would think that only the Jews could be called children of the promise, but this opens the door for ALL people, regardless of heritage, to receive and enjoy God's salvation and grace!*

In verse 30-31, Paul takes part of the Genesis story and tells the Galatians (and us!) what we are to spiritually and emotionally do in regard to religious bondage. What is it? *“Cast out the bondwoman,” – in other words, get rid of whatever causes you to live in bondage to laws and rules in order to please God. Accept His free gift of grace and salvation through Christ alone and do not choose to live under the bondage of “doing good” in order to be saved.*

*Review question from last week:* What are we to do about being placed under religious bondage?

**Read Galatians 5:1-15**

In this passage, Paul begins to get practical about what he has established in the first four chapters.

In review, how would you summarize the first four chapters in one sentence?

In 5:1, how does Paul tell us to stand \_\_\_\_\_ What does he want us to avoid?

This language seems to indicate an ongoing process, as if it is almost a daily thing not to be drawn back into slavery. Do you agree? What sort of daily temptations could cause you to fall into the trap of legalism?

In verse 2 and 3, Paul reminds that if these Galatians fall into the trap of thinking they have to be circumcised, they would have two consequences. What are they?

Using verse 5, explain in your own words what our hope is.

Paul questions the Galatians in verse 7-8. He is indicating that influence from others is causing this problem. He later has very strong words for these people. See verse 12! This is a good warning for us. Confidentially, is there any person or group in your life that tends to “drag you down” in regard to your freedom in Christ? (ie place unfair expectations on you, insist on certain behaviors that are not specifically addressed in Scripture, etc.) If so, how might you be wise to deal with that individual or group?

What do you think Paul means by verse 9?

In verses 13-15, Paul paints a meaningful picture of how freedom lives itself out. Note two or three of his main points:

Read Mark 12:28-34 – What does Christ tell the man is the greatest law?

How do law and love intertwine, without one outbalancing the other?

Back to Galatians: Spend a bit of time on verse 15, an interesting picture of personal relationships. Describe what the image of “bite and devour” means to you in terms of interpersonal relationships.

What will eventually happen when people “bite and devour” each other?

Personal application: *Think of a situation in which people are biting and devouring because they lay heavy religious expectations on one another. What would be a good way to respond to such an issue?*

Review question from last week: What are we to do about being placed under religious bondage?

Not allow others to do this to us. Enjoy our freedom in Christ.

### Read Galatians 5:1-15

In this passage, Paul begins to get practical about what he has established in the first four chapters. In review, how would you summarize the first four chapters in one sentence?

*Christ + anything = nothing; Christ + nothing = everything* (“stolen” from Pastor Charlie Boyd of Southside Fellowship. ☺)

In 5:1, how does Paul tell us to stand FAST What does he want us to avoid? *Becoming entangled again in bondage.*

This language seems to indicate an ongoing process, as if it is almost a daily thing not to be drawn back into slavery. Do you agree? What sort of daily temptations could cause you to fall into the trap of legalism?

*Personal response*

In verse 2 and 3, Paul reminds that if these Galatians fall into the trap of thinking they have to be circumcised, they would have two consequences. What are they?

1. *Christ would “profit them nothing.”*
2. *You’d then have to be able to keep the entire law*

Using verse 5, explain in your own words what our hope is.

*We are righteous because of what Christ did...His Spirit indwells us and we have hope for the future.*

Paul questions the Galatians in verse 7-8. He is indicating that influence from others is causing this problem. He later has very strong words for these people. See verse 12! This is a good warning for us. Confidentially, is there any person or group in your life that tends to “drag you down” in regard to your freedom in Christ? (ie place unfair expectations on you, insist on certain behaviors that are not specifically addressed in Scripture, etc.) If so, how might you be wise to deal with that individual or group? *Personal response*

What do you think Paul means by verse 9? *If you allow even a little misunderstanding of the true gospel (Christ alone, not behavior, not works) it infects the entire concept.*

In verses 13-15, Paul paints a meaningful picture of how freedom lives itself out. Note two or three of his main points:

*-called to live in freedom, but not so we can just feed our pleasures; instead be free to love one another*

Read Mark 12:28-34 – What does Christ tell the man is the greatest law? *Love the Lord our God with all our hearts, souls, mind and strength and love others as ourselves.*

How do law and love intertwine, without one outbalancing the other? *Love needs guidelines and healthy boundaries—it is not always loving to just “let anything go,” which is where law can come in. Law helps you become more loving because its guidelines point us to a more loving life. (Paraphrased from Charlie Boyd.)*

Back to Galatians: Spend a bit of time on verse 15, an interesting picture of personal relationships. Describe what the image of “bite and devour” means to you in terms of interpersonal relationships. *This can be anything from nit-picking to fully being mean and selfish with one another, causing people to be “eaten up inside.”*

What will eventually happen when people “bite and devour” each other? *We will destroy one another (ourselves included!)*

Personal application: *Think of a situation in which people are biting and devouring because they lay heavy religious expectations on one another. What would be a good way to respond to such an issue.*

Review question from last week: How do law and love intertwine, without one outbalancing the other?

**Read Galatians 5:16-26**

This section of Galatians contains one of the most familiar parts of the New Testament. Before we get into that though, let's be sure not to miss the continued foundation.

Verse 16 actually seems to be a continuation of verse 15. Refresh your memory by writing verse 15 here:

What is the contrast shared in verse 16?

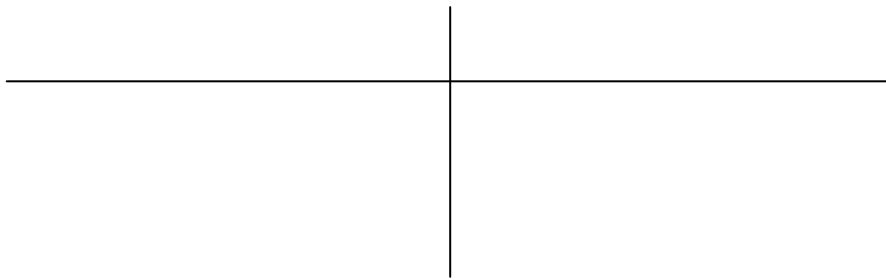
Why do we sometimes, perhaps often, feel inner conflict about decisions and behavior? (see verse 17)

Observation: perhaps the one we feed most often will win out more often?

If we walk daily led by the spirit, why would we not really need the law?

What does the phrase "led by the Spirit" mean to you personally?

In verses 19-23, Paul contrasts behavior motivated by the flesh with characteristics that come from the spirit's activity in our hearts. Make two lists, with evil behavior on one side and godly fruit on the other:



Why would Paul call the good characteristics "fruit of the Spirit" rather than present them as a list of qualities to aspire to?

Fill in the blank: *Good qualities such as \_\_\_\_\_ are seen in me more consistently as I am filled with the \_\_\_\_\_,*  
*(fruit)*

*not as I work or try harder to achieve them.*

According to verse 24, as a follower of Christ, what have you done?

Why would Paul differentiate *living* by the Spirit and *walking* by the spirit?

What warning does Paul give in verse 26? Does this seem out of place to you? Why or why not?

Personal application: *Of the qualities of the fruit of the Spirit, which ones seem to come most naturally to you? Which ones seem to be more of a challenge? Spend a few minutes asking God for fresh filling today, and for fruit to be seen in the areas that may not come as naturally to you.*

This section of Galatians contains one of the most familiar parts of the New Testament. Before we get into that though, let's be sure not to miss the continued foundation.

Verse 16 actually seems to be a continuation of verse 15. Refresh your memory by writing verse 15 here: *(See your Bible ☺)*

What is the contrast shared in verse 16?

*When we walk in the spirit, we will not as often give in to the fleshly attitudes that cause conflict and problems and relationships will not be "devoured."*

Why do we sometimes, perhaps often, feel inner conflict about decisions and behavior? (see verse 17)

*Our flesh fights against God's spirit within us.*

Observation: perhaps the one we feed most often will win out more often?

If we walk daily led by the spirit, why would we not really need the law?

*Because God's Spirit would guide us to love Him with all our hearts and love others as ourselves, and we would naturally respond and treat people in ways that would honor Him and bless others.*

What does the phrase "led by the Spirit" mean to you personally? *Personal application.*

In verses 19-23, Paul contrasts behavior motivated by the flesh with characteristics that come from the spirit's activity in our hearts. Make two lists, with evil behavior on one side and godly fruit on the other:

Sexual immorality, impurity, Sensuality, idolatry, sorcery Enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger Rivalries, dissension, divisions Drunkenness, orgies	love, joy, peace patience, kindness, goodness faithfulness, gentleness, self-control
---	--

Why would Paul call the good characteristics "fruit of the Spirit" rather than present them as a list of qualities to aspire to? *Because it is a result of God's Spirit living inside us, not us trying harder. You can't force fruit to grow, but you can nurture the plant. The nature of a fruit tree is to produce fruit.*

Fill in the blank: *Good qualities such as \_\_\_\_\_ (pick one) \_\_\_\_\_ are seen in me more consistently as I am filled with the Spirit, not as I work or try harder to achieve them.*

According to verse 24, as a follower of Christ, what have you done? *Crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.*

Why would Paul differentiate *living* by the Spirit and *walking* by the spirit? *We may have a relationship with God, but if we do not cultivate that relationship, we will not as easily walk with His guidance daily. It is a choice to walk with Him.*

What warning does Paul give in verse 26? Does this seem out of place to you? Why or why not?

*We must be careful that when good fruit manifests itself, we do not credit ourselves for these good characteristics but instead glorify the God Who is in us.*

Personal application: *Of the qualities of the fruit of the Spirit, which ones seem to come most naturally to you? Which ones seem to be more of a challenge? Spend a few minutes asking God for fresh filling today, and for fruit to be seen in the areas that may not come as naturally to you.*

*Review question from last week:* In Chapter 6, Paul turns to deal with some very practical applications of the freedom he has advocated in chapters 1-5. Before diving into these, how would you sum up chapters 1-5 in one or two sentences?

**Read Galatians 6:1-18**

In verse 1, how does Paul tell us to approach another believer who is in bondage to a sin? What warning does he give at the end of the verse?

In verse 2, we are told to bear one another's burdens, and verse 3 continues the thought in a unique way. Why would our attitude about ourselves affect how we feel about either sharing our burdens, or helping others with theirs?

In verse 4-5, does Paul seem to contradict himself? \_\_\_\_\_ He has said to "bear one another's burdens," yet then says to "test your own actions" and "carry your own load." Paul may be sharing that we assist others in easing their burdens, but we must also, as individuals, take responsibility for our particular, unique challenges. We are willing to give and accept help, but also not totally abdicate our responsibility (I.e. by blaming others for our dysfunctions, for example.) This is not a contradiction, but a balance between taking responsibility and allowing people to help us bear up under a load.

Which do you find easiest to do: give help, or receive help?

If you find it hard to receive help, it may be wise to think about it this way. In the body of Christ, if God is prompting someone to help you, your refusal of their encouragement or assistance may actually block the Spirit's work in both of your lives. Furthermore, our refusal to accept reasonable help can reveal our pride. So the next time someone offers you something, even if you don't feel you really "need" it, accept it graciously as a gift from your heavenly Father just because He loves you!

What does Paul tell us to do in regard to teachers, in verse 6?

In verses 6-10, what is the main concept?

Why would Paul emphasize the household of faith in verse 10? (Take a look at 1 Tim. 5:8 to help you with this answer.)

From verse 11 on, it appears Paul took over the writing duties (he may have been dictating, prior to this.) Pick out two concepts in this last section that Paul chose to emphasize as he wrapped up the letter.

*Personal application:* From the entire book of Galatians, what stood out to you most personally? What will you take away from this as a positive change in your life?

*Review question from last week:* In Chapter 6, Paul turns to deal with some very practical applications of the freedom he has advocated in chapters 1-5. Before diving into these, how would you sum up chapters 1-5 in one or two sentences?

*Christ + nothing = everything; it is for freedom that Christ has made us free*

### Read Galatians 6:1-18

In verse 1, how does Paul tell us to approach another believer who is in bondage to a sin? What warning does he give at the end of the verse? *I must be in spiritual touch with God myself and do it in a gentle way, being careful of the possibility of my own fall into sin.*

In verse 2, we are told to bear one another's burdens, and verse 3 continues the thought in a unique way. Why would our attitude about ourselves affect how we feel about either sharing our burdens, or helping others with theirs? *If we are proud, we will have a harder time accepting help. If we realize that we are all in need of each other, we will better give and receive help.*

In verse 4-5, does Paul seem to contradict himself? \_\_\_\_\_ He has said to "bear one another's burdens," yet then says to "test your own actions" and "carry your own load." Paul may be sharing that we assist others in easing their burdens, but we must also, as individuals, take responsibility for our particular, unique challenges. We are willing to give and accept help, but also not totally abdicate our responsibility (I.e. by blaming others for our dysfunctions, for example.) This is not a contradiction, but a balance between taking responsibility and allowing people to help us bear up under a load.

Which do you find easiest to do: give help, or receive help? *Personal response.*

If you find it hard to receive help, it may be wise to think about it this way. In the body of Christ, if God is prompting someone to help you, your refusal of their encouragement or assistance may actually block the Spirit's work in both of your lives. Furthermore, our refusal to accept reasonable help can reveal our pride. So the next time someone offers you something, even if you don't feel you really "need" it, accept it graciously as a gift from your heavenly Father just because He loves you!

What does Paul tell us to do in regard to teachers, in verse 6? *Those taught should be sure to share in tangible ways with those who teach them.*

In verses 6-10, what is the main concept? *We reap what we sow.*

Why would Paul emphasize the household of faith in verse 10? (Take a look at 1 Tim. 5:8 to help you with this answer.)

*It is important to be helpful to people in general, but we first are responsible to the circle of influence God has arranged for us (our families, our brothers and sisters in Christ)*

From verse 11 on, it appears Paul took over the writing duties (he may have been dictating, prior to this.) Pick out two concepts in this last section that Paul chose to emphasize as he wrapped up the letter.

*Answers may vary but could include:*

*-pride and image often influence people to demand that others do what they want*

*-we have no reason to boast except in the cross of Christ*

*-I am crucified to the world*

*-following rules does not make me more spiritual*

*-Paul has suffered for Christ and did have authority to teach these concepts*

*Personal application:* From the entire book of Galatians, what stood out to you most personally? What will you take away from this as a positive change in your life? *Personal response.*