

Galatians

Week 4—Fighting Me

Your assignment:

1. Read Galatians once a week (6 chapters).
2. Take the notes each week and review them as you read.
3. Be open to God completely shifting your relationship with Him.
4. Text any questions to 440.557.2822.

(Galatians 2:16-21)

Yet we know that a person is made right with God by faith in Jesus Christ, not by obeying the law. And we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we might be made right with God because of our faith in Christ, not because we have obeyed the law. For no one will ever be made right with God by obeying the law. But suppose we seek to be made right with God through faith in Christ and then we are found guilty because we have abandoned the law. Would that mean Christ has led us into sin? Absolutely not! Rather, I am a sinner if I rebuild the old system of law I already tore down. For when I tried to keep the law, it condemned me. So I died to the law—I stopped trying to meet all its requirements—so that I might live for God. My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I do not treat the grace of God as meaningless. For if keeping the law could make us right with God, then there was no need for Christ to die.

Introduction:

Remember that these believers to whom Paul is writing are very young in their faith (just like some of you). We can assume they would have found Paul's letter hard to read and understand...

- ...because they don't think they are turning away from Christianity,
- ...they think they are becoming "better" Christians.

There is no such thing as a "better" Christian.

- Doesn't God want us to be "better" Christians?
- Doesn't He want us to behave, and get our life together?
- Doesn't He want us to act more like a Christian?

These new believers were under the pressure to behave as good Jewish people.

- Specifically, the false teachers were telling them it wasn't enough to believe in Jesus you had to believe in Jesus **AND** follow the Jewish rules (including circumcision and all the dietary rules and rituals)
 - Their message was **believe in Jesus, change, and God will love you**, and see how subtle this is.
 - This would not make you think you are abandoning Christianity or the Gospel; **this makes you believe you are being a great Christian and you are being good for God!**
 - You believe in Jesus **AND** you come to church, and you're in a growth group, and you tithe, and you're nicer to people, and you drink, smoke, cuss, and gamble less.

The Gospel says **believe in Jesus and God's love will change you**. Seems like a small difference, but it's completely different. Acting Jewish is not our struggle, but the pressure to be a "better" Christian is very real.

- Every day **we're tempted to believe our job is to not disappoint God**, so we need to do stuff for Him but we don't need to. The only thing that matters is that we believe the Gospel, and the more we believe the Gospel the more we will be/are transformed into the person we could never become on our own.

(Galatians 6:15)

It doesn't matter whether we have been circumcised or not. What counts is whether we have been transformed into a new creation.

- The question is not *are you trying to do better?* The REAL question is ***are you being transformed by God's grace to be His witness to the unbelieving world?***
- The false gospel says the changing depends on you BUT THE TRUE GOSPEL says **transformation depends on the power of God love working in your life.**

So how are we transformed from our old selves into the new creation? **By Continuing To Believe The Gospel.**

- This is what Paul is saying. You don't need something deeper or more advanced than the Gospel, you just need to keep believing what you first believed when you put your faith in Jesus.

What did you believe? **When you believed the Gospel you had a revelation of Jesus.** In some way or another, you realized that...

Because of your sin, someone has to pay the penalty of death and condemnation, and it should be you, but God loves you so much he sent his son Jesus to pay the penalty for your sin, and if you believe in Jesus, you can have life instead of death.

- *If we wanted to shorten it we could say, the Gospel is the realization that your sin is worse than you thought, but God's love is greater than you knew.*
- When we forget this or stop believing it, or start adding variations to it, we stop trusting that God's love is enough, we convince ourselves we need something else, and we start putting our faith in ourself.

(Galatians 2:20)

I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

If Salvation Depends On Me, That's A Problem

(Romans 7:14-25)

So the trouble is not with the law, for it is spiritual and good. **The trouble is with me, for I am all too human, a slave to sin.** I don't really understand myself, for I want to do what is right, but I don't do it. Instead, I do what I hate. But if I know that what I am doing is wrong, this shows that I agree that the law is good. So I am not the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it. And I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. I want to do what is right, but I can't. I want to do what is good, but I don't. I don't want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway. But if I do what I don't want to do, I am not really the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it. I have discovered this principle of life—that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong. I love God's law with all my heart. But **there is another power within me that is at war with my mind. This power makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me.** Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death? **Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord.**

If My Good Deeds Get Me To Heaven, Then Why Did Jesus Have To Die?

(v.21)...I do not treat the grace of God as meaningless. For if keeping the law could make us right with God, then there was no need for Christ to die.

- Paul suggests that our minds and spirit man are at war with the evil we are born with—we are slaves to it—until Jesus came to the Cross. We continue to proclaim to you as Paul did to the Galatians—the work of the Cross is enough to save us if we put our faith and trust in Jesus.