

Galatians

Week 6—Saved Sinners

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 3:1-14)

Oh, foolish Galatians! Who has cast an evil spell on you? For the meaning of Jesus Christ's death was made as clear to you as if you had seen a picture of his death on the cross. Let me ask you this one question: Did you receive the Holy Spirit by obeying the law of Moses? Of course not! You received the Spirit because you believed the message you heard about Christ. How foolish can you be? After starting your new lives in the Spirit, why are you now trying to become perfect by your own human effort? Have you experienced so much for nothing? Surely it was not in vain, was it? I ask you again, does God give you the Holy Spirit and work miracles among you because you obey the law? Of course not! It is because you believe the message you heard about Christ. In the same way, Abraham believed God, and God counted him as righteous because of his faith." The real children of Abraham, then, are those who put their faith in God. What's more, the Scriptures looked forward to this time when God would make the Gentiles right in his sight because of their faith. God proclaimed this good news to Abraham long ago when he said, "All nations will be blessed through you." So all who put their faith in Christ share the same blessing Abraham received because of his faith. But those who depend on the law to make them right with God are under his curse, for the Scriptures say, "Cursed is everyone who does not observe and obey all the commands that are written in God's Book of the Law." So it is clear that no one can be made right with God by trying to keep the law. For the Scriptures say, "It is through faith that a righteous person has life." This way of faith is very different from the way of law, which says, "It is through obeying the law that a person has life." But Christ has rescued us from the curse pronounced by the law. When he was hung on the cross, he took upon himself the curse for our wrongdoing. For it is written in the Scriptures, "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree." Through Christ Jesus, God has blessed the Gentiles with the same blessing he promised to Abraham, so that we who are believers might receive the promised Holy Spirit through faith.

There are times when it is difficult to be consistent with how we live for Christ. This summer we are learning... **We Don't Have To Perform For God In Order To Be Saved—We Only Need To Believe In The Cross And Death Of Jesus Christ!**

Christianity has a vocabulary too. As God works in us and grows us it's important to know what we mean when we use phrases like *sanctification*, *justification*, *trinity* and *incarnation* to explain our Christian faith. The point is not to sound smart, but knowing what these words mean...

- helps explain our faith
- helps explain what Christianity is
- helps us know more about who God is.

Today, the word is **RIGHTEOUSNESS**. It's not a word we use in our everyday vocabulary, but for a Christian, it could possibly be the most important word you need to understand as a believer.

The word has many technical definitions but for today you just need these two. According to the dictionary, **RIGHTEOUSNESS** means *to be free from guilt or sin*. In a way, righteousness means *being perfect* and *no one can find fault with you*.

There is another important definition...**RIGHTEOUSNESS** means *being right with God*.

What does it mean to be right with God?

- When you become a Christian by placing your faith in Jesus, **the Bible says you are counted as RIGHTEOUS**.
- It means in God's eyes because of your faith in Jesus Christ you are not guilty of sin.

Because Jesus paid the penalty for every one of your sins.

(Galatians 3:13)

But Christ has rescued us from the curse pronounced by the law. When he was hung on the cross, he took upon himself the curse for our wrongdoing.

Something Most Christians Don't Understand

- Salvation does not mean God is letting you off the hook for your sin because he's nice or loving.
- It means **God does not hold your sin against you** because Jesus has already paid the penalty for your sin.

Don't misunderstand...**God has never lowered his standards.**

- He wasn't mean in the Old Testament but nice in the New Testament.
- From the beginning God has had the same expectation of you and I – **we are to live a holy life free from sin**.
- The only way we can have a relationship with God and ultimately spend eternity with Him is to be **SINLESS**.
- God will not let anyone off the hook for sin and every sin has to be accounted for.

This Is Why We Make Such A Big Deal About Jesus.

- We know that we will never be able to be good enough for God.
 - Jesus came to earth as a human being and lived a righteous and sinless life.
- So Jesus, the only perfect human being to ever live was punished like a sinner.
 - He got what you and I deserve.
- **If we will just believe it, we get credit for the perfect life Jesus lived instead of the sinful life we live.**

(John 3:16)

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

- Jesus makes you right with God
- Faith in Jesus is what makes you righteous—

- Not how many rules you keep or break.
- Not the good choices or deeds you may done.

How Do You Grow In Righteousness?

This is really the crux of the Christian life.

- There is a way that Christians are supposed to live.
- There is a way of life that God has given us to live.
- The point of Galatians is not that Christians should not obey the Bible.
- The point of Galatians is that your salvation does not depend on your behavior.
- The way you know that you have truly understood the Gospel message is that **CHRIST'S SPIRIT NOW LIVES IN YOU**, and a person who has Christ's spirit living in them, is a completely different and transformed person from those who have yet to come to Jesus.

One of the hardest parts of the Christian life is truly believing how God feels about you instead of how you feel about yourself.

- It be awesome for some of you if you never doubted yourself again or struggled. But we don't.
- **We struggle with being the saved person we know we are and the sinner we know we are too.**

How do we live more like the person God says we are?

(Galatians 3:1-5)

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- The first way is to **try really really hard**.
 - But trying hard will not change your spiritual condition.

Try Believing!

- The Christian life is different from every other religion and self-help practice and philosophy
- **The message of Christianity is not about "doing" because it's already "done!"**
- You are transformed as you continue to believe

The way you become a Christian is the way you grow as a Christian—**FAITH** over **EFFORT**.