

THE GOSPEL OF GRACE



MIKE WITHEM
EDITED AND COMPILED BY JOSEPH F. ROBERTS

THE GOSPEL OF GRACE

Studies in Paul's Epistle to the Galatians

Pastor Mike Withem

Edited and Compiled by Joseph F. Roberts

A narrative edition with complete King James Version Scripture passages

THE GOSPEL OF GRACE
Studies in Paul's Epistle to the Galatians

Original sermons and Bible studies by Pastor Mike Withem.

Edited, compiled, and arranged in narrative form by Joseph F. Roberts.

Scripture quotations are from the King James Version of the Bible.

*The source manuscripts identify the author with First Baptist Church, Ranson,
West Virginia.*

Contents

Editor's Note

Introduction to Galatians

PART ONE — THE GOSPEL OF GRACE DEFENDED

Chapter 1: Who Gave Himself — Galatians 1:1-5

Chapter 2: I Marvel — Galatians 1:6-9

Chapter 3: Not After Man — Galatians 1:10-24

Chapter 4: The Truth Of The Gospel — Galatians 2:1-10

Chapter 5: He Was To Be Blamed — Galatians 2:11-21

PART TWO — THE GOSPEL OF GRACE EXPLAINED

Chapter 6: O Foolish Galatians — Galatians 3:1-5

Chapter 7: Faithful Abraham — Galatians 3:6-9

Chapter 8: Under The Curse — Galatians 3:10-14

Chapter 9: To Abraham And His Seed — Galatians 3:15-18

Chapter 10: Wherefore Then Serveth The Law — Galatians 3:19-29

Chapter 11: Because Ye Are Sons — Galatians 4:1-7

Chapter 12: I Am Afraid Of You — Galatians 4:8-11

Chapter 13: I Tell You The Truth — Galatians 4:12-20

Chapter 14: Abraham Had Two Sons — Galatians 4:21-31

PART THREE — THE GOSPEL OF GRACE APPLIED

Chapter 15: Stand Fast — Galatians 5:1-12

Chapter 16: Use Not Liberty — Galatians 5:13-15

Chapter 17: Walk In The Spirit — Galatians 5:16-18

Chapter 18: The Works Of The Flesh — Galatians 5:19-21

Chapter 19: The Fruit Of The Spirit Is Love — Galatians 5:22

Chapter 20: The Fruit Of The Spirit Is Joy — Galatians 5:22

Chapter 21: The Fruit Of The Spirit Is Peace — Galatians 5:22

Chapter 22: The Fruit Of The Spirit Is Longsuffering — Galatians 5:22

Chapter 23: The Fruit Of The Spirit Is Gentleness — Galatians 5:22

Chapter 24: The Fruit Of The Spirit Is Goodness — Galatians 5:22

Chapter 25: The Fruit Of The Spirit Is Faith — Galatians 5:22
Chapter 26: The Fruit Of The Spirit Is Meekness — Galatians 5:23
Chapter 27: The Fruit Of The Spirit Is Temperance — Galatians 5:23
Chapter 28: Let Us Walk In The Spirit — Galatians 5:24-26
Chapter 29: If A Man Be Overtaken In A Fault — Galatians 6:1-5
Chapter 30: Let Us Do Good — Galatians 6:6-10
Chapter 31: The Israel Of God — Galatians 6:11-18

CONCLUSION AND BACK MATTER

Conclusion: Grace That Bears Fruit
Scripture Index
About the Author
About the Editor and Compiler

Editor's Note

This volume brings together a sequence of Galatians studies written by Pastor Mike Withem and originally prepared in sermon-outline form. The original teaching, illustrations, doctrinal emphasis, appeals, and practical applications have been preserved. The editorial work has concentrated on joining the outline points into readable narrative, correcting minor mechanical irregularities, standardizing Scripture references, and arranging the studies as chapters of one continuous book.

Every principal text and every verse-specific cross-reference found in the source manuscripts has been written out in full from the King James Version. The sermon setting can still be heard in the author's direct questions and pastoral appeals, but time-bound phrases have been adjusted where necessary so that the material reads naturally as a book rather than as a transcript tied to a particular Sunday.

The completed volume contains thirty-one studies, beginning with Galatians 1:1-5 and continuing through Galatians 6:18. Together they follow the full movement of Paul's letter: the gospel of grace defended, the gospel of grace explained, and the gospel of grace applied in a Spirit-directed life.

Joseph F. Roberts
Editor and Compiler

Introduction to Galatians

The Epistle to the Galatians has often been described as a charter of Christian liberty. It has been called “The Magna Carta of Spiritual Liberty,” “The Battle Cry of the Reformation,” and “The Christian’s Declaration of Independence.” Each title reflects the central concern of the letter: the freedom that belongs to those who are saved by the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ.

Paul wrote because the churches of Galatia had been troubled by false teachers. These teachers insisted that faith in Christ was not enough and that believers must also submit to the law of Moses in order to remain secure. Paul answered that distortion with a vigorous defense of the gospel. Salvation does not begin in grace and continue by human merit; it rests upon the finished work of Christ, who “gave himself for our sins.”

The studies that follow trace Paul’s argument in three movements. Galatians 1-2 defends the gospel of grace. Galatians 3-4 explains it. Galatians 5-6 applies it to Christian conduct. The progression matters: liberty is never a license for the flesh. The grace that justifies also calls believers to stand fast, serve one another, walk in the Spirit, and bear spiritual fruit.

These chapters retain Pastor Withem’s pastoral voice. They are meant not only to explain the text but also to press its truth upon the heart. The reader is therefore invited to examine every claim by the Word of God, to reject every substitute for the true gospel, and to live in the freedom Christ has given.

PART ONE

The Gospel of Grace Defended

Galatians 1-2

CHAPTER 1

Who Gave Himself

Scripture Text: Galatians 1:1-5 (KJV)

¹ Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;)

² And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia:

³ Grace *be* to you and peace from God the Father, and *from* our Lord Jesus Christ,

⁴ Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:

⁵ To whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Introduction

The book of Galatians has been called several things. For example, it has been called, “The Magna Carta of Spiritual Liberty.” It has also been called, “The Battle Cry of the Reformation.” In fact, the great German reformer, Martin Luther, wrote the following about Paul’s letter to the Galatian believers, he said, “The epistle to the Galatians is my epistle. To it I am, as it were, in wedlock. Galatians is my Katherine.” (Katherine was his wife’s name.) The book of Galatians has also been called, “The Christian’s Declaration of Independence.” Now this raises a question. Why is the book of Galatians given these names?

It is given these names simply because of its theme, which is “Christian Liberty.” Now what was the occasion for the writing of this letter? The theme of the letter was “Christian Liberty,” but why did Paul write this letter to the churches of Galatia? He wrote this letter because the Galatian believers had been influenced by false teachers. Apparently, these churches had been infiltrated by “Judaisers,” who had led them to believe that even though they had trusted Christ as Savior, if they did not

keep the law of Moses, they still would not be saved. In other words, they had been convinced that even though they had been saved by grace through faith, if they wanted to “stay saved” (not lose their salvation), they would have to conform to the law of Moses. One writer put it like this, “The Galatians, having launched their Christian experience by faith, seem content to leave their voyage of faith and chart a new course based on works, a course Paul finds disturbing. His letter to the Galatians is a vigorous attack against the gospel of works, as well as a defense of the gospel of faith.”

Now that we know the theme of the book of Galatians and understand the occasion for it’s writing, I want us to notice how Paul begins his letter to these misguided believers. He begins his letter by doing two things. The first thing he does is he sets forth his credentials as an apostle. Notice again verses. 1, “Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;)” Paul made it clear that he was not a self-appointed or man-appointed apostle, but a God-appointed apostle. He wanted these Galatian believers to know that his authority came from God Himself! The second thing that Paul does, as he begins this letter, is he reminds these believers that the basis of their salvation was not their works, but rather the finished work of Christ on the cross.

Notice again verses. 3-4, “Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ,...Who gave himself for our sins.” Paul made it very clear to these Galatian believers that they were not because of anything that they had done, but rather because of what God had done for them. Now as we examine the basis our salvation more closely, in this study, I want to call your attention to at least three things. First of all, I want to call your attention to...

What Jesus Did For Us

Notice again the first part of verses. 4, it says, concerning Jesus, “Who gave himself for our sins.” What did Jesus do for us? He “gave himself for our sins.” This is not the only place in God’s Word where we are told that Jesus “gave Himself” for us. Let’s jump ahead, for just a moment, to Gal. 2:20, “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” Listen also to Eph. 5:25, “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;” Finally, listen to 1 Tim. 2:5-6, “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;...Who gave himself a ransom for all.”

Now what did Paul mean when he said that Jesus “...gave himself for our sins”? He simply meant that Jesus sacrificed Himself on the cross as a payment for our sins, so that we could be forgiven and live with Him in heaven one day. You see, the Bible tells us that we are all sinners. In Rom. 3:23, we read, “For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” The Bible also tells us that because we are sinners, we owed a terrible debt to God. In Rom. 6:23, we read, “For the wages of sin is death.” That’s the bad news.

However, there is good news, and the good news is that Jesus died for our sins. (Amen?) In Rom 5:8, we read, “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” And so, when Paul said that Jesus “...gave himself for our sins,” he simply meant that by sacrificing Himself on the cross, Jesus paid our sin debt in full, thereby providing a way for us to one day enter heaven. The apostle Peter put it like this in 1 Pet. 3:18, “For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.” By

the way, this was a totally voluntary act on His part. Listen to what Jesus said in John 10:17-18, “Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again....No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.”

What did Jesus say? He said, “...I lay down my life.” He said, “No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself.” This was a totally voluntary act on His part. Now this raises a question. Why would Jesus voluntarily “lay down” His life for us? What could possibly motivate Him to allow Himself to be crucified on an old rugged cross? There is only one answer, and that is love. Do you remember what Jesus told His disciples in John 15:13? He said, Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends?

The apostle John put it like this in 1 John 3:16, “Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us:” And so, that’s what Jesus did for us. Now I want to call your attention to....

What Jesus Desires Of Us

Notice again verses. 4 of our text, “Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world.” What does Jesus desire of us? He desires that we be delivered “from this present evil world.” Now what does this mean? Some would have us to believe that Paul is talking about going to heaven. After all, what better way to be delivered “from this present evil world.”? However, I don’t believe Paul is talking about going to heaven here. You see, I believe that there is a sense in which we can be delivered “from this present evil world” without actually having to be taken out of the world.

Turn with me, if you will, to Tit. 2:13-14, “Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our

Saviour Jesus Christ;...Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity (what Jesus did for us), and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works (what Jesus desires of us)." A lot of people think that the only reason God saved us was so that we could go to heaven, but let me ask you a question. If that is true, why did God leave us in this world after He saved us? Why didn't He just take us to heaven the moment that He saved us? According to Tit. 2:14, He left us in this world so that He could "purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Now let me point out that the word "peculiar" here does not mean "whacky" or "weird."

It simply means "unusual" or "different." What does Jesus desire of us as His children? He simply desires us to be "unusual" or "different," as compared to "this present evil world" in which we live. Now this raises a question. How do we go about being different? Well, let me say, first of all, that "being different" should not be our principle aim. (In other words, we shouldn't concentrate on being different.) Instead, we should concentrate on living our lives according to the principles of God's Word.

If we will do that, we won't have to worry about being different, because we will be different. Israel is a good example of this. The Bible tells us that the Lord chose "Jacob" and his descendents to be "his peculiar treasure." (Psa. 135:4) How did Israel accomplish this? Turn with me to Exo. 19:5, "Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:" In other words, God told Israel, "If you will live your lives according to the precepts of My law, you will be different from all the other nations and peoples." Why was this true?

It was true because all of the other nations and peoples of the world were heathens and were living their lives according to the

dictates of their own sinful flesh. Well, the same thing is true of Christians today. If we will live our lives according to the principles of God's Word, we will be different. Why? Because the unsaved of this world are living their lives according to another standard, they are living their lives according to the dictates of their own depraved natures. But someone says, "Pastor, I still don't see how this amounts to being delivered "from this present evil world." Well, it's like this. By living our lives according to the principles of God's Word, we are being delivered from the influence and domination of this world.

We are in the world, but we are not of the world! Of course, one day we will be taken out of this world, either by death or by rapture, whichever comes first. That will be our ultimate deliverance! Thus far we have noticed two things. What Jesus did for us. What Jesus desires of us. Finally, in this study, I want to call your attention to...

What Jesus Deserves From Us

Notice again verses. 5 of our text, "To whom be glory for ever and ever." What does Jesus deserve from us? Considering the fact that He died for us. Considering the fact that He is now delivering us. What exactly does Jesus deserve from us? This is an easy question. He deserves "glory" from us. What does the word "glory" mean? It comes from the Greek word "doxa," which means, "honour, praise, or worship." And so, because of all that Jesus has done for us, He deserves our honour, He deserves our praise, He deserves our worship.

Someone says, "I give glory to Christ every Sunday morning. I come to church, I sing praises to Him, and I worship Him." That's great, but what about the other six days of the week? What about Monday, and Tuesday, and Wednesday, and Thursday, and

Friday, and Saturday, do you give Him glory then? How do we give glory to God when we are not in church? Jesus answered this question in Mat. 5:16, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” The apostle Peter put it like this in 1 Pet. 2:12, “Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.” And so, by doing good works we give glory to God.

But there is another way that we can give glory to God any day of the week, and that is by bearing fruit. Listen to what Jesus said in John 15:8, “Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit.” Now how does a Christian bear fruit? Let me ask you a question, “What fruit does an apple tree bear? (It bears apples, of course.) Okay, let me ask you another question, “What fruit does a peach tree bear?” (It bears peaches, of course.) Okay, let me ask you a third question, “What kind of fruit should a Christian bear?” (A Christian should be other Christians, of course.) And so, the fruit of a Christian is another Christian.

I don’t know anything that brings more glory to God than the act of leading a lost soul to Christ. What does Jesus deserve from us? He deserves “glory.” He deserves honour, praise and worship. He deserves the glory that we give Him when we do good works and bring the lost to Christ. That’s what Jesus deserves from us.

Conclusion

What have we learned in this study? First of all, we learned what Jesus did for us. (He gave Himself for us.) Secondly, we learned what Jesus desires of us. (He desires that after we are saved, we be delivered from the influence and domination of this world by living our lives according to the principles of His Word.) Finally,

we learned what Jesus deserves from us. (He deserves the glory that we give Him by doing good works and bringing the lost to Christ.) Let me ask you a couple of questions. First of all, do you realize what Jesus did for you? Do you realize that Jesus gave Himself for you, that he sacrificed His life on Calvary's cross to pay your sin debt, so that you could live with Him in heaven one day?

If you don't, then in all likelihood you have never been saved. Won't you consider coming to Christ in this study, putting your faith in what He did on the cross for you, and then calling upon Him to save you? Now, those of you who are saved, do you realize what Jesus desires from you? Are you being delivered from the influence and dominance of "this present evil world" by living your life according to the principles of God's Word? Are you giving glory to God by your good works as well as your efforts to bring the lost to Christ? And then do you realize what Jesus deserves from you? Are you giving Him glory by doing good works and making every effort to bring the lost to Christ?

Scripture References Written Out

The following verse-specific passages cited in this chapter are supplied in full from the King James Version.

Galatians 2:20

²⁰ I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Ephesians 5:25

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

1 Timothy 2:5-6

⁵ For *there* is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;

⁶ Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.

Romans 3:23

²³ For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

Romans 6:23

²³ For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 5:8

⁸ But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

1 Peter 3:18

¹⁸ For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

John 10:17-18

¹⁷ Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.

¹⁸ No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

John 15:13

¹³ Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

1 John 3:16

¹⁶ Hereby perceive we the love of *God*, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down *our* lives for the brethren.

Titus 2:13-14

¹³ Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

¹⁴ Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Titus 2:14

¹⁴ Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Psalms 135:4

⁴ For the LORD hath chosen Jacob unto himself, *and* Israel for his peculiar treasure.

Exodus 19:5

⁵ Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:

1 Peter 2:12

¹² Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by *your* good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.

John 15:8

⁸ Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

CHAPTER 2

I Marvel

Scripture Text: Galatians 1:6-9 (KJV)

⁶ I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:

⁷ Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

⁸ But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

⁹ As we said before, so say I now again, If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

Introduction

(Illus.- A few weeks ago someone asked me the following question, “Pastor, what do you enjoy most about being a pastor?” I thought about it for a moment, and then I answered him like this, “The thing that I enjoy most about being a pastor is preaching and teaching God’s Word.” Now I realize that compared to most, my abilities as a preacher and teacher are somewhat limited, however, I still love it. Now don’t get me wrong, there are other things about being a pastor that I love as well, but the thing that I love the most is preaching and teaching God’s Word. Well, when I answered that question, the person that asked me followed it up with another question, “What do you enjoy least about being a pastor?” Without even having to think about it, I said, “The thing that I enjoy least about being a pastor are the surprises.” Not good surprises or pleasant surprises, but unpleasant surprises. What did I mean by that? I simply meant that as a pastor, every now and then someone within the church family will do something that I would have never dreamed that they would do, something very disappointing

to me as their pastor. I love being a pastor, but I hate those surprises.)

I'm not the only one who has to deal with surprises in his ministry. The apostle Paul had to deal with surprises too! Notice again the first two words in verses. 6 of our text, Paul said, "I marvel." Now what does that word "marvel" mean? The word "marvel" as it is used here means "to be surprised, or to be astounded, or to be bewildered." It's like Paul was saying, "I can't believe it! I'm amazed! I'm absolutely dumbfounded that you would do such a thing!" Now this raises a question.

Exactly what had the Galatian believers done that had resulted in Paul being "dumbfounded"? They had actually done three things. First of all, they had...

Abandoned The True Gospel

Notice again the first part of verses. 6 of our text, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ." Now before I say anything else here, I think it is imperative that I define what I mean by "the true gospel." Exactly what is "the true gospel"? Well, according to Paul's own words in verses. 6, the true gospel is a gospel of "grace." In other words, it is a gospel that rests (is based) completely on the grace of God. Let me give you some verses. Perhaps the most famous verse is Eph. 2:8-9, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:...Not of works, lest any man should boast."

Then there is 2 Tim. 1:8-9, "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;...Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and

grace.” Finally, there is Tit. 3:4-5, “But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared,...Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us.” Now what does the Bible mean when it says that we are saved “by grace”? It simply means that God saves us, in spite of the fact that we are absolutely undeserving! And do you know why we are undeserving? We are undeserving because we... are sinners;

have broken God’s law, have offended God’s holiness; The Bible says in Rom. 3:23, “For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” And so, we are undeserving because we are sinners. In fact, if God were to give us what we deserve, every single one of us would end up in the lake of fire! The Bible says in Rom. 6:23, “For the wages of sin is death.” The Bible also says in Rom. 5:12, “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:”

And so, when the Bible says that we are saved “by grace,” it simply means that God saves us in spite of the fact that we are absolutely undeserving. But this raises yet another question. If we are absolutely undeserving, how then can we be saved? We can be saved because of what Jesus did for us. I talked about this last Sunday morning. What did Jesus do for us? He died on the cross for our sins. (Amen?) Look again at the first part of Gal. 1:3-4, “Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ,...Who gave himself for our sins.”

Paul put it like this in Rom. 5:8, “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” Now when Jesus died on the cross for our sins, He accomplished at least two things. First of all, He paid our sin debt in full! The Bible tells us in 1 Pet. 2:24 that Jesus “his own self bare our sins in

his own body on the tree (cross).” He not only bore our sins on the cross, but in doing so He paid for our sins in full. The writer of Hebrews put it like this in Heb. 2:9, “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.” And so, first of all, when Jesus died on the cross for our sins, He paid our sin debt in full.

But there was something else that He accomplished, and that is He purchased for us a very wonderful gift! Let me quote Rom. 6:23 again, this time I will quote the entire verse, “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” The apostle John put it like this in 1 John 5:11, “And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.” Now let’s go all the way back to my original question. What is “the true gospel”? It is a gospel of “grace.” It is a gospel that rests completely on the grace of God.

It is a gospel that says even though... we are sinners; we are undeserving; there is nothing we can do to earn God’s forgiveness, because of what Jesus did on the cross, if we will put our trust in Him and then ask Him to give the gift of eternal life, we can be saved!; Not only is this the true gospel, it is the very gospel that the Galatian believers had abandoned. It’s no wonder that Paul “marveled” (was so surprised)! What “right-thinking” person would abandon a gospel that says, “You don’t have to do anything to be forgiven and go to heaven, except trust in what Jesus has already done for you.”?

Yet that’s exactly what these Galatian believers had done. Not only was Paul surprised that they had abandoned the true gospel, but he was also surprised that they had...

Adopted A Perverted Gospel

Notice again verses. 6 of our text, “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.” And so, not only had these believers abandoned the true gospel, but in doing so, they had adopted what Paul referred to here as “another gospel,” which, in fact, was not another true gospel, but rather a perverted gospel. In other words, they had adopted a false gospel. Now what do we know about this perverted gospel that the Galatian believers had adopted? First of all, we know that it was a gospel of works. Whereas the true gospel is a gospel of grace, this false gospel that the Galatians had embraced was a gospel of works. In other words, it was based on good works.

To be more specific, it was based on keeping the law of Moses. Apparently, these churches in Galatia had been infiltrated by false teachers that some have referred to as “Judaizers.” Who were these “Judaizers.” They were Jews who had professed faith in Christ as Savior, yet they continued to follow the teachings of the law of Moses. In other words, they continued to be good Jews. For example, they continued to practice circumcision (circumcise their male offspring). They also continued to observe all of the Jewish feast days, such as the Passover, Pentecost, and the feast of Tabernacles.

They also continued to adhere to the dietary restrictions of the law of Moses. And so, they continued to be good Jews. Now this raises a question. Why did they continue to follow the teachings of the law of Moses, even after they had professed faith in Christ as Savior? They did so because they really believed that if they failed to... be good Jews; practice circumcision; observe the feast

days; adhere to the dietary restrictions, they still would not be saved and go to heaven;

Now it was bad enough that these “Judaizers” were so misinformed themselves, but what’s even worse is the fact that many of them became “crusaders” and began infiltrating churches made up primarily of Gentile believers and convincing them that if they wanted to be saved and go to heaven, they too would have to become good Jews (be circumcised, observe the feast days, adhere to the dietary restrictions, etc.). That’s what had happened to the Galatian believers. Even though they had trusted Christ as Savior, they had been persuaded to abandon the true gospel (a gospel of grace, a gospel based on Christ’s sacrifice on Calvary) and adopt instead a perverted gospel (a gospel of works, a gospel based on keeping the law). But someone says, “Pastor, what’s wrong with a gospel that is based on keeping the law?” The problem with a gospel that is based on keeping the law is that no one can keep the law.

Israel couldn’t keep it. The Jews in Paul’s day couldn’t keep it. We as Gentiles today certainly cannot keep it. Let me ask you a question, “How many of you here today can honestly say that you have never... told a lie (not even a little white lie)?”; stolen something (not even a pencil from work)?”; coveted (wanted something that your neighbor had)?”; Well then, by your own admission, all of you here in this study are liars and thieves and coveters, and these are only three of the commandments.

The point is, no one can keep the law. But someone says, “Well, pastor, I know I cannot keep it perfectly, but I can keep it to a certain extent. Wouldn’t that count for something in the eyes of God?” Let’s let God Himself answer that question, turn with me to Jam. 2:10, “For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.” In other words, if you

could keep all of God's laws except one, that one transgression, all by itself, would be enough to keep you out of heaven! That's what's wrong with a gospel that is based on keeping the law! (Because no one can keep the law, it is worthless!) Yet the Galatian believers had abandoned the true gospel (a gospel that is based on the grace of God) for a worthless gospel (a gospel that cannot save anyone).

How dumb was that??? (Illus.- How many of you have heard of the "Hope Diamond"? From what I've read, the "Hope Diamond" is the largest and most perfect blue diamond in the world, and could be worth as much as a quarter of a billion dollars. Suppose you were the owner of the "Hope Diamond." How many of you, if you were the owner of this very rare and expensive diamond, would trade it to me for this piece of limestone? Sounds like a fair trade to me, one rock for another. The truth is, if you were to make such a trade, you would be extremely foolish. Why? Because you would be trading something of extreme value for something that is totally worthless.) Yet that is exactly what the Galatian believers had done. They had traded something of extreme value (the true gospel of grace) for something that is totally worthless (a perverted gospel of works).

I would say they were foolish, wouldn't you? In fact, notice how Paul addressed them in Gal. 3:1, "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?" And so, Paul was surprised because the Galatian believers had adopted a perverted gospel. He was surprised because they had... abandoned the true gospel; adopted a perverted gospel; There was at least one more reason why Paul was surprised, and that is because the Galatian believers had been...

Allured By False Teachers

This is why they had abandoned the true gospel and adopted a perverted gospel, they had been allured (led astray) by false teachers. You know, the Bible warns us about false teachers. In Mat. 7:15, Jesus said, “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.” Paul put it like this in Acts 20:29-30, “For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock....Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.” Peter put it like this in 2 Pet. 2:1, “But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.” John put it like this in 1 John 4:1, “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”

And so, over and over again God's Word warns us about false teachers. How can we protect ourselves from false teachers? Our best defense is to have a good solid (foundational) knowledge of the Word of God. You see, if we know the truth, we are not likely to believe a lie. (Amen?) Apparently, the Galatian believers had not be grounded in the Word of God, or else they would not have been so quickly and so easily led astray by false teachers. By the way, did you notice what Paul said about these false teachers in verses. 8-9 of our text? He said, “But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed....As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.”

Twice, Paul said, “...let him be accursed.” The word translated “accursed” is the Greek word “anathema,” which literally means “cut off from God.” Why such strong words for these false teachers? Because false teachers are responsible for leading their unsuspecting victims into a Christ-less eternity. I’ll tell you what, I wouldn’t want to be in their shoes when they stand before Jesus at the Great White Throne Judgment!

Conclusion

What had these Galatian believers done that had resulted in Paul being dumbfounded? Three things. They had abandoned the true gospel. They had adopted a perverted gospel. They had been allured by false teachers. This reminds me of what the Lord said about His people Israel in Jer. 2:13, “For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.” In closing, let me ask you a couple of questions.

First of all, have you partaken of the “fountains of living waters”? Have you obeyed the true gospel, which says that we are saved by God’s grace as a result of putting our trust in what Christ did for us on the cross? If not, won’t you consider doing that in this study? Secondly, for those of you who are saved, are you grounded in the Word of God? If not, you are a prime target for false teachers. What happened to these Galatian believers could very easily happen to you. Don’t you think it is time that you got grounded in the Word of God?

Scripture References Written Out

The following verse-specific passages cited in this chapter are supplied in full from the King James Version.

Ephesians 2:8-9

⁸ For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is the gift of God:*

⁹ Not of works, lest any man should boast.

2 Timothy 1:8-9

⁸ Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;

⁹ Who hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,

Titus 3:4-5

⁴ But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared,

⁵ Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

Romans 3:23

²³ For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

Romans 6:23

²³ For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 5:12

¹² Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

Galatians 1:3-4

³ Grace *be* to you and peace from God the Father, and *from* our Lord Jesus Christ,

⁴ Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:

Romans 5:8

⁸ But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

1 Peter 2:24

²⁴ Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

Hebrews 2:9

⁹ But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

1 John 5:11

¹¹ And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

Galatians 3:1

¹ O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

Acts 20:29-30

²⁹ For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.

³⁰ Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

2 Peter 2:1

¹ But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

1 John 4:1

¹ Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

Jeremiah 2:13

¹³ For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, *and* hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.

CHAPTER 3

Not After Man

Scripture Text: Galatians 1:10-24 (KJV)

¹⁰ For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.

¹¹ But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.

¹² For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught *it*, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

¹³ For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it:

¹⁴ And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.

¹⁵ But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called *me* by his grace,

¹⁶ To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:

¹⁷ Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus.

¹⁸ Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days.

¹⁹ But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother.

²⁰ Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not.

²¹ Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia;

²² And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judaea which were in Christ:

²³ But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed.

²⁴ And they glorified God in me.

Introduction

There is something very sad about the book of Galatians. Remember now that Paul wrote this letter to a group of believers who had come to Christ as a result of his ministry. You see, when

Paul first encountered them, they were... heathens; idol worshipers; lost sinners on their way to hell, yet because of Paul's ministry, they had heard the gospel, they had placed their faith in Christ, and they had been gloriously saved; Now you would think that because of their past relationship with one another that this letter would have been like a love letter from the beloved apostle to his precious children in the Lord, but it isn't like that at all.

As we saw last week, Paul began this letter with a very stern rebuke for the Galatian believers. Notice again Gal. 1:6-7, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:...Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ." In other words, he said, "I can't believe it! I'm absolutely amazed that you would so quickly abandon the true gospel and adopt a perverted gospel." Doesn't sound like a love letter to me! (Amen?) And then, after rebuking these believers for abandoning the true gospel and adopting a false gospel, Paul begins a lengthy defense of his motives, his message and his ministry. Why did he feel the need to defend himself? Well, apparently, the false teachers (Judaizers) who had infiltrated these churches had made some very false accusations against Paul.

They had attacked Paul's credibility, and in doing so had convinced the Galatian believers that he could no longer be trusted. (In short, they had turned them against Paul.) Any way you look at it, this is so sad! Now, in this study, I want us to focus our attention on the way in which Paul defended himself against the false accusations of the Judaizers. Notice, first of all, how...

Paul Defended His Motives

Apparently the false teachers had attacked Paul's motives, and they did so by accusing him of being a "man pleaser" rather than a "God pleaser." Notice how Paul defended himself against this false accusation in verses. 10 of our text, "For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." In other words, Paul said, "Who am I pleasing? Am I pleasing men, or am I pleasing God? If I am seeking to please men with my life, then there is no way that I can be a true servant of Christ!" If you have ever studied the life and ministry of the apostle Paul, you know that he was not a man pleaser! There is a very significant passage, as far as our discussion here is concerned, in 2 Cor. 11:24-25, where Paul recounts a few of the things that he had experienced as a missionary.

Listen to what he said, "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one....Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned." Why is this passage significant? It is significant because if Paul had been a "man pleaser," he would have never received "forty stripes save one," much less five times. If Paul had been a "man pleaser," he would have never been "beaten with rods," much less three times. If Paul had been a "man pleaser," he would have never been "stoned." Do you know why Paul... received "forty stripes save one," five times?;

was "beaten with rods," three times? was "stoned"?; These things happened to him because he was NOT a "man pleaser!" Paul was a man who was motivated, not by a desire to please men, but rather by a desire to please God, and he was determined to please God with his life, even when it meant suffering the displeasure (and wrath) of man. Paul should be an example to

every one of us. Are we “God pleasers” or “men pleasers”? Are we motivated by a desire to please God, or a desire to please men?

When you are faced with a decision where you have to choose between doing what God wants you to do, or doing what someone else wants you to do, do you choose God? Hopefully, we are all “God pleasers.” Do you remember what Peter told the when he and the other apostles were arrested and brought before the Sanhedrin? The high priest said, “Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine.” (Acts 5:28) Do you remember how Peter responded? He said, “We ought to obey God rather than men.” (Acts 5:29) That was not only true in Peter’s day, it is true in our day as well. We “ought to obey God, rather than men!” In Paul’s letter to the church in Ephesus, he gave some very specific instructions to servants (slaves).

Do you remember what he said? Listen as I read Eph. 6:5-6, “Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ;...Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart;” Are you “menpleasers,” or are you “servants of Christ”? Are you motivated by a desire to please men, or are you motivated by a desire to do “the will of God from the heart”? Why is it so important to be “God pleasers” rather than “men pleasers?” The answer is found in 2 Cor. 5:9-10, turn there with me, “Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him....For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ;” Why is it important that we be “accepted of him” rather than “accepted of men”?

It is important because one day “we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ.” (Illus.- But someone says, “Pastor, if I

don't fudge the books, my boss will fire me! I will lose my job!" Okay, but I will guarantee you that if you fudge the books, while you may keep your job, you will one day lose far more when you stand at the judgement seat of Christ.) (Illus.- But someone says, "Pastor, if I don't do drugs with my friends, they won't like me, and I will lose them as friends." Okay, but if you do drugs, while you may not lose your friends, you will lose far more when you stand at the judgment seat of Christ.) (Illus.- But someone says, "Pastor, if I don't have sex with my boyfriend, he is going to be angry and I will lose him as my boyfriend. Okay, but if you have sex with him, while you may not lose him as your boyfriend, you will lose far more when you stand at the judgment seat of Christ.)

It all boils down to this, "Whose favor do you want to lose? Do you want to lose your boss's favor, or your friends' favor, or your beau's favor, or do you want to lose God's favor? And so, we see how Paul defended his motives. He said, "If I am seeking to please men with my life, there is no way that I can be a true servant of Christ." The same thing is true of us. If we are seeking to please men with our lives, there is no way that we can be true servants of Christ. Notice, secondly, how...

Paul Defended His Message

Not only did these false teachers attack Paul's motives, but they also attacked his message, and they did so by accusing him of preaching a man-made message, a message that was of human origin. Notice how Paul defended his message in verses. 11-12 of our text, "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man....For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." In other words, Paul said, "The gospel that I preached unto you, the gospel of grace, I didn't receive that gospel from a man, nor was I taught it by a man, but I received it by special

revelation from God Himself.” Now this raises a question. When did Paul receive this special revelation from God? Drop down to verses. 16-17, and let’s begin reading in the middle of verses. 16, Paul said, “... immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:...Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia,”

According to this, not long after Paul was converted, he “went into Arabia.” This was before he went to Jerusalem. This was before he conferred with the other apostles. This was before he met with any of the leaders of the church at that time. It says that he “went into Arabia.” By the way, Arabia was a “desert” that was located south of the city of Damascus. Why would Paul, soon after his conversion and before he began his ministry, go into the desert?

While we are not specifically given that information here, it is quite probable that Paul went into the desert to be alone with God. He went there so that God could teach him, by special revelation, the things that he needed to know before he began his ministry. I believe it was while Paul was in the desert, that he received, directly from God, the message (gospel) that he later preached to the inhabitants of Galatia. And so, Paul defended his message by saying that he had received it from God Himself! By the way, the gospel that we preach today, that Christ died for our sins, that He was buried, that He rose again from the dead, is the SAME gospel that Paul preached. We didn’t receive it in the desert like Paul did. We didn’t receive it by special revelation like Paul did.

We didn’t receive it directly from God like Paul did. But it is the same message (the same gospel), and it is of divine origin (it came from God). This is why we shouldn’t be the least bit intimidated when we share the gospel with people. We are not sharing our

message. We are not sharing the church's message. We are not sharing some human being's message. We are sharing God's message! Do you know what this makes us? It makes us God's ambassadors! Listen to what Paul wrote in 2 Cor. 5:18-20, "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;...To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation (the gospel)....Now then we are ambassadors for Christ."

Let us never forget that every time we attempt to share the gospel, we are representing the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords! By the way, because the gospel we share is of divine origin (it comes from God), it is able to save the most vilest of sinners. Paul put it like this in Rom. 1:16, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." And then again in 1 Cor. 1:18, "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." And so, we see how Paul defended his message. He said, "The gospel that I preach, I didn't receive it from a man, nor was I taught it by a man, but I received it by special revelation from God Himself!"

Let us never forget that the gospel that we preach is the same gospel that God to Paul 2,000 years ago! (Amen?) Finally, in this study, notice how...

Paul Defended His Ministry

Not only did these false teachers attack his motives, and not only did they attack his message, but they also attacked his ministry, and they did so by accusing him of being a self-made, a self-

called, a self-appointed preacher. Notice how Paul defended his ministry in verses. 13-16, “For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it:...And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers....But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace,...To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen;” In other words, Paul said, “I'm not a self-made preacher. God had His hand upon me even when I still in my mother's womb, and when the time was right, He saved me and called me to preach His gospel of grace.”

When you consider Paul's past, when his name was Saul, when he was a persecutor of the church, you are forced to conclude that what happened to him on the road to Damascus and afterwards, it was all of God! Paul was definitely not a self-made preacher! You know, while Paul was not a self-made preacher, many of those who stand in pulpits today are self-made preachers. They are not in the ministry because... god called them; god chose them for the ministry; god saved them and placed them in the ministry;

In fact, many of them have never been saved. Why then are they in the ministry? Why then do they stand in pulpits Sunday after Sunday? Well, to them, it is just a job (profession). Some do it for the money. Others do it for the prestige. Still others do it for the approval of loved ones. I've known more than one pastor who confessed that the only reason they became a pastor was to make mama happy, or daddy happy. Paul definitely was not in the ministry...

for the money, for the prestige; for the approval of loved ones; He was in the ministry because God had chosen and called Him and

placed him there! By the way, don't think that just because God has not called you to be a pastor or an evangelist or a foreign missionary that you don't have the responsibility to share the gospel. You may not be called to preach, but you are most certainly commanded to preach. Just before Jesus ascended back into heaven, He gave His church their marching orders.

He said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15) We must remember that this commission was not given to the apostles only, but rather to the entire church. Jesus said it like this in John 15:16, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit." What is the "fruit" of a Christian? The "fruit" of a Christian is another Christian. You may not be called to be a pastor or an evangelist or a foreign missionary, however, as a member of this local church, you are commanded by God to do everything within your power to win souls to Christ. And so, we see how Paul defended his ministry.

Conclusion

Now let me go back to something I said when I began this message. Isn't it sad that Paul had to use this letter to defend himself against the accusations of the false teachers? How did he defend himself? First of all, he defended his motives by saying that he was not a "man pleaser," but rather a "God pleaser." He went on to say that if he lived his life to please men, he could not have possibly been the servant of Christ. Secondly, he defended his message by saying that he didn't receive it from man, but rather by special revelation from God Himself! Finally, he defended his ministry by saying that God had separated him from his mother's womb, and that when the time was right, God saved him and called him to preach His gospel of grace. As I close, let me ask you a couple of questions.

First of all, are you saved? Someone says, “I would love to be saved, but considering the kind of life I’ve lived, I doubt that God could save me.” You must not have been paying attention when Paul talked about the kind of life he lived before God saved him. He was a persecutor of Christians (had them arrested and imprisoned, as well as killed). If God could save Paul, He can certainly save you! For those of you who are saved,... Are you a “man pleaser” or a “God pleaser”?

Do you live your life primarily to please yourself or to please others, or do you live your life to please God? Remember, one day we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ. How will you fare then????

Scripture References Written Out

The following verse-specific passages cited in this chapter are supplied in full from the King James Version.

Galatians 1:6-7

⁶ I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:

⁷ Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

2 Corinthians 11:24-25

²⁴ Of the Jews five times received I forty *stripes* save one.

²⁵ Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep;

Acts 5:28

²⁸ Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.

Acts 5:29

²⁹ Then Peter and the *other* apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.

Ephesians 6:5-6

⁵ Servants, be obedient to them that are *your* masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ;

⁶ Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart;

2 Corinthians 5:9-10

⁹ Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.

¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad.

2 Corinthians 5:18-20

¹⁸ And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

¹⁹ To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

²⁰ Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

Romans 1:16

¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

1 Corinthians 1:18

¹⁸ For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

Mark 16:15

¹⁵ And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

John 15:16

¹⁶ Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

CHAPTER 4

The Truth Of The Gospel

Scripture Text: Galatians 2:1-10 (KJV)

¹ Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with *me* also.

² And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain.

³ But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised:

⁴ And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:

⁵ To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

⁶ But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person:) for they who seemed *to be somewhat* in conference added nothing to me:

⁷ But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as *the gospel* of the circumcision *was* unto Peter;

⁸ (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:)

⁹ And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we *should go* unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.

¹⁰ Only *they would* that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.

Introduction

Before I go too far with my message in this study, I want to remind you that the very lengthy section of Galatians that we are currently in (1:10-2:21) is actually a defense that Paul gave of himself. Why did Paul deem it necessary to defend himself? He

deemed it necessary because of false teachers who had crept into the Galatian churches and had launched a barrage of attacks against him. First of all, they had attacked his motives, accusing him of being a man pleaser, rather than a God pleaser. Paul defended himself against this false accusation in Gal. 1:10. Secondly, the false teachers had attacked Paul's message, accusing him of preaching a man made gospel. Again, Paul defended himself against this false accusation in Gal. 1:11-12.

Finally, the false teachers had attacked Paul's ministry, accusing him of being a self-appointed apostle. Again, Paul defended himself against this false accusation in Gal. 1:13-24. We now come to Galatians 2, and immediately it becomes obvious that Paul is still defending himself, as well as the gospel that he preached. He does so by relating to his readers the details of a meeting that took place between himself and the leaders of the church in Jerusalem. Notice again verses. 1-2 of our text, "Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also....And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain." While we cannot say for sure, it is most likely that this meeting is the same meeting mentioned in Acts 15:1-4.

Turn there with me and let's read those verses, "And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved....When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question....And being brought on their way by the church, they passed through

Phenice and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren....And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and of the apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them.” In this study, I want us to focus our attention on this meeting that Paul had with the leaders of the Jerusalem church. The first thing I want us to notice is...

The Purpose Of The Meeting

In other words, why did Paul go up to Jerusalem and meet with the church leaders, and what purpose did he hope to accomplish? Let me tell you, first of all, what his purpose was not! His purpose was not to seek the approval of the other apostles for his ministry. Now it is true, that during the course of their meeting, he did receive their approval (we will talk more about that later), however, that was not the purpose of the meeting. How do I know this? I know this because Paul did not need their approval. You see, as we learned two weeks ago, Paul’s authority to preach did not come from the other apostles.

As an apostle himself, Paul’s authority came directly from God. Listen again to what Paul wrote in Gal. 1:15-16, “But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by his grace,...To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen;” We should remind ourselves that the meeting that took place between Paul and the church leaders in Jerusalem took place at least seventeen years after Paul started preaching the gospel. For seventeen years Paul had preached the gospel of grace without the approval of the other apostles, why would he need (or even desire) their approval now? And so, the purpose of the meeting was not to seek the approval of the other apostles. May I also say that the purpose of this meeting was not to validate the message that Paul preached.

Some believe that Paul went up to Jerusalem to make sure that the gospel he was preaching was the true gospel.

This is ridiculous! Why do I say this is ridiculous? Because Paul already knew that the message he preached was the true gospel. There was absolutely no doubt in his mind that he was preaching the true gospel! Do you know why? Because he had the best teacher one could have, the Lord Himself! Listen again to what Paul wrote in Gal. 1:11-12, “But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man....For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.”

And so, the purpose of the meeting was not to validate the message that Paul preached. As far as Paul was concerned, it had already been validated by the Lord Himself. (Amen?) What then was the purpose of this meeting? The purpose was to confront the false teachers, also known as Judaizers, who were apparently based in Jerusalem, but who were going around to the churches that were made up primarily of Gentile believers, and telling them that they needed to be circumcised, as well as conform to other demands of the Old Testament law. Notice again what Paul wrote in verses. 4 of our text, “And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:” These Judaizers wanted to place the demands of the law of Moses upon Gentile believers, in other words, bring them into bondage.

According to Acts 15:1, these Judaizers had actually gone to Paul’s sending church, the church at Antioch, and tried to sell their goods there. Of course, Paul and Barnabas withstood their efforts, debating them on the issue, however, it was still causing problems in these Gentile churches. The church at Antioch sent

Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem to confront these false teachers, and at the same time, settle the question of Gentiles being circumcised once and for all! This is why they took Titus with them. Titus, of course, was a Greek (Gentile believer). While Titus was a true believer in Christ, he had never been circumcised. I believe Paul and Barnabas took Titus with them to illustrate what God could do in the life of a Gentile who put his faith in Christ. (Kind of like “show and tell.”)

Before I move on to my next point, notice again what Paul wrote concerning the false teachers who tried to sell their goods to the church at Antioch. In verses. 5, we read, “To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.” In other words, Paul said, “We didn’t give in to them, not even for an hour, so that the truth of the gospel might be preserved.” When those false teachers began teaching that circumcision was necessary, Paul and Barnabas immediately challenged them! You know, when it comes to false teachers in a church, we must do as Paul and Barnabas did, we must challenge them immediately, not giving them the opportunity to spread their lies. But someone says, “Shouldn’t we at least give them a hearing? After all, there might be a little truth mixed in with their false teaching.”

No, we shouldn’t even give them a hearing. Listen to what John wrote in 2 John 1:10-11, “If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed:...For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.” As we saw two weeks ago, Paul was even more adamant than John. Listen again to what he wrote in Gal. 1:9, “If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.” Don’t give him a hearing, but let him be accursed!!! Someone says, “That’s pretty strong

language.” Yes it is, but false teachers pose a pretty strong threat to the truth of the gospel and to the churches that propagate that gospel.

And so, that was the purpose of this meeting. Now let’s notice, for just a moment,...

The Proceedings Of The Meeting

In other words, what exactly happened at this meeting. One of the things that happened in this meeting with the Jerusalem church leaders is that Paul preached the gospel to them. Notice again the first part of verses. 2 of our text, “And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles.” In other words, Paul related to them the gospel that he had received from the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, the gospel of grace, the gospel that declares salvation by grace through faith alone, without any human works whatsoever. Now let me point out something here very important. Some believe that Paul related to the other apostles the gospel that he had been preaching to the Gentiles in order to make sure that he was preaching was the true (right) gospel. However, as I have already pointed out in this study, Paul was not seeking the validation of his message.

He already knew that he was preaching the true gospel, because he had received it from Jesus Christ Himself. It is much more likely that Paul wanted to be sure that the other apostles were preaching the true gospel. And so, Paul preached the gospel to them. But that’s not all that happened at this meeting. Not only did Paul preach the gospel to the Jerusalem church leaders, he also shared with them how God was blessing his and Barnabas’s ministry to the Gentiles. Listen to Acts 15:4, “And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and of the

apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them.” Listen also to Acts 15:12, “Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them.”

In other words, Paul & Barnabas told them how... gentiles were getting saved; gentile churches were being established; gentile believers were growing in the Lord; My guess is that this is when they introduced them to Titus. I can almost hear Paul saying, “If you have any doubts, here is a living example of what God is doing among the Gentiles. Brethren, I present to you, Titus.” I would also assume, though we are not told this, that Titus shared his personal testimony with the church leaders.

Here was living proof that a man could be saved and having a personal relationship with the God of heaven without being circumcised or conforming to any other Old Testament ritual. Let us not forget the purpose for Paul’s visit to Jerusalem. He went there to confront the false teaching that was coming out of Jerusalem, the false teaching that said the Gentiles must be circumcised (become Jews) in order to be saved! I would say that Paul did an excellent job of presenting his case (making his argument). Now, finally, let us notice...

The Product Of The Meeting

In other words, what results were produced by this meeting? The first thing that happened was that the false teachers were put in their place. During the course of the meeting, even though the false teachers were there making their case, as far as we know, no apostle or church leader sided with them. Instead, they sided with Paul. Turn with me to Acts 15:7-11, and notice what Peter had to say, “And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose

up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe....And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us;...And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith....Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?...But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.”

Not only did Peter side with Paul, but so did James, who was apparently the lead pastor of the Jerusalem church. Notice what he said in verses. 13-19, “Men and brethren, hearken unto me:...Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name....And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written,...After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up:...That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things....Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world....Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God.”

In other words, James said, “In my opinion, we should leave our Gentile brethren alone, and not try to impose our Jewish traditions upon them!” And so, the first thing that happened was that the false teachers were put in their place. The second thing that happened is that the apostles and church leaders in Jerusalem gave Paul and Barnabas “the right hands of fellowship,” giving their blessings to their ministry among the

Gentiles. Notice again verses. 9 of our text, “And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.” Now let me emphasize again that they didn’t do that for the sake of Paul and Barnabas. Paul and Barnabas did not need their blessings to continue their ministry. (They only needed God’s blessings! Amen?)

They were going to continue preaching the gospel to Gentiles and winning them to Christ with or without the blessings of the Jerusalem leaders. James and Peter and John gave Paul and Barnabas their blessings to make a statement to the false teachers. (You might say that it was a slap in the face to those false teachers.) A third thing that happened as a result of this meeting, and I will just mention it briefly, is that the apostles and church leaders in Jerusalem sent a letter to Paul’s home church in Antioch apologizing for the problems caused by the false teachers and encouraging them in the work of the Lord. (Acts 15:23-29)

Conclusion

Now what have we learned about this meeting that Paul had with the apostles and church leaders in Jerusalem? Purpose of the meeting (not to validate his ministry or message, but to confront false teachers). Proceedings of the meeting (Paul preached the gospel to them and shared with them how God was blessing his ministry to the Gentiles.). Product of the meeting (False teachers were put in their place, and the other apostles and church leaders gave Paul and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship.) What lessons should we learn from all of this? First of all, there is only one gospel, the gospel of grace, and it is unchanging. Paul preached the same gospel that the apostles were preaching in

Jerusalem. The gospel we preach today is also that same gospel! Secondly, we have a responsibility to do everything we can to preserve the gospel. We must confront those who, like the Judaizers, pervert the true gospel and preach another gospel.

Finally, the basis for unity is truth, not tradition. While Paul desired to fellowship with his Jewish brethren in Jerusalem, he would only do so on the basis of truth, not tradition. Thankfully, they were willing to put truth before tradition. We should do the same. Do you know Christ as your personal Savior? Have you put your faith in the gospel, the death, the burial, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ? Are you trusting in what Jesus did for you on the cross and nothing else to get you to heaven? If you are trusting in anything else, you are trusting in a false gospel, and faith in a false gospel won't get you to heaven! (Prayer & Invitation)

Scripture References Written Out

The following verse-specific passages cited in this chapter are supplied in full from the King James Version.

Galatians 1:10

¹⁰ For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.

Galatians 1:11-12

¹¹ But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.

¹² For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught *it*, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Galatians 1:13-24

- ¹³ For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it:
- ¹⁴ And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.
- ¹⁵ But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called *me* by his grace,
- ¹⁶ To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:
- ¹⁷ Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus.
- ¹⁸ Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days.
- ¹⁹ But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother.
- ²⁰ Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not.
- ²¹ Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia;
- ²² And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judaea which were in Christ:
- ²³ But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed.
- ²⁴ And they glorified God in me.

Acts 15:1-4

- ¹ And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, *and said*, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.
- ² When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.
- ³ And being brought on their way by the church, they passed through Phenice and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren.
- ⁴ And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and *of* the apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them.

Galatians 1:15-16

- ¹⁵ But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called *me* by his grace,
- ¹⁶ To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:

Acts 15:1

- ¹ And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, *and said*, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.

2 John 1:10-11

¹⁰ If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed:

¹¹ For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.

Galatians 1:9

⁹ As we said before, so say I now again, If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

Acts 15:4

⁴ And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and *of* the apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them.

Acts 15:12

¹² Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them.

Acts 15:7-11

⁷ And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men *and* brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe.

⁸ And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as *he did* unto us;

⁹ And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.

¹⁰ Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

¹¹ But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.

Acts 15:23-29

²³ And they wrote *letters* by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren *send* greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia:

²⁴ Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, *Ye must* be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no *such* commandment:

²⁵ It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,

²⁶ Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

²⁷ We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell *you* the same things by mouth.

²⁸ For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things;

²⁹ That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.

CHAPTER 5

He Was To Be Blamed

Scripture Text: Galatians 2:11-21 (KJV)

¹¹ But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.

¹² For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.

¹³ And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.

¹⁴ But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before *them* all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?

¹⁵ We *who are* Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles,

¹⁶ Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

¹⁷ But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid.

¹⁸ For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.

¹⁹ For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.

²⁰ I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

²¹ I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness *come* by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

Introduction

As I studied last week preparing for in this study's message, I couldn't help but think about what the Roman Catholic Church teaches concerning the office of Pope. Of course, we know that the Bible says absolutely nothing about the existence of such an

office. Our Catholic friends, however, not only acknowledge such an office, they also believe that the man who occupies that office is “infallible.” What do they mean by “infallible”? Well, I looked up the word “infallible” in Webster’s dictionary and found the following definition, infallible means “incapable of error.” And so, based on the meaning of that word, our Catholic friends must believe that the man who occupies the office of Pope is “incapable of error.” But that’s not all.

Not only do Catholics believe that their Popes are infallible, they also believe that Peter was the first Pope! This would be funny, if it weren’t so sad. Why? Because Peter was anything but infallible. Do you remember what Peter did soon after they came and arrested Jesus? Even though Peter had told the Lord that he would never forsake Him and would even die for Him, if called upon to do so, the Bible says that he did forsake Him. Not only did He forsake Him, but he denied Him thrice. But someone says, “Wait a minute. That’s not fair! Yes, Peter did forsake the Lord, and, yes, he did deny the Lord thrice. However, that was before Pentecost! That was before he received the power of the Holy Spirit!”

You’re right, that was before Pentecost. However, Peter was ever bit as fallible after Pentecost! How do I know that? I know that because of how he acted when he went to Antioch to visit with his Gentile brothers who made up the church there. Notice again what Paul wrote in verses 11-12 of our text, “But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed....For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.” Do you understand what happened here? Peter went to Antioch to visit with Paul and Barnabas and the rest of the church there.

Remember now, that this church was made up primarily of Gentile believers. However, when Peter arrived, he was warmly received by the church there and even accepted invitations to “break bread” (share a meal) in some of the homes of his Gentile brothers. By the way, this may very well have been the first time that Peter ever “broke bread” in the home of a Gentile. Why did he do it on this occasion? I would imagine he did so to demonstrate to his Gentile brothers the truth that is taught in Gal. 3:28, which says, “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.” And so, everything was going well with Peter’s visit UNTIL a certain group of Jewish believers arrived from Jerusalem. When Peter heard these guys were in town, he completely changed his behavior.

Whereas before he was fellow shipping with his Gentile brothers, he stopped fellow shipping with them. Whereas before he was going into their homes, he stopped going into their homes. Whereas before he was “breaking bread” with them, he stopped breaking bread with them. His behavior completely changed with regards to his Gentile brothers (he became a different person). Why did his behavior change? His behavior changed because Peter was afraid of what these Jewish believers might think of him if they knew that he had actually dined with a Gentile. Now any way you look at this, Peter was wrong!

That’s why I say that even after Pentecost, Peter was anything but infallible. He was the same fallible human being he had always been, and his cowardly actions in Antioch were evidence of this fact! Now in this study, I want us to focus our attention on Peter’s actions. First of all, I want us to consider...

The Core Of Peter's Actions

Let me ask you a question. Why were Peter's actions wrong? Peter's actions were wrong because at the core (heart) of his actions was the sin of hypocrisy. What is hypocrisy? Hypocrisy can be defined in at least two ways. First of all, hypocrisy can be defined as "pretending to be something that you are not." In fact, the Greek word that is translated "hypocrite" (hupokrites) in the New Testament literally means "an actor under an assumed character." Judas is undoubtedly the best biblical example of a hypocrite.

As you well know, Judas pretended to be... a believer; a disciple; a true follower of Christ; yet Jesus said that he was "a devil." (John 6:70) And so, hypocrisy can be defined as pretending to be something that you are not. Hypocrisy can also be defined as "being two-faced." In other words, acting one way when you are around one group of people, and acting another way when you are around a different group people. Isn't that what Peter did? When he was around his Gentile brothers, he acted one way, however, when he was around his Jewish brothers, he acted totally different (he became a totally different person).

I'm afraid that many professing Christians are just like Peter, they are two- faced. When they are around Christian people, they act like Christians, however, when they are around unsaved people, they act like the world. (Illus.- I remember a number of years ago I was in a home trying to share the gospel with a man and lead him to Christ. I hadn't gotten very far into my presentation when the man stopped me and said, "Is So & So a member of your church?" He called the name of a man who was not only a member of our church, but a very faithful attender. When I told him that this man was, in fact, a member of our church, he said something to this effect. He said, "I work with

him every day on the job and he is anything but a Christian!” He then went on to share with me the ungodly manner in which this man conducted himself on the job. My heart just sank, not only because of what I had just learned, but also because I knew my chances of winning this man to Christ were slim to none.)

Are you like that brother? Do you act one way when you are around your Christian brothers and sisters, and then act another way when you are around your unsaved co-workers? Do you use your voice to sing praises to God on Sunday, and then use that same voice to utter profanities on Monday? I certainly hope not! If you are, you are not only disappointing your Lord, but you are also hurting the cause of Christ by bringing shame and reproach upon His name! We need to realize the folly of trying to live a double life. Do you remember what Jesus said in Mat. 6:24? He said, “No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other.”

James put it like this in Jam. 4:4, “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.” What are these two passages telling us? They are telling us that we can’t have it both ways. They are telling us that we can’t... serve God and serve this world at the same time; live a Christian life and worldly life at the same time; be God’s friend and the world’s friend at the same time;

We have to choose one or the other. Hopefully, we will choose to serve God! (Amen?) And so, at the core of Peter’s actions was the sin of hypocrisy. Peter was two-faced, acting one way when he was around his Gentile brothers, but acting totally different when he was around his Jewish brothers. This, of course, was totally unacceptable. Now I want us to consider...

The Consequence Of Peter's Actions

The consequence of Peter's actions was two-fold. First of all, Peter's sin affected him. In addition to damaging his fellowship with God, I'm sure it also damaged his fellowship with his Gentile brothers. How do you think they felt when they saw how Peter behaved himself? If I had been one of them, I would have said, "Peter, just go on back to Jerusalem where you belong, and don't bother coming back to Antioch!" And so, first of all, Peter's sin affected him. But that's not the worst consequence of Peter's actions.

Not only did his sin affect him, but his sin also affected others. Notice again verses. 13 of our text, "And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation." That word "dissembled" means "acted in a hypocritical manner." And so, what this verse is saying is that the rest of the Jews in the church at Antioch, including Barnabas, went along with Peter and acted in the same hypocritical manner in which he acted. Because of Peter's respected position as one of the original twelve apostles, when he sinned, he also encouraged others to sin with him. There is a very important lesson that we all need to learn here. When we sin, our sin not only affects us, but it also affects those around us.

This is especially true if we, like Peter, are in a position of authority. 3. (Illus.- Let me illustrate. Every now and then you will hear about a pastor who is caught in some sin, such as the sin of adultery. Let me ask you a question. When that happens, is he the only one who is hurt by his sin? Of course not. If he has a family, his family is hurt. And even if he doesn't have a family, the church family will likely be devastated. And that's not all. The time will probably come when some member of that church will commit the same sin, and he will try to justify it by saying, "My

pastor did it, why shouldn't I?") But someone says, "Wait a minute, pastor. Only a very weak person could be influenced in that manner." Really? How do explain Barnabas?

Would you say that Barnabas was a really weak person? Of course not! Yet Barnabas fell under the influence of Peter! It can happen to any of us, if we are not careful. (Illus.- Another example of someone in authority is parents. Let me ask you a question. When a parent engages in sinful behavior, is he or she the only ones who are hurt? Of course not! The children will also be hurt. It is very probable that children will follow in the sinful footsteps of their parents and will try to justify their sin by saying, "If Dad did it, why shouldn't I?" Or, "If Mom did it, why shouldn't I?") And so, when we sin, our sin not only affects us, but it also affects those around us. Do you remember what Paul wrote in Rom. 14:7? He said, "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself."

In other words, "Every man's life and every man's death will affect others!" By the way, this works both ways! Not only do we influence others negatively when we do wrong, we also influence others in a positive way when we do right! (Amen?) This is what's called being a positive role model. May God help us all to be positive role models. And so, the consequence of Peter's actions was that others were influenced in a negative way, including Barnabas, and were actually caught up in Peter's hypocrisy. Finally, in this study, I want us to notice...

The Confronting Of Peter's Actions

When Paul saw what Peter did and how his good friend, Barnabas, was caught up in Peter's hypocrisy, he immediately confronted Peter. Notice again verses. 14-15 of our text, "But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth

of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?...We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles.” There are two things that I want to point out here, before we proceed. First of all, Paul was not afraid to confront sin, no matter who was involved in the sin. We must remember that Peter was a very powerful man. He was one of the original twelve apostles. He was one of the leaders of the Jerusalem church.

He was the one who preached that famous sermon on the Day of Pentecost that resulted in 3,000 souls being saved. Yet Paul was not afraid to confront him with his sin! We too need to be courageous enough to confront sin, no matter how powerful or influential the person is who is involved in the sin. (Illus.- For example, if the time should ever come that my behavior becomes unacceptable, I do hope that some of you good men will have the courage to confront me with my sin, even though I am your pastor.) The second thing I want to point out is that Paul not only confronted Peter, he confronted him publicly. Paul said, “...I said unto Peter before them all.” (verses. 14) Because Peter’s sin was a public sin, Paul’s confrontation was a public confrontation.

There is a flip side to this coin, however. While public sins require public confrontations, private sins call for private confrontations. Now why did Paul feel compelled to confront Peter with his sin? He felt compelled because Peter was sending the wrong message to the Gentile believers at Antioch. By the way that he was acting, he was telling his Gentile brothers that because they... were not Jews; had not been circumcised; the only thing they had going for them was simple faith in Christ as Savior, that they were somehow lacking!;

In so many words, Paul said, “Peter, why are you sending them this message. You know as well as I do that one is not saved by conforming to the law, but rather by trusting in Jesus Christ. Notice again verses. 16 of our text, “Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.” Then in the next four verses (verses. 17-20) Paul presents the following argument. He said, “Acknowledging that we are sinners incapable of saving ourselves by keeping the law is not nearly as bad as telling someone that they have to keep the law in order to be saved, and then turning right around and telling them just the opposite. (verses. 17-18)

By the way, that’s exactly what Peter had done. Paul went on to say, “I stopped trying to save myself by keeping the law, so that I could trust Christ and thereby receive eternal life as a gift from God.” (verses. 19) By the way, a person never will be saved until they stop trying to save themselves! As long as a person keeps trying to save themselves by their own efforts, they never will put their faith in what Jesus did for them on the cross and be saved by trusting in Him. Paul went on to say, “When Christ died on the cross, I died with him, and now that I am saved, He lives within me, and every day that I live, I live trusting in the One who loves me and died for me.” (verses. 20) Paul just keeps pointing out, over and over again, that salvation comes as a result of trusting in Christ, not by keeping the law of Moses.

Notice how Paul concludes his argument in verses. 21, “I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.” In other words, Paul said, if we could be saved by... keeping the law; doing good works; being a good

neighbor; any efforts whatsoever of our own; then Christ died in vain. If we can make to heaven on our own, then Christ's precious blood was shed for nothing. This, of course, is ludicrous. We do need Christ! (Amen?)

Christ did not die in vain! Christ's precious blood was not shed for nothing. There's absolutely no way that we can make it to heaven on our own (by our own efforts)!!!

Conclusion

What have we noticed about Peter's actions in Antioch. The core of Peter's actions (the sin of hypocrisy). The consequence of Peter's actions (others were carried away with him in his hypocrisy). The confronting of Peter's actions (Paul confronted Peter publicly, not just because he was being a hypocrite, but more so because he was sending the wrong message). Are you saved? If you are trying to save yourself, then I can assure you that you are not saved. You never will be saved until you admit that you cannot save yourself, and trust Christ totally to save you and take you to heaven.

Paul wrote in Eph. 2:8-9, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:...Not of works, lest any man should boast." If you are saved, are you guilty of the sin of hypocrisy? Do you act one way when you are around other Christians, but act in a totally different manner when you are around the unsaved? Remember now, we cannot be God's friend and a friend of the world at the same time. We must choose one or the other. Who's friend are you? (Prayer & Invitation)

Scripture References Written Out

The following verse-specific passages cited in this chapter are supplied in full from the King James Version.

Galatians 3:28

²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

John 6:70

⁷⁰ Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?

Romans 14:7

⁷ For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.

Ephesians 2:8-9

⁸ For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God:

⁹ Not of works, lest any man should boast.

PART TWO

The Gospel of Grace Explained

Galatians 3-4

CHAPTER 6

O Foolish Galatians

Scripture Text: Galatians 3:1-5 (KJV)

¹ O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

² This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

³ Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

⁴ Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if *it be* yet in vain.

⁵ He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, *doeth he it* by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

Introduction

As we begin our study of Galatians chapter three, immediately we learn at least two things about these believers to whom Paul was writing. The first thing we learn is that they were conducting themselves in a foolish manner (they were being foolish). Notice once again.”verses. 1, “O foolish Galatians,” The word translated “foolish” here is the Greek word “anoetos (an-o'-ay- tos).” According to one Greek scholar, the word “denotes the stupidity that arises from deadness and impotence of intellect.” It means “lacking in the power of perception.” It refers to someone who does not reflect, someone who fails to use their own powers of perception.

It’s like Paul was saying, “You Galatians are not using your heads, and because you are not using your heads, you are conducting yourself in a foolish manner.” Now this raises a question. Why weren’t these Galatian believers using their heads? They weren’t using their heads because they had come under the spell of false

teachers. Notice again verses. 1, “O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you.” The word translated “bewitched” here is from a Greek word that is found only once in the New Testament and it means “to fascinate” or “to put under a spell.” Now I don’t believe that the false teachers were actually practicing “magic” and casting “spells” on the believers in Galatia.

However, I do believe that because of the demonic powers that accompany all false teaching, these believers had fallen under their influence and been persuaded to believe a lie. Now, in this study, I want us to focus our attention on the first three words in verses. 1 of our text, “O foolish Galatians,” and I want us to answer the question, “Why were these Galatian believers foolish?” Paul said they were foolish, but why were they foolish? According to our text, there were at least three reasons. why they were foolish. First of all, they were foolish because they had...

Disobeyed The Truth About Christ’s Crucifixion

Notice again verses. 1, “O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?” Now let me say, first of all, that these Galatian believers were not having a problem with the fact of Christ’s crucifixion. They accepted the fact that Christ had been crucified. They even accepted the fact that Christ had been crucified for them (for their sins). What they did not accept, however, was the fact that Christ’s crucifixion on their behalf was sufficient in and of itself to guarantee them a place in heaven. Let me remind you that these Galatian believers had been deceived into believing that if they wanted to be sure of heaven, they not only had to trust in Jesus, but they also had to conform to the law of Moses.

In other words, Jesus was not enough. Jesus' sacrifice on the cross was not enough. Jesus' blood that was shed for them was not enough. This is what I mean when I say that they had disobeyed the truth about Christ's crucifixion. They did not accept the fact that Christ's crucifixion was sufficient in and of itself to atone for their sins and guarantee them a home in heaven. Now let me ask you a question. Is Jesus enough? Is His sacrifice on the cross enough?

Is His blood that was shed for us enough? Is Christ's crucifixion sufficient in and of itself to atone for our sins and guarantee us a home in heaven? Let's let the Word of God answer that question. Turn with me to Rom. 5:8-10, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us....Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him....For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." There are two phrases in this passage that I want you to notice, first of all in verses. 9 it says, "...being now justified by his blood." By what are we "justified"? We are "justified by his blood."

Then in verses. 10 it says, "...we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son." By what are we "reconciled to God"? We are "reconciled to God by the death of his Son." Notice that it doesn't say anything about being circumcised, or keeping the law, or doing good works. And so, according to this verse,... Jesus IS enough; his sacrifice on the cross IS enough; his blood that was shed for us IS enough; Now turn with me to Eph. 1:7, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;"

According to this verse, the "blood" of Jesus is sufficient to provide for us at least two things. First of all, it is sufficient to

provide “redemption.” Secondly, it is sufficient to provide “the forgiveness of sins.” Notice that it doesn’t say anything about being circumcised, or keeping the law, or doing good works. And so, according to this verse,... jesus IS enough; his sacrifice on the cross IS enough; his blood that was shed for us IS enough; There is one more passage that I want us to look at before I move on to my next point, and that is 1 Pet. 1:18-19, “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;...But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:”

With what have we been redeemed? According to this verse, we have been redeemed with “the precious blood of Christ.” Notice that it doesn’t say anything about being circumcised or keeping the law or doing good works. And so, according to this passage,... jesus IS enough; his sacrifice on the cross IS enough; his blood that was shed for us IS enough; And so, the Galatians were foolish because they had disobeyed the truth about Christ’s crucifixion. While they had accepted the fact that Christ had died on the cross, and while they had even accepted the fact that He had died for their sins, they did NOT accept the fact that Christ’s death (sacrifice) was all sufficient.

Because they had fallen under the demonic influence of false teachers, they had been led to believe that if they wanted to be sure of heaven, they must “add to” what Christ had already done. Let me tell you something, contrary to what most professing Christians believe, we don’t have to add anything to what Christ has already done! What Christ did when He died on the cross for us was all sufficient to guarantee us a home in heaven. All we must do is accept, by faith, what Christ has done. John 3:16 says it so well, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only

Begotten Son (on the cross), that whosoever believeth in Him (His sacrifice) should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (Amen?) Notice, secondly, that the Galatian believers were foolish because they had...

Disregarded Their Spiritual Roots (Beginnings)

Notice again verses. 2-3 of our text, “This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?...Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?” In other words, Paul asked them the question, “How did you come to Christ in the first place? Did you come to Christ by conforming to the law of Moses or by simple faith in Him?” The answer, of course, was they had come to Christ by simply putting their faith in Him. Paul goes on, “Are you so foolish as to believe that one is saved by faith alone, but then is kept saved (“made perfect”) by keeping the law? By the way, did you realize that the vast majority of professing Christians today believe this same foolishness?

(Illus.- Not too long ago I was discussing this very thing with a man who professed to be a Christian, but was not a Baptist. Early in our conversation, he asked me, “Don’t you Baptists believe in ‘once saved, always saved’?” When I told him that we did, he said, “Well, I just can believe in that.” While he didn’t use the word “foolish,” I could tell by the way he said it that he thought that Baptists were foolish for believing in eternal security. I read him Eph. 2:8-9, and asked him if he believed in salvation by grace through faith alone. In so many words, here is what he said, “Yes I do, but I also believe that once we are saved, it is then up to us to keep ourselves saved by living a life that is worthy of eternal life.”) Now that man thought I was foolish because I believed in eternal security, however, according to Gal. 3:2, I’m not the one who is being foolish. (Amen?)

And so, the vast majority of professing Christians believe the same foolish lie that the Galatian believers had come to believe. Let me tell you something, the same grace that saved us when we first trusted Christ as our Savior, is the grace that keeps us saved today! (Amen?) We are not only saved by grace, but we are kept by that same grace. I love the words of Jesus found in John 10:27-29, “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:...And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand....My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand.” Paul put it like this in 2 Tim. 1:12, “...for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.”

Peter put it like this in 1 Pet. 1:3-5, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,...To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,...Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” And so, the Galatian believers were foolish because they disregarded their spiritual roots (beginnings). We, as believers today, need to be very careful that we do not disregard our spiritual roots. Paul wrote in Col. 2:6, “As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:” How did we receive Christ? We received Him... by faith;

with joy, in anticipation; Well, if that’s how we received Christ, that’s how we should live our lives today,... by faith; with joy; in anticipation; You might remember that in Rev. 2:4, our Lord Jesus rebuked the church at Ephesus for disregarding their spiritual

roots. He said, “Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.” This church had clearly gotten away from their spiritual roots. There was a third reason why the Galatian believers were foolish, and that is because they had...

Disavowed The Basis Of God’s Miracles

Notice again verses. 4-5 of our text, “Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain....He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?” One of the things that accompanied Paul’s ministry as he went about preaching the gospel, winning people to Christ, and establishing churches, was the working of miracles. These miracles included healing the sick, casting out demons, and even raising the dead. For example, while Paul was preaching in the city of “Troas,” on the last night he was there, he preached “until midnight.” (Acts 20:7) We are told that a young man named “Eutychus,” fell asleep and fell out of a third story window and was killed by the fall. According to Acts 20:10, Paul stopped his preaching, fell upon the young man’s lifeless body, and restored his life to him.

The point is, just like the other apostles, the working of miracles accompanied Paul’s ministry. Now Paul asked the Galatian believers a question. “While I was with you, ministering to you and preaching the gospel to you, and God was working miracles in your midst, was God working these miracles in response to faith or in response to conforming to the law?” The answer, of course, was “in response to faith.” In Mark 9, we are told about a man who brought his son to Jesus. This man’s son was possessed by a demon spirit that caused him to fall on the ground, gnash his teeth, foam at the mouth, and wallow in the dirt. (Mark 9:18, 20,

22) Sometimes the demon would cause the boy to throw himself into a fire.

The father brought his son to Jesus and said, “Have compassion on us and help us.” (Mark 9:22) Do you remember what Jesus told him? He said, “If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth” (Mark 9:23) Notice He didn’t say, “...all things are possible to.... him that is circumcised; him that keepeth the law; him that doeth good works; but it says, “all things are possible to him that believeth.” By the way, Jesus’ own disciples had tried to cast this demon out, but had failed.

After Jesus had cast the demon out, His disciples came to Him and said, “Why could not we cast him out?” Do you remember what Jesus told them? According to Mat. 17:20, Jesus said, “Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.” And so, the Galatian believers were foolish because they had disavowed the basis for God’s miracles. You know, I believe God still works miracles today. No, I don’t believe that any human being today possesses the gift of miracles like Paul did, but I do believe that God still works miracles today, and He often does so in response to our faith. Do you need a miracle in your life today?

The Bible says in Jam. 1:5-6, “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him....But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering.”

Conclusion

Notice again how Paul began this third chapter of Galatians, he said, “O foolish Galatians.” Why were they foolish? Three

reasons. First of all, they were foolish because they had disobeyed the truth about Christ's crucifixion (they had failed to accept the fact that Christ's death on the cross was [all sufficient] sufficient in and of itself to guarantee them a home in heaven). Secondly, they were foolish because they had disregarded their own spiritual roots (they had been led to believe that even though they had initially been saved by grace through faith alone, if they wanted to keep their salvation, they had to keep the law). Finally, they were foolish because they had disavowed the basis for God's miracles (they had been deceived into believing that even though God had wrought great miracles among them in response to their faith, faith alone was not sufficient to get them to heaven - they needed to keep the law as well).

Not only were the Galatian believers foolish, but anyone who rejects the simple truth that all a sinner has to do to be saved is to believe (trust) in what Jesus did on the cross when He died for our sins, anyone who rejects that truth is also foolish. How about you? Are you like those foolish Galatians? Have you been deceived into believing that Christ's sacrifice on the cross was not sufficient, and that you must add something to what Christ has already done if you want to go to heaven? Listen, Jesus doesn't need our help to save us. All we must do is trust in what He has done for us. Have you done that??

I certainly hope so!

Scripture References Written Out

The following verse-specific passages cited in this chapter are supplied in full from the King James Version.

Romans 5:8-10

⁸ But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

⁹ Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

¹⁰ For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

Ephesians 1:7

⁷ In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

1 Peter 1:18-19

¹⁸ Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers;

¹⁹ But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

John 3:16

¹⁶ For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Ephesians 2:8-9

⁸ For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God:

⁹ Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Galatians 3:2

² This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

John 10:27-29

²⁷ My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

²⁸ And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand.

²⁹ My Father, which gave *them* me, is greater than all; and no *man* is able to pluck *them* out of my Father's hand.

2 Timothy 1:12

¹² For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

1 Peter 1:3-5

³ Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

⁴ To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

⁵ Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Colossians 2:6

⁶ As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, *so* walk ye in him:

Revelation 2:4

⁴ Nevertheless I have *somewhat* against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.

Acts 20:7

⁷ And upon the first *day* of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.

Acts 20:10

¹⁰ And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing *him* said, Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him.

Mark 9:18

¹⁸ And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him: and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not.

Mark 9:22

²² And oftimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us.

Mark 9:23

²³ Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things *are* possible to him that believeth.

CHAPTER 7

Faithful Abraham

Scripture Text: Galatians 3:6-9 (KJV)

⁶ Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

⁷ Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.

⁸ And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, *saying*, In thee shall all nations be blessed.

⁹ So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

Introduction

I want to begin in this study by asking you a question. Other than our Lord Jesus Himself, who would you say is the most famous Jew (Jewish person) of all time? Not just “modern day” Jews, but who would you say is the most famous Jewish person of all time? If you were to ask me that question, without hesitation I would say, “Abraham!” Why Abraham? Because Abraham is the father of the Jews. (Illus.- In fact, there’s a children’s song that I’ve heard our children sing in church many times entitled, “Father Abraham.” It goes something like this: “Father Abraham, had many sons, Many sons had Father Abraham, I am one of them, And so are you, So let’s all praise the Lord.”)

Abraham is the father of the Jews. Do you remember the promise that God gave to Abraham when He called him to follow Him? He said, “...Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:...And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great.” (Gen. 12:1-2) God told Abraham, “...I will make of thee a great nation.” Did God keep that promise? He most certainly did, because some of Abraham’s descendants became

the Jewish nation. And so, for that reason, Abraham has to be the most famous Jew (Jewish person) of all time.

The reason I call this to your attention is because this is probably why Paul chose to use Abraham as an example in his attempt to counteract the false teaching of the Judaizers who were causing so many problems in the Galatian churches. Remember now, these Judaizers were telling the Gentile believers that they couldn't be saved without being circumcised (becoming Jews). By using Abraham as an example, it's like Paul was saying, "Wait just a minute! That couldn't be true, because Abraham, who was the father of the Jews, was saved without having to be circumcised!" As we look more closely at Paul's use of Abraham as an example, we will learn at least three things about Abraham. First of all, we will learn that...

Abraham Heard The Gospel

Now you've heard me say, over and over again, that people were saved in Old Testament days in exactly the same way that people are saved today. Abraham is a perfect example of this. Notice again verses. 8 of our text, "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham." Now this raises a question. When did Abraham hear the gospel?. He heard it the first time when God called him. Notice again the latter part of verses. 8 of our text, "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed."

When did God tell Abraham that in him "all the nations" would be blessed? When He called him to leave "Haran" and to follow Him. Turn with me to Gen. 12:1-3 (I quoted part of this passage a moment ago), "Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out

of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:...And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:...And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.” When Abraham heard those words, “in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed,” he heard the gospel. Now someone asks, “How do those words constitute (comprise) the gospel?”

Well, you have to understand that those words were prophetic in nature, and that they were looking forward to the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. It's like God was telling Abraham this, “Abraham, I am going to bless you with a very large family, and not only that, one of your descendants is going to be a blessing to the entire human race.” Who was that descendant? It was Jesus Christ, who by dying on the cross for our sins, became the means of salvation for the entire human race, including Abraham himself. And so, when God told Abraham, “...in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed,” He was preaching the gospel to him. But someone asks, “Did Abraham truly understand the significance of what he heard?” Perhaps not at that precise moment, however, I am convinced that the time came when Abraham did understand.

How can I be so sure? Do you remember what Abraham told his son, Isaac, as they were making their way to the top of Mt. Moriah? Isaac had asked his father, “Dad, we have the fire and we have the wood, but where is the lamb that we will need for the burnt offering?” (Gen. 22:7) Do you remember how Abraham answered his son? He said, “Son, God will provide a lamb.” (Gen. 22:8) Does that sound to you like Abraham had a good understanding of the gospel? (It does to me!) In John 8 we see

another indication that Abraham not only heard the gospel, but understood it.

Jesus was having a conversation with a group of Jews, and Abraham's name kept coming up during the course of the conversation. It all started when the Jews said, "Abraham is our father." (John 8:39) Jesus told them, "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham." (John 8:40) Later on in this discussion Jesus said the following about Abraham, He said, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad." (John 8:56) How was Abraham able to see Jesus's day? This brings me to my next point. Not only did Abraham hear and understand the gospel, but notice also that...

Abraham Believed What He Heard

Let's go back to verses. 6 of our text, it says, "Even as Abraham believed God." This is not the only place where God's Word tells us that "Abraham believed God." Rom. 4:3 tells us that "Abraham believed God." Jam. 2:23 tells us that "Abraham believed God." In fact, in verses. 9 of our text Abraham is called "faithful Abraham." And so, Abraham believed what he heard. Turn with me to Heb. 11. As you know, Heb. 11 has been called the hall of fame of faith.

Notice what we are told about Abraham in verses. 8, "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went." Notice also verses. 9-10, "By faith he (Abraham) sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:...For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." Finally, notice verses. 17-19, "By faith Abraham, when he was tried,

offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,...Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called:...Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.”

All of these verses tell us about Abraham’s faith. Not only was Abraham a man of faith, but his faith was strong. Turn with me to Rom. 4:16-21, “Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,...(As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were....Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be....And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara’s womb:...He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;...And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.”

And so, not only was Abraham a man of faith, but his faith was strong. When God told him that he would have a son and that his son’s descendants would become a great nation, Abraham believed Him, even when he was 100 years old and still childless. That’s faith!!! And so, Abraham believed what he heard. First of all, Abraham heard the gospel. Secondly, Abraham believed what he heard. Notice, finally, that...

Abraham Was Made Righteous By His Faith

Let's go back to our text, and notice again verses. 6, "Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." It says that after hearing the gospel, Abraham "believed God" (the gospel), "and it (his faith) was accounted to him for righteousness." In other words, in response to Abraham's faith, God imputed to him (credited to his account) righteousness. Turn with me to Rom. 4:1-5, "What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?...For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God....For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness....Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt....But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."

And so, in response to Abraham's faith, God imputed to him (credited to his account) righteousness. Go back to Rom. 4:21 that we read just a moment ago, it says concerning Abraham, "And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform." Now look at the very next verse, "And therefore it (his faith) was imputed to him for righteousness." Now why is this important? It is important because Paul is trying to point out to the Galatian believers that the most famous Jew of all, Abraham, was made righteous (saved) by faith. And that's not all, Abraham was saved long before he was circumcised. Since we are still in Rom. 4, look at verses. 9-10, "Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness....How was it then reckoned? when he was in

circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.”

In other words, when was Abraham saved, after he was circumcised or before? The answer is, he was saved long before he was circumcised. In fact, Abraham was 90 years old when he was circumcised in obedience to God’s command. The argument that Paul is making here to the Galatian believers is this, if circumcision was necessary for salvation, then why did God save Abraham long before he was circumcised? The truth is, circumcision has never been necessary for salvation. It was not necessary in Abraham’s day, and it is certainly not necessary today! What is necessary, however, is faith.

And so, Abraham was made righteous by his faith.

Conclusion

What have we learned about Abraham in this study? Three things. First of all, Abraham heard the gospel (he heard it the first time when he was still living in Haran). Secondly, Abraham believed what he heard (not only was he a man of faith, but his faith was strong). Finally, Abraham was made righteous by his faith (in response to his faith, God imputed to him righteousness). Does this sound familiar? It should, because that is exactly how a sinner is saved today, he....

hears the gospel (death, burial, resurrection), believes what he hears (puts his trust in Christ); is made righteous by his faith (imputed righteousness); Is this how you were saved? If it isn’t, then you are not really saved. There are people today who, rather than trusting Christ and receiving God’s righteousness, are still hoping to make it to heaven on the basis of their own righteousness. Do you know what the Bible says about your

righteousness? It says that when God looks at it, he sees a pile of filthy rags. (In other words, our righteousness makes God sick.)

Do you really think you can make it to heaven on the basis of a righteousness that makes God sick? I hope not. Jesus' righteousness, however, is a perfect righteous-ness, and if you will put your faith in what Jesus did for you on the cross, God will give you His righteousness.

Scripture References Written Out

The following verse-specific passages cited in this chapter are supplied in full from the King James Version.

Genesis 12:1-2

¹ Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:

² And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

Genesis 12:1-3

¹ Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:

² And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

³ And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

Genesis 22:7

⁷ And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here *am* I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where *is* the lamb for a burnt offering?

Genesis 22:8

⁸ And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.

John 8:39

³⁹ They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.

John 8:40

⁴⁰ But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham.

John 8:56

⁵⁶ Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw *it*, and was glad.

Romans 4:3

³ For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

Romans 4:16-21

¹⁶ Therefore *it* is of faith, that *it might be* by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,

¹⁷ (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, *even* God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.

¹⁸ Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.

¹⁹ And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb:

²⁰ He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;

²¹ And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

Romans 4:1-5

¹ What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?

² For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath *whereof* to glory; but not before God.

³ For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

⁴ Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

⁵ But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

Romans 4:21

²¹ And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

CHAPTER 8

Under The Curse

Scripture Text: Galatians 3:10-14 (KJV)

¹⁰ For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

¹¹ But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, *it is evident*: for, The just shall live by faith.

¹² And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them.

¹³ Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree:

¹⁴ That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Introduction

I realize that I may be starting to sound like a broken record, but I want to remind you again of the situation that existed in the churches to whom Paul was writing this letter. The Galatian churches were made up, primarily, of Gentile converts. However, false teachers had crept into the churches and had convinced these Gentile believers that if they wanted to be saved, they must keep the law of Moses. This is why, as we saw last Sunday, Paul used Abraham to illustrate that salvation was by grace through faith alone. Paul clearly demonstrated that Abraham was saved as a result of a three step process. Step One: Abraham heard the gospel. Step Two: Abraham believed what he heard.

Step Three: Abraham was made righteous by his faith. Notice again Gal. 3:6, “Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” And so, Paul clearly demonstrated that Abraham, the father of all Jews, was saved,

not be keeping the law, but by simple faith in Christ. In our text for in this study, Paul continues to make his case that salvation is by grace through faith alone, and he does so by pointing out that rather than bringing salvation, the law brings condemnation (rather than bringing justification, the law brings a curse). As we examine our text more closely, the first thing that comes to our attention is...

The Curse Of The Canon

Notice again the first part of verses. 10, “For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse:” In other words, “Those who are trying to be saved by keeping the law are under the curse (condemnation) of God.” Now this raises the question, “Is the law bad? If the law brings a curse, does that mean that there is a problem with the law itself?” The answer is, “Absolutely not, the law is not bad, but to the contrary, the law is good.” The law is good for at least three reasons. First of all, it is good because it reflects the character of God. This is why God’s law is perfect. God’s law is perfect because God is perfect.

And so, the law is good because it reflects the character of God. Secondly, the law is good because it defines sin. Listen to what Paul wrote in Rom. 7:7. “What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.” We would not know the difference between right and wrong were it not for God’s law. And so, the law is good because it defines sin. Thirdly, the law is good because by defining sin, it makes us aware of our need for Christ. Paul wrote in Gal. 3:24 (we will talk about this more in a later sermon), “Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ.”

If the law teaches us anything, it teaches us that our only hope of heaven is Christ! (Amen?) And so, the law is not bad, but good. Why then does the law bring a curse? Well, it's really not the law itself that brings a curse, but rather our inability to keep (live up to) the law. Notice again verses. 10 of our text, "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." And so, it's not the law itself that brings a curse, but rather our failure to conform to the law. (Illus.- Let me illustrate. We have laws in our land, as well as penalties for breaking those laws. For example, it is against the law to commit murder. Not only is it against the law to commit murder, but in many states the penalty for committing murder is death. Now let me ask you a question. If a person commits murder and as a result of his crime receives the death penalty, does this mean that the law against committing murder is a bad law? Of course not. The law is good. It is the person who breaks the law who is bad. That person who is on death row for committing murder cannot blame his predicament on the law, but he must shoulder all the blame himself. Why? Because he broke the law!)

And so, it's not the law itself that brings a curse, but rather man's failure to keep the law. Now exactly what is the "curse" (penalty) for breaking God's law? The Bible answers that question in Rom. 6:23, "For the wages of sin is death." Paul put it like this in Rom. 5:12, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:" Do you remember what God told Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden? He had given them only one law to obey, but do you remember what He said would be the penalty for breaking that law? Listen to Gen. 2:16-17, "And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely

eat:...But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”

Of course, when the Bible says that “the wages of sin is death,” it is not talking about physical death, but rather spiritual death. It is talking about what the Bible refers to as “the second death.” What is the “the second death”? Listen to Rev. 21:8, “But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.” (Illus.- When I share the gospel with individuals, I come right out and tell them that if God were to give us what we deserve, we would all be in hell! Why is this true? It’s true because we are all sinners, we have all broken God’s law, and the penalty for breaking God’s law is spiritual death.) But someone says, “Wait a minute, preacher. I may have broken some of God’s laws but I haven’t broken all of them!”

It doesn’t matter! Do you know why it doesn’t matter? It doesn’t matter because if you have broken only one of God’s laws, you are just as guilty, just as cursed, just as condemned as if you had broken them all! Notice again verses. 10 of our text, “For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.” James put it like this in Jam. 2:10, “For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.” That’s the curse of the canon. The second thing that comes to our attention in our text is...

The Cure For The Curse

Thank God there is a cure for the curse! (Amen?) What is the cure? The cure is Jesus! Notice again the first part of verses. 13 of our text, “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law.” The word “redeemed” here is translated from a Greek word that literally means “to purchase” or “to pay the ransom.” It can also mean “to rescue.” And so, when the Bible says that “Christ” has “redeemed us from the curse of the law,” it means that “Christ” has rescued “us from the curse of the law.”

Now this raises a question. How did Christ rescue us from the curse of the law? He did so by becoming a curse for us. Notice again verses. 13, “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.” In other words, Jesus rescued us from the penalty of sin by paying that penalty Himself on the cross. The prophet Isaiah foresaw this in Isa. 53:4-6, “Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted....But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed....All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.”

Paul put it like this in 2 Cor. 5:21, “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” Peter put it like this in 1 Peter 2:24, “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.” How did Jesus rescue us from the curse? By becoming a curse for us, by going to the cross, and on that cross suffering our penalty for sin! Notice again verses. 13 of our text, “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being

made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.” This is a reference to Deu. 21:23, which says, “...he that is hanged is accursed of God.”

Even though death by crucifixion was unknown to Israel when God gave them His law, it was understood even then that being hanged implied being cursed by God. Well, that’s exactly what Jesus did when he allowed Himself to be hung (suspended) on the cross, He became cursed by God, not because of His sin, of course, but because of our sin. By the way, Jesus could not have become our substitute for sin, had He possessed any sin of His own. Do you remember what God told Israel in Exo. 12:5 concerning the Passover lamb? He said, “Your lamb shall be without blemish.” The Passover lamb had to be a perfect lamb. Why? Because it was a picture of Jesus, our Passover Lamb! (Amen?)

The Bible says in 1 Pet. 1:18-19, “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;...But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.” Let me quote again 2 Cor. 5:21, “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin.” Because our Lord Jesus was Himself sinless, He was a suitable sacrifice for our sin. That’s the cure for the curse. The final thing that comes to our attention in our text is...

The Condition For The Cure

Thus far we have noticed the curse of the canon and the cure for the curse, but what is the condition for the cure? In other words, what must we, as sinners, do in order to benefit from what Christ did on the cross for our sins? There is only one condition for the cure, and that is simple faith in Christ. Notice again verses. 14 of

our text, “That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.” How does “the blessing of Abraham” come on us? How do we “receive the promise of the Spirit”? The answer is, “...through faith.” (Amen?)

Not through keeping the law. Not through doing good works. Not through being baptized or joining the church. But “...through” simple “faith” in Christ! Turn with me, for just a moment, to Rom. 3:24-28, “Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:...Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;...To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus....Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith....Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.” And so, again, the condition for the cure is simple faith in Christ.

As Paul noted in the passage we just read, this excludes all “boasting.” Paul put it like this in Eph. 2:8-9, “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:...Not of works, lest any man should boast.” There is one more thing that I want to point out about verses. 14 of our text, and that is the fact that Paul referred to salvation as “the promise of the Spirit.” Do you have any idea why he did that? He referred to salvation as “the promise of the Spirit” because when a person puts his faith in Christ as Savior, not only does God save him, He also sends the Holy Spirit to dwell within them. Jump ahead to Gal. 4:4-6, “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,...To

redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons....And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.”

When a person places his faith in Christ as Savior, the Holy Spirit of God comes into his heart. In fact, it is the Holy Spirit who quickens our dead spirits, giving us both spiritual and eternal life. Not only does the Holy Spirit create new life within us, He also seals us (becomes God’s mark of ownership within us). The Bible says in Eph. 1:13, “In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise.” All of this in response to simple faith in Christ. That’s the condition for the cure.

Conclusion

What have we learned in this study? We learned about the curse of the canon. Paul said, “For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse.” (verses. 10) We also learned about the cure for the curse. Paul said, “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.” (verses. 13) Finally, we learned about the condition for the cure. Paul said, “...that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.” (verses. 14)

May I ask you a personal question? As a sinner, you are definitely under the curse of the canon, but have you received the cure for the curse? You have received the cure only if you have fulfilled the condition for the cure, and that is faith in Christ. Listen, if you have placed all of your faith in Jesus and what He did on the cross for you, you don’t have to worry about the curse. Why not? Because Jesus... was made a curse for you;

became your substitute on the cross, paid the penalty for all of your sins in full!; If you have not received the cure, would you

consider doing so now? Do you believe that Jesus died for your sins? If so, the Bible says in Rom. 10:13, “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” Won’t you call upon Him today? You won’t be sorry!!!

Scripture References Written Out

The following verse-specific passages cited in this chapter are supplied in full from the King James Version.

Galatians 3:6

⁶ Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

Romans 7:7

⁷ What shall we say then? *Is* the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.

Galatians 3:24

²⁴ Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

Romans 6:23

²³ For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 5:12

¹² Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

Genesis 2:16-17

¹⁶ And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:

¹⁷ But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

Revelation 21:8

⁸ But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

Isaiah 53:4-6

⁴ Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

⁵ But he *was* wounded for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

2 Corinthians 5:21

²¹ For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

1 Peter 2:24

²⁴ Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

Deuteronomy 21:23

²³ His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged *is* accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy God giveth thee *for* an inheritance.

Exodus 12:5

⁵ Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take *it* out from the sheep, or from the goats:

1 Peter 1:18-19

¹⁸ Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers;

¹⁹ But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

Romans 3:24-28

²⁴ Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

²⁵ Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

²⁶ To declare, *I say*, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

²⁷ Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.

²⁸ Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

Ephesians 2:8-9

⁸ For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God:

⁹ Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Galatians 4:4-6

⁴ But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

⁵ To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

⁶ And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

Ephesians 1:13

¹³ In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,

Romans 10:13

¹³ For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

CHAPTER 9

To Abraham And His Seed

Scripture Text: Galatians 3:15-18 (KJV)

¹⁵ Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though *it be* but a man's covenant, yet *if it be* confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto.

¹⁶ Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

¹⁷ And this I say, *that* the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.

¹⁸ For if the inheritance *be* of the law, *it is* no more of promise: but God gave *it* to Abraham by promise.

Introduction

I'm sure that most of you remember Paul's primary reason for writing this letter to the churches of Galatia. It seems that false teachers (Judaizers) had infiltrated these Gentile churches and were teaching them that simple faith in Christ was not enough, and that if they really wanted to go to heaven, they had to be circumcised, as well as conform to other tenets of the law of Moses. Not only had these false teachers infiltrated the churches, but it appears as though they had been at least somewhat successful in influencing these young believers and leading them astray. Listen again to what Paul wrote in Gal. 1:6, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:" I would imagine that Paul was heartbroken when he heard the news about what was happening in the churches of Galatia.

(Illus.- I know how I would feel if God were to move me away from here [FBC] to some other ministry, and then I were to hear that, after my leaving, false teachers had crept into this church

and had led many of you astray. I too would be heartbroken!) Not only was Paul heartbroken by the news, but he responded by writing the letter that we are now studying. Now in this letter, Paul does far more than just scold the Galatians for being so gullible. He does scold them. For example, in Gal. 3:1, Paul wrote, “O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?” And so, Paul does scold them, however, in this letter he does far more than just scold the Galatians for being so gullible.

What he does is present one argument after another in defense (support) of his position that salvation is by faith alone, apart from any conformity to the law of Moses. This is why he brings up Abraham here in Gal. 3. He said, “Listen, Abraham was not saved by keeping the law of Moses, but Abraham was saved by faith.” Notice again Gal. 3:6-7, “Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteous-ness....Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.” Did you realize that when Abraham got saved, the law of Moses had not yet been given? Not only was Abraham saved before the law was given, he was also saved long before God commanded him to be circumcised. And so, Paul used Abraham to support his position that salvation is by faith alone, apart from any conformity to the law of Moses (good works).

In our text, in this study, Paul again brings up Abraham, but this time he is focusing his attention on the covenant that God made with Abraham. What covenant am I talking about? The covenant that is recorded in Gen. 12:1-3. Turn there with me, for just a moment, and lets read what God told Abraham (Abram), “Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I

will shew thee:...And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:...And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee (thy seed) shall all families of the earth be blessed.” Now having read God’s covenant with Abraham, I want us to go back to our text, Gal. 3:15-18, and notice at least three things about this covenant.

First of all, I want us to notice...

The Basis For The Covenant

Every covenant (agreement) has a basis. Now what is the basis for the covenant that God made with Abraham? The basis for this covenant is nothing less than the integrity (honesty) of God Himself! (Illus.- It has been said that an agreement is only as good as the integrity [honesty] of the person who makes the agreement.) That being true, the covenant (agreement) that God made with Abraham was a very good agreement, because it is based on the integrity (honesty) of God Himself. Let me tell you something, because of God’s integrity, there are two things that we can absolutely sure God will NEVER do. First of all, we can be absolutely sure that God will never break His covenant.

How can we be so sure? We can be sure because the Bible tells us that God cannot lie. Listen to Tit. 1:1-2, “Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God’s elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness;...In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;” Heb. 6:18 puts it like this, it says that it is “impossible for God to lie.” And so, we can be sure that God will never break His covenant because it is “impossible” for Him to lie. On one occasion when Balak was trying to persuade Balaam to curse Israel, he responded to him like this,

he said, “God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?” (Num. 23:19)

Being a man, I have broken so many agreements and so many promises that I have made to others. God, on the other hand, because He is God, has never broken a covenant (and He never will). Not only can we be sure that God will never break His covenant, we can also be sure that He will never modify (change) His covenant. Notice again verses. 15 of our text, “Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto.” In other words, Paul said, “Even agreements that are made between men, once the agreement has been made, you don’t change the terms of the agreement.” However, this is exactly the position that the Judaisers had taken. The Judaisers were saying, “Yes, we know that God made an agreement with Abraham and his seed. However, when He gave the law to Moses, He changed the terms of that agreement.”

Paul said, “No, no, no, no!!! God didn’t change the terms of His covenant with Abraham and his seed, when He gave the law to Moses.” In fact, the terms of the covenant that God made with Abraham are still the same today (haven’t changed)!!! (Illus.- Let me illustrate. Can you imagine a company like Ford motor company agreeing on a contract with it’s union employees, and then before the contract expires, calling in the union bosses and telling them, “We are going to change some of the terms of the contract! We are going to reduce everyone’s salary by 10%, and at the same time increase everyone’s workload by 20%.” Can you imagine how that would go over? There would probably be a strike.) (Illus.- Or suppose you were to sign a contract with your bank to borrow the money to purchase a new home. How would

you react if about 15 years into a 30 year contract, your banker calls you in and says, “I know we agreed on 7% interest for the entire duration of the loan, but because of financial pressures we are now going to have to double your interest rate.” How would you react to that? You would be looking for a lawyer. Amen?)

And so, because of God’s integrity, He will never make a covenant, and then later on change or modify the terms of His covenant. However, this is exactly the position that the Judaisers had taken. They were saying, “Yes, we know that God made a covenant with Abraham and his seed. However, when God gave the law to Moses over four hundred years later, the law disannulled the first covenant.” But Paul said, “No, no, no, no! The law did no such thing. The first covenant is still good!” Notice again verses. 17 of our text, “And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.” And so, because of God’s integrity, the covenant that God made with Abraham and his seed is still good.

That’s the basis of God’s covenant with Abraham. Now I want us to notice...

The Beneficiaries Of The Covenant

Not only does every covenant have a basis, it also has beneficiaries. In other words, someone benefits from the covenant (agreement) in some way. Who are the beneficiaries of God’s covenant with Abraham? Someone says, “Abraham, of course!” Well, it’s true that Abraham was one of the beneficiaries, but He wasn’t the only one. There are other beneficiaries as well. Turn with me to Gen. 12:6-7, “And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the

Canaanite was then in the land....And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land:"

Notice the words "thy seed." Now turn with me to Gen. 17:7, where God later reaffirmed His covenant with Abraham. God said, "And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee." Twice in this passage we are told that the covenant that God made with Abraham was not with Abraham only, but also with his "seed." But someone says, "I understand that the promises God made to Abraham were also made to his descendants, but we are not descendants of Abraham! What does this covenant have to do with us?" It has everything to do with us. Now I realize that we are not physical descendants of Abraham, however, by virtue of our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, we are his spiritual descendants.

Notice again verses. 16 of our text, "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." In other words, Christ is the seed of Abraham. When God told Abraham in Gen. 12:3 that in him (his seed) "all the families of the earth" would be blessed, He was talking about the Lord Jesus Christ. (Amen?) Do you realize what this means? First of all, it means that by virtue of our faith in Christ, we are children of Abraham (spiritually). Look again at Gal. 3:6-7, "Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteous-ness....Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham." Paul put it like this in Rom. 4:16, "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to

that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all.”

And so, because of our faith in Christ, we are children of Abraham, even though we are Gentiles in the flesh. It also means that as children of Abraham, we too are beneficiaries of the covenant that God made with Abraham. (Illus.- A man told me once that, in his opinion, there was absolutely no reason for us, as believers in Christ, to study the Old Testament. He believed that the Old Testament was obsolete and had absolutely no relevance for Christians today.) Of course, this man was wrong! The covenant that God made with Abraham proves that he was wrong. 4. It proves that he was wrong because the promises that God made to Abraham span both the Old and New Testaments. They reach all the way from Abraham to believers today! Someone says, “Well, I don’t care what God promised Abraham!”

Well, I do, because what God promised Abraham, because of my faith in Christ (the seed of Abraham). God also promised to me! (Amen?) I don’t have a drop of Jewish blood flowing through my veins, however, I am a child of Abraham, and as such, am a beneficiary of the covenant that God made with him. Thus far we have noticed two things about the covenant that God made with Abraham. The basis for the covenant (God’s integrity). The beneficiaries of the covenant (those who have placed their faith in Christ). Finally, in this study, I want us to notice...

The Benefit Of The Covenant

We could also use the word “blessing.” Do you remember what God told Abraham in the latter part of Gen. 12:3? He said, “...in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.” Now this raises a question. What is this blessing that God promised to “all the families of the earth,” that would come through Christ? In verses.

18 of our text it is referred to as an “inheritance,” but what exactly is this inheritance, that we, as believers in Christ, have to look forward to? Someone says, “The inheritance that God promised to Abraham’s descendants was the land of Canaan.

That’s true, if you are talking about Abraham’s fleshly descendants. After Abraham obeyed God’s command to leave his home in Haran and follow Him, God led him to the land of the Canaanites. Listen to what God told Abraham soon after he arrived in Canaan, He said, “Unto thy seed will I give this land:” (Gen. 12:7) And so, it’s true that God did promise the land of Canaan to Abraham’s fleshly descendants. But what about Abraham’s spiritual descendants? What has God promised to us? Well, let me say that He has promised us something far better than the land of Canaan.

Turn with me to 1 Pet. 1:3-4, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,...To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.” What has God promised us? He has promised us a home in heaven! (Amen?) Jesus put it like this in John 14:2, “In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.” Someone asked me once, “Did Abraham know about this spiritual inheritance? Did he know about heaven?” Listen to Heb. 11:8-10, and then you answer the question, “By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went....By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob,

the heirs with him of the same promise:...For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.”

There’s no doubt that Abraham knew about heaven, and by faith he looked forward to going to heaven one day.

Conclusion

We have noticed three things about the covenant that God made with Abraham. The basis of the covenant. (God’s integrity) The beneficiaries of the covenant. (all who have put their faith and trust in Christ). The benefit of the covenant. (heaven). Let me ask you a question. Are you a child of Abraham (spiritually)? Have you put your trust in Abraham’s seed (Christ)? If so, because God is a God of integrity, one day you will inherit the blessing (heaven). If you haven’t trusted Christ, then you are going to miss out on this tremendous blessing, because the promise is only to Abraham’s seed.

Scripture References Written Out

The following verse-specific passages cited in this chapter are supplied in full from the King James Version.

Galatians 1:6

⁶ I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:

Galatians 3:1

¹ O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

Galatians 3:6-7

⁶ Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

⁷ Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.

Genesis 12:1-3

- ¹ Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:
- ² And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:
- ³ And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

Titus 1:1-2

- ¹ Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness;
- ² In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;

Hebrews 6:18

- ¹⁸ That by two immutable things, in which *it was* impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

Numbers 23:19

- ¹⁹ God *is* not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do *it*? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?

Genesis 12:6-7

- ⁶ And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite *was* then in the land.
- ⁷ And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him.

Genesis 17:7

- ⁷ And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.

Genesis 12:3

- ³ And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

Romans 4:16

- ¹⁶ Therefore *it is* of faith, that *it might be* by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,

Genesis 12:7

- ⁷ And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him.

1 Peter 1:3-4

³ Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

⁴ To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

John 14:2

² In my Father's house are many mansions: if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

Hebrews 11:8-10

⁸ By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

⁹ By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as *in* a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:

¹⁰ For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker *is* God.

CHAPTER 10

Wherefore Then Serveth The Law

Scripture Text: Galatians 3:19-29 (KJV)

¹⁹ Wherefore then *serveth* the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; *and it was* ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.

²⁰ Now a mediator is not *a mediator* of one, but God is one.

²¹ *Is* the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.

²² But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

²³ But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.

²⁴ Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

²⁵ But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.

²⁶ For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

²⁷ For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

²⁹ And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Introduction

If we have learned anything from our study of Paul's letter to the Galatians, we've learned that salvation is by faith, and not by keeping the law of Moses. Look back at Gal. 2:16, "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." Paul put it like this in Rom. 3:28, "Therefore we conclude that a man is

justified by faith without the deeds of the law.” And so, if we have learned anything from our study of Galatians, we’ve learned that salvation is by faith in Christ, and not by keeping the law of Moses. Now this raises a question.

If that is true, then why did God give the law to Moses? In fact, Paul himself raises this question in our text. Notice again how verses 19 begins, “Wherefore then serveth the law?” In other words, if the law of Moses did not nullify the covenant that God made with Abraham and his seed, and if we are not saved by keeping the law, then what purpose does the law of Moses serve? If you will stop and think about it, that’s a very legitimate question. Now notice how Paul answers that question, again in verses 19, “Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions,” The word translated “transgressions” here literally means “violations.”

What it is talking about is sin. And so, what Paul is saying here is that the law was added because of sin. Now because this is a very “general” answer to the question (What purpose does the law of Moses serve?), I would like use this opportunity in this study to answer the question more specifically. First of all, let me say that the law was added for the purpose of...

Specifying Sin

Let me ask you a question. How do we know what constitutes sin? For example, we know that committing adultery (being unfaithful to our spouse) is a sin, but how do we know that? We know that because of the law! (Amen?) We know that committing adultery is a sin because in Exo. 20:4, the law plainly says, “Thou shalt not commit adultery.” That’s what I mean when I say that the law was added for the purpose of specifying (defining) sin. I want to show you a couple of verses in the book of Romans.

First of all, turn with me to Rom. 3:20. Notice how the verse begins, it says, “Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight.” In other words, when it comes to being “justified” or being saved, keeping the law or trying to keep the law just isn’t going to cut it. But someone says, “Well then, if we can’t be saved by keeping the law or trying to keep the law, then why did God give the law? I’m glad you asked that question, because in the latter part of Rom. 3:20 we have God’s answer, it says, “...for by the law is the knowledge of sin.” The word translated “knowledge” here is a Greek word that literally means “recognition” or “discernment.” And so, when Paul said that “...by the law is the knowledge of sin,” he was actually saying, “It is because of the law that we are able to recognize or discern what constitutes sin.”

Now turn with me to Rom. 7:7. We won’t take time in this study to read them, however, in the previous verses Paul points out that because of our new life in Christ, we are now dead to the law. He then asks the question in the first part of verses. 7, “What shall we say then? Is the law sin?” In other words, “Because for so many years we lived under the bondage and curse of the law, is the law a bad thing?” Notice how God answered that question, Paul went on to say, “...God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.” Paul said, “No, the law wasn’t a bad thing. The law gave me the ability to recognize and discern sin in my life.

And so, God gave the law for the purpose of specifying sin. (Illus.- I’m sure most of you remember Judge Roy Moore who was removed from the bench because he refused to remove the “ten commandments” from his courtroom. They not only removed the ten commandments from his courtroom, they removed him as

well. If you will stop and think about it for a moment, this doesn't make any sense whatsoever. Why not? Because so many of the laws that Judge Moore had the responsibility of enforcing are based on the ten commandments. [Amen?] For example, why is it against the law to commit murder? Because God's law says, "Thou shalt not kill." Why is against the law to rob a bank? Because God's law says, "Thou shalt not steal." Why is it against the law to commit perjury? Because God's law says, "Thou shalt not bear false witness.")

Not only does the law serve the purpose of specifying sin, it also serves the purpose of...

Silencing The Sinner

(Illus.- Every now and then we will stand on the street in front of the Charles Town Post Office and conduct a religious survey. One of the questions that we ask is, "Do you consider yourself to be a sinner?" There was a time when almost everyone, without any hesitation, would have answered "yes" to that question. However, today, you would be absolutely amazed by how many people actually answer "no" to that question. Do you know why so many people today answer "no"? It is because they are ignorant when it comes to the law of God.) If the law of God does anything, it silences the sinner. In other words, it stops all boasting about one's personal goodness. Turn with me to Rom. 3:19 (we looked at verses. 20 a moment ago). Notice, first of all, the verses that come before verses. 19.

Beginning with Rom. 3:10, we read, "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:...There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God....They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one....Their throat is an open sepulchre; with

their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips:...Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness:...Their feet are swift to shed blood:...Destruction and misery are in their ways:...And the way of peace have they not known:...There is no fear of God before their eyes.” Wow, these verses don’t paint a very pretty picture of man’s condition, apart from God, do they? However, they do paint a very accurate picture! Now notice verses. 19, Paul said, “Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.”

(Illus.- Let me illustrate this truth. A few months ago, I tried something that I saw done on TV. I was talking to a man who, when I asked him if he considered himself to be a sinner, responded by saying, “Not really.” He proceeded to tell me why he considered himself to be a good person. I then began to ask him a series of questions. I said, “Sir, have you ever told a lie, even a little ‘white lie’?” Of course, he answered, “Yes.” I said, “Sir, God’s law says, thou shalt not bear false witness.” I then asked him, “Sir, have you ever taken something that didn’t belong to you, even something as small as an ink pen from work?” Again, he answered, “Yes.” I said, “Sir, God’s law says, thou shalt not steal.” I then asked him, “Sir, have you ever had lustful thought about any woman other than your wife?” Again, he answered, “Yes.” I said, “Sir Jesus said that, whosoever looketh upon a woman to lust after her has committed adultery in his heart.” I then asked, “Sir, have you ever taken the Lord’s name inappropriately?” Again, he answered, “Yes.” I said, “Sir, God law says, thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.” I then said, “Sir, according to God’s law and by your own admission, you are a liar, and a thief, and an adulterer and a blasphemer.” I then said, “Sir, do you still consider yourself to be

a good person?” I will never forget what he did then. He didn’t say a word, he just turned and walked away.)

That’s what God’s law will do. It will stop someone from boasting about how good a person he is and make him stand guilty before God. And so, the law serves the purpose of silencing the sinner. It can’t save the sinner, but it sure can silence the sinner. Notice again verses. 21-22 of our text, Paul said, “Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law....But the scripture hath concluded all under sin.” If the law serves any purpose whatsoever, it makes us aware of the fact that we are sinners, totally incapable of saving ourselves. (Amen?) Not only does the law serve the purpose of specifying sin and silencing the sinner, it also serves the purpose of...

Showing The Sinner His Need For A Savior

Notice again verses. 23-24 of our text, “But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed....Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith....But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.” It says “the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ.” Now what does this mean? Well, a school master does what? (He teaches.) That being the case, what does the law teach us? It teaches us, among other things, that we are in need of a Savior. Someone asks, “How does the law so that? How does the law show us that we are need of a Savior?

It does so by showing us how short we have all come of what God requires for heaven. Let me ask you a question, “Do you have any idea what God requires of those who are determined to make it

to heaven completely on their own?” He requires nothing less than absolute perfection. In other words, one would have to live his or her entire life without once violating any part of God’s law. Of course, no one can do that! That’s why when we compare ourselves to God’s perfect law, we quickly realize that, as Rom. 3:23 tells us, “All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” (Illus.- Let me illustrate. Have you ever been to an amusement park where, instead of age limits, they have measuring sticks at the entrance of each ride, showing how tall you must be in order to get on the ride? I’ve been to those amusement parks and I’ve seen many young children stand next to those measuring sticks, then walk away sadly because they were too short to get on the ride. In other words, they just didn’t measure up.)

God’s law is like a measuring stick. God says, “If you want to go to heaven, this is how tall (good) you must be.” However, when we measure ourselves with God’s measuring stick, we too have to walk away sadly. Why? Because we don’t measure up! But this is good! (Amen?) It’s not good that we don’t measure up, but it is good that we realize this fact while we still have the opportunity to look for another way to heaven. Is there another way to heaven? (I’m glad you asked.) Do you remember what Jesus told Thomas in John 14:6?

Jesus had just told His disciples that He would soon be returning to His Father in heaven. Thomas spoke up and said, “Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?” (John 14:5) It was then that Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” According to these words, Jesus is really the ONLY way to heaven. Once we realize this, we at least have an opportunity to trust Christ and to be saved. And so, the law serves the purpose of

showing the sinner his need for a Savior. Do you know what's really sad?

The fact that even we have God's law to show us our need for Christ, there are still multitudes who are convinced that they don't need Christ, that they can make it heaven on their own. Why is this sad? It's sad because unless they change their thinking, they are going to miss heaven altogether.

Conclusion

Now let's go back to our original question. If we can't be saved by keeping God's law, then why did God give His law to us? What purpose does it serve? Paul said it was "added because of transgressions." In other words, it serves at least three purposes. First of all, it serves the purpose of specifying sin. (This is how we know what constitutes sin. The law of God defines sin for us.) Secondly, it serves the purpose of silencing sinners. (It stops all boasting about one's personal goodness.)

Finally, it serves the purpose of showing the sinner his need for a Savior. Let me ask you a very personal question. Are you saved? If not, it could be that the reason you are not saved is because you have not yet realized your need for a Savior. Let me ask you this, "Have you, from the day you were born until now, kept perfectly every law of God?" Of course you haven't. (No one has!) That's why you need a Savior. I can assure you that Jesus stands ready and willing to forgive you of your sin and save your soul, if you will only call upon Him.

Before I close, let me point out one more thing about our text. Every person who has placed his or her faith in Christ as Savior, no matter... who you are; what your background; what part of the world you are from; what your ethnic or cultural background; whether you are male or female; we are all equally

saved! We are all equally Abraham's seed. We are all equally heirs of the promises that God made to Abraham. Look at verses. 28-29, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus....And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

Somebody say, "Amen!!

Scripture References Written Out

The following verse-specific passages cited in this chapter are supplied in full from the King James Version.

Galatians 2:16

¹⁶ Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

Romans 3:28

²⁸ Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

Exodus 20:4

⁴ Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness *of any thing* that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:

Romans 3:20

²⁰ Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

Romans 7:7

⁷ What shall we say then? *Is the law sin?* God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.

Romans 3:19

¹⁹ Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

Romans 3:10

¹⁰ As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

Romans 3:23

²³ For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

John 14:6

⁶ Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

John 14:5

⁵ Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?

CHAPTER 11

Because Ye Are Sons

Scripture Text: Galatians 4:1-7 (KJV)

¹ Now I say, *That* the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all;

² But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father.

³ Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world:

⁴ But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

⁵ To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

⁶ And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

⁷ Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

Introduction

From our study of Galatians 3, we learned, among other things, that by virtue of our faith in Christ, Who is the seed of Abraham, we (believers) are children of Abraham. Notice Gal. 3:6-7, “Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness....Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.” Notice also Gal. 3:29, “And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed (descendants), and heirs according to the promise.” And so, by virtue of our faith in Christ, we are children or descendants of Abraham, at least in the spiritual sense of the word. Now why is this significant? It is significant because the promises that God made to Abraham were also made to his descendants and will one day be fulfilled in us! (Amen?) However, we now come to Galatians 4,

and immediately we notice that the focus changes from our being children of Abraham, to our being children of God.

Notice again verses. 4-5 of our text, “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,...To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.” According to the latter part of verses. 5, those of us who have placed our faith in Christ as Savior have been adopted into the family of God. Paul put it like this in Eph. 1:3-5, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ...According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:...Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself.” And so, those of us who have trusted Christ have been adopted into God’s family.

But someone says, “Wait a minute. I thought we were ‘born’ into God’s family. Are we ‘adopted’ into God family, or are we ‘born’ into God’s family?” The answer is, “Both!” Let me explain. In both Jewish and Roman culture, a male child born into a family did not enjoy all the rights of son ship until he reached a certain age. Notice again verses. 1-2 of our text, “Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all;...But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father.” When the male child reached a certain age (usually between 12-14), he was legally deemed a “son” of his father. The Jews call it “Bar Mitzvah.”

The Romans called it “Liberalia.” In both cases, the male child became a full fledged son. Well, the same thing is true of us, as believers, the only difference being, we were born into God’s family and adopted (legally deemed a “son”) at the same time!

But the fact is, we are now “sons of God!” (Amen?) Now notice again the first part of verses. 6 of our text, “And because ye are sons,” In this study, I want us to think about some of the privileges that are ours simply “because” we “are sons.” First of all, because we are sons...

Our Past Is Forgiven

Notice again verses. 4-5 of our text, “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,...To redeem them that were under the law.” The word “redeem” here is translated from a Greek word that means “to buy back” or “to rescue from loss.” The fact that we have been redeemed implies that there was something from which we needed to be rescued. Well, look again at verses. 5, “To redeem them that under the law.” Someone says, “There it is! It was the law from which we needed to be rescued.” Not exactly. It was not “the law” from which we needed to be rescued, but rather the “curse” of the law.

Look back at Gal. 3:10, “For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.” What exactly is the “curse” of the law? According to Rom. 6:23, it is “death,” it says, “For the wages of sin is death.” Paul put it like this in Rom. 5:12, “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:” How did Jesus “redeem” (rescue) us from the “curse” of the law? Look back at Gal. 3:13, “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:”

Jesus redeemed us from the “curse” of the law by “being made a curse for us.” In other words, by taking our place on the cross. You see, it should have been us dying on the cross. It should have been us satisfying the debt for our sin. It should have been us suffering the penalty for our sin. Yet Jesus, because of His love for us and His desire to save us, took our place on the cross, dying in our stead. Paul put it like this in Rom. 5:8, “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

Because of what Jesus did on the cross, those who place their faith in Him as Savior are completely forgiven of all their sins. The Bible says in Eph. 4:32, “And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.” Paul put it like this in Col. 1:14, “In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:” I’ll tell you, nothing can compare to the peace that comes from knowing that your sins are forgiven. Do you have a past that is need of forgiveness? If so, Jesus stands ready and willing to receive you into His family, and in so doing, forgive you of all your sin! Will you come to Him today?

And so, because we are sons, our past is forgiven. Not only is our past forgiven, but because we are sons...

Our Present Is Fruitful

Notice again verses. 6 of our text, “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.” Have you ever wondered why, when God saved us, He sent His Holy Spirit to dwell within us?” One reason He gave us His Spirit was to seal us. Listen to Eph. 1:13, “In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were

sealed with that holy Spirit of promise.” In Paul’s day, a seal was a mark of ownership. When the Bible says that believers are “sealed” with the “Holy Spirit,” it simply means that the indwelling Holy Spirit identifies us as a child of God. This is what Paul meant when he wrote in Rom. 8:16, “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:”

And so, one reason God gave us His Spirit was to seal us. Another reason that God gave us His Spirit was to sanctify us (to produce Christ likeness in us). Let’s jump ahead to Gal. 5:22-23, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,...Meekness, temperance:” In other words, the Holy Spirit produces these character qualities in the lives of believers. He produces love, and joy, and peace, and longsuffering, and gentleness, and goodness, and faith, and meekness and temperance in our lives. Now this raises a question. How does the Holy Spirit accomplish this?

How does the Holy Spirit produce these character qualities in our lives? He does so by doing three things for us, as believers. First of all, He guides us. Listen to what Jesus said in John 16:13, “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth:” (Illus.- Have you ever had a situation arise in your life that demanded an immediate response, and part of you wanted to respond in the wrong way, yet at the same time someone inside of you said, “Don’t do it. Don’t respond in that way, but rather respond in this way?” Night before last, as I was driving back from my son’s soccer tournament in Luray, VA, a lunatic driver made a lane change on I-81 without looking, and almost ran me off the road. In fact, I did have to take the shoulder to keep from being hit. Now when that happened, part of me wanted to speed up, get on that guy’s bumper, and blink my lights and honk my horn in disapproval. But at the same time,

something inside of me said, “Relax, preacher. Don’t make the situation worse than it already is. Just back off and let him go on his way.” Do you know where that voice of reason came from? It came from the indwelling Holy Spirit, Who constantly guides us to do the right thing.)

Not only does the Holy Spirit guide us, He also empowers us. He gives us the power to do the right thing. In Isa. 11:1-2, we find a prophecy of the coming of Christ. Listen to what the prophet said, “And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:...And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might.” The Holy Spirit is both “the spirit of counsel and might.” In other words, He not only guides us into all truth, but He empowers us to follow His leading. The prophet Micah put it like this in Mic. 3:8, “But truly I am full of power by the spirit of the LORD.”

Not only does the Holy Spirit guide us and empower us, He also convicts us. Listen to what Jesus said in John 16:8, “And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:” The word “reprove” here means to “convict.” While this passage speaks primarily of the Holy Spirit’s ministry among the unsaved, it is a fact that He also convicts those of us who are saved. When does He convict us? When we do wrong or when we go astray. Do you remember the prophet, Nathan?

After King David had sinned with Bathsheba, God sent the prophet Nathan to confront David with his sin. It was Nathan who, when he confronted the king, said, “Thou art the man.” (2 Sam. 12:7) Now we don’t have our own personal prophet to point out the sin in our life, however, we do have the Holy Spirit. We also have that precious promise found in 1 John 1:9, which says, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our

sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” That’s how the Holy Spirit produces Christ likeness in us, by.... guiding us into all truth; empowering us to obey God’s Word;

reproving (convicting) us when we go astray. And so, because we are sons, our present is fruitful. Our past is forgiven. Our present is fruitful. Finally, in this study, because we are sons,...

Our Prospect Is Fabulous

Why is our prospect fabulous? Look again at verses. 7 of our text, it says, “Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.” Paul put it like this in Rom. 8:16-17, “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:...And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ;” Now this raises a question. As “heirs of God,” what will we one day inherit? Turn with me to Rev. 21:7 where we find the answer to this question, it says, “He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.” Based on this verse, I would definitely say that our prospect is fabulous. (Amen?)

Let me tell you something, if you are a child of God, things just get better and better. I love what John wrote in 1 John 3:2, it says, “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be:” In other words, while it’s wonderful to be a child of God now, (excuse the grammar) we ain’t seen nothing yet!

Conclusion

Paul said, “And because ye are sons,” At least three things are true if we are sons. First of all, our past is forgiven. Secondly, our present is fruitful. Finally, our prospect is fabulous. But someone says, “What if I choose not to trust Christ as my Savior, and what

if I choose not become a child of God? What can be said about my past, my present, and my prospect? First of all, your past will not be forgiven (your unforgiven sin will forever hang over you).

Secondly, your present will not be fruitful (your life will be a total waste). Finally, your prospect will not be fabulous (your future will be shockingly disappointing). Do you want to know what lies in your future? Read with me Rev. 21:8 (we just read verses. 7), it says, “But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.” Not much to look forward to, is it? For the life of me, considering all of this, I cannot understand why any sane person would not want to become a Christian. Are you a Christian?

Are you a son of God? Are you a child of God? If not, then you can do something about that in this study. (Prayer & Invitation)

Scripture References Written Out

The following verse-specific passages cited in this chapter are supplied in full from the King James Version.

Galatians 3:6-7

⁶ Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

⁷ Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.

Galatians 3:29

²⁹ And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Ephesians 1:3-5

³ Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ:

⁴ According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

⁵ Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

Galatians 3:10

¹⁰ For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

Romans 6:23

²³ For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 5:12

¹² Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

Galatians 3:13

¹³ Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree:

Romans 5:8

⁸ But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Ephesians 4:32

³² And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

Colossians 1:14

¹⁴ In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins:

Ephesians 1:13

¹³ In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,

Romans 8:16

¹⁶ The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

Galatians 5:22-23

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

²³ Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

John 16:13

¹³ Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

Isaiah 11:1-2

¹ And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:

² And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD;

Micah 3:8

⁸ But truly I am full of power by the spirit of the LORD, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin.

John 16:8

⁸ And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

2 Samuel 12:7

⁷ And Nathan said to David, Thou *art* the man. Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul;

1 John 1:9

⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Romans 8:16-17

¹⁶ The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

¹⁷ And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.

Revelation 21:7

⁷ He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

1 John 3:2

² Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

Revelation 21:8

⁸ But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

CHAPTER 12

I Am Afraid Of You

Scripture Text: Galatians 4:8-11 (KJV)

⁸Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods.

⁹But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?

¹⁰Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.

¹¹I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.

Introduction

As most of you know, I have been a pastor for almost 33 years now. One of the things that I have experienced as a pastor is what I call an emotional roller coaster. How many of you have ever ridden a roller coaster? If you have, you know that roller coasters go “up” and they go “down.” Not only do roller coasters go up and down, but often times the ups and the downs are very close together. Being a pastor is kind of like riding a roller coaster, at least emotionally. There are emotional highs, and there are emotional lows, and often times these highs and lows are very close together.

One day you want to shout, the next day you want to cry. One day you are on the mountaintop, the next day you are in the valley. One day you are experiencing great joy, the next day you are experiencing great despair. Now to be honest, it is not this way all of the time. And that’s a good thing, too, because if it were, there’s no way that I could have survived 33 years of pastoral ministry. But some of the time it honestly is like riding an emotional roller coaster. Now what are some of the emotions with which we, as pastors, have to contend?

One emotion is “joy.” For example, there is the joy of... seeing a lost sinner saved; seeing a believer grow in Christ; seeing a church give almost \$ 200,000 to missions in one year; Pastoring this church has brought me so much joy over the years. Another emotion is “sadness.” For example, there is the sadness of... seeing a lost sinner reject Christ; seeing a believer backslide spiritually; seeing a church hesitate to move forward for God; While pastoring this church has brought me much joy over the years, it has also brought a certain amount of sadness.

A third emotion is “fear.” For example, there is the fear of... seeing false teachers infiltrate a church; seeing believers within a church led astray; seeing 30+ years of ministry come to nought; And these are just some of the emotions with which we, as pastors, have to contend. (There are many more.) You know, Paul, although he was more a missionary than he was a pastor, he also had to contend with these same emotions. He had to contend with joy. He had to contend with sadness.

He had to contend with fear. We see this clearly in our text, in this study. As we examine our text more closely, notice, first of all, that...

Paul Was Joyful

Why was he joyful? He was joyful because the Galatians to whom he was writing this letter had been delivered from the spiritual bondage of idol worship. You see, when Paul first encountered these people, they were idol worshippers. They... bowed down to idol gods; offered sacrifices to idol gods; engaged in heathen rituals in honor of idol gods; You might say that they were enslaved in idol worship. But Paul preached the gospel to them And as a result of that, they... heard the gospel;

believed the gospel, were freed from their bondage by the gospel; Notice again verses. 8-9 of our text, “Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods....But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God.” I like those words, “but now...” Paul said, “You used to be enslaved to your idol gods, which are not really gods at all, BUT NOW you know (have a relationship with) the true God of heaven!” And so, you see why Paul was joyful. By the way, did you notice how Paul described the idols that the Galatians worshiped before they were saved?

In verses. 8, he described them as “them which by nature are no gods.” This reminds me of the psalmist David said about idols in Psa. 115:5-8, “They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not:...They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not:...They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat....They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them.” In other words, they are not gods at all. The Lord said it like this through the prophet, Jeremiah, “They are upright as the palm tree, but speak not: they must needs be borne, because they cannot go. Be not afraid of them; for they cannot do evil, neither also is it in them to do good.” (Jer. 10:5)

In other words, idols can't hurt us or help us? Why not? Because they are not really gods. This is what God had delivered the Galatians from, the worship of idol gods who “by nature are no gods,” and because of this Paul was joyful. Now lest you think that you are somehow better or smarter than those Galatians, let me remind you that when God saved you, you too were delivered from the bondage and servitude of idol gods. Of course, our gods were different than the gods that the Galatians served, but we

had our gods! (Amen?) Some of us served the god of alcohol. Some of us served the god of illegal drugs.

Some of us served the god of sinful pleasure. Some of us served the god of material wealth. Some of us served the god of power and prestige. Some of us served other gods of this world, but the point is, we all had our gods. But thank God, when He saved us, He delivered us from the bondage and servitude of these idol gods. (He set us free!) I love what Jesus said in John 8:36, “If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.” That’s reason to be joyful (to rejoice).

And so, the first emotion with which Paul had to contend was joy. Paul was clearly joyful. Notice also, that in addition to being joyful,...

Paul Was Mournful

Someone asks, “Why was Paul mournful?” The Galatians had heard the gospel. The Galatians had believed the gospel. The Galatians had been freed from the bondage of idol worship by the gospel. Why on earth was Paul mournful? The answer is found in verses. 9 of our text, “But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?” Why was Paul mournful? He was mournful because after God had delivered the Galatians from the bondage of idol worship, they willingly put themselves back under bondage.

Now don’t misunderstand what I am saying. When I say that they willingly put themselves back under bondage, I don’t mean that they started worshiping idols again. That’s not what happened. What happened was, they exchanged the bondage of idol worship for a different kind of bondage. What kind of bondage? The answer is found in verses. 10 of our text, “Ye observe days,

and months, and times, and years.” This is clearly a reference to the law of Moses. These Galatians, even though God had delivered them from the bondage of idol worship, willingly placed themselves under the bondage of the law of Moses.

They were observing the Jewish feasts, and the Jewish Sabbaths, and the Jewish ceremonies. Paul said, “How could you do that? After experiencing the liberty that comes from knowing Christ as your Savior, how could you willingly put yourselves back under bondage?” This is why Paul was mournful. (Illus.- I believe I understand a little of Paul’s sadness , as well as his frustration. Many years ago, I had the opportunity to win a man to the Lord who’s name was Mike. I knew Mike for a long time and had shared the gospel with him many times. You can imagine how joyful I was the night that he finally decided to trust Christ as his Savior. I will never forget that night as long as I live. However, my joy soon turned to sorrow. Instead of coming to our church, Mike began attending and later joined the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. You see, his wife was a Seventh-Day Adventist. Why did I go from being joyful to mournful? Why wasn’t I happy about him joining the Seventh-Day Adventist Church? Because that church teaches that in order to be saved, you must keep the law of Moses. What Mike did was exactly what the Galatians did. Even though God had delivered him from the bondage of his sin, he willingly placed himself back under the bondage of the law of Moses by joining the Seventh-Day Adventist Church.)

You know, the Adventists don’t have a monopoly when it comes to placing believers under bondage. Some Baptist churches are almost as legalistic. (Illus.- Let me just give you one example of what I am talking about. In some Baptist churches today, it is looked upon as a cardinal sin for a woman to wear a pair of slacks. To the best of my knowledge, the only verse they use to

support their position is Deu. 22:5, that says, “The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman’s garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the LORD thy God.” The Bible does say that, but what they don’t tell you is that verse is a part of the law that God gave to Moses. In that same chapter, it goes on to say that we should not wear garments [clothing] woven with different kinds of material, such as wool and linen. [Deu. 22:11] If we put ourselves under this Mosaic law, then we would have to practically empty out our closets. In the very next verse in that same chapter, we are commanded to sew “fringes” [tassels] on the corners of our garments. [Deu. 22:12] I don’t know about you, but I don’t have a single garment in my closet that has tassels sewn on to the corners. Do you? The point is, if we are going to put ourselves back under the law of Moses, then let’s go all the way!

The only admonition that we find in the New Testament concerning how women should dress is found in 1 Tim. 2:9, which says, “In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel.” Now it is true that some slacks are not modest [because of the way that they fit - or don’t fit] and should not be worn by Christian ladies, but at the same time, some dresses are immodest as well. And so, the Seventh-Day Adventists don’t have a monopoly on legalism, some Baptists are almost as legalistic. Listen to me for just a moment. The Christian life should not be about obeying rules, even though rules, if they have their basis in the Word of God, are a good thing (necessary). The Christian life, on the other hand, should be about experiencing and enjoying a relationship with Jesus Christ. Notice again the first part of verses. 9 of our text, “But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God.”

Paul put it like this in Phil. 3:10, “That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings.” The sad truth is, a lot of believers are so consumed by their efforts to obey the rules, that they totally miss out on enjoying a personal relationship with Christ. This is so sad! And so, the second emotion with which Paul had to contend was sorrow. Paul was mournful. But notice also, that in addition to being joyful and mournful,...

Paul Was Fearful

Why was Paul fearful? The answer is found in verses. 11, “I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.” In other words, he said, “I fear that all the time and effort I spent teaching you the Word of God will prove to be wasted time.” Now what did Paul mean by that? He simply meant that if these young believers did not free themselves from the binding influence of the false teachers who had led them astray, their Christian lives (effectiveness for Christ) would never amount to much. Now don’t misunderstand me, those false teachers could not rob the Galatians of their salvation. Salvation is by grace through faith, and once a sinner is saved, there is no way that he can lose his salvation.

Jesus put it like this in John 10:27-28, “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:...And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.” And so, there’s no way that false teachers can rob us of our salvation, that is if we are truly saved. I’ll tell you what they can do, however, and that is they can ruin (destroy) our effectiveness for Christ. That’s what Paul was afraid would happen to these Galatian believers. This is perhaps a pastor’s greatest fear, that he would invest his life (his time, his energy, his prayers) in winning someone to Christ, then teaching

them the Word of God, only to have them fall under the binding influence of false teachers. (Illus.- Let me share with you one of my greatest fears. One of my greatest fears is that when the time comes that I am no longer the pastor of this church, when I am completely out of the picture, that some yahoo will come along and destroy what it has taken years and years and years to build. This is why I have made the following decision: I will never die and I will never step down from being the pastor of this church! Of course, I know that I am not irreplaceable. I know that. It's just that when you invest the better part of your life into something, you don't want to see your labors come to nought one day.)

I'm sure that many pastors share this same fear! And so, the third emotion with which Paul had to contend was fear, he was fearful.

Conclusion

What have we learned from our text, in this study? First of all, we learned that Paul was joyful (because the Galatians had been delivered from the spiritual bondage of idol worship). Secondly, we learned that Paul was mournful (because they had willingly placed themselves back under bondage - not the bondage of idol worship, but rather the bondage of the law of Moses). Finally, we learned that Paul was fearful (that the investment he had made in the lives of these Galatian believers would all come to nought). Let me ask you a couple of questions. First of all, are you saved? In other words, have put your faith and trust in Jesus as your Savior and been delivered from the bondage of your sins?

If so, you have reason to be joyful, and I rejoice with you. However, if you are not saved, you should be fearful in this study. "Fearful of what?" you ask. Fearful of dying without Christ and being condemned to an eternity separated from God in a horrible place called the lake of fire. Perhaps you need to

respond to the invitation in this study by coming to receive Christ as your Savior. Second question, for those of you who have been saved, have you willingly put yourself back under some kind of bondage? Are you more concerned about obeying rules than you are experiencing and enjoying your relationship with Christ?

If so, you should be mournful. God set you free from bondage and He doesn't you ever in bondage again, either to your old way of life, or perhaps some new kind (system) of slavery. He wants you to be free! Not free to do as you please, but free to know Him and to serve Him. Perhaps you need to respond to the invitation in this study by coming and asking God to help you free yourself from your self-imposed bondage.

Scripture References Written Out

The following verse-specific passages cited in this chapter are supplied in full from the King James Version.

Psalms 115:5-8

- ⁵ They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not:
- ⁶ They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not:
- ⁷ They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat.
- ⁸ They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them.

Jeremiah 10:5

- ⁵ They *are* upright as the palm tree, but speak not: they must needs be borne, because they cannot go. Be not afraid of them; for they cannot do evil, neither also *is it* in them to do good.

John 8:36

- ³⁶ If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

Deuteronomy 22:5

- ⁵ The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so *are* abomination unto the LORD thy God.

Deuteronomy 22:11

¹¹ Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, *as* of woollen and linen together.

Deuteronomy 22:12

¹² Thou shalt make thee fringes upon the four quarters of thy vesture, wherewith thou coverest *thyself*.

1 Timothy 2:9

⁹ In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;

Philippians 3:10

¹⁰ That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

John 10:27-28

²⁷ My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

²⁸ And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand.

CHAPTER 13

I Tell You The Truth

Scripture Text: Galatians 4:12-20 (KJV)

¹² Brethren, I beseech you, be as I *am*; for I *am* as ye *are*: ye have not injured me at all.

¹³ Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first.

¹⁴ And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, *even* as Christ Jesus.

¹⁵ Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if *it had been* possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me.

¹⁶ Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?

¹⁷ They zealously affect you, *but* not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye might affect them.

¹⁸ But *it is* good to be zealously affected always in *a good thing*, and not only when I am present with you.

¹⁹ My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,

²⁰ I desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you.

Introduction

As we have learned from our study of Paul's letter to the Galatian believers, the problems that had arisen in the Galatian churches were the result of false teachers. This should be no surprise because Jesus Himself warned His disciples about false teachers. For example, in Mat. 7:15, Jesus said, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." There are at least two things that we can learn about false teachers from our Lord's warning. First of all, we can learn that false teachers always disguise themselves and in doing so try to conceal their true identity. Notice again what Jesus said, He said, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's

clothing.” They are not sheep, but wolves, however, they disguise themselves as sheep, hoping to conceal their true identity.

Turn with me, for just a moment, to 2 Cor. 11:13-15, “For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness;” Twice in this passage Paul tells us that false teachers transform themselves (disguise themselves) as “apostles” or “ministers of righteousness.” Why do they disguise themselves? Because if they told people up front what (who) they really are, no one would listen to them. (Illus.- Can you imagine someone knocking on your door and saying, “Hello. I am a false teacher and if you will let me, I will deceive you into believing a lie that will destroy your life, and possibly even condemn your soul to hell.” For some reason, I can’t imagine that, can you?)

Not only do false teachers always disguise themselves, but according to Jesus, they also devour their victims. Notice again what Jesus said, He said, “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.” The word “ravening” means “devouring.” (Illus.- Imagine, if you can, a pack of hungry wolves who have just taken down a young deer. Imagine them tearing and ripping apart the flesh of that helpless animal with their sharp teeth as they devour their prey.) This is exactly what false teachers do, only in a spiritual sense, they tear and rip apart the souls of their helpless victims, as they devour their prey. And so, we learn at least two things about false teachers from the warning that Jesus gave. First of all, they always disguise themselves (“in sheep’s clothing”).

Secondly, they devour their prey (“ravening wolves”). This was certainly true of the false teachers who had infiltrated the Galatian churches and led many of those young believers astray. In our text, in this study, Paul takes aim at these false teachers, and from what he said about them, we can learn at least three more characteristics of false teachers. First of all, we can learn that false teachers are...

Takers

Did you realize that there are basically two kinds of people in the world today. First of all, there are what I call “givers.” Who are “givers”? Givers are people who’s lives are characterized, for the most part, by giving. They are people who think more about the needs of others than they do about their own needs. They are people who dedicate their lives to serving others, rather than serving themselves. While some “givers” undoubtedly have the spiritual gift that is referred to in Rom. 12:8 as the gift of “giving,” you don’t have to possess that gift to be a giver.

All believers in Christ should be “givers.” (Amen?) The apostle Paul was definitely a “giver.” From the time he was saved on the road to Damascus, his life and ministry were characterized by giving. Notice again verses. 12-15, “Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am; for I am as ye are: ye have not injured me at all. Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first. And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus. Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me.” This is not the only time that Paul made reference to being afflicted with some kind of physical infirmity.

In 2 Cor. 12:7 he referred to this infirmity as his “thorn in the flesh.” In that same chapter, Paul tells us how he asked God on three different occasions to remove that thorn, and three times God told him, “No.” What was Paul’s “thorn in the flesh”? No one knows for sure, but many Bible students believe that it had something to do with his eyes. They believe that partly because of what Paul said in the latter part of verses. 15 of our text, “...for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me.” The point is, whatever Paul’s infirmity was, he could have very easily had the attitude that because of his infirmity, people should... serve him;

take care of him, tend to his needs; But Paul didn’t have that kind of an attitude. In spite of his physical infirmity, he devoted his life to ministering to the needs of others. Why? Because he was a giver! And so, some people are givers. Secondly, there are those people who are what I call “takers.” Who are “takers”? They are just the opposite of “givers.” They are people who’s lives are characterized by taking. They are people who care far more about their own needs than they do the needs of others.

They are people who dedicate their lives to serving themselves, rather than serving others. They definitely don’t have the gift of giving, because they are basically very selfish people. False teachers are definitely “takers.” I like the way that Paul described false teachers in Phil. 3:18-19, “For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly.” What did Paul mean when he said that their god is their belly? He simply meant that they worship their own appetites. Their purpose for living is not to serve God and others, but rather to satisfy their own selfish appetites.

They are takers and not givers. What did the false teachers who had crept into the Galatian churches take from their unsuspecting victims? The most valuable thing they took was their “liberty.” They took their “liberty” and gave them “slavery” in return. Not a very good exchange, if you ask me. And so, first of all, false teachers are takers. Notice, also, that false teachers are...

Liars

Did you notice the question that Paul asked these Galatian believers in verses 16 of our text, “Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?” While Paul didn’t come right out and call these false teachers liars, he certainly implied it here. It’s like Paul was saying, “I don’t understand you Galatians. False teachers tell you lies, and you embrace them as your friends. I tell you the truth, and you treat me like your enemy. Am I your enemy, simply because I tell you the truth?” One of the characteristics that all false teachers share is that they are all liars. Do you know why false teachers are liars? It is because the devil is a liar, and false teachers work for him. (In other words, they are his emissaries.) Do you remember what Jesus said about the devil in John 8:44?

Jesus was talking to a group of unsaved Jews. He said to these unsaved Jews, “Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.” Even if Jesus didn’t tell us that the devil is a liar, we know he is because of what he did to Eve in the Garden of Eden. Do you remember what he told Eve in the garden? God had already told Adam that if they ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, that they would die. Then the devil

comes along later and tells Eve, “Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.” (Gen. 3:4-5)

Was that a lie? Listen, not only was that a lie, but no greater lie has ever been told than the lie that the devil told Eve in the garden on that day. And so, from the very beginning, the devil has proven himself to be a liar. That’s why false teachers are liars, because the devil is a liar and they work for him (they are his emissaries). Now don’t misunderstand what I am saying. False teachers are clever enough to know that if they mix a certain amount of truth in with their lies, they will have much more success. This is what makes them so dangerous.

They use just enough of the truth to lure their victims in, and once the bait is taken, they spring the trap. (Illus.- I remember the first time I watched John Hagee on television. At that time, I knew nothing about him. The first few times I watched him, I thought to myself, “This guy is right on!” Not only did I like what he was saying, but I liked the way he was saying it. But then one day while I was watching his program, right out of the blue he said something that revealed to me his true colors. I don’t even remember exactly what it was he said, but I remember thinking to myself, “This guy is not what he appears to be on the surface. This guy is a false teacher.” You know, false teachers like John Hagee are very dangerous because they use just enough of the truth to lure their victims in, and once the bait is taken, they spring the trap.)

But any way you look at it, false teachers are liars. Notice, finally, that false teachers are...

Users

Notice again what Paul said about the false teachers who were causing so many problems in the Galatian churches, in verses. 17 of our text, “They zealously affect you, but not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye might affect them.” Now what was Paul saying here? He was simply saying, “These false teachers are making a really big fuss over you, however, their motives are not genuine. They really don’t care about you. All they care about is using you to get what they want.” That’s the way all false teachers are. They really don’t care about their victims, all they care about is using them to get what they want, whether it be money or fame or pleasure, or something else. Turn with me to 2 Pet. 2:1-3, “But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you:”

Notice again verses. 3, “And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you:” In other words, “They will lie to you and use you in order to satisfy their greed.” That’s what the phrase “make merchandise of you” means, it means “to use you,” or perhaps we should say “to abuse you.” False teachers are both users and abusers. Paul, on the other hand, was anything but a user. Instead of using people to get what he wanted, he used himself (poured out his life) to help and meet the needs of others. On at least one occasion, when he was ministering in the city of Corinth, he willingly forfeited his right to be compensated financially, just so that his motives would not be misinterpreted. (1 Cor. 9:1-14)

He didn't want anything to hinder his ministry among the Corinthians. False teachers would never make that kind of sacrifice. They are takers, not givers. They are users, not ministers. False teachers are not the only ones who are users. (Illus.- As you know, election day is just around the corner. As I have watched some of the many political ads on TV during the past couple of weeks, it has become clear to me that many of those running for office are nothing but users. Oh, they say that they want to be our [public] servants, but the truth is, all they want to do is use us [beginning with our vote] to get what they want. Some of them want money, others want power, others want prestige, but they all want something, and they don't care who they use, or abuse, in order to get it. Now to be fair, this is not true of all political candidates, but it is true of many of them.)

And so, false teachers are not the only users in this world.

Conclusion

What have we learned about false teachers? First of all, we learned that they are takers (not givers). Secondly, we learned that they are liars (not truth tellers). Finally, we learned that they are users (not ministers). When we consider these characteristics of false teachers, we should not be surprised by Paul's admonition found in Rom. 16:17, where he said, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them." Or John's admonition found in 2 John 1:10, where he said, "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed:" Let me ask you a personal question.

Are you a taker or a giver? Is your life characterized mostly by taking or giving? Before you answer that question, let me remind

you of the words of our Lord Jesus Himself, where He said, “It is more blessed to give than to receive.” (Acts 20:35)

Scripture References Written Out

The following verse-specific passages cited in this chapter are supplied in full from the King James Version.

2 Corinthians 11:13-15

¹³ For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.

¹⁴ And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

¹⁵ Therefore *it is* no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

Romans 12:8

⁸ Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, *let him do it* with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

2 Corinthians 12:7

⁷ And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

Philippians 3:18-19

¹⁸ (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* the enemies of the cross of Christ:

¹⁹ Whose end *is* destruction, whose God *is their* belly, and *whose* glory *is* in their shame, who mind earthly things.)

John 8:44

⁴⁴ Ye are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

Genesis 3:4-5

⁴ And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

⁵ For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

2 Peter 2:1-3

¹ But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

² And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.

³ And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

1 Corinthians 9:1-14

¹ Am I not an apostle? am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? are not ye my work in the Lord?

² If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord.

³ Mine answer to them that do examine me is this,

⁴ Have we not power to eat and to drink?

⁵ Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?

⁶ Or I only and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working?

⁷ Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?

⁸ Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also?

⁹ For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen?

¹⁰ Or saith he *it* altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, *this* is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope.

¹¹ If we have sown unto you spiritual things, *is it* a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?

¹² If others be partakers of *this* power over you, *are* not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ.

¹³ Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live *of the things* of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar?

¹⁴ Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.

Romans 16:17

¹⁷ Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

2 John 1:10

¹⁰ If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed:

Acts 20:35

³⁵ I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

CHAPTER 14

Abraham Had Two Sons

Scripture Text: Galatians 4:21-31 (KJV)

²¹ Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?

²² For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman.

²³ But he *who was* of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman *was* by promise.

²⁴ Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar.

²⁵ For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children.

²⁶ But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.

²⁷ For it is written, Rejoice, *thou* barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband.

²⁸ Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.

²⁹ But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him *that was born* after the Spirit, even so *it is* now.

³⁰ Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.

³¹ So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.

Introduction

Every now and then I will come across someone who is of the opinion that, as far as believers today are concerned, the Old Testament is irrelevant. Some even go so far as to say that the New Testament is all that we need today, and there is absolutely no reason to read or study the Old Testament. This, of course, is absurd. While certain parts of the Old Testament, such as the law that God gave to Moses, do not apply directly to believers today, the Old Testament is certainly not irrelevant! In fact, there are

certain parts of the New Testament that are impossible to understand without a knowledge of the Old Testament. Let me give you an example. In 1 Pet. 1:19 we are told that, as believers, we are redeemed “...with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”

Did you notice how Peter described Jesus? He described Him as “...a lamb without blemish and without spot.” Now if you have absolutely no knowledge of the Old Testament, you are going to be clueless as to what that means. Why? Because Peter here is comparing Jesus to the Old Testament Passover lamb. The point is, in order to understand 1 Pet. 1:19, which is a New Testament verse, you absolutely must be familiar with Exo. 12:1-13, which is an Old Testament passage. And so, certain parts of the New Testament are impossible to understand without at least a partial knowledge of the Old Testament. This is most certainly true of our text, in this study. As we begin to examine our text more closely, the first thing that I want us to notice is...

The Story Behind Our Text

Our story begins with a promise that God made to Abraham all the way back in Gen. 12:2, where God said, “...I will make of thee a great nation.” In other words, “Abraham, I’m going to bless you and Sarah with many descendants, so that your grandchildren will become a mighty nation.” This was not the only time that God made this promise to Abraham. This same promise was reaffirmed in Gen. 15:5, where God said, “...Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.” In other words, “Abraham, just look up at the stars. Can you count the stars, Abraham? That’s how many grandchildren I am going to give you, so many that you won’t be able to count them.” And, so our story begins

with a promise that God made to Abraham, a promise to give him many descendants.

However, there came a time when Abraham and Sarah began to have some doubts about God's ability to keep His promise. You see, Sarah was getting quite old, and she still had not given Abraham any children. That was when Sarah came up with this "brilliant" idea to give her handmaid, a slave girl named Hagar, to Abraham as a second wife, so that Abraham could have a child by her. You can read all about this in Gen. 16. Well, Abraham "hearkened unto the voice" of Sarah, took Hagar to be a second wife, and soon bare a son by her. (Gen. 16:2) You might remember that they named the boy, Ishmael. Was Ishmael the son whom God had promised to Abraham?

Absolutely not! We know that Ishmael was not the promised son, because in Gen. 21:1, we are told that "the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken." In other words, God finally kept His promise and Sarah conceived a son of her own. You might remember that they named this boy, Isaac. Now Isaac was the promised son, not Ishmael. In fact, not long after Isaac was weaned, God spoke to Abraham and told him to "cast out this bondwoman and her son." (Gen. 21:10-12) Now there are at least two very important lessons that we should learn from this story.

First of all, we should learn that is God does not need our help to keep His promises. (Amen?) If you stop and think about it for a moment, that's exactly what Abraham and Sarah tried to do, they tried to help God keep his promise. But God doesn't need our help. After Ishmael was born, God appeared to Abraham again in Gen. 17:1, and the first thing he told him was, "I am the Almighty God." In other words, Abraham, I don't need your help. A second lesson we should learn is that while God keeps every promise He

makes, He does so according to His timetable and not ours. This is why we must learn to wait upon Him. And so, this is the story behind our text. Now I want us to consider...

II The Symbolism Behind The Story. Notice again verses. 21-24 of our text, “Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?...For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman....But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise....Which things are an allegory:” Did you notice the word “allegory.” The word “allegory” means a “symbol” or a “symbolic representation.” He said, “Abraham had two sons.” One of his sons was by a “bondwoman” (Hagar). The other son was by a “freewoman” (Sarah).

The son of the bondwoman, of course, was Ishmael. The son of the freewoman, was Isaac. Then Paul said this, “Which things are an allegory.” In other words, Ishmael and Isaac are symbolic representations of something. “Representations of what?” someone asks. Well, let’s read on, beginning with verses. 24, “Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar....For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children....But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.” In other words, Hagar and her son, Ishmael, represent the law.

Just like Ishmael was the son of a slave (Hagar), those who place themselves under the law of Moses place themselves under slavery. Sarah, on the other hand, and her son, Isaac, represent God’s covenant of grace. Just like Isaac was the son of a free woman (Sarah), those who place their faith in Christ are made spiritually free. Notice again verses. 28 of our text, “Now we,

brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.” I think what Paul is getting at here is very clear. He’s asking these Galatians a question, “Why would those who are children of the freewoman want to be identified with those who are children of the bondwoman? Why would those who have been freed from the bondage of sin want to identify themselves with those who are still living under spiritual bondage? It just doesn’t make any sense!”

Again, this is why Paul wrote, “I marvel!” (Gal. 1:6) Paul was absolutely flabbergasted that these Galatian believers had allowed false teachers to bring them back under bondage. Did you notice, that in addition to the symbolism that we see in Ishmael and Isaac, there is another allegory here. We saw it in verses. 25-26. Look at those verses again, “For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children....But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.” Paul mentions two Jerusalem’s here, the “Jerusalem which now is,” and the “Jerusalem which is above.” In these verses, Paul compares the present Jerusalem to the Old Covenant (law), and the new Jerusalem to the New Covenant (grace).

By the way, this is why I am far more interested in seeing the New Jerusalem than I am in visiting the Old Jerusalem. If you visit the Old Jerusalem today, you won’t find Jesus there, but listen to what John had to say about the New Jerusalem in Rev. 21:2-3, “And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband....And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he (Jesus) will dwell with them.” And so, that is the symbolism behind the story. Now, finally, in this study, I want us to consider...

The Summons Given To The Galatian Believers

Notice again verses. 30 of our text, “Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.” You might remember that soon after Isaac was weaned, Ishmael began “mocking” him. (Gen. 21:9) When Sarah saw this, she told Abraham, “Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son.” (Gen. 21:10) While Abraham hesitated initially, God spoke to him and told him to do as Sarah had said. And so, Abraham obeyed God and sent Ishmael and his mother away. Why would Paul bring this up in his letter to the Galatians? It was a summons to action.

It was like Paul was saying, “Just like Abraham cast out the bondwoman and her son, even so should you cast out the false teachers who have caused you so much grief.” Notice again verses. 31 of our text, Paul said, “So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.” “We are not slaves to the law of Moses, but rather because of our faith in Christ, we are children of the God who has set us free!” “Therefore, cast out those false teachers who have led you to believe otherwise!” You know, under normal circumstances a New Testament church is encouraged to take people in, not cast them out. However, there are times when we are commanded to do just the opposite. When we have those within our church who pose a threat to the spiritual well being of the church, for the good of the church as a whole, we should cast them out.

Do you remember what Paul told the believers in Corinth concerning the unrepentant brother who was engaged in an incestuous relationship? In 1 Cor. 5:6-7 we read, “Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole

lump?...Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump.” That’s exactly what those Galatian believers needed to do with the false teachers who had infiltrated their churches, they needed to cast them out!

Conclusion

As I close, in this study, sometimes we have things in our lives that need to be cast out. For example, we read in Eph. 4:31, “Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:” Is there something in your life, in this study, something that poses a threat to your spiritual well being, that needs to be cast out? If so, will you act in this study? Do you know Christ as your Savior?

Scripture References Written Out

The following verse-specific passages cited in this chapter are supplied in full from the King James Version.

1 Peter 1:19

¹⁹ But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

Exodus 12:1-13

- ¹ And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying,
- ² This month *shall be* unto you the beginning of months: it *shall be* the first month of the year to you.
- ³ Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth *day* of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of *their* fathers, a lamb for an house:
- ⁴ And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take *it* according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb.
- ⁵ Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take *it* out from the sheep, or from the goats:
- ⁶ And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.
- ⁷ And they shall take of the blood, and strike *it* on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it.
- ⁸ And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; *and* with bitter *herbs* they shall eat it.
- ⁹ Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast *with* fire; his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof.
- ¹⁰ And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire.
- ¹¹ And thus shall ye eat it; *with* your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it *is* the LORD'S passover.
- ¹² For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I *am* the LORD.
- ¹³ And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye *are*: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy *you*, when I smite the land of Egypt.

Genesis 12:2

- ² And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

Genesis 15:5

- ⁵ And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.

Genesis 16:2

- ² And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the LORD hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai.

Genesis 21:1

¹ And the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken.

Genesis 21:10-12

¹⁰ Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, *even* with Isaac.

¹¹ And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son.

¹² And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called.

Genesis 17:1

¹ And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I *am* the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.

Galatians 1:6

⁶ I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:

Revelation 21:2-3

² And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

³ And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be* their God.

Genesis 21:9

⁹ And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking.

Genesis 21:10

¹⁰ Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, *even* with Isaac.

1 Corinthians 5:6-7

⁶ Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?

⁷ Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:

Ephesians 4:31

³¹ Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

PART THREE

The Gospel of Grace Applied

Galatians 5-6

CHAPTER 15

Stand Fast

Scripture Text: Galatians 5:1-12 (KJV)

¹ Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

² Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.

³ For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.

⁴ Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.

⁵ For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.

⁶ For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.

⁷ Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?

⁸ This persuasion *cometh* not of him that calleth you.

⁹ A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.

¹⁰ I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded: but he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be.

¹¹ And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased.

¹² I would they were even cut off which trouble you.

Introduction

Paul's letter to the Galatian believers can very easily be divided into three sections. The first section could be entitled, "The Gospel of Grace Defended." Why? Because in Galatians 1-2, Paul goes to great lengths to defend the gospel. He defended it by reminding his readers that it was... given by divine revelation; approved by the church leaders in Jerusalem; vindicated by his rebuking the apostle Peter; The second section could be entitled, "The Gospel of Grace Explained." Why? Because in Galatians 3-4, Paul goes to great lengths to explain the nature of the gospel.

He explained to his readers that... the Holy Spirit was given by faith, and not by works; abraham was saved by faith, and not by works; justification is by faith, and not by works; spiritual blessings come by faith, and not by works; The third section could be entitled, “The Gospel of Grace Applied.” Why? Because in Galatians 5-6, Paul goes to great lengths to instruct his readers how to apply the principles of the gospel to their everyday lives. 2. He talked about the...

position of Christian liberty, practice of Christian liberty; power for Christian liberty; And so, Galatians can very easily be divided into three sections. The Gospel of Grace Defended (Gal. 1-2). The Gospel of Grace Explained (Gal. 3-4). The Gospel of Grace Applied (Gal. 5-6). In this study, as we continue our study of Galatians, we begin the third section, the gospel of grace applied, and as we do, there are three things that I want us to notice about the present text. First of all, I want us to notice...

A Command

The command can be found in verses. 1, “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.” Actually, this command has two parts. The first part says, “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.” This is not the only time that we are admonished in God’s Word to “stand fast.” For example, in 1 Cor. 16:13, we are admonished to “stand fast in the faith.” Also, in Php. 1:27, we are admonished to “stand fast in one spirit.” Also, in Php. 4:1 and 1 Thes. 3:8, we are admonished to “stand fast in the Lord.”

Finally, in 2 Thes. 2:15, we are admonished to “stand fast” in “the traditions which” we “have been taught.” And so, several times in God’s Word we are admonished to “stand fast.” Now what does it

mean to “stand fast”? Well, the phrase “stand fast” is translated from a Greek word (*steko*) which literally means “to be stationary.” In other words, it means “to not move” or “to not be moved away from.” Now what is it that we are being commanded “to not be moved away from”? Notice again verses. 1 of our text, Paul said, “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free,”

In other words, “Don’t be moved away from your Christian liberty. Don’t be moved away from the realization that those who have put their faith and trust in Christ as Savior have been freed from the burden and bondage of their sin.” Now notice the second part of this verse, Paul went on to say, “...and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.” In other words, “Don’t allow yourself to be put you back under bondage. Once you realize that by virtue of your faith in Christ you have been set free, don’t allow any person or any circumstance to place you back under bondage.” If you have been paying attention during the course of our study of Galatians, you know that this is exactly what many of the Galatian believers had done. Even though they had been saved, even though they had been freed from the burden and bondage of their sin, they had allowed false teachers to convince them that they still needed to keep the law of Moses.

Notice again Gal. 4:9-10, “But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?...Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.” And so, even though God had freed these Gentile believers from their former worship of idols, they had exchanged that bondage for a different form of bondage. Did you know that there are false teachers in the world today who would love to rob us of our Christian liberty and put us back under some kind of bondage?

They come to us and say things like this, “It’s nice that you have trusted Christ as your Savior, however, if you want to be assured of heaven, you must... do this or that; obey this rule or that rule; conform to this belief system or that belief system;

In other words, they tell us that trusting in Christ is not enough, that His sacrifice is not enough, that His righteousness is not enough, that there is something we must do to merit going to heaven. Whenever we hear that, we need to remind ourselves of the command found here in Gal. 5:1, “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.” In other words, “Don’t let anyone rob you of your Christian liberty and put you back under bondage.” Our Christian liberty is too precious to give up! Not only do we see a command here, but we also see...

A Caution

After commanding his readers to “Stand fast” in their Christian “liberty,” Paul cautions (warns) them about the consequences of not standing fast. Notice again verses. 2-4 of our text, “Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing....For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law....Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.” Do you understand what Paul is saying here? He is saying that if a person makes the decision to rely upon their ability to keep the law of Moses to get him to heaven, then what Christ did on the cross will be of no benefit to him whatsoever. Notice again the words in the latter part of verses. 2, “...Christ shall profit you nothing.”

But someone says, “I thought Jesus died for every man.” That’s true, He did die for every man. Listen to Heb. 2:9, “But we see

Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.” Listen also to 1 John 2:2, “And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” And so, Christ did die for every man. However, even though that is true, in order for a person to benefit from what Christ’s sacrifice for them, he must trust Him (and Him alone) as their Savior. This is why we read in 1 Tim. 4:10, “For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.”

The point is, if a person makes the decision to rely upon their ability to keep the law of Moses to get them to heaven, then what Jesus did on the cross, even though He died for them, will be of no benefit whatsoever. But someone says, “What difference does it make, whether we get to heaven by trusting Christ or by keeping the law, as long as we make it to heaven.” Your question is based on a false assumption. You are assuming that it is possible for a person to make to heaven by keeping God’s law. That is a false assumption. How do I know that? Well, look again at verses. 3 of our text, “For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.”

The only way one could make it to heaven by keeping God’s law is by keeping all of it. (Not just some of the commandments, but ALL of the commandments!) In other words, he would have to live his whole life, from the day he is born until the day he dies, and never once violate even one of God’s laws. This, of course, is an impossibility! This is why Paul cautioned them. He said, “If you trust in the law to save you, you are going to be totally on your own, because the sacrifice that Christ made on the cross will not benefit you at all. Now before I move on to my final point, I

want us to look again the phrase in the latter part of verses. 4 of our text, “...whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.”

I’ve heard many people quote this verse trying to defend their position that it is possible to lose your salvation. They quote this verse and say, “See, it is possible to fall from grace!” This, of course, is absurd. What Paul is saying here is that those who seek to be “justified by the law” (trusting in their ability to keep the law in order to get them to heaven), have departed from (gone away from) the principle of grace. In other words, you can’t have it both ways, you either have to trust completely in your works, or trust completely in God’s grace, you can’t mix the two! Turn with me, for just a moment, to Rom. 11:5-6, “Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace....And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.”

Paul concludes his caution by reminding his readers that true righteousness and acceptance with God comes by faith, and not through keeping the law. Notice again verses. 5-6, “For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith....For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.” Not only do we see a command and a caution in our text, but we also see...

A Craving

There was something that Paul craved (strongly desired). What was it? He craved that God would deal with the false teachers who had caused so many problems in the Galatian churches and that they would leave the Galatian believers alone. Notice again verses. 7-12, “Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should

not obey the truth?...This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you...A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump....I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded: but he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be....And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased....I would they were even cut off which trouble you.” Notice again what Paul said in verses. 12, “I would they were even cut off which trouble you.”

The first time I read this verse, I thought that Paul was merely wishing that the false teachers would be gone. But then I studied the Greek word that is translated here, “cut off,” and discovered that what it means is to “amputate or mutilate.” And then it dawned on me what Paul was saying. The false teachers were telling these Galatian believers, who were Gentiles, that if they really wanted to be saved, they had to “amputate or mutilate” their flesh by being circumcised. If I understand Paul’s words here, he is being sarcastic. He is saying, “If these false teachers are so bent on mutilation, I wish they would mutilate themselves!” You know, there are still many false religions in the world who teach their followers that if they want to be accepted by God, they must mutilate themselves in some way.

(Illus.- For example, in the Philippines, some Catholics will actually crucify themselves [have themselves literally nailed to a cross] in an attempt to gain God’s acceptance.) (Illus.- In some countries, Muslims will actually cut themselves with a sword and literally beat themselves with a whip in an attempt to gain God’s acceptance.) (Illus.- And then, of course, we are all too familiar with those Muslims extremists who believe that by strapping explosives to their bodies and blowing themselves up, they will gain entrance into heaven.) And so, the idea of gaining God’s

acceptance by mutilating one's flesh is still around today. Listen, we don't have to mutilate ourselves in order to gain God's acceptance. We don't have to cut ourselves, or beat ourselves, or subject ourselves to being nailed to a cross, or anything like that. Do you know why?

Because Jesus has already done these things for us! I love Isa. 53:5, which says, "But he was wounded for our transgressions (we don't have to wound ourselves), he was bruised for our iniquities (we don't have to bruise ourselves): the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes (not with our stripes) we are healed."

Conclusion

And so, as we examined our text in this study, we noticed three things. First of all, we noticed a command ("Stand fast"). Secondly, we noticed a caution ("Christ shall profit you nothing"). Finally, we noticed a craving ("I would they were even cut off"). As I close, let me ask you a question. Are you "standing fast" in this study? Are you standing fast "in the faith"? Are you standing fast "in the Lord"? Are you standing fast "in one spirit"? Are you standing fast in the Biblical "traditions" that you have "been taught"?

And, most of all, are you standing fast in the "liberty wherewith Christ hath made" you "free"? While there are times when we need to be flexible, there are times when we must stand fast and not be moved! Do you know Christ as your Savior?

Scripture References Written Out

The following verse-specific passages cited in this chapter are supplied in full from the King James Version.

1 Corinthians 16:13

¹³ Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.

Philippians 1:27

²⁷ Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;

Philippians 4:1

¹ Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, *my* dearly beloved.

1 Thessalonians 3:8

⁸ For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.

2 Thessalonians 2:15

¹⁵ Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.

Galatians 4:9-10

⁹ But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?

¹⁰ Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.

Galatians 5:1

¹ Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

Hebrews 2:9

⁹ But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

1 John 2:2

² And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for our's only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world.

1 Timothy 4:10

¹⁰ For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.

Romans 11:5-6

⁵ Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.

⁶ And if by grace, then *is it* no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if *it be* of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.

Isaiah 53:5

⁵ But he *was* wounded for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

CHAPTER 16

Use Not Liberty

Scripture Text: Galatians 5:13-15 (KJV)

¹³ For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only *use* not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.

¹⁴ For all the law is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

¹⁵ But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.

Introduction

For several weeks now, as we have continued our study of Paul's letter to the Galatian believers, we have focused our attention on the importance of standing fast in our Christian liberty, and not allowing ourselves to be placed again under any form of spiritual bondage. Paul said it best in Gal. 5:1, which we considered Sunday before last. Let's look at that verse again, Paul said, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." And so, when it comes to our Christian liberty, we should be firm and not let any person rob us of that liberty and thereby place us again under bondage. However, there is another side to that coin that must not be overlooked. Not only should we stand fast in our Christian liberty, we must also be very careful that we do not take advantage of our Christian liberty.

Notice again verses. 13 of our text, "For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh." In other words, "Don't use (look at) your freedom as an opportunity (a license) to indulge (gratify) your sinful flesh." Peter put it like this in 1 Pet. 2:16, "...not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness." Here is what will happen, if we are not

careful. We will tell ourselves, “Since we are not saved by works or by good deeds, but rather by grace through faith in Christ, it really doesn’t matter how we live our lives.” In other words, “Since we are free, we are free to do as we please.” However, nothing could be further from the truth.

We are free, but we are not free to do as we please. We are free, but it does matter how we live our lives. We are free, but we must not take advantage of our freedom, and use it as an opportunity to gratify our sinful flesh and thereby sin against the God who gave us our freedom in the first place. How ungrateful would that be? Do you remember Joseph? Even though Joseph was Potiphar’s servant, his master gave him great freedom when it came to running his household. Do you remember what Joseph told Potiphar’s wife when she tried to seduce him? He said, “Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand;...There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?” (Gen. 39:8-9)

In other words, “How can I sin against Someone Who has been so good and so gracious to me?” And so, while it is important that we stand fast in our Christian liberty, it is also important that we not take advantage of that liberty. In our text, in this study, Paul mentions at least three ways that we can take advantage of our Christian liberty, if we are not careful. For example, we take advantage of our Christian liberty when we...

Attend Only To Our Needs

Notice again verses. 13 of our text, “For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.” You know, there are

basically two kinds of believers today. First of all, there are those believers whom I refer to as “self-serving” believers. What do I mean by “self-serving”? I simply mean that they live their lives primarily to... serve themselves; attend to their own needs; meet their own obligations, and they have little or no time to concern themselves with the needs of others;

While they would never admit it, their motto in life is, “Take care of # 1, and don’t worry about anyone else.!” They are self-serving believers. And so, first of all, there are those believers whom I refer to as “self- serving” believers. The other kind of believer is what I refer to as “others serving” believers. While they do attend to their own needs, they live their lives primarily to attend to the needs of others. Rather than taking advantage of their Christian liberty, they put into practice the words found in verses. 13 of our text, which says, “...but by love serve one another.” You know, when it comes to serving others, our Lord Jesus set the example, didn’t He.

First of all, He set the example in the way that He lived His life. Do you remember what Jesus did that really astonished His disciples, especially Peter? He literally washed His disciples’ feet. (John 13:1-12) He took a towel and a basin of water, and one by one, washed the feet of each of His disciples. And then when He was finished, He said this, “For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.” (John 13:15) Jesus also set the example for serving others in the way that He died. How did He die? He died for others! (Amen?)

Listen to what Jesus said in Mat. 20:27-28, “And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:...Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.” But someone asks, “Why should I live my life for others?” Well, I’ve already given you two reasons,

because... the Bible commands us to; Jesus set the example for us; but let me give you a couple of more reasons. First of all, we should attend to the needs of others because God will attend to our needs if we do.

(Illus.- I've heard people say, "I can't worry about others, I have to take care of myself." Let me ask you a question. Do you think God can do a better job of taking care of you than you can? If so, concern yourself with the needs of others and let God take care of your needs.) Isn't that what He promised in Mat. 6:33? He said, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." In other words, live your life the way God wants you to live it, and God will see to it that your needs are met. A second reason that you should attend to the needs of others is because we will be happier if we do. (Illus.- In my opinion, the saddest people in this world are those who live "self-serving" lives. The opposite is also true. The happiest people in the world are those who live their lives for others.)

Didn't Jesus Himself say, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."? (Acts 20:35) And so, we take advantage of our Christian liberty when we attend only to our needs. We also take advantage of our Christian liberty when we...

Abhor Our Neighbor

Notice again verses 14 of our text, "For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.." The first place we find this command in Scripture is in Lev. 19:18, which says, "Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." This, of course, was a part of the law of Moses. The second place we find it is in Mat. 22:39. You might remember that a lawyer had asked Jesus the question,

“Master, which is the great commandment in the law?” (Mat. 22:36) In other words, “Of all the commandments that God has given us in His law, which is the greatest?” Do you remember how Jesus answered this question?

He said, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind....This is the first and great commandment.” (Mat. 22:38) But Jesus didn’t stop with just the greatest commandment, He went on and stated the second greatest commandment. He said, “And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself....On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.” (Mat. 22:39-40) Now there are two things that I want to point out about the second greatest commandment. Notice, first of all, that it is universal in scope. What does it say? It says, “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” Now this raises the question, “Who is our neighbor?”

Someone says, “Well, that’s easy! Our neighbor is the guy who lives next door.” Well, that’s a pretty narrow definition. Jesus defines the word neighbor in a much broader way. Do you remember His parable of the good Samaritan? The same lawyer who had asked Jesus the question, “Which is the greatest commandment?” followed up our Lord’s answer with another question. He asked, “And who is my neighbour?” (Luke 10:29) It was in response to this question that Jesus told the parable of the good Samaritan found in Luke 10:30-37, which teaches, among other things, that our neighbour is anyone with whom we come into contact who has a need.

Not only is this command universal in scope, it is also unconditional in application. Notice that our text does not say, “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, as long as he lives up to your expectations.” “As long as he is a good guy.” “As long as he is

not an undesirable.” “As long as he is not of a different race, or a different religion, or a different sexual orientation.” It simply says, “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,” period! The command is unconditional in it’s application.

Why should we love unconditionally? Because God loved us unconditionally! (Amen?) I love Rom. 5:8, it says, “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” Notice those words “while we were yet sinners.” God loved us “while we were yet sinners.” But someone asks, “Doesn’t the Bible say that we should hate sin?” Yes it does, but it doesn’t say that we should hate sinners. (We should hate sin, but at the same time we should love the sinner.)

And so, we take advantage of our Christian liberty when we abhor our neighbor. Finally, we take advantage of our Christian liberty when we...

Annihilate One Another

Notice again verses. 15 of our text, “But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.” Apparently the believers in Galatia, in addition to being plagued with false teachers, also had problems getting along with one another. Paul describes their behavior as biting and devouring “one another.” (Sort of sounds like a “dog fight.”) Paul warned them to “take heed” lest they be “consumed one of another.” The word “consumed” here means “used up or destroyed.” When believers fight with other believers, not only are individual relationships destroyed, but in some cases entire churches are destroyed as well. Rather than tearing one another down, believers should instead build one another up.

The Biblical word for this is edification. The Bible admonishes us in Rom. 15:2, “Let every one of us please his neighbour for his

good to edification.” Paul put it like this in Rom. 14:19, “Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.” You know, the tongue is a very powerful thing. James compares the tongue to “a little fire.” (Jam. 3:5) It can do great harm or great good. It can tear people down or build them up.

It can destroy relationships and churches or it can build relationships and churches. It all depends on how we use it. In Rom. 12:1, we are admonished to “present” our “bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God.” This should certainly include our tongues! And so, we take advantage of our Christian liberty when we annihilate one another.

Conclusion

As I get ready to conclude, in this study, I want to ask you a couple of questions. First of all, do you possess liberty in Christ? In other words, have you, by virtue of your faith in Christ as Savior, been set free from the bondage and penalty of your sin? (Are you saved?) If not, I encourage you to trust Christ in this study. If so, let me ask you another question. Are you taking advantage of your Christian liberty? You are, if you are attending only to your own needs.

You are, if you are abhorring your neighbor. You are, if you are annihilating your fellow believers. Instead of attending to our own needs, we should serve one another. Instead of abhorring our neighbor, we should love our neighbor. Instead of annihilating our fellow believers, we should build them up. To do anything less is to take advantage of our Christian liberty.

Scripture References Written Out

The following verse-specific passages cited in this chapter are supplied in full from the King James Version.

Galatians 5:1

¹ Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

1 Peter 2:16

¹⁶ As free, and not using *your* liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.

Genesis 39:8-9

⁸ But he refused, and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand;

⁹ *There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?*

John 13:1-12

¹ Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

² And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son*, to betray him;

³ Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God;

⁴ He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself.

⁵ After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe *them* with the towel wherewith he was girded.

⁶ Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?

⁷ Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.

⁸ Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.

⁹ Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also *my* hands and *my* head.

¹⁰ Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash *his* feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.

¹¹ For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.

¹² So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?

John 13:15

¹⁵ For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

Acts 20:35

³⁵ I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

Luke 10:29

²⁹ But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?

Luke 10:30-37

³⁰ And Jesus answering said, A certain *man* went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded *him*, and departed, leaving *him* half dead.

³¹ And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

³² And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked *on him*, and passed by on the other side.

³³ But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion *on him*,

³⁴ And went to *him*, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

³⁵ And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave *them* to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

³⁶ Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?

³⁷ And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

Romans 5:8

⁸ But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 15:2

² Let every one of us please *his* neighbour for *his* good to edification.

Romans 14:19

¹⁹ Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

Romans 12:1

¹ I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service.

CHAPTER 17

Walk In The Spirit

Scripture Text: Galatians 5:16-18 (KJV)

¹⁶ *This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.*

¹⁷ *For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.*

¹⁸ *But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.*

Introduction

(Illus.- Every now and then, someone will come to me, usually a new believer in Christ, and will ask me the following question, “Pastor, why is it so difficult for me to do the things that I know in my heart God wants me to do? Why is it so difficult for me to pray? Why is it so difficult for me to read my Bible? Why is it so difficult for me to get out of bed on Sunday morning and come to church? Why is it so difficult for me to share my faith when God gives me the opportunity? Why is it such a struggle for me to do the things that I know in my heart God wants me to do now that I am one of His children?”) Let me begin by saying that living the Christian life IS a struggle for every believer.

Consider the apostle Paul, for just a moment. Do you remember how Paul described his own personal experience in Rom. 7:15? Listen to what he said, “For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.” Sounds to me like living the Christian life was a struggle, even for Paul! (Amen?) And so, living the Christian life is a struggle for every believer. But why is this true? The answer is found in our text, in this study. But before we look at that answer, I want us to notice...

The Challenge

The challenge is found in the first part of verses. 16 of our text, it says, “This I say then, Walk in the Spirit.” Now what does it mean to “walk in the Spirit”? Before we can understand what it means to “walk in the Spirit,” there is something else that we must understand first. We must understand that when God saved us, He sent His Holy Spirit to live within us. Look back at Gal. 4:6 for just a moment, Paul said, “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.” Paul put it like this in Rom. 5:5, “And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” Now this raises a question, “Why did God send His Holy Spirit to live within us?”

One of the reasons was to provide us with a spiritual compass (guide). Listen to what Jesus said in John 16:13, “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth:: But someone says, “I thought the Bible was our guide.” The Bible is our guide, however the Bible is more like our map, while the Holy Spirit is like our compass. The Bible tells us where we need to go, and the Holy Spirit points us in that direction. By the way, there is never any contradiction in what the Bible tells us and where the Holy Spirit points us. They are always in perfect harmony!

Now with that in mind, let’s go back to our original question. What does it mean to “walk in the Spirit”? It simply means to... follow His guidance; submit our lives to His leading; allow ourselves to be under His influence and control; Walking in the Spirit means the same thing as being “filled with the Holy Spirit.” The Bible says in Eph. 5:18, “And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.” Why does God’s

Word contrast being “filled with the Spirit” to being “drunk with wine”?

Because a person who is drunk with wine is under the influence and the control of wine. (Illus.- This is why we sometimes refer to a person who is drunk as being “under the influence.” He is under the influence and the control of the alcohol.) That being true, being “filled with the Spirit” means being under the influence and under the control of the Holy Spirit. The opposite of walking “in the Spirit” is quenching the Holy Spirit. In fact, the Bible admonishes us in 1 Thes. 5:19 to “Quench not the Spirit.” The Holy Spirit is like a fire that burns within us. Do you remember how God led the children of Israel in the wilderness?

We are told that He led with “a cloud” by day and “a pillar of fire” by night. (Exo. 13:21-22) When we ignore the leading of the Holy Spirit, it’s like we are quenching (putting out) the fire that put within us to guide us through this world of darkness. And so, that’s the challenge, to “walk in the Spirit,” to follow His guidance, to submit to His leading, to be under His influence and His control. Now I want us to notice...

The Difficulty Of The Challenge

We are now going to answer the question, “Why is living the Christian life such a struggle?” The challenge is to “walk in the Spirit.” The challenge is to follow the Holy Spirit’s guidance. The challenge is to submit to the Holy Spirit’s leading. The challenge is to be under the Holy Spirit’s influence and control. This is not only a challenge, but it is an extremely difficult challenge. But why? The answer is found in verses. 17 of our text, it says, “For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.”

Why is living the Christian life such a struggle? Why is walking “in the Spirit” a difficult challenge? It is a difficult challenge because when God saved us and gave us His Holy Spirit, He didn’t take away our old nature. That nature that... we were born with; we received from our great grandfather, Adam; is sinful and vile and depraved in the worst sort of way; that nature still abides within us! And so, the reason that living the Christian life is such a struggle is because of two very “contrary” natures that dwell within us.

Of course, we have a new nature that was created by the Holy Spirit when He entered our hearts, and that is inclined toward righteousness. But we also still have our old nature that we were born with, and that is inclined toward sin. Paul tells us that these two natures, because they “are contrary the one to the other,” are constantly doing battle. Paul also described this conflict in Rom. 7:14-25 (turn there with me), “For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin....For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I....If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good....Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me....For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not....For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do....Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me....I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me....For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:...But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members....O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?...I thank God through

Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.”

Without going into a lot of detail, it is plain to see from Paul’s words here that living the Christian life was a struggle even for him. Many of the good things that he wanted to do, he found himself not doing, and many of the sinful things that he did not want to do, he found himself doing. How do you explain that? There’s only one explanation, just like us, Paul had two very contrary natures dwelling within him, two natures that were constantly engaged in conflict. Now all of this raises a very important question, “How do we make sure that our new (spiritual) nature comes out on top in this conflict, at least most of the time?” The key is to make sure that our new (spiritual) nature gets the most attention and nurturing. (Illus.- A little boy was describing to his Sunday school teacher his own conflict between good and evil. He said, “Teacher, I have these two dogs inside of me. One dog is a black dog and he is always trying to get me to do bad things. The other dog is a white dog and he tries to get me to do good things. And these dogs are always fighting with each other.” The teacher asked him, “Which dog usually wins the fight?” The boy’s answer was, “The one I feed the most.”)

We smile, but there is much truth in those little boys words. When it comes to the spiritual struggle that we experience between our two natures, the nature that wins is usually the nature that we feed the most. Listen to what Paul wrote in Rom. 13:14, “But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.” In other words, Paul said, “Don’t feed your sinful nature, because if you do, you are going to find yourself fulfilling it’s sinful desires.” How do we feed our flesh? We feed our flesh by.... listening to the wrong kind of music;

reading the wrong kind of literature, watching the wrong kind of TV programs; viewing the wrong kind of Internet web sites; 9 The more we feed our flesh, the stronger it becomes and the more control it will have over the way that we live our lives. 10 This is why we should concentrate on feeding our new (spiritual) nature. 11 How do we feed our new nature? 12 We feed our new nature by... listening to the right kind of music; reading the right kind of literature;

watching the right kind of TV programs, viewing the right kind of Internet web sites; 13 We are absolutely insane if we think that we can constantly feed our flesh while totally neglecting our spiritual nature, and still live a godly Christian life. (It's just not going to happen.) 14 While walking in the Spirit is a difficult challenge, it is most certainly not an impossible challenge. 15 As I said a moment ago, the key is making sure that our new (spiritual) nature gets the most attention and the most nurturing. Now, finally, I want us to notice the...

Importance Of The Challenge

Why is it so important that we “walk in the Spirit”? Of course, the most obvious reason is that walking in the Spirit assures us of success, as far as living the Christian life is concerned. It doesn't mean that we will be perfect, but it does mean that, for the most part, we will please God with our lives. And so, that's the most obvious reason it is important that we “walk in the Spirit.” However, there is another reason it is important. And that is, it is important because “walking in the Spirit” assures us that we are, in fact, born again. Notice again verses. 18 of our text, “But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law (you are not under the curse of the law, but rather have been saved by the grace of God).”

Think about it for a moment. If we “walk in the Spirit,” then that means that the Holy Spirit lives within us. (One can’t walk in the Spirit if the Spirit does not live within him.) And if the Holy Spirit does live within us, then that means that we are, in fact, born again. Turn with me to Rom. 8:14-16, Paul wrote, “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God (as many as are walking in the Spirit), they are the sons of God....For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father....The Spirit (Holy Spirit) itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:” There are other ways that we can know that we are saved. For example, we can know that we are saved if we keep God’s commandments.

The Bible says in 1 John 2:3, “And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.” We can also know that we are saved if we love the brethren. The Bible says in 1 John 3:14, “We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.” And so, there are other ways that we can know that we are saved. However, having said that, one of the surest evidences that a person is truly born again is that he is walking “in the Spirit.” The apostle John put it like this in 1 John 4:13, “Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.”

Conclusion

We’ve noticed three things in this study from our text. First of all, we noticed the challenge. (The challenge is to “walk in the Spirit,” to follow His guidance, to submit our lives to His leading,, to allow ourselves to be under His influence and control.) Secondly, we noticed the difficulty of the challenge. (Walking “in the Spirit” is a difficult challenge because we still possess our old nature.) 3. Finally, we noticed the importance of the challenge. (By walking

“in the Spirit,” we assure ourselves that we are, in fact, born again.) May I ask you a couple of questions? Are you, in fact, born again? If so, are you walking “in the Spirit”? Are you finding it difficult to “walk in the Spirit” because you are giving your fleshly nature far more attention and nurturing than your spiritual nature.

Do you understand the importance of walking “in the Spirit”? Perhaps you need to respond to the invitation in this study, get on your knees before God, and ask Him to help you “walk in the Spirit.”

Scripture References Written Out

The following verse-specific passages cited in this chapter are supplied in full from the King James Version.

Romans 7:15

¹⁵ For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.

Galatians 4:6

⁶ And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

Romans 5:5

⁵ And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

John 16:13

¹³ Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

Ephesians 5:18

¹⁸ And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;

1 Thessalonians 5:19

¹⁹ Quench not the Spirit.

Exodus 13:21-22

²¹ And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night:

²² He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, *from* before the people.

Romans 7:14-25

¹⁴ For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.

¹⁵ For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.

¹⁶ If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that *it is* good.

¹⁷ Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

¹⁸ For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not.

¹⁹ For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

²⁰ Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

²¹ I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.

²² For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:

²³ But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

²⁴ O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

²⁵ I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

Romans 13:14

¹⁴ But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to *fulfil* the lusts *thereof*.

Romans 8:14-16

¹⁴ For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

¹⁵ For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

¹⁶ The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

1 John 2:3

³ And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.

1 John 3:14

¹⁴ We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not *his* brother abideth in death.

1 John 4:13

¹³ Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

CHAPTER 18

The Works Of The Flesh

Scripture Text: Galatians 5:19-21 (KJV)

¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

²⁰ Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

²¹ Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told *you* in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Introduction

In our last study of Galatians, we focused our attention on the two natures that exist within every child of God, as well as the constant struggle that results because of these two natures. First of all, we all have a fleshly nature. This is the nature with which we were all born. This is the nature that we all inherited from our great great grandfather, Adam. This is the nature that can be accurately described with words such as sinful, depraved, and fallen. However, if we are saved, we also have a spiritual nature. This is the nature that we were given when we were born the second time (born again).

This is the nature that came about as a result of God's Holy Spirit coming into our hearts (indwelling us). This is the nature that can accurately described with words such as holy, righteous, and divine. This is why there is a constant struggle between these two natures. One is sinful and the other is holy. One is depraved and the other is righteous. One is fallen and the other is divine. Paul described this struggle in Gal. 5:16-17, let's read those verses again, "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh....For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and

the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.”

In this study, we want to focus our attention on our fleshly nature. Notice again the first six words of verses. 19 of our text, “Now the works of the flesh are...” There are three things that I would like for us to notice, in this study, about “the works of the flesh.” First of all, I would like for us to notice...

The Meaning Of The Works Of The Flesh

You may have noticed that Paul listed seventeen different “works of the flesh” in this passage. The first four sins that Paul mentions in verses. 19 are clearly “sexual sins.” For example, mentions “adultery.” Adultery can be defined as “breaking one’s marriage vows,” or “being unfaithful (in the physical or sexual sense) to one’s spouse.” By the way, “adultery” doesn’t have to be physical in nature. Do you remember what Jesus said in Mat. 5:27-28, “Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:...But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.” Paul also mentions “fornication.”

The word “fornication” is a much broader term, and can be defined as “any illicit sexual activity, everything from adultery to homosexuality to bestiality.” The Greek word that is translated “fornication” is the same word from which we get our English word “pornography.” Paul also mentions “uncleanness.” The word “uncleanness” can be defined as “impurity.” It means the opposite of someone who is sexually clean and pure. Finally, Paul mentions “lasciviousness.” The word “lasciviousness” means “lack of self restraint,” or “an inability to control one’s sexual cravings.”

By the way, sex, in and of itself, is not a bad thing. God created us sexual beings, giving us sexual desires. As long as it is kept within the boundary of the marriage relationship, sex is a beautiful thing. However, when it is practiced outside of the marriage relationship, sex becomes something ugly, and vile, and even repugnant. The Bible says in Heb. 13:4, “Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.” And so, the first four “works of the flesh” that Paul mentions here are sexual sins. As we move on to verses. 20 of our text, we notice that the next two “works of the flesh” that Paul mentions are what some have referred to as “religious sins.”

For example, Paul mentions “idolatry.” “Idolatry” means much more than just bowing down to some graven image. “Idolatry” can be defined as “worshiping anything in the place of God,” or “putting anything above God as far as our devotions are concerned.” I don’t personally know anyone who bows down to a graven image, but I do know people who worship their car, or their hobby, or their career. Paul also mentions “witchcraft.” “Witchcraft” can be defined as “magic” or “sorcery.” It’s interesting to note that the Greek word translated “witchcraft” here is the same word from which we get our English word “pharmacy.”

I’m told that it was used to refer to mood altering drugs that were associated with many forms of pagan worship. The final eleven “works of the flesh” that Paul mentions in verses. 20-21 can all be referred to as “societal sins” or “sins against humanity.” First of all, Paul mentions “hatred.” “Hatred” can be defined as “prejudiced hostility or an attitude of animosity.” Next, Paul mentions “variance.” “Variance” can be defined as “dissension or discord.” Next, Paul mentions “emulations.” “Emulations” can be defined as “rivalry that is based on jealousy.”

It's what we would refer to today as "keeping up with the Jones." Next, Paul mentions "wrath." "Wrath" can be defined as "intense anger or indig-nation." Next, Paul mentions "strife." "Strife" can be defined as "conflict or contention, sometimes physical and sometimes violent." Next, Paul mentions "seditions." "Seditions" can be defined as "rebellions or insur-rections against lawful authority." Next, Paul mentions "heresies." "Heresies," as it is used here, refers to "divisions into various factions or sects." We hear every day on the news about the "sectarian" violence in Iraq.

Next, Paul mentions "envyings." "Envyings" can be defined as "jealousies that can cause one to be resentful of someone else." Next, Paul mentions "murders." "Murders" can be defined as "the taking of human life without a just cause." When you consider the number of legal abortions that are performed daily in our country, one must conclude that we currently live in the most murderous society that this world has ever known. Next, Paul mentions something that often leads to "murders," and that is "drunkenness." "Drunkenness" can be defined as "intoxication by some drug, such as alcohol."

This reminds us what Paul wrote in Eph. 5:18, "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;" The last sin that Paul mentions by name in this passage is "revellings." "Revellings" can be defined as "wild parties." All of these sins, as we have defined them, represent "the works of the flesh." The sins of adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, and revellings. And so, this is the meaning of "the works of the flesh." Now I want us to notice...

The Manifestation Of The Works Of The Flesh

Notice again the first part of verses. 19 of our text, “Now the works of the flesh are manifest.” Now this raises at least two questions. First of all, when will they be manifest? In other words, when will the works of the flesh be evident in our lives, as believers? When you consider this passage as a whole, the answer is obvious. The “works of the flesh” will be evident in our lives whenever we are not walking “in the Spirit.” Go back to Gal. 5:16, “This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.”

Whenever we are not walking “in the Spirit,” whenever we are not... following His guidance; submitting our lives to His leading; allowing ourselves to be under His influence and control, then we can expect the “works of the flesh” to be manifest (become evident) in our lives; Do you know why this is true? It’s true because there is no “middle ground.” There is no such thing as kicking our lives into “spiritual neutral.” We are either walking “in the spirit” or we are walking in “the flesh,” one or the other.

A second question that is raised is, “Why will the works of the flesh be manifest?” In other words, what exactly causes the “works of the flesh” to be manifest our lives as believers? The answer is, the “works of the flesh” will be manifest whenever we give more attention to our fleshly nature than we do our spiritual nature. Paul put it like this in Rom. 13:14, “But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.” What does it mean to “make...provision for the flesh”? It simply means to feed the flesh, to nourish the flesh, to satisfy the appetites of the flesh, and we all know we do that. We feed the flesh by watching ungodly television.

We feed the flesh by listening to ungodly music. We feed the flesh, by reading ungodly literature. We feed the flesh, by visiting

ungodly Internet web sites. The more we feed our fleshly natures, the stronger they will become, the more they will control our actions, and the more “works of the flesh” will be manifest in our lives! That’s how it works. (Illus.- Have you ever heard the computer phrase “garbage in, garbage out”? What it means is, you can only get out of a computer what you put into it. If you put garbage in, you will get garbage out. The same thing is true of our spiritual lives. If we are constantly putting garbage into our minds, we shouldn’t expect anything less to come out in our lives. Garbage in, garbage out.) Thus far in this study, we have noticed two things.

First of all, we noticed the meaning of the works of the flesh. Secondly, we noticed the manifestation of the works of the flesh. Finally, in this study, I want us to notice...

The Message Of The Works Of The Flesh

There is a very sobering message in the latter part of verses. 21 of our text, it says, “...of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” Paul lists seventeen different works of the flesh, everything from adultery to hatred to strife to envyings, and then he says, “...they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” Now what does this mean? Let me tell you, first of all, what it does not mean. It does not mean that true believers in Christ will never manifest the “works of the flesh” in their lives. To take the position that a true believer in Christ will never... have a lustful thought, or;

harbor ill will in his heart, or fall out with another believer, or; be envious of those who have more; to take that position would be utterly absurd. The believers in Corinth are a perfect example. Do you remember how Paul began his first letter to them? He

wrote in 1 Cor. 1:1-2, “Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother,...Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints,” (They were definitely saved!)

Yet, just two chapters later, he wrote these words, “And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ....For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?” (1 Cor. 3:1, 3) By the way, the word “carnal” means “fleshly.” And so, Gal. 5:21 does not mean that true believers in Christ will never manifest the works of the flesh in their lives. Nor does it mean that a believer who occasionally manifests the “works of the flesh” in his life will lose his salvation. What then does it mean? It simply means that those who’s lives are nothing but a manifestation of the “works of the flesh” have surely never been born again. They may profess to be saved, but the outward evidence says otherwise.

(Illus.- I have known a few professing believers down through the years whom I believe were not really saved. Of course, I could not see into their hearts, but I could watch the way they lived their lives, and I saw absolutely no evidence that the Holy Spirit of God lived within them. Their lives were nothing but a manifestation of the “works of the flesh.”) I said earlier that this is a very sobering message. Why did I use the word “sobering”? Rev. 21:8 answers this question, listen to what it says, “But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.” Not only will the unsaved not inherit eternal life, they will instead inherit eternal death.

Conclusion

In this study, we've learned several things about the "works of the flesh." First of all, we've learned the meaning of the "works of the flesh." Secondly, we've learned about the manifestation of the "works of the flesh." Finally, we've learned about the message of the "works of the flesh." As I close in this study, let me ask you a very serious question. How prominent are the "works of the flesh" in your life? If they manifest themselves occasionally, then you are what I would call a typical Christian.

If they manifest themselves quite often, then you are definitely a "carnal" Christian, and you are guilty of feeding your flesh. If your life is nothing but a manifestation of the "works of the flesh," then you most likely are not saved. Perhaps you need to come to this altar in this study and take care of some business with God?

Scripture References Written Out

The following verse-specific passages cited in this chapter are supplied in full from the King James Version.

Galatians 5:16-17

¹⁶ This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

¹⁷ For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

Hebrews 13:4

⁴ Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

Ephesians 5:18

¹⁸ And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;

Galatians 5:16

¹⁶ This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

Romans 13:14

¹⁴ But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

1 Corinthians 1:1-2

¹ Paul, called *to be* an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes *our* brother,

² Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called *to be* saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both their's and our's:

1 Corinthians 3:1

¹ And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, *even* as unto babes in Christ.

Galatians 5:21

²¹ Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told *you* in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Revelation 21:8

⁸ But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

CHAPTER 19**The Fruit Of The Spirit Is Love****Scripture Text: Galatians 5:22 (KJV)**

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

Introduction

I want to begin in this study by asking you a rather personal question, and that is, “How spiritual a person are you?” In other words, if I were to ask you to rate yourself on a scale of one to ten, with ten being very spiritual and one being very unspiritual), what rating would you give yourself? Would you rate yourself a ten (very spiritual)? Would you rate yourself a one (very unspiritual)? Or would you rate yourself somewhere in between? Just how spiritual a person are you? But someone says, “Wait a minute, pastor. That’s a really stupid question. Everyone knows that spirituality is an inward thing and cannot be measured.”

Well, I will agree with you, partly. Spirituality is an inward thing, however, spirituality can be measured! Now this raises a question. If spirituality can be measured, how do we go about it? In other words, what standards do we use, or what measuring sticks do we compare ourselves to, or what rules do we apply to our lives? Well, let me begin by telling you what standards we do NOT use! First of all, we do not measure our spirituality by how often we attend church.

Now please don’t misunderstand what I am about to say. Church attendance is extremely important for believers. This is why God’s Word admonishes us in Heb. 10:25 to not forsake the “the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another:” However, having said that, we do not

measure a person's spirituality by how often they attend church. The truth is, some of the most unspiritual people that I have ever known have been regular church attenders. May I also say that we do not measure our spirituality by how much Bible knowledge we have. Now, again, please don't misunderstand what I am about to say.

Bible knowledge is a wonderful thing, and the Lord knows that we could all stand to add to our knowledge of God's Word. However, having said that, Bible knowledge alone is not a good indicator of a person's spirituality. (Illus.- I'm thinking now of a young man that I met many years ago. When I first met him, I was greatly impressed by his knowledge of the Scriptures. He could quote verse after verse after verse, and he could quote it correctly. However, there was something not right about this young man. A few months later it became quite evident that this young man was anything but spiritual. In fact, I'm convinced that he was not even saved.) And so, Bible knowledge alone is not a good indicator of a person's spirituality. May I also say that we do not measure our spirituality by what comes out of our mouths.

Over the years I have known people who had learned to talk in a spiritual fashion, yet their lives were anything but spiritual. (Illus.- I'm thinking now of a brother who at one time was a member of this church. You would think by listening to him talk that he was a very spiritual person, because almost everything he said, at least when he was around me, was mixed with expressions like "bless God" and "praise the Lord," and "God is good." If you didn't know this brother personally, you would think that he was a very spiritual person. The problem was, I knew him personally, and his actions were not all that spiritual.) Have you ever heard the expression, "Talk is cheap."? That is certainly true when it comes to measuring a person's spirituality.

Now this brings us back to our original question, “How do we measure a person’s spirituality? If we don’t measure it by how often they attend church, or how much Bible knowledge they have, or spiritual they sound, then how do we measure it? What standard do we use?”

The answer is found in our text, in this study. Notice again Gal. 5:22-23, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,...Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.” There’s the answer to the question. We measure a person’s spirituality by measuring (examining) “the fruit of the Spirit.” There are three questions that we want to answer in this study. First of all,...

What Is “The Fruit Of The Spirit”?

In order to answer this question, let’s look closely at the two primary words in that expression. First of all, let’s look at the word “Spirit.” You may have noticed that in the KJV, the word “Spirit” is capitalized, the reason being this is definitely a reference to the Holy Spirit of God. Someone asks, “What does the Holy Spirit have to do with spirituality? The answer is, He has everything to do with it! In fact, it is the Holy Spirit of God who produces true spirituality in our lives. We would have no spirituality whatsoever were it not for the work of the Holy Spirit of God in our lives!

This is why a person must be saved before he can exhibit true spirituality in his life. You see, only those who are saved have the Holy Spirit of God living within them. Look again at Gal. 4:4-6, “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,...To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons....And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of

his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.” (Illus.- This is why simply “turning over a new leaf” in life does not make a person a Christian. I’ve known of a number of people who simply decided one day that they were going to start living a Christian life. They didn’t get saved. They didn’t receive the Holy Spirit into their heart. They just decided that they were going to start living a Christian life. Of course, they failed, and the reason they failed is because the Holy Spirit is the producer [source] of all true spirituality.)

And so, when Paul spoke about “the fruit of the Spirit,” he was referring to the Holy Spirit. Now what about that other word in the expression, “fruit of the Spirit,” and that is the word “fruit.” What does that word mean? When we think of fruit, we usually think of apples and oranges and peaches and bananas, etc. Now that is certainly “fruit,” however, that’s not exactly what Paul had in mind here. Paul is using the word “fruit” (*karpos*) in a figurative sense here, and what it means is “outward visible evidence.” (Illus.- Let me illustrate. I’m not very good at identifying various kinds of trees. However, in the fall, I don’t have any trouble identifying fruit trees. Why not? Because of the fruit that is hanging from the limbs. If you see apples hanging from the limbs of a tree, you know that is an apple tree! How do you know. Because of the apples. The apples hanging from the limbs are outward visible evidence that it is an apple tree.)

And so, the word “fruit” here means “outward visible evidence.” Now let’s put these two words together. “Spirit” refers to the Holy Spirit. “Fruit” refers to outward visible evidence. That being the case, when Paul spoke of “the fruit of the Spirit,” he was referring to “the outward visible evidence that the Holy Spirit of God is at work in a person’s life.” Let me tell you something, if the Holy Spirit is truly working in our life, if we are truly walking “in the

Spirit,” as Paul admonished us to do earlier, then there is going to be some outward visible evidence of that! There is going to be some fruit! (Amen?)

Now this raises another question,...

To What Extent Will “The Fruit Of The Spirit” Be Evident In A Believer’s Life?

That all depends. It depends on to what extent a believer walks “in the Spirit.” It depends on to what extent a believer yields his or her life to the Holy Spirit Who lives within them. While every true believer will exhibit the “fruit of the Spirit” in his life to some degree, some believers will exhibit more fruit than others. Do you know why this is true? Because it is possible to “quench” the Holy Spirit. Listen to what Paul wrote in 1 Thes. 5:19, “Quench not the Spirit.”

What does it mean to “quench...the Spirit”? It simply means to... subdue the Spirit; suppress or inhibit the Spirit; put out or extinguish the Spirit; (Illus.- I don’t know about you, but I enjoy camping. One of the things that I enjoy about camping is having a campfire. You know, cooking hot dogs and roasting marshmallow, telling stories. But while campfires are nice, we all know what “Smokey the Bear” says. He says, “Before leaving camp, be sure and ‘extinguish all fires.’ The last thing you should do before heading for home is to pour plenty of water on your fire. Why? Because water “quenches” [put’s out] the fire.) Well, that’s exactly what some believers do to the Holy Spirit, they “quench” Him.

Yes, they are saved. Yes, the Holy Spirit lives within them. However, they subdue, suppress or inhibit His working in their lives. Consequently, “the fruit of the Spirit” is not as visible in their lives as it should be and could be. (Illus.- Let me illustrate

what I am talking about. Have you ever heard a sermon that really convicted you about something that you needed to change about your life? Whether you realized it or not, it was not the preacher who convicted you, but rather the Holy Spirit Who lives within you. But have you ever felt that conviction, only to resist it until finally the conviction subsided? If so, you quenched the Spirit. Consequently, your life did not change.) There is one last question that I want us to answer in this study, and that is...

What Is The Greatest Evidence Of The Working Of The Holy Spirit In A Believer's Life

As we are going to see later, Paul mentions at least nine evidences of the working of the Holy Spirit in a believer's life, but which of these nine is the greatest? I don't think there is any question about it. "Love" is the greatest. I say that for two reasons. First of all, I say that because "love" is the first evidence that Paul mentions in this passage. Notice again the first part of Gal. 5:22, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love." I don't think that it was just a coincidence that Paul mentioned "love" first.

I believe he mentioned "love" first because "love" is the greatest evidence of the working of the Holy Spirit in a believer's life. A second reason is because of what Paul wrote in 1 Cor. 13:13, "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." I am also reminded of something that Jesus said in John 13:35, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." Now what is "love"? Most definitions that I have heard given for "love" are, in my opinion, far too shallow. Here's a definition that I think accurately defines "love," "love is an unselfish concern that freely accepts another and diligently seeks his good." Love is definitely far more than just a feeling or an emotion.

True love is an action. This is why the Bible admonishes us in 1 John 3:18, “My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.” How do we demonstrate our love by our actions? The answer is very simple, we do so by “giving. By giving of... ourselves; our means; our time and energy; The ultimate demonstration of love is the actual giving of one’s life. Jesus put it like this in John 15:13, “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”

By the way, this is exactly what Jesus did for us. He laid down His life on Calvary’s cross for our sins. What an example He is for us! And so, the greatest evidence of the working of the Holy Spirit in a believer’s life is love.

Conclusion

In this study, we have answered three questions. First, what is “the fruit of the Spirit”? (It is the outward evidence of the working of the Holy Spirit in a believer’s life.) Secondly, to what extent will the fruit of the Spirit be evident in a believer’s life? (This depends on to what extent a believer walks “in the Spirit,” or yields his life to the Holy Spirit.) Finally, what is the greatest evidence of the working of the Holy Spirit in a believer’s life? (It is love!) Let me ask you a personal question. To what extent is the working of the Holy Spirit evident in your life? Do you love your brother? Are you quenching the Holy Spirit???

Scripture References Written Out

The following verse-specific passages cited in this chapter are supplied in full from the King James Version.

Hebrews 10:25

²⁵ Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

Galatians 5:22-23

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

²³ Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

Galatians 4:4-6

⁴ But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

⁵ To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

⁶ And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

1 Thessalonians 5:19

¹⁹ Quench not the Spirit.

1 Corinthians 13:13

¹³ And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

John 13:35

³⁵ By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

1 John 3:18

¹⁸ My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

John 15:13

¹³ Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

CHAPTER 20

The Fruit Of The Spirit Is Joy

Scripture Text: Galatians 5:22 (KJV)

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

Introduction

If you were here last Sunday morning, you remember that I began my message with a rather personal question. I asked you, “How spiritual a person are you?” In this study, I would like to follow up that question with yet another question, and that is, “Do you have the joy of the Lord in your life?” Now I didn’t ask you, “Are you happy?” And I didn’t ask you, “Are you smiling?” And I didn’t ask you, “Are you enjoying life?” But I asked you, “Do you have the joy of the Lord in your life?”

Someone asks, “Aren’t we talking about the same thing? Isn’t happiness the same thing as joy?” Not necessarily, as we are going to see later on in this message, but again, the question, “Do you have the joy of the Lord in your life?” The reason I ask this question is because the second “fruit” (evidence) of the working of the Holy Spirit in a believer’s life is “joy.” Notice again our text, Paul said, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy.” (Gal. 5:22) In this study, I want us to answer three questions. First of all....

What Is Joy?

The word translated “joy” here is from the Greek word “chara,” which literally means “a calm delight.” It can also mean “cheerfulness” or “gladness.” Now before I go any further, I want to make something very clear. The “joy” that Paul refers to here is not the same as the “happiness” that the unsaved world

experiences. (Illus.- Someone asked me once, “Can an unsaved person experience happiness?” The answer is yes, the unsaved can experience happiness of a sort, but it is clearly not the same as the joy of the Lord that believers in Christ experience.) There are at least three differences between the “world’s happiness” and the “joy of the Lord.”

First of all, the world’s happiness is very shallow. It doesn’t go very deep, but rather is all on the surface. You’ll see the unsaved smile, you’ll hear them laugh, you’ll sense that they are experiencing some sort of happiness, however, it is not the same. It is very shallow. The “joy of the Lord,” on the other hand, is very deep. It’s not confined to the surface, but rather finds its roots deep within our hearts. (Illus.- Sometimes our children will sing the song, “I have the joy, joy, joy, joy, down in my heart, [where?] down in my heart, [where?] down in my heart. I have the joy, joy, joy, joy, down in my heart, [where?] down in my heart to stay.” Where is the joy of the Lord? It is down in our hearts!)

And so, the “world’s happiness” is very shallow. Another difference between the “world’s happiness” and the “joy of the Lord” is that the “world’s happiness” is based entirely on outward circumstances. Have you ever looked up the word “happy” in the dictionary? If you have, you know that it comes from an old English word “hap,” which means “chance or fortune.” In fact, the first definition for the word “happy” in the Merriam-Webster’s 11th Collegiate Dictionary is as follows: “favored by luck or fortune : fortunate.” That pretty much describes the “world’s happiness.” It is based purely on luck or chance.

If a person is lucky enough to have... a good job; good health; good relationships; lots of money in the bank, etc; then that

person is happy. However, you let that person... lose their job; become seriously ill; have a relationship go sour; experience financial difficulty, etc; then that person's happiness sprouts wings and flies right out the window; Why? Because it is based entirely on outward circumstances. As long as a person's outward circumstances are conducive to happiness, then he will be happy, but when his outward circumstances are not conducive to happiness, then he is miserable.

The "joy of the Lord," on the other hand, is not based on outward circumstances, but rather is based on inward realities. In other words, the basis for a believer's joy is found deep within him! Do you realize what this means? It means that no matter what our outward circumstances might be, we can still have the "joy of the Lord!" This brings us to the third big difference between the "world's happiness" and the "joy of the Lord," and that is the "world's happiness" is only temporary. Because it is based on outward circumstances, it comes and it goes as one's outward circumstances change. The world is...

happy one day, and sad the next, smiling one day, and frowning the next; enjoying life one day, and hating life the next!; The "joy of the Lord," on the other hand, is eternal. Because it is based on inward realities that never change or fluctuate, it stays with us all the time (never leaves us). Now this does not mean that believers in Christ never experience sadness or sorrow. Let us not forget Solomon's words found in Ecc. 3:4, where he said that there is "A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance."

Even Christians experience sadness and sorrow. However, having said that, even in the midst of terrible sadness and sorrow, true believers possess an inward abiding joy that gives them the strength to go on. This is something that the unsaved

world knows absolutely nothing about! What is “joy”? Joy is “chara.” It is “a calm delight.” It is “a calm delight” that... finds its roots deep within our hearts; is based on inward realities, not outward circumstances; stays with us, even in the midst of sadness and sorrow;

What Is The Basis Of Joy?

I said earlier that true joy is based on constant inward realities, not on temporary outward circumstances, but what are these inward realities? First of all, there is the reality of salvation. Let me tell you something, there is joy in salvation. There is joy in knowing that... you are saved; your sins are forgiven; you possess the gift of eternal life; you have a home in heaven waiting for you!; (Illus.- Even though it was almost 38 years ago now, I still remember how happy I was right after I got saved. I still remember the joy that I felt. It was truly beyond description. It was truly “joy unspeakable and full of glory.” Of course, I’m still rejoicing in my salvation, and will continue to do for eternity!)

When you stop and think about it, true joy begins with salvation, doesn’t it? Do you remember the parables in Luke 15? There are three of them, the parable of the lost sheep, the parable of the lost coin, and the parable of the lost son. In each case, when that which was lost was found, there was great joy. The shepherd rejoiced when he found the lost sheep. The housewife rejoiced when she found the lost coin. The father rejoiced when his lost son came home.

And so, one of the inward realities upon which our joy is based is the reality of our salvation. The prophet Isaiah put it like this in Isa. 12:3, “Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.” By the way, it is possible to lose the joy of our salvation. Now I didn’t say that we can lose our salvation, but we

can lose the joy of our salvation. Do you remember what happened to King David when he sinned with Bathsheba? One of the things that happened was that he lost the joy of his salvation. How do I know that?

I know that because of the prayer that he prayed in Psa. 51:12, “Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation;” When a believer sins the way that David did, he loses the joy of his salvation, and the only way to get it back is to claim the promise of 1 John 1:9, which says, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” Another inward reality upon which our joy is based is the reality of the indwelling Holy Spirit. Turn with me to 1 Thes. 1:5-6, “For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake....And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost:”

Paul put it like this Rom. 14:17, “For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.” The fact is, the Holy Spirit is the source of our joy! By the way, this is the reason that the “joy of the Lord” is eternal, because the Holy Spirit has promised to never leave us nor forsake us!!(Heb. 13:5) And so, the second inward reality upon which our joy is based is the reality of the indwelling Holy Spirit. A third inward reality upon which our joy is based is the reality of our faith. Listen to Peter’s words recorded in 1 Pet. 1:7-8, “That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:...Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye

see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.”

Though everything in our lives goes bad, though all of our outward circumstances turn sour, though our very worst fears become a reality, our faith... in God; in God’s Word; in God’s promises, sustains us and enables us to “rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.”; And so, our joy is based on the reality of our faith. All of these things form the basis for our joy. Our salvation. The indwelling Holy Spirit. Our faith in the God who loves us and saved us!

Because of these things, we can have joy in our hearts when everyone else around us is miserable. One final question...

To What Extent Will We Experience Joy In Our Lives?

As I said last week, I’ll say it again, it all depends. “Depends on what?” someone asks. It all depends on to what extent we are able to walk “in the Spirit.” It all depends on to what extent we are able to yield our lives to the Holy Spirit Who lives within us. It all depends on to what extent we are able to... follow His guidance; submit our lives to His leading; allow ourselves to be under His influence and control; The more we are able to walk “in the Spirit,” the more fruit (evidence) there will be of the Holy Spirit’s working in our lives, and the more joy we will experience.

It’s as simple as that! Do you realize what this means? It means that you can measure your spirituality by the amount of joy that you are experiencing in your life at this moment. The sad truth is, many believers are don’t have much joy, and the reason they don’t have much joy is because rather than walking “in the Spirit,” they are fulfilling the “lust of the flesh.” Fulfilling the “lust of the flesh” may bring momentary pleasure or happiness,

remember, it's not the same thing as the "joy of the Lord." (Illus.- Last Sunday evening Bro. Cera told the story about the little girl who gave up her fake pearls, only to be rewarded with the real thing. Many believers are settling for fake (the world's) happiness, when they could have the real thing (joy of the Lord).

Conclusion

How about you, friend? Do you have the joy of the Lord in your life? If so, how much do you have? Want more joy? Then turn your life over to God, yield your life to the Holy Spirit of God, let Him control your life. You'll be amazed at the joy you will experience by doing so, not fake joy, but the real thing. Perhaps you have no real joy whatsoever. Your problem is you are not saved. You do not have the source of joy, the Holy Spirit, living within you.

You can do something about that in this study. How about it???

Scripture References Written Out

The following verse-specific passages cited in this chapter are supplied in full from the King James Version.

Isaiah 12:3

³Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.

Psalms 51:12

¹²Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me *with thy* free spirit.

1 John 1:9

⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 Thessalonians 1:5-6

⁵ For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.

⁶ And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost:

Romans 14:17

¹⁷ For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Hebrews 13:5

⁵ *Let your conversation be* without covetousness; *and be* content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

1 Peter 1:7-8

⁷ That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

⁸ Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:

CHAPTER 21

The Fruit Of The Spirit Is Peace

Scripture Text: Galatians 5:22 (KJV)

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

Introduction

(Illus.- Last week as I was browsing the Internet, I came across a web site called “United for Peace and Justice.” On their home page, there was a giant advertisement which read as follows: “March On Washington: January 27, 2007: Assemble on the National Mall between 3rd and 7th Streets: March will kick off at 1:00 pm.” I read a little bit further and among the “confirmed speakers” listed were names like “Jane Fonda, Danny Glover, Jesse Jackson, Dennis Kucinich and Maxine Waters.” As I read the complete list of featured speakers, I was a little surprised that Cindy Sheehan’s name was not on the list. Now I assume that these folks had their march in Washington yesterday, but I can’t help but wonder about something. I can’t help but wonder if any of those people have any idea what real peace is all about. They march for peace. They protest for peace. They say that they are in favor of peace. However, how many of them have any idea whatsoever what real peace is all about? I would imagine that very few of them do.)

The reason I have raised this question is because the third “fruit of the Spirit” (outward evidence of the Holy Spirit’s working in a believer’s life) that Paul mentions here is “peace.” Notice again Gal. 5:22, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace.” Now what is the meaning of the word “peace”? The word “peace” here is translated from the Greek word “eirene” (i-ray’- nay), which literally means “peace, quietness, or rest.” There are actually

three kinds of peace that are mentioned and dealt with in God's Word. In this study, I would like for us to consider all three. First of all, there is what we could call...

Peace With God

Turn with me to Rom. 5:1, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:" Notice the phrase "peace with God." By the way, this is the most important kind of peace there is! Why do I say that? I say that because unless you have made peace with God, there is no way that you can experience the other kinds of peace that I am going to talk about in this study. Making peace with God is absolutely essential! Now this raises a question.

Why does man need to make peace with God? The Bible gives us the answer to this question, and the answer is, because man, by nature, is at enmity with God. In other words, because we were born sinners, we were born at odds with God, or we could say that we were born enemies of God. It all goes back to the garden of Eden. When Adam sinned against God, Adam became an enemy of God, but it didn't stop there. Not only did Adam become an enemy of God, but every one of his descendants (which includes every one of us) is born an enemy of God as well. Listen to Rom. 5:12, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:"

To put it simply as I know how, man needs to make peace with God because man is born a sinner. Now I know that some people will argue with that statement, however, the Bible is very clear. For example, in Psa. 51:5, the psalmist David wrote, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." David put it like this in Psa. 58:3, "The wicked are estranged from

the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.” And so, contrary to what many would have us to believe, we were all born sinners, enemies of God, in need of making peace with God. Now this raises yet another question. If man is, by nature, the enemy of God, how then can he make peace with God?

Well, let’s go back to Rom. 5:1, “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:” According to this passage, there is only one way for sinners to make peace with God, and that is through faith in the shed blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. You see, when Jesus died on the cross, He died for our sins. Rom. 6:23 tells us that “...the wages of sin is death,” but Jesus died to pay those wages on our behalf, and in so doing, made a way for us to make peace with God. Rom. 5:8 tells us that “...God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” When we place our faith in the sacrifice that Jesus made on the cross for us, His precious blood is applied to our sins, and all of our sins are forgiven.

This is how we make peace with God! There is a verse in Ephesians 4 that says it so well, and that’s verses. 14, speaking of our Lord Jesus, Paul wrote, “For he (Jesus) is our peace.” Perhaps I am speaking to someone in this study, and you have no real peace in your life. You are like the people that the prophet Isaiah described in Isa. 57:20-21, “But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt....There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.” Your life is like a troubled sea. You have no peace, no quietness, no rest, only constant turbulence. If that describes your life, it is probably because you have never made peace with God.

You have never... acknowledged your sin before God; confessed your helplessness to save yourself; trusted in the sacrifice that

Jesus made on the cross for your sins; It is no wonder that you lack peace in your life. And so, the first and most important kind of peace is peace with God. But there is also what we could call the...

Peace Of God

Turn with me to Col. 3:15, “And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.” Notice the phrase “the peace of God.” What is “the peace of God”? It is simply the peace that comes from... being at peace with God; knowing Christ as our Savior; being assured that your sins have been forgiven and that you have a home in heaven; Let me point out here that, just like joy, the source of this peace is within us.

Of course, I’m talking about the indwelling Holy Spirit of God. He is our source of peace. I don’t know about you, but I’m glad that the source for our peace is within us. (Illus.- In recent years, I have had the opportunity to visit several old castles, both in Western and Eastern Europe. I’m told that in many of these old castles you will find deep water wells that were dug in order to supply water when the castle was under siege. You see, if the inhabitants of the castle were dependent upon some outside source of water, they could be in big trouble. Why? Because the enemy could dam, pollute or cut off their water supply. And so, they dug wells within the castle itself so that they would have an inside source of water.) This is very similar to the peace that we enjoy as believers.

We may have troubles without, but on the inside we have a constantly abiding source of peace in the person of the indwelling Holy Spirit. This is why our enemy, Satan, can’t rob us of our peace. There is something else that we should understand

about the peace of God. Not only does it originate within us, but it also comes in varying degrees. What do I mean by that? I simply mean that while every believer enjoys some degree of the peace of God, some have more than others. Now this raises a question.

How can we, as believers, enjoy more of the peace of God in our lives? Someone says, “By walking in the Spirit more!” That’s true, but let me give you two very practical suggestions that will help you in your spiritual walk. First of all, we can enjoy more of the peace of God in our lives if we will spend more time in God’s Word. Listen to Psa. 119:165, “Great peace have they which love thy law:” The prophet Isaiah put it like this in Isa. 26:3, “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee:” How do we keep our minds “stayed” (focused) on God?

It’s very simple. We do so by spending time in God’s Word. There is nothing that pacifies our soul more than spending time in God’s precious Word. May I say, secondly, that we can enjoy more of the peace of God in our lives if we will spend more time in prayer. Listen to what Paul wrote to the Philippian believers in Phil. 4:6-7, “Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God....And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” (Illus.- Have you ever been really worried about something that you were facing or that was going in your life, or perhaps the life of one of your loved ones, and you got on your knees and poured your heart out to God about it, and as a result of doing that, God gave you a wonderful peace? In other words, it was like God told you not to worry, that He would take care of the situation and work things out. Have you ever experienced that? If you have ever experienced that, you know how precious that peace is!) 3. The sad truth is, however, that most believers

would rather worry and fret about the situation, rather than giving it to God in prayer.

Hey, let me tell you something, worrying about something never helps, especially when we are worrying about something over which we have absolutely no control. All that worry does is make us miserable. It can also make us sick (affect us physically). Why in the world would anyone choose to be both miserable and sick, when instead they could have that “peace of God, which passeth all understanding”? And so, the second kind of peace that is mentioned and dealt with in the Bible is the peace of God. Finally, there is what we could call...

Peace With Others

Turn with me to Rom. 12:16-18. “Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits....Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men...If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.” Jesus put it like this in Mark 9:50, “...have peace one with another.” The writer of Hebrews put it like this in Heb. 12:14, “Follow peace with all men.” Now I’m going to say something that I want you to listen to very carefully. The peace of God that I have talking about in this study, this peace is more than something that we have within, it is something that affects our relationships with others. For example, it affects our relationship with our spouse.

You show me a marriage that is in trouble, a marriage where there is strife, a marriage where the husband and wife fight like cats and dogs, and I will show you a marriage where there is a significant absence of the peace of God. I’ll show you a marriage where either one or both partners are not walking in the spirit, a

marriage where the Holy Spirit is not being allowed to work, a marriage where there is little fruit (evidence) of the Holy Spirit. How can I make such a bold statement? I can do so because the Bible says that “the fruit of the Spirit is...peace.” (Gal. 5:22) If a husband and wife are walking in the Spirit, allowing the Holy Spirit to control their lives, they are going to have a peaceful marriage. Now this does not mean that there won’t be an occasional skirmish, but it does mean that their marriage won’t be like WW III!

Let me give you another example. The peace of God also affects our relationships with other believers. Show me a church that is in trouble, a church where there is strife, a church where the members fight like cats and dogs, and I will show you a church where there is a significance absence of the peace of God. I will show you a church where many, if not most, of the members are not walking in the Spirit, a church where the Holy Spirit is not being allowed to work, a church where there is little (fruit) evidence of the Holy Spirit. How can I make such a bold statement? I can because the Bible says that “the fruit of the Spirit is...peace.” (Gal. 5:22) If a church is made of members who, for the most part, are walking in the Spirit, allowing the Holy Spirit to control their lives, there is going to be good fellowship (peace) in that church.

Again, this does not mean that there will not be an occasional skirmish, but it does mean that the church services will not be like WW III. The point I am trying to make is this: Don’t tell me how spiritual you are, if you can’t get along with your spouse. Don’t tell me how spiritual you are, if you can’t get along with your brothers and sisters in Christ. Don’t tell me, because I’m not going to believe you. Why not? Because the Bible says that “the fruit of the Spirit is...peace.” (Gal. 5:22) If you are truly walking in

the Spirit, if the Holy Spirit is truly working in your life, then that will be manifested in peaceful relationships.

Conclusion

Let me ask you a personal question, one that I have asked several times during the past few weeks. Are you walking in the Spirit? Is the Holy Spirit truly working in your life? If so, then three things will be true. First of all, you will be at peace with God. Secondly, you will also have the peace of God. Finally, you will be at peace with others. Why? Because the Bible says that “the fruit of the Spirit is...peace.” (Gal. 5:22) Perhaps you are not even saved.

If so, you have no peace. You do not have peace with God. You do not have the peace of God. You do not have true peace with others. Your life in this study is anything but peaceful. You are like the folks that Isaiah the prophet described in Isa. 57:20 as being “like the troubled sea.”

Scripture References Written Out

The following verse-specific passages cited in this chapter are supplied in full from the King James Version.

Romans 5:1

¹ Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

Romans 5:12

¹² Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

Psalms 51:5

⁵ Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.

Psalms 58:3

³ The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.

Romans 6:23

²³ For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 5:8

⁸ But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Isaiah 57:20-21

²⁰ But the wicked *are* like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.

²¹ *There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.*

Colossians 3:15

¹⁵ And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

Psalms 119:165

¹⁶⁵ Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.

Isaiah 26:3

³ Thou wilt keep *him* in perfect peace, *whose mind is stayed on thee*: because he trusteth in thee.

Philippians 4:6-7

⁶ Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

⁷ And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Romans 12:16-18

¹⁶ *Be* of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.

¹⁷ Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

¹⁸ If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

Mark 9:50

⁵⁰ Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another.

Hebrews 12:14

¹⁴ Follow peace with all *men*, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

Isaiah 57:20

²⁰ But the wicked *are* like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.

CHAPTER 22**The Fruit Of The Spirit Is Longsuffering****Scripture Text: Galatians 5:22 (KJV)**

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

Introduction

Thus far in our study of “the fruit of the Spirit,” we have noticed three different outward evidences that a believer in Christ is walking “in the Spirit.” The first outward evidence is “love.” Paul said, “The fruit of the Spirit is love.” (Gal. 5:22) If a believer in Christ is truly walking “in the Spirit,” he will be a loving Christian. First of all, He will love God. Secondly, He will love the lost. Finally, He will love other believers. And so, the first outward evidence is “love.”

The second outward evidence that a believer is walking “in the Spirit” is “joy.” Paul said, “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy.” If a believer in Christ is truly walking “in the Spirit,” he will be a joyful Christian. And not just when things are going his way! He will be joyful even in the midst of terrible trials and tribulations. And so, the second outward evidence is “joy.” The third outward evidence that a believer is walking “in the Spirit” is “peace.”

Paul said, “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace.” If a believer in Christ is truly walking “in the Spirit,” he will be peaceful Christian. First of all, he will be at peace with God. Secondly, he will have the peace of God. Finally, he will be at peace with others. And so, the third outward evidence is “peace.” In this study, I want us to look at the fourth outward evidence that a believer is walking “in the Spirit,” and that is “longsuffering.”

Paul said, “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering.” (Gal. 5:22) First of all, I want us to answer the question...

What Is Longsuffering?

The Greek word from which the word “longsuffering” is translated is the word “makrothumia,” which literally means “longanimity, forbearance or fortitude.” I was curious about that word “longanimity,” so I looked it up in Webster’s Dictionary and found this definition, “a disposition to bear injuries patiently.” Actually, you get the same meaning when you break down the word “longsuffering.” The word “long” means “a long time.” The word “suffer” means “to allow, to endure or to put up with something.” When you put these two meanings together, the word “longsuffering” means “the ability to endure or to put up with something for a long time.” Someone has defined “longsuffering” as “the quality of self-restraint in the face of provocation which does not hastily retaliate or promptly punish.”

I think the key words here are the words “self-restraint.” “Longsuffering” is “the ability to restrain oneself when one feels like retaliating against someone or punishing someone.” I read yet another definition of “longsuffering” last week that I really liked. According to this definition, “longsuffering” means “long-fused.” Short-fused people are people who “blow up,” or become angry, or get upset very easily. I know people like that, don’t you? You are afraid to be around them, because the least little thing will cause them to “fly off the handle,” so to speak.

People who are “longsuffering,” on the other hand, are just the opposite. They have a long fuse. It takes an awful lot to get them “riled” or upset with you. Those are the kind of people that I like being around! “Longsuffering” is the same thing as

“forbearance.” Turn with me to Eph. 4:1-2, “I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,...With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love.” Paul said it like this in Col. 3:12-13, “Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;...Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you.”

When Paul admonished believers to forbear “one another,” he meant that we should... bear with one another; put up with one another; endure one another’s imperfections; This is what the apostle Peter had in mind when he wrote these words, “And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.” (1 Pet. 4:8) Now let me make something very clear here, before I move on to my next point. When I talk about bearing with one another, and putting up with one another, and enduring one another’s imperfections, please understand that there are some imperfections that we should NOT endure.

For example, if someone’s actions are illegal or harmful to others, it would be inexcusable to overlook them. (Illus.- Let me illustrate. There is a very large Baptist church in Memphis, TN, that is in turmoil today because a sin was “covered up” that should have been “exposed.” It seems that the senior pastor found out, in a counseling session, that another pastor on staff was a child molester, yet he covered it up for six months, allowing the child molester to continue to serve. I don’t know what excuse he gave, but there is no excuse for that kind of misconduct.) And so, there are some imperfections that, because of their serious nature, we should not endure. When Paul

admonished us to forbear “one another,” he simply meant that we should be willing to overlook, at least initially, those minor injustices that are sometimes committed against us, even by fellow believers.

The reason I use the phrase “at least initially,” is because even a long fuse has an end! And so, that’s what longsuffering means. Now...

To Whom Can We Look For An Example Of Longsuffering?

That’s easy. No one is more “longsuffering” than our God! (Amen?) Listen to Num. 14:18, “The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression. Listen also to Psa. 86:15, “But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.” Finally, listen to 2 Pet. 3:9, “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” Let me give you three examples of God’s “longsuffering.” First of all, God was “longsuffering” with mankind just before the flood.

Listen to 1 Pet. 3:20, “Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing.” Usually, when we think about the flood, we think of God’s judgment (and rightly so). However, we forget that after God decided to destroy the world with a flood, He waited 120 years. During this time Noah preached to the people, pleading with them to repent. One can only assume that had mankind responded to Noah’s preaching and repented of their evil, God would have spared the world. A second example of God’s “longsuffering” is when He was “longsuffering” with the nation of Judah before the Babylonian captivity. When we think

of the captivity, we usually think about God's judgment (and rightly so).

However, we forget that before Judah fell, God gave them countless opportunities to repent. He sent prophet after prophet to the nation to warn them of the coming judgment and to call them back to God. "Jeremiah," alone, preached for 40 years. It was only after the longsuffering of God was exhausted, that God brought the armies of Nebuchadnezzar to destroy Judah and to carry them into captivity. Listen to 2 Chron. 36:16, "But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till there was no remedy." Even God has His limit when it comes to being longsuffering. There is a third example of the "longsuffering" of God.

Not only was God "longsuffering" with mankind before the flood. Not only was God "longsuffering" with Judah before the captivity. He was also "longsuffering" with us before we came to Christ! (Amen?) In 2 Pet. 3:15, Peter wrote that "...the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation." That's so true, isn't it? If it were not for the "longsuffering" of our God, all of us would be in hell today. The apostle Paul certainly realized that he owed his salvation to the fact that God is "longsuffering."

Listen to what he wrote in 1 Tim. 1:16, "Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting." We all remember how Paul, when his name was Saul, "persecuted the church of God, and wasted it." (Gal. 1:13) Yet God was "longsuffering" toward him, and eventually saved him. And so, the best example of "longsuffering" is our God Himself. Finally, in this study,...

Why Is Longsuffering Such An Important Evidence Of The Working Of The Spirit?

It is important because it contributes to both peace and unity within the body of Christ. Turn with me to Eph. 4:1-3, “I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,...With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;...Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” Now what do these verses teach us? They teach us, among other things, that being “longsuffering” and exercising forbearance results in both “peace” and “unity” (harmony). Take the marriage relationship, for example. I’m sure that we would all agree that both “peace” and “unity” are to be desired in any marriage relationship. Well, one thing that is extremely helpful in achieving this is being “longsuffering.”

Why is this true? Remember the word “long-fused”? It is true because if both the husband and wife are “long-fused,” they are much less likely to... blow up at each other; become angry with each other; get into an argument for fight with each other; The result of this will be more “peace” and “unity” (harmony) in the marriage. Now this does not mean that couples who exhibit the quality of “longsuffering” in their marriage will never have a disagreement. What it does mean, however, is that the disagreements that are sure to come will be both fewer and less severe in nature.

The same thing is true when it comes to our relationship with our church family. The Bible tells us 1 Cor. 1:10, “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.” Now this raises a question. We know that God

desires both “peace” and “unity” within His local body, but what can we, as individual members, do to encourage this? The best thing we can do is to... be “longsuffering,”; be long-fused rather than short fused;

put up with a LOT before we reach our limit. I’m convinced that most church squabbles could be avoided altogether if we would just exhibit more “longsuffering” in our lives. Do you know what? “Longsuffering” is nothing more than “love in action.” You are familiar with 1 Cor. 13. We sometimes call it the “love chapter” of the Bible. In this chapter, Paul goes to great lengths to define the nature of love (“charity”). Do you remember the very first words he used to define the nature of love?

They are found in verses. 4, he said, “Charity (love) suffereth long.” In other words, love is “longsuffering.” If we truly love someone, we will be “longsuffering” with them. If we truly love our... spouse; children; fellow believers; we will be “longsuffering” with them. And the more we love them, the more “longsuffering” we will be. “Charity (love) suffereth long.” (1 Cor. 13:4)

Conclusion

Now, let me once again ask you a very personal question. Are you walking “in the Spirit”? If so, then your life will exhibit “longsuffering.” If you are walking “in the Spirit,” then you... will be long-fused; will be “slow to wrath,” (Jam. 1:19); will be able to exercise self-restraint in the face of provocation; Someone says, “Pastor, I’ve got to be honest with you, in this study. I have a very short fuse. It doesn’t take much at all to set me off. The least little thing will cause me to lose my temper with my spouse, my children, or my fellow believers. What’s my problem?”

One of two things is your problem. Either you are not saved, or you are not walking “in the Spirit” like you should be. Only you can decide which. (Prayer & Invitation)

Scripture References Written Out

The following verse-specific passages cited in this chapter are supplied in full from the King James Version.

Ephesians 4:1-2

¹ I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

² With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;

Colossians 3:12-13

¹² Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;

¹³ Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also *do* ye.

1 Peter 4:8

⁸ And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.

Numbers 14:18

¹⁸ The LORD *is* longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing *the guilty*, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth *generation*.

Psalms 86:15

¹⁵ But thou, O Lord, *art* a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.

2 Peter 3:9

⁹ The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

1 Peter 3:20

²⁰ Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.

2 Peter 3:15

¹⁵ And account *that* the longsuffering of our Lord *is* salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you;

1 Timothy 1:16

¹⁶ Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

Galatians 1:13

¹³ For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it:

Ephesians 4:1-3

¹ I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

² With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;

³ Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

1 Corinthians 1:10

¹⁰ Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and *that* there be no divisions among you; but *that* ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

1 Corinthians 13:4

⁴ Charity suffereth long, *and* is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

CHAPTER 23**The Fruit Of The Spirit Is Gentleness****Scripture Text: Galatians 5:22 (KJV)**

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

Introduction

It's hard to believe, but it has been five weeks now since my last sermon on the subject, "The Fruit Of The Spirit." I began this mini series with a message on "love." My second message was on "joy." My third message was on "peace." My fourth message was on "longsuffering." In this study, we come to the fifth "fruit of the Spirit," or the fifth outward evidence that the Holy Spirit is working in a believer's life, and that is "gentleness." I don't mind telling you that I have been dreading this day.

Why? Because of all the manifestations of the Spirit that Paul mentions here in Gal. 5, "gentleness" is the most difficult to describe. I know what gentleness is, at least I think I do, but it is very hard to describe it with words, it is very difficult to reduce it to mere words of the English language. Gentleness truly is something that is better seen in a believer's actions than it is described with words. But having said that, I will do my best in this study to expound upon this extremely important spiritual quality that ought to be evident in the life of every believer. And so, first of all, in this study...

Let's Try To Define Gentleness

Without considering the Greek word just yet, let's try to define the English word. I looked up the word "gentleness" in Webster's Dictionary and found the following definition, "the quality or

state of being gentle; mildness of manners or disposition.” I also looked up the word “gentle” and found this definition, “free from harshness, sternness and violence; soft or delicate.” Based on these two definitions, gentleness, then, can be defined as “the quality or state of being mild, soft, or delicate.” It is the opposite of being harsh, stern or violent. I came across another definition for gentleness that I really liked, it goes like this: Gentleness is love in action. It is consideration, it is tenderness in feeling, it is promptness of sympathy, it is love in all it’s depths and delicacy. It is everything included in that matchless grace called the gentleness of Christ.”

When you begin to study the Greek word from which the word “gentleness” is translated, you come to the conclusion that “gentleness” and “kindness” are one and the same thing. Why do I say this? Because the Greek word (chrestotes) from which the word “gentleness” is translated in Gal. 5:22, is also translated “kindness” in several other passages. For example, in Eph. 2:7, we read, “That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.” Listen also to Col. 3:12, “Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;” Finally, listen to Tit. 3:4, “But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared,” Although the word “kindness” is used rather than “gentleness,” it is the same Greek word.

And so, gentleness and kindness are the same thing. (Illus.- When I think of the quality of “gentleness,” there is a certain person who immediately comes to mind who used to attend this church many years ago. Most of you have never met her, but her name is Lillie Nunn. Those of you who have met her, you know that she was, and I’m sure still is, one of the most gentle people you will

ever meet. Everything about her was gentle. Her speech was gentle. Her demeanor was gentle. Her appearance was gentle. She had one of the sweetest and most gentle smiles of any person I have ever known. In all the years that I knew her, I never heard her raise her voice, and I never saw her display any harshness whatsoever. In my humble opinion, she was the personification of gentleness.)

There is a verse in 1 Thessalonians (1 Thes. 2:7) that will help us greatly in understanding the meaning of gentleness. Turn there with me. It says, “But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children:” The word “nurse” here does not mean the kind of nurse who works in a hospital taking care of sick folk, although gentleness is a desired quality in these nurses as well. What Paul is talking about here is a nursing mother. Imagine, if you will, a nursing mother as she gently holds or cradles her newborn child to her breast. Everything about a nursing mother is gentle. Her touch is gentle, her voice is gentle, the smile on her face is gentle.

(Illus.- Studies have shown that, as a general rule, babies who are breast fed as infants, grow up to be healthier, happier and more contented adults. This is due, in part, to the gentleness that was shown to them by their nursing mothers.) Now that we understand the meaning of this spiritual quality called “gentleness,”...

Let's Notice How This Quality Was Demonstrated In The Life And Ministry Of Our Lord Jesus Christ

Turn to 2 Cor. 10:1, “Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence am base among you, but being absent am bold toward you:” Did you notice the expression, “gentleness of Christ”? If ever a person has

exhibited the spiritual quality of gentleness in His life it was our Lord Jesus Christ. Let's consider a few examples of His gentleness. First of all, Jesus was gentle in His dealings with His disciples. If you have studied the gospels carefully, you know that even though the disciples were... oftentimes short on faith;

constantly misunderstanding His teachings, prone to arguing among themselves like children; Jesus did not take a hard line with them, but rather He dealt with them gently and tenderly. Just one example is the way that He dealt with Thomas after Thomas had told the other disciples, "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe." (John 20:25) Do you remember how Jesus dealt with him the following week? Rather than coming down on him hard because of his unbelief, Jesus simply walked up to him and very gently said, "Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing." (John 20:27) Not only was Jesus gentle with His disciples, but He was also gently with children.

On one occasion, mothers were bringing their children to Jesus so that He could touch them and bless them. You probably remember that the disciples took a very hard line and scolded these mothers for bothering Jesus. Jesus, on the other hand, was gentle with the children and with their mothers, telling His disciples, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." (Mark 10:14) Oftentimes Jesus would gently take the children up into His arms and just love them. Not only was Jesus gentle with His disciples and with children, but He was also gentle with His friends. There was one family in particular to which Jesus was very close, and that was Mary, Martha and Lazarus of Bethany. On one occasion,

Martha lost her temper and actually scolded Jesus for not telling her sister, Mary, to get in the kitchen and help her prepare the evening meal.

Rather than being harsh with Martha, which He very well could have done, He dealt with her very gently and tenderly. Do you remember what He told her? He said, “Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things:...But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.” (Luke 10:41-42) Not only was Jesus gentle with His disciples and with children and with His friends, but He was even gentle with His enemies. I’m thinking now of something that Jesus said while He was hanging on the cross. His enemies had just nailed Him to the cross when He prayed these words, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.” (Luke 23:34) Can’t you just hear the gentleness of Christ in those words? Not only did Jesus pray for forgiveness for those who crucified Him, He also forgave one of the thieves that was crucified along side of Him.

Do you remember what Jesus said to that thief just before he went out into eternity? He said, “To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.” (Luke 23:43) And so, if ever a person has exhibited the spiritual quality of gentleness in His life it was our Lord Jesus Christ. Now, before I close in this study, let me say that...

We, As Believers, Should Exhibit This Same Quality (Gentleness) In Our Lives As Well

Turn with me to 2 Tim. 2:24, “And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men.” While Paul wrote these words to the young preacher, Timothy, the same truth is applicable to us as well. If we desire to... be effective servants of the Lord; be successful in our respective ministries; have

harmony in our relationships with others; then we too must “be gentle unto all men.” For example, we must exhibit “gentleness” in our marriage. (Illus.- Most of the time when couples come to me for marriage counseling, it becomes quite evident early on that most, if not all of the gentleness has gone out of their marriage. When this happens, the marriage is in great jeopardy.)

If ever there is a place where gentleness is needed, it is in the marriage relationship. (Illus.- I’m going to tell my age here, but there is an old Glen Campbell song entitled, “Try A Little Kindness.” The chorus of this song goes like this; You got to try a little kindness, Yes show a little kindness, Just shine your light for everyone to see, And if you try a little kindness, Then you’ll overlook the blindness, Of narrow-minded people on the narrow-minded streets.) You may not be a Glen Campbell fan, but if you are having problems in your marriage, that’s exactly what my advice to you would be, just “try a little kindness.” Why? Because almost without fail, people respond in a positive manner to kindness, and they usually do so by showing a little kindness of their own (in return). (Illus.- Fellows, if you don’t believe me, why don’t you try this. When you come home from work tomorrow evening, rather than doing what many husbands normally do, yelling at their wives because supper is not on the table or the house is not clean, why don’t you try taking your wife gently into your arms, kissing her tenderly on the lips, and saying, “Honey, I really missed you today.” Why don’t you try that and see what a difference it will make in how the rest of your evening goes. I’ll guarantee that it will make a difference.)

Not only is gentleness important when it comes to getting along with our spouses, it is also important in every other human relationship. Another example is our church relationships. I don’t know about you, but I look at our church as a haven, not just a

haven, but a haven of gentleness and kindness in a world of harshness and cruelty. It is for this reason that when we come together as a church family, we should strive to be as gentle and as kind to one another as possible. (Illus- I hate to say this, but some churches are anything but havens of gentleness and kindness. Because of jealousy and strife, they have become places where fellow believers are mean and cruel to one another.) James describes this sad situation in Jam. 3:14-16, “But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth...This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish...For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.”

Let’s face it, we live in a cruel ruthless world. Our church should be a place where believers can come to find refuge from the world and enjoy the gentleness and kindness of Christ. And I will tell you something else, gentleness will also open doors and give us opportunities to share Christ with the unsaved. You see, before we can share the gospel with someone who is unsaved, we must first of all get their attention. And I don’t know of anything that will get their attention any quicker than to be shown a little love and kindness. That’s something that they are not accustomed to.

Conclusion

What have we learned in this study about this spiritual quality of gentleness? First of all, we’ve learned that gentleness can be defined as “the quality or state of being mild, soft, or delicate.” We’ve learned that gentleness is the opposite of being harsh, stern or violent. We’ve learned that gentleness and kindness are the same thing. Secondly, we’ve learned that if ever there was a person who exhibited gentleness in His life, it was our Lord Jesus Christ. We’ve learned that Jesus was gentle with His disciples, gentle with children, gentle with His friends, and even gentle

with His enemies. Finally, we learned that we, as believers, if we desire to be servants of the Lord, must exhibit gentleness in our lives as well.

Let me ask you a question, “Do you exhibit gentleness in your life?” Are you gentle with your spouse? Are you gentle with your children? Are you gentle with your fellow church members? Are you gentle with the unsaved, thereby opening doors and creating opportunities to share Christ with them? Let us not forget that “the fruit of the Spirit is gentleness.” (Gal. 5:22) If the Holy Spirit abides in your heart, and if the Holy Spirit is truly working in your life, then you will exhibit gentleness in your life.

Scripture References Written Out

The following verse-specific passages cited in this chapter are supplied in full from the King James Version.

Ephesians 2:7

⁷ That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

Colossians 3:12

¹² Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;

Titus 3:4

⁴ But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared,

1 Thessalonians 2:7

⁷ But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children:

2 Corinthians 10:1

¹ Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence *am* base among you, but being absent *am* bold toward you:

John 20:25

²⁵ The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.

John 20:27

²⁷ Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust *it* into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.

Mark 10:14

¹⁴ But when Jesus saw *it*, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.

Luke 10:41-42

⁴¹ And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things:

⁴² But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

Luke 23:34

³⁴ Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.

Luke 23:43

⁴³ And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

2 Timothy 2:24

²⁴ And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all *men*, apt to teach, patient,

CHAPTER 24**The Fruit Of The Spirit Is Goodness****Scripture Text: Galatians 5:22 (KJV)**

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

Introduction

In Mat. 19:16, we are told that a certain man came up to Jesus one day and asked Him the following question, he said, “Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?” Before Jesus answered this man’s question, He asked him a question of His own, He said, “Why callest thou me good?” and then Jesus said this, “...there is none good but one, that is, God:” (Mat. 19:17) This should remind us of something that Paul wrote in Rom. 3:12, where he said, “...there is none that doeth good, no, not one.” And also Rom. 3:10, where he said, “...There is none righteous, no, not one:” Now this raises a question, “If it is true that there is none good, but God, and if it is true that there is none that doeth good, no not one, and if it’s true that there is none righteous, no not one, then how do we reconcile this fact with our text, which says, “...the fruit of the Spirit is...goodness”? (Gal. 5:22)

In other words, if there is none good, but God, then how are we going to exhibit goodness in our lives? The answer is, “We are not going to exhibit goodness in our lives. You see, we do not have the ability in and of ourselves to manifest any goodness whatsoever.” However, the Holy Spirit does! (Amen?) Look again at our text, Gal. 5:22. Paul did not say, “...the fruit of... man is goodness; the flesh is goodness; human depravity is goodness,” but rather, “...the fruit of the Spirit is goodness.” (Gal. 5:22);

The fact is, when a believer in Christ exhibits goodness in his life, this goodness is the product of the Holy Spirit of God working in our lives. Now having said that,...

Let's Begin By Defining This Manifestation Of The Spirit That Paul Refers To Here As Goodness

What is “goodness”? The Bible actually talks about two different kinds of goodness. First of all, the Bible talks about goodness in the sense of graciousness and generosity and benevolence. For example, when we say that God has been good to us, what do we mean? We simply mean that God has been... gracious to us; generous to us; benevolent to us; This is the kind of goodness that is referred to in Rom. 2:4, which says, “Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?”

And so, first of all, the Bible talks about goodness in the sense of graciousness and generosity and benevolence, and all of these words most certainly describe our God! However, when the Bible says that “the fruit of the Spirit is...goodness,” it is talking about a different kind of goodness. What it’s talking about is the spiritual quality of virtue. It’s talking about personal holiness or righteousness. It’s talking about personal morality or uprightness. The Greek word (agathosune - ag-ath-o-soo'-nay) from which the word “goodness” is translated in Gal. 5:22, is actually found three other places in the New Testament. For example, it is found in Rom. 15:14, where Paul wrote, “And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.”

The word is also found in Eph. 5:9, which says, “(For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)”

Finally, it is found in 2 Thes. 1:11, where it is clearly referring to God's holiness. Listen to what it says, "Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power:" And so, when the Bible says that "...the fruit of the Spirit is...goodness," it is talking about the spiritual quality of virtue, or holiness, or righteousness. The second thing that I want to point out in this study is that...

We Can Only Be Good Because God Is Good

In fact, the Bible tells us in 1 Pet. 1:16, "Be ye holy; for I am holy." We can only be holy because God is holy!!! Is God holy? Let's let the psalmist answer this question. In Psa. 24:3, we read, "Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place?" In Psa. 99:5, we read, "Exalt ye the LORD our God, and worship at his footstool; for he is holy." In Psa. 99:9, we read, "Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at his holy hill; for the LORD our God is holy." Finally, in Psa. 145:7, we read, "The LORD is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works."

When I think about the holiness of God, I think about Moses standing before that burning bush. This was when God spoke to Moses and called him to go to Egypt and lead His people out of bondage. If you will remember, Moses was out tending sheep one day, when he saw a very strange sight. He saw a bush that was burning, but was not consumed. As he approached the bush to satisfy his curiosity, God spoke to him from out of the midst of the bush and said, "Moses, Moses," and Moses said, "Here am I." (Exo.3:4) God went on to say, "Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." (Exo. 3:5) When I think of the holiness of God, I think about the prophet Isaiah, as he beheld "the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up." (Isa. 6:1)

Not only did he see the Lord, but he also heard the seraphim cry out, “Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts:” (Isa. 6:3) Do you remember how Isaiah responded to this demonstration of the holiness of God? He said, “Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.” (Isa. 6:5) When I think of the holiness of God, I think about the vision that God gave to the apostle John, which he recorded for us in Rev. 4. Do you remember what John saw? First of all, he saw “a throne” that “was set in heaven,” as well as the One “who sat on the throne.” (In other words, he saw God’s throne!) (verses. 2)

And then, surrounding the throne, he saw what he described as “four beasts” (verses. 6) who continually, “day and night” were giving praise to God. (verses. 8) Do you remember the song of praise that they sang? They said, “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.” (verses. 8) And so, yes, God is holy, and it is only because God is holy that we can be holy. Don’t forget that we are talking about “the fruit of the Spirit,” Who, of course, is God. The third thing that I want to point out in this study is that...

Because God Is Good, He Expects Us To Be Good As Well

Listen again to the Word of God. The Bible says in Eph. 1:3-4, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:” The Bible also says in 1 Pet. 1:15-16, “But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.” Finally, the Bible says in Tit. 2:11-12, “For the grace of

God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;” Now there are at least three areas of our lives where the goodness (holiness) of God should be evident.

First of all, it should be evident in our actions. In other words, it should be evident in the... way we live; things that we do; works that we perform; The unsaved (those who do not know Christ) should be able to look at us, and by observing our actions, see the goodness and the holiness of God. I believe this is what the apostle Peter had in mind when he wrote in 1 Pet. 2:9, “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:”

Not only should God’s goodness be evident in our actions, it should also be evident in our speech. In other words, it should be evident in the... way we talk; words that we choose; expressions that we use to communicate with others; The unsaved (those who do not know Christ) should be able to listen to our speech, and by listening to the way that talk, detect the goodness and the holiness of God. This is the Bible admonishes us in Eph. 4:29 to “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.”

Listen also to Tit. 2:7-8, “In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.” Finally, God’s goodness should be evident in our thinking. Now I realize that the unsaved cannot tell what we are thinking (they cannot read our minds), however, our thought life

is still extremely important. Do you know why it is important? It is important because the Bible tells us in Pro. 23:7 that as a man “thinketh in his heart, so is he.” In other words, we are what we think. This is why it is so important that strive to have a pure (proper) thought life.

But someone says, “Pastor, I really struggle with this. I constantly find myself thinking about things that I shouldn’t be thinking about. How can I stop doing this?” It’s really not that difficult. The way to stop thinking bad (immoral) thoughts is to fill our minds with good (wholesome) thoughts. Listen to Phil. 4:8, “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.” Let me tell you something about the human brain, it can only entertain one thought at a time. As long as we are having good thoughts, there’s no way that immoral thoughts can invade our thinking. But someone asks, “How do we train our minds to think only good thoughts?”

That too is not difficult. We train our minds by filling them with the Word of God. This is what Paul had in mind in Rom. 12:2, “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” As we fill our minds with the Word of God, our minds are renewed, the result being that our lives are brought in line with the will of God. The key to living right is thinking right! And so, because God is good, He expects us to be good as well. This should be evident in our actions.

This should be evident in our speech. This should be evident in our thoughts. Now, before I close, let me point out something

very important. While God expects us to be good (exhibit personal holiness in our lives), we cannot be good on our own. What do I mean by this? I simply mean that we do not possess, in and of ourselves, the ability to... be holy; exhibit true righteousness; live a life that is pleasing to God; However, even though this is true, because God dwells within us in the person of His Holy Spirit, God is able to exhibit His goodness in and through us!

2 Cor. 9:8, “And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:” Notice this verse begins with the words, “...God is able.” While we are not able on our own to live a holy life, God is able live in and through us. This is why it is so important that we “walk in the Spirit” (yield our lives to the Holy Spirit Who lives within us).

Conclusion

What have we learned in this study? We’ve learned the meaning of goodness. We’ve learned that goodness is... the spiritual quality of virtue; personal holiness or righteousness; personal morality or uprightness; We’ve also learned that we can only be good because God is good. Finally, we learned that because God is good, He expects us to be good also, which means that He expects us to exhibit holiness in... our actions; our speech; our thoughts; Let me ask you a personal question. Is the spiritual quality of goodness evident in your life?

Do you exhibit holiness in... your actions; your speech; your thought life?; Remember now what our text says. It says, “The fruit of the Spirit is...goodness.” If the Holy Spirit lives in your heart, and if He is working in your life, then you will exhibit

“goodness” in your life. And if you are not, then there is a problem somewhere.

Scripture References Written Out

The following verse-specific passages cited in this chapter are supplied in full from the King James Version.

Romans 3:12

¹² They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

Romans 3:10

¹⁰ As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

Romans 2:4

⁴ Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

Romans 15:14

¹⁴ And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.

Ephesians 5:9

⁹ (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)

2 Thessalonians 1:11

¹¹ Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of *this* calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of *his* goodness, and the work of faith with power:

1 Peter 1:16

¹⁶ Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

Psalms 24:3

³ Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place?

Psalms 99:5

⁵ Exalt ye the LORD our God, and worship at his footstool; *for he is holy.*

Psalms 99:9

⁹ Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at his holy hill; for the LORD our God *is* holy.

Psalms 145:7

⁷ They shall abundantly utter the memory of thy great goodness, and shall sing of thy righteousness.

Exodus 3:5

⁵ And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.

Isaiah 6:1

¹ In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.

Isaiah 6:3

³ And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

Isaiah 6:5

⁵ Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I *am* a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.

Ephesians 1:3-4

³ Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ:

⁴ According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

1 Peter 1:15-16

¹⁵ But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;

¹⁶ Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

Titus 2:11-12

¹¹ For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,

¹² Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

1 Peter 2:9

⁹ But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

Ephesians 4:29

²⁹ Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

Titus 2:7-8

⁷ In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine *shewing* uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,

⁸ Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.

Philippians 4:8

⁸ Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things *are* honest, whatsoever things *are* just, whatsoever things *are* pure, whatsoever things *are* lovely, whatsoever things *are* of good report; if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things.

Romans 12:2

² And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

2 Corinthians 9:8

⁸ And God *is* able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all *things*, may abound to every good work:

CHAPTER 25**The Fruit Of The Spirit Is Faith****Scripture Text: Galatians 5:22 (KJV)**

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

Introduction

For several weeks now we have been focusing our attention on “the fruit of the Spirit.” In other words, we have been looking at different evidences or outward manifestations that the Holy Spirit is present and working in a person’s life. In our text, Gal. 5:22-23, Paul lists nine different manifestations of the Spirit. Thus far, we have looked at six of the nine, those six being “love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness.” In this study, we come to the seventh manifestation of the Spirit in Paul’s list, and that is “faith.” Now I must admit that when I first began to study the subject of faith, I was overwhelmed by the subject. Why? Because it is such a vast and such a broad subject.

Do you realize how much the Bible has to say about faith? In the New Testament alone, you find the word “faith” (or some other form of the word) over 500 times. That’s a lot of references. A believer could very easily devote his entire life to a study of the study of faith, alone. (Perhaps every believer should do this!) Anyway, faith is an overwhelming subject. However, even though that is true, it is also a very important subject. Why? Because without faith, you...

cannot be saved, cannot live for God; cannot please God with your life; Faith is absolutely necessary if we are to have and maintain a right relationship with God. And so, for the next few

minutes, let us consider this outward manifestation of the Spirit that the Bible calls faith. First of all, we need to...

Define Our Subject

What is faith? Here's how our English dictionary defines the word "faith," it defines it as "a firm belief in something for which there is no proof." It is also defined as "something that is believed with a strong conviction." According to both definitions, faith is believing. It is "believing something that cannot be proven by normal means, yet believing it firmly with a strong conviction." While the dictionary definition is helpful, the Bible itself gives us the best definition for the word "faith." Turn with me to Heb. 11:1, it says, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

There are two key words in this Biblical definition for "faith." The first key word is the word "substance." Now what is "substance"? Substance can be defined as matter. It is something tangible. It is something that you can... see; touch; grasp with your hands; Now with that in mind, let's look again at the Biblical definition for "faith," it says that "faith is the substance of things hoped for." In other words, "faith provides substance for something for which there is no substance." Let me illustrate.

How many of you believe in a Creator God? Okay, now how do we know that there is a Creator God? We certainly cannot see Him. We certainly cannot touch Him. We certainly cannot grasp Him with our hands. After all, God is a Spirit, and because He is a Spirit, there is no tangible (physical) proof that He exists. How do we know that there is a God in heaven Who created this universe, as well as everything that is in it? We know by faith!

In other words, our faith provides substance for which there is no substance. The other key word in this Biblical definition for

“faith” is the word “evidence.” Now what is “evidence”? Evidence can be defined as “proof.” (Illus.- Let me illustrate. Suppose you were a prosecuting attorney. You would not charge a person with a crime and put him on trial, unless you had some evidence. In other words, unless you felt like you could prove to a jury, beyond a reasonable doubt, that he had actually committed the crime. Evidence is proof.) And so, when the Bible says that “faith is...the evidence of things not seen,” it simply means that faith provides the proof for something for which there is no proof. Let me ask you another question, “How many of you believe there is a heaven?”

Okay, now how do we know that there is a heaven? Have we ever seen any tangible evidence or proof that there is a heaven? The answer, of course, is, “No.” How then do we know that there is really a heaven? I’ll tell you how we know, we know by “faith.” In other words, our faith becomes the proof for that for which there is no proof. Faith then can be defined as believing something that we cannot see, something that we cannot touch, something that we cannot grasp on to, something for which there is no tangible substance, no tangible evidence, no tangible proof.

As I said a moment ago, it is only by faith that we know there is a God in heaven. Oh, I realize that we can see God’s handiwork all around us. (Amen?) Psa. 19:1 says, “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.” Listen also to Rom. 1:20, “For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead;” I realize that anyone with eyes can see God’s handiwork in the world. (How can one not see it?) Yet, ultimately, the existence of God is something that is either accepted or rejected by faith. This is why we read in Heb. 11:6, “But without faith it is impossible to please

him: for he that cometh to God must believe (have faith) that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”

I'll tell you something else. It is only by faith that we can know that this Book (the Bible) is the Word of God. (Illus.- During the course of my ministry, I have had many people challenge me to prove to them that the Bible is, in fact, the Word of God.) Of course, I cannot do this. No one can prove (with tangible evidence) that the Bible is the Word of God. You either accept it or reject it by faith.

Now that we have defined faith, I should point out that

There Are At Least Two Kinds Of Faith

First of all, there is what I call “saving faith.” What is “saving faith”? It is the faith by which we are saved. It is the faith that we exercise when we call upon the Lord to save us, when we receive Jesus Christ as our personal Savior. John 1:12 speaks of “saving faith.” It says, “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on (have faith in) his name:” Did you realize that most people today believe, not in salvation by faith, but rather salvation by works? (Illus.- When I have the opportunity to share the gospel with someone, I usually ask them at least two questions. First of all, I ask them, “If you were to die this very moment, do you know for sure that you would go to heaven?” If they answer, “Yes,” I then ask them the following question, “How do you know that?” Do you know how almost all people answer that second question? They answer it with what I call a “good works” answer. In other words, they say, “Because I am basically a good person, I’ve never hurt anyone, etc.)

Do you know what they tells me? It tells me that the most people believe in salvation by works. In other words, they believe that whether or not they go to heaven when they die depends, at least in part, on what kind of life they live. The Bible, however, teaches us something very different. The Bible teaches us that a sinner is saved, not by works, but rather by faith in the finished work of Christ on the cross. In Rom. 4 the apostle Paul uses Abraham as an example of this, turn there with me and let's read the first five verses, "What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?...For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God....For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it (his faith) was counted unto him for righteousness....Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt....But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."

Listen also to Rom. 5:1, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:" Finally, listen to Eph. 2:8-9, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:...Not of works, lest any man should boast." And so, the Bible teaches us that one is saved, not by works, but rather by faith. This is what I call "saving faith." However, there is another kind of faith. It is what I call "living faith." What is "living faith"?

Living faith is the faith by which we live our Christian lives after we are saved. Since you are already in Romans, turn to Rom. 1:17, the Bible says, "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." Did you notice the latter part of that verse? Paul said, "The just shall live by faith." In other words, those who have already been justified before God by faith in Christ as Savior, shall live

their Christian lives by faith. I have detected a fallacy in the thinking of some believers today. Some believers look at faith merely as a means of being saved (something by which we are saved) and nothing more.

They look at faith as something that is necessary to get us to the point of salvation, but which is not necessary beyond that point. (Illus.- For example, to them faith is sort of like the rocket boosters that are attached to the space shuttle when it takes off for outer space. The purpose of those boosters is to get the shuttle to a certain point, and once it reaches that point, they are no longer necessary and are jettisoned away and fall back to earth.) Some believers look at faith in the same way. However, nothing could be further from the truth. Faith is just as important after we are saved as it was before. Trusting the Lord is just important after we are saved as it was before. Believing the promises of God is just important after we are saved as it was before.

Do you know why? Because salvation is not the end! Salvation is the beginning, the beginning of a whole new life, a life that should be lived by faith! Let me ask you a question. Is it your desire to please God with your life? I hope that every single one of us would say, "Yes!" But listen again to what God's Word tells us in the first part of Heb. 11:6, "...without faith it is impossible to please him:" Notice that the Bible does not say that "...without faith it is...

hard to please God," difficult to please God,"; a challenge to please God; but rather, "impossible to please God." And so, faith is very important when it comes to living the Christian life. Now that we have defined faith and pointed out that there are two kinds of faith, saving faith and living faith, I want us to...

Notice Three Things About Living Faith

First of all, living faith, as we see in our text, is faith that evidences (manifests) itself in the believer's life. Again, our text says, "the fruit of the Spirit is...faith." How does faith manifest itself? According to God's Word, it manifests itself in our works. In other words, if a believer is truly living by faith, he will produce good works in his life, and these works will be evident. It is as simple as that. In fact, the Bible tells us that if our faith does not produce good works in our lives, then it is not living faith at all.

Turn with me to Jam. 2:15-18, "If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,...And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?...Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone....Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works." Notice again what James said in verses. 18, "I will shew thee my faith by my works." And so, living faith is faith that evidences (manifests) itself in the believer's life (in our good works). The second thing I want us to notice about living faith is that it is faith that produces faithfulness. Think about it for a minute.

What does the word "faithful" mean? It literally means "full of faith." Living faith, therefore, is faith that produces faithfulness. First of all, it produces faithfulness to God. Secondly, it produces faithfulness to our families. Finally, it produces faithfulness to our church. Don't try to convince me that you are living by faith, if at the same time you are neglecting your responsibilities to God, to your family, and to your church. Living faith is faith that

produces faithfulness. There is one more thing that I want us to notice about living faith.

Not only is it faith that manifests itself, not only is it faith that produces faithfulness, it is also faith that is constantly growing. How do you know if something is alive? If it is growing, it is alive! (Amen?) Living faith is faith that is constantly growing. On one occasion our Lord's disciples made the following request of Him, they said, "Lord, Increase our faith." (Luke 17:5) Do you know what that tells us? It tells us that we should never be satisfied with our level of faith, that we should constantly striving to grow (increase) our faith.

How do we grow our faith? By simply exercising the faith that we already have. As we step out in faith and see God keep the promises that He has made to us, our faith will increase, and we will be able to trust God for greater things. And so, living faith is faith that is constantly growing.

Conclusion

What have we learned about faith, in this study? First of all, we learned the meaning of faith. We learned that faith is the "substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Heb. 11:1) We learned that faith is believing something for which we have no tangible proof. Secondly, we learned that there are two kinds of faith, saving faith and living faith. Finally, we learned that three things can be said about living faith, that it is faith that... evidences (manifests) itself in our good works;

produces faithfulness to God, to our families, and to our church, is constantly growing; In closing, may I ask you a personal question? Do you possess faith? First of all, do you possess saving faith (have you trusted Christ as your Savior)? Secondly, do you possess living faith (are you trusting God on a daily basis as you

claim His promises and serve Him with your life)? Thirdly, does your faith manifest itself in your works? Finally, is your faith growing (is it stronger today than it was the day that you came to Christ)?

Let us not forget that “the fruit of the Spirit...is faith.”

Scripture References Written Out

The following verse-specific passages cited in this chapter are supplied in full from the King James Version.

Galatians 5:22-23

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

²³ Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

Hebrews 11:1

¹ Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Psalms 19:1

¹ The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.

Romans 1:20

²⁰ For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

Hebrews 11:6

⁶ But without faith *it is impossible* to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

John 1:12

¹² But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name:

Romans 5:1

¹ Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

Ephesians 2:8-9

⁸ For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is the gift of God*:

⁹ Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Romans 1:17

¹⁷ For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

Luke 17:5

⁵ And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.

CHAPTER 26**The Fruit Of The Spirit Is Meekness****Scripture Text: Galatians 5:23 (KJV)**

²³ Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

Introduction

As many of you know, in my Wednesday night Bible study group, we have been studying some of the heroes and villains of the Old Testament. A few weeks ago we studied about Moses. When I think of Moses, the first thing that comes to mind is not the miraculous way in which his life was spared as an infant. Nor is it the call of God that he received while standing before the burning bush. Nor is it the way that he stood before Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and boldly demanded that he let the people go. Nor is it how he parted the waters of the Red Sea, so that the children of Israel could walk across on dry ground. While all of these things were definitely very important events in his life, the first thing that comes to my mind when I think about Moses is his meekness.

Listen to what the Bible says in Num. 12:3, “(Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.)” The reason that I’ve brought up the subject of meekness, is because meekness is the one of the nine manifestations of the Holy Spirit that Paul lists in Gal. 5:22- 23. In fact, it is the next to the last one in the list. As we consider the subject of meekness in this study, I think we should first of all...

Define Exactly What We Are Talking About

What is “meekness”? I think it would be helpful if we would begin by stating what meekness is NOT. Why? Because

“meekness” is definitely one of the most misunderstood of all the manifestations of the Spirit. May I say, first of all, meekness is NOT a natural disposition. You know, as well as I do, that some people are just naturally timid or mild mannered. (They were born that way!) They are just naturally... shy; quiet; passive; Most of the time, you hardly even know that they are around, they are just so inconspicuous.

However, this is not meekness! Meekness is not a natural quality with which we are born, but rather it is a spiritual quality that is produced in us by the presence and working of the Holy Spirit in our lives. (Illus.- I know some unsaved people who are very timid or mild mannered. They were born that way. However, because they are not indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and because meekness is a manifestation of the Holy Spirit, they are not meek.) And so, meekness is not a natural disposition. May I also say that meekness is NOT weakness. Some people equate meekness with weakness, but they are not the same thing. Some of the strongest people I have ever met are also very meek.

Moses was meek, but he certainly wasn't weak. Our Lord Jesus was meek, but He certainly wasn't weak. Stephen, the first Christian martyr was meek, but he certainly wasn't weak. And so, meekness is not weakness. Someone has defined meekness like this, “strength under control.” (I like that definition.) May I also say that meekness is NOT a spirit of compromise. Some people believe in peace “at any price.” In other words, they will make any compromise and sacrifice any principle they have to for the sake of peace.

They would never stand up and fight, no matter how right or how just the cause. And some would call this meekness. Meekness, however, is not a spirit of compromise, especially when principle is involved. Meekness does desire peace, but not

if it... calls for sacrificing of one's principles; requires compromising one's convictions; This is not meekness. And so, we see what meekness is NOT. It is not a natural disposition. It is not weakness. It is not a spirit of compromise. What then is meekness?

I think that meekness can be defined in at least three ways. First of all, meekness is humility. A meek person is a humble person. He is someone who... sees himself as he really is; does not think too highly of himself; is very much aware of his own imperfections; He is not proud or boastful. This aspect of meekness is brought out very well in Gal. 6:1, where Paul wrote, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."

What does this verse mean? It simply means that before we... look down on someone else; sit in judgement of someone else; start boasting about how we would never do such and such, we need to stop and realize that we too; are capable of sin; have our imperfections; could easily be overtaken by immorality; And so, meekness is humility. Meekness can also be defined as non-assertiveness. A meek person is a non-assertive person. He is someone who does not... assert himself; promote himself; push himself into the forefront of things;

(Illus.- You know, as well as I do, that the wisdom of the world tells us that if we are ever going to get anywhere in life, if we are ever going to be successful, if we are ever going to get ahead, we must assert ourselves. We must be aggressive. We must be pushy.) Meekness, on the other hand, is just the opposite of that. Meekness causes one to wait quietly and patiently and contently in the background while others rush forward to get to the front of the line. This aspect of meekness is brought out in 1 Pet. 3:4,

where Peter wrote, “But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.” Finally, meekness can be defined as a non-demanding spirit.

A meek person is a non-demanding person. He is someone who does not demand things for himself, whether it be position, or privileges, or possessions. He does not demand to always have his own way. He does not demand even that which is rightfully his. Instead, he takes what is given to him without whining or complaining. (Illus.- The wisdom of our day tells us that we should stand up for our ourselves, show people that we mean business, demand what is rightfully ours!) Meekness, on the other hand, is just the opposite of that.

Meekness is a non-demanding spirit. This aspect of meekness can be seen in Eph. 4:2, where Paul wrote, “With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;” Forbearing one another simply means to let others have their way, rather than demanding our own way.

Let me point out something here that I think is very important

There is a difference between standing up for yourself and standing up for others. (Illus.- Let me illustrate. I will take a lot of abuse from someone if I am the one being abused. However, if some member of my family is being abused, or some member of my church is being abused, that is different! I absolutely won't stand for that, and neither should you. While we should feel very uncomfortable demanding our own rights, we should not feel uncomfortable speaking up for the rights of others. And so, what is meekness? Meekness is NOT a natural disposition. Meekness is

NOT weakness. Meekness is NOT a spirit of compromise. Meekness IS humility.

Meekness IS non-assertiveness. Meekness IS a non-demanding spirit. Now let's look at some...

Bible Examples Of Meekness

First of all, let's look at Moses. As we saw earlier, the Bible says that "Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth." (Num. 12:3) A good example of the meekness of Moses can be seen in an incident recorded in Num. 12. If you will remember, Miriam and Aaron, Moses sister and brother, were speaking against him, challenging the authority that God had given to him as leader of the children of Israel. What did Moses do about this? The answer is, "Moses did nothing!" He did not speak up for himself.

He did not assert his God given authority. He did not pull rank on Miriam and Aaron, putting them in their proper places. Instead, he did nothing. Actually, he did do something, he referred the matter to the Lord. Did God do something Miriam and Aaron's sin? He most certainly did, and when God got through with them, never again did they challenge Moses's authority. There is a valuable lesson to be learned here. (Illus.- I've heard some say, "I can't afford to be meek. If I don't stand up for myself, no one will.")

Well, that's not true. Just like the Lord stood up for Moses, as long as we are in His will for our lives, He will stand up for us and plead our case before our enemies. While Moses was certainly the meekest man of his day, the meekest man of all time was our Lord Jesus Christ. Do you remember what Jesus said in Mat. 11:28-29? He said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest....Take my yoke upon you,

and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart.” Paul wrote these words in 2 Cor. 10:1, “Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ,” The very best example that we have of meekness is none other than our Lord Jesus Himself.

The meekness of Christ, I think, can best be seen in the final days of His life before He was crucified. Remember when He stood before Pontus Pilate? Pilate was angry with Jesus, or perhaps we should say frustrated. Do you remember why Pilate was frustrated? He was frustrated because Jesus would not stand up for Himself, nor would He say anything in His own defense. This is what Isaiah the prophet was referred to in when he wrote, “...as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.” (Isa. 53:7) That is meekness.

Even when they nailed our Lord Jesus to the cross, He did not protest. He did not ask for an appeal. He did not demand a new trial. But rather, He willingly submitted Himself to the very ones who drove the nails through His hands and His feet. This is what Peter was referring to in 1 Pet. 2:23, listen to what he wrote concerning our Lord Jesus, “Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:” That’s meekness. Now this raises a question,...

Why Is Meekness Something To Be Desired?

In Zeph. 2:3, we read, “Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness:” Here we are actually commanded to “seek meekness.” But why? There are several reasons why we should seek meekness. First of all, we should seek meekness because the more meek we are, the more teachable we are. Listen to Psa. 25:9, “The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach

his way.” (Illus. As a pastor, I have discovered this to be true as I have tried to teach people the ways of the Lord. I’ve discovered that people who are...

proud, assertive; very demanding, are also very difficult to teach. On the other hand, I have found people who are meek to be much more teachable and willing to learn.); And the Lord knows that we all need to be more teachable! Secondly, we should seek meekness because the more meek we are, the happier we are. Listen to Isa. 29:19, “The meek also shall increase their joy in the LORD, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.” (Illus.- As a pastor, I have also found that people who are proud, and assertive, and very demanding are not very happy people)

Do you know why this is true? It’s true, I believe, because these people are never satisfied. They are never satisfied with their possessions or with their position (station) in life, they always want more or something else. Those who are meek, on the other hand, are usually very content, and the reason that is true is because meekness and contentment go hand in hand. A content person is a happy person. A third reason we should seek meekness is because the more meek we are, the more we will be a peace with others. Listen to Psa. 37:11, “But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.”

(Illus.- Let me tell you something else about people who are proud and assertive and demanding. Not only are they hard to teach, not only are they basically unhappy, but they are also usually involved in some sort of squabble or conflict with another person.) Do you know why this is true? It’s true because they are always making demands. They are always demanding this or demanding that, and eventually they are going to come

across someone who won't give them what they demand. (Illus.- It's kind of like children. What happens when you put two assertive children together? There's going to be a conflict because each one will demand their own way. Adults are really no different.) There is one more reason why we should seek meekness, and that is because the more meek we are, the more God will exalt us one day.

Listen to what Jesus said in Mat. 5:5, "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." This is a blessed promise indeed. What Jesus is promising here is that those who... humble themselves now; do not assert themselves now; do not demand their rights now, will be rewarded one day for their meekness; How will they be rewarded? According to this verse, they will inherit the earth. In other words, one day they will be... exalted by the Lord; promoted by the Lord;

given what is rightfully theirs by the Lord. This promise is stated like this in Luke 14:11, "For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

Conclusion

Let me ask you a personal question. Do you exhibit the spiritual quality of meekness in your life? Remember what meekness is. Meekness is... humility; non-assertiveness; a non-demanding spirit; Are you a meek person? Remember that those who exhibit meekness in their life will be... more teachable; happier and more content; more at peace with others; rewarded by the Lord one day!; If you are not a meek person, one of two things is wrong. Either you do not have the Holy Spirit within you, or you are not allowing the Holy Spirit to work in your life?

Which is it???

Scripture References Written Out

The following verse-specific passages cited in this chapter are supplied in full from the King James Version.

Numbers 12:3

³ (Now the man Moses *was* very meek, above all the men which *were* upon the face of the earth.)

Galatians 5:22-23

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

²³ Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

Galatians 6:1

¹ Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

1 Peter 3:4

⁴ But *let it be* the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, *even the ornament* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

Ephesians 4:2

² With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;

2 Corinthians 10:1

¹ Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence *am* base among you, but being absent *am* bold toward you:

Isaiah 53:7

⁷ He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

1 Peter 2:23

²³ Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed *himself* to him that judgeth righteously:

Psalms 25:9

⁹ The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way.

Isaiah 29:19

¹⁹ The meek also shall increase *their* joy in the LORD, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.

Psalms 37:11

¹¹ But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

Luke 14:11

¹¹ For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

CHAPTER 27**The Fruit Of The Spirit Is Temperance****Scripture Text: Galatians 5:23 (KJV)**

²³ Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

Introduction

We now come to the final “fruit” (manifestation) “of the Spirit” in Paul’s list here in Gal. 5:22-23, but before we look at this final manifestation, I want to give you a pop-quiz to see how much you have learned up to this point. What’s I’m going to do is this: I’m going to define one of the manifestations of the Spirit, and I want you to tell me which one it is. Are you ready? Okay, first definition, “the ability to endure or to put up with someone for a long period of time.” (longsuffering) Second definition, “an unselfish concern that freely accepts another and diligently seeks his good.” (love) Third definition, “the quality or state of being soft, delicate, kind, considerate, sensitive and tender.” (gentleness) Fourth definition, “humility, non-assertiveness, a non-demanding spirit.” (meekness)

Fifth definition, “a state of tranquility or harmony between two parties.” (peace) Sixth definition, “the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” (faith) Seventh definition, “cheerfulness or calm delight.” (joy) Eighth definition, “the quality of virtue.” (goodness) How did you do? Did you get all eight? In this study, we come to the ninth and final “fruit” (manifestation) “of the Spirit” listed here in Gal. 5:22-23, which is “temperance.” As we have with just about every one of these manifestations, I want us to begin by...

Defining Temperance

What is temperance? Here's how the dictionary defines temperance, "moderation in action, thought or feeling; restraint; habitual moderation in the indulgence of the appetites or passions." The key word here is clearly the word "moderation." Temperance is "moderation." It is the ability to avoid excesses. It is the ability to stay within acceptable limits. I think one of the best definitions for temperance is "self-control." (Illus.- Have you ever felt like your life was out of control? By out of control, I mean out of "your" control. Have you ever felt like you were on a run-away freight train, that your life was headed down a path of destruction, and that it was only a matter of time before a major collision [catastrophe] would take place?")

I don't know about you, but that pretty well describes the lives of many people today. Well, temperance is just the opposite of that. A person who is temperate has his life in control. Rather than his life controlling him, with the help of the Holy Spirit, he is controlling his life. He is... in charge; at the controls; calling the shots; Now that we understand the meaning of temperance, notice that there are at least...

Three Areas Of Our Lives Where Temperance Is Needed

First of all, temperance is needed when it comes to our physical bodies. You see, our physical bodies have many different appetites (urges). For example, there are sexual appetites. As far as our physical bodies are concerned, our sexual appetites are probably the strongest appetites that we have. Now let me stop here and make something very clear. There is absolutely nothing wrong with having strong sexual appetites. Why not? Because God created us with these appetites. However, having said that, it

is very important that we keep our sexual appetites under control.

In other words, it is very important that when we are gratifying these appetites, that we avoid accesses and keep them within acceptable limits. “What are acceptable limits?” someone asks. That’s an easy question to answer, because God’s Word defines the acceptable limits in Heb. 13:4, which says, “Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.” And so, as long as we satisfy our sexual appetites within the boundaries of the marriage relationship, that is acceptable. (God said, “Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed [marriage] undefiled.”) However, when we get outside of these boundaries, that is totally unacceptable to God. (God also said, “...but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.”) In our society today, it is quite evident that lots of people do not exercise self control when it comes to their sexual appetites. (Illus.- I get calls on a regular basis from couples who are looking for a preacher to marry them. I usually begin the telephone interview with two questions. The first question that I ask is, “Have either of you been married before?” The second question that I ask is, “Are you currently living together?” I would say that at least half of the couples who call are living together.)

Not only do our physical bodies have sexual appetites, they also have what I will call nutritional appetites. What are nutritional appetites? I’m talking about an appetite for food! We all have nutritional appetites. (Amen?) Now, again, let me say that there is nothing wrong or sinful about having an appetite for food, the reason being God created us with these appetites. However, just like our sexual appetites, it is very important that we keep our appetites for food under control. In other words, it is very

important that when we are satisfying these appetites, that we avoid excesses and keep them within acceptable limits.

What are acceptable limits, when it comes to eating? Well, some would say that we should eat only enough to sustain us physically (keep us alive and healthy). As someone who enjoys good food, I wouldn't go quite that far. However, I would go this far, I would say that when we eat so much that it literally becomes harmful to our health, then we have definitely exceeded acceptable limits. This is what the Bible refers to as gluttony. For example, the Bible says in Prov. 23:21, "For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty." And so, temperance is needed when it comes to our physical bodies.

Temperance is also needed when it comes to our minds. Not only do we need to exercise self-control over our bodies, but we should also exercise self-control over our minds and our thoughts. This is actually more difficult than controlling our bodies, however, with God's help, we must do it. Someone asks, "Does the Bible actually admonish us to control our thoughts?" It most certainly does. Listen as I read Phil. 4:8, "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." Now some would have us to believe that it really doesn't matter what we think, as long as we keep our actions in check.

(Illus.- I don't know how many times I have heard people say, "There's no harm in thinking something bad, as long as you don't actually do what you are thinking.") The problem with that logic is that our thoughts, if we dwell on them long enough, will eventually become actions. This is what Solomon was talking

about in Prov. 23:7, which says that as a man “thinketh in his heart, so is he.” We are, or at least we will become, what we think! This is why we should exercise temperance (self-control) when it comes to our minds. There is at least one more area of our lives where temperance is vitally important, and that is our emotions. Not only must we control what we do, and not only must we control what we think, we must also control what we feel (our emotions).

Take anger, for example. Anger is an emotion that we all feel from time to time. However, if we do not control our anger, it will not only destroy us, but it can also do serious harm to others. This is why the Bible says in Jam. 1:19, “Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:” Now, again, don’t misunderstand what I am saying. Emotions are not necessarily a bad thing. God created us as emotional beings, with the ability to feel and experience all kinds of emotions.

At times, emotions can even be very beneficial to us. However, having said that, we must not let our emotions run wild. With God’s help, we must control them and keep them within acceptable limits. Turn with me, for just a moment, to Prov. 16:32, “He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.” Notice the expression, “...he that ruleth his spirit.” What that means is, “...he who controls his emotions.” Solomon tells us here that he who controls his emotions is more to be admired than a military general who conquers a city.

And so, there are at least three areas of our lives where temperance is needed, our bodies, our minds, and our emotions. Finally, in this study, I want us to answer the question,...

Why Is Temperance So Important?

Why is it so important that we exhibit this manifestation of the Holy Spirit in our lives? Why is it so important that we exercise self-control over our bodies, our minds, and our emotions? There are at least three reasons. First of all, it is important because, if we don't, God is not going to be able to use us in His service. (Illus.- Suppose you owned a company or a business and needed to hire an employee to work for you. Would you hire someone, if when you checked his references you found out that he had a work history of being both lazy and undisciplined? I know your answer. You wouldn't hire him, and you shouldn't. An employee like that would not help your company, but rather hurt your company.) Well, did you ever stop to think that perhaps God is at least as smart as you are?

If you couldn't use a lazy and undisciplined employee in your company, God cannot use a lazy and undisciplined believer in His service! Turn with me to 1 Cor. 9:25-27, "And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate (disciplined, exercises self-control) in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible....I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:...But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." Did you notice that word "castaway"? The literal meaning of the Greek here is "worthless, rejected." In other words, Paul is saying here, "I strive to be temperate in all things, to exercise self-control, to bring my body into subjection to my will, lest I become worthless and rejected from God's service."

A second reason that we should exercise self-control is because, if we don't, our lives will end in ruin. A life out of control is a life headed for disaster. (Illus.- Suppose you are on an airline flying

at an altitude of 30,000 feet and a speed of 550 mph, and all of the sudden your pilot comes across the intercom and says, “Ladies and gentlemen, this is your captain speaking, I am sorry to have to tell you this, but due to a malfunction in our hydraulic system, we have totally lost control of the plane!” Now that would not be good news, would it? Tell me what’s going to happen? I’ll tell you what’s going to happen. There is going to be a disaster, and you are going to be part of it.) The same thing is true of our lives. When we lose control of our lives, disaster is sure to result.

It may not come today, or tomorrow, or even the next day, but it will come! Solomon wrote in Prov. 25:28, “He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls (a city in ruins).” And so, temperance is important because if we don’t exercise self-control, our lives will end in ruin. A third reason why temperance is important is because if we fail to exercise self-control, we will miss out on a reward. If you are still in 1 Cor. 9, look again at verses. 25, “And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible (crown).” When Paul talks about crowns here, he is talking about rewards, and what he is saying is that those who live disciplined lives will be rewarded one day.

Now this is not talking about rewards in this life, even though practicing temperance does yield rewards in this life, but rather it is talking about heavenly rewards (rewards in the life to come). I love Rev. 22:12, where Jesus said, “And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.” While this is a precious promise, indeed, if we do not exhibit the spiritual quality of temperance (self-control) in our lives, there will likely be few, if any, rewards for us!

Conclusion

What have we learned about “temperance,” in this study? First of all, we learned the meaning of temperance (self-control, the ability to keep our lives within acceptable limits). Secondly, we learned that temperance is needed in at least three areas of our lives (our bodies, our minds, and our emotions). Finally, we learned that temperance is important for at least three reasons (so that God can use us, so that our lives will not end in ruin, so that we will be rewarded in heaven, one day). Now, the important question, “Do you exhibit temperance in your life?” “With the help of the Holy Spirit, do you keep your body, your mind, and your emotions under control and within acceptable limits?” If not, I can make three predictions concerning your life,...

you will be rejected from serving God, your life will surely be unprofitable, and will likely end in ruin; you will receive few, if any, heavenly rewards when you stand before Christ’s judgment seat;

Scripture References Written Out

The following verse-specific passages cited in this chapter are supplied in full from the King James Version.

Galatians 5:22-23

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

²³ Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

Hebrews 13:4

⁴ Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

Proverbs 23:21

²¹ For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags.

Philippians 4:8

⁸ Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things *are* honest, whatsoever things *are* just, whatsoever things *are* pure, whatsoever things *are* lovely, whatsoever things *are* of good report; if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things.

Proverbs 23:7

⁷ For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee.

Proverbs 16:32

³² *He that* is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.

1 Corinthians 9:25-27

²⁵ And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they *do it* to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.

²⁶ I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:

²⁷ But I keep under my body, and bring *it* into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

Proverbs 25:28

²⁸ He that *hath* no rule over his own spirit is *like* a city that is broken down, and without walls.

Revelation 22:12

¹² And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

CHAPTER 28**Let Us Walk In The Spirit****Scripture Text: Galatians 5:24-26 (KJV)**

²⁴ And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

²⁵ If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

²⁶ Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

Introduction

About a month ago I began a new Sunday night teaching series entitled, “Rightly Dividing The Word.” During the course of this study, we are going to look at a number of very important principles (laws) of Biblical interpretation. One of the laws that we will look at is what I call the “law of repetition.” What is the “law of repetition”? It is the law that states whenever God repeats Himself in His Word, He is emphasizing the importance of some spiritual truth, and we should pay special attention. There are a lot of examples of this in God’s Word. For example, in John 3:3-5, Jesus told Nichodemus, not once, but twice, that he needed to be born again.

In verses. 3, Jesus said, “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” And then again in verses. 5, He said, “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” Why did Jesus repeat Himself? He did so because of the importance of what He was saying. (He was saying that there is absolutely no way for a person to go to heaven without being born again!) And so, the law of repetition states that whenever God repeats Himself in His Word, He is emphasizing the importance of some spiritual truth or principle, and we should pay special attention. Another example of the law

of repetition is found right here in the latter part of Gal. 5. Notice that we are admonished, not once, but twice, to walk “in the Spirit.”

In verses. 16, Paul said, “This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.” And then again in verses. 25, He said, “If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.” Why did Paul repeat himself here? He did so because of the importance of what he was saying. (He was saying that every believer should “walk in the Spirit.”) Now during the past few weeks we have talked a lot about walking “in the Spirit,” but we really haven’t answered the question, “How do we do that? How do we walk in the Spirit?” That’s what I want us to do in this study. As we answer this question, there are five words that I want to share with you, in this study.

The first word is the word...

Acknowledge

If we are going to “walk in the Spirit,” we must first of all acknowledge the fact that we can’t do it on our own. In other words, we do not possess the ability, in and of ourselves, to walk in the Spirit. Turn to John 15 for just a moment. In this chapter, Jesus taught us the importance of bearing fruit for Him. For example, in verses. 2, He said, “Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.” He also said in verses. 8, “Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit;” And so, Jesus taught us the importance of bearing fruit.

But not only did He teach us the importance of bearing fruit here, He also taught us the secret to doing so. Look at what He said in verses. 4, “Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except

ye abide in me.” Did you notice the words “the branch cannot bear fruit of itself”? In other words, if you cut a branch off of an apple tree and set it apart completely on its own, it cannot bear fruit, it cannot produce any apples. Jesus used even plainer words in the latter part of the very next verse, verses. 5, notice what He said, “I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.”

Notice that He did not say, “...without me ye can do little,” but rather, “...without me ye can do nothing.” And so, if we are going to “walk in the Spirit,” we must begin by acknowledging the fact that we can’t do it on our own, that we do not possess the ability, in and of ourselves. Paul said it like this in Rom. 7:18, “For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.” In other words, Paul said, “I have the desire to do good, but apart from God, I lack the ability.” This is why it is impossible for someone who is not saved to live a Christian life. (Illus.- Every now and then, I will come across someone who will say something similar to this, “I tried living the Christian life, but it just didn’t work out for me.” Most people to tell that have never been saved. In other words, they skipped being saved and went directly to trying to live a Christian life. That doesn’t work!)

And so, if we are going to “walk in the Spirit,” we must begin by acknowledging the fact that we can’t do it on our own. The second word that I want to share with you in this study is the word...

Appeal

If we are going to “walk in the Spirit,” not only must we acknowledge the fact that we can’t do it on our own, we must

also appeal to God for His strength. B I quoted to you a moment ago Rom. 7:18, where Paul said, “For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.” However, there is another side to this coin. Listen to what Paul wrote in Phil. 4:13, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” The key words here are the words “...through Christ which strengtheneth me.” While Paul readily acknowledged his inability to do anything good on his own, he also realized that by appealing to God for His strength, he could do all things. (In other words, he could do anything that God wanted Him to do.)

One of the keys to successfully living the Christian life and walking “in the Spirit” is realizing that the power to do so comes from God, and not from ourselves. Turn with me to Phil. 2:12-13, “Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling....For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” This is why Paul admonished us in Eph. 6:10 to “be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.” This is why Paul reminds us in Col. 1:10-11 that if we are going to “walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing,” we are going to have to be “strengthened with all might, according to his (God’s) glorious power.”

And so, if we are going to “walk in the Spirit,” we are going to have to appeal to God for His strength. The third word that I want to share with you in this study is the word...

Abstain

If we are going to “walk in the Spirit,” not only must we acknowledge the fact that we can’t do it on our own, not only must we appeal to God for His strength, but we must also abstain

from feeding our flesh. Turn with me to Rom. 13:14, Paul wrote, “But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.” Notice the words “make not provision for the flesh.” What does that mean? It simply means, “Do not feed your fleshly nature.” You know, as well as I do, that in our society today we are surrounded by stuff that does nothing but feed our sinful flesh. Most of what airs on television falls into this category.

Much of what you can view on the Internet falls into this category. Most of the music that is popular today falls into this category. Most of the magazines on a typical magazine rack fall into this category. Everywhere we turn, we are confronted with stuff that does nothing but feed our sinful flesh. However, if we are going to “walk in the Spirit,” we must avoid, as much as is humanly possible, this kind of stuff. One of the keys to living a successful Christian life and walking “in the Spirit” is realizing that the more we feed our flesh, the stronger it becomes, and the more difficult it is to “walk in the Spirit.” (Illus.- It is said that an old Indian Chief once described the struggle between his flesh and his Spirit like this: He said that he had two dogs living within him. One dog was an obedient dog, the other was disobedient. He went on to say that these dogs were constantly fighting with one another. Someone asked him, “Chief, which dog usually wins the fight?” to which he replied, “The one that I feed the most.”)

We chuckle when we hear this story, but the fact is, the chief was correct. When it comes to the struggle between our fleshly nature and our spiritual nature, the one who usually wins is the one we feed the most. If you look again at verses. 24 of our text (Gal. 5), you will notice that Paul said, “And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.” While this is speaking of something that has already taken place positionally,

there is a practical sense in which we should “crucify our flesh” on a daily basis. How do we crucify (kill) the flesh, along with the affections and desires of the flesh? There is only one way that I know, and that is by starving it to death. Of course, the flesh will never completely die, not as long as we are in this body, however, with God’s help, we can keep our flesh subdued to the extent that it no longer dominates our lives.

And so, if we are going to “walk in the Spirit,” we are going to have to abstain from feeding our flesh. The fourth word that I want to share with you in this study is the word...

Absorb

If we are going to “walk in the Spirit,” not only must we acknowledge the fact that we can’t do it on our own, not only must we appeal to God for His strength, not only must we abstain from feeding our flesh, but we must also absorb as much of the Word of God as we can. What we must realize is that walking “in the Spirit” not only requires that we starve the flesh (our fleshly nature), but is also requires that we feed or spiritual nature. How do we do that? We do that by feeding upon the Word of God. Jesus said in Mat. 4:4, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” The Bible also says in 1 Pet. 2:2, “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:”

Now there is a reason that I chose the word “absorb.” Someone says, “Because it begins with the letter A.” That’s true, but that’s only part of the reason. I chose the word “absorb” because when you “absorb” something, it becomes a part of you. Turn with me to Jam. 1:21, “Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness (in other words, starve the flesh), and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.”

Notice the word “engrafted” here. It is translated from a Greek word that literally means “implanted.”

There are at least two ways of reading the Bible. One way is to read it, then totally forget about what you have read. (Illus.- Have you ever heard the expression, “In one ear and then out the other”?) This is how many believers read the Bible. They read it, but not seriously. They read it, but then forget what they’ve read. They read it, but it goes in one ear and out the other. The other way of reading the Bible is to read it in such a way that we absorb what we have read, that the truths of God’s Word become implanted within our minds and hearts.

If we are going to walk in the Spirit, this is how we must read the Bible. And so, if we are going to “walk in the Spirit,” we must absorb as much of the Word of God as we can. The final word that I want to share with you in this study is the word...

Apply

If we are going to “walk in the Spirit,” not only must we acknowledge the fact that we can’t do it on our own, not only must we appeal to God for His strength, not only must we abstain from feeding our flesh, not only must we absorb as much of the Word of God as we can, but we must also apply the principles of God’s Word in our daily walk. Look with me, if you will, at Jam. 1:22 (we just looked at Jam. 1:21, so you should still be there), the Bible says, “But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.” Now let me point out something here that is very important. You can do all of the other things that we have talked about in this study, you can... acknowledge the fact that you can’t do it on your own;

appeal to God for His strength, abstain from feeding your flesh; absorb as much of the Word of God as you can; you can do all of

these things, however, until you actually begin to apply the principles of God's Word in your daily walk, until you actually begin to be a "doers of the word," then you are not walking "in the Spirit." This is the final step, when it comes to walking "in the Spirit." Jesus put it like this in Luke 11:28, "...blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it."

Conclusion

How can a believer "walk in the Spirit"? It's really a five step process. First of all, we must acknowledge the fact that we can't do it on our own. Secondly, we must appeal to God for His strength. Thirdly, we must abstain from feeding our flesh. Fourthly, we must absorb as much of the Word of God as we can. Finally, we must begin to apply the principles of God's Word in our daily walk. Perhaps I'm speaking to someone in this study who is frustrated from years of trying to "walk in the Spirit," yet not being able to do so. (I can understand your frustration!)

One of two things is true. Either you are not saved, or you have not yet followed this five step process. Which is it???

Scripture References Written Out

The following verse-specific passages cited in this chapter are supplied in full from the King James Version.

John 3:3-5

³ Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

⁴ Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

⁵ Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

Romans 7:18

¹⁸ For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not.

Philippians 4:13

¹³ I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

Philippians 2:12-13

¹² Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

¹³ For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure.

Ephesians 6:10

¹⁰ Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

Colossians 1:10-11

¹⁰ That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;

¹¹ Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;

Romans 13:14

¹⁴ But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to *fulfil* the lusts *thereof*.

1 Peter 2:2

² As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:

Luke 11:28

²⁸ But he said, Yea rather, blessed *are* they that hear the word of God, and keep it.

CHAPTER 29

If A Man Be Overtaken In A Fault

Scripture Text: Galatians 6:1-5 (KJV)

¹ Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

² Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

³ For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

⁴ But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.

⁵ For every man shall bear his own burden.

Introduction

I want to begin in this study by describing to you a hypothetical situation and then asking you how you would respond to it. Suppose that it were to become common knowledge that a certain brother or sister in our church family gotten caught up in some serious sin, let's say, adultery. Now I don't mean a member who hasn't been to church in months or years, but rather a member, perhaps a prominent member, who has been very involved in the church. Suppose it were to become common knowledge that said member had committed the sin of adultery, how would you, as a fellow member of this church, and as a fellow believer, how would you respond to that situation? Now don't worry yourself too much, in this study, because to the best of my knowledge, such a situation does not exist in our church.

But suppose it did, how would you respond? How would you respond to that situation? How would you respond to that brother or sister? But someone says, "Pastor, that could never happen in our church?" Really? What makes you think that it could never happen? It's happened in other churches. It's

happened to pastors. It's happened to deacons. It's happened to Sunday school teachers. It's happened in other fundamental Baptist churches. What makes you think that it could never happen here? Now don't misunderstand me, I pray that it never does, but the truth is, it could happen here!

The question is, if it does, how should we respond? Our text, in this study, answers that question. According to the verses that Bro. Earl read a moment ago, at least three things are important when responding to this kind of a situation. First of all,...

Attitude

Our attitude is important. There are at least three attitudes that we want to avoid. First of all, we should avoid a critical attitude. If we are not careful, the first thing we will be inclined to do, when we hear about a brother or sister who has fallen into sin, is to become critical of them and begin speaking evil of them. Listen to Jam. 4:11, "Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge." And so, the first attitude that we should avoid is a critical attitude. We also should avoid a judgmental attitude.

Our Lord's disciples displayed this kind of an attitude one day when they entered a Samaritan village and received a less than enthusiastic welcome. The disciples were angered and said, "Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them?" (Luke 9:54) In other words, 'Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven and burn them up?' Do you remember how Jesus responded to them? Luke 9:55 says, "But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not

what manner of spirit ye are of.” Why did Jesus rebuke them? He rebuked them because they had a judgmental spirit.

And so, we should avoid a judgmental attitude. Finally, we should avoid a self-righteous attitude. Jesus told a parable about a Pharisee who had this kind of an attitude. (Luke 18:10-14) The parable begins like this, “Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.” (verses. 10) Do you remember the Pharisee’s prayer? It went like this, he said, “God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.” (verses. 11) I would say that this Pharisee had a pretty high opinion of himself, wouldn’t you?

And so, we should avoid a self-righteous attitude. Not only are there some attitudes that we want to avoid, but there is also an attitude that we should cultivate, and that is an attitude of humility. Notice again verses. 1 of our text, “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness;” What is “the spirit of meekness”? It is a spirit or an attitude of humility. It is an attitude that says, “Yes, my brother has sinned, however, I myself am not above sin, and what happened to my brother could very easily happen to me if I am not careful!” Look again at verses. 1 of our text, “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.”

Notice the words “considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.” In other words, “watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.” (Illus.- I’ve heard Christians say, upon hearing that a brother had gotten caught up in some sin, “I would never do that!” While I know that in most cases they sincerely meant what they said, we should very careful about making such bold statements.) Do you

remember what Peter told the Lord on one occasion? Jesus had just predicted that Peter would deny Him. Peter said, “Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee.” (Mat. 26:35) I’m sure that Peter sincerely meant what he said, however, when put under pressure, he did deny the Lord, not once, not twice, but three times! And so, when it comes to responding to a brother or sister who has gotten caught up in some sin, attitude is important.

There’s something else that is important,...

Actions

Our actions are important. Look again at verses. 1 of our text, “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one.” What action should we take when our brother sins? Some would say that we should ignore him. Others would say that we should abhor him. God’s Word, however, says that we should restore him. What does it mean to “restore” a fallen brother? The Greek word that is translated “restore” here, literally means to “to set or to adjust or to join together.”

It refers to what a doctor does with a broken bone, he sets the bone or he realigns it, so that it can heal properly. Do you realize what this means? It means that a brother or sister who’s gotten caught up in some serious sin is in need of spiritual healing, and that we who are “spiritual” (walking in the Spirit) are to act as their spiritual physicians. Now this raises another question. How do we go about restoring a fallen brother? First and foremost, we do this by praying for him. I am reminded of what James wrote in Jam. 5:14-15, “Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:...And the prayer of faith shall save the

sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.”

Now I realize that this passage begins with the focus on physical healing. James asks the question, “Is any sick among you?” But even though the passage begins with the focus on physical healing, it ends with the focus clearly on spiritual healing. James said, “...and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.” And so, the very first thing we should do when trying to restore a fallen brother is to pray for him. The second thing we should do is to go to our brother and verbally express our love and concern for him. Now don’t misunderstand what I am saying, here.

This does not mean that we are to condone his sin. We should never condone sin, no matter who is involved or what the circumstances might be. However, we should let our brother know that while we do not condone his sin, we still love him none the less. In other words, we need to be like Jesus. (Amen?) While Jesus hated sin, He loved the sinner. We too need to hate sin, yet love the sinner. This is why we should reassure our brother that even though he has sinned, we still love him and want to help him in any way that can to be spiritually healed.

The third thing that we should do is to admonish and encourage our brother with the Word of God. Turn with me to Psa. 107:17-20, “Fools because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted....Their soul abhorreth all manner of meat; and they draw near unto the gates of death....Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and he saveth them out of their distresses....He sent his word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions.” (Illus.- When we are physically sick, we go to our doctor and he prescribes some medicine that will hopefully encourage the healing process.) Well, those who

are spiritually sick also need some medicine, but the medicine that they need doesn't come out of a pill bottle. What they need is the Word of God! If they are still unrepentant, they need to be admonished with the Word of God, but if they are contrite, they need to be encouraged with the Word of God.

And so, when it comes to responding to a brother or sister who has gotten caught up in some sin, actions are important. Do you remember the good Samaritan? What did he do when he saw the poor fellow who had been robbed and beaten lying helpless on the side of the road? The Bible says that he “went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.” In other words, he “doctored him,” and then saw to it that someone would nurse him back to health. That's exactly what we are to do for our fallen brother, only in a spiritual sense. There's at least one more thing that is important when it comes to responding to a brother or sister who has gotten caught up in some sin, in addition to our attitude and actions, and that is our...

Accountability

Our accountability is important. Look again at verses. 4-5 of our text, “But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another....For every man shall bear his own burden.” Paul said, “For every man shall bear his own burden.” Now, on the surface, there appears to be a contradiction here. Why? Because in verses. 2 Paul said, “Bear ye one another's burdens,” and then in verses. 5, he said, “...every man shall bear his own burden.” The problem here, or the reason that some people see this as a contradiction, is that they don't understand that Paul is talking about two very different things. When Paul said, “Bear ye one another's burdens,” he was talking

about our responsibility as believers to help a brother in need, whether it be physical, material, or spiritual.

However, when Paul said, “...every man shall bear his own burden,” he was talking about the fact that every believer will one day before the judgment seat of Christ and give account of himself to God. In other words, accountability. Now this raises a question. We know that we are all accountable to God, but why would Paul bring this up here in his discussion of restoring a fallen brother? I’ll tell you why! Because of our tendency to want to sit in judgment of our brother. What Paul is saying here is this, “Don’t sit in judgment of your brother when he sins, because one day God is going to judge you!”

Jesus said basically the same thing in Mat. 7:1-2, “Judge not, that ye be not judged....For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.” The point is this, when our brother sins, it is not our responsibility to don ourselves in a black judges robe and pass judgment on him, but rather it is our responsibility to put on our white doctors’s coat and do everything that we can to restore him (nurse him back to health) spiritually. And so, when it comes to responding to a brother or sister who has gotten caught up in sin, accountability is important.

Conclusion

Actually, three things are important. First of all, attitude is important (rather than a critical or judgmental or self-righteous attitude, we should demonstrate an attitude of humility). Secondly, actions are important (if we have the right attitude, then right actions will follow, and we will restore our fallen brother). Finally, accountability is important (we are not qualified to be our brother’s judge, because one day we too will

be judged). Do you know of a fellow believer who has gotten caught up in some serious sin? If so, do you have the right attitude? If so, are you performing the right actions?

If so, are you aware of your own accountability? What happens far too often is that when our brother falls, we want to kick him while he is down, rather than try to lift him back up. (Prayer & Invitation)

Scripture References Written Out

The following verse-specific passages cited in this chapter are supplied in full from the King James Version.

Luke 9:54

⁵⁴ And when his disciples James and John saw *this*, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?

Luke 9:55

⁵⁵ But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.

Luke 18:10-14

¹⁰ Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

¹¹ The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men *are*, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

¹² I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

¹³ And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as *his* eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

¹⁴ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified *rather* than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

Psalms 107:17-20

¹⁷ Fools because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted.

¹⁸ Their soul abhorreth all manner of meat; and they draw near unto the gates of death.

¹⁹ Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, *and* he saveth them out of their distresses.

²⁰ He sent his word, and healed them, and delivered *them* from their destructions.

CHAPTER 30

Let Us Do Good

Scripture Text: Galatians 6:6-10 (KJV)

⁶ Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

⁷ Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

⁸ For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

⁹ And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

¹⁰ As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all *men*, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

Introduction

As we begin to examine our Scripture text in this study, the first thing that sort of “jumps out” at us is what has come to be called “the law of the harvest.” What is “the law of the harvest”? It is the law that says “we reap what we sow.” Notice again verses. 7, Paul said, “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” (Illus.- If you have ever planted a garden, you know that if you want to reap potatoes, you have to sow potatoes. If you want to reap green beans, you have to sow green beans. If you want to reap corn, you have to sow corn. Why is this true? It’s true because of “the law of the harvest.” It’s true because you reap what you sow.) The same thing is true in a spiritual sense.

If we sow to the flesh, because the flesh is corrupt, we will reap corruption in our lives. However, if we sow to the Spirit, because the Spirit is good, we will reap good things in our lives. This is the “spiritual law of the harvest,” which says that we reap what we sow in a spiritual sense. Actually, “the law of the harvest” says far

more than “we reap what we sow.” Not only does it say that “we reap what we sow,” but it also says that “we reap later than we sow.” (Illus.- Some of you have already begun planting your gardens. Well, you know, as well as I do, that you can’t plant your potatoes in this study and expect to harvest them this afternoon. Seedtime and harvest don’t take place at the same time. The harvest comes long after the seeds are sown.)

The same thing is true in a spiritual sense. The spiritual seed that we sow today, whether good or bad, may not bear fruit until many years later. This is why young people, especially, need to be careful about what kind of seed they are sowing in their lives. (Illus.- I’ve actually heard people justify the sinful acts of young people by saying, “They’re young. Let them sow their wild oats while they are young. They will grow up one day.”) The problem with that is that even if they straighten up as adults, the wild oats they sow as young people will sprout and bear fruit later in their lives. That’s “the law of the harvest.” Not only does “the law of the harvest” say that “we reap what we sow and later than we sow,” but it also says that “we reap more than we sow.”

(Illus.- For example, one little seed kernel of corn will produce a stalk that will bear at least two full juicy ears of corn.) The same thing is true spiritually. Do you remember what Jesus said in Luke 8:38, “Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over.” And so, as we begin to examine our Scripture text, in this study, the first thing that “jumps out” at us is “the law of the harvest.” However, that’s not all that we see in this passage. In addition to “the law of the harvest,” we also see at least three more important truths. For example, we see...

A Purpose To Fulfill

Notice again verses. 10 of our text, “As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.” What is this purpose to fulfill? First of all, we are “do good.” Paul said, “As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good.” The psalmist wrote in Psa. 37:3, “Trust in the LORD, and do good;” The writer of Hebrews put it like this, “By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name....But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.” (Heb. 13:15-16) And then the apostle John put it like this in 3 John 11, “Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God:”

And so, our purpose to fulfill is to “do good.” But that’s not all that Paul said. Not only did he say “...let us do good,” but he went on to say, “...unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.” In other words, Paul said, “Be good to everyone, especially your brothers and sisters in Christ.” Paul put it like this in Gal. 5:13, “For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.” And then, as we saw last week, Paul said in Gal. 6:2, “Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.” And so, not only are we to “do good,” but we are to “do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.”

But someone says, “Wait a minute, pastor. I thought our primary purpose as believers was to serve the Lord, and now you are telling us that we should “do good unto all men!” Let me ask you a question. How do we serve the Lord? You’re absolutely right when you say that our primary purpose as believers is to serve

the Lord, but how do we do that? I'll tell you how! We serve the Lord by serving our fellow man! Do you remember what Jesus told His disciples in Mat. 25?

He said that one day "...the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory." (verses. 31) He went on to say when that when that day comes, He would reward them for... feeding him when he was hungry, and; giving him water to drink when he was thirsty, and; taking him in when he was a stranger, and; clothing him when he was naked, and; visiting him when he was sick;

coming to him when he was in prison. (verses. 35-36) He went on to say, "Then you will ask me, Lord, when did we do these things for you? When did we feed you, and give you water to drink, and take you in, and clothe you, and visit you, and come to you? When did we do these things for you?" (verses. 37-39) Do you remember the answer that Jesus said He would give them when that day comes? Mat. 25:40 says, "And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." What is Jesus teaching us here? He's simply teaching us that the way we serve Him is by serving one another. And so, in this passage, we see a purpose to fulfill.

We also see...

A Peril To Avoid

Notice again the first part of verses. 9 of our text, Paul said, "And let us not be weary in well doing:" What is this peril to avoid? It is the peril of growing so weary (tired) in our Christian service that we actually call it quits. I've seen this happen many times. I've seen it happen to pastors. I've seen it happen to missionaries. I've

seen it happen to Sunday school teachers. I've seen it happen to youth and AWANA leaders. I've seen it happen to choir members and nursery workers.

They just become so weary in their particular ministry that they say, "I've had enough," and that's it! Now this raises a question. What causes a believer to become so weary in their Christian service that they would actually consider quitting? Several things can lead to this. For example, some become weary because of a lack of time (time constraints). Let's face it, some ministries are very demanding on our time, and in our busy society today, time is an extremely precious commodity. Others become weary because of a lack of appreciation. While it shouldn't be this way, it is easy to become discouraged in a ministry if no one seems to appreciate what you are doing.

Still others become weary because of a lack of cooperation. Again, it shouldn't be this way, but it is easy to become discouraged in a ministry if we are carrying the full load all by ourselves, and others are not willing to help. And so, there are several things that can cause a believer to become so weary in their Christian service that they would actually consider quitting. However, we must not quit! (Amen?) We should take to heart the admonition that Paul gave to the Corinthian believers in 1 Cor. 15:58, where he said, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." Let me share a little secret with you that has helped me time and time again. The next time you get so weary in your Christian service that you are thinking about quitting, just remind yourself of the fact that Jesus didn't quit.

Turn with me to Heb. 12:1-3, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and

let us run with patience the race that is set before us,...Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God....For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.” In other words, the next time you are tempted to quit on the Lord, just remind yourself of the fact that Jesus didn’t quit on you. He endured the cross. He endured the shame. He endured the humiliation. He endured the pain and agony.

He endured it all for you, shouldn’t we do the same for Him? And so, in the passage we see a peril to avoid. We see a purpose to fulfill. We see a peril to avoid. Finally, we see...

A Prize To Win

Notice again the latter part of verses. 9 of our text, “And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.” What is this prize to win? It is the reward that comes as a result of not quitting. Some of these rewards come in this life. (Amen?) (Illus.- The story is told of a man who took on the ministry of distributing gospel tracts on a street corner. For years he faithfully carried out this ministry. However, because he saw no one come to Christ as a result of this ministry, the time came when he quit [gave up]. Two years later this man happened by this same street corner and saw another person handing out tracts. He walked over to the stranger and struck up a conversation. What he found out was this. The stranger had been saved two years earlier after reading one of his tracts. The stranger said, “Many a time I’ve come back here to find the man who gave me that tract and to thank him, but he never came back. So I decided he must have died and gone to heaven. That’s why I have taken his place!”)

And so, some rewards come in this life. Most rewards, however, will come when we stand at the judgment seat of Christ. I'm reminded of something that Paul said as he neared the end of his life. It's recorded in 2 Tim. 4:7-8. Turn there with me, please. Notice what he said in verses. 6-7, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand....I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:" When Paul said, "...I have finished my course," what he meant was, "I didn't quit. I didn't faint. I stayed in the race until the race was over."

And because he didn't quit, notice what he was able to say in verses. 8, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." There is a prize to win, however, if we are going to win that prize, we must avoid the peril of quitting (we must not quit).

Conclusion

What have we seen in this passage? First of all, we saw a purpose to fulfill. (Paul said, "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.") Secondly, we saw a peril to avoid. (Paul said, "And let us not be weary in well doing.") Finally, we saw a prize to win. (Paul said, "for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.") Are you fulfilling your purpose as a believer, or have you given in to the peril of quitting? If you have given in to the peril of quitting, how do you expect to ever win the prize? (Prayer & Invitation)

Scripture References Written Out

The following verse-specific passages cited in this chapter are supplied in full from the King James Version.

Luke 8:38

³⁸ Now the man out of whom the devils were departed besought him that he might be with him: but Jesus sent him away, saying,

Psalms 37:3

³ Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.

Hebrews 13:15-16

¹⁵ By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of *our* lips giving thanks to his name.

¹⁶ But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

Galatians 5:13

¹³ For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only *use* not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.

Galatians 6:2

² Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:58

⁵⁸ Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

Hebrews 12:1-3

¹ Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

² Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

³ For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

2 Timothy 4:7-8

⁷ I have fought a good fight, I have finished *my* course, I have kept the faith:

⁸ Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

CHAPTER 31

The Israel Of God

Scripture Text: Galatians 6:11-18 (KJV)

¹¹ Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand.

¹² As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.

¹³ For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.

¹⁴ But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

¹⁵ For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

¹⁶ And as many as walk according to this rule, peace *be* on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

¹⁷ From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.

¹⁸ Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with your spirit. Amen.

Introduction

As we begin to examine the closing verses of Paul's letter to the Galatian believers, we notice that he ends his letter the same way that he began it, and that is with a warning against the false teachers (Judaizers) who had infiltrated these Gentile churches. Look again at verses. 11-13, Paul said, "Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand....As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ....For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh." I'm sure that you remember that these Judaizers were Jewish converts to Christ, at least they professed to be, who were telling these Gentile believers that if they really wanted to

be saved, not only did they need to trust in Christ, but they also needed to be circumcised.

In other words, they (Gentile believers) needed to become Jews by conforming to all the rites and ceremonies of the law of Moses. This, of course, was not true! And so, Paul ends his letter with yet another warning against these false teachers. But that's not all. Notice again verses. 11, Paul said, "Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand." There are two things we can learn from this verse. First of all, we can learn that while it was Paul's custom to dictate his letters to someone else, he went to the trouble of writing this letter with his own hand.

Secondly, we can learn that Paul used larger than normal letters when he wrote this letter. Now this raises a question. Why did Paul pen this letter himself, and why did he use larger than normal letters? While there has been much debate about this question, I think we can safely assume that the primary reason was because Paul wanted to emphasize the importance of what he was saying. Why was it so important that the false teachers be rejected? It was important because they were preaching a false gospel, and those who place their faith in a false gospel will be doomed to an eternity in hell. Now, in this study, I want us to focus our attention on a phrase that Paul used in verses. 16 of our text, "And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God."

Notice the phrase at the end of the verse, "the Israel of God." Now this raises a question. To whom was Paul referring here? He was asking God to bestow both His "peace" and His "mercy...upon the Israel of God," but to whom was he referring. Well, it's clear that he was not referring to unbelieving Israel, or the nation of Israel as a whole. By this time unbelieving Israel, or the nation of Israel

as a whole, because of their unbelief, had been “cut off” (“broken off”) from God. (Rom. 11:20) To whom, then, was Paul referring?

Our text answers that question. Notice, first of all, that Paul was referring to those who have been...

Saved By Faith In Christ Alone

As we have already seen, these false teachers (Judaizers) had tried to persuade the Galatian believers, who were Gentiles, for the most part, that while faith in Christ was necessary, it was not sufficient by itself to guarantee a sinner entrance into heaven. Now let me ask a question. Is faith in Christ alone sufficient by itself to guarantee a sinner entrance into heaven? Apparently it is, because Paul said in verses. 14 of our text, “...God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.” In other words, “God forbid, that I would put my trust in anyone or anything, except in the cross of Christ, as well as the blood that was shed there on my behalf.” There’s no doubt that Paul believed in salvation by faith in Christ alone. Let’s look at some other statements that Paul made on this subject.

Turn with me to Rom. 4:1-5, “What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?...For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God....For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness....Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt....But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” Sounds to me like salvation is by faith in Christ alone! Now turn to Rom. 5:1-2, “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:...By whom also we have access by faith into this grace

wherein we stand.” Again, sounds to me like salvation is by faith in Christ alone! Now turn to Eph. 2:8-9, “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:...Not of works, lest any man should boast.”

Finally, turn to Phil. 3:4-9, “Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more:...Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee;...Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless....But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ....Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,...And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:”

How anyone can read this, and then say that faith in Christ alone is not sufficient by itself to guarantee a sinner entrance into heaven, I will never understand. And so, salvation is by faith in Christ alone. But that’s not all, those who have been saved by faith alone are “the Israel of God.” How can I be so sure? Look back at Gal. 3:6-7, “Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteous-ness....Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.” And so, when Paul made reference to “the Israel of God,” he was talking about those who have been saved by faith alone. He was also talking about those who have been...

Shaped Into A New Creation

I don't know whether you know this or not, but when you placed your faith in Christ as Savior, not only did God save you, but He also created a new person inside of you. Notice again what Paul said in verses. 15 of our text, "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." Paul said it like this in 2 Cor. 5:17, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." The word "creature" here means "creation." And so, what Paul is telling us here is that when God saved us, He created a new person inside of us. Now there's something that we must understand here. When God created a "new man" within us, He did not take the "old man" away.

This is why the Bible talks about the "old man," as well as the "new man." Turn with me to Eph. 4:22-24, "That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;...And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;...And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Notice the difference between the "old man" and the "new man." The "old man," Paul tells us, is "corrupt according to the deceitful lusts," while the "new man" is "created in righteousness and true holiness." Not only does Paul point out here the difference between the "old man" and the "new man," but he also tells us that the key to living the Christian life is putting off the old man while at the same time putting on the new man.

You probably remember that Paul put it like this in Gal. 5:16, "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh." It all boils down to this. If we are truly saved, we have a choice to make. We have to choose whether to "walk in the Spirit" or to

continue fulfilling “the lust of the flesh.” We have to choose whether to “put on the new man” or to continue letting the “old man” call the shots in our life. The choice we make will determine what kind of Christian we will be (either spiritual or carnal). It will also determine, as we learned last week, what we will reap in life, as well as when we stand at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

And so, when Paul referred to “the Israel of God,” he was talking about those who have been shaped into a new creation. Notice, finally, that Paul was also talking about those who have been...

Summoned To Suffer For Christ

Here’s something that you may not want to hear. When God saved us, He not only shaped us into a new creation, but He also summoned us to suffer for Him. Listen to what Paul wrote in Phil. 1:29, “For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;” How did Paul know that living the Christian life included being summoned to suffer for Christ? He knew because of his own personal experience. Look again at verses. 17 of our text, “From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.” Now what did Paul mean by that?

Well, the word “marks” in our KJV is translated from the Greek word, “stigma,” which literally means “scars of service.” What Paul was saying was, “I bear in my body the scars of serving Christ.” In other words, “Look at my body, and you will see the physical scars that have resulted from all of the persecution that I have endured.” Did Paul know anything about persecution? Let’s let him answer that question. Turn with me to 2 Cor. 11:22-25, “Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I...Are they ministers of Christ? (I

speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft....Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one....Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned.”

You often hear people talk about how Paul was the greatest missionary of all time, other than Christ, of course. That may very well be true, but it is also true that few, if any, have suffered the way that Paul suffered. There’s a lesson to be learned here. Those who desire to be great in God’s kingdom must be willing to suffer for Christ. While we probably won’t be called upon to suffer to the extent that Paul suffered, we can be absolutely sure that we will be called upon to suffer. 8. Paul said it like this in 2 Tim. 3:12, “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.” We should note that Paul didn’t say that we “might suffer persecution,” but rather we “shall suffer persecution.” But someone says, “Hey, wait a minute. I didn’t know when I received Christ as my Savior, that this was a part of the deal!”

Well, it is a part of the deal, that is if you want to know Christ intimately. Listen to what Paul wrote in Phil. 3:9-10, “And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:...That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings.” Do you want to know Christ intimately? Do you want to achieve greatness in Christ’s kingdom? If so, you must be willing to suffer for Him! I’m convinced that one of the reasons many believers are so shallow, spiritually, is because they are not willing to suffer for Christ (not willing to pay the price). And so, when Paul referred to “the Israel of God,” he was talking about those who have been summoned to suffer for Christ.

Conclusion

Let me ask you a personal question. Are you among (a part of) “the Israel of God”? If so, then you have been saved by faith in Christ alone. If so, then you have been shaped into a new creation. If so, then you have been summoned to suffer for Christ. Perhaps you are not among “the Israel of God.” If that is the case, don’t despair, because you can be. You see, God has made provision for this through Christ, His Son!

Scripture References Written Out

The following verse-specific passages cited in this chapter are supplied in full from the King James Version.

Romans 11:20

²⁰ Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear:

Romans 4:1-5

¹ What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?

² For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath *whereof* to glory; but not before God.

³ For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

⁴ Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

⁵ But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

Romans 5:1-2

¹ Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

² By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Ephesians 2:8-9

⁸ For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is the gift of God:*

⁹ Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Philippians 3:4-9

⁴ Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more:

⁵ Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, *of* the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee;

⁶ Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

⁷ But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

⁸ Yea doubtless, and I count all things *but* loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them *but* dung, that I may win Christ,

⁹ And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

Galatians 3:6-7

⁶ Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

⁷ Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.

2 Corinthians 5:17

¹⁷ Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Ephesians 4:22-24

²² That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

²³ And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

²⁴ And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

Galatians 5:16

¹⁶ *This* I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

Philippians 1:29

²⁹ For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;

2 Corinthians 11:22-25

²² Are they Hebrews? so *am* I. Are they Israelites? so *am* I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so *am* I.

²³ Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I *am* more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft.

²⁴ Of the Jews five times received I forty *stripes* save one.

²⁵ Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep;

2 Timothy 3:12

¹² Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

Philippians 3:9-10

⁹ And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

¹⁰ That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

Conclusion: Grace That Bears Fruit

The argument of Galatians begins and ends with the sufficiency of Christ. He gave Himself for our sins, and therefore no human work can be added to His finished work as a condition of salvation. Paul defended that gospel against distortion, explained the place of faith and promise, and warned believers not to exchange spiritual liberty for religious bondage.

Yet liberty is not permission to indulge the flesh. Those who have been made free are called to serve one another, to love their neighbors, and to walk in the Spirit. The works of the flesh reveal the old nature, while the fruit of the Spirit reveals the Spirit's gracious work within the believer. Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance are not ornaments of the Christian life but evidence of a life yielded to God.

Paul brings the letter to its practical close by calling spiritual believers to restore the fallen in meekness, to bear one another's burdens, to sow to the Spirit, and not to become weary in well doing. His final boast is not in the flesh or in religious distinction, but in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the new creature produced by grace.

The message of the whole epistle is therefore plain: stand fast in grace, reject every false gospel, trust wholly in Christ, walk in the Spirit, do good to all, and let the freedom Christ gives become visible in a life marked by His fruit. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

Scripture Index

Verse-specific references are indexed below. Each listed passage is written out in full within the chapter or chapters shown.

Genesis

2:16-17 — chapter 8
3:4-5 — chapter 13
12:1-2 — chapter 7
12:1-3 — chapters 7, 9
12:2 — chapter 14
12:3 — chapter 9
12:6-7 — chapter 9
12:7 — chapter 9
15:5 — chapter 14
16:2 — chapter 14
17:1 — chapter 14
17:7 — chapter 9
21:1 — chapter 14
21:9 — chapter 14
21:10 — chapter 14
21:10-12 — chapter 14
22:7 — chapter 7
22:8 — chapter 7
39:8-9 — chapter 16

Exodus

3:5 — chapter 24
12:1-13 — chapter 14
12:5 — chapter 8
13:21-22 — chapter 17
19:5 — chapter 1
20:4 — chapter 10

Numbers

12:3 — chapter 26

14:18 — chapter 22

23:19 — chapter 9

Deuteronomy

21:23 — chapter 8

22:5 — chapter 12

22:11 — chapter 12

22:12 — chapter 12

2 Samuel

12:7 — chapter 11

Psalms

19:1 — chapter 25

24:3 — chapter 24

25:9 — chapter 26

37:3 — chapter 30

37:11 — chapter 26

51:5 — chapter 21

51:12 — chapter 20

58:3 — chapter 21

86:15 — chapter 22

99:5 — chapter 24

99:9 — chapter 24

107:17-20 — chapter 29

115:5-8 — chapter 12

119:165 — chapter 21

135:4 — chapter 1

145:7 — chapter 24

Proverbs

16:32 — chapter 27

23:7 — chapter 27

23:21 — chapter 27

25:28 — chapter 27

Isaiah

6:1 — chapter 24

6:3 — chapter 24

6:5 — chapter 24

11:1-2 — chapter 11

12:3 — chapter 20

26:3 — chapter 21

29:19 — chapter 26

53:4-6 — chapter 8

53:5 — chapter 15

53:7 — chapter 26

57:20 — chapter 21

57:20-21 — chapter 21

Jeremiah

2:13 — chapter 2

10:5 — chapter 12

Micah

3:8 — chapter 11

Mark

9:18 — chapter 6

9:22 — chapter 6

9:23 — chapter 6

9:50 — chapter 21

10:14 — chapter 23

16:15 — chapter 3

Luke

8:38 — chapter 30

9:54 — chapter 29

9:55 — chapter 29

10:29 — chapter 16

10:30-37 — chapter 16

10:41-42 — chapter 23

11:28 — chapter 28

14:11 — chapter 26

17:5 — chapter 25

18:10-14 — chapter 29

23:34 — chapter 23

23:43 — chapter 23

John

1:12 — chapter 25

3:3-5 — chapter 28

3:16 — chapter 6

6:70 — chapter 5

8:36 — chapter 12

8:39 — chapter 7

8:40 — chapter 7

8:44 — chapter 13

8:56 — chapter 7

10:17-18 — chapter 1

10:27-28 — chapter 12

10:27-29 — chapter 6

13:1-12 — chapter 16

13:15 — chapter 16

13:35 — chapter 19

14:2 — chapter 9
 14:5 — chapter 10
 14:6 — chapter 10
 15:8 — chapter 1
 15:13 — chapters 1, 19
 15:16 — chapter 3
 16:8 — chapter 11
 16:13 — chapters 11, 17
 20:25 — chapter 23
 20:27 — chapter 23

Acts

5:28 — chapter 3
 5:29 — chapter 3
 15:1 — chapter 4
 15:1-4 — chapter 4
 15:4 — chapter 4
 15:7-11 — chapter 4
 15:12 — chapter 4
 15:23-29 — chapter 4
 20:7 — chapter 6
 20:10 — chapter 6
 20:29-30 — chapter 2
 20:35 — chapters 13, 16

Romans

1:16 — chapter 3
 1:17 — chapter 25
 1:20 — chapter 25
 2:4 — chapter 24
 3:10 — chapters 10, 24
 3:12 — chapter 24
 3:19 — chapter 10

3:20 — chapter 10
 3:23 — chapters 1, 2, 10
 3:24-28 — chapter 8
 3:28 — chapter 10
 4:1-5 — chapters 7, 31
 4:3 — chapter 7
 4:16 — chapter 9
 4:16-21 — chapter 7
 4:21 — chapter 7
 5:1 — chapters 21, 25
 5:1-2 — chapter 31
 5:5 — chapter 17
 5:8 — chapters 1, 2, 11, 16, 21
 5:8-10 — chapter 6
 5:12 — chapters 2, 8, 11, 21
 6:23 — chapters 1, 2, 8, 11, 21
 7:7 — chapters 8, 10
 7:14-25 — chapter 17
 7:15 — chapter 17
 7:18 — chapter 28
 8:14-16 — chapter 17
 8:16 — chapter 11
 8:16-17 — chapter 11
 10:13 — chapter 8
 11:5-6 — chapter 15
 11:20 — chapter 31
 12:1 — chapter 16
 12:2 — chapter 24
 12:8 — chapter 13
 12:16-18 — chapter 21
 13:14 — chapters 17, 18, 28
 14:7 — chapter 5
 14:17 — chapter 20

14:19 — chapter 16

15:2 — chapter 16

15:14 — chapter 24

16:17 — chapter 13

1 Corinthians

1:1-2 — chapter 18

1:10 — chapter 22

1:18 — chapter 3

3:1 — chapter 18

5:6-7 — chapter 14

9:1-14 — chapter 13

9:25-27 — chapter 27

13:4 — chapter 22

13:13 — chapter 19

15:58 — chapter 30

16:13 — chapter 15

2 Corinthians

5:9-10 — chapter 3

5:17 — chapter 31

5:18-20 — chapter 3

5:21 — chapter 8

9:8 — chapter 24

10:1 — chapters 23, 26

11:13-15 — chapter 13

11:22-25 — chapter 31

11:24-25 — chapter 3

12:7 — chapter 13

Galatians

1:1-5 — chapter 1

1:3-4 — chapter 2

1:6 — chapters 9, 14
 1:6-7 — chapter 3
 1:6-9 — chapter 2
 1:9 — chapter 4
 1:10 — chapter 4
 1:10-24 — chapter 3
 1:11-12 — chapter 4
 1:13 — chapter 22
 1:13-24 — chapter 4
 1:15-16 — chapter 4
 2:1-10 — chapter 4
 2:11-21 — chapter 5
 2:16 — chapter 10
 2:20 — chapter 1
 3:1 — chapters 2, 9
 3:1-5 — chapter 6
 3:2 — chapter 6
 3:6 — chapter 8
 3:6-7 — chapters 9, 11, 31
 3:6-9 — chapter 7
 3:10 — chapter 11
 3:10-14 — chapter 8
 3:13 — chapter 11
 3:15-18 — chapter 9
 3:19-29 — chapter 10
 3:24 — chapter 8
 3:28 — chapter 5
 3:29 — chapter 11
 4:1-7 — chapter 11
 4:4-6 — chapters 8, 19
 4:6 — chapter 17
 4:8-11 — chapter 12
 4:9-10 — chapter 15

4:12-20 — chapter 13
4:21-31 — chapter 14
5:1 — chapters 15, 16
5:1-12 — chapter 15
5:13 — chapter 30
5:13-15 — chapter 16
5:16 — chapters 18, 31
5:16-17 — chapter 18
5:16-18 — chapter 17
5:19-21 — chapter 18
5:21 — chapter 18
5:22 — chapters 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25
5:22-23 — chapters 11, 19, 25, 26, 27
5:23 — chapters 26, 27
5:24-26 — chapter 28
6:1 — chapter 26
6:1-5 — chapter 29
6:2 — chapter 30
6:6-10 — chapter 30
6:11-18 — chapter 31

Ephesians

1:3-4 — chapter 24
1:3-5 — chapter 11
1:7 — chapter 6
1:13 — chapters 8, 11
2:7 — chapter 23
2:8-9 — chapters 2, 5, 6, 8, 25, 31
4:1-2 — chapter 22
4:1-3 — chapter 22
4:2 — chapter 26
4:22-24 — chapter 31
4:29 — chapter 24

4:31 — chapter 14
4:32 — chapter 11
5:9 — chapter 24
5:18 — chapters 17, 18
5:25 — chapter 1
6:5-6 — chapter 3
6:10 — chapter 28

Philippians

1:27 — chapter 15
1:29 — chapter 31
2:12-13 — chapter 28
3:4-9 — chapter 31
3:9-10 — chapter 31
3:10 — chapter 12
3:18-19 — chapter 13
4:1 — chapter 15
4:6-7 — chapter 21
4:8 — chapters 24, 27
4:13 — chapter 28

Colossians

1:10-11 — chapter 28
1:14 — chapter 11
2:6 — chapter 6
3:12 — chapter 23
3:12-13 — chapter 22
3:15 — chapter 21

1 Thessalonians

1:5-6 — chapter 20
2:7 — chapter 23
3:8 — chapter 15

5:19 — chapters 17, 19

2 Thessalonians

1:11 — chapter 24

2:15 — chapter 15

1 Timothy

1:16 — chapter 22

2:5-6 — chapter 1

2:9 — chapter 12

4:10 — chapter 15

2 Timothy

1:8-9 — chapter 2

1:12 — chapter 6

2:24 — chapter 23

3:12 — chapter 31

4:7-8 — chapter 30

Titus

1:1-2 — chapter 9

2:7-8 — chapter 24

2:11-12 — chapter 24

2:13-14 — chapter 1

2:14 — chapter 1

3:4 — chapter 23

3:4-5 — chapter 2

Hebrews

2:9 — chapters 2, 15

6:18 — chapter 9

10:25 — chapter 19

11:1 — chapter 25

11:6 — chapter 25
11:8-10 — chapter 9
12:1-3 — chapter 30
12:14 — chapter 21
13:4 — chapters 18, 27
13:5 — chapter 20
13:15-16 — chapter 30

1 Peter

1:3-4 — chapter 9
1:3-5 — chapter 6
1:7-8 — chapter 20
1:15-16 — chapter 24
1:16 — chapter 24
1:18-19 — chapters 6, 8
1:19 — chapter 14
2:2 — chapter 28
2:9 — chapter 24
2:12 — chapter 1
2:16 — chapter 16
2:23 — chapter 26
2:24 — chapters 2, 8
3:4 — chapter 26
3:18 — chapter 1
3:20 — chapter 22
4:8 — chapter 22

2 Peter

2:1 — chapter 2
2:1-3 — chapter 13
3:9 — chapter 22
3:15 — chapter 22

1 John

1:9 — chapters 11, 20

2:2 — chapter 15

2:3 — chapter 17

3:2 — chapter 11

3:14 — chapter 17

3:16 — chapter 1

3:18 — chapter 19

4:1 — chapter 2

4:13 — chapter 17

5:11 — chapter 2

2 John

1:10 — chapter 13

1:10-11 — chapter 4

Revelation

2:4 — chapter 6

21:2-3 — chapter 14

21:7 — chapter 11

21:8 — chapters 8, 11, 18

22:12 — chapter 27

About the Author

The source manuscripts identify Pastor Mike Withem as pastor of First Baptist Church in Ranson, West Virginia. These studies preserve his direct pastoral voice, his emphasis upon salvation by grace through faith, and his practical application of Paul's Epistle to the Galatians.

About the Editor and Compiler

Joseph F. Roberts prepared this edition by compiling the original studies, arranging them as a continuous book, converting the sermon outlines into narrative form, standardizing the Scripture references, and supplying the full King James Version text of the cited passages.

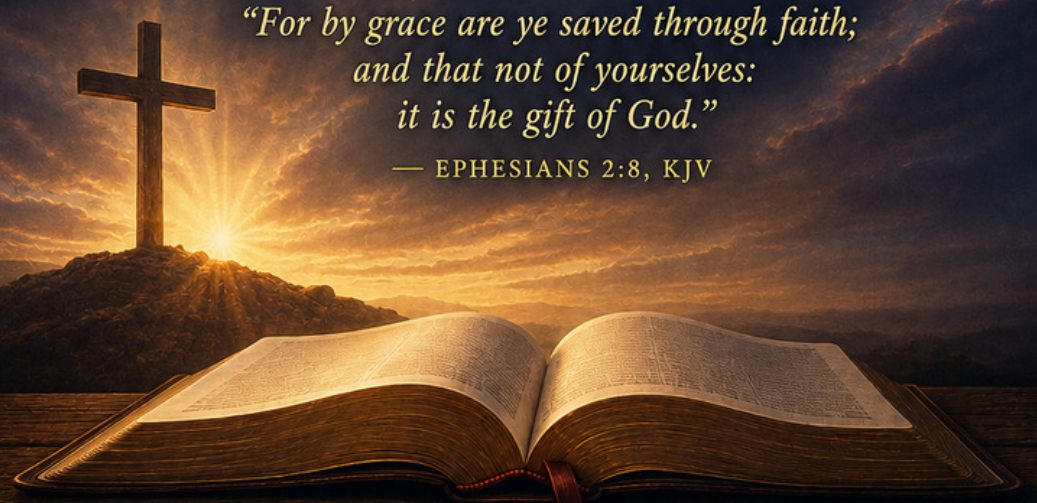
Salvation is not earned by human merit, religious effort, or works of righteousness. It is the gift of God, freely offered through Jesus Christ.

The Gospel of Grace presents a clear, Scripture-centered study of sin, redemption, faith, and the finished work of Christ. With reverence and simplicity, Mike Withem directs readers to the mercy of God, the sufficiency of the cross, and the transforming power of grace.

Whether you are seeking assurance, growing in your understanding of salvation, or longing to share the gospel more faithfully, these pages offer a timeless reminder of the grace that saves and keeps the believer.

*“For by grace are ye saved through faith;
and that not of yourselves:
it is the gift of God.”*

— EPHESIANS 2:8, KJV



MIKE WITHEM

EDITED AND COMPILED BY
JOSEPH F. ROBERTS