

Galatians: Christ Has Set Us Free
Lesson 4 “Justified by Faith”

I. Introduction - We are continuing through our study through the book of *Galatians* tonight.

A. Introduction

1. Paul wrote this book to give an revelation of grace and what the true gospel is. He wrote in a very emphatic and dogmatic and sort of in your face style. Why?
2. He was writing to churches in Galatia that he founded on his first missionary journey (*Acts 13-14*). These churches were founded in approximately 48 A.D.
3. Paul wrote Galatians about 3 years after he founded these churches to counter the teaching of the Judaizers. The Judaizers had come in and begin to say that these Christians had to continue to believe in Jesus but also live by the Mosaic law to be right with God. **Watered down the gospel.** Paul called their teaching of mixture a different gospel and said that those that taught it were accursed..
5. The last couple of weeks we have looked at where Paul got his message from (the gospel of grace - came from divine revelation) and how upon learning this truth he had to mature in the things of God so people saw the gospel accompanied with signs and wonders working in his life which gave him influence.
 - a. *Acts 15* Council of Jerusalem - The Apostles made the doctrinal decision that Gentiles do not have to keep the law of Moses and get circumcised to be saved. **Changed the course of church history.**

B. Tonight we are going to finish *Galatians 2* and what it means to be justified by faith.

II. Justified by Faith

A. **Galatians 2:11-14 Paul’s Confrontation with Peter**

1. Sometime after the Council of Jerusalem in *Acts 15* Peter traveled to Antioch. The church in Antioch is different than the church Jerusalem because it is comprised of both Jews and Gentiles. This was Paul’s home church.
2. In this story, Paul tells about how he confronted Peter face to face because when men who came from the church in Jerusalem where James was and went to Antioch, Peter would no longer eat with the Gentiles.
 - a. In that day, eating together was a sign of mini-covenant. It’s not like today when food is easy to get. People had to grow much of their own food or trade for it with the sweat of their brow, so when they broke bread together it was symbolic of their life, labor, and love. **It was covenant.**
 - b. This is why the Pharisees were angry at Jesus when he ate with the tax collectors and the publicans. He was affirming them as people.

- c. Ironically, Peter was the person God used initially to reach the Gentiles in *Acts 10*. Gives Peter a vision of sheet from heaven with four footed creatures and wild beats that weren't kosher and tells Peter to kill and eat. Peter said, "I can't eat that which is unclean." God then said, "Don't call unclean what I have called clean" and then sent him to the house of a Roman centurion called Cornelius to minister and lead people to Jesus.
- 3. When the men from James were in Antioch, Peter played the hypocrite (actor) and would't eat with them. He withdrew because of fear.
 - a. Hypocrisy isn't falling short of a standard you proclaim. Hypocrisy is pretending to be something you are not and never intend to be.
 - b. Fear affected Peter and he stepped back into His old self prior to the crucifixion when he denied truth.
- 4. Paul sets a good example because he confronted Peter to his face and not behind his back or own social media, etc. (*Matthew 18:15-19*)

B. Galatians 2:15-21 Paul's Case for the Gospel

- 1. *Verses 15-16* Paul makes the point that if those who were Jewish by nature could not be right with God by keeping the works of the law. **By the works of the law no flesh shall be justified. This verse should end Cancel Culture.**
- 2. *Verse 17* Once you understand grace and accept Christ, it is sin to try to maintain right standing with God based on your good works.
 - a. Many Jews said Jesus was a minister of sin because they misunderstood grace. ex: Sermon on Mount - hating your brother is murder, adultery begins in the heart, whoever divorces his wife commits adultery.
 - b. Jesus raised the standard to make it unlivable so people would give up and look to Him. Preached grace to free people from sin not so they could live in sin.
- 3. *Verse 18* When we try to build that which God has destroyed (Old Covenant, Temple System), we make ourselves sinners. How do we do this today?
 - a. We sin and then withdraw from God for a while because we don't feel like we are clean enough or serious enough to spend time with Him.
 - b. We fast so many days to get God to answer a prayer...
 - c. We try to certain religious rituals to get God to be pleased with us.
- 4. *Verse 19* The law is a ministry of death. When Paul accepted Christ he died to the law so he could now be alive in Christ.
- 5. *Verse 20-21* When Jesus was crucified, we were crucified (old nature). It's no longer us who lives, by Christ living in us by the power of the Holy Spirit.
 - a. This is why we must renew our minds, because sometimes we don't feel like this is true. Example from yesterday, where I had to ask Jesus, how do you live through me in this situation?
 - b. **If we try to earn anything by our good works (legalism) Christ's death was useless (in vain.)**

III. Conclusion - This message is so relevant to each of us because Paul wrote this letter to a Gentile (formerly heathen) church. He didn't write this to a bunch of religious people. Today, even us Gentiles can fall under the influence of legalism if we aren't careful.

A. Call Up Prayer Team

B. Pray Closing Prayer