

Galatians: Christ Has Set Us Free

Lesson 8 “Paul’s Concerns for the Church”

- I. Introduction - We are continuing through our study through the book of *Galatians* tonight. Tonight we are going to look at Paul’s first missionary trip to Galatia and some important parts of Paul’s personal history that will help us understand the Bible better. We will also look some concerns he had for the church in Galatia.

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..
4. The main point of the letter is we are saved by putting faith in God’s grace. We cannot add to what Jesus did for us to get saved, maintain our salvation, and/or to receive any of the blessings of God like healing, prosperity, etc.

- B. Last week we looked at how Paul told the church in Galatia that they were now sons (huios) of God because they have the Holy Spirit. In *Galatians 4* he is going to continue persuading them to not go back under the law. They are sons now, don’t be a slave.

II. Paul’s Concerns for the Church

A. Galatians 4:8-12 Paul Expresses His Concerns

1. *Galatians 4:8* The Galatians were not originally religious Jews. They were heathen that worshipped false gods sky, earth, committed sexual immorality, etc.
2. *Galatians 4:9-10* After they knew God and were known by God (*Matthew 7:23* - when we get saved we become known by God), they were turning back to beggarly elements (New Moon festivals, keeping feast days and going into bondage.
 - a. **Basically Paul is saying legalism is the same as idolatry.**
 - b. **Both present a false image of God.**
3. *Galatians 4:11* It puts fear into Paul that these Christians are going back into legalism. Why? It’s bondage. ex: my example - people going to legalistic churches and not being able to sleep, getting sick, etc. and then they get a revelation of grace and they are healed by changing how they think.

4. **Galatians 4:12** Paul urged the Galatians to be like him (free from the law) because he became like they were (freed from the law).

B. Galatians 4:13-15 Paul's Infirmary in the Flesh

1. What was this infirmity? (put up map of Iconium, Lystra, Derbe). Violence was plotted against them in Iconium so they fled. The people tried to stone them.
2. **Acts 14:8-20** Paul is almost stoned to death after preaching the gospel.
3. Persecution was Paul's thorn in the flesh. **2 Corinthians 12:7-10**.
 - a. **2 Corinthians 11:22-30** persecution was Paul's infirmity.
 - b. **Numbers 33:55, Joshua 23:13, Judges 2:3**
4. Paul loved the Galatians so much he was willing to endure physical hardship for them like stoning, but he didn't have an eye disease.

C. Galatians 4:16-20 Paul's Prayer for the Galatians

1. **Galatians 4:16-17** the Judaizers were courting the Galatians church and putting rules on them they couldn't keep to gain power over them. Legalism is about control.
2. **Galatians 4:18** We want to be zealous for the right thing - Jesus!!!
3. **Galatians 4:19-20** Paul has doubts about if many in this church are still saved or if they have gone back to exclusively trusting in their good works. He prays Christ would be formed in them again (in their mentality, soul not their spirit).

III. Conclusion - Idolatry is a major revival killer and the idolatry of legalism is one of the biggest revival killers of all time. Tonight we looked at that and countered a distorted view about Paul's thorn in the flesh that misrepresents the nature of God. We are going to close by praying that Christ (his finished work and grace is established in all of our lives).

A. Call Up Prayer Team

B. Pray Closing Prayer