

"The Work of Christ, Beginning to End" Conclusion to Series on Galatians

Galatians is not simply about the gift of Christ received through "justification" by faith. Galatians is not only, or even primarily, about doctrine. Galatians is about the church. The work of Christ was and is the solution for the twin problems of the flesh that the Galatians, and the church today, were wrestling with - legalism and license. Through His work we have been set free from the penalty of sin, and we have been set free from the power of sin through His indwelling Spirit, so that we are free to love one another and thereby reflect the very character of Christ.

We began our study of Galatians talking about giving and receiving gifts. 2000 years ago all of mankind was given an indescribably valuable gift; the one gift we most needed. God's grace in Christ is just too good to be true. This was the first and foundational struggle of the early church. Galatians was written to address this very issue.

Galatians is not simply about the gift of Christ received through "justification" by faith. Not only, or even primarily about doctrine. Galatians is about the Church. The work of Christ is the solution for the problems they were facing.

Church needs truth as its foundation

I. How can I become "right" with God?

A. Content of the Gospel – 1:3-4

B. Response to the gospel – 2:16

Define faith

C. Result: Justification by faith

D. Argument of the book

Personal/Historical – 1-2

Doctrinal – 3-4

Practical – 5-6

Two primary doctrinal errors were producing bad practice and dividing the church

1. Attempting to earn "rightness" with God (legalism) – 5:1

Define legalism (Part A) : works, or Christ + works

Gal. 2:11-13; Examples of division created in Galatian church

Before Christ, circumcision and keeping Law – signs that a person was rightly related to the Law. Law was form of administration of God's kingdom... for a time.

Possession of the Spirit is the sign that I am rightly related to God through the covenant given to Abraham.

2. Taking "rightness" for granted (license) – 5:13

5:15, 26; Examples of division created in Galatian church

Two forms of the flesh

Define: independence from God

Consequences

Broken relationships

Discipline

Disinheritance; "inherit the kingdom" – 5:21

Original design of mankind – Gen. 1; plan through Abraham – all nations blessed; inherit the earth; Rom. 4:13-14

1 Cor 6:9-11; Eph. 5:1-8

This life is training ground. This life is testing ground.

Forfeit inheritance

Cannot forfeit sonship

II. How can I grow in "rightness" with God?

A. Legalism, flesh – 3:3

Define legalism (Part B) : independent effort to change my character, earn more of God's favor

4:8-10

Jews didn't understand the nature of the relationship between these two covenants. Nor were they willing to accept that the Law of Moses had run its course.

B. Promise, Spirit, Love – 5:1, 13, 16, 25

Freedom

Not released from holiness

Released from self and flesh

6:2, 10; Examples in the body

C. How does grace/law work in parenting? LOYAL LOVE

Law is for the immature, untrained – restrains and reveals sin

Law – teaching children cause and effect; consequences. Need clear boundaries and clear, appropriate consequences.

Moving children toward maturity. Goal – independently dependent on God. Independent financially; also spiritually.

Not black and white answer; it is a continuum

Many rebukes (“law”) in 1 Cor because of their immaturity

Delayed – rescue children from consequences

Moving from law to dialogue. Telling to advising to waiting.

Grace – teaching them to listen to God's voice.

III. How can I know I am “right” with God?

Look to self?

Confirmation of maturity

Look to the cross – 6:14-15

I only boast in the cross

Ezekiel 36:22-27

Application

Who do you represent? Whose interests concern you most?

Aggie ring; wedding ring, last name, business card

Paul, an apostle. You too have been commissioned

Do you know the gospel? Can you say it without confusion in 30 seconds?

Duty, privilege of every Christian. You possess the greatest gift, yours to give away freely.

Have you believed the gospel?

Ask a friend. Tell a friend if you made a decision today. This is just a beginning. Now you can grow.

Share the gospel